

# NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2023



Aug 23 – Peter's Carn Pica walk - Photo Jackie

## Walks Programme.

This year a full and varied programme of walks and weekends away have been enjoyed by the group. Walks over the year have been well attended, although numbers on the Wednesday evening walks dropped off a little bit from previous years.



Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 New Year's Day walk led by Sarah – Photo Jackie

The traditional New Year's Day walk was led by Sarah, with hospitality at the end provided by Chris and Nicki at their house. The magnificent refreshments provided were much appreciated.

Last year the group sponsored a re-print of a Valeways walk leaflet re-named to commemorate Graham Woosnam, a longstanding VoG member who was involved in setting up Valeways and documenting many of their walks. In April 2023 Graham's nephew John led "The Woosnam Walk" around Welsh St Donats in his memory. Graham's partner Helen F and daughter Karen also came along, with a good turnout from the group.





Karen, Helen F and Jon on "The Woosnam Walk" Apr 23

In July 23 for the first time in several years we were able to enjoy a coach ramble, organised by Jean, Ian, Mike and Judy. The trip was well supported, with short and longer walk options ending together at Cheddar Gorge. Fortunately the weather was kind and there were great views over the Mendip Hills.



Coach Ramble to Cheddar Gorge July 23 - Photo Mike



Last summer Wed evening walk on Kenfig Beach, led by Jeff and Jane Aug 23 - Photo Mike





A walk under the Severn Bridge led by Jackie Aug 23 – Photo Mike

And in September 23 Ian, Jean and Gwenda led walks for the Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival, organised by Valeways.

Thanks must go to all the leaders over the last year for offering such a varied programme.

To remain vibrant the group needs new leaders to step up to share the load, and existing leaders and committee members are always ready to advise and assist those who would like to have a go. There are also lots of free on-line courses and workshops offered by Ramblers HQ to give advice on how to plan and lead walks, and to share experiences.

The Winter 2023/24 programme is currently being put together by Jane, our Walks Secretary, who would be very pleased to hear from anyone who would like to offer to lead walks.

## Weekends Away.

The group enjoyed Autumn and Spring walking weekends away which were a great success. In Oct 22 Chris and Lynda, supported by Su and Ruth, a weekend in Llandudno. The Saturday walk from Conway had fabulous views, and the Sunday walk around and over the Great Orme at Llandudno was spectacular if a trifle windy!



Llandudno weekend away – Oct 22 – Photos Mike and Jackie

Then in May 23 we had another weekend away based in Ludlow organised by Gwenda, Bill and Ruth, when we again enjoyed some lovely sunny weather. The Saturday walk started with a short train ride North followed by a walk back through beautiful countryside to Ludlow, and the Sunday walk circled Clee Hill. Unfortunately on the Sunday Ruth, who was leading the walk, twisted her ankle on a grassy slope and broke a bone in her foot. Luckily Colin was able to locate a local farmer who took Ruth off the hill on his ancient quad bike, and then to a road in his similarly



ancient Landrover where Jeff was able to take her to hospital. Fortunately Ruth is making a good recovery and is now able to join us again for some shorter walks.



Ludlow weekend away- Rail Ramble and Clee Hill – May 23 – Photos Ruth and Jackie

The group is now looking forward to the next weekend away in Llangollen from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October, organised by Gwion.

## Footpath matters.

After a frustrating year dealing with the VoG Council over the use of power tools for clearing footpaths Peter, our Footpath Officer, decided to resign. Many thanks go to Peter for his work in the role for several years. Ian has taken over the role temporarily until formal elections at the AGM in November.

Ian has organised several Thursday evening path clearances over the summer with group volunteers, and has now agreed with Valeways that our group will focus on the Millenium Heritage Trail through the Vale, while they do the rest.

We are also still trying to get the council to install some gates to replace decrepit stiles using our Legacy Fund, but progress is very slow. After much chasing we did get the council to replace one dangerous stile in Llanblethian using money donated by Waitrose.



Path clearing evening June 23 and Waitrose Gate Apr 23 – Photos Jackie

## Other Activities.

- **Litter picks** – Sarah has volunteered to take over the organisation of our litter picking sessions from Jackie, with the first one starting in Sep 23. Anyone interested in joining in should contact her. Many thanks go to both for their efforts.
- **Social Activities** – This year the group enjoyed our traditional New Year meal at the end of January 23, held at Illtud's 216 in Llantwit Major. The summer meal to mark the end of the Wednesday evening walk season was held in August at the Raj Kinara in Rhoose. These events were organised by Ruth, our Social Secretary, and both were well attended. Many thanks to Ruth for setting them up.
- **Vale of Glamorgan Show** – As usual our group set up and manned a Ramblers stand, with a great display designed by Gwenda. Thankfully the traffic problems of the previous year were sorted and the event went off smoothly.

Thanks to Gwenda, Bill, Ian and Ruth for setting up, running and dismantling the stand.



Vale of Glamorgan Show Aug 23 – Photo – Mike

- **Website**
  - Many of you will have noticed that our Group website has changed. This is because Ramblers HQ have modernised the national website format, and our website Officer Jeff has been supplying our information to HQ to update our own site. Despite supplying lots of information the site is still missing some previously available references like the walks programme but is gradually being improved. Many thanks go to Jeff for his work despite the frustration of many delays in getting the new system implemented.



- **People**

- Since the last newsletter two of our walk leaders, Helen F and Jen, have passed the 30 year anniversary of being members of the group, so our thanks go to them for their contribution over the years.



Helen F and Jen (with Muriel behind her) Photos Mike and Jackie

- Since October 22 Su and Jane have taken on the job of circulating the weekly walk emails for Sunday and Wednesday evening walks. My personal thanks go to them for taking on this task which has lightened the Group Secretary load considerably.
- Congratulations go to Ruth who celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in July 23. Although she still had her leg in plaster after her fall leading a walk during the Ludlow weekend away, she was lured out to join us at the end of a Wednesday evening walk for a birthday toast and piece of cake. Unfortunately that was the only time in the evening the rain decided to appear so umbrellas quickly deployed.



Ruth's birthday toast July 23 – Photo Jackie

## AGM

- In November 22 for the first time since Covid we held our AGM in person in the Duke of Wellington, Cowbridge. Gwion, our Vice-Chair, stood down and Gwenda was elected as Vice-Chair. After the official business was completed we had a social get together. Ray ran one of his amusing quizzes which was enjoyed by all, thanks Ray.
- This year we again will hold our AGM in person on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm in the Duke of Wellington Pub, Cowbridge. Further details will be sent out nearer the day, and we plan to send out the various Committee Member reports prior to the meeting, so we can concentrate on electing the committee and enabling members to contribute if they wish.

Mike Holley - Secretary

Sep 23