

Rothsay Ramblers

A club of the Rothsay Education Centre (Bedford)

NEWSLETTER December 2020

A very Happy Christmas to all our Members from your Committee

Reflections on 2020 – Rob Bollington, Chairman

In our newsletter of December 2019, we were looking forward to a year much like the previous one. We set out plans for a London walk, a linear walk in the Rutland Water/Stamford area and a Bank Holiday walk from St Albans. The 2020 programme in the first few weeks ran pretty much as planned but then March saw the final walks on our traditional pattern taking place. As you will recall, the first lockdown saw our programme put on hold for several weeks until we were able to restart with a programme of small group walks limited to six people. At the time of writing, the second lockdown has brought even this programme to a halt, hopefully for not too long.

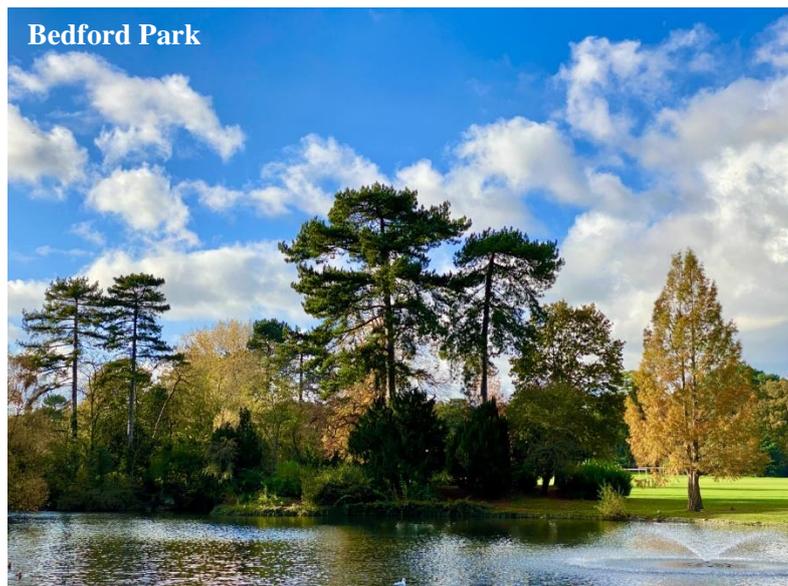
Several things have come out of this. First, our thanks must go to all those, both coordinators and walk leaders, who have made the programme of small group walks happen. This has been very much appreciated. Second, through all the changes this year has brought, the benefits of walking for our physical and mental health have become even more apparent. Whether walking with a friend or partner, in a small group or alone, there has been a lot of walking going on. The situation has led to experimentation and flexibility with starting points, group size, walk length and refreshments. There have been walks with picnics, longer walks, and walks starting from village greens and lay-bys. Hopefully, there are lessons here that we can build on when we return to more normal conditions.

It would be remiss not to end these reflections without expressing my thanks to all those who have served on the Committee during the past year and to all who have led walks. Let us look forward, however it happens, to another good years walking.

WhatsApp 1 + 1 Walking Group

In early November the Committee decided a 1+1 walking group should be set up in WhatsApp to encourage members to keep on walking during the second Lockdown. Some of you may still wish to continue walking with a '+ 1' even though we can walk in groups of six from the 7th December. If you would like to join this WhatsApp group please text Carolyn on 07796 811185. Also, a list of walkers who have shared their information is available on our website under the Committee/Members tab.

Mobiography Made Easy: The Basics! by Hemant Jariwala



Bedford Park

It was Chase Jarvis in 2009 who coined the phrase, “*The Best Camera: Is the One That's With You*”. He was of course referring to the advancement of digital camera built-in a mobile phone and thus offering us the possibility of capturing the world around us. Indeed, over the past decade, a mobile phone has become a regular ‘every day carry’ item, such as; house keys, activity tracker and a wallet!

This short article introduces a ‘Step by Step’ guide in the use of ‘Point & Shoot’ nature of a mobile phone camera.

Taking photos using a mobile phone can be summarised by the following ‘fail safe’ steps:

‘Compose-Focus-Exposure-Adjust-Tweak-Shoot’ (CFEATS):

- **“Compose”**: Compose the elements of the image using the ‘WYSIWYG’ (*what you see is what you get*) phone screen. Use the ‘Rule-of-Thirds’ grid to assist image composition and ensuring the phone is held horizontally or vertically orientation, without any movement.
- **“Focus”**: Lightly touch the area/point on the screen you ‘assess’ or ‘desire’ to be focused or sharp.
- **“Exposure”**: Exposure evaluation and calculation is done automatically by the phone’s camera app, but linked to the ‘focus’ area/point.
- **“Adjust”**: The measured ‘exposure’ can be ‘adjusted’ by touching the screen, and moving your finger ‘up or down’ or controlled by a ‘+/- scale’ on the screen. The image on the screen will lighten or darken, accordingly. When the image ‘looks correct’ - stop adjusting!
- **“Tweak”**: Recompose, as you may have moved the camera’s direction during ‘Focus-Exposure-Adjust’ steps. At this point, ensure that the ‘horizon’ is horizontal, and, the ‘verticals’ are vertical!
- **“Shoot”**: Very gently ‘touch’ the camera’s shutter symbol on the screen. If the camera is on a tripod, use a ‘remote control’ to trigger the camera’s shutter.



Pegsdon Hills, post Lockdown 1

Course: Enrol on my 1-Day Workshop @ the REC ‘Mobiography Made Easy!’
Recommended Book: ‘The Joy of iPhotography’ ISBN 978-1-78157-356-3.
YouTube Mobile Photography Tutorials: <https://youtu.be/RAZtIIe-XHs>

Anniversary – Rob Bollington, Chairman

Rambling through the REC goes back some forty years. In 1981 rambling became part of the syllabus of the REC and for the next ten years, rambling took place through a class. Then on 30th September 1991, the Rothsay Ramblers was set up as a separate group, when the following resolution was passed at its inaugural meeting: “that a club be formed to arrange country walking and associated activities for its members, that it shall be called the Rothsay Ramblers and that its membership shall be restricted to members of the Bedford REC.” The group was to be run by an elected committee and to be self-financing with subs set at £3. In 2011, the group celebrated the twentieth anniversary of this inaugural meeting with a picnic and walks at Priory Park. The committee, some of whom still walk with the group, provided a birthday cake.

The current committee would very much like to mark our anniversary next year – 40 years of walking linked to the REC and 30 years of the Rothsay Ramblers. That is a lot of miles, friendship, and fun to celebrate! We are thinking of two ideas:

- (1) We would like to compile a display on the website of photos and memories. It would be good to hear what stands out in your memory and what difference the group has made to you personally. Contributions can, of course, be anonymous if you wish. It would also be good to receive photos, especially from the earlier years of the group.
- (2) We would like to hold a picnic for members next September (subject, of course, to any restrictions then in place) along the lines of the one organised by Jean Jeavons and her committee in 2011.

Please email me at rob.bollington@btinternet.com with memories or photos that you would be happy for us to share with members through our website or to let me know if you would be interested in talking to me about your memories.

Membership News – Nicola Howard, Membership Secretary

Very many thanks indeed to all of you who have renewed your membership for 2020-21; this is especially appreciated in view of the different and changing ways in which we have been able to run the walks - thank you so much for your support.

And a very warm welcome to all our new members - things can only get better!

At present we have 83 members who have renewed - this is obviously down on last year, but several people have indicated that they will return once a degree of "normality" is reached.

Green group has 14 paid-up members; the rest are equally spread over the four 5-mile groups.

In the course of my end-of-year Membership housekeeping, I have found that there is still a handful of people who haven't renewed their Rothsay Ramblers Membership for 2020-21 (including possibly the REC subscription).

This could be for two reasons:

- 1) a wish to leave the group
- 2) not wanting to walk with us while the Covid19 restrictions are still in place, including a personal choice not to walk with the group until the risk of infection is eliminated.

In this case, your details would remain on the Membership list, so you would continue to receive group emails, but you would not be able to access the Rothsay Ramblers website. When and if you choose to return, you would be able to re-register to access the website on receipt of appropriate payment.

It would be most helpful if you could let me know, with some urgency, which category you fall into. If I have not heard anything from you **by Monday 14th December**, I will assume that you no longer wish to be part of the group. (email: nicola.howard123@yahoo.com / 01234 312066)

AGM Monday 5th October 2020 by Zoom

The Committee were very pleased with the turnout of 38 members to the Zoom AGM. Thank you to everyone who 'attended'. All the vacancies on the Committee were filled and the Committee list can be found towards the end of this Newsletter. A copy of the draft Minutes and Attendance List are available on the website under the 'AGM' tab.

The Lost Footpaths of Bedfordshire and beyond *(Phillipa Partington, Green Walks Co-Ordinator)*

We tend to think of Ordnance Survey maps as being the definitive record of the 140,000 miles of footpaths and bridleways in England & Wales. We respect their accuracy and endeavour to learn their code so that we know where we have a right to walk and where we haven't. Conscientious walkers avoid straying from the paths marked on the OS maps and look for the path and bridleway markers erected by local authorities to confirm that we are on the right track.



It might come as a surprise to many, therefore, to learn that there are a further 49,000 miles of historic rights of way that are not on the OS maps and are in danger of being lost forever unless concerned people do something about it now.

How did this happen?

The 1949 *The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act* required all local authorities to create an official record of public rights of way and it on is these maps that our current OS maps are based. The creation of these local authority Definitive Maps was largely carried out in the 1950s and was done more rigorously by some local authorities than others. Although the work dragged on into the 1980s, many historic rights of way were not recorded and among them were 137 miles of footpaths and bridleways in Bedfordshire.

In 1999, in order to give landowners a degree of certainty, the government decided to call a halt to the process of recording historical rights of way and allowed a ten year period in which to consolidate the work. As the work was time-consuming and expensive, The Ramblers managed to get this period extended to twenty five years so that it now ends on 1st January 2026. That means that there are only five years in which to restore lost paths to the Definitive Maps held by local authorities and, by extension, to the Ordnance Survey maps.

Why is this important?

When we walk along part of the Icknield Way, near Pegsdon and Barton le Clay, it is exciting to think that prehistoric peoples walked that footpath even before Roman soldiers did the same, but this long-distance path does not have only historic importance but it also connects with several other newer ones including, in our area, the Bunyan Trail, the Chiltern Way and the Ridgeway, helping to create a network of paths rather than just a route from A to B. Networks of paths provide far superior access to the countryside facilitating circular walks locally and a variety of routes over longer distances.

What next?

The Ramblers says that identifying potential lost rights of way is just the start of a long process of putting them back on the map.

There are five steps to saving these lost paths:

- Identify historical paths which may be lost rights of way.
- Prioritise those paths which add the most benefit for people.
- Research the individual path to find out if it can be saved.
- Build an application based on historical evidence.
- Submit the application by 1st January 2026

Since The Ramblers will not be able to get all unrecorded paths restored, they are prioritising those which help to create networks, connect dead ends to another path and facilitate circular routes.

Initially, the Government committed to supporting this work directly but failed to do so. It is now up to organisations like The Ramblers to get these paths back on the map. Volunteers are still finding and proving historical rights of way and with their cleverly named “*Don’t Lose Your Way*” project. The Ramblers are aiming to raise £49,000* to support the work of safeguarding these footpaths for the future. What a wonderful legacy this would be!

If *you* would like to get involved in finding and proving useful paths or in fund-raising for The Ramblers’ “*Don’t Lose Your Way*” project; more details are available on their website.

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/dont-lose-your-way-2026.aspx>

*Cotswold Outdoor, The Ramblers recommended outdoor retailer has already donated £10,000.

2021 – Looking forward

Walks from 1st January 2021

Our walking groups are still limited to six per walk, including Leader, no back marker is required. Please continue to check our website Calendar for the walks that have been programmed from January 1st.

Early May Bank Holiday, Monday 3rd May 2021 – New Walk

Our planned walk in 2020 on the 8th May, marking the 75th anniversary of VE Day never happened!



However, Sue Allen has kindly offered to lead this walk in 2021 on the early May Bank Holiday, Monday 3rd May. Of course this is subject to regulations that may be in place, but I’m sure we are all hoping for a more normal 2021.

We will meet at Bedford Railway Station in the morning at 9.30am – please bring drinks and a packed lunch, also your Senior Rail Card if you have one. If you haven’t the Rail Card, there is a discounted rate on the production of your bus pass.

The walk starts from St Albans station with an early coffee in the Cathedral coffee shop. The route is then through Verulamium Park to Batchwood Golf course and Childwickbury (points of interest are the house formerly owned by Stanley Kubrick and church by Gilbert Scott (see photo above)).

The rest of the route is all on Harpenden Common with a picnic site and pub, then Harpenden station for train home. Something to cheer us up are the thoughts of bluebells and rhododendrons in May. The distance of the walk is around 6 miles. If you would like further information, please contact Sue Allen on (01234) 407264.

AGM Monday 17th May 2021

The 2021 AGM of Rothsay Ramblers will take place on Monday 17th May 2021 at Biddenham Village Hall. If there is still an issue regarding numbers meeting in an enclosed space the AGM will be by Zoom.

Three members of the Committee (Secretary, Membership Secretary and Red Walks Co-Ordinator) will be stepping down having been in post three years. To date we have had expressions of interest for the Red Walks Co-Ordinator and the Membership Secretary which is wonderful.

The post of Secretary will need to be filled. If you would like to take up this position, please contact Carolyn. The post could be done by two people, so why not have a chat with a good friend/spouse/partner and put your name(s) forward.

Thank you to Nicola, Bernie and Carolyn for their time and effort on behalf of the group.

Linear Walk 2021 – Rutland Water, Stamford

We hope to organise the Linear Walk planned for 2020 in August 2021. An email will be circulated once we have a confirmed date. What we do will of course depend on progress in dealing with the pandemic.

The 9 mile walk will be from Rutland Water into Stamford,

the 6 mile walk will be mainly along the Hereward Way into Stamford,

and the 3 mile walk will be part way round Rutland Water.

After the walks you will have the opportunity to explore the historic town of Stamford.



The Great Tower, Rutland Water, north shore

This and that

Sweatshirts, T-Shirts, Polo Shirts & Zipped Tops



We have a great supplier for Ramblers apparel, and we can obtain sweatshirts (£15), t-shirts (£12), polo shirts (£13) and zipped tops (£20) in a wide range of colours with our logo. To place an order contact Hazel Woodward

Email: hazel.woodward73@gmail.com; Phone 01234 303221

News on Past and Present Ramblers

Please email the Secretary at caro_mcf@hotmail.co.uk if you would like to update the membership on the 'health' of current/past members.

Rothsay Ramblers Committee 2020-21

Chair	Rob Bollington	01234 838484	rob.bollington@btinternet.com
Honorary Secretary	Carolyn McFarland	01234 350703	caro_mcf@hotmail.co.uk
Honorary Treasurer	Bill Walsh	07927 028471	billy1957walsh@gmail.com
Membership Secretary	Nicola Howard	01234 312066	nicola.howard123@yahoo.com
Web Administrator	Trevor Banyard Smith	07762 824943	trevor.bs.t21@btinternet.com
Digital Mapping Administrators	Neil Ratnett Lynne Ratnett	07736 691909	neil.ratnett@btinternet.com lynne.ratnett@btinternet.com
Walks Coordinators			
Red	Bernadette Russell	01234 772230	bernussell@yahoo.co.uk
Orange/Blue	Nigel Roxburgh	07920 577171	nigel.roxburgh@sourcegene.com
Jade <i>(main contact is Helen)</i>	Helen Busby John Busby	07887 486768 01234 354481 07770 416726	helen@thebusbys.co.uk helendbusby@gmail.com
Green	Phillipa Partington	01234 350524 07897 704411	phillipapartington@gmail.com

And finally, the JOKE

