

# WRITE OF WAY

THE RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND AREA

NEWSLETTER Winter 2011



**ramblers**  
at the heart of walking



**ON JANUARY 28th 2012, THE 23rd  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND AREA  
OF THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION  
WILL BE HELD AT  
THE PALACE COMMUNITY CENTRE,  
IBSTOCK  
MEET FROM 9.30am for 10.00am  
PROMPT START**

**THERE ARE EIGHT  
GROUPS MAKING UP  
THE AREA**

**COALVILLE**

**HINCKLEY**

**LEICESTER**

**LOUGHBOROUGH**

**LUTTERWORTH**

**MELTON MOWBRAY**

**RUTLAND**

**LEICESTERSHIRE &  
RUTLAND 20s & 30s  
WALKING GROUP**

See also the Area's web site - <http://leicsra.org.uk>  
and the Ramblers national web sites  
<http://www.ramblers.org.uk> and the walkfinder web site  
[http://www.ramblers.org.uk/areas\\_groups/groupswalksfinder.htm](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/areas_groups/groupswalksfinder.htm)

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***Leicestershire & Rutland Area***

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The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily  
those of the RA or its officers

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## **AREA TEAM**

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Mike Statham, Ron Fox , Alan Loasby

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Membership Secretary -

Publicity Officer -

Webmaster - John Samson  
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Member without portfolio - Mary Rooks

Representative of affiliated bodies  
Eileen Pott  
(Over The Hill Walking Group)

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## **CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

I want to invite you to our AGM, in many peoples eyes a necessary evil. I can assure you however we keep it as brief as possible and as light hearted as these things can ever be. Most of us would prefer to spend our time walking or campaigning or both but the formalities are needed if the organisation is to function properly.

By practice the AGM is hosted by each group in turn and this year you are invited to Coalville.

*(There are several agreed practices like this rotation which are not covered by our constitution and these 'standing orders' are given towards the end of this newsletter for your information)*

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided before and after the meeting and for those who wish to take advantage of it there will be an afternoon walk with leaders from Coalville. We gather from 9.30 with AGM starting at 10.00 and hoping to finish by 12.30

Our guest speaker this year is Paul Tame, Regional Environment and Land Use Adviser for the NFU in the East Midlands Region. Paul is well known to several of your officers as he is a fellow member of the Local Access Forum and can give us the farmers' view on the many changes in our countryside. He will give us a short presentation and then field questions (*no pun intended*) on the issue. We are fortunate that our President will also be able to give us the County Council perspective.

We follow the formal meeting with an open forum when members can air any subjects they feel they wish to discuss.

We do have some jobs to fill but I can assure you that nobody attending will be put under any pressure to take them on.

One of the items on the agenda this year is that of General Council (GC). We are hosting this national gathering of the Ramblers in 2012 and it is a great opportunity for members to meet those responsible for running our organisation.

We, like all Areas will only have 2 delegates but can always send 2 observers at our own expense but unusually, given it is on our doorstep, this is a rare chance for a large number of our members to see what goes on without making a dent in our budget. The members to go officially will be decided at the AGM but over and above this we will need a team of volunteers to do the admin jobs at GC and they as well will have a chance to see most of the activity. These 'workers' will also get fed for their trouble. If anybody is interested in helping but cannot make the AGM please contact Michael Parr, the Area Secretary, who is acting as Coordinator for this event.

Amongst the items in this newsletter there are reports from your officers. There are some inevitable overlaps as they are produced independently and we all work closely together.

There are some gaps in the line up at present. We have no publicity officer although Eddie East has been covering part of the role but now wishes to stand down. We have no Membership Secretary as the incumbent (Phil Barnes ) has had to move away with his job. We do however have Martin James lined up to step into the breach. Martin stepped down from the role when other commitments made it difficult but he now feels able to resume it. John Samson wants to step down as webmaster but again we have a volunteer waiting to take on the role. I would like to thank Eddie, Phil and John for their support and efforts over recent years.

I must also thank Ann Amos who stepped into the breach when we needed a new Treasurer. She did an excellent job but found it increasingly difficult with work pressures and had to stand down in September. Mike Goodrich has agreed to take over but as we go to press, is still finding his way into the role and we have no banking arrangements operational. We have managed to get end of year figures off to central office and I have extracted from these, a balance sheet and income and expenditure sheet to try and give you a flavour of our position but by the AGM there may be some changes to this. The true position will only be determined when Mike has analysed everything and our accounts have been audited.

We also have no representative on the National Forest Committee at present. Traditionally it has been part of the role of the Countryside and Access Officer but since Michael Parr took on that role, living the wrong side of the county, we have had volunteers just attending these two meetings each year to get the voice of the Ramblers heard in the debates. Ideally, as they meet at Moira for about two hours in an afternoon, a member from Loughborough or Coalville groups would be best placed. It is very interesting and there is no commitment to attend Area Committee to report back although you would be welcome to do so. I attend representing the East Midlands Orienteering Association so can report back myself. If anyone is at all interested and would like more information please feel free to give me a ring or collar me at the AGM. If you try it once and feel it is not for you, that is fine.

I would like to point out that we can have up to two members on the Area Committee elected at the AGM who actually have no specific job. If it is having the responsibility of a job which deters you why not put yourself forward for this. I would like to see more balance on the committee with more from groups other than Leicester. This is no reflection on Leicester, far from it, this demonstrates their commitment. It is just that I feel we are a bit unbalanced with the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Chairman and Webmaster all from that group. To compound it the only other member of our committee at present who has no portfolio is also a Leicester member. Come on you other groups! We don't bite. Meetings are only 4 times a year in Glenfield starting at 7.30 and finishing between 9.00 and 9.30.

## 23rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND AREA

- 1 Chairman's Opening Remarks & Welcome
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Approval of the minutes of the 22nd A.G.M, (page 7)
- 4 Matters arising from those minutes not otherwise on the agenda
- 5 Presentation of annual reports
  - a) Presentation of accounts and Treasurer's report (14)
  - b) Adoption of the accounts
  - c) Other officers' reports
    - Chairman (4) - Secretary(9) - Membership Secretary
    - Countryside and Access Officer (12) - Newsletter Editor (12)
    - Footpath and Survey Secretary (9) - Webmaster (12)
    - Campaigns Coordinator (11) Publicity Secretary
  - d) Adoption of Officers' reports
  - e) Group Reports (15)
- 6 GUEST SPEAKER Paul Tame,  

FOLLOWED BY A 15 MINUTE BREAK
- 7 Motions/constitution changes previously notified, including any for National Council (19)
- 8 Election / Affirmation of President and Vice Presidents
- 9 Elections of Honorary Officers (Chairman - Vice Chairman - Secretary - Treasurer  
Membership Secretary - Countryside and Access Officer - Publicity Secretary - Newsletter Editor  
Footpath and Survey Secretary - Webmaster - Campaigns Coordinator)
- 10 Elections/nominations of further members to serve on Area Executive Committee
  - a) Representatives from groups (Coalville, Hinckley,  
Leicester, Loughborough, Lutterworth, Melton, Rutland,  
Leicestershire & Rutland 20s & 30s Walking Group
  - b) Up to two 'elected' representatives of Affiliated Organisations
  - c) Up to two 'elected' members from the floor
- 11 Election of Representatives to General Council (2)
- 12 Appointments
  - Confirmation of appointment of an Auditor / Independent Financial Examiner
- 13 Date, venue and format of the next AGM, to be hosted by Loughborough
- 14 General Council 2012 in Leicestershire & Rutland Area
- 15 Open Forum

**The AGM will be followed by a walk for members wishing to participate  
It will be led by Coalville Group - Members should bring their own packed lunches**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of  
Leicestershire and Rutland Area of The Ramblers  
held 29th January, 2011 at St. Peter's Church Rooms, Glenfield at 10.00 am.**

**Present:** Mike Statham, Vice-President  
Tony Andrews, Vice-President  
Roy Denney, Chairman  
Terry Bates, Vice-Chairman  
Ann Amos, Treasurer  
Michael Parr, Secretary  
Phil Barnes, Membership Secretary  
Stan Warren, Survey & Footpath Secretary  
Eddie East, Publicity Secretary  
John Samson, Webmaster  
Bob Woodward, National Forest Representative  
Tom Franklin, Chief Executive, The Ramblers

35 other members were present and are listed on the attendance sheet.

**Chairman's opening remarks.**

The Chairman reported the death of Kenneth Wadd who had been a member for many years and thanked the Leicester Group for hosting the AGM.

**1. Apologies** for absence were received from Malcolm Burdett, Elaine Easom, Malvern Irons, Fiona and Peter Proudoff and Chris Tipper.

**2. Minutes** The minutes of the meeting held on 23/01/10 were confirmed as a correct record.

**3. Matters arising** There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**4. Officer's reports**

All were printed and circulated with the agenda. The following additional information was given.

(a) Chairman The Chairman thanked the other officers and in particular the Treasurer who was co-opted at the beginning of the year.

(b) Treasurer The Area had a slight deficit of £325.82 over the year.

(c) Footpath & Survey Secretary The issue at Barton-in-the-Beans was the subject of a new proposal which it was hoped would provide a resolution.

The level-crossing problem at Barrow was still unresolved and a new proposal is being discussed.

Local government cuts are a source of concern.

(d) Countryside and Access Officer English Heritage has announced that the 10 year review of Access Land will be delayed by two years and that the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme that funds many discretionary paths is closed so that as licences run out access may be denied.

Members may wish to make their views known to government on the question of the sale of Forestry Commission land.

The Annual Report of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum was circulated.

(e) Publicity If groups have fairs or open days where we could display our boards are available.

All the officer's reports were adopted.

**5. Group reports** All the group reports were adopted.

**6. Tom Franklin**

At the close of the 75th year of the Ramblers existence, he reflected on the state of access in 1935 when 98% of the Peak District was closed to walkers, there were no national parks and OS maps did not include paths. Now it is a very popular pastime with 6 million walkers. We need to make government aware of this.

The Ramblers have for the first time for a number of years had a steady, rather than declining membership and it was possible to create a £250,000 fund for legal cases through an increased level of bequests.

**7. Constitution**

The following amendments were proposed by Roy Denney, seconded by Michael Parr:

That rule 6(f) iii should now read:

The AEC shall have the power to co-opt members.

That rule 6(f) iv should now read:

The AEC shall decide where it shall meet with meetings to be held at least once every three months, subject to

not less than 14 days notice of time and place. An agenda for all such meetings shall be provided at least 7 days in advance. Half those members entitled to attend shall form a quorum provide that at least 3 of those present are honorary officers of the area. In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the meeting shall appoint its own Chairman.

That rule 9 should have additional clauses:

(b) Receive and note the Annual Reports of the groups making up the Area.

(c) A quorum at any general meeting shall be 20 members or 51% of the membership (rounded up) whichever is the smaller number.

Subsequent clauses to be re-lettered accordingly.

#### **8.President**

Peter Williams was elected President and introduced himself to those present.

#### **9.Vice-Presidents**

Alan Loasby was elected to fill the vacancy for a fourth Vice-President.

Mike Statham, Tony Andrews and Ron Fox were also confirmed as Vice-Presidents.

#### **10.Election of officers**

The following appointments were confirmed:

Chairman, Roy Denney; Vice-Chairman, Terry Bates; Treasurer, Ann Amos; Secretary, Michael Parr; Membership Secretary, Phil Barnes; Footpath and Survey Secretary, Stan Warren; Newsletter Editor and Campaign Organiser, Roy Denney; Publicity Secretary, Eddie East; Webmaster, John Samson; Access and Countryside Officer, Michael Parr.

#### **11.Other appointments**

Representative of affiliated groups, Eileen Pott; Member without portfolio, Mary Rooks.

#### **12.Group representatives**

The following appointments were confirmed:

Coalville, vacant; Leicester, Terry Bates; Hinckley, Tony Smith; Loughborough, John Howells; Melton, vacant; L&RWG, Karl Pigin; Rutland, John Williams; Lutterworth, Yvonne Coulson.

#### **13.Nominations for General Council 2011**

It was agreed to leave this to the next meeting of the Area Executive Committee.

#### **14.Auditor**

Chris Tipper was appointed Honorary Auditor.

#### **15.Area quiz**

It was agreed that responsibility should rotate around the area and that each group should host it 4 years after they host the AGM.

#### **16.General Council 2012**

We have agreed to host the event and the Chairman asked anyone who was prepared to assist to contact Michael Parr. It was suggested that people who went to GC this year should be prepared to take substantive roles at the next GC and note what was needed. Central Office funds 2 delegates and area may be prepared to fund 2 observers if volunteers for next year would be likely to benefit from it.

#### **17.Date of next meeting**

28th January, 2012 Coalville group will be the hosts. Venue to be announced.

The formal meeting closed at 11.30am and a general discussion followed.

Tom Franklin talked about the contribution of our national president Julia Bradbury and the Mystery Walkers Scheme which asks walkers to report footpath problems.

The question of allocation of members by post-code and the problems of areas with post-codes in adjoining counties, Tom suggested that this should be resolved by local agreement and that central office would be reluctant to become involved.

Peter Williams drew attention to the Open Spaces Survey that Leics. C.C. is running on line during February and March .

MWP

31.01.11

# **OFFICERS REPORTS**

## **Area Secretary's Report**

The Area Executive Committee has met four times in the past year. It has established an eight year schedule so that area activities are spread around the eight groups in the area. These are the Larry Ball Walk, the area quiz and the annual general meeting.

The most important development during the year has been the welcome announcement that the City Council has made a successful bid to the Department of Transport for a grant of £4.4 million for a three year scheme to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport. We will be heavily involved in supporting the Ramblers full-time officer who will be based in Leicester.

The General Council will be held in Leicester next April again with support from us and preparations for the event are in hand.

At long last the Area Constitution has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

Michael Parr

## **Area Footpath and Survey Secretary**

Firstly - surveying our network. 2012 will see the completion of another four-year cycle, so we should be able to compare the state of play with 2008 in a meaningful manner next year. To achieve this, we still have 34 squares left to visit, and I will be foregoing my regular free bus jaunts around the Midlands on Saturdays to support the regular stalwarts, who have at least had the benefit of a long and relatively dry autumn. Feedback continues to indicate improvement, some of which has been brought about by diversions to avoid permanent obstructions such as buildings. The milestone of our problem count dropping below 2000 has been achieved, and hopefully this trend will be maintained to the completion of the cycle. I always welcome new surveyors, and will assist in any way possible.

The harsh economic climate must inevitably lead to budgetary cut-backs in Highway Authorities, but we seem to have so far escaped the draconian measures in places like Nottinghamshire. Their cause will be helped by continued reporting of problems found - it demonstrates regular use of paths, and hence the need for maintenance.

The Leics. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) is being refreshed, and, while it contains no startling major initiatives, the ongoing commitment is positive, and even extends to efficiency improvements within Legal Services. The replacement of Long Horse Bridge near Shardlow at a cost of £1.5 million (soon to open and well worth a look at less than one mile from the Old Crown at Cavendish Bridge) will probably be the last major project for many a year. Our long wish lists for missing links will be for future generations to pursue, unless external funding opportunities arise.

One interesting paragraph in the ROWIP refers to Definitive Map anomalies. If you think our network is nearly perfect, this shows otherwise. The figures are:-

Missing Links	155	Status Unclear	124
Lost Ways	383	Dead Ends	108
Building Obstructions	236	Other Obstructions	195
Unofficial Diversions	511	Other Legal Problems	193
Garden Obstructions	113		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1994</b>	

This is enough to keep legal services busy for at least the rest of the century at current rates of resolution - hopefully those which would benefit us by opening a new route or clearing a currently impassable one will be given priority. Needless to say, I would love a copy of the list.

Progress on significant specific issues this year follows. Obviously I cannot list everything, but am always available to inform on and discuss any proposal which has passed by me this year.

### **Airfield Farm, Market Harborough**

We are still fighting the desire to rationalise the two footpaths which cross this site, and I await a response to my most recent submission.

### **Monsters of Rock at Donington**

After initial protestations, the temporary diversion this year was much improved. Plans for a permanent diversion seem to be making little progress.

### **Isley Walton**

LCC have finally passed their 2003 Creation Order to the Planning Inspectorate for determination.  
Forest View, Groby

LCC's decision not to make an Order has been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal. We still await the Order from LCC, and understand that the landowner most affected is massing legal big guns to oppose it.

### **Swannington**

The path which the landowner failed to divert is usable, subject to a slight deviation around a fence, and probable abuse from his wife. The latter should be reported to the police and LCC. The new diversion application has not yet been issued for consultation.

### **Barton-in-the-Beans**

The highlight of the year in terms of gain, and thanks are due to the landowner and local parish councils. As well as diverting three paths around long-standing obstructions with no loss of convenience, we can now access the Leicestershire Round, as the dead-end path heading south-west links to the Round between Shackerstone and Carlton.

### **Barrow-on-Soar**

The crossing remains closed, but Network Rail has submitted an application for a footbridge close by, which is acceptable to the RA.

Major planning applications include the Bardon Quarry extension, where LCC are busy working to mitigate the effect on footpaths around Rise Rocks; and Woolfox Wind Farm in Rutland, where planning permission has currently been refused. The latter affects the environment rather than paths directly.

Two major development proposals which may give opportunities to improve the footpath network are in progress. A major mixed housing/business development off Kirby Road, Glenfield has now been approved despite local opposition and having been turned down by the planning authority. I should however give us links from the path crossing Western Park Golf Course (if diverted as proposed), across Kirby Road to the old railway line from Ratby, if Glenfield Brook can be bridged. The proposed waste incinerator at the old Charnwood Quarry near the M1 Junction 23 at Shepshed could allow the diversion of the footpath from Nanpantan away from Junction 23, as there is an access tunnel under the M1 within the site. As we go to press a public enquiry is under way on an appeal as this has also been turned down once. Other leisure uses for the disused quarry are also being explored and we have made submissions for these facilities as compensation if the inspector is minded to approve the appeal.

The cessation of the various Countryside Stewardship schemes and their funding threatens current sites when the expiry date is reached. There are over 80 such sites in Leicestershire & Rutland, and some are of great benefit for local use and links into the wider network. The LAFs are making

local parish councils aware of the benefit for residents, and the Footpath Committee is reviewing the merits of each site during our regular meetings. Any membership feedback is always welcome.

Three current or potential Map Modification Orders are in urgent need of user evidence. The locations are Huit Farm near Earl Shilton, the disused railway between Melton Country Park and Scalford, and Jericho Lane at Barkestone-le-Vale.

Lack of footpath secretaries at Loughborough and Coalville, and no feedback to the Area from Lutterworth causes concern, as, perversely, these seem to be the parts of the county attracting major housing development. A local pair of eyes and ears can only help the RA to make informed comment, and suggest ways in which the loss of countryside can be offset to some degree by improved walking opportunities both within the development and linking to the remaining countryside. In the absence of formal officers, I would appreciate feedback from anyone on what is being proposed, and what the local reaction is, otherwise such plans will pass without comment from the RA.

Finally, one to put under U for Utopia in my RA files. I explained the problems with the closed bridleway rail crossing at Barrow-on-Soar to a work colleague, to which the response was

'if the crossing is closed, where do the trains go now' .....if only.

Stan Warren

## **Campaigns Coordinator Report**

Once again the main thrust of our campaigning work has been keeping our footpaths open by walking them, surveying them and reporting any defects to the LCC. There have been no specific local campaigns where we have had to call on the assistance of members but members of your Area Committee still serve on the Local Access Forum (LAF) ensuring your interests are always to the fore. This did allow us to defend the status of local country parks although the medium term position is still in the air. It has also provided us with a vehicle to advise local parishes on the possible loss of permissive access routes due to changes in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme grants situation and to advise them as to how they might address this. We have also assisted with footpath issues as detailed in the report of your Footpaths and Surveys Secretary.

We are represented on the National Forest Access & Recreation Group and have had a say in the design of the National Forest trail which subject to funding should traverse 70 miles of the new forest. Again we are members of the Connect2 steering group and played a part in improved access routes to and through Watermead Country Park and I am on the Heart of the Forest Forum doing the same exercise for the new access areas being created around Spring Cottage Gresley and Overseal. I am also a volunteer with the Woodland Trust and have been doing the promotional photography for their new flagship woodlands being created near Ravenstone another exciting prospect to improve walking in what was once a fairly despoiled area.

On the national front we have contributed to numerous campaigns broadly in support of the position taken by Ramblers London office but with a local take on positions. We have been able to do this by direct support to their campaigns; by personal submissions and by using our influence to get the LAF to also submit supporting statements.

Campaigns we have acted on include the suggested sale of national woodlands, "Helping to Shape Natural England"; new suggested planning regulations (the relaxation thereof); the New Coastal Footpath; recreational use of quarries and the proposed changes to the registration regime for village greens as common land.

Roy Denney

## **Countryside and Access Officer's Report**

The meetings of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LAF) have been reduced to four times a year as an economy measure. Fortunately, there have been no further reductions in staffing of the Rights of Way Team following the reorganization last year. This is in marked contrast to many other counties.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan came to the end of its first five year cycle and a draft of the new plan has been commented on. Reductions in government expenditure have resulted in the delay of the promised ten year review of the Open Access Land schedule. Leicestershire and Rutland were on the end of the queue anyway, so it could be a long time before we see any changes.

The government has also ended the provision in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme for landowners to be compensated for allowing discretionary footpaths across their land. This means that over the next few years we could lose a number of very useful paths. Steps are being taken to make parish councils aware of the issue.

Lost Ways continue to be debated; the working party of interested groups did not come up with any radical solution. Leicestershire has identified 383 potential lost ways amongst some 1994 assorted footpath problems. Given the time it takes to sort out a single problem it is unlikely that many will be resolved by the 2026 deadline. LAF is endeavouring to identify the really important ones so that a priority list may be established.

Other issues that have been discussed include the recreational use of quarries after they are worked out and the plans for the temporary and permanent diversion of paths around the extension of Bardon Quarry.

The National Forest is preparing a long distance footpath of some 70 miles probably from Beacon Hill to Alrewas. We have helped with surveying the Leicestershire section. The Woodland Trust is to establish a sizeable new wood near Coalville to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Michael Parr

## **Newsletter Editors Report**

Firstly thank you to those who do contribute - I have received less of late partly no doubt because everybody is aware that we have to be very selective to keep down the size of our newsletter in these financially restricted times. Do keep offering material however as anything I cannot print will be sent to the web master and progressively we hope to move more to that less expensive medium. Your newsletters do appear there already and eventually we hope to get to a position where hard copy will only be sent to those where we do not have an email address.

We have moved from 5 editions each year to just this major edition which services the requirements of your AGM and an interim one mid year which is much smaller

Roy Denney

## **Webmasters Report**

Thank you to everybody who has supported my efforts over the years with the area website <http://leicsra.org.uk>. I hope to relinquish my role at the next AGM to somebody who can dedicate more time to the task and I would ask you to provide as much material as possible to the new Webmaster to make this a must-see site

John Samson

## Treasurers Report and Accounts

This year was notable for the area improving its financial situation from 2010 a year when we were of course hit a by funding reductions.

This was not only due to increased funding from central office but also by the Area reducing its expenditure

This transformed the bottom line from a deficit of £376 to a comfortable surplus .

The previous treasurer, Ann Amos, was regrettably forced to resign due to pressure of work and I came into the post in mid September.

I am retired businessman, with a background in engineering. I intend to use my experience of working in a financially tough industry to ensure careful management of our funds.

Mike Goodrich

### **BALANCE SHEET** (previous year in brackets)

#### ASSETS

Investments	£176	(£176)
Debtors	£250	(£250)
Prepaid income	£50	
Cash and Bank balances	3631	(£2097)
Total	£4107	

#### LIABILITIES

Creditors	£1100	(£1100)
Prepaid expenses	£192	
Total	£1292	

FUNDS £2815 (£1423)

**AREA INCOME & EXPENDITURE** (previous year in brackets)

INCOME

Receipts from Central Office	£6863	(£5418)
Investment Income	£184	(£3)
Sales	£0	(£7)
Total	£7048	(£5427)

EXPENDITURE

Distributed to Groups (see notes)	£3664	(£3360)
Campaigning, publicity & newsletter	£1871	(£1959)
Meetings	£110	(£310)
Admin	£61	(£57)
Other	£0	(£117)
Total	£5707	(£5803)

SURPLUS £1341 (£-376)

**ACTUAL ALLOCATION TO GROUPS**

Leicester	£970
Coalville	£780
Hinckley	£500
Loughborough	£358
Rutland	£293
Melton Mowbray	£191
Lutterworth	£176
LRWG	£162

# **GROUPS REPORTS**

## **LEICESTER**

We've had another very successful year, with new members joining every month; though with people leaving our numbers have only slightly increased over the year to 461 at the end of August. Of these, nearly 70 are active leaders of walks, which is really quite remarkable, as the great majority of members never actually take part in a led walk.

Our programme has been extended to include regular Tuesday morning walks – initially once a month, but now more frequently – the only limitation is being able to find enough leaders to lead them. Our Thursday morning walks have also been augmented with regular longer all-day Thursday walks; these too were initially limited to once a month, but extra walks have been introduced when we have been able to find people to lead them. All these extra walks were introduced principally to take pressure off the Thursday morning walks, which are now the most popular walks we do. After just 4 years, we now regularly get between 20 and 30 people on these, which can cause problems if there are lots of stiles on the walk, and even finding pubs that can cope with that number for a meal! However, the extra walks haven't had much effect on the Thursday morning walks, which continue to attract a large following, but have brought us even more members!

The monthly coach rambles continue to be popular, though there are always spare places, and members of other Groups are welcome to join us on any of those. Our evening walks, Saturday afternoon walks, all-day Saturday walks, and all-day Sunday walks likewise each continue to attract a loyal following. The Saturday walkers have walked the complete Leicestershire Round during the year in a sequence of Saturdays. All in all, we put on well over 200 walks every year.

We have arranged two walking holidays this year – one based on a Youth Hostel near Wenlock Edge, and the other in the Forest of Bowland.

We are in the process of regenerating our social activities that have lapsed in the last year or two, and ran a successful Skittles Evening at the end of September. It is hoped to extend the scope of the social activities in the coming year.

Our new Publicity Secretary has taken over the Group's website, and completely redesigned it. This can be seen at [www.ramblers-leicester.org.uk](http://www.ramblers-leicester.org.uk)

Dave Siddons

## **HINCKLEY**

The Hinckley group have continued to enjoy an interesting and varied walking programme, often travelling to Derbyshire, Staffordshire or the Cotswolds for our longer Sunday walks, while the shorter Saturday afternoon walks seem to be increasingly popular, attracting large numbers. Fortunately, we have three new leaders for our winter programme, which is a bonus, as we were becoming rather short of leaders.

During the summer, our Wednesday evening walks are popular, particularly if fish and chips or a nice pub are part of the event. Full day walks are also offered each Tuesday and Thursday, and we are delighted that the shorter Thursday walks, started some two years ago by one of our members, continues to go from strength to strength, with several leaders. This is for members who for various reasons do not want a longer walk, so they do around three miles, avoiding stiles wherever possible, then enjoy a pub lunch.

The Easter Weekend was spent at Watchet in Somerset, with superb weather and delightful walking, while August Bank Holiday saw 11 members travel to Conwy, an interesting walled town in North Wales. Our Thursday group enjoyed a short break in Weymouth earlier in the year, and we have recently returned from spending five days in Oxwich Bay, in the beautiful Gower Peninsula.

Our Annual Dinner at Sutton Cheney was most enjoyable, and the Quiz and the Photograph Competition was well supported with an excellent range of photos.

We had a stall at Hinckley and Bosworth's Over-50's Day, with a theme "Fit For The Future" where we distributed lots of membership forms and walks leaflets. This gave us the opportunity to look round the Atkins Centre, a converted knitwear factory in the centre of Hinckley.

Our new husband and wife team have settled into the role of secretary, and are doing a superb job, though Head Office seemed to be sending them two of everything. However, we hope that the problem has been resolved now.

Many thanks to everyone for their continuing support, and we all look forward to another successful year of walking in 2012.

Wendy Martin

## **RUTLAND**

Rutland Ramblers have enjoyed another busy and successful year.

A regular programme of fortnightly walks has attracted an average turnout of 22 walkers, while our annual safari, this time to the Bakewell district of Derbyshire, proved a lot of fun for the 20 participants. Next year we are hoping to spread our wings with a trip to Portugal.

Our social events also proved popular and successful. A wine & cheese event followed our AGM in November, and then in March 33 sat down to dine at Cottesmore at our annual dinner when the guest speaker was Mr Ray Hill, the well known authority on Burley on the Hill.

In the Autumn issue of Walk Magazine, I was interviewed by Julia Buckley, the theme, 'the perils and pleasures of walking with sight-loss.'

Alex Crombie

## **LUTTERWORTH**

We have had a most successful year with nearly all our walks being well attended on average 15/16 each walk. There were no walks missed due to bad weather and the only Sundays not walked were the bank holidays. We had a very good walking weekend away in Monmouth at the end of May, 27 people attending mostly staying at the King's Head a Witherspoons' Hotel. We hope to repeat the venture to Shrewsbury next May.

Our AGM in November was followed by a 5 mile walk and a soup and pudding lunch, this we find is a good way to ensure a full turn out for the meeting. We will also be having a Christmas lunch on December the 4th.

If you want to see where we are walking look on our web site to find the programme. [www.lutterworthramblers.org.uk](http://www.lutterworthramblers.org.uk).

Yvonne Coulson

## **LRWG**

In February we had a cold weekend away staying at a Youth Hostel in Clun, Shropshire. In May, the group had a weekend away at YHA Keswick. This was the weekend of the Royal wedding and some of the group watched some of it on a large TV outside in the centre of Keswick.

Some members really got in to the spirit of things and took Union Jack bunting up to the top of Pillar.

This trip was extended by a few members of the group, going up the Monday before and also staying at YHA Ennerdale and YHA Buttermere. Many peaks were climbed on this trip away.

In June, I led another of my Norfolk camping weekends. This year we stayed at Hemsby and I led Norfolk Broads walks at Potter Heigham and Horsey.

In July, we had a week away camping at Fowey, Cornwall. In addition to some great coastal walks some members also visited the Eden Project, Lost Gardens of Heligan and Lanhydrock National Trust Property.

August was an extremely busy month. There was an extra camping trip away to Parsley Hay in Derbyshire, which was not featured in the programme. We also had our summer barbeque and disco at the Oadby Golf Club, where LRWG hired the function room for the evening. We ended the month with a trip to Snowdonia and stayed at YHA Swallow Falls with a few members camping. Many of the group climbed Snowdon and some other peaks.

In early October, there was an extra mini break for 1 night which was also not featured in the programme. This consisted of staying at YHA Castleton in Derbyshire, with walks on the Saturday and Sunday.

In late October, a weekend away was planned for a youth hostel in Mankinholes and in November a weekend away was planned for Woody's Top in the Lincolnshire Wolds.

No information about these weekends away was available at the time of writing.

In addition to all the great trips away, we have had lots of social events including a trip to the Space Centre, a number of meals, cinema trips, regular pub meets, night clubs, beer festivals, comedy nights, theatre trips etc. and a Christmas party and disco has been planned for December.

Membership remained stable. I would also like to report that there were four weddings within the group in 2011 in addition to the three weddings in 2010. In all seven cases these were group members getting married to other group members. Congratulations to all concerned.

Further trips away are already in the planning stage for 2012, so it looks like being another exciting year for LRWG.

Karl Piggin

## **LOUGHBOROUGH**

We now have detailed statistics of the walks in the past year, thanks to Malc Burdett: 85 walks covering 1140 km (or 710 mi in the spreadsheet's units) in 8 counties. With an average of 10 walkers, that is roughly enough rambler-strides to take us a quarter of the way round the world. Our most active walkers have been Jane Trevarthen (33 walks totalling 547 km) and John Harper (31 walks, 542 km).

As well as again joining Coalville Ramblers for the annual coach ramble, this time to the Stratford-upon-Avon area, we also joined forces on the coach for a weekend trip to the Isle of Wight, an area new to many. Based in Sandown, with the help of some coach travel the choice of walks covered much of the island.

Although the Soar Feet team only came second in the 2010 Area Quiz, the team has regained the trophy in 2011. The 2011 slide show included walking in Bhutan, Chamonix and Utah (as well as some slides of our own walks over the decades). Our next presentation of members' adventures

will be on Fri 16 Mar, at Charnwood AC Clubhouse; the programme will appear on <http://go.to/lbra> at a later date but will include a talk by Roy Denney on "Up the Khumbu and Kala Pattar (5643m)". Further contributions are welcomed!

For those who would like to join us for the slide show Charnwood AC clubhouse is within Loughborough University and beside the running track. Just tell main gate that you have a meeting in Charnwood AC building and they will give you a pass.

We would like to thank Sarah Puxley, who has stepped down this November after six years on the Committee. During this time she organised five weekends away, a chance to explore a choice of walks in far-flung parts of the country and relax in the evenings. We wish Sarah and Dave all the best for the future in their impending move closer to the hills. We also wish Carol Morris well in her new home in Nottingham, as she steps down after one year on the Committee.

A well-attended AGM saw four new members elected to the Committee. We welcome Jenny Alobaidi, Siva Balaratnam, Rachel Stone and Stuart Tyler and look forward to new ideas. Jenny is also the proud winner of this year's Muddy Boot award for her walk at Gaddesby, in a year that otherwise offered little opportunity for mud.

John Samson

## **COALVILLE**

Throughout the year we maintained a very varied walks programme and also managed to celebrate our 25th Anniversary with a week long walking festival, at the beginning of May that was supported by over 100 people.

In addition to the regular walks the social activities we arranged were:-

Early in the year an event at Lynroys attended by 19 people. A joint venture bus trip to Stratford upon Avon with Loughborough Ramblers was supported by 41 people,; three walks were on offer and these were evenly attended, showing we'd picked the right balance for the day. An evening meal was enjoyed on the return journey.

Our annual weekend trip was to the Isle of Wight where 48 people travelled by coach and 4 others travelled independently. This proved to be a great success, the coach being a winning formula which I hope we can repeat. It was good that Loughborough Ramblers joined us to make the trip viable and we were all able to enjoy each others company in the evenings. We were successful in taking first and second prize in a Sunday night quiz at the local hostelry!

In an effort to publicise the Ramblers we took a stand at the Snibston Gala. The weather wasn't too good and although over 500 visited the stand we are not sure it had a great effect. At least locally it may have upped our profile.

Elaine Easom

## **MELTON**

Our membership currently stands at 165, which is a slight decrease on last year. We are looking into postcode allocations for our area as we believe that we are missing a substantial chunk from our membership. We raised this point directly with Tom Franklin, Ramblers CEO, at the Area AGM, but the point was not fully answered, so we are still actively pursuing this.

There have been no contentious issues with footpaths this year, although we have had two reports of intimidation by farm animals.

The walking programme has been full, with walks of different lengths every weekend throughout the year, various walks during the week, and our popular Wednesday evening short walks during

the summer. We have also organised a couple of night hikes, and a weekend away to the 3 Peaks in Yorkshire which, despite the awful weather on two of the days, was a great success.

Suzanne Elliott

## **AGENDA ITEM** - Possible change to allocation of members

To comply with our own rules we are giving you notice of a possible motion to put to the General Council. Your officers are still researching the depth of this problem and by the time of the AGM will have decided whether to recommend it to you.

Some NG, CV and DE postcodes cover villages in Leicestershire and new members in those areas may not be being allocated to this Area. Concern has also been expressed to us that even within our area the post codes allocated to each group are not giving a logical split and are creating imbalances. Members can elect to change to a group of their choice and should advise our Membership Secretary or London office if they wish to do so. We feel that there should be a more effective way of allocating new members given the computer systems available today.

It is not our intention that any existing members be moved between groups so there would be no dramatic change but the thinking is that if new members are allocated on a better basis then progressively this anomaly will be reduced.

Our suggested motion subject to agreement at our own AGM is :

**The General Council requests the Board of Trustees to review the system of allocating new members to Areas and Groups. It further recommends that in future, if practical, they be allocated to an Area by geographic boundary and not by post codes. General Council further suggests that, with the acknowledgement of their membership, members be advised of the groups in that Area and be invited to elect which, if any, of them they wish to be considered members of. This could be done centrally or by the Area.**

### BACKGROUND

For many years now people have been flagging up this problem which arises all over the country to greater or lesser extent .

At present new members are allocated to groups on an entirely arbitrary basis using their post codes which just relate to where the Post Office chooses to deliver the mail from. In Leicestershire many of the outer areas of the county are allocated post codes from post towns in other counties. This is by no means unique to Leicestershire and it distorts Areas' membership bases. It also means that walkers allocated to groups outside the county will have no channel within the Ramblers to report defects or problems in their vicinity as their groups and Area have relationships with the wrong highways authority.

## **GET WALKING KEEP WALKING**

This successful project which the Ramblers have been rolling out across the country is coming to Leicester.

Get Walking Keep Walking is a project that helps people in big cities do more regular local walking to improve their health and well-being. The project provides free locally based walking programmes combining information and motivation with led walks and other activities.

Projects have been organised in Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Durham, Swindon and several London boroughs.

The project is aimed at people from deprived urban areas who aren't already active enough for good health. It aims to encourage regular independent walking close to home as part of everyday life – not only health and leisure walks but everyday trips on foot, such as to the shops, school or work. It encourages walking for mental well-being as well as physical health.

Activities are run by volunteers as well as staff, including volunteer walking ambassadors – keen walkers who already know the local area. Volunteers are also involved in finding attractive walking routes around the local area, using quiet streets, footpaths, parks and green spaces. These routes are used on led walks and will be publicised more widely so everyone can enjoy them.

The Ramblers successful Get Walking Keeping Walking Programme has spread its wings and will soon take flight in new territory with the launch of GWKW Leicester, in partnership with Leicester City Council.

Following a successful bid for funding from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport fund Leicester Council has tasked the Ramblers with getting Leicester walking, as part of a wider package of measures to improve sustainable travel across the city over the next 3 years.

This new walking scheme will encourage people in Leicester to walk to work. The aim is to embed a culture of walking in the local community, to engage with communities not just to get people active but to keep them active. We look forward to working with employers, community groups and volunteers across Leicester to motivate this change.

People taking part will be encouraged to take up other existing walking opportunities - including walks you might more traditionally associate with the Ramblers. We really look forward to GWKW coming to Leicester and engaging with the wider community to encourage them to get walking and hopefully keep walking with our groups.

To make this scheme work it is probable that a Ramblers employee will be embedded within the City Council over the three years.

It does not end there as the County Council are seeking funding from the same source probably concentrating on the Loughborough and Coalville areas and we again looking to assist with the walking element if it comes off and will be having an input into the bid process

## **AREA QUIZ**

This years quiz was again well supported with 43 members present.

The Area were hosting it having won the competition last year but they were very ably assisted on the night by members of the LRWG.

The 10 teams taking part adopt various names which do not identify the Groups they come from and as such this cannot be described as an inter group event.

Some can be identified including the Loose Women of Leicester who came a very creditable 4th with 113 points out of a possible 200. In third place were Odds and Ends with 124 points. This team included two members of the previous years winning team. 2nd place went to the Long Distance Walkers with 129 but the winners (not for the first time) with 142 points were Soar Feet, a team out of Loughborough Group.

Next years quiz will be hosted by Rutland now that we have decided it is fairer to host it in rotation.

## **LARRY BALL WALK**

The sun shone on the thirty people who turned out for this year's walk. Leicester, Loughborough, LRWG, Hinckley and others were represented.

The route took us from Hallaton past Horninghold to Knob Hill Farm (cats , dogs, ostriches, goats, pigs and alpacas) to Highland Spinney, Blaston and back to Hallaton for lunch. For my money, this is some of the finest scenery in the county, quite equal to the Cotswolds, but without the coaches and the crowds. After lunch, a somewhat smaller party went on up Hare Pie bank to Slawston and Cranoe.

Thanks to Brian Jeffs for leading and to Leicester Group for organizing the walk.



Michael Parr

# **Changes to our Footpath Network since the last edition of Write of Way**

The network continues to change, and again I will attempt to describe the diversion etc. concerned without the use of footpath numbers and grid references.

## **Leicestershire**

### **Market Harborough**

Diversion of the east-west bridleway and north-south footpath to the west of Farndon Road due to a major housing development, Both routes lead quickly to the Northamptonshire county boundary. The bridleway is largely retained as an off-road route with only slight deviation, but the footpath has been largely subsumed into estate roads. However, as some compensation, a perimeter all-weather path gives a longer alternative to the west. It is being constructed on public open space but will not be adopted by LCC because of maintenance and standards issues.

### **Merrylees near Thornton**

Extinguishment of the cross-field path east of Heath Farm because of a quarry extension, and slight changes to the eastern perimeter path. Restoration plans promise landscaping with a pond, but only permissive access at this stage until the final restored landform has been determined.

### **Brooksby**

Minor diversion using farm tracks on the path to Rearsby.

### **Dadlington**

Small diversion to improve privacy of New House Farm on Stapleton Lane – path leads northwards to Sutton Cheney.

### **Little Stretton**

Technical extension of footpath leading past the church towards village street – there has never been an issue here as far as I am aware.

### **Redmile**

Addition of short path in village to north-east of church.

### **Broughton Astley**

Extinguishment of inaccessible disputed route through Sutton Fields Farm, plus clarification of the status of path along farm drive, and slight diversion of the same path further towards Cosby.

### **Barton-in-the-Beans**

Diversion of paths south of village to practicable routes – avoiding at last a long-established stock barn and other less significant encroachments. Also legalising use of farm track to access the footpath south to Carlton, replacing blocked cross-field route. **And, the major gain of the year, extension of the former dead-end route heading south-west to link up with the Leicestershire Round between Carlton and Shackerstone.**

## **Rutland**

Nothing to report.

Stan Warren, Footpaths & Survey Secretary

# **STANDING ORDERS**

These guidelines may be changed from time to time by the decision of the Area Executive Committee but shall form the basis on which we operate within the Area in support of the Constitution.

## **Area Gatherings**

- a) Annual General Meetings – AGMs shall be held in accordance with the prevailing constitution. They will be hosted by each Group in turn on an eight yearly cycle. The host Group shall budget for all costs which they anticipate incurring with the exception of room hire and the actual cost of refreshments both of which will be reimbursed by Area within a budget to be agreed each year. Hosts Groups are invited to put a walk into their walks programme to follow the AGM, subject to their normal arrangements, but if they elect not to do so then Area Officers may elect to lead a walk on that occasion. All other Groups are asked not to arrange any other activity on that day.
- b) Area Quiz – The Annual Quiz will be hosted by each Group in turn on an eight yearly cycle, four years after they last hosted the AGM. The host Group shall make a charge to cover room hire, refreshments and any other costs as Ramblers rules require that social functions be self funding. No travel expenses will be covered.
- c) Area Walk – Once each year, on an eight year cycle, a Group will host a walk within their programme and subject to their normal arrangements. It to be styled “The Larry Ball Walk” in memory of our former President. It is envisaged that they will be joined on the walk by members from other Groups and all Groups are asked to leave this date otherwise free in their walks calendar.
- d) Area Executive Committee Meetings – The AEC will meet in accordance with the constitution, normally 4 or 5 times each year. Area officers shall endeavour to attend and each group is requested to send a representative. Where requested, normal expenses arrangements apply, and will be met from Area funds. Where a group cannot, for any reason, send a representative they are requested to send in a written report of their activities. Groups may change their representatives during the year.
- e) Area Footpath Meetings – These are arranged as required but normally about 8 times each year. Amongst other matters they review all Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) and planning applications having a potential impact on the rights of way network throughout Leicestershire & Rutland. Each Group is asked to nominate a Footpaths Secretary who should, whenever possible, attend and represent their Group at such Area footpath meetings. Any requested reimbursement of expenses by representatives should be budgeted for by their Group.

**In furtherance of the above the following diary is envisaged**

	<b>AGM</b>	<b>Quiz</b>	<b>Larry Ball Walk</b>
2012	Coalville	Rutland	Loughborough
2013	Loughborough	Lutterworth	Hinckley
2014	Hinckley	LRWG	Melton
2015	Melton	Leicester	Rutland
2016	Rutland	Coalville	Lutterworth
2017	Lutterworth	Loughborough	LRWG
2018	LRWG	Hinckley	Leicester
2019	Leicester	Melton	Coalville

## ***DATES FOR YOUR DIARY***

### **Larry Ball Walk**

August 19th

Details to follow but keep your diary free  
and a slot in your own group programme

### **Loughborough Slide Show**

The slide show will be at 19.30 on Fri 16 March  
in Charnwood Athletic Club Building  
on Loughborough University campus.

### **Area Quiz**

Next years Area Quiz will be at Wing Village Hall, LE15 8SA  
Friday October 12th, 7.00 for 7.30  
More details next newsletter.

***The deadlines for future material to go into these twice-yearly newsletters are June 15th and November 15th***