

ANNUAL REPORT OF RAMBLERS CYMRU CARDIFF GROUP FOR 2023-2024

A twice-yearly walks programme booklet continues to be sent out to members. It is clear that our membership values receiving these booklets, which give them a physical reminder of what walks the Group is offering throughout the year. In addition, it was felt that such a booklet was tangible evidence for members may not walk with us of their connection to the Group. Being a group with over around 650 members it is difficult otherwise to ensure that we remain in touch with all our members.

So, once again, many thanks to all the walk leaders who provide the huge variety of walks that provide something for everyone; with walks ranging from four to seventeen miles on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays plus Thursday evening walks in the summer. A selection of these walks are coach trips, so many thanks to Karen Walters who organises these events. These have again proved very successful with the majority once again being sold-out. In April the Group did its first holiday away organised through Ramble Worldwide Holidays: this was a trip to the Scilly Islands to explore five of the islands. We were fortunate that it was under the leadership of Roma Whiteley, one of our own members, as she had to contend with some difficult weather conditions which caused severe travel disruptions both in getting there and in travelling between the islands – she coped with it all magnificently. Thanks also to Roma for organising a very successful back-packing walk along the Mull of Kintyre Way in early May.

The work of putting a programme together has been very much a team effort: thanks must go to Jan Aplin, Leighton Hill, Barry Southwell and Gwyn Lewis who act as co-ordinators and inspire leaders to put forward walks for each programme; thanks also to Andrew Price, the Publications Officer, for putting it all together ready for the printers. Thanks also to Jean Board, our new Membership Secretary, for organising the mail-out and Mike Kohnstamm, Webmaster, for the uploading of the information onto the website and The Ramblers walks' database.

All this has all been done despite the fact that we still lack a Rambles Officer; so we are still on the look-out for someone who is willing to co-ordinate all the work needed to produce a programme, which has at least half-a-dozen walks per week. We held a series of training courses for walk leaders in October and November of last year to show them how to enter their walks directly onto Walks Manager. Nearly all active walk leaders took up the offer and have been directly putting their walks onto Walks Manager making the job of constructing each six-month programme a lot easier for the Publications Officer. Many thanks to Jean Board and Mike Kohnstamm who organised and ran the sessions.

Our Chair, Andrew Price, has stated that he will be standing down from the role at the 2025 AGM so there is also a need for someone to step forward and take up this position. I am sure Andrew will be happy to give advice to anyone thinking about volunteering and there is plenty of training available from The Ramblers as well as help and support from the Committee.

A core aspect of our work is to respond to issues that affect our ability to walk such as problems with the Rights of Way network or developments that affect the enjoyment of walking, such as inappropriate developments. To do that, though, we do need members to report such issues to us. Recently a member reported problems arising from Transport for Wales (TfW) practice of missing out stations if a train was behind schedule, which had caused problems on walks and could deter leaders from incorporating trains into the design of walks. As it is likely to be national problem, we have contacted Ramblers Cymru office and they are taking up the issue with TfW.

Diane Davies