



Rambling and Grumbling

I don't know about you but as I 'mature' I find more things to moan about – perhaps the issues have always been there but I've just been more accepting in the past! Anyway, over the last few months I've found myself doing a lot more walking in the urban areas around Deganwy and Llandudno and I now appreciate even more how low down the priority list walking is in general. I'll just mention three of my annoyances and I'm sure you can add more and perhaps together we can build up an encyclopaedia of irritations.

First I have an issue relating to the difficulty of negotiating the section of the Wales Coast Path between Deganwy and West Shore in Llandudno where the path has disappeared either because of collapse or sand inundation. Conwy Council has decided that this brilliant tourist attraction is too expensive to reinstate because they have created an alternative 'Active Travel' route alongside the main road with its heavy traffic. Be

that as it may (and that is a grumble in itself) but as I walk home uphill from Llandudno using this dual use path I find that cyclists coming downhill towards me are very reluctant indeed to slow down to pass me. The other day, walking with my wife Monica, we were confronted by a speeding cyclist who clearly thought we should get out of her way even though there was plenty of room for her to pass – she was heading straight towards me!! It was only as she sped past me did we realise that there was another cyclist coming uphill from behind us and all four of us ended up abreast on the path. Could she not have braked?

Secondly, my next moan also relates to pavement walking in town (and here I'm not just going to upset the cyclists amongst you but also those of you who are dog owners) but most dogs seem to want to keep possession of the inside edge near any undergrowth where undoubtedly all the best smells are. I don't blame the dogs for wanting to

maximize their enjoyment of their outing but I do object to those owners who, with dog lead extended, expect me to step into the road and face the oncoming traffic because they are not willing to take closer control of their pet. Get a grip dog owners!

Finally, and this is now becoming a pavement thing, I am truly amazed at the number of vehicles that are parked well onto the pavement leaving very little room for me to pass – I appreciate even more now the problem that arises for parents with pushchairs and wheelchair users. The strange thing is that many of these (mainly cars) are parked on pavements where there is absolutely no need as the roads are wide enough for normal roadside parking. I shall certainly be supporting any initiative to ban parking on pavements.

There, now I've got that off my chest I can go for a walk!!!!

Denis McAteer

UPDATE: the public right of way that runs along the top of the sand dunes from Trinity Crescent, West Shore, Llandudno, and continues by running along the side of the Conwy Estuary some 500 metres further along, is currently being upgraded. It will be widened, given a hard surface in all but the actual sand dune section. Once finished, it will become the new route of the Wales Coast Path.

The former route was notorious for getting covered in sand; not surprising as the path had been cut through the lower sections of the dunes, rather than below them, and the dunes were constantly reclaiming that land. The decision to abandon that route was made easier because it was never officially put on the map nor made a public right of way.

Kevin Slattery



The photo (© Denis McAteer) shows part of the original west shore path, overtaken by the sand dunes.

Chairman's Report

THE 2019/20 year has been quite different for the Ramblers. We have had countryside lockdowns before, because of Foot and Mouth disease. The difference then was that when the lockdown ended things returned to normal almost immediately. This has not happened with the current emergency.

As with the Foot and Mouth lockdown certain occupiers tried to close rights of way across their property. By and large though the North Wales county councils resisted these closures. The decision to close all the car parks and footpaths in the Clwydian Hills and Dee Valley AONB was I believe an over-reaction. Whilst closing the "Honey Pot" car parks was probably correct the closure of the paths was not necessary and actually did not work. Walkers simply parked elsewhere to access the paths. The Offa's Dyke Path was officially closed and the numbers attempting to walk it was greatly reduced. The Coast Path was

not completely closed. Some of the car parks were closed but this did not have the effect of reducing usage. In fact the number of walkers increased as the Coast Path became very popular with families and dog walkers.

The surprise effect though was the increase in use of the paths in and around communities. Local residents who were furloughed and had children to entertain explored their local rights of way. This had two effects. The first was that more problems were identified and reported to the county councils. The second is that the more popular footpaths "look after themselves". Heavy use by walkers tends to keep the paths clearer of vegetation.

The easing of the conditions in July meant that the Groups could restart their programmes. The published North Wales Walks Programme has been suspended since March. Groups have been planning walks on a short term basis and advertised via their Websites and through

Social Media. This has shown that such methods can work. The problem is that many members do not get the full information or get it late.

Guidance was issued by Ramblers Cymru on how to operate under the new conditions. The basic differences is that under Welsh Government rules leaders have had to carry out a risk assessment and keep a record with contact details (for possible track and trace) of participants.

I would like to thank all the Group members who have kept their walks programmes going under the conditions. Throughout this period Groups and Committee members have been kept fully informed of the changing conditions by our Secretary. In particular I would like to thank our Secretary, Joanna, who has worked extremely hard. She has questioned and clarified the rules and made sure that all Groups were fully informed.

Ron Williams

Footpath Notes

Lixwm path claim

THIS path, west of Lixwm (Llithyr) village, was claimed as a bridleway by Ysceifiog community council. Although evidence was given by equestrian users at the public inquiry the inspector decided that the evidence was only sufficient to support a footpath designation.

The decision to confirm the order with modifications meant that it had to be readvertised, and we understand that some further representations have been made to the planning inspectorate. We don't know what they are at this stage but there will have to be a further decision by the inspector in due course to finalise the case. And so we wait. *RW*

Deganwy level crossing

Network Rail (NR) doesn't give up easily! After its appeal to the High Court was turned down by a High Court judge last July, NR lodged papers in the Court of Appeal in August, again with a view to overturning the decision of the public inquiry Inspector issued in July 2019.

Those of you with long memories may recall that the Inspector decided that there was a public footpath across the Llandudno branch line at the foot of

Pentywyn Rd, and it had been there since the railway was constructed in the 1850s.

If NR fails to convince the Court of Appeal with its legal arguments we may in time get back a very useful crossing of benefit to both local walkers and visitors. Meanwhile Conwy Council has a temporary closure order in place preventing use of the level crossing.

The level crossing was closed to the public by NR in 2011, so you can see why you need to take a long view when working these path cases.

No doubt in these Covid times it is taking much longer than usual for the Court of Appeal to process applications. As we go to press we learn that the NR application will be referred to an Appeal judge on 4 December, so keep your fingers crossed!

Don't Lose Your Way

This project, previously known as **Lost Ways**, is moving forward at a national (England & Wales) level, albeit slowly. Volunteers have examined historic maps online and identified routes which might be claimable as public paths, including those marked by Ordnance Survey as "FP" or "BR" on the old maps.

Detailed results have not yet been released but the estimate is that over

49,000 miles of paths are not properly recorded as public. For locations in north Wales you can put in a postcode and get a result for your county. This provides the following estimates in miles:

Ynys Môn	183
Gwynedd	1342
Conwy	411
Denbighshire	270
Flintshire	125
Wrexham	158
Total	2489

What you have to remember is that each and every case tentatively identified by the national exercise will need detailed research to find supporting documentation. A path being marked "FP" on an old map is not enough on its own. And if there is no supporting historic documentation, the local people who previously used a path around 1900 are no longer around to give their personal testimony. There may be better luck on documents with bridleways and old roads no longer used as such.

Welsh Government is still expected to do away with the 2026 cut-off for recording historic paths. But even if/when that happens, we still need to do our best to get historic public paths recorded as such and put on the map. *PB*

Secretary's Report

IN a year many of us will want to forget we need to look for positives and walking has definitely been one. Both personally as a way to keep fit and healthy and also in terms of the increase in people walking and appreciating their local areas especially during the long lock-down.

Having a charity that protects places to walk and promotes walking is all the more important now. The reduction in group walks this year has been unavoidable and we thank you for keeping your membership to support the important work Ramblers do, there will be lots more walks to look forward to.

There may be less group walks but our walk leaders past, current and future are an important asset as are our footpath volunteers and all the officers who work behind the scenes.

Free **Training courses**. Surprisingly a few of these did manage to take place face to face but socially distanced. A full programme is being prepared for next year so we keep our fingers crossed as they are a real bonus for members wanting to learn new skills or brush up on old ones. Training can sometimes be tailored to needs so let us know if you or your group have any particular requests.

For a current list visit our Area website, the national Ramblers' website (click on Wales) or contact your Ramblers Group.

There was a report of the January AGM in the last newsletter. Details of the **next AGM** on Saturday 9th January 2021 are on the back page

The **Welsh council** did not take place this year and details for 2021 had not been announced when this was written. The General(UK) Council was arranged as a brief formality in September to meet the requirement of charity law. A small closed meeting was streamed online, voting took place by proxy. All motions were remitted to the trustees.

The 2021 **General Council** will be a single day event in Birmingham on Saturday 6 March 2021.

The **Big Welsh Walk** was another cancellation. It would be great to see this take place at Chirk in Spring 2021. However a lot of work and publicity goes into the event so we have to be fairly certain it will be able to take place before finalising details.

Similarly we cannot begin to produce another **Combined Walk Programme** (CWP) until walks can take place with fewer restrictions and changes.

Amongst all the worries about the economy and health issues I worry that we could lose sight of the importance of looking after our planet and everything we share it with. A 'green recovery' which Ramblers have joined many other organisations in calling for would be one where

economic recovery plans are linked to protecting the natural world and tackling climate change. Developing green energy, energy saving improvements to homes and industries and greener transport(including walking) can all play a part. We can put health and well-being first by increasing space for wildlife and people's access to it.

In Wales next year we have **Senedd elections** and Ramblers Cymru have produced a Welsh manifesto "*Walking Our Way to Recovery*" to help walkers get their voices heard. It calls on the next Welsh Government to put walking at the heart of communities and at the centre of recovery from the pandemic. You can look at it on the Wales part of the national Website

I have continued to update the **Area website**. The walks listing, which normally updates automatically once loaded, has involved more work from the Programme Secretaries who have had to deal with cancellations through the year as rules have changed. Thank you all for managing those.

I would welcome a volunteer to take on our webpage and would be happy work with anyone interested in maintaining it.

Joanna Slattery
Area Secretary

Offa's Dyke Path

The Offa's Dyke Path National Trail will celebrate its **50th Anniversary** in 2021, and Ramblers Cymru is working with Visit Wales and Natural Resources Wales to plan a triple celebration.

Over three consecutive weekends, **26-27 June, 3-4 July and 10-11 July 2021**, we'll be holding celebratory walks for people of all ages and abilities. It's in the early planning stages, but save the dates, and keep an eye out for more information.

The Offa's Dyke Association Centre should be open to the public again, with a new exhibition and the Offa's Dyke Living History Festival in Knighton.

BOATs, ORPAs, Vehicles

On any OS Explorer map you may see a series of **green dots** (or **red dots** on Landranger maps). These dots mark "**Other Routes with Public Access**" which are minor highways maintainable by the local authority. These routes often have a long history and are usually unmetalled. Before the advent of the green/red dots they were often called "**white roads**" and it wasn't clear from the map whether there were any public rights to use them. Whether these old routes have any public rights for vehicles is less clear: the council's records only prove that there is a responsibility to maintain.

BOATs are Byways Open to All Traffic, which motor vehicles are allowed to use. However, BOATs can still get damaged and become difficult to use. We hear reports that abuse of BOATs and ORPAs by recreational 4x4 vehicles and trail bikes in and around the National Park is on the increase.

What can be done?

Ramblers, with others, are researching routes in one community to see whether some ORPAs could be added to the Definitive Map as footpaths or bridleways, which would give some protection. For BOATs it is possible (as for some Peak District routes) that a Traffic Regulation Order could be imposed limiting vehicular use.

If you are concerned about vehicular abuse of a BOAT, ORPA or indeed a footpath or bridleway, email brief details to me using the '**newsletter**' address on the back page. Please bear in mind however that this is a difficult area and detailed research is always needed, which takes time. Don't expect instant solutions.

Pete Bland (Editor)

Link to latest Ramblers advice and guidance :

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/coronavirus/volunteering.aspx>

Link to current Ramblers' insurance arrangements for organised activities:

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/support-and-development/volunteer-toolkits-alphabetically-sorted/insurance.aspx>

Snowdonia Developments

THERE have been some recent developments that will be of interest to members with the possibility of getting involved in one of them. It was on 12 March (just managed to get it in before lockdown) that I represented Ramblers Cymru at a consultation day at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch conducted by Martin Higgitt Associates on behalf of the Yr Wyddfa Partnership (Snowdon Partnership). The consultation was entitled "Issues, Ideas & Visioning" and was concerned with transport and parking in the Snowdon and Ogwen areas – and bear in mind that this was before the chaotic scenes that we saw as visitors returned to Snowdonia after the lockdown was eased. The report of the consultants can be seen at <https://snowdonpartnership.co.uk/projects>

It recommends developing a Sustainable Tourism Approach to reduce the environmental impact of visitors on the protected landscape, at the same time as reducing the problems and increasing the benefits of tourism to communities and the local economy. It is hoped to improve the visitor experience and enable a more diverse range of visitors to enjoy the area. If the ideas are realised it will have similar features to those that exist in some Alpine areas such as Austria but will require substantial capital and revenue financing to get off the ground.

The other development that I would like to draw your attention to is the Carneddau Landscape Partnership

which is developing "a scheme that will help promote a positive future for the Carneddau by increasing understanding and enjoyment of its history, cultural traditions and wildlife. It will conserve the area's heritage by promoting sustainable farming that protects rare habitats, species and archaeological remains, and by recording place names and memories." The project is worth over £4million to be spent over the next 5 years and aims:

- To protect rare habitats and species, nationally important archaeological remains and distinctive landscape features.
- To keep the traditions, knowledge, and place names of the landscape alive.

North Wales Area membership at 30 September 2020

Group	Life	Annual	Annual Concession	Total	Payment pending
Clwydian	9	120	32	161	4
Conwy Valley	8	184	43	235	13
Ynys Mon	4	113	23	140	6
Wrexham	5	64	28	97	3
Meirionnydd	4	79	32	115	4
Berwyn	5	33	10	48	-
Vale of Clwyd	2	108	42	152	3
Deeside	-	75	16	91	11
Eryri	5	145	43	193	1
96	1	19	-	20	3
98 (unattached)	-	2	0	2	-
99 (Affiliated Clubs)	-	(5)		(5)	(1)
Area Total	43	942	269	1254	48

THE Total numbers listed are for Active Members. Payment Pending Members are shown in the last column. Affiliated Clubs numbers are not included in the Area Totals. I haven't included Joint/Joint Concession numbers this year because these are not currently available in the new Insight Hub Summary Dashboard Tables

The National RA Membership on October 1st 2020 was 101,811 as compared with 102,038 for October 1st 2019 and with 102,515 for October 1st 2018. So there has been a 0.2% reduction nationally over the last twelve months compared with a 5.2% reduction in North Wales Area membership. Note these figures refer to total membership numbers, not active membership numbers. The active membership on 30Sep2020 was 98,717: in other words there were 3,798 payment pending members (3.7%) nationally compared with 48/1302 for North Wales

also 3.7%.

As from 1st August 2020, the Monthly Membership Update Reports and Active Members by Area Reports ceased being sent out to the Area and Local Membership Secretaries. Instead, Secretaries will now have to download Reports from the Membership Secretaries Dashboard on the Ramblers Insight Hub.

This new system is working fine as I write in October 2020. However I have had to remove the Joint Membership columns from the Table above. Actually the Joint Membership has been an anomaly for some years, ever since joint members became recorded individually. They are still recorded as individual or joint on the Full Membership Lists but the Membership Concession Status is not given in these lists.

The feature of most significance this year is of course the Coronavirus Pandemic which has curtailed the activities

of all the Ramblers' Groups. The Welsh Area Council Meeting on 21-22 March was cancelled. Also the Area Council has been unable to meet in person since 1 February 2020!

The New Membership Secretaries Dashboard has nine different lists at present:

1. Member Summary (includes the Summary Dashboard which has National Information)
2. New Members
3. Movers & Leavers
4. Member Changes
5. Full List
6. Contact Lists
7. Walk Register non-members
8. Updater List
9. Affiliated Clubs

The Membership Secretaries Dashboard is only accessible to Group Membership Secretaries and the lists provided mainly refer to their particular Group. If anybody wants more information about the working of the Insight Hub please let me know.

As Group 96 doesn't have a Membership Secretary, I suspect, as Area Membership secretary, I'm the only person in North Wales who will be able to access the Group 96 data.

So far, I have had no adverse reports regarding the new ways of communicating with London. If anyone has any queries regarding any membership issues do please let me know,

Neville Fernley
Area Membership Secretary

Snowdonia Developments

- To promote sustainable land use practices.
- To help as broad an audience as possible to discover, record, conserve and celebrate the Carneddau through events, activities, training, new interpretation and better access.
- To maintain the overall number of visitors within sustainable levels.

Becca Roberts of the Partnership is happy to talk to Groups about their work and members may wish to help with issues such as tree planting or the creation of the 65km low level path around the Carneddau. See more at

<https://www.snowdonia.gov.wales/looking-after/carneddau-partnership>

Denis McAteer

Area Treasurer's Report 2020

Income

Our income for the year was £12,458 made up from Central office grants of £12,200, advertising sales of £70, publication sales of £66 (Ron's book produced on behalf of the area) and two miscellaneous payments, £25 from Bagillt Historical society for talk given by Ron Williams and £97 from Clwydian group, a repayment for a newsletter invoice. (£122 in total)

Expenditure

Our total expenditure for the year was £8,437.12. The one walks programme and the two newsletters produced accounts for £4,089 of that spend. £3,489 was paid in group grants, £370 for meetings and admin and £488 on footpath work.

Summary

Obviously, not a normal year due to the

Covid effect, and this has meant we have underspent our budget by a sizeable amount. This underspend will be rebalanced next year to bring our reserves back to a normal level by requesting a smaller grant from HQ than we would normally have.

Financially the area remains in a healthy position. We ended the year with an available balance of £12,887.46, which excludes the £1,145 in the Watt's Dyke Way account.

Thank you to the group treasurers, who throughout the year pay the bills/expenses and keep the vital records to enable the groups and area to function. We are a charity and as such are subject to the various laws relating to charities and keeping accurate records of what we do with our funds is important.

Jeff Nagle
Area Treasurer

Ramblers Association - North Wales Area					
Year ending 30th September 2020					
Receipts and Payments at					
Receipts	2019/20	2018/19	Payments	2019/20	2018/19
Balance at 1st Oct 2019	10012.34				
Central Office	12,200.00	13,400.00	Groups Grants	3,489.00	3,672.00
			Walks Programme	2,919.86	5,015.56
			Newsletters/Publicity	1,169.43	390.00
Publication Sales	66.00	158.40	Book Sale Expenses	-	-
Advertising Sales	70.00	210.00	Footpaths	487.93	476.10
Miscellaneous Income	122.00		Countryside Protection	-	36.00
			Access	-	124.38
			Meetings (inc AGM)	344.00	901.61
			Admin	26.90	1.50
			Flexi Groups		
			Watts Dyke Way		54.42
Total Receipts	22,470.34	13,768.40	Total Payments	8,437.12	10,671.57
Surplus(+)/deficit(-)	14,033.22	3,096.83			
Bank reconciliation					
	2019/20	2018/19			
B/Fwd 1 Oct 2019	10,012.34	6,915.51			
Surplus(+)/deficit(-)	14,033.22	3,096.83			
Watt's Dyke Way	- 1,145.76	- 1,145.76			
Available Bal at 30 Sept	12,887.46	8,866.58			
Bank balance at 30th Sept		10012.34			
Signed:	Honorary Treasurer: Jeff Nagle				
Signed:	Independent Examiner: Martin Hughes				
Date:	Address:				

Navigation training

*Navigation Skills Training – Level 3
Facilitator: Martin Bevan*

On Friday 18 September 2020, seven of us attended an interesting Navigation Level 3 course at Plas y Brenin organised by Ramblers Cymru. It was a brilliant sunny day and Martin Bevan is a good instructor.

Martin assessed the group thoroughly, accurately assessing individual capabilities and tailored the training to the needs of the group. This was useful to the group as we easily related to the practical information for us to use as walk leaders.

We revised the basics of map reading and compass use.

To keep in mind the four 'D's'. Distance, Direction, Description and Danger. What each of these entailed and to practically use them throughout the day.

We picked up tips to measure and time our steps to aid navigation in fog - the group found we did 60 - 67 steps per 100m taking around 1min 15 seconds on the flat.

For mountain paths we were advised to use 1.5 minutes / 100m (4 kilometres/hour) or rough stuff to use 2 minutes / 100m (3 kilometres/hour).

We also learnt about boxing, dog legs, aiming high and finding points in fog using compass points and circling, by which time we were all flagging!

The training was enjoyable, interesting but more importantly useful.

We would recommend anyone who walks, to attend any Navigational Training Session offered by the Ramblers.

Thank you to the Ramblers Association for giving the opportunity to learn or enhance skills for the outdoors.

A year ago we attended a first aid course organised by the Ramblers through St John's Ambulance. We found this a well organised, interesting and invaluable Course for enhancing practical and useful knowledge.

*Jo-Anne & Roy Milnes
Eryri Ramblers*

I can still remember the sense of achievement the first time I navigated a route in thick mist using map and compass. Despite GPS such skills are still essential. Your map and compass don't need batteries! Ed.

Eryri walk leader of the year



It's the time of year when the great and good win awards.

Rachel Plaxton has been the Eryri Group's star walk leader this year. Her famous **Short Walks** have probably attracted more ramblers than any other leader in North Wales.

This has given our Ramblers and friends the healthy benefits of enjoying the great outdoors in wonderful scenery—and perhaps boosted the profits of

Canolfan Fron!

There are Emmy's, BAFTA's and Oscars – well in Eryri Group they have **WALTERS!****

Rachel was appointed Eryri walk leader of the year 2020 and presented with her trophy at Canolfan Fron on Sat 21 November, as the photo shows.

** Someone will have to explain this to the Editor

Ramblers Manifesto— Walking Our Way to Recovery

The **2021 Senedd elections** are an opportunity for walkers to get their voices heard by political parties in Wales.

As a result of the COVID restrictions, many people are discovering a new appreciation of the paths and green spaces on their doorsteps, of the benefits walking brings to their health and wellbeing, and of the enjoyment of to be had by being close to nature.

Ramblers have set out a manifesto which calls on the next Welsh government to put walking at the heart of communities and at the centre of the nation's recovery from the pandemic. We would like to see a Wales where:

- Walking is at the heart of communities
- Good quality paths and routes connect us to our friends and family, to nature, and our local heritage
- Green spaces that make our communities a healthy, attractive place to live, work, and volunteer

- More people improve their health and wellbeing by walking
- Walking routes are available for local people and visitors to enjoy
- People have a better understanding how to protect and respect the places we walk

You can download a full copy of the Manifesto from the Ramblers website (click on "Wales" at the top of the page).

Denis McAteer reports that Ramblers submitted evidence to the Senedd Climate Change Environment and Rural Affairs Committee considering the draft National Development Plan for the next 20 years, called **Future Wales**. This has resulted in the committee making a recommendation as follows:

Recommendation 9. Future Wales should recognise the public rights of way network and access to common land as national assets.

The final version of Future Wales is due to be published in Feb 2021.

Proposed

Rural Museum

Conwy Council is currently considering a planning application (o/47490) for a rural museum to be situated at Mynydd Bodrochwyn, about 2 kms north east of Llanfair Talhaiarn (SH 939 720). It appears that the owner, Mr Frost, has been collecting carriages and horse-related items for quite some time and now wants to expand and invite visitors.

Encouraging such rural enterprise is on the face of it a laudable aim and it looks like the planning officers would like to grant consent for the museum. There are problems however.

In the first place the whole of the site is **registered common land**, which means that even if planning consent is granted the owner would still need the consent of the Welsh Ministers and would most likely have to offer equivalent land in the locality to replace the common on which he wants to build. This was only pointed out after Open Spaces Society got involved. The council's own Common Land officer was not originally consulted about the application.

In the second place **public footpath No 37 runs right across the proposed site** of the museum and this path would have to be legally diverted in order for the development to proceed.

Ramblers and OSS have objected and the application now goes to committee.

Do you get emails from Ramblers?

If "Yes" then thank you: the rest of this article does not apply to you.

If "No" then please take a few minutes to continue reading this.

In this time of frequent rule changes it becomes more important to get information out to Ramblers members in an efficient and quick manner. Walks are planned, changed and cancelled at short notice, and so electronic methods of communication have come to the fore. If you want to be kept in touch with what is happening in your Group, it helps if you have registered your email address with Ramblers via the main website.

At present only a relatively low percentage of Ramblers members have registered their email address as part of their membership, which is a shame. There are options you can choose to opt out of emails which would be of no interest to you, so registering your address won't result in you getting "spam".

No emails?

If you do **not** currently receive any emails from Ramblers then either you are not registered or your email address has changed and you didn't get around to updating it.

To register

From your PC/Laptop/Tablet etc. Using your usual web browser, search to find the main Ramblers website. It is this one:

www.ramblers.org.uk

Click on this site and look for "Sign up" at the top of the black area, click on this and it will take you to "**My Ramblers Account**" with a sign up button, click on this and fill in your details and preferences.

You are registered but are not receiving emails

On the main Ramblers home page you will see "Log in" near the top. After entering your email address and password click on "My Account" at the top of the black section. About half way down the page on the left hand side is "Update Profile". Click on this and it will show your personal details. One of the fields will be your email address. If this is no longer your current address that is why you are not receiving emails. It is not possible to change the email address here, you need to contact by email

support@ramblers.zendesk.com

—this is also the address to use if you have problems getting logged in.

In the last couple of years Ramblers have been updating and changing some of their internal computer systems so if you experience problems, you won't be the first! The editor had problems getting logged in a couple of months ago, but it was solved after an exchange with the support team.

Useful contacts

Below is a list of the main contacts for Groups and Area, in the absence of the details in the Walks Programme. If you need to get in touch with somebody else, check the website(s) or contact the Area Secretary. If you want to write a letter to the Area Sec, the address is; Joanna Slattery, 15 Vicarage Avenue, Llandudno LL30 1PS

Group / Officer	Contact	email	Telephone
Berwyn:	Dave Collins	info@berwynra.org.uk	01978 852741
Clwydian:	Shirley Fermor	clwydianrambler@hotmail.co.uk	01352 753901
Conwy Valley:	Kevin Slattery	chair@conwyvalleyra.org.uk	01492 874563
Eryri:	Jo-Anne Milnes	eryriramblers@gmail.com	
Deeside:	Kathleen Morris	kathleen_morris3@hotmail.com	01244 813211
Meirionnydd:	Andrea Whittaker	secretary@meirionnyddramblers.org.uk	01341 430249
Vale of Clwyd:	Janet Hinton	hintz123@hotmail.co.uk	01745 856224
Wrexham:	Anne Cooper	anthonycooper945@gmail.com	01978 312515
Ynys Môn:	Dave Melling	dgmelling@btinternet.com	01248 812987
Area Secretary	Joanna Slattery	secretary@ramblernorthwales.org.uk	01492 874563
Area Chair	Ron Williams	chair@ramblersnorthwales.org.uk	01352 715723
Area Footpath Sec	Ron Williams	footpathsecretary@ramblersnorthwales.org.uk	01352 715723

Why I joined the Ramblers

Dear Fellow Ramblers,

I love walking. When I was growing up, my two brothers and I always looked forward to the weekend, especially Sundays as Sundays meant Wanderlust, meant Rucksacks and Wuerstchen, Gurken and Kartoffelsalat. And best of all it meant exploring. Usually without maps. Usually ending up amongst nettles in the undergrowth, usually with surprises along the way.

When I left home, I always made sure I'd explore my new surrounds, mainly by bike (*I am a German flatlander*) later on more often on foot, especially whilst living in a city, then on the coast and now in the hills. I like to take my surrounds in, 'sniff the roses'. There are two things I love most about rambling.

First, rambling makes me keenly aware of the natural world around me. I home in on the beauty of the landscape, the seasonal changes and frequently ask myself, how can I invest in the environment that serves me, or better yet, leave it undisturbed? The second thing I love about rambling is the way it lights up my senses. I love the fresh air when I hike out, feel the sun and the wind or the rain on my face. I love the aroma of wild garlic in the woods, the warm golden fields on a summer's day, the feel of bouncy



moss amongst the autumn leaves and I am excited like a child when my chosen country of Wales is covered in snow.

Whatever draws you to rambling, we can agree on one thing: We all do better when we stride out, clear our minds or walk and talk with a friend by our side. I believe everybody - regardless of age, gender, background, a city dweller or a country egg like myself should have the

freedom to enjoy the Welsh outdoors on foot and benefit from the unique experience. No matter where we live or where we come from - we all deserve local green spaces. We all win when new ramblers join as it will make us healthier and happier humans.

For the love of rambling

Karin Bruns

Photo: A young Karin enjoying the countryside

Area AGM

The next AGM on **Saturday 9th January 2021** will have to take place online **using Zoom**. We apologise to anyone that this excludes, but social distancing rules makes it impossible to hold a safe indoor meeting of 50 or so people. If you are interested but don't use computers please try to find another Ramblers member or family member who you can join with and take part. It will be possible to join the Zoom AGM by phone (audio-only) but depending on your phone contract you may be charged.

The meeting will start at 2.00 pm but please log in anytime from 1.45 pm so that we are ready for 2 pm. Following the business we will have a speaker- Alan Austin from Powys Area who will talk about "Strengthening connections within Ramblers to deliver our aims"

To take part in the AGM please email the secretary (*address at foot of page*) and I will send a link at the start of the new year. An agenda, minutes of the last AGM and a list of officers and nominations will also be available on the Area website later in the year. Please send me in writing (e-mail) any motions for discussion at the meeting and nominations so that I can post them on the website.

Nominations can also be taken on the day and are for Area Officers; General Council delegates (2) and Welsh Council delegates (4 but please try to fill your Group delegate first).



This path on the north side of Moel Arthur was down to a foot wide, with gorse encroaching. After clearance by Dave Allison and his son it is now 2 metres wide and allows walkers to pass each other with 'social distancing'. (Photo: D Allison)