

tavistock ramblers



newsletter

Message from the Chair

Thank you to everyone who is contributing to our walks programme. We've enjoyed a varied programme of winter walks and now that the evenings are getting lighter and with signs of spring, we're looking forward to our summer walks programme.

Our Committee has met twice since the AGM. We've welcomed Jane Brookes to our Committee following her election at the AGM and are delighted that Janet Harvey has agreed to join our Committee as well. Jane and Janet will be joining our Walks Programme Team and supporting with other activities such as social events.

Our membership continues to be strong with a steady stream of new members. It's wonderful to see so many new faces on our walks, quickly blending in to our friendly group.

Our summer programme this year will be special, with memories of the summer of 2003 - twenty years ago. Remarkably, some of the walk leaders from then still lead walks today. Many are still group members. We'll be paying tribute to them this summer by retracing some of their walks as part of our summer programme.

We also have other special events to look forward to including our St Ives holiday and a very special celebration, led by Long John, to celebrate the coronation.

My main priority as Chair is to ensure our walks programme continues to offer three walks most weeks plus evening walks on some Thursdays during the summer.

The walks programme needs to continue to be varied to accommodate the different needs of our members. Now that the pandemic is behind us, we are revisiting our social programme. The Christmas pie walks were very successful as were other recent walks with pub lunches attached. We will be offering more of these. The St Ives holiday is at the end of April and we're starting to look at other options for next year which may include the Lake District.

We're exploring ideas for other social activities. Another priority is the invaluable work on footpaths (thank you David!) plus our other responsibilities such as carrying out twice yearly checks on the Lydford to Tavistock and Princetown to Tavistock sections of the Dartmoor Way.

If you'd like to help with any of our activities we'd love to hear from you.

Enjoy your walking!

Frances Teague

Update of Committee Meeting 21st February 2023

This quarter we were delighted to welcome Janet Harvey as a new Committee Member. Whilst Janet currently has no immediate specific responsibilities, she has kindly offered to add her support to ongoing activities wherever required. We are always looking for new people to join the Committee – so if you would like to see what is involved just speak to one of us on a walk.

There was a lot to discuss this month as we thankfully look forward to warmer months:

- The St Ives holiday has proven to be a popular break with three fantastic walks to look forward to. There are still a couple of places available at the time of writing if anyone would like to join us.
- Coronation Celebration Walk – Clearly you don't get to celebrate a Coronation every year. To commemorate the event Long John is planning walks from Princetown to King's Tor, "From Prince to King". More about this will follow in due course but it would be great to get as many members attending this as possible. There will be three walks on offer.
- Summer Walks Programme – Another super idea has come from Sally and Frances after Rosemary passed on her "bible" of walks dating back 20 years. The plan is to re-run some of these summer walks from bygone days by making them available, via the website, to existing and new Walk Leaders. Again, more on this will be communicated very shortly.
- Membership numbers have held steady – 188 as at 18th February. A big welcome to all those who

have joined the Group in the last six months. We hope you are enjoying the Walks Programme but if you have ideas that you think would be popular please do not hesitate to let us know.

- Social Events – The Christmas Pie Walks were very popular again, with the addition of a Wednesday Walk to the traditional Saturday one. Big thanks to Paul and Rosemary for organising this. Definitely a permanent feature in our diary. Other events we have planned include the return of the Skittles Evening – or maybe upgrading to ten pin bowling! As food seems to be popular with our walks, more regular Walk & Lunch events and, later in the year, the return of the brain puzzler Quiz! Once again, if you have ideas for other activities that we could enjoy please let us know – even better if you can help to organise them.
- Footpath Officer - You should already have seen that David has been uploading more Self Guided Walks including the updated Tamar Trails Walks. The Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty now have a link on their web site to our Walks. There are also 15 new circular walks incorporating a stretch of the West Devon Way from Plymstock to Okehampton. Why not try them out? David has a large section of footpaths to check for improvements (access problems etc). If you could help him by walking a section of footpaths near to where you live or regularly walk please do let him know.

Christine Youds

Tamara Coast to Coast

Would Alfred Wainwright be flattered, or would he be turning in his grave (had he not been cremated when he died)?

Since he devised the Coast to Coast walk back in the 1970's, others have tried to emulate the concept. The Two Moors Way is sometimes branded (even on waymarking) as "Devon's Coast to Coast" but now we will soon have another.

The Tamara Coast to Coast is set to be launched this Summer. Preparations are said to be well under way to open the new 90-mile walking route. This trail will follow the River Tamar from sea to source and linking both coasts. By so doing it will also create a circular walking route around the coast of Cornwall as it starts at Cremyll and finishes at Marsland Mouth, so connecting with the South West Coast Path at both ends.

It uses existing public rights of way for obvious reasons (as referred to in David's article). It will cross the Tamar several times, at first using the Torpoint Ferry.

Then it will follow the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail. Curiously, it will still follow the same route at Calstock which involves catching the train from Bere Alston.

Timing of the walk will be critical.

Many Ramblers will, no doubt, have walked the Dartmoor Way since its launch, so here will soon be another challenge.

Long John



The Definitive Map

I am sure that as you have walked along with fellow ramblers discussing the condition of the footpath the route it is taking and heaving yourself over the numerous stiles your thoughts have probably turned to the Definitive Map.

Well perhaps not, but I, as the footpath officer, do on occasions have to consider if a path is following the correct route as defined on the Definitive Map.

But what is the Definitive Map? Well, to answer that read on, but basically it's a map of all the rights of way. Let's start with a bit of history. In 1947 the Hobhouse committee report was published which recommended that all public rights of way should be surveyed and recorded on maps. Their recommendation was put into effect by enactments of the sections 27 and 28 of the National Parks and access to the Countryside act of 1949. All County Councils and then also County Boroughs were tasked with surveying and mapping all the rights of way classifying them as footpaths, bridle ways and RUPP's which stands for Roads Used as Public Paths.

Hopes of early completion of this mammoth task were not realised primarily due to lack of money. In an attempt to speed things up the Countryside Act of 1968 was enacted but this actually made matters worse for thousands of objections started to clog up the system.

However, with the publication of North Bedfordshire's map in May 1982 the task was done. In 1981 the Wildlife and Countryside Act went for a system of continuous reviews which is what we have today and as I am penning these few words I notice that it is the 40th birthday of the start of the last full revision of the network of rights of way the 28th Feb 1983.

The Definitive Map is how all public rights of way are recorded. The presence of a right of way shown on the Definitive Map is conclusive proof in law that a member of the public has a right to traverse that path either on foot or otherwise depending on the allocated status.



It also is a written record of the route that may have information about its width or if there is a right of the landowner to erect stiles or gates. Anyone can apply for a change to the map and if the County Council agree they will issue a DMMO which stands for a Definitive Map Modification Order. You, of course, know all about the current Don't Lose Your Way project (another mammoth task) that the Ramblers are undertaking. Well, there are likely to be quite a number of DMMO's issued in the coming years.

Over at Bere Ferrers a problem has arisen due to, I believe, the council more than 20 years ago not properly registering a path on the Definitive Map. Hopefully this will be resolved without going to court but I'm told it's not looking good.

If you think that a right of way is not following the definitive route let me know and I will take it up with the relevant person.

David Simkins
Footpath Officer

The Secret World of Emojis

You learn all sorts of things on Ramblers walks. A bit of flora and fauna, geology perhaps and some of you will know that I like to pepper my walks with historical facts which are threatened to form the basis of a quiz later.

But emojis? During a lunch stop on a moorland walk not so long ago, Sally introduced us to the hidden world of emojis.

If you thought that emoji were just a bit of fun, beware. It's whole new language not always understood if you are old enough to have left school.

So much so, that I investigated a bit later and discovered that Surrey Police have released a guide to 'secret world of emojis' for parents - hidden meanings including sex and drug use

In their publicity they said that it is a "horrifying guide to the secret world of emojis" and how innocent looking emojis could in fact be a code for drug use or sex. The force have issued the guide to parents who might be concerned about how their children are using their phones and devices. The list of examples include using a strawberry, dog, cherries, cake, ice cream or leaves to indicate cannabis.

An aubergine or a peach might represent sex and an alien or a mask might mean MDMA.

A petrol pump or a snowflake can represent cocaine use, while a fist or a rocket might mean how powerful the substances are



Emojis of a pair of eyes or a power cable might mean someone is a drug dealer. The list is endless.

So be careful when you add an emoji to your text or WhatsApp. It might be just a bit of fun, but you might be sending a decidedly inappropriate message that could horrify your grandchildren.

Long John.

Walks Programme

Firstly, as always, many thanks to all of you who contribute to our Walks Programme – it really is appreciated. Diary dates for April through to end October are now available for booking on the Google Spreadsheet – this includes Thursday evenings for June through to first week in September. Please do get reserving those dates.

We are intending to publish the Walks Programme for April, May and June by 25th March at the latest so we need all your walks to be submitted by 20th March please.

In particular June is looking a little bare so if anyone can help us with some walks in June it would be much appreciated. Whilst it has been good to see new Walk Leaders contributing to our programme there is always room for more.

Tavistock Ramblers are very lucky to see an average of three walks a week throughout the year – Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Not all groups have this amount of choice, and in fact we have recently discovered that 20 years ago only one walk a weekend was taking place – so we are very fortunate. .

We are often asked “what is needed to be a Walk Leader?”

The first thing to know is that we encourage everyone to support our group by leading walks. You do not have to attend a Walk Leader Training course first, or have passed any navigational course to put on a walk. All that is needed is sufficient knowledge of a local walk, or one that you have found in a guide book, that you can confidently lead others on.

There are obviously practical issues to consider:

- When leading a walk you must always use a public right of way or open access land.
- You should take into account the location, length and timing.
- Factor in the possible impact of the season, terrain, degree of ascents and descents.
- Check the car parking at the walk start location and facilities, especially toilet stops, along the route.
- Make sure you have a copy of your route to refer to in need.
- Recce the route before leading others - as close as possible to the date of your walk to identify any changes which may have taken place since you last walked it. Walk the full route, noting important navigation points, hazards and problems.

Whilst you do not need to have attended the Walk Leader training session, there are of course some essentials. Firstly, you must **register** as a volunteer on the Ramblers' **Assemble site for volunteers**. This will ensure that you are recorded as a Walk Leader and thereby fully covered by the Ramblers' insurance arrangements. There are easy to follow instructions on the Ramblers' website explaining how to do this.

Secondly, you must complete the Ramblers' Group Walks Risk Assessment on the standard format (available on our website or the Ramblers' Volunteer page). We suggest this is completed as part of your recce of the route. Note - this document needs to be kept as a record for three years from the date of the walk. This can be done in electronic or paper form, as you prefer.

The third essential point is to ensure that your walk is advertised to other Rambler Members. It's easy to get included in the diary:

- Complete the details of your walk on the Walks Spreadsheet (accessed via a link on the Members Only Page of our website) where you also select the date on which you wish to lead your walk.
- Our next programme will be published covering the three months April 2023 to June 2023. The deadline is 10 days before the start of the programme to allow time for the Programme to be uploaded to the Central Ramblers' site and published on our website.

That is really all there is to it!

So why not take the plunge and join our merry band of Walk Leaders. We encourage “buddy” arrangements and would be pleased to talk about this so either email tavywalkteam@gmail.com who will be happy to help, or chat to the Walk Leader on the next walk you join.

Christine Youds

