

Conwy Valley Ramblers Chair's Report 2020

Since the end of March we have been going through a set of circumstances unparalleled in the history of the Ramblers, in which Conwy Valley Ramblers has been caught up as much as any other Association. The coronavirus pandemic has touched all of our lives in many ways, one of which has been its effects on our two main reasons for existing as an organisation : walking in the company of others, and making sure that the paths which we use for those walks are maintained to a useable standard. During the months of April, May, June and July this was not possible; walking could only be done with one other person, within a distance of five miles from where we live, and paths could only be maintained by carrying secateurs or loppers on those walks.

However, August saw a change to more group-oriented activity, and walks once again became possible, as did Path Maintenance, albeit with restrictions aimed at preventing any unnecessary potential spreading of the virus. Participation in walks currently require pre-booking, with a maximum number, usually between 15 up to the maximum of 30, along with risk assessments, contact details of all walkers for track and trace purposes, and social distancing of 2 metres between individuals.

Although no longer in a physical booklet of walks, all walks have been advertised on the Conwy Valley Ramblers website, and it is great to note that there have been a fair number of them offered, on both weekdays and at weekends. Our thanks must go to those walk leaders who not only have given up their time in preparing and leading the walks but have also had to do all the extra admin required by the coronavirus guidance. Many thanks also to Andy Wilson, who, in addition to doing the tricky job of compiling and providing us with the Walks Handbook for the first part of the year, when the pandemic was unheard of, has also maintained the website, putting on the walks details and all the other various updates cropping up throughout the last few months. We are always ready to welcome new walk leaders, so if you wish to share one or two of your favourite walks with a group of happy, friendly people, and haven't already done so, please let us know! We always try to provide long and short, high and low walks, so whatever takes your fancy, there will be people who will want to join

you, and, of course, help will be given with regard to the new virus guidance restrictions.

This year's away-trip to the Brecon Beacons turned into a string of disappointments : first of all, the original April dates were ruled out because of the lockdown, and now the new dates, in October, have had to be rearranged as well. It is now hoped that the new dates, April 19th – 23rd, 2021, will be successful! If you haven't already received an email about the details because of not being in the original group, the revised details are on the website.

The Conwy Valley Ramblers Annual Lunch was held on Tuesday 14th January at the Eagles Hotel, Llanrwst on the 14th January, and 20 members enjoyed a sociable time and a good value 3 course meal. Regrettably, it is not possible to organise an Annual Lunch for 2021 at the moment, pending lifting of restrictions on gatherings in restaurants. Members will, of course, be updated as and when it should become possible again.

More thanks are due to Andy Wilson and Joanna Slattery for maintaining the Conwy Valley Ramblers website (conwyvalleyra.org.uk), used so frequently by both local members and visitors, and also to Margaret Norwood for her regular publicity of Walks in the North Wales Weekly News.

Thankyou also to Jean Wilson for once again devoting her continual time and valuable behind-the-scenes work as Treasurer for our group, enabling the group to function smoothly and properly. As with most good things, they work well because the organising that goes into it doesn't get noticed! If there is another member who would be interested in taking over the role of Treasurer, it would be very welcome; Jean will be very happy to help that person to get to know what needs doing as Treasurer.

The Llandudno Town Council had continued with its monthly monitoring walks, with details on our website; these were great opportunities to chat with local councillors, who led the short walks, as well as helping maintain paths locally. Unfortunately, these too became victims of the pandemic, and have currently ceased. We will let members know when they begin again, but in the meantime, we recommend all

members outside Llandudno to encourage their councillors to consider doing the same when the restrictions are lifted.

Thankyou also to the members of the committee : Andy and Jean Wilson, Margaret Norwood, Doreen White,Dave Connolly, Joanna Slattery, and myself as Chair. We are still without a Secretary or a Membership Secretary, so any member who would like to take up one of these positions, or simply join the committee, is welcome to contact me at any time.

So, to end this report, it's a "Thank you" to all who, either before or after the lockdown, have made the walks that have taken place enjoyable and interesting. Let's hope for many more in 2021!

Keep smiling, virus or no virus!