



# EAST BERKS RAMBLERS

Berkshire Area

Group website: [www.eastberksramblers.org](http://www.eastberksramblers.org)

Ramblers website: [www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)

## MEMBERS NEWSLETTER No. 133 - AUGUST 2020

Ramblers Group walks have been suspended since 18th March. Our top priority is protecting the health of our members and volunteers – and given the latest government instructions, we want to do our part to help suppress the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Please visit the Ramblers website for further updates: [www.ramblers.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/coronavirus)

As a result, there is no EBR Walks Programme with this newsletter. We intend to prepare a Walks Programme now that government restrictions on group activities have been relaxed.

The committee is sad to report the passing of **John Vint**, one of our longest serving members and past Chairman. John was Chairman from 2000 to 2006 and was very engaging and innovative. We are sure he will be remembered fondly by many of you. A funeral notice and a personal tribute by Gerald Barnett are included later on in this newsletter.

### New Members

A very warm welcome to our new Members:

**Karin Diederichsen   Sheila Edgerton   Elizabeth Turner & Nicholas Gill**

You have joined a very friendly and sociable Group and we look forward to welcoming you on our walks. We hope you will enjoy your membership on walks, at our social events, and by volunteering. But even if you play a more passive role thank you for giving your support to the Ramblers, the national Association for walkers and for the protection of our rights of way heritage.

For membership enquiries contact Malcolm Stone  
Email: [membership@eastberksramblers.org](mailto:membership@eastberksramblers.org)

### Chairman's Chat *writes Gordon Marrs, Acting Chairman*

I hope you are enjoying your (partial) freedom; at least we can now see our nearest and dearest again. I expect, like me, you have had to cancel more than one holiday, I hope you are not too out of pocket as a result.

I am glad to see from your responses to Rosemary, our editor, that at least some of you have been well occupied, finding interesting and constructive things to do. Members have continued to walk, in small groups of up to six, as friends, but we may be able to hold official walks (up to 30 people) before long. Please see our Walks Organiser, Pera's, contribution for more information concerning the possible resumption of a programme.

Although the Ramblers was in effect closed down, with an embargo on all volunteering activities, I managed to get permission to carry out the Spring survey of footpaths for RBWM. Our Path Wardens all rallied round and completed the survey in about four weeks; I think they were pleased to have an excuse to get out and about.

We had to abandon the idea of celebrating our 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary this summer with a picnic, but have two other projects in hand. The first is to produce a collection of 50 Favourite Walks, in digital format. The other idea, from a suggestion by Gail Cullen, is to put up a memorial bench for David Bounds. David, together with Dave Ramm, wrote the series of 'Rambling for Pleasure' guidebooks, and the plan is to put a seat on a footpath featured in one of the books. We have chosen a site on Remenham FP 6, which features in three walks in 'Along the Thames', which was one of David's favourites. I have obtained permission from the owners of the Culden Faw estate and the matter is in hand.

The Saga of Battlemead Common continues, as Steve together with Ann Darracott (Maidenhead Civic Society) keep up the fight for public access and the use of the path across the causeway. You may have followed the series of correspondence in the `Advertiser` and Steve has written an update in this Newsletter. If you are resident in the Royal borough please consider lobbying your local councillor in support of public access.

At the time of writing we have no information on the state of play with respect to holding this year's AGM, so you are stuck with me for the duration. Prospective candidates for office can put themselves forward (please!!), nomination forms are obtainable from our secretary.

KEEP SAFE

I hope to see some of you on a walk sometime soon.

**Countryside Matters** *writes Gordon Marrs*

### **Footpaths**

The path wardens completed the Spring survey of paths for RBWM in good time. They clocked up about 350 miles and undertook over 200 hours of field work. They deserve our special thanks for doing all of this under the lockdown regime. There were no urgent issues uncovered needing attention and I submitted my usual summary report to the Rights of Way team at RBWM.

### **Planning**

The planning application PA 19/03103, for the new car park on Battlemead Common is still under review, as there were objections from several quarters. My regular checking of all new planning applications has not highlighted any serious problems with regard to public access or rights of way.

### **Countryside**

Battlemead Common still occupies a lot of our attention, although no face-to-face meetings are scheduled due to the lockdown restrictions. There may be an on-line meeting of the Friends of Battlemead at some stage to try to agree the management plan. Steve is our champion and I refer you to his report for an update on the situation.

**From the Footpath Secretary** *writes Steve Gillions*

**Battlemead Common: access and management still uncertain**



Cliveden from the Causeway path

The drawn-out saga of how Battlemead Common should be managed by the Council in the best interests of walkers and wildlife has entered a new stage. In May the Council announced, without any consultation, that the Causeway Path would only be open for two days of the year. We made strong representations to the Council on this and challenged some of the more extreme positions taken by others through the pages of the Maidenhead Advertiser.

In a personal capacity I have been working for some time with others to try and convince the Council to take a balanced approach based on mutual compromise and open discussion. We put forward a proposal that a walkway should be made through Willow Field, following the line of an old path. This could be done as a community project using volunteers. We have also asked the Council to produce the evidence that supported their initial proposals but unfortunately they have not yet done so. The Council's latest proposals were

- The Causeway Path will be open between April and September but closed for the remainder of the year to safeguard over-wintering birds. The path will be fenced and hedged.
- There will be a new fenced path in the East Field running parallel to the Thames Path, making part of the East Field open year round.
- The Willow Woodland will remain closed to public access on the grounds that this would adversely affect wildlife and entail significant tree clearance.

I say 'were' because a week after issuing these proposals the Council has put things on ice. This decision seems to have arisen as a result of representations made by various organisations. Our sole concern is that Battlemead is managed in the most appropriate way, given the various pressures on it, and have accepted from the outset that this means access cannot be unlimited.

You will see elsewhere in the Newsletter that the **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Millennium Walk** will take place on **Sunday 20 September**. Please come along – it's important that we use the walk we have fought so hard to get.

### **Temporary Footpath Closure at Dorney Lake**

The landowners, Eton College, have obtained a temporary footpath closure order for the path that runs from the entrance just beyond Dorney Court to the Thames Path. The closure is for a maximum of six months.

The reason for this is that Dorney Lake was used for a number of illegal raves during the covid pandemic and the police consequently asked for an Anti Social Behaviour Order to close the area. The landowners now want to erect fencing to prevent future repeats. Whilst regrettable, I think their action is understandable. I will be writing to Eton College to ensure that they adhere to the timescales for the work and re-open the path at the proper time.

I think that's about all for now. I hope you are all managing to get some walking in now that restrictions have been eased a little. I've certainly managed to get out and about, including a short trip to one of the remoter parts of the Lake District. Talking to hill walking friends around the country, things are beginning to open up and sensible walkers are welcomed albeit with some reservations in places. Show proper consideration of others and the environment seems to be the watchword but none of you will need reminding of that.

Enjoy your walking and stay safe.

### **Millennium Walk – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Walk - *It's back on !***

*writes Steve Gillions*

### **Sunday 20 September 2020**

#### **Start 2pm at the National Trust car park (opposite the Scout Hut) at Pinkneys Green**

The Millennium Walk is a joint project of East Berks Ramblers and Maidenhead Civic Society. You will remember from the last Newsletter that we had planned to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Millennium Walk by a group walk along the stretch from Pinkneys Green to Boulter's Lock, crossing Battlemead Common along the way. The Covid pandemic meant we had to postpone this but EBR and MCS have re-scheduled the walk for Sunday 20 September, leaving the National Trust Car Park in Pinkneys Green at 2.00pm.

The walk will cover a distance of about 4 miles and will be organised and led by Steve Gillions (EBR) and Ann Darracott (MCS). Please note that this is not an official Ramblers Walk.

EBR and MCS have been strong advocates of the Causeway Route across Battlemead although the Council has yet to make a decision. We need as many people as possible to join in this walk to demonstrate that there is a lot of support for it and to show that walkers will behave responsibly when crossing Battlemead and respect the wildlife.

We plan to register this walk for Heritage Open Days (HODS) as this year their topic is unusually *Hidden*

*Nature* rather than heritage buildings. Please register as soon as you can to be sure of a place as numbers are limited.



## Where and when?

The start of the walk is at the junction of Marlow Road and Winter Hill Road in Pinkneys Green, grid reference SU 862 826, post code SL6 6NS. Parking will be available on the National Trust land, opposite the Scout Hut in Pinkneys Green.

Walkers should assemble at **1.45pm for a 2.00pm** start from the National Trust land. En route we will point out the remaining missing link between Switchback Road and the Green Way.

## Practicalities

### Covid 19

The Covid advice is ever-changing and we will of course work to the government advice as it stands at the time of the walk. Our current thoughts are as follows.

- Numbers on the walk will need to be limited to a maximum of 50 all told. To book a place contact Tina Sell from the MCS at [tina.sell@talktalk.net](mailto:tina.sell@talktalk.net) or mobile 07989 332759. Tina will coordinate booking for EBR and MCS.
- People should walk in 'bubbles' of up to five, maintaining appropriate social distancing within each group and between groups. We are intending to provide hand sanitiser at the start of the walk but you should take any other equipment such as masks with you.
- We will need to have names and contact details of all walkers. This allows us to monitor numbers and facilitate contact tracing if this becomes necessary.
- We will need a number of marshals to act as signposts along the route and monitor numbers: volunteers invited.

## Transport

- The walk is a point-to-point route, not a circular one. People should therefore consider car sharing. Within your bubble, two drivers (and any passengers) and their cars meet at Boulton's Lock, parking one car and driving to Pinkneys Green in the other. At the end of the walk both drivers return to Pinkneys Green to retrieve the first car.
- Boulton's Lock Car Park may be well-used on the day, especially if the weather is good. There is alternative parking at Riverside Gardens Car Park to the south and (limited) on road parking at the northern end of Sheephouse Road.

## Interested? Here's what you need to do ....

- Organise a 'bubble' with two drivers.
- Contact Tina Sell giving her names and phone numbers: see details above.
- Let me know if you are prepared to be a marshal on the day. The duties will not be onerous but we do need to make sure our organisation and monitoring is as good as it needs to be.
- And finally – put the date in your diary! **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September 1.45 pm at Pinkneys Green**

Remember 2020 is also the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of East Berks Ramblers, so hope to see you at the celebration event.



## What next for the walks programme?

*writes Pera Marrs, Walks Programme Co-ordinator*

Back in March we were a week away from publishing our summer walks programme. Then came the Great Lockdown and we could only walk on our own or with our household.

As restrictions have started to lift, I know that many of you have started to walk in groups of upto 6 rambler friends. Some have stayed in one group, others walk with different friends on different walks. These are all unofficial walks arranged between friends who happen to be Ramblers.

Ramblers have suddenly announced that we are clear to walk with groups of 30 from 30<sup>th</sup> July, but along with this come long lists of conditions.

- We need to keep a list of walkers, no problem;
- We should book places on the walk. (*The committee may decide to reduce the maximum number of walkers from the 30 suggested by Ramblers.*)
- There is a 3-page risk assessment form to be filled in for each walk. We are looking to simplify that.
- And finally, all the leaders have to be registered as Volunteers, and most of ours are not. Just to be helpful the Ramblers have changed the volunteers' site to a new Assemble site linked to their app.

It will take a while for the Committee to sort all this out, so we plan to produce a walk programme for October. In the meantime carry on walking in small groups of uninsured friends, with Tony, Alma, or any other leaders. (See Alma and Tony's items). I think it is likely that a lot of you will be happier walking in small groups to start with anyway. I expect these walks to continue alongside the official walks and if we can sort the risk assessments and registering the leaders, they can become part of the official insured programme.

With all these complications, I do not plan to produce a full 4 month programme initially. Viv and I will contact our walk leaders and produce a programme for one month, which will be displayed online, on our updated website. We will continue to produce monthly programmes probably until December, when hopefully we can return to the old system and produce a Spring programme.

I am sorry but there will be no printed copies of these monthly programmes, so if you know of friends with no computer access, perhaps you could print them a copy, or pass on details of the next walk.

Please check the EBR website for all the latest updates. <https://www.eastberksramblers.org/>  
Enjoy the walking we are still able to do, and let's hope that we all meet safe and sound before Christmas!

## Unofficial walks during the restrictive lockdown period

*From Alma Richardson*

If any of the 'Shorter Walkers' would like to join me on a walk (3-5 miles) that I will offer on either a Wednesday morning or Sunday morning (not every week), then please contact me on my email so that I can register your interest. I shall circulate those that have responded with the details of where and when. As you know I am limited to 5 people plus me, so it will be on a first come basis.

My email address: [richardsonalma@gmail.com](mailto:richardsonalma@gmail.com)

*From Tony Hatch*

Small group walking may be with us for some time and has already been happening with walks ranging from 3 to 10 miles, often in fixed groups. Some walk leaders are trying to widen access to walks but data protection rules limit contact possibilities. A way to reach all of our members is via this EBRA newsletter. You may respond by calling me in the first instance on **01628 623140** with all subsequent communication by email. In return I will pass your details to walk leaders to make contact with you and offer walk details. Due to a limit of six on a walk you may only attend if the leader has confirmed acceptance or a possible standby status. If you are accepted on a walk and then have to cancel, please do it promptly as this will free up space for another person. Walks may be spasmodic and on any day of the week,

It is conditional that you accept my passing of key details to walk.

Ideally Alma's walks programme in this section is the method to use but due to the short time before newsletter publication, this is currently the only route.

***Please note these are not official EBR walks and you are therefore not covered by Ramblers insurance and you participate at your own risk. They will not appear on the EBR website.***

## John Vint – 1 July 1922 – 3 August 2020

John Vint, Chairman of the East Berkshire Ramblers 2000 – 2006, passed away peacefully on Monday, 3 August. His funeral will take place at 11.00 am on Wednesday 26 August at Our Lady of Peace Burnham, SL2 2NL.

There are restricted numbers at the funeral but Father Joseph has said that people are welcome to pay their respects outside the church and along the road.

John asked for no flowers at his funeral but wanted to do some good in his passing for those less fortunate than us and supported WaterAid - a Just Giving page has been set up if you would like to donate to this worthy cause in memory of John.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/john-vint-98>



### John Vint, A Personal Tribute *written by Gerald Barnett*

When I retired in 1993 I joined the Ramblers and was assigned to the Wycombe Group. After 6 months of walks with them I grew tired of their obsession with distance rather than admiring the scenery and stopping occasionally “to smell the flowers!”. On one walk soon after a group from East Berks Ramblers was present, including John Vint. John told me “you should switch to our Group, we like to take our time on walks”. Well, I did and have not looked back and been ever grateful to John for the suggestion.

I served for a number of years as Group Secretary on the East Berks Committee including the time when John was Chairman. John was effective and led by example when things needed to be done. This included reviving the application to reward with an MBE our Footpath Secretary, the late Margaret Bowdery, Group founder and, probably, the most respected Footpath Secretary in the Ramblers. John masterminded this successful application and was delighted with the outcome, even though they did not always see eye-to-eye over footpath priorities in Committee meetings!



John Vint leading a strollerthon in 2019



In 1994 John, myself, Russell Spencer, Gordon Marrs and Jim Keehan (an American friend of John) decided to walk the Thames Path in occasional stages from the Thames Barrier to the Source. We completed this in 19 stages by summer 1996. John was a delightful companion and regaled us with innumerable stories. He told us that he had been a workaholic who dreaded the day that he would have to retire but on joining the Ramblers, and East Berks Group in particular, he changed completely and walking became a passionate obsession.

Soon afterwards, I took and passed the Guidelines Course to become a Walks Leader for HF Holidays. I can remember being on a Group walk that John led and him telling the walkers at the break with pride that I honoured the Group by becoming an HF Leader.

John led many walks for the Group but, inevitably, age began to tell and we began to see him less on Group walks. Then in a flash of inspiration (and perhaps his greatest legacy) John proposed the concept of the Strollerthon, a short walk from a place with a café to allow older Group members to continue to meet up and socialise. After a slowish start this has now become (prior to Covid 19!) a permanent fortnightly feature on the Group's Walks Programme. John would often be found, leading initially and joining in latterly, with his all-terrain walking frame, until, in his late 90's, this became too much for him.

John was an inspirational Group member, true friend and brilliant raconteur - he will be sorely missed by me and, I am sure, all who knew him.



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Call: 01707 819261

**Ramblers**  
Walking  
Holidays

## Booking a trip with Ramblers Holidays?

EBR are affiliated to the Walking Partnership. If you book a holiday with Ramblers Walking Holidays, Cruise and Walk or Adagio then please remember to nominate East Berkshire Ramblers when you do your booking to ensure we receive funds. Please note the nomination must be done before the holiday and cannot be done retrospectively.

For details please go to [www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk](http://www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk)

## The Three Castles Path *reports Richard Falconer*

John Harden and I will lead the walk next year. We have walked most of the route from Windsor and only have the final stage into Winchester to do. The *Three Castles Path* is a 60-mile long-distance footpath based on the 13th-century journeys of King John at the time of Magna Carta.

I hope that everyone will be fit and able to join us on April 7th 2021

## Walking In England

We received an email from John Harris giving details of his website which includes free walks to download plus details of walking clubs in the country and various other pieces of information.

<https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk>

John is keen to create awareness of his site and asked us to let EBR members know of its existence so if you are looking for a walk then check out John's website and I am sure you will find something that will suit you. John's site is organised by County, and links to the walks in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire can be found on the [walks page](#) of the EBR website.

## What have you been doing during Lockdown?

Thank you to all members who responded to our request for information on what you have been doing during lockdown. Here are some of the responses:

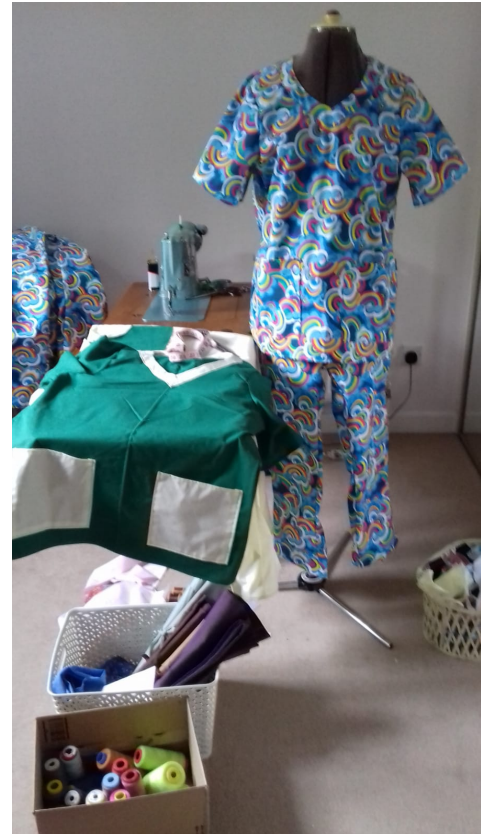
### **Busy making scrubs for the NHS** *from Dotty Lindsay*

I am very fortunate in having good neighbours. They constantly ask if they can get anything for me. I know that the lady across the Green shops at the Farm shop and my friends in the Lane shop at Ocado and Waitrose, but no one seems to shop at M & S! Communications are good too with a What's App group which was set up previously. One neighbour is doing a Saturday exercise class, another set up a lunch, each sitting in their own front garden to toast one another. We also all turned out to clap the NHS on Thursday evenings. And our Minister sends us via Zoom a church service every Sunday and there were devotions throughout Holy Week.

The Mayor of the Royal Borough has set up an appeal for Scrubs for the NHS. I spoke to the Mayor's PA and volunteered to sew the garments, a quick trip to South Ascot for fabric and back home to make a pattern, turn the dining room into a cutting room and upstairs to the backroom where the sewing machine is to make up and display on "Frieda" the dress form.

I have also enrolled my friends at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle to help out. I have since found out that it was a Minister in Hackney who first had the idea and now there are 60 other groups around the country who are sewing Scrubs. (5,000 are needed.) The BBC are putting together a documentary and want to feature me – so watch this space!

All of a sudden I have a focus and am very busy – and pleased to be so.



### **Saved by Harvey** *from Eve Norton*

Our lockdown has been made bearable by Harvey, our Westie. He demands a walk, at least an hour, every morning and sometimes one in the afternoon. We live 5 minutes walk from Pinkneys Green and Maidenhead Thicket and so life has been fine for us. We have seen a succession of beautiful flowers there starting with cowslips, dog-daisies, buttercups, vetch and scabious. The orchids are now in flower and we can also count the many types of butterflies.

We have met a few fellow ramblers whilst dog-walking, keeping socially distant, and have exchanged news. Roger has purchased an electric bike and this has enabled us to explore the bridle paths and local quiet country lanes. My bike has a basket in which Harvey sits (safely clipped in). We sometimes go for a ride, then a walk through the woods and ride home.

Now that camp-sites are open, we are planning a trip to Cornwall in our trusty campervan

### **Wildlife visitors** *from Liz Richardson*

We all enjoy wildlife, don't we? Well, yes and no. During lockdown I have had two new wildlife visitors to my garden and, as with all visitors, some are welcome and some are not!

My first (unwelcome) visitor in May was a large brown rat which didn't skulk round in the undergrowth but made a determined bee-line, or rat-line, to my bird table. There it gobbled up the few morsels which had dropped to the ground from the feeders and which the greedy pigeons and magpies had missed.

With the lack of normal sources of food, e.g. rubbish from catering establishments or discarded take-outs, this rat was moving on from street food and testing a new local restaurant but not for long.



Sadly for the birds, the bird table was withdrawn (only temporarily) and Ratty has been seen no more.

My second (welcome) visitor in June/July was a hedgehog now referred to as Tiggy. Although it's unusual to see a hedgehog out in daylight, during the Summer months after hoglets are born in June/July, an appearance during the late afternoon (Tiggy comes between 5:30 and 7) is likely to be a female foraging for food or nest material. Tiggy enjoys the hedgehog food I've left out, as the photo proves, and I'm hoping that I might see hoglets in due course if I'm lucky.



### **Delightful daily walks** *from Eleanor Griffiths*



Daily walks in lockdown have been a delight, finding new paths really close to home and observing the changes in the grasses and wildflowers on Maidenhead Thicket and Pinkneys Green.

The main unusual thing that lockdown allowed me to do was to transcribe my late father's memoirs from his scrawled handwriting to a Word document - something I had been promising myself (and my family!) that I would do for nearly the last thirty years. When I started I remember hoping that the lockdown would last long enough for me to get the task done. I finished on 24th April, many weeks before any relaxation of the lockdown rules

### **Rebecca's Well, Crazies Hill**

*from Alma Richardson*

During the lockdown I led a 5 mile walk from Crazies Hill with 4 friends from EBR, the purpose of which was to visit Rebecca's Well which Wargrave Parish Council had recently restored at a cost of around £5,400 to commemorate it being 150 years old. It is now a Grade II listed structure.

Although it is referred to as a "well", it isn't actually a well but a natural spring that local villagers visited to collect fresh water for their cottages nearby. It was originally known as Rebra's Well which is thought to be a shortened version of the biblical name Rebecca and so eventually it was referred to as Rebecca's Well. It is interesting that the name Crazies Hill originated from the well (spring) being nearby, meaning CRAY-WY-ZEATH hill, that is the hill of 'the fresh clean water of the waterless place'.



### **Wildlife and views** *from Martin Cox*

During the lockdown I revisited footpaths of Bray Parish where I live, discovering lots of wildlife, bee hives and great views. There were some defects on paths particularly footbridges which I reported to RBWM who made swift repairs. I also met a friend regularly and walked around Ockwells Park and Thrift Wood (brilliant bluebell display) followed by coffee at Andrea's Cafe. I "adopted" Grenfell Park and Bray Lake which were suffering from persistent litter issues, doing a pick once a week. Quite amusing was a householder who challenged me when I stopped to tip everything out to separate recyclable items. Please take everything away, my reply was 'I don't live here, just picking up litter in your park'. Great coffee and burgers in Grenfell Park, value for money and the cafe proprietor very friendly.

Next as lockdown restrictions eased, I was able to complete footpath surveys for RBWM as I am footpath warden for most of Bray Parish.

I have a casual paid job as a driver for a health trust. During the pandemic I took nurses to residents houses/care homes to take swabs, or conveyed patients home who had been discharged from hospital. For several years I have been a volunteer at Maidenhead Foodshare (foodbank), my commitment went from one evening to three days a week. We normally support 300 people a week, within two weeks of lockdown this rose to 800. I have been either sorting donations or being a traffic marshal to assist deliveries.

Last of all, my wife wanted to have a go at geocaching in the local area. Great fun but got some strange looks when scrabbling around in undergrowth looking for the caches !!!

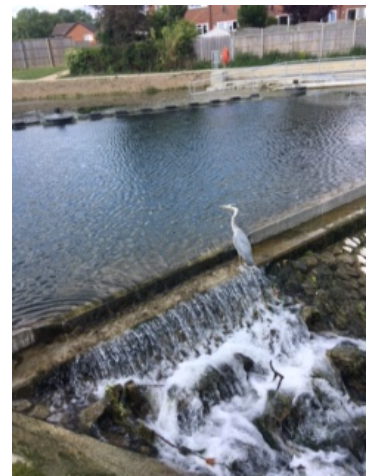
### **Personal walks** *from Bob Pedley*

I've used some of my time as an opportunity to build up a few more routes into the wonderful Ramblers Routes library, which lives on the Ramblers.org website. The library now has more than a dozen walks starting within about 5 miles of my home in Slough. Perhaps other Ramblers could use this opportunity to contribute to the library by documenting walks near their home? Some of my walks are ready for the next stage, which is independent checking. If any of the East Berkshire group have the opportunity they could help by logging into the Ramblers website and verifying my walks.

### **I enjoy my walking** *from Mary Williams*

Fortunately I have been able to really enjoy myself walking every day: Cookham, towpath from Maidenhead bridge passing Monkey Island, parts of the Greenway, Battlemead and Widbrook Commons, Ockwells Park, etc. Often during times of glorious weather. I have led an evening walk with just 4 of us. We went past the Weir, although we didn't see the heron as shown on the enclosed photograph. It was only about 3 miles along the paths of Braywick.

I have also done quite a bit of cycling, and most weeks with a friend, often starting from The Jubilee River. It has been great to see a lot of activity there, from canoeing and poling.



### **Checking fruit trees** *from John Langley*

Walking on the common from Ray Street to Cookham and back along the Thames path I always check on the many fruit trees along the way.

### **Good work in the community** *from Gail Cullen*

Aside from litter picking around the village and the paths of the EBRA published walks in and around Binfield, Customer Services / Street Cleaning Team at Bracknell Forest Council must groan when they see my multiple reports of fly tipping to be removed!

## **East Berkshire Group AGM - Friday 13th November 2020**

We have a provisional booking at Claire's Court for our AGM to be held on Friday, 13th November 2020. At present, it seems unlikely that we will be able to go ahead and steps may need to be taken to hold a virtual meeting. Please keep a watch on the website for further updates.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memories – Maureen Prince – Member since the mid-1970s**

*Writes Malcolm Stone Membership Secretary*

In April, I had a very enjoyable conversation with Maureen, a retired local librarian, after receiving her wonderful handwritten letter in response to my note on her personal membership details. She joined the Ramblers with her late husband John, who got heavily involved with path maintenance work, which was one of the original reasons EBR was formed. Maureen became good friends with Margaret Bowdery, David Bounds, Peter and Mollie Neville and



Dave Ramm.

Together with John, she did a lot of walking abroad, for example, in Madeira and Spain. Today at 80 years of age, living in Wargrave, she is still very active, with six miles being her walking limit these days. Unfortunately, as she does not drive, she can't get to any of our mid-week walks. Another passion is golf, which she plays at the nearby Hennerton Golf Club.

She helped Dave Ramm by providing information for the Rambling for Pleasure books, and has also written two chapters for a book on Wargrave. Other interests include local history and the countryside. She used to give slideshows to the Rotary, WI, EBR and other local organisations. Does anyone remember being at the EBR slideshow? Another longstanding interest is birdwatching, Maureen being a RSPB member since 1976.

She has happy memories of EBR weekend trips to Barton-on-Sea, Porlock, Sidmouth and Wales. There also used to be folk dancing at Neville Hall, Waltham St Lawrence. Maureen mentioned that she really looks forward to receiving the EBR Newsletter. She wishes to convey her best 'Rambling Wishes' to our older members, who may remember her. If anyone wishes to get in contact with Maureen to have a chat and reminisce, her contact number is 0118 940 2430.

## 2020 EBR Group Holidays

### Spring Break 2020 – Craflwyn Hall, Snowdonia

The Spring Break, scheduled for end April, was cancelled by the HF House because of the coronavirus outbreak.

### Autumn Break 2020 *writes Gail Cullen*

#### Alnmouth Holiday with HF

HF Nether Grange opened at the end of July and much to our surprise the group holiday of guided walks is able to go ahead. The HF houses opened initially for self-guided walking holidays only and I couldn't see how that would work for our large group booking. The itinerary is very different from the holiday the group signed up to, with all walks currently from the house. A larger number of leaders have been assigned to follow government guidelines. A select group of 15 people are due to travel.

Little did I know how much work would be involved when I volunteered to organise an EBRA Autumn break, collating 32 responses and cross checking all the details!

The balance for the holiday was due at the end of July, I left it to HF to recalculate the figures.

### Spring Break 2021

Arthur Holland has advised that he will take soundings in late autumn to find out what interest there will be from members for a Spring walking holiday. Hopefully by then we might know a little more of the restrictions that may be encountered.

### Autumn Break - September 2021

I was very surprised to be contacted by HF in May to be informed that my request for a Group Autumn break in September 2021 has been confirmed! All HF houses were closed at the time.

As the 7 day break in Northumberland was considered too far away or too long a break for some, I have opted for a 4 day break, Monday to Friday at Abingworth Hall on the South Downs in September next year. I love the South Downs, having led walks along the South Downs Long Distance path a number of times in the early 1990's. Plus a selection of Raymond Hugh's "Adventurous Walks" in later years. I do hope some of you will join me at HF. Monday 20 September – Friday 24 September 2021 at £475 per person. For Sole occupancy we will need 35 guests, the house has capacity for 38. Booking arrangements to follow in separate correspondence.



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## Saturday Coach Walks

Eve Norton reports that it is too early to make a decision on Coach Walks in 2021 but if the coach prices are right and there is sufficient interest from our members then there is no reason why they should not go ahead.

## EBR New Year Lunch 2021 *writes Alma Richardson*

We still have restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic and at the time of writing I cannot give you menu details for our New Year Lunch which has been booked for **Sunday 17th January 2021**. Although we would like to hold the event at the Winter Hill Golf Club as in previous years it may be that a larger venue will be required should the one metre social distancing rule still be in place at that time.

We will keep monitoring the situation and a further update and full details will be given in the December Newsletter if and when the event will take place.

## Rambling For Pleasure Books

We have all seen more people walking in our local communities during the lockdown period and there has been increased interest in the Rambling for Pleasure books. 18 orders were received on line and Gail spotted one in use.

### From Gail Cullen

One Saturday morning in June I was walking down the lane in Binfield (Wicks Green) and a young couple joined the lane, rucksacks in place. I noticed they had a copy of the East Berkshire Rambling for Pleasure Book (green) and were off on the walk "Monks Alley and Orange Hill". We chatted briefly and they said they had the book for a couple of years and also the yellow one Walks around Reading. Both had got them through lockdown. Thanks to the two David's (Bounds and Ramm), Peter Neville and all the others over the years instrumental in publishing and reviewing the East Berkshire Rambling for Pleasure books, and those who maintain our footpaths. It is appreciated.

### Email received from a 'Three Castles Path' guide user

"Just wanted to share that my wife and I bought the 3 castles book back when we were first married during the 1990s but only got so far because we only had one car and access via public transport isn't always easy. Now we are in our 50s, we have used that book during lockdown to complete the full walk over multiple weekends.

The book from the 90s stands up quite well. It has been a true treat, thank you."

### Do you need to update your collection of the Group's *Rambling for Pleasure* walks guides and Parish Maps?

The books are available from Amazon and other book suppliers. They are also available from the **Group Secretary**.

Send your details to [groupsecretary@eastberksramblers.org](mailto:groupsecretary@eastberksramblers.org).

Please add £1.40 p&p per copy for guidebooks and £1 per copy for footpath maps.

Please make cheques payable to **EBR or East Berks Ramblers**.

Parish maps can now be downloaded from the [EBR website](http://EBR website).

**Books:** *The Secrets of Countryside Access* £3; *The Three Castles Path* £7.99;

*In East Berkshire* £7.99; *Along the Thames*; *Around Reading Series 2*;

*Kenet Valley and Watership Down* (at £4.95 each).

**Maps:** *Windsor and the Great Park* (£1.50); Parish maps (see [EBR website](http://EBR website) for list) (50p).

The views or opinions expressed by individuals in this Newsletter are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Committee. The Editors welcome letters and articles from members but reserve the right to reject or edit contributions. Would contributors please note that all items for inclusion in the next issue of the Newsletter should be submitted, preferably by email, to the Editors (address below) as soon as possible and no later than **Sunday 29th November 2020**.

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