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Website: www.ramblers.org.uk. Regional website: www.ralakedistrict.talktalk.net.

COMMITTEE MATTERS

GRANT AID FOR FLOOD REPAIRS

You may remember that in the November Newsletter, your Committee asked for suggestions for projects towards which we might donate funds. Well we weren't exactly inundated with replies, and then events of the 6th December rather took over!

At our January meeting, we agreed to offer **£3,000** to SLDC or CCC to **repair a footbridge** and the quickest responder was to get the funds. We specified that the Kendal Ramblers grant should cover the **whole of the renovation** and the remedial work **should take place immediately**.

Unfortunately SLDC lost out and of the bridges offered by CCC we chose Miller Bridge as the project for our grant. As you will know from various reports, on the radio and in the press, **work started on Miller Bridge in mid February** (the parapet walls were completed by the 24th Feb), followed by grouting and we now have thank you letters from Cllr Anne Sowerbutts and David Clare, CCC Countryside Access Officer. David tells us the funding and rapid response has acted as a **catalyst** for his highways colleagues to get the **resurfacing work** done on the routes that lead from the bridge into the park and Anne confirms that she hopes the bridge will **reopen during week commencing 7th March**. Whilst it is annoying that the funding for this work was initially credited to the Ramblers Association, you may have subsequently seen the letter Polly submitted to the Westmorland Gazette which was published in the edition of Thursday 3rd March, correcting this report. **It is great that we have enabled this important bridge for walkers and ramblers to be reopened so quickly.** Ed.

SHORTER WALKS FOR OLDER RAMBLERS

And those of us disinclined for extreme exercise! Following guidelines set out by your Committee, John Fairhurst and Jill Hayes have been trying to **put together the next walks** programme to include shorter walks, and then obtain leaders. We recognise that it may not be possible for our more infirm members to act as leaders which would mean booking their slot months in advance, but surely **it must be possible for some people** who wish to go on shorter walks to act as leader from time to time? So far, few have come forward **so here is another appeal** for people to consider leading walks in the autumn programme. At present there are only two walks of less than 8k on the summer programme, one of which is being led by John Fairhurst. Roger Palmer has supplied a list of shorter walks – and we have our published versions in books and leaflets, not to mention Wainwright in his older years - so there is **a wealth of information** available for any considering acting as leader. General walks leaders or Members of your Committee would be happy to "walk it out" with you should you feel unsure.

It has been agreed that these walks should not start before 9.30am and should preferably take place on a Tuesday or Wednesday in order to avoid clashes with U3A. It is always possible to notify the membership via email (courtesy of Geoff) should a walk need

to be amended or cancelled at short notice owing to ill health or bad weather.

There is an option of shortening some of the walks on the programme, but it is rarely taken, however two walks on the same day are always feasible **AS LONG AS THE LEADERS ARE THERE**. Perhaps a group of our 'elderly' could get together to help co-ordinate a separate **"Short Walks Programme"** ?

New members aiming to lead main programme walks on the higher or longer routes might also like to cut their teeth on one of these shorter walks?

Come on people, don't ignore the valuable contribution made by our long-term members who have laid down the ground work for you and would **still like to continue walking** but in a more gentle way. Initially contact Jill or John Fairhurst. Ed.

Leaders Day with Lancaster Ramblers

In January the Kendal Ramblers Group was invited to join Lancaster Ramblers on their **'Leaders Day'**, which is a sort of 'thank you' given by the group to those of its walks-leaders who have provided their services over the past year or two.

John Fairhurst, Tony Willey and I, accepted their kind offer and received a very warm welcome when we joined them at Quernmore Methodist Church.

We were given a most **impressive and informative presentation** by Brian Jones, their Chairman, which dealt with the many details that a walk leader should take into consideration **before leading a walk - for more information on this visit the Ramblers website**.

During the course of the morning a useful insight was gained into the way in which the two Groups differed in their approach to various matters. The Lancaster Group, for instance, as well as organising two walking days per week, also undertake a **"Footpath Checking Day"** which they hold at regular intervals. When members meet at a pre-arranged location, then set off for an hour or so in varying directions, noting and **ideally photographing** anything of relevance such as missing signposts or waymarks, broken stiles, padlocked access gates, etc. They then re-group to discuss their findings and **forward all of the information to their local footpath secretary**.

The members seemed quite keen on Footpath Checking, all agreeing that **apart from its intrinsic value** as a "right of way" exercise, it also gave them the opportunity to hone and practice their map-reading skills and **pass them on to others** who were perhaps a little less proficient.

At lunch-time we were treated to a very tasty hotpot followed by delicious desserts and we had the opportunity to chat with the Lancaster group members individually. John, Tony and I certainly feel that we benefited from seeing how a different Ramblers Group operates and in learning about its priorities and organisation. **Jill Hayes, John Fairhurst and Tony Willey**

Note: *We have considered this type of activity on various occasions, but would like feedback from members please, commenting on whether they feel a Footpath Checking Day would be something they would be interested in joining. Reply to Jill Hayes and John Fairhurst – see Committee List for contact details.* Ed.

JANE MAXWELL

1st September 1941 – 10th February 2016

–service of thanksgiving 20th February 2016

I think that the number of Ramblers attending the memorial service for Jane Maxwell today – I counted 35 – is a measure of just how shocked we all are to have lost Jane so suddenly, and how much we realise we will miss her now she has gone.

Quiet and self effacing, Jane was one of those rare people who would always be there if a job needed doing, only to slip away before we had time to thank her.

Her family were out in force and the service was a true celebration of her life, with Jane as Homemaker, Worker, Rambler, and Church Warden all celebrated throughout her many moves to different parts of the UK. One of her daughters wondered how (now having children of her own) her mother always seemed to have time for them all amongst her other activities in each of the communities in which they lived.

When Nigel took early retirement, they were able to move up to the Kirkby Lonsdale and take up serious walking! Jane also continued with her first love and found a post as a peripatetic school librarian travelling throughout the Lakes, introducing children in many schools to her love of children's authors.

As Church Warden at St. Mary's Kirkby Lonsdale Jane was always there an hour or so before the service to ensure that everything was in place for its smooth running. When she found that the community nurse for children and babies was operating in an unsuitable cold and damp room, she quickly arranged for this clinic to take place in the Church Vestry. The Celebrant told us that for the past few weeks, without Jane, they have all found themselves "behaving like headless chickens"!

Jane's favourite readings and hymns punctuated the memories, and the overwhelming feeling was that a strong and loving presence had left us far too soon. Vidor's Toccata was an uplifting ending for this ceremony. A retiring collection was taken to be shared between St. Mary's and The Alzheimers' Society in memory of Jane's mother. **Ed**

HOTPOT SUPPER

Saturday 13th February 2016

Alison organised this annual feast and 47 of us once again got together for a delicious evening – food followed by a fascinating talk by **Jan Wiltshire** who brought her new book for us to see but mainly talked all about the **flood damage in and around Kendal** with slides covering its effects on wildlife.

She showed the mud that abounded on the riverbank after the flooding and the **creatures that were trapped in it – from native crayfish to small fry** – and the efforts of teams to rescue and return as many of these as possible to the main river. The power of the water and the **devastation it caused** to both plant and animal life in the Kent Valley was brought home as slide after slide showed the damage and death which Jan chronicled **after the December floods**. Thankfully, Jan went on to cover the birds and flora which she has brought together in word and pictures in her new book "Cumbrian Contrasts" following on from "About Scout Scar". **A stunning slide show** gave us intimate pictures of "one of the most beautiful diverse and precious parts of the British Isles". Sometimes waiting for hours for the right picture, **Jan has encapsulated** many of the things we most love and some of those virtually hidden in plain sight. Her picture of a skylark with its dappled plumage and amazing crest is something to treasure for those of us who only ever manage to see skylarks when they are tiny specks far above us.

Text and pictures flow through this delightful book which is thoroughly recommended to those not at the hotpot supper. For sale through Waterstones or via Jan at £12.99.

Many thanks to Alison for organising and Jan for the entertainment! **Ed.**

Missing Group First Aid Kits

Last November, following representation from some of our leaders, **we dispensed with the hard boxed first aid kits** and introduced a softer version in a **Boots blue zipped bag**; this was much lighter and was more easily carried in a rucksack. Unfortunately, both the Tues./Wed. and the Thurs. kits are **now missing**. If you led a walk last November or December **will you please** look in your **rucksack, box room, garage, attic, workshop or car boot** to see if you still have one of these first aid kits and let me know so that I can arrange collection. **Geoff**

Quiz and supper evening at Abbot Hall Social

Club will be on Friday, October 21st this year.

Please make a note in your diary and look out for the booking form in the July Newsletter. We can promise a delicious supper! **Alison**

The Hincaster Trailway is open for business

While building work is underway for the new Greenside Farm development, the developers EGG Homes have provided an **alternative route to access Viver Lane**.

Unfortunately, during the prolonged wet weather and due to the **popularity of the route** with walkers, cyclists and horse riders this new track **became very boggy**. However, Ashley Reece from Egg Homes has now ensured that a **recycled hard core surface** has been laid and the full route is now easily accessible again. In fact, with the local flooding, the Trailway is **one of the few ways to get from Hincaster to Greenside without waders!** and as a result is attracting even more users.

Please note that the temporary diversion has a slope which is **not suited to wheelchairs** but we hope the original route will reopen in late Spring 2016 with the added benefit of a designated **off road parking area created by EGG Homes** as part of the Greenside development, which will particularly benefit our less able users.

FRIENDS OF BLENCATHRA

The charity has maintained constant contact with the Vendor's lawyers over the last 18 months. The decision making process on the Vendor's side has been a long and complicated one. However the position at 30.01.16 is as follows: the mountain has **not been sold to other bidders** and the Vendor is committed to the sale of the mountain; preferably to the charity **provided that acceptable terms can be agreed**. The charity submitted a revised draft contract of sale to the Vendor in November 2015 and today, the terms of that deal **remain under discussion** between the parties. **Ed.**

2016 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

11 th -15 th April 2016	Newton Stewart Holiday
27 th April 2016	Committee Meeting
14 th -21 st May 2016	Hassness Holiday
20 th July 2016	Committee Meeting
19 th October 2016	Committee Meeting
21 st October 2016	Quiz Evening
11 th November 2016	AGM

July Newsletter copy date

Please supply items of information, items for sale, notification of events, or anything else of general interest by the 7th July 2016 to your Editor² on 01539 721998 or at terrydee@talktalk.net **Ed**

TOWNEND

This house was the home of the Browne family for 12 generations and is known for the carvings on every free wooden surface. It was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1948 but **last year** they found that the beams holding up the property were **infested with wet rot** – a timber attacking fungus.

Replacing these beams and re-rendering and decorating the house **will probably take around six months and cost in the region of £100,000.**

The National Trust plan to reopen the house by the end of July and **hope that all the work will be completed by the end of August.** Ed.

TOUR OF BRITAIN

Stage 2 of Britain's premier cycling event will begin in Carlisle city centre on September 5 before heading through the heart of the Lake District, passing through Keswick, Ambleside and Windermere before finishing at the top of Beast Banks in Kendal. You have been warned. Ed.

Christmas Lunch

This year's venue for the popular Christmas lunch was at the **Silverdale Golf Club.**

56 Ramblers enjoyed a tasty and well presented lunch and made the most of the opportunity to **catch up on news.**

A small and brave band faced the inclement weather and **did the short walk led by Alice and Mike.**

Many thanks to them both and also to Alison who organised this year's lunch. Ed.

Kendal Group Committee 2016:

Chair	John Watson	Tel: 015395 60362 jgwatson@talktalk.net
Secretary – minutes	Sheila Watson	Tel: 015395 60362 sheilawatson@talktalk.net
- general	Margaret Pook	Tel: 015395 60249 dmpook@btinternet.com
Treasurer	Alison Jones	Tel: 01539 739105 alison@linford-jones.me.uk
Footpaths outside LDNP	Ernie Robin	Tel: 01539 732995 perobin@gmail.com
/Books Editor		
Footpaths (LDNP)	Dave Harrison	Tel: 01539 728426 Djh@cam.ac.uk
Walks' Programme	John Fairhurst	Tel: 01539 733887 john@thefairhurst.org.uk
	& Jill Hayes	Tel: 01539 733099 justjill@hotmail.co.uk
Newsletter	TerryDoherty	Tel: 01539 721998 terrydee@talktalk.net
Social Access	Vacant	
	David Staton	01539 734880 dstaton19@googlemail.com
Countryside	Colin Boothman	Tel: 01539 731338 colinhboothman@gmail.com
Publicity/Books	Polly Robin	Tel: 01539 732995 polly.ramblersbooks@gmail.com
Website	John Edmondson	Tel: 01539 821251 johnmark.edmondson@gmail.com
Membership	Geoff Brooks	Tel: 01539 720097 geoff.agbrooks@outlook.com
Dales Way	Donald Holliday	Tel: 01539 44066 donald.holliday@tiscali.co.uk

ROAD REPAIRS

A591 - DUNMAIL RAISE

Whilst work goes ahead on "the gap" caused by Storm Desmond, it has been decided that access along the temporary road will **continue to be limited** to school buses, cyclists and residents living between the north and south road closure.

Highways engineers have estimated that if the usual two way traffic flows on the A591 during March, April and May were to be repeated – **around 5,000 vehicles per day** – the one way traffic convoy system would cause long tailbacks taking around 40 minutes to clear. This would result in traffic being queued at each end for **up to two hours** making the journey time longer than the existing diversions. **The bus service will continue to be monitored.**

A592 – AIRA FORCE

Work began on the resurfacing drainage and embankment of the A592 between Aira Force and Dobbin Wood on **Monday the 7th March** and should be completed in around four weeks. Flood damage to embankments will be repaired and a 2.2km section of damaged road will be replaced by a new surface. Ed.

JOHN WARD

Those who remember John and Pam will be sad to hear that John, who hung up his walking boots in 2014, passed away last month.

What Does a Footpath Officer Do? No.1

Amongst his/her other duties, a FP officer receives the statutory consultation relating to any **DMMO (Definitive Map Modification Order)**

A DMMO is required when any **Public Right of Way (PRoW)** is created, diverted or extinguished. It may arise when a landowner wishes to remove or change a path, where developments are planned; or where a PRoW is to be created.

Creation: rarely is there an objection but the Highway Authority may seek evidence to support it.

Diversion: the most common DMMO. Here there is much to be gained or lost. The cost of such a DMMO falls mainly upon the landowner, and is around £2000 legal and advertising costs. If objections are made and particularly if a Public Hearing (the right of any objector) held, the cost escalates. There is never a charge against any reasonable objection even if the objector demands a hearing at a Public Enquiry. **The FP officer considers the DMMO proposal**, in particular, whether there may be any detriment to the convenience of or pleasure for users.

A good recent example occurred in Arnside, where a path through a clean farmyard was to be diverted onto a field around it. A smooth hard path (used by families and even pushchairs) was to go onto a grassy possibly muddy field.

The statutory right to object was raised unless the path was made equally suitable as the one being lost. As a consequence the new path will have gates, be hardened so as not to be muddy, and of such a width (3m) that even should it be fenced at some time in the future it could be used by any of the public. Barbed wire is to be avoided in any form.

A similar approach is used as recently in Kendal, where a path was to be extinguished to enable development. Two replacement paths were negotiated, on the implied threat of objections which would have delayed the development for up to 18 months.

These events may be time-consuming, and need a determination to prevent the disregard which was so common in former times. Ed.

Ernie Robin

What has the CRoW Act done for us ?

If we asked ourselves whether we would prefer to have all of our footpaths free of problems and properly maintained or a review of the CRoW Act then I **suspect most** would opt for the former. Of course our aim is to achieve both. The former is perhaps obvious but why do we need a review of the Act which became law in 2000. At the outset, the Act was intended to define open country under the broad definitions of mountain, moor, heath and down. However in its passage through Parliament we ended up with a compromise which in simple terms defined open country according to whether or not the land had been improved. There is no doubt that the amount of Access land **greatly increased** with the Act, more noticeably in some areas than others, but how often do we look over a wall and ask - what's the difference between what I am looking at and where I am standing? To the untrained eye there often isn't much difference. As a result the Open Country boundary takes an almost unpredictable line with some access areas **existing as islands** within a landscape which is all very similar. To make matters worse if any access land is not adjacent to a highway or crossed by a PROW then **the only legal way of reaching it** is by helicopter! Also there is no provision in the Act to make an access point even if a highway is adjacent to it without the agreement of the landowner.

In our own area are there any examples of these issues? **The Helm** with which we are all familiar is defined as access land on the western side and the northern end. The Friends of the Lake District own the eastern side and allow open access even though it is semi-improved grassland and used for grazing. Access points have been provided on all compass points of the Helm **with the exception** of the northern end because agreement **cannot be reached** with the landowner. Legally you have a right to be on the land but to get there, you will have to **climb over a locked gate**.

Those of us still fit enough to do the Bannisdale Round starting with the delectable Whiteside Pike will know that the Pike located in access land, **cannot legally be reached from the south by the route described by Wainwright**. There is a bridleway from Mosergh farm but it turns west 300mts short of the access land boundary. However it is possible to continue along a good track which leaves the bridleway. The track leads directly in 300mts to the boundary with 'access land' **where there is a locked gate**. Once safely in 'access land' the Pike is in front of you. Progress is now much easier with the provision of stiles to cross the many walls and fences. These have been put in place by the LDNP following the implementation of the Act. This work is ongoing and is greatly assisted by ourselves advising the LDNP where stiles or gates would be most helpful. **Better a gate than a broken down wall**.

I would not wish to condone deliberate trespass but merely give this account of my experience to illustrate the need to develop new routes to provide access to open country. This was recognised by the Act but 16 years later we are still encountering problems.

A review of the Act is long overdue but this is unlikely before 2019/20 and even this timescale is far from certain. For the present we need to work with landowners, Local Access Forums and others to get the best out of what we have and to campaign on those issues which we consider should be addressed. To answer the question what has the CRoW Act done for us? The answer is a great deal but there is room for improvement. **David Staton**

A6 ROAD LINK

Here we go again. Kendal Town Council, South Lakeland District Council and the Kendal branch of the Federation of Small Businesses have called for the Northern Relief Road idea to be resurrected.

Additionally, a Kendal taxi driver has started an e-petition following many closures of the M6. Recently, one taxi driver took three hours to get into Kendal from Shap when there was an accident on the motorway.

If you wish to support this petition it can be found at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/122491>

Ed.

SPRINT MILL BRIDGE AND THE DALES WAY

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Donald Holiday, your Dales Way Secretary, has been in touch with Tim Farron regarding repairs to Sprint Bridge, Sprint Mill Bridge and damage to the Dales Way.

Herewith Tim's response together with an excerpt from the letter from CCC.

"Dear Donald,

Please find attached the response from the Area Manager for Cumbria Highways to the letter that I wrote on your behalf with regard to the restoration of the Dales Way in Burneside.

I welcome the news of the priority that has been given to these repairs and I hope that they will be completed in the shortest possible time. With best wishes **TIM FARRON**

At the end of January Nick Raymond wrote:

"With regard to the bridge at Sprint Mill affecting the Dales Way long distance path. The countryside access team have been in contact with the owner of the bridge and **highlighted it dangerous state**. To prevent risk to the users and owner a temporary closure has been put in place to **ensure the route is closed**. Fortunately being a private structure the **bridge is insured** and the owner is expecting a structural engineer to assess the structure shortly."

On the 7th March Donald told us::

"This bridge has now been classed as a High Priority bridge requiring significant repairs.

A design solution is due to be approved in 2 to 3 weeks with a likely reopening in April 2016.

For full details of what is happening see the Dalesway website at: <http://www.dalesway.org/> and their news page at <https://daleswaynews.wordpress.com/> **Ed.**

JANE MAXWELL

A message from Nigel

February was a horrible month but we were uplifted by the huge number of messages, cards and prayers for Jane. Seeing so many Ramblers at her service of thanksgiving was intensely moving. The generosity of the collection and the warmth of recollections during refreshments was a great help to us. We knew we would miss her but had failed to understand just how great an impression she made beyond the family circle. Thank you all for your kindness and support at this difficult time.

Nigel, Christine, Clare, Donald.

VOLUNTEERS

You will see from the Area Newsletter, Malcolm Petyt is very pessimistic regarding the future of Ramblers groups as **so few members come forward** to take up the posts necessary to continue the smooth running of both Area and each of the Groups within the region. Unless people come forward to help run them, the Grange and Carlisle Groups will join West Cumbria as defunct.

Thankfully Kendal group has an efficient Committee — welcome to Colin Boothman, **Countryside**, and David Staton, **Access** — but **Alison as well as being your Treasurer** has taken on the duties of Social Secretary on a temporary basis and Polly is doubling on Books and Publicity. We urge you if you fancy either Social Secretary or Publicity to contact Margaret Pook.

See Committee List for contact details.

Ed.