



ramblers
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Derbyshire Area News

Annual Report 2015



Welcome to Derbyshire Area News

In this issue:

2015 Annual Reports

Walking in Access Land

The Big Pathwatch

Amber Valley Footpath working Group

Walking for Health in Amber Valley

The Centenary Way

Take a Walk in the Park

Members of Amber Valley and Erewash Footpath Volunteer teams

Picture: Keith Shiers

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AREA AGM

SATURDAY JANUARY 16th 2016

at 2:00 pm

DARLEY DALE METHODIST CHURCH HALL,

DARLEY DALE, MATLOCK

DERBYSHIRE, DE4 2FS

SPEAKER: SARAH FOWLER

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE PDNPA

There will be a short walk (approx. 4 miles) in the morning starting from the Church Hall car park (SK273630) at 10:00 am

The hall will be available from 12 noon until 4pm. There will be tea, coffee and biscuits supplied, people to bring their own lunch.

Sarah will speak before the start of procedures.

Sarah was appointed as Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority in December 2014. Prior to that she was a senior official in the Environment Agency (EA), latterly heading their national Field Services team with responsibility for flood risk management. Before that, she had been Area Manager for EA in the East Midlands and then their Midlands Director. Earlier posts included working for the RSPB and for English Nature. On appointment to the PDNPA, Sarah said she was looking forward to hearing from those who live in, work in, and visit the PDNP for their views on how, together, we can continue to care for the National Park.

Getting there

Travelling from Derby, follow the A6 to pass through Belper and Matlock into Darley Dale. The Methodist Church Hall is on the left hand side of the road just past the Whitworth Institute. There is ample free parking.

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Note from the Editor

This is the new format that provides notification of the Ramblers Derbyshire Area Annual General meeting and associated reports. Please retain this copy and bring it as your reference document at the AGM.

There are a number of key positions that will become vacant at the AGM. Therefore, Included in this issue is a heartfelt plea for more of our members to get involved.

We are entering a difficult time with drastic cuts to RoW resources already announced. It is tragic that after 80 years of hard fought battles to protect RoW and the countryside much is under threat. It is essential that Ramblers continue to meet its charitable objectives in every way possible

Cover Picture

A departure from the usual Cover Picture. As it is Amber Valley's turn to be featured on the front cover this edition, I thought it worthwhile to feature another aspect of Ramblers work. The picture shows members of the Amber Valley footpath volunteers following installation of steps and a wicket gate as stile replacement. The site is on the boundary between Amber Valley and Erewash and was a joint effort between the two Groups' footpath volunteers.

Derbyshire Area Ramblers needs YOU Area Council Vacancies

Quite simply, this is a plea for more of our **members to take an active role in the work of the Area administration**. In 2016 a number of key posts will become vacant and if not filled, **may consequently lead to the collapse of the Area organisation and ultimately, our four Derbyshire Groups**.

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The Area is the primary source of campaigning efforts in support of the national organisation. It is the main communication channel and coordinating body for the activities of the Derbyshire Groups and manages the funding of all activities within the Area. The Area Council has three meetings a year as well as the AGM, from which there is opportunity to become involved in a variety of associated tasks. The work is interesting and flexible in that, to a great extent, the member decides when and how much to do. Training is also available to help develop any necessary skills associated with the tasks. As well as attending the meetings, Members of the Area Council may also serve on other bodies, such as local access forums, in promoting the cause of the walking community. It is then, an opportunity to meet new people, learn more about Ramblers and the wider walking environment and get involved in new and exciting projects that will help forge future walking links.

The key posts that will require filling together with a short description are:

Area Chair;

Is responsible for ensuring that the committee has a clear sense of direction and purpose and that this coincides with Ramblers strategy. The role includes developing agendas for meetings, planning the AGM, facilitating meetings and acting as spokesperson speaking with Groups in the Area and liaising with Ramblers' Board members.

Area Secretary:

Ensures the Area Council runs effectively through good administration and supports the Chair. The role includes oversight of Area activities, acting as contact between Area and the Ramblers Board, Chief Executive and Central Office and for queries from members, potential members and other organisations. Makes arrangements for Area Council meetings and in conjunction with Group Chairs, Area AGM and Area get together. Arrange reports for Area Council meetings, annual report and articles for Area News.

Ramblers is more than just a Walking Club, it has a proud record of working on behalf of all walkers in protecting and enhancing our precious rights of way and countryside. By becoming involved you will allow this work to continue and is a chance to 'put something back' in return for the pleasure we get in walking our beautiful countryside. So, if you have only **thought** about joining a dedicated team in supporting the Area functions, maybe 2016 is the year for **you** to do something about it. If you are interested in getting involved in this work then please ask your local Group Chairman for some more information or contact Martin Pape.



Ramblers Derbyshire Area

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 17th January 2015

at Strutts Community Centre, Belper at 2.00 p.m.

There were 24 attendees. The meeting was chaired by Gerry White Amber Valley Group who welcomed members and Andy Rogers a Board of Trustee member and our guest speaker.

The following members were remembered, having passed away since our last meeting:- John Riddall – Derbyshire Dales Chairman Nick Stephens paid tribute to John for the outstanding work he had carried out on behalf of Ramblers and the many other organisations he supported. Three members of Erewash Group were remembered – Bill Roys, Philip James and Brian Ainsworth.

1. Apologies for Absence: These were received from John Beadle, Mike Hufton and Sue Weatherley.

2. President's Remarks

Unfortunately our President John Beadle was unable to attend today's meeting.

Martin Pape read out a letter received from John expressing his regret that due to his illness he felt unable to continue as our President, a position he had held since the 1970's.

3. Minutes of the 18th January 2014 AGM and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2014 AGM were approved. This was moved by Keith Shiers and seconded by Bob Lewin.

No matters arising.

4. Annual Report and Financial Statement

The Annual Report and Financial Statement had been circulated previously and copies were available at the meeting.

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Martin Pape summarised the Financial Statement which had been examined by Roger Torr, and explained that there was a slight error in the Financial Statement. The Summary should have read:-

There was a **modest surplus of £105** (2013 - £114 deficit).

A question arose from the floor regarding “Restricted Funds”.

Martin Pape explained that these arose from the assets passed over to us by Derbyshire Footpath Preservation Society and were to be used for projects aligned with footpath preservation work. We are currently considering a grant (subject to conditions) for reinstating a historic pathway from Winster to Birchover.

Derek Roome added that the Centenary Way from Ilkeston to Ashbourne was a DFPS route and Ramblers Groups are committed to maintain it. Martin Pape – This has been under discussion at Area Council where it was agreed to re-walk and update if necessary then add to Ramblers` Routes.

David Davison moved that the Annual Report and Financial Statement be approved and this was seconded by Chris Vaughan.

5. Appointment of Honorary Area Officers

President: To be discussed at Area Council

Vice Presidents: Joy Osborne and Tony Beardsley.

Chairman – No nominations so as agreed at previous AGM’s to be rotated round the Groups on an annual basis. Gerry White appealed to members as he said this is not an ideal situation.

Secretary: Martin Pape – Martin gave notice that this will be his final year.

Countryside Secretary – Vacant

Footpath Initiative: Basil Merry of Chesterfield and NE Derbyshire is acting as co-ordinator for Groups in and around Derbyshire.

Publicity – Vacant. Keith Shiers volunteered to take on this task.

All other officers being willing to stand for re-election and there being no further nominations, the Area Council will be as follows:-

Vice Presidents: Joy Osborne and Tony Beardsley

Chairman: Groups in rotation – 2015 Derby & South Derbyshire

Secretary : Martin Pape

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Minutes Secretary: Carol Shiers

Membership Secretary: Chris Vaughan

Treasurer: Mike Hufton

Access Officer: Sue Weatherley

Area News Editor and Publicity: Keith Shiers

Web-site Manager: Chris Vaughan

6. Election of representatives of individual members

John Dyson was re-elected.

Derek Roome asked if representatives of individual members and affiliated local organisations could be combined. Martin Pape answered that it would require an alteration to our constitution so was best left as it was. John Dyson was asked who it was that he represented at Area Council and answered that it was individual members any of whom could contact him. (John is also a Ramblers member and member of an affiliated club).

7. Election of representatives of affiliated local organisations

Derek Roome was re-elected. (Subject to Derby Nomads re-affiliation).

8. Appointment of representatives to General Council

Ange Dunlop and Carol Shiers. Keith Shiers to attend as an observer

9. Appointment of Independent Examiner to the Accounts

Roger Torr

10. Motions, recommendations to the Area Council or any Group motions for submission to the next General Council of the Ramblers

There had been no notice of motions or recommendations to the Area Council or any Group and there was no proposed motion for submission to the Ramblers' 2015 General Council.

This had been discussed at Area Council and there were concerns aired on the discussion document proposals for a new Governance Structure for Ramblers. It was understood that other Areas may have put forward a motion on this topic so on this basis Martin Pape was tasked with writing a letter to the Ramblers Chair.

11. Any other business

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The Chairman asked attendees whether there were any matter they wished to raise.

Nick Stephens asked on protocol regarding Area Get-together – organising walk leaders.

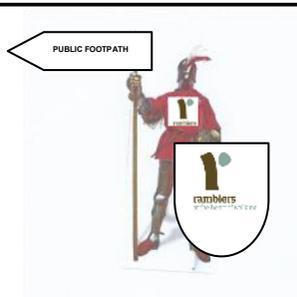
Martin Pape – If each group supplied a walk leader it might then encourage members of that group to attend the Area event.

There were no other matters raised.

Martin thanked Gerry for arranging and chairing the meeting and the morning walk.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm.

Date of 2016 AGM organised by Derbyshire Dales Group to be advised.



PLEASE HELP!

YOUR FOOTPATHS NEED YOU

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Become a local Footpath Warden for your Group and monitor their state

Join a footpath working party with your Group and help maintain the footpaths

Research old maps for your Group—remember the **2026** cut off date for claims

Report any problem you find to: eteprow@derbyshire.gov.uk

Area Secretary's Report

Martin Pape

During year October 2014 to September 2015 we held three Area Council meetings. Our Area AGM was in January 2015 in Belper, organised by Amber Valley Group and chaired by Gerry White. Tributes were paid to John Riddall, Bill Roys, Philip James and Brian Ainsworth. We were saddened to note that John Beadle, our Area President, was not standing for re-appointment as his health was deteriorating - John had been Area President since 1974, an impressive 41 years. We had no volunteers for the posts of Area Chair, Area Footpath Secretary and Area Countryside Secretary, limiting what our Area can do on these important topics. However it was noted and appreciated that Basil Merry is covering much of the work of an Area Footpath Secretary having taken on the role of "Ramblers Footpath Coordinator for Derbyshire". There were no proposals of motions for the 2015 Ramblers General Council but I was tasked with writing a letter to the Ramblers Chair expressing concerns about proposals for a new governance structure for the Ramblers - these are being reconsidered but one member / one vote for election of Trustees is likely to be introduced. Our guest speaker was Andy Rogers, a members of the Ramblers' Board of Trustees and co-founder of Ramblers' walking groups for younger members.

In March 2015 Martin Osborne informed me that his mother Joy could no longer contribute as an Area Vice-President as she had suffered a stroke which had left her partially disabled. Joy and her late husband Arthur had been key figures in Derbyshire Ramblers for decades.

Apart from the AGM, our other significant Area event was the Area-Get-Together in October 2014 which was in the Stanley area and was organised by Tony Beardsley and the Erewash Group. In good weather around 60 members enjoyed the walks.

We have two members on Local Access Forums – Sue Weatherley on the Peak Park LAF and Geof Cole on the Derby & Derbyshire LAF. Three members attended Ramblers' 2015 General Council in Cambridge as delegates from our Area.

You will see elsewhere in this newsletter that there will be vacancy for the post of Area Secretary at our next Area AGM in January 2016. I am standing down having done the job for nine years as, without an Area Chair for most of this period, I feel that I have only been able to "hold the fort". I hope that a new regime heading our Area Council will be better able to pursue some of the initiatives emanating from Ramblers' Central Office, and be more successful in gaining acceptance from our Groups of the role of the Area Council and in increasing their involvement with it. My thanks to those members who have contributed to Area activities and who have helped me during my time as Area Secretary. Thanks also to those many walkers who support the Ramblers through their membership of the association.

Area Access Officer's Report

Sue Weatherly

I continue to attend the quarterly meetings of the Peak District Local Access Forum and also meetings of the two sub-groups dealing with Access and Green Lanes.

Off-roading continues to be an important topic. In the summer a Traffic Regulation Order came into force on Leys Lane in Great Longstone, this prohibits the use of this route by motor vehicles. In September the Peak District National Park decided to go ahead with the next stage of consultation on placing a Traffic Regulation Order on Washgates. This is a route many Derbyshire walkers will know, it crosses the River Dove above Hollinsclough and its use by vehicles has been problematic for a long time. When the consultation process begins, in the next few months, it will be very controversial and anyone who knows about the route and cares about the area should respond to the consultation and make their views known.

Recently the Green Lanes Sub Group have begun to look at the condition of priority routes in Cheshire

Following on from the 10th anniversary of the introduction of Access Land last year the National Park has established an Access Fund. This Fund is ring-fenced to be used on work to improve and extend access to Access Land and during the first year various fund raising events have been held and work has been carried out to put in place additional access points on Callow Bank near Stanage.

Many walkers will have seen the effects of the work of Moors For The Future on the regeneration of habitat on the moors of Kinder Scout and Bleaklow. This wonderful work will continue for the next five years. MoorLIFE 2020, a new project with a value of approx £13 million to conserve priority habitat across the South Pennine Moorlands between Edale and Skipton, has been awarded the biggest grant the European Commission have given to a UK conservation project. The work is co-financed by 3 water companies and delivered by the National Park Authority and Pennine Prospects, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the National Trust. More information is at www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/moorlife.

Sue Weatherley, Area Access Officer



To: Members of The Ramblers' Association
Derbyshire Area

TREASURER'S REPORT
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

I present overleaf the accounts for the Group for the year ended 30 September 2015.

Basis of Preparation

Income and expenditure are recorded in most cases on a cash basis. Expenses paid to Committee members in respect of costs incurred in performing their duties relate primarily to the year in which they are paid.

Summary

There was a net deficit for the year of £860 (2014: £105 surplus)
The Area's General Reserves stand at £1,933.

The Area's expenditure exceeded funding from Central Office by £1,079, partially offset by advertising revenue and bank interest of £219. The deficit was planned, to reduce the level of General reserves held.

During the year only one Area News publication was produced (distributed to members by the Group's in their programme mailings), compared to two in previous years. The move to an 'annual' News reduced printing costs by £737, partly offset by £60 lower advertising receipts.

Income

Total Area funding received from Central Office was £3,200 (2014: £4,186), of which £3,170 (2014: £2,680) was for the Groups, and £30 (2014: £1,506) for Area purposes. Revenue for advertising in the Area News generated £205 (2014: £265). Interest received on the bank account amounted to £14 (2014: £14).

Expenditure

Funding payments to the Derbyshire Groups amounted to £3,170 (2014: £2,680), reflecting higher requests for central funding (2014 benefited from utilisation of Group's own reserves).

Area administration costs totalled £1,109 (2014: £1,660). Of this, £707 (2014: £1,444) relates to the production of the Area News distributed to members. The balance of £402 (2014: £236) covers AGM, Council and Footpath meetings, and attendance at General Council.

There was no expenditure in the year from the restricted reserves (2014: nil).

Balance Sheet

The Area's funds at 30 September 2015 total £13,165 held as Unity Bank deposits.

The reserves comprise general reserves of £1,933, and £11,232 designated reserves (received from the Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society in 2011 on the closure of this organisation in particular for the purpose of maintaining the Centenary Way).

Mike Hutton - Area Treasurer

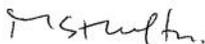
RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION - DERBYSHIRE AREA
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th SEPTEMBER 2015

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

2014		2015	
£	<i>INCOME</i>	£	£
	Head Office funding		
1,506	Area	30	
2,680	Group	3,170	
265	Advertising revenue	205	
14	Bank account interest	14	
<u>4,465</u>	TOTAL INCOME		<u>3419</u>
	<i>EXPENDITURE</i>		
2,680	Group funding		3,170
	Administration Expenses:		
23	Room Hire: AGM and Council meetings	56	
	Room Hire: Footpath meetings	120	
	Area Get-together	44	
149	General Council attendance	85	
	PDGLA	15	
1,444	Area News	707	
56	Postage, stationary, other admin	62	
8	Sundry	20	
1,680	Subtotal administration expenses		1,109
<u>4,360</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>4,279</u>
<u>105</u>	NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME		<u>(860)</u>

BALANCE SHEET

	<i>AREA FUNDS</i>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Total</u>
13,920	Balance as at 1st October 2014	11,232	2,793	14,025
105	Surplus / (deficit) for the year	-	(860)	(860)
<u>14,025</u>	Balance as at 30th September 2015	<u>11,232</u>	<u>1,933</u>	<u>13,165</u>
	<i>Represented by:</i>			
14,035	Unity Bank Account			13,165
(10)	Accruals			
<u>14,025</u>				<u>13,165</u>



M S Hufton - Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Statement

Having carried out procedures in accordance with the Area and Group independent examination guidelines, I consider the Derbyshire Area accounts to give a fair representation of the Area's financial activities for the year to 30 September 2015.



R Torr - Independent Examiner

Registered Charity No. 1093577
 Company limited by guarantee 4458492



Rambler's General Council 2015

Ange Dunlop	Delegate
Carol Shiers	Delegate
Keith Shiers	Visitor

The General Council this year was held at Robinson College, Cambridge, a modern campus in the heart of Cambridge. Our thanks go to all who were involved in our stay, both college and Rambler's staff and also Cambridgeshire and Peterborough volunteers who were our hosts.

The first session commenced with the usual Agenda Committee report and appeals, Annual Report and Accounts followed by the Election of officers. Benedict Southworth (Chief Exec.) then gave his review of the year.

For the second session we split into groups for a discussion on governance consultation. There appeared to be mixed views on this but it was felt that more time was needed for discussion with the membership. This was then reported back to plenary.

Instead of the customary speaker we were treated to Kate Ashbrook in conversation with Dame Fiona Reynolds, one time Director General of the National Trust and Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. An extremely interesting hour where Dame Fiona's love of the outdoors shone through.

The evening comprised of various fringe meetings but I chose the Big Pathwatch, an initiative sponsored by Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust, due to be rolled out in June. The aim is to survey all paths (RoW) in England and Wales, highlighting any problems encountered by means of a free downloaded App for smart phones. This should make it easy to upload responses during a walk (providing you have a smart phone). Paper surveys may also be available, uploading data to the website later. Previous initiatives have involved walking the path network but not reported on problems encountered, which in this exercise hopes to highlight problem Councils with related funding cuts.

Sunday, down to business with the Candidate hustings. As one of the Trustees had stepped down, an additional candidate was hurriedly found, leading to five vacancies for the Board of Trustees. Those duly elected were Mike Church, Moira Fraser, Jeremy Kenyon (3 year terms) Terry Moore (2 years) and Roy Hunt (1 year).

Motions to General Council – There was only one contentious motion this year which was a change to articles to allow "one member one vote". After much discussion and an informal vote this motion was withdrawn. As much time had been taken discussing this item and various amendments the remaining motions were speedily dealt with, with the final two being remitted.

As usual, an interesting experience, with the opportunity to mix and exchange views with other area members and staff.

A concise report on Conference can be viewed on Ramblers Website.

Carol Shiers

Group Reports

Amber Valley

Annual Report for the Amber Valley Group of the Ramblers' Association for the year ending October,2015

Group Committee

President and Footpath Secretary	John Morrissey
Vice President	Dick Hall
Chairman	Gerry White
Vice Chairman and Membership	Keith Howkins
Secretary	Christine Levasseur
Treasurer	Mike Hufton
Webmaster	David Davison
Away Week ends Organiser	Sue Glithero
Programme Co-ordinator	John Topliss
Programme Publisher	Martin Phillips
Footpath Maintenance leader	Michael Poyser
Social Programme	Peter Swan

Membership of the Group has increased to 213 at the time of writing.

The Committee met twice during the year in May and September. In addition Gerry White and David Davison represented Amber Valley at Area Council meetings on three occasions as well as the Area General Meeting in January.

The above two also represented the Group in helping launch the Amber Valley and Erewash Festival of Autumn walks programme which took place in September, leading 3 well attended walks. John Morrissey has also been involved with the Derwent Valley Mills project, leading informative historical walks on their Discovery Days.

Our own Walks Programme has been issued twice and we are grateful for those who have led walks. Sundays have averaged about 15 per walk, Wednesdays with its 7 mile distance about 20 people, whilst the Friday 4.5 mile option has proved consistently popular with between 20-30 in attendance. In addition David Davison, on the Group's behalf, has established contact with the various Walking for Health groups in Amber Valley and further information can be seen on our website. The Group hosted the recent Area Get together which attracted about 70 walkers. The walks started at

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Alport Heights with lunch in the admirable Alderwasley Village Hall. Thanks to AVR Members who led the various walks and Shirley and David Davison for looking after catering arrangements.

We enjoyed slide shows and talks on 3 Friday winter evenings including talks given by our own members on their adventures along the Cotswold Way and in Ecuador.

The Annual Dinner, again organised by Dick Hall was held in February at the Chevin Golf Club, Duffield and we held the traditional Midsummer meal in June at the Family Tree cafe in Whatstandwell, preceded by some with a short walk.

Again this year the Footpath Maintenance team, led by Michael Poyser under the overall supervision of Steve Cresswell, Volunteer Co-ordinator of Derbyshire County Council, should be congratulated on their effort in all weathers on projects around Amber Valley. These have included sites in Belper, Heanor, Mercaston, Farnah Green and Lower Hartshay, including work on the infamous Depth of Lumb. At a time when the Council are laying plans to curtail their activities in this area, this work is to be commended.

Away trips have been thoroughly enjoyed on 2 occasions this year. We had a 4 night break in Wooler, Northumbria which proved very popular and also a week end in Helmsley, North Yorkshire.

We have been very indebted to Sue Glithero for her time and energy in putting these breaks together for us in recent years. However Sue, who as we all know is still recovering from her serious accident and we wish her well, said some time ago that she wished to relinquish these duties.

So we are again appealing for someone from our membership of over 200 to step forward and take over these activities and join the Committee. Unless we have someone in place shortly it will mean that our intended visit to Grasmere in May of 2016 ,will be our final trip away.

Plenty of support is always available to anyone wanting to volunteer for this post.

Gerry White
Chairman

Derbyshire Dales

Our Group is still providing a good, varied selection of up to 9 walks per week. Membership remains reasonably stable although as time marches on, we need to be encouraging new younger members to replace those falling off their perches. I point out to those people who say that U3A is better value, that it is the Ramblers that do all the hard work in keeping our footpaths open. We owe our thanks to the 'Footpath Fixers', who are doing a great job maintaining our local footpaths. Amongst the organisers and volunteer helpers are our own Dave Pearson and Dave Selkirk (instigator of the FF's).

In memory of our past Chairman/President Ken Hammond, 4 years have been spent trying to find a suitable location to erect a memorial plate. At long last, a sturdy bench was erected alongside the Cromford Canal right opposite the Leawood Pumping Station. Since Ken had been an engineer, this was considered a very suitable location and would be on view in a location popular with our own members. On 2nd August a gathering of 25 Derbyshire Dales Group members attended the official opening ceremony, with current President Frank Ogden cutting the tape and all members drinking a toast. A photo and article appeared in the local press. Whilst unable to attend the ceremony, Ken's daughter Alison has visited the bench and gives it her full approval.

Our Programme Secretary Kath Cartlidge works hard to produce our walks programme in what we consider to be the best possible format/layout for a printed copy and being available on our own website. However, to upload our walks onto the Ramblers' Group walks system has meant retyping in all the walk details. I have taken over this tedious task from our web site manager George Wolfe but I am looking into ways of getting the procedure automated. Any advice/assistance in this matter would be gratefully received.

Our Friday night social events were becoming poorly attended resulting in financial losses. It was decided to move the event to a new venue and a new time of Friday afternoon (since most members didn't like venturing out on dark nights). This has proved very successful with attendances more than doubling. We are continuing with interesting and illustrated talks.

We are looking for a volunteer for the Footprints Editor position. Our current editor, Paul Greenfield, is standing down after our AGM.

Nick Stephens.
Chairman

Erewash

There were a lot of new faces on the committee table at the recent AGM. At their first AGM were Royce Drew (Secretary), Michael Throup (Treasurer), Sylvia Reid (Membership), Sara Ashmead (Footpath & Minutes Secretary) and Robert Mee (Webmaster). All were thrown in at the deep end but responded well.

I can report on another year of very good attendances on all our walks. Mondays especially saw some days with large numbers of walkers (40 +). Also the short walks on Wednesday were seeing greater numbers.

We have had some memorable trips by coach in the last year. Our day trip to Skip-ton was enjoyed by all even though it was about the windiest day of the year and we almost got blown off Sharp Haw. Our holiday trips were to Eastbourne and Gilsland in the Hadrian's Wall area. Both attracted full coaches and were efficiently organised by Margaret Chapman.

We have held all our usual social functions at the West Hallam Village Hall and they have been well attended.

Sara Ashmead is getting to grips with the footpath work now. She has been busy extending our network of footpath wardens. The Big Path Watch results are being sorted through by our footpath wardens so we can assist DCC in prioritising problems. Sara is also hoping to attend the Area footpath secretary's meetings.

Our volunteering section is continuing with Keith Shiers working with Steve Creswell in organising working parties to clear undergrowth and repair footpath furniture.

We led walks in the Autumn Footprints walking Festival. Brian Marshall led all our walks in this and also many of our short Wednesday walks plus his normal programme walks.

On the publicity side we have a revamped Web-Site provided by Robert Mee and our Publicity Secretary Alan Brown has provided us with a Facebook page which I am told gets many "Likes".

Our new membership secretary Sylvia Reid tells me that our membership figures on September 30th stood at 239 our largest membership ever.

Our financial situation is satisfactory and is being watched over well by our new Treasurer Mike Throup.

Tony Beardsley,
Chairman

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Area Get Together 2015

*David Davison
Amber valley Group*

The 2015 Area Get Together was held on Sunday 18 October and hosted by the Amber Valley Group. A visitor to the event was Jeremy Kenyon, our 'local' member of the Board of Trustees.

Well over seventy people gathered on a cold and murky morning, on both of the National Trust's car parks at Alport Height. Normally, on a clear day, the Wrekin in Shropshire is just visible from this vantage point but not today, we couldn't even see the tops of the communication masts that dominate these heights.

At ten o'clock the three leaders set off in different directions, leading walks of 6 ½ miles, 9 miles and 10 plus, all with the aim of arriving at the restored St. Margaret's Chapel, in Alderwasley, which now serves as the village hall. By twelve thirty all three groups had arrived, settling into their lunch break and were supping the tea and coffee provided by Amber Valley, the hosts for this year.

The magnificently appointed hall, was just big enough, providing a real get together atmosphere, for all to sit and enjoy a chat with members of the other groups, some even venturing outside where clearing weather provided good views over the A6 corridor. One by one the walk leaders gathered their charges around them, leaving the hall to complete their routes, the last ones arriving back at the car park sometime around four.

Our thanks to Amber Valley for organising the event, to all of the walk leaders and to the refreshment team. A magnificent effort, enjoyed by all.

Editor,

Area Get Together 2016

The Area Get Together for 2016 will be organised by the Derby and South Derbyshire Group.

Provisional date is 16 October 2016

All details will be confirmed and publicised on individual Group websites.

Derbyshire Rights of Way

Basil Merry
Derbyshire Footpath Coordinator

In 2014 all the Ramblers Groups in Derbyshire started working closer together to protect and improve the rights of way in Derbyshire and Derby City.

The objective was to ensure that the Groups, which are in 3 different Ramblers Areas, co-operated in dealings with the councils to best effect. It proved to be a timely step.

During 2015 the need to speak with one voice has become more apparent. As we all know, councils are under financial pressure and the maintenance of rights of way is no exception.

If things were in order to start with, the impact may have been less. But sadly, both councils are not up to date in definitive maps and statements, the processing of legal orders, and path maintenance.

New ways of working need to be introduced and this could mean an increased role for parish councils, and other volunteers. Difficult times are ahead in any case.

But it's not all bad news. The Ramblers Derbyshire Rights of Way Committee (RDROWC) has asked DCC to protect the woodlands and green spaces they own by dedicating them for public use in perpetuity. We have obtained a commitment that all greenways that do not presently have public right of way status, will be given that protection. We understand that a Derbyshire Walking Strategy should be in the next Improvement Plan, some years after the already agreed Derbyshire Cycling Strategy.

RDROWC will continue to press councils to see walking as an essential component and the most cost effective tool in improving public health. Through tourism it also benefits the local economy.

Good paths will be needed more than ever and that's our objective.

Please get involved in helping us to achieve that by helping to monitor, maintain, and improve your local rights of way. Contact your Group Footpath Secretary and see how you can make a difference.

The Big Pathwatch

Jeremy Kenyon

Member, Board of Trustees

Jeremy is a member of the Sheffield 40s Walking Group and was elected to the Board of Trustees at the Ramblers 2015 General Council. He writes:

“As I ploughed through waist high grass in a boggy meadow towards a broken stile, with no vestige of path in sight, failing light and several miles to go, I did wonder why I was doing Pathwatch—but the question gave the answer—our path network needs us.

Pathwatch is a great way to fill those spare hours you have... you get fit, clear your head and do something useful, all at the same time. It is also curiously addictive—just remember to take your secateurs—you will probably need them.

Having surveyed about a hundred of the OS 1 Km squares, mostly in Derbyshire, I have walked places I would never have been otherwise. They vary hugely—from unusual buildings, quiet valleys and great views in unexpected places—to disastrous stiles and non-existent paths—all of it interesting.

I have learnt so much about my local area—and as I chat with most walkers I meet, I have realised how much things are getting worse in some places—they always have tales to tell about old paths that are gone, or paths they can no longer walk

As we are running out of time, Ramblers have identified a set of ‘priority’ sample squares that we are asking people to arrange their survey walks around. Usually there will be one near you and you can do a few adjacent squares at the same time. There is a map showing the priority squares at : <https://bigpathwatch.ramblers.org.uk/map-of-sample-squares>. Note, you cannot adopt squares here.”

When you read this, the Ramblers’ ambitious initiative to involve the public in trying to walk every public footpath in England and Wales will have almost run its course, it finishes at the end of December. It has had a mixed reception in Derbyshire with some Groups opting not to be involved with organised Pathwatch activities whilst others have gone further and started using the information from the results to feed into volunteer footpath work party schedules. What is clear though, is that it has touched the imagination of the public in that about 70% of Pathwatch had been done by non-members, a positive result on which to build.

Editor

Adventures in Access Land

*Sue Weatherley
Area Access Officer*

This year a new access point has been put in to improve access on Callow Bank. This is a stretch of moorland between Stanage and Higgarr Tor. There is a footbridge marked on the map at GR 253821, close to this a new stile has been put in to allow access across Callow Bank and on to the road below Stanage where you can go directly up on to the edge.

This work has been paid for by Access Fund which was set up by the Peak Park last year to mark the tenth anniversary of Access Land.

An access point that is not new but which I have only just discovered makes for a nice variation on walks in the Wildboarclough area. If you set off from the car park at Clough House (GR 987699) and walk up Cumberland Brook you will come to a path junction at GR 998699. At this point bear right on the main track and in a short distance you will see a stile in a fence across the river at GR 998697. You reach this by crossing the, by now very small, brook. There is no real path but it is not difficult. Once over the fence there are marker signs and the route takes you over Wood Moss, which gives good views on a clear day, to reach the A54 at GR999687. At this point you can cross straight over the road on to the next section of Access Land or go a few yards along the road to the lane which goes down towards Gradbach. If you go on to the next section of moorland this crosses Cut-thorn Hill. There are more good views from the top but then the ground drops steeply to Three Shires Heads. The best way down is to follow the easiest slope as it curves round to the north and then work your way down to the bridle path and so to Three Shires Heads.

For your safety when out walking

Dark nights: wear something bright

See and be seen

Carry a torch and use it

The Centenary Way

Keith Shiers
Area Council Member

The Centenary Way is a Derbyshire cross country route starting at Ilkeston and continuing over public footpaths to Ashbourne. It was devised to commemorate the centenary of the Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society that was founded in 1894 and is featured on the OS map. Sadly, with declining membership and insufficient officers to support the society it was finally disbanded in 2011. However, the route lives on and as a condition of a legacy the society kindly gifted to Derbyshire Area Ramblers, they are now responsible for monitoring its upkeep. This is achieved and agreed by each Group undertaking an annual survey to check the section of route passing through their area, that includes Erewash, Amber Valley and Derbyshire Dales.

In 2012 a complete survey of the route was undertaken to identify any access problems and ensure the route description in the booklet was still valid. It was felt that republishing the booklet would be too expensive, be of limited value and that more up to date means of promoting the route should be utilised, hence this action was a precursor to loading the route onto the Ramblers Route website. A further survey to assess material and work content to implement any access improvements was completed in 2015. This survey identified a number of issues and also areas where access could be improved that includes cutting back areas of overgrowth, replacing stiles with wicket gates, installing waymark posts and improving way marking and extending an area of boardwalk. It is proposed that the work be undertaken by a team of members of the various Group footpath volunteers. A work plan has been generated for the Area Council to consider and once approved, hopefully the work will start in February 2016. On completion, the route will provide a fitting tribute to the memory of an organisation that helped preserve the footpaths we enjoy today.

Thank you to the individuals from each Group who spent time surveying the route, also to members of the Derbyshire County Council Rights of Way team David Jenkinson, Lynn Taylor and to Volunteer Co-ordinator Steve Cresswell, for their help and support in addressing the issues identified in the surveys.

Amber Valley Ramblers Footpath Working Group

*Peter Ward
Amber Valley Group*

The Amber Valley Ramblers Footpaths Working Group came into being at a time when the Ramblers were promoting the formation of these groups as Local Authority budgets came under pressure and changes to Natural England's budgets and manpower were happening. An initial meeting was held where interested volunteers met Steve Cresswell who was to be the invaluable enabler on behalf of Derbyshire County Council. Also present was Keith Shiers bringing his knowledge and experience of running the Erewash group, readers may recall his writings on the subject in previous issues. Further to the encouragement of the Erewash Group an early opportunity was made to accompany them on one of their assignments to observe them at work.

Michael Poyser the leader of the Amber Valley Footpaths Working Group was now in a position to undertake work in the field and with Steve Cresswell to guide the volunteers. A section of path on the Cromford Canal near Ripley was cleared of overhanging and fallen trees, brush and vegetation and a flight of stone steps leading down to the path was virtually dug out of many years of accumulated earth.

On a monthly basis, the group has continued and Michael received a letter from Codnor Council thanking the Group for their efforts clearing up a flooded path, a job which began with the path being made accessible by cutting back hedging and vegetation before bringing in barrows of stone to make a walkable surface and finally removing litter and old mattresses as the unusable path had been used as a dumping ground. The monthly assignments are communicated to the volunteers by email from Michael with Steve Cresswell preparing the details and practical support. Usually for each work day there will have been several site visits and meetings between Michael and Steve accompanied sometimes by colleagues from the Council.

A work day begins on site at 09.45 for 10am and usually finishes around 1pm. Volunteers come attired as they would for gardening or walking with Steve providing hard hats and eye protection for them. Steve's role is invaluable to the functioning of the group as he attends to liaison with the landowner the paperwork for the council including a map of the work area location among many other details which are emailed by Michael to the volunteers. On the work day Steve brings the necessary tools and materials such as bow saws, shears, loppers, spades and wood and stone chip-pings.

Readers who are interested in forming or joining a footpaths working group will hopefully find this short account gives an idea what is involved. The rewards of seeing a

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path come back into use are immense and it only takes an obstruction such as a decayed stile or steep embankment needing steps to deter users from a section of path which then becomes overgrown and neglected. Undertaking this work is interesting as it shows what goes on behind the scenes, as it were, to provide the walkable paths we enjoy. Brief monthly accounts of work undertaken by Amber Valley Group can be seen on ambervalleyramblers.org.uk



Above, work on a steep section of path at Hearnor



A gate erected to replace a stile and steps on the steep banks in a joint Amber Valley and Erewash project. The landowner came and spent some time with us as we worked.

Below, Steve checking out earth steps on Erewash side, the Amber Valley side was stone chipped and can be seen below the Landrover in the background.



Take a Walk in the Park

Keith Shiers

Although a Derbian, I am the first to admit that the city is not the prettiest of places having been ravaged by developers and visionless city planners over the recent past. Despite this, one is able to escape the dreary carbuncles and step out and be, within minutes, enjoying the fresh air in any of the parks that surround the city. And that is the key, they are easily accessible; they are free and a myriad of routes can be entertained that provide short, lovers strolls or deep thinking marathons depending on the mood. There is flower and fauna to enjoy and lots of history to contemplate.

As a child, I well remember walks with my parents that took in the likes of Chaddesden Park (it had a paddling pool back then, since filled in), Alvaston Park with its lake that on a Sunday was filled with model sailing yachts as tall as me; there were regular excursions across the Racecourse under the railway onto Chester Green and thence to Darley Fields (the Roman fort of Derwentio has been regularly excavated here). Sometimes we would catch the rowing boat ferry to cross the River Derwent to Darley Park (the ferry long since gone like the fare of one old penny) or continue onto Darley Village and chance the Toll Booth at the mills. Darley Park was a particular favourite with the obligatory visit to the superb greenhouse displays (Percy Thrower of TV fame was once a gardener here) and if a Sunday, listen to the bands that once played in the now defunct bandstand, sometimes with a diversion through Derwent Park. There were sojourns to Markeaton Park where there were often more magnificent flower displays and at Easter, as with Darley Park, the rowing boats were opened for hire, whilst on high days and holidays we would venture to Allestree Park and view the menagerie at the Hall. On family visits we would also enjoy Markeaton Rec. or The Arboretum, the country's first municipal park, with its proud archway declaring the event and a menagerie plus a central fish pond to add interest.

Today, the parks are still there fulfilling the vision for which they were created, fresh air, relaxation and enjoyment. Though probably not maintained to the standards of yesteryear, they are at least more accessible. Derby City Council provides a number of circular walks that take in some of the parks and can be downloaded from their website. They vary in length from about 3 miles to just over 5 miles and also in terrain though none could be considered strenuous. Of course, there is also the Arthur Osborne & Keith Walkerdine Memorial Walk that runs for 6 miles from Derby Cathedral to Markeaton Park, Allestree Park and Duffield. Next time you are at a loose end, take a walk in the park reflect on the forethought of our forebears and enjoy the experience.

Bennerley Viaduct

*Philip Robinson
Amber Valley Group*

One Saturday recently I was 60ft above the Erewash Valley shoveling ballast from the track bed of the Bennerley Viaduct. I had joined a work party organized by Sustrans who hope to bring the viaduct back into use. Sustrans is the charity that has created many miles of cycling and walking tracks across the country, a local example is the Nutbrook trail.

Bennerley viaduct is unusual insofar as it is constructed of wrought iron and is one of only two examples surviving in the country. It is approximately 500 yards long, 60 ft high and runs from the east of Ilkeston towards Giltbrook. Sustrans hopes to use it as a cycle and pedestrian trail across the valley which should link in with the Great Northern Greenway which is being developed by Derbyshire County Council (the section from Breadsall to Lime Lane is already open). When complete this should make a spectacular addition to local routes. The viaduct is not open at the moment but good views can be obtained from the A6096 near Awsworth and from a footpath which passes underneath the western end.

I hope that if possible you will support this project, it has the possibility of opening up new areas for us. You can find more information on <http://bennerleyviaduct.org.uk/>.



Bennerley Viaduct

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Walking for Health in Amber Valley

*Peter Ward
Amber Valley*

The Belper Walking for Health Group has been running for some years now over which time this initiative has gone from pillar to post as government whims and budgets have shifted. However, now it involves the Ramblers and so this article gives an



Amber Valley Group July 2015

insight as to how things currently are running and some possibilities for the future. Across our area there are quite a number of such groups and a look at the Amber Valley Ramblers website shows ones in the Amber Valley area. This is a facility for them to communicate their wares, for example, the Belper Group has a quarterly programme on its listing and short accounts of walks undertaken giving new and intending members an idea as to what to expect and for existing members, a memory chest of past walking days throughout the seasons of the year.

Currently, lip service is paid to encouraging walking as one of the important lifestyle choices. Not much is said further except the news media is always full of a who's who of celebrities purporting to go to gyms as part of their fashionable lifestyle. Readers will be well aware of the pleasures of walking and for the Ramblers, as an organization, they have potentially been handed fresh membership in quantity if they can appeal to the needs of these groups. Originally under Natural England, the groups were formed for doing small walks many being fairly unappealing because of adhering to dictates that walks must be "flat" or "not involve stiles" . However, the format soon matured and a range of walks offered, the lengthier ones being equal to those offered by the Ramblers. Just as the Ramblers like to associate, the Walking for Health groups like to do the same with everyone enjoying the company as well as the landscape, nature, and fresh air.



Walking around Crich
June 2015

Group Contacts

For up to date information on who to contact then visit:

www.derbyshireramblers.org.uk

www.ambervalleyramblers.org.uk

www.derbyramblers.org.uk

www.derbyshiredalesramblers.org.uk

www.erewashramblers.org.uk

My Contact Details Form

If you already carry one, please ensure the details are up to date.

Importantly, always carry it with you—it will help others help you if the need arises.

If you haven't got one, contact your Group Secretary for details.

Ramblers Holidays Partnership

Your Group can benefit from direct financial support from Ramblers Holidays through The Walking Partnership; register your Group at: www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk. The company makes a payment to the Group of £10 per UK holiday, £20 per European holiday, and £40 for long haul bookings if a member nominates the Group when booking holidays.

This does not cost the individual anything – all it needs is a mention of the Group, which is recorded on the booking documents. The nomination must be made before the holiday is actually taken.

The Chesterfield Group has, in the current financial year, received £400 from Ramblers Holidays in respect of members who have nominated the Group when booking holidays. All funds are put to good use such as foot-path improvements.

Derbyshire Area News—Annual Report 2015

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of Area News. My thanks too to the advertisers who have given unstinting support that has gone some way to cover the cost of publication. The next issue will be delivered in December 2016 — if there is something missing from **your** Area News - think! If you don't report it, we don't print it!

Can you ensure that items for the 2016 edition of Area News, including Annual Reports, reach me by:

Sunday 22nd October 2016 please.

email: keithshiers1@gmail.com



Which just leaves us now to wish all our members a Happy Christmas and Good Walking in the New Year



And don't forget the AGM!



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