

A sign of the times!

No. 19

May 2024



Hi everyone and welcome to the May edition of our newsletter

Wheddon Cross - Devon Area meet up day

A huge thank you to our wonderful walk leaders, and everyone who came and supported the Area Meet up day at Wheddon Cross on 13th April 2024. It was a great success, and appeared to be enjoyed by all. After weeks of heavy rain and strong winds, and all the worry about routes not being safe to walk, the weather was kind to us on the day, and all 3 walks could go ahead as planned. The 2 longer walks even managed to coincide at Dunkery Beacon at lunchtime. We had some very positive feedback from John Howell and Tim Spray from Area, and Nicky Wilson from Head Office, thanking us for organising and leading the walks, and providing a warm welcome on the day. We have set a high bar for an annual meet up day in the different Devon group locations in future.



And Congratulations to Mo who won the £25 prize for her photo
"Highlighting the pleasures of walking on Exmoor or Dartmoor"

Remembering Chris Catlin

Chris Catlin sadly died last month after a stoical battle with illness which she bore with fortitude. She is a great loss to North Devon Ramblers as she supported the group in many ways over the years.

Chris first met Joan Long (our previous long-standing Chair) in 1978. Chris was the Group Walks Programme Manager for over 20 years & was a hard act to follow. Chris & Joan “would steal themselves away on educational trips” as they used to call it “to recce possible places for Ramblers walks and away breaks.”

Chris knew Exmoor exceptionally well but also led many walks in other areas, including the Quantocks. Indeed, the last walk she led for the group was from Horner in memory of Joan, less than 2 years ago. Chris was always welcoming to new members & was interesting to talk to on walks, as she had lots of stories about her extensive travels with Roger.

Thank you, Chris, for all that you did for the group.



Chair and Secretary

Janice and I are finishing our roles of Group Secretary and Chair in November this year. I don't want to rush the summer away, but the time will go by quickly enough, and we still haven't got anyone willing to take on one of these roles. The group is currently successful and flourishing, with over 300 members, fantastic walks and walk leaders, an annual holiday, social occasions, and some great publicity going on. It would be so very sad if no one comes forward to take on these vital roles, with the worst case scenario being that the group will fold. (As happened with the Tiverton group a few years ago.) Please think very carefully whether you could offer to do one of these roles. It wouldn't have to be a long term commitment – one year at a time would be brilliant.

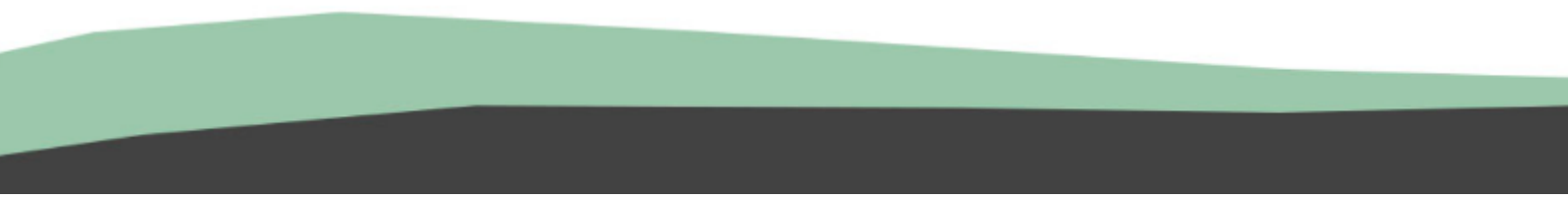
Maybe you think “I could never do that. I wouldn't know where to start.” My quick reply would be “it's mostly common sense.” Have a chat to Janice and/or myself on a walk, or give us a call, to find out more about what's involved.

Or maybe you are thinking “Well, why do we need a committee anyway? Surely the group could function without it?” And if you do think something along those lines, then why not come along to our July committee meeting and see what the committee does. Or you might have ideas to share about how we could streamline or change some things. All ideas welcome .

The next committee meeting is on Thursday 11th July, 7 – 9pm at the Castle Centre in Barnstaple

Keep an eye on our walks programme on our the website, for some additional pop-up walks!

www.northdevonramblers.org.uk



Publicity

We have had some great publicity opportunities recently

Did you see the April article about North Devon Ramblers in the North Devon Gazette? It was Rachel's lovely piece about how she came to join our group, and the joy and benefits she has found. Look out for the May article written by Janice about how our group is walking The Dartmoor Way.

Could you write a piece for the Gazette? Something about walking, the countryside, or being in a group? Or do you have a suggestion about something you think would make a good article which could tempt you into walking, or joining Ramblers, or becoming involved in maintaining footpaths and suchlike? Do let Janet or any committee member know.

We had a table at Rosemoor's Great Hobby Weekend on 4th and 5th May, and with much better weather than last year, many people came and enquired about Ramblers, and/or had a chat about walking, and took a list of our upcoming walks. Hopefully some will be inspired to come along and try a group walk with us soon.

Special thanks to Janet for organising our presence, and attending on both days. And to Graham and Louise for giving their time and support.

We also had a presence at St Michael and All Angels Church in Torrington, as part of their flower festival over the May Bank Holiday Weekend.

Special thanks to Linda for setting up a display for the group.

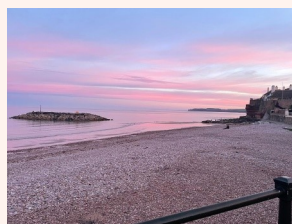
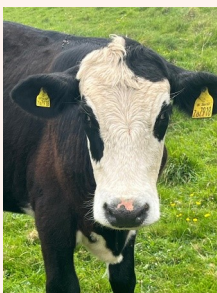


North Devon Show

The next big publicity event will be The North Devon Show on 7th August. And we are looking for 5 volunteers to help Janet on the day, chatting to members of the public and promoting the joy of group walking and being a member of Ramblers. Could you help with this? A few hours in the morning, or the afternoon, with free entry to the Show and plenty of time to look around. Please let Janet, or any committee member know.

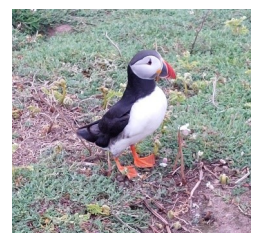
Social and Sociable Activities

After months of preparation by our volunteers and walk leaders a group of 23 keen ramblers have recently returned from a most successful walking holiday in Sidmouth. Here are a few pictures from the holiday. And yes it was sunny!!



And on 11th June, we have our group trip to Lundy with 25 coming. If anyone else would like to join us, please contact me as soon as possible.

Call **07972 510903** or email **clarice.d@btinternet.com**



Lorna Doone Festival 14th and 15th September 2024

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the National Trust is organising a walking and outdoors activities festival celebrating The Lorna Doone Valley on the weekend of 14th and 15th September 2024. They are asking many groups to be involved, including North Devon Ramblers. They have asked us to lead 2 walks on each day – a shorter walk of about 3 hours – 5-6 miles, and a longer day walk – 8-9 miles. All walks to start and finish at Malmsmead, where there will be parking for 100+ cars. So how about it? Could you lead one of these walks? Probably best to buddy up with someone as co-leader/back marker, as we wouldn't know how many people to expect on the walks, some of whom may be inexperienced walkers, particularly for the shorter walks. But what a great opportunity to introduce new people to the joys of group walking. Please let Sarah know if you could lead one of these walks, or if you could offer support as back marker/help to reccy/attend on the day.

Upcoming Walks

We have some great walks coming up in the next few months.

- The final Pilgrim's Trail walk in June, visiting the ancient and beautiful churches of Stoke Pero, Luccombe and the one with the thatched roof, Tivington.
- Janice has 2 more sections of the Dartmoor Way in June and July, visiting some well known, and some lesser known places on the western edges of Dartmoor. See photo of Brent Tor, below.
- And on Friday 21st June, Rachel is offering an early morning walk to see the sunrise up Codden Hill, followed later (after a siesta maybe?) by an evening sunset walk around Baggy Point. Who will join Rachel for both??



There are plenty of other interesting and varied walks on offer through the next few months too, including a new area for us – The Raddon Hills from Newton St Cyres, led by Gemma.

However, there are still some gaps in the programme, and if you can offer a pop-up walk in one of these gaps, we just need 3 weeks' notice. Ask Sarah for details.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES



Coffee morning – It is great to see lots of people at the monthly coffee mornings. Do come and join us on the first Thursday of the month, 10.30 at Queen Anne's café in Barnstaple. Next meeting is 6th June.



- **11th June** - Group trip to Lundy
- **11th July** - Committee Meeting , 7 – 9pm Castle Centre Barnstaple, All welcome
- **7th August** – North Devon Show – can you help? Let Janet know.
- **14th and 15th September** -National Trust Lorna Doone Festival, Malmsmead

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Clarice Harwood	07972 510 903	email Clarice
Secretary	Janice Hurdle	07765 091 260	email Janice
Membership Secretary	Dune Simpson	07379 498 808	email Dune
Treasurer	Ruth Rouxel	07895 547 009	email Ruth
Footpath Officer (North Devon)	Jon Bennett	01271 375 906	email Jon
Footpath Officer (Torridge)	Mike Kelly	07495 048 339	email Mike
Walks Programme Secretary	Sarah McRae	07889 489 366	email Sarah
Minute Secretary	Lynne Clement	07757 384 893	email Lynne
Media & Publicity Officer	Janet Ellis	07599 093 973	email Janet
IT & Web Editor	Peter Loombe	07453 194 985	email Peter
WhatsApp Manager	Anne Hunnibell	07592 880 760	

Did you know that the Ramblers discount code at Cotswold Outdoors has changed?

It is now

AF-RAMBLERS-M6

Check out the other discounts available, such as for Cicerone books or the first year's subscription for the OS Map App. See www.ramblers.org.uk for details.

Thanks to all of our contributors