

**Issue 7**

**DECEMBER 2025**

# **EAST DEVON RAMBLINGS**

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## **WINTER 2025 EDITION**

As the year draws to a close and the festive season is upon us, we can take a moment to look back on a wonderful year of walking together.

This year we had an endless supply of bright and sunny days with endless blue skies, as well as some crisp Autumn rambles, it's been a joy to share so many miles, laughs and memories. It's now time to wrap up the year and look ahead to 2026.

We can look forward to new routes, fresh adventures, and plenty more opportunities to stretch our legs and enjoy good company, whatever the weather may bring.



*Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year!*

## **UPDATING YOUR CONTACT DETAILS**

Members regularly email us with updates to phone numbers and email addresses; however, we are unable to update the main Ramblers database. You can update your own details by going into your own Ramblers account or alternatively ask central office to do it via telephone on 020-3961-3232 or you can email your request using [ramblers@ramblers.zendesk.com](mailto:ramblers@ramblers.zendesk.com)

## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH



Another festive visit to the Victoria Hotel, Sidmouth for our Christmas lunch was enjoyed by 70 members, and Santa and his elves remembered where to deliver Walk Leaders' gifts too!

We anticipate booking this venue again for our 2026 celebrations so keep an eye out for the confirmed date in the Summer 2026 Walk Programme.

## GREAT TURNOUT FOR NORMA'S 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY WALK

*BY JOY WHITELY*

The forecast was dire with Storm Claudia on its way but that didn't deter East Devon Ramblers from turning up at Colyton Peace Memorial Playing Fields to show appreciation for all Norma has contributed over the years.

Thirty-four of us turned up for the walk around Colyton led by Norma, ably assisted by Jas. When we got back to Colyton, Jas told us about the history of the Church and by this time the rain was coming down heavily, so we hastened to the Pavilion where we were joined by another fifteen people for tea and cake.

Many thanks to Jas and Mike for organising the venue and to Jas for the lovely selection of cakes which included a birthday carrot cake – Norma's favourite.

Naomi presented Norma with a well-deserved bouquet of flowers and a Certificate of Appreciation for her contribution to EDR over many years.

It was a lovely, happy occasion, and good to see so many past and present members. Norma said that she really enjoyed the day and would like to pass on her thanks to everyone for coming. Here's to the next 10 years, Norma!



## WALK LEADERS

In Spring 2025 Ramblers introduced "a new approach to walk leader training", requiring all leaders to confirm their experience or to undertake some training by 2026. You might have heard about it, even if you are not a leader.

This followed the development of a Walk Leader Handbook in 2024 and feedback from many Ramblers Groups including our own. We are lucky to have many experienced and skilful leaders here in East Devon enabling us to offer lots of varied and interesting walks every year. Some leaders had led so many walks in the previous year that they were accredited automatically.

For those who were not, training was required by Ramblers, either online, by reading hard-copies of the material or coming along to a local workshop. The workshops covered the same material but included the benefit of discussion with fellow leaders with a soothing application of tea and cake.

After several months of hard work by many people we now have a list of 77 fully-trained, fabulous leaders (88 if you count partners). Thank you to all of you who successfully navigated their way through the training and to everyone who helped achieve this result.



Don't forget, we are always looking for new leaders to keep our busy walks programme going. There is loads of help to get you started including:

- A pre-planned local route, local workshops to learn and discuss the "how to" and then have a go at leading with other newbies,
- a buddy leader from East Devon
- someone to help you recce your first walks

Contact Jas on 01297 552313 or April 07922 651426 if you want to step out at the front of one of our walks.

## SIDMOUTH AND EAST DEVON WALKING FESTIVAL

This year's September walking festival was our most successful yet, with a record number of participants taking part. There were a great variety of walks to choose from, and the Special Interest walks proved especially popular. A huge thank you to all of our walk leaders, backmarkers and helpers for their hard work and enthusiasm. The festival wouldn't be possible without you.



We received lots of positive feedback from walkers; here are some of the comments;

- I thought the programme this year was excellent-something for everyone.
- Extremely well organised festival by all of you behind the scenes planning walks. The guides are well informed and look after their group with care and attention. Hope the festival will flourish beyond this year.
- Please keep going.



- It's great to see more shorter special interest walks, thank you.
- The walk introduced us to a part of Devon we wouldn't have necessarily visited.
- Super scenery, good quality leaders, nice, varied terrain, and views. Happy!

We are already looking ahead to next year and would love to have more helpers involved. The help that we require is:

- Someone who can send by email the booking sheet to the Tourist Information Centre and then email the completed sheet to the walk leaders the night before the actual walk taking place.
- Someone to help with PR or media.
- Someone to help distribute promotional leaflets, posters, postcards.
- Anyone who would like to help man the stand on Launch Day.
- Anyone who can be a "reserve" — someone whom we can call on to help out if we are overwhelmed and need another pair of hands.
- More walk leaders and back markers please.

If you are interested in getting involved, please do get in touch with:

Tim Spray. [tim@lunatika.org.uk](mailto:tim@lunatika.org.uk)

Mike Garrick. [mikegarrick@btinternet.com](mailto:mikegarrick@btinternet.com)

Eve Maunder. [yvonnemaunder@gmail.com](mailto:yvonnemaunder@gmail.com)

## NEWQUAY WALKING HOLIDAY

Fifty-six East Devon Ramblers spent a memorable week in October either walking the coast path from Padstow to St Ives or visiting places of interest.

The weather could have been kinder to us but on the whole, we managed to dodge the worst of the wet weather and complete the task we had set out to do.



*This poem was sent in by Sue Cox:*

- ~ *Last year it was North, this year it was West. Which of the two do you think is the best?*
- ~ *In the North, the weather was kinder by far, in the West the weather wasn't on par.*
- ~ *With boots at the ready we were off at a trot, for Saturdays walk was 14 miles- that's a lot!*
- ~ *Sunday and Monday the weather wasn't very kind, but the hardy walkers kept going, for they were of one mind.*
- ~ *The wind and the rain would not stop them from walking; all helped along with some amiable talking.*

- ~ *For others, the Eden Project was our goal, a really worthwhile visit, and all built in a bowl.*
- ~ *Industry had finished quarrying for China clay, two biomes transformed into what we see today.*
- ~ *Some members visited historical houses each day, there were plenty to choose from I have to say.*
- ~ *One group went off with their binoculars clutched near, to find migrant birds and a Chough or two I hear.*
- ~ *We visited an owl sanctuary where birds were guaranteed, had owls flying over us at quite a speed.*
- ~ *Art Galleries, museums, and towns were visited each day, with Ramblers dropped off for walking along the way.*
- ~ *We all returned safe and sound to our hotel every night, where dinner was served, so that was alright.*
- ~ *A ventriloquist, magician and singer were there to entertain, with a barn dance and games that Eve had to explain.*
- ~ *The coach driver drove down many a narrow Cornish lane, it was great having someone to take the strain.*
- ~ *The week seemed to fly by and to Devon we had to return, the driver dropped us off safely, all in turn.*
- ~ *How Eve put together the timetable I really don't know, she really deserves a medal to put on show.*
- ~ *Safely back in Exmouth with her feet up for a while, I hope she doesn't think it was too much of a trial.*
- ~ *Our walk leaders were brilliant and deserve a pat on the back, and as for the back markers there was never a lack.*
- ~ *Discovering pastures afar was a week well spent, Eve said she's not organising another, but perhaps she'll relent?*

## HEALTH MATTERS

### Pros and cons of walking poles

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#### PROS

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##### *Reduced impact on joints:*

One of the greatest advantages of walking poles is how they help reduce strain on your knees, hips, and ankles, especially when descending steep slopes. By distributing some of your body weight through your arms, poles can absorb up to 25% of the impact that would otherwise stress your lower joints.

##### *Improved stability and balance:*

Uneven terrain, wet grass, or loose stones can easily throw you off balance. Poles act as additional points of contact with the ground, offering extra stability and confidence, particularly when crossing streams or tackling rocky paths. They can also help prevent slips and falls on muddy tracks.

Using poles encourages you to walk more upright, opening up your chest and improving breathing efficiency. Poles also help establish a steady rhythm which can aid walking. Poles can also be useful to test water depth in puddles, firmness on boggy ground. They can also be used to squash down nettles and brambles.

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### **CONS:**

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Carrying poles means extra weight. They can be cumbersome when not in use.

Hands are not free so it's more difficult to take photos and delve into the rucksack. It's also something that can be left behind when stopping for a lunch or coffee break.

Some walkers grow dependent on poles, even when the terrain is mild. Over time, this might reduce natural balance and leg strength.

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### **SUMMARY:**

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Walking poles can be an excellent addition to your Rambling kit, especially if you tackle varied or hilly terrain. They help to protect joints, improve balance, and offer a modest workout for the upper body. However, they are not essential for every walk.

## **CAR SHARING ON WALKS**

To facilitate car sharing, a number of WhatsApp groups have been set up. Car sharing is better for the environment and can help if there are limited car parking facilities at the start of a walk.

Walkers can post they are going on a particular walk, mentioning where they live and are looking to car share a lift. Anyone interested in going on that particular walk would be able to buddy up.

## **CALL FOR INPUT**

We hope that you found this edition of 'Ramblings' interesting and informative. If there is anything you would like to contribute to the next edition, please contact Eve on [yvonnemaunder@gmail.com](mailto:yvonnemaunder@gmail.com).