

## Oxon 20s 30s Walkers

### Agenda

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2012**

**5-7pm St Peters Church Rooms, Wolvercote**

Current Committee Members

Alice Marten (AM) – Chairman	Laura Wilkinson (LW) – Publicity
Rory Scannell (RS) – Secretary	Gordon Bissell (GB) – Membership Secretary
Andy Chandler (AC) – Webmaster	Rob Hollister (RH) – Footpaths
Andrew Woodmore (AW) – Programme Secretary	Lucy Blake (LB) - Treasurer
Debbie McKenzie (DMK) - Social Secretary	Joanne Maltby (JM) – Member without portfolio

1. Apologies for Absence

Rob Hollister  
Jo Maltby  
Laura Sandford  
Andrew Perkins

2. Handing out of water bottles!

Done

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

- Approved. (Secretary forgot to bring along copies..)
- No longer receiving printed program. All walks are available on Ramblers walk finder.  
Approved

4. Chairmans Report (Alice Marten)

*Chairman's Report 2012*



It has been another successful year for the group. The highlight has been our biggest recruitment drive for a number of years. We set ourselves the stretch target of reaching 100 members by this AGM. I am pleased to report that we have grown from 82 to 96 members – a fantastic effort!

The recruitment drive involved holding a series of introductory walks (thanks Lucy for launching the idea), a poster campaign and the incentive of giving water bottles to the first 10 members to join the group. Unfortunately, it has proved difficult to distribute these so we are holding a draw for the remaining ones at today's AGM. We have also paid more attention to new members by sending them an e-mail to welcome them to the group (thanks Gordon for taking this on). We are planning to carry on with the introductory walks in 2013 as they have been so successful.

The group is now making more use of Facebook. The private group has become a popular tool for sharing pictures, lift requests and information about past or future group events. We also have a public page to act as an advertising tool. We would need to invest more time to make this really successful and this is why we are creating a new committee post for a social media officer.

Meanwhile, the group's website is still the main tool for publicity and for communicating the group's programme. It has been significantly enhanced to make it easier to maintain and the mailing list registration has been simplified. Thanks to Andy for making all these changes - a lot of effort in the background that we are all very grateful for.

The main purpose of the group is of course walking. We had a varied programme of walks including some summer evening walks, the short introductory walks, two night walks, some themed walks for the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics and some joint walks with neighbouring groups.

A few new leaders have led walks this year and I would like to thank them. It is important that as many people as possible lead walks as this ensures that we continue to offer a varied programme. Leading a walk is a lot easier than it sounds. Any of the current leaders would happily discuss what's involved and even help you reccie/lead your first walk.

The group has enjoyed a range of trips away: two weekends in the New Forest and the Peak District, a week away to Ireland (the first trip abroad for many years), a camping weekend in Wales and we will join the Chilterns 20&30s group for the Christmas party weekend in Amersham. I would like to thank all people who organised these trips as they all involve a lot of planning. We are now looking for ideas for trips away for next year.

Socials are an important aspect of the group. We have had a number of socials this year including pub nights, meals, ice skating, a ballet and a joint Ceilidh with the Chilterns 20s&30s group. I would like to thank Debbie for organising the majority of these. The group needs more ideas and volunteers to organise socials. I believe that only one social (Ruth's pizza night) was arranged by someone outside the committee. Arranging a social is very easy (even easier than leading a walk) and it would be great if more people became involved. We'll be passing around a sign-up sheet after the meeting to capture ideas.

Finally, I would like to thank the whole committee for a great year. I am happy to stay as Chairman for another year unless anyone would like to take over the post. I have been in the role for the last 4 years so I think that it'll be time to let someone else take my place at the next AGM.

## 5. Officers reports

a. Area Rep

(Alice Marten)

***Group Rep to Area EC Report 2012***

Our group (as well as the Weekend Walkers) is quite different from the other Ramblers groups as it is age-based. One of the key aims in having a rep on the Area EC is to maintain good relationship with all the other groups in the area. The main activity of the Area EC rep is to attend the quarterly meetings of the Oxfordshire Ramblers Area EC.

These meetings are mainly for information sharing and in particular coming from Ramblers Central office. In recent months, such information has included the requirement to allow assistance dogs on all walks and the Ramblers Holidays Walking Partnership funding opportunity.

Area EC sometimes organises events for the whole area. In June, we attended the annual picnic in Thrupp and there will be a First Aid course for Oxfordshire walk leaders in February 2013. I also attended the Ramblers stall at the Abingdon Societies fair in April to try and promote our group.

A printed programme with all walks in Oxfordshire is produced twice a year by the Area EC. As a lot of our walks are organised at short notice, we passed a motion at our group's AGM last November to withdraw from this. This was accepted by the Area EC and our walks no longer feature in the programme. They do, however, still feature on the national Walks Finder website as this is updated on a monthly basis.

Oxfordshire Area EC currently has a strong focus on setting up footpath maintenance groups. This isn't particularly applicable to our group but it is interesting to hear how these working parties contribute to maintaining the high standards of footpaths in Oxfordshire.

The Oxfordshire Area EC holds an annual AGM and there is a rota for each group to organise it in turn. In January 2012, it was our group's turn to host it. The event was held in Cumnor and was very successful thanks to a nice walk led by Rory and a generous supply of cakes. This time the event will be hosted in Sunningwell by the Vale group on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2013. I would like to encourage you to attend to show other groups how friendly we are.

I have been in this role for the past 5 years and really enjoyed it. However, I think it is time for me to step down. I hope that one of you will be interested in joining the Area EC and maintaining the good relationship that has been built over the last few years. I think the fact that I was elected Vice Chair of the Area EC is a tribute to this good relationship. Sadly, I will resign from this position also as it requires spending time attending the meetings.

b. Treasurer

(Lucy Blake)

***September 2011– September 2012***

The Oxon 20s and 30s walking group has had a proactive year financially, looking to support the Ramblers nationwide drive (as announced at the annual conference in 2011) to target and reach new potential members.

In February we launched our bi monthly Introductory Walks, that specifically targeted and

welcomed new faces. These provided shorter and easier afternoon walks for those new to walking or the Ramblers to get a feel for the group. At the initial launch the group welcomed everyone to and hosted drinks after the walk in an effort to get feedback and to welcome the new walkers, to take forward their comments onto future walks. These walks have been very well supported and have drawn in high numbers of new faces with attendance figures around 30.

Following on from this the group purchased new posters that were distributed locally by our current members, in an attempt to target those that would not perhaps be looking actively to go walking or aware that our Group existed otherwise.

Finally an initiative to welcome new members with a water bottle was undertaken. This turned out to be a useful exercise as it highlighted that many of our new walkers do not get allocated by the Ramblers to our group, something we then followed up to rectify.

The cost for all of these undertakings totalled £178 and was expended from the bank balance carried forward from previous years. The balance at the end of the last financial year at 30 September 2011 was £207.90, which has been reduced to £50.78 at 30 September 2012.

Annually we receive a sum from the Ramblers Area funding which for the year was £150. A large proportion of our annual on-going expenditure is spent on the website registration and maintenance (£91) that we believe is essential for publicity and as our main walk programme. The costs for the last AGM totalled £38.

#### ***Budget for 2012/2013***

The budget for this financial year was submitted in July and we estimated that we would increase our annual on-going expenditure by £15 to around £215. This would include the cost of the AGM room hire and refreshments (up to £45), adhoc advertising materials (£20), on-going website fees (£100), and miscellaneous items (£25).

This year we are due our full allocation from area which now stands at £170, plus a further £100 requested for on-going funding.

The accounts were independently checked last month by an external examiner, Mrs Gemma Honhold, (A Senior Manager at ICAEW) who has signed to verify the records accordingly.

I took on the role from Tamsin Bramley last year and would like to thank her for her assistance during this transition stage. I have enjoyed the year and I am very happy to put myself forward again for the forthcoming period as Treasurer.

Lucy Blake  
Treasurer  
Prepared 20/10/12

c. Secretary (Rory Scannell)

Not much to report, the quarterly meetings are going along nicely.

d. Membership (Gordon Bissell)

e. Footpaths (Rob Hollister)

Footpath group has always around 20 to 30 issues that they are dealing with, anything from blocked footpaths to requests for footpaths to be moved. In most cases the issues take a long time to resolve probably on average upwards of a year.

Only thing for the future is that volunteers are looked for and will be looked for to help with path clearance/improvement so you may see requests for voluntary help in our area coming through in the next year

*This information is also covered at the Area meeting so this might be a good role to combine with Area Secretary.*

Thank you to Rob for looking after this for the year.

f. Walks Programme (Andrew Woodmore)

We had a varied walks program. A thanks to new members for leading walks. We have relied on a core of people to put on walks and some of these people are not as available as they were, so we do need more new people to put on walks.

Walks are encouraged, also note that Saturdays are allowed.

We should aim at getting lots of people around new year to make use of peoples resolutions.

The introductory walks have been tremendously successful.

We do have maps, that people can borrow.

A big thanks to Andy for doing the website in such a way that it makes this job very easy.

g. Website (Andy Chandler)

The web site went through a further set of updates throughout this year. Members can now sign up to receive the level of information they wish and change this at any time. All e-mail addresses etc. are held securely and in encrypted form for safety. We have a new, slim-line gallery as the Facebook group page has taken over as a place to post pictures, chat and arrange lift-shares, as well as bounce ideas around for future socials. Our web site can post directly to Facebook and we have calendar links so anyone can add walks directly to their Google or iPhone Calendars. We have an improved postcode finder for walk starts, many cosmetic changes and many changes have gone on behind the scenes to make the committees life easier so if anyone is thinking of joining, the admin side takes just moment now!

*Is there a web calendar that people can subscribe to?*

A big thanks to Andy for making it a great website.

h. Publicity (Laura Wilkinson)

2012 saw our "plus 25 members campaign". This included a poster drive, increased Facebook

activity, some well-attended introductory walks, Lucy's welcome drinks, and water bottles for new members.

We tried to understand our membership better, with our Membership Officer sending welcome emails to all new starters, and "sorry to see you are leaving" emails to relevant leavers. A number of people were linked to the wrong Ramblers group and so were transferred into the 20/30s group. We should continue to remind people to do this and ensure that people submit membership details (alongside medical and contact details) for all weekends away going forward.

Alongside our website and our Facebook page, all walks are also loaded onto the Daily Info website. I would recommend that we try the Round and About magazine once or twice in the year too. We took part in a Radio Oxford phone-in show in the early part of the year and Alice tried a "Groups and Associations event" in Abingdon, but sadly footfall was poor.

All walk leaders are encouraged to carry the Ramblers welcome leaflets and our website highlights the benefits of being a member of the Ramblers (in terms of discounts in stores etc).

I tried contacting the walking groups at Brookes and Oxford University to make connections, but with no joy. Perhaps we should try again in 2013.

We are still heavily reliant on word-of-mouth recommendation - and it is critical that existing members continue to make every effort to welcome new and prospective walkers at walks and socials.

i. Social (Debbie McKenzie)

A nice meal out at Thai Restaurant in Abingdon- Successful turn out in February despite the snow!!  
Ballet in Oxford- Good girls night out in Oxford.  
Some joint events with Berkshire Group including Punting- not sure of the turnout?

3 successful weekends away in Ireland, New Forest and Peak District.

Good pub evenings including recently Pub Quiz.

Still as ever people need to be encouraged to put ideas forward to the social secretary otherwise Socials will be very limited!

Further socials for the rest of the Year - Christmas Do with Chilterns- Good number going from Oxon.

Christmas Drinks - Lamb and Flag in Oxford.

I will be stepping down from my role as I have other commitments.

It may work better to have this role as a joint role!!

6. Election of Committee for 2012/2013

<b>Position</b>	<b>Person Elected</b>	<b>Proposed by:</b>	<b>Seconded by:</b>
Chairman	Alice Martin	LBr	LH
Area Rep	Jonathan Dawson	AM	GB
Treasurer	Lucy Blake	RS	AM
Secretary	Rory Scannell	LBr	GB
Membership	Gordon Bissell	AM	LBr
Footpaths	-	-	-
Walks Programme	Andrew Woodmore	AM	AS
Website	Andrew Chandler	AM	LP
Publicity	Jonathan Dawson	LBr	LP
Social	Laura Sandford Rob Hollister	RS AC	LB GB
Social Media Secretary	Matthew Hutton	AM	AC
Without Portfolio	Andrew Stretton	RS	GB
Without Portfolio	Laura Broadfoot	AM	FB

7. AOB

None