



RAMBLERS' INNER LONDON AREA ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13



www.innerlondonramblers.org.uk

*The Ramblers is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales.
Company registration number: 4458492.
Registered charity in England and Wales number: 1093577
Registered office: 2nd Floor, Camelford House, 87-90 Albert Embankment, SE1 7TW*

What we do

The Ramblers is Britain's walking charity. We want everyone to be able to experience the joys of walking, and the health and environmental benefits it brings.

We safeguard Britain's unique network of footpaths, and push for better rights of access across England, Scotland and Wales so people can enjoy walking in even more places.

We encourage more people to go walking, and work to protect the beauty and tranquillity of our countryside and open spaces.

“

Our aim is to ensure everyone can enjoy the benefits of being outdoors on foot. Throughout Britain, we will continue to strive to implement all of our mission, everywhere, forever.”



Jonathan Kipling,
chairman, The Ramblers

Top 5 successes

1 **Walking for health**

We became the new host of England's health walks scheme.



2 **Wales Coast Path**

Opening of the world's only complete national coast trail.

3 **Protecting over 3,000 paths**

All footpaths threatened by closure and diversion checked.



4 **Leading 45,000 walks**

Volunteer-led walks across England, Scotland and Wales

5 **New website for walkers**

Launch of Ramblers new online home:
www.ramblers.org.uk





RAMBLERS' INNER LONDON AREA

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

2pm on Saturday 8 February 2014 at The Pirate Castle, Oval Road, NW1 7EA

AGENDA

1. Welcome by the Area Chair (Alex Mannings)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of 2013 Annual General Meeting
4. Matters arising from the Minutes
5. Presentation of Area Report - Area Chair
6. Membership Report - Membership Secretary (Phil Marson)
7. Campaigns Report - Campaigns Officer (Des Garrahan)
8. Publicity Report
9. IT Report
10. Presentation of Accounts by Area Treasurer (Elspeth Cox)
11. Appointment of Auditor
12. Election of Officers for 2014
13. Election of Area council (Executive Committee), directly elected representatives and representatives from affiliated organisations.
14. Nomination of proposed Area Representatives to General Council 2014
15. Recommendation of motions concerned with the business of the Area.
16. Any other business

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Bruce McVean, [Movement for Liveable London](#)

Bruce is Integrated Design Manager at Beyond Green, where he leads their work on strategic masterplanning, helping design teams and local stakeholders work together to ensure new developments are designed and run in ways that are truly sustainable. He's particularly interested in how people get around and how to create places where walking is a pleasure. In 2011 Bruce founded Movement for Liveable London with the aim of broadening the debate about how the design of the public realm and changing the way people travel can help create a more liveable city.



Nicky Philpott, Ramblers' Director of Advocacy and Engagement

Nicky joined the Ramblers in September 2011. For the previous 12 years she worked at the NSPCC leading the campaigns team. She has also held campaign and policy positions at Age Concern, RNID, Scope and Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). Nicky is committed to working with staff and volunteers to develop campaigns which preserve and increase access for walking. Nicky grew up in Somerset and her favourite walks are in the South West as near to water as possible as she likes to incorporate walking with a swim when she can.

[@ramblersnicky](#)





AREA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2013-14

Chair	Alex Mannings
Vice-Chair	Dominic Pinto
Secretary	Helen Abbott
Treasurer	Elspeth Cox
Campaigns Officer	Des Garrahan
Editor SE Walker	Les Douglas
Membership Secretary	Phil Marson
Publicity Officer	VACANT
Webmaster/IT Officer	VACANT
GROUP REPRESENTATIVES	
Blackheath	Mary Scott
Capital Walkers	Phil Marson
Hammersmith, Fulham & Wandsworth	John Archer
Hampstead and District	Robin Midwinter
	John Rogers
Kensington, Chelsea & Westminster	Rita Kandela
	Penny Thesen
London Strollers	Les Douglas
Metropolitan Walkers	Jack Hoxley
North-East London	Nick Richards
	Fred Davis
South Bank	Garry Gerrish
	Diane Kavanagh
AFFILIATED CLUB REPRESENTATIVES	
	Tony Atkins
	Norman Coles
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	
	Mark Sheiham
	Jane Rosoux
	Clare Wadd
REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER COMMITTEES	
Hampstead Heath Management Committee	Maija Roberts
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	John Rogers



AREA OFFICERS' REPORTS

REPORT BY THE CHAIR (Alex Mannings)

The role of the Inner London area is to implement the Ramblers mission in Inner London.

- § We want everyone to be able to experience the joys of walking, and the health and environmental benefits it brings.
- § We safeguard Britain's unique network of footpaths, and push for better rights of access across England, Scotland and Wales so people can enjoy walking in even more places.
- § We encourage more people to go walking, and work to protect the beauty and tranquillity of our countryside and open spaces.

In Inner London our 9 groups encourage people to go out walking and experience the joys of walking by putting on walks programmes. Inner London Area have groups specialising in short walks, a group for people specialising in 20's and 30's and people in their 40's and 50's as well as 7 local groups covering all of the Inner London boroughs.

An indicator of how successful groups are at getting people out walking is their membership figures. Unfortunately Membership has over the area continued to decline over the year. However both the Capital Walkers and London Strollers continued to buck the trend with both seeing good rates of growth.

We have made real efforts to help groups reverse the membership decline. The first step with this is to publicise the walks that a group offers to get new people out on the walk. As well as advertising our walks on walks finder 5 of our 9 groups now use the social networking site Meetup to advertise their walks programme. New people to the Ramblers now attend our walks by finding them through Meetup. Continued efforts need to be made by our groups to get new members.

On the campaigning front, we have taken action to help safeguards London's footpaths. Our efforts continue to reopen the blocking of the Green Chain Walk. After a successful round table meeting between the farm, council and the Ramblers (chaired by the Campaign for Rural England) some progress was made with a possible compromise being put forward. The creation of a definitive map in Lambeth also made some progress with Lambeth council; however, it would seem that the next stage is to bring a further motion to General Council to adopt the relevant legislation.

We have made strides to increase the Ramblers' profile in London particularly via the use of social media We have also started to build up links with other campaigning organisations. Phil Marson and I attended the Liveable London fringe event that encompassed the cycling lobby, and Living Streets where we made some useful contacts.

Inner London Area continue to contribute significantly to the national Ramblers organisation with 3 trustees from Inner London now sitting on the board of trustees (2 elected and 1 co-opted) and a member of the Agenda Committee.

Over the next year we need to continue to raise the Ramblers' profile in London and to start growing membership in the area. I would like to thank everyone who has volunteered to help the Ramblers in Inner London this year.



REPORT BY THE CAMPAIGNS OFFICER (Des Garrahan)

It's been another busy year of campaigning from Inner London Area and this year, as in previous years, it has been the actions and vigilance of individual members that have contributed to continued improvement of the walking environment for all those who make use of it.

As well as all the effort IL members (& supporters) gave to the [national campaigns](#), and you will all no doubt be aware of the various national successes that have been achieved, let's start with a local victory.

Much of the Thames Path that was shut this time last year is now open and available for walkers. It had been closed for quite a while without Greenwich council seeming to have much urgency in remedying this. Following insistent enquiries from our members we were able to see the route once again open.



Work continues on the *Putting London on the Map* campaign, most notably in the London Borough of Lambeth through the endeavour of our chair. As you know, London's inner boroughs (our patch) were excluded from the original legislation requiring local authorities to compile a definitive map. An understanding was reached with Lambeth and following a meeting in borough offices (attended by 2 members of Ramblers staff) a path was selected to be the first on the map. The stretch of path is on council land on Streatham Common. We are currently in communication with the council about the wording of a motion to be put before the council to ensure the map clears all legal hurdles.

The year has been dominated by the campaign concerning the blocked section of the *Green Chain Walk (GCW)* where it crosses Woodlands Farm. This part of the GCW has been obstructed for many years but has got steadily worse in the last few years and at the start of the year before last it was all but impassable. Although the permissive path is still blocked, and indeed the GCW is diverted these days, much progress has been made. Bexley council has made certain proposals concerning council property alongside an existing footpath next to Woodlands Farm. Through much protracted and often painful negotiation it is possible a new path will cross Woodlands Farm that will be dedicated at a future date.

Through the redoubtable efforts of Dominic Pinto we continue to monitor and take action over 'gating/stopping up' orders in our area. Ramblers staff have added their expertise when they have had the available time. Frankly the resident in one location is intractable and Westminster council lack the will to do anything about it.

Finally, I'd like to thank everybody for their hard work, ideas and support but end with a cautionary note that the Area is probably at the limit of its resource of campaigning capability. However, whilst this might sound counter intuitive I can't help thinking we have missed campaigning opportunities over the last year. The tragic death of cyclists has unfortunately filled the papers at various times of the year yet more pedestrians (or walkers as we like to call them) die every year in similar incidents. I was approached, albeit very late in the day, to see if we wanted to take part in the recent Critical Mass demonstration. In all likelihood we might well have refused but currently we are not in a position to make a reasonable assessment of this. Also the whole Campaign for Better Transport at best passes us by because that particular narrative doesn't seem to highlight that walking is a form of transport.



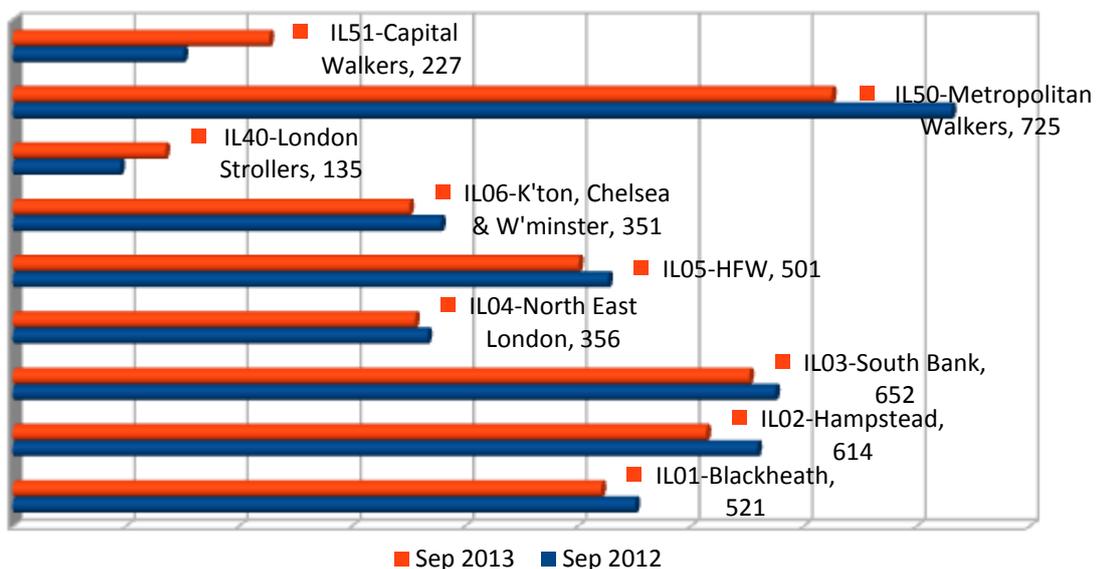
REPORT BY THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Phil Marson)

2012-13 was a really tough year for retaining and recruiting members, Area membership declined over the year from 4,474 to 4,337 members. The shocking weather put even hardcore ramblers off walking over the winter, with a resulting downturn in renewals, and the late Spring meant that no-one was thinking about going outside during our traditional recruitment peak in the New Year. Continued austerity caused by the on-going crises in the capitalist system didn't help either.

Nationally, The Ramblers' membership figures continued to decline. We're likely to have fewer than 100,000 within a few years on current trends. This isn't inevitable, though; other organisations seem to be doing better - CAMRA's membership goes from strength to strength, and the National Trust recruited over 750,000 new members this year.

Locally, only two groups (the *London Strollers* and the *Capital Walkers*) grew over the year, with the *Metropolitan Walkers* (historically the engine of growth for the Area) losing one in eight of its membership over the year. It remains the largest group in the Area, so this large proportional decline makes a massive difference in our performance. The Metropolitan Walkers committee has

Group Membership - 2012/13



given itself a target of 800 members in the next year.

The only other bright spot in these statistics is that Inner London Area has shrunk less quickly than the national membership and now makes up more than 4% of the national membership. This means that we qualify for a third seat at General Council 2014, giving us an even bigger voice in the organization.

Again next year, we have to make publicity and membership retention & recruitment a higher priority. We need to set targets, be more visible in the local media, experiment with social media, welcome new members, and talk to people to explain why they should join and volunteer with the Ramblers, and understand why they don't.



REPORT BY THE TREASURER (Elspeth Cox)

This has been my first year in the role of Area Treasurer, having taken over at last year's AGM. The accounts for the 2012-13 year have followed a similar level of expenditure to recent years and there is nothing of concern to highlight. The main expense continues to be payments to groups.

The Area has had a deficit for the year of £5,159, but this was planned as our reserves figure at the start of the year had been higher than needed. At the end of the current year our reserves remain at a comfortable level in line with Central Office guidance.

As we anticipate expenditure for the forthcoming financial year to be similar to this year, we submitted a funding request to Central Office for the same amount, ie £5,000. However Central Office has advised that due to funding requests across the country as a whole exceeding the amount available, the sum allocated to Inner London will be £124.81 less than requested. This will not impact on the Inner London groups, who will all receive their requested budgets in full, however if Area expenditure is as planned this will bring our reserves at the end of 2013-14 down to the lowest end of the recommended range, therefore budgets for the following year may need to be scrutinised carefully.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2012-2013

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION – INNER LONDON AREA

Registered Charity – 1093577

BALANCE SHEET as at 30 September 2013

Year to 30.09.12 £		Year to 30.09.13 £	Notes
	CURRENT ASSETS		
12,098	Unity Trust Bank current a/c	6,771	
	Pre-paid room hire	125	
	CURRENT LIABILITIES		
43	Sundry creditors	0	
	NET CURRENT ASSETS		6,896
	<u>12,055</u> TOTAL ASSETS		<u>6,896</u>
	representing: AMALGAMATED FUND		
	Balance as at 1 October 2012	12,055	
12,055	Surplus for the year	-5,159	
	<u>12,055</u>		<u>6,896</u>



RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION – INNER LONDON AREA

Registered Charity – 1093577

Income and Expenditure Account 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013

Year to 30.09.12		Year to 30.09.13	Notes
£		£	
	INCOME		
12,006	Budget funding from Central Office	5,000	1
14	Unity Trust Bank interest	10	
-	Reimbursement of Council fringe event	102	2
<u>12,020</u>		<u>5,112</u>	
	EXPENDITURE		
341	Meetings	50	3
8,956	Local Groups	7,882	4
31	Printing/Postage/Stationery	-	
86	Misc Admin	76	5
1,948	South East Walker	1,959	
50	Auditor's Fee	50	
353	Misc/Publicity	152	6
-	General Council fringe event costs	102	2
<u>11,765</u>		<u>10,271</u>	
<u>255</u>	<u>IN YEAR DEFICIT/SURPLUS</u>	<u>-5,159</u>	

Notes on the Accounts 2012-13

The accounts for 2012-13 continue in the presentation adopted over previous years. The income and expenditure shows a deficit of £5,159 for the year. The end of year balance remains healthy with a reserves percentage of 62.7%, in line with the Ramblers' policy to maintain main funds within a target range of between 40% and 100% of annual expenditure.

The numbers below refer to numbered notes on the Balance Sheet and the Income and Expenditure Account:

1. Central Office paid the requested Budget in full.
2. The costs of an Inner London fringe event held at General Council were paid through Inner London accounts but subsequently reimbursed in full by Des Garrahan.
3. Meetings costs are low as a cheque for £140 to the Pirate Castle for AGM meeting room hire was lost by them. Pirate Castle asked us to stop the cheque and did not require a replacement.
4. Payments to Groups were made in line with their requested Budgets.
5. Misc Admin relates to travel costs by Area Committee members.
6. Publicity costs include subscription fees for the Meetup website (used by three IL Groups) and a stall at the Angel Canal Festival.

AUDIT STATEMENT RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION INNER LONDON AREA BALANCE SHEET AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2012-13

To Whom It May Concern

Having carried out procedures in accordance with the Area and Group Audit Guidelines, I consider the Inner London Area accounts to have been properly prepared and to give a true and fair view of the Area's finances for the year to 30 September 2013.

GROUP REPORTS



BLACKHEATH GROUP

Blackheath group continues to offer longer & faster walks than most of the other Inner London groups, so it attracts members from across London. However, a considerable number of shorter walks are also provided.

Walks are offered on Saturdays and Sundays and always use public transport. In the past year, Blackheath offered 93 walks - 32 of these walks were over 15 miles and 37 were 10-15 miles in length. 24 shorter walks of 5-10 miles were also in the programme. The shorter walks, mostly led by



Des de Moor continue to attract large numbers, with participants from all over London.

The group offered a walking holiday in Wales. Twelve members attended and enjoyed 4 days of excellent walks in beautiful, sunny Snowdonia. This year the group covered parts of the following trails – Jubilee Greenway, London Countryside Way and the Stour Valley Walk.

The local MP (Heidi Alexander) was invited to join a Blackheath Ramblers walk & we were thrilled that she accepted. Heidi & her husband joined one of our shorter walks, with 40 plus attendees, where everyone had a chance to chat to her in a relaxed atmosphere. We also explained to her the value of Ramblers, so that if there are any relevant matters arising in Parliament, at least she knows who we are.



At the AGM, the existing officers agreed to remain in position. One new committee member was appointed.

A newsletter is published with each programme. The newsletter is used to share information from Ramblers HQ and to give more detail on upcoming walks of interest. Members submit poems and articles on walk experiences and special birthdays are announced.

HAMPSTEAD AND DISTRICT

During the year ended 30 September 2013 the Group ran a programme of walks which was varied both in terms of distance and area and ranged in pace from slow to moderate and moderate to fast. This year it offered fewer walks than the previous year - 83 as against 101 during the year ended 30 September 2012 - in part because of a reduced number of midweek day and evening walks. On the other hand, the Group was able to offer at least one walk every weekend. These walks were laid on in London, the Home Counties and further afield, to suit the requirements of all sectors of our membership.



A few of the walks were well supported with parties of 20 or more, but in too many cases the party sizes were in low single figures. In as much as we can ascertain a pattern to this, we would say that attractive alternative walks offered by other Groups, major sporting events, forecasts for bad weather (which might not materialise!), rail replacement buses, and even scheduled buses which enable access to

areas otherwise inaccessible by train, all deter prospective participants.

Last year the Group organised four walking holidays. There was our usual 4-night New Year break from 28 December 2012 to 1 January 2013, this time in York, which had 8 participants. The second holiday was a 3-night stay at the HF Holidays centre in Dovedale in the Derbyshire Dales from 15 to 18 March. Two months later, from 11 to 16 May, there was a holiday based in Nerja on the Andalucian Coast of Spain,



which had 13 participants. The fourth holiday was five nights based in Windermere in the Lake District from 27 June to 2 July, which had 8 participants.



The Group's membership declined during the year from 662 to 614 full members.

Incidentally, at the Group's AGM on 17 November a motion was passed to appoint somebody to investigate the possibility of changing the name of the group to something which better represents the geographical spread which it covers, such as "Camden and Islington Ramblers". A member was duly appointed to carry out a survey.

Robin Midwinter



HAMMERSMITH, FULHAM & WANDSWORTH

From 1st November 2012 to the end of October 2013 we offered a total of 123 walks, 11 walks more than last year thanks to new leaders coming forward in 2012 & 2013.

There was the usual wide variety of walks on offer in our three programmes including two city visits - Winchester in March and Cambridge in July. In July we had our third and very successful joint walk with London Blind Ramblers Group.

Sadly two of our longstanding leaders, Derek Purcell and John Kirkbride will no longer be able to offer walks. The group would like to express their thanks and gratitude for the enormous contribution to our programmes over many years and to wish them both well in the future. We regret to report the death of John Holley in January. He led walks and organised social events for the group.

The group has a monthly social event and these have included evening visits to museums or galleries such as Courtauld, National Portrait Gallery, Tate Britain, a musical evening at the V&A and a summer visit to Regents Park Open Air Theatre. These events are followed by a meal or drink. We also regularly meet for a meal in the Rocket, a riverside pub by Putney Bridge.

HFW Group Committee

SOUTH BANK - TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT

This is my first year as Treasurer. On October 1st I took over from Kate Jones, who has done a very conscientious job for the last 3 years, making it easy for me to get started. We ended the year with a healthy balance and the finances in good order.

Programme printing and mailing were by far the largest items of expenditure over the year, with a very noticeable increase on last year. We introduced the option of receiving the Walks Programme by email, starting with the current programme, and encouraged people to accept this if possible. The response was very good, with just over 50% of members and associate members now receiving the programme by email. Although the final effect will not be known until the end of the coming financial year, the signs are optimistic that impending difficulties over increased postage, printing and stationary costs have been averted.

A paper programme will always be available for anyone who cannot receive it electronically, but I would encourage anyone who can, to agree to receive it electronically. This frees funds for the Ramblers to use to promote walking and helps keep membership costs down.

Our account, as with all RA Groups, continues with Unity Trust Bank.

Treasurer South Bank Group

LONDON STROLLERS



This has been another good year for the Strollers, with membership by the end of September growing to 135 – an encouraging increase of 42% from the previous year. We have provided a varied programme of walks, both urban and country, with a walk on almost every Saturday and Sunday throughout the year, as well as a series of waterway walks on Wednesday evenings in the summer. Our walks are regularly joined by members from other groups, and we have 106 associate members. We are very grateful to all the volunteers who lead walks for us.



We continue to try to encourage new members and are active in promoting the group, and the Ramblers and walking in general, through social media. In particular the London Strollers group on Meetup now has over 1,100 members. The number of Meetup members going on to join the Ramblers is perhaps low in comparison to the overall Meetup numbers, but there have been sufficient new members through this route to warrant the relatively low cost of Meetup membership. We are now increasingly proactive about contacting individual Meetup members to encourage them to take the next step and join the Ramblers and hope that this will increase the numbers.

Two members of the London Strollers' committee attended General Council in April 2013, where our then Chair, Alex Mannings, accepted the President's Best Original Recruitment Volunteer Award on behalf of the Strollers for the use of Meetup, which Alex had initiated.

At the Strollers' AGM on 12 October 2013 existing committee members were reappointed for a further year. We are currently without either a Chair or a Publicity Officer.

KENSINGTON, CHELSEA & WESTMINSTER

This has been a steady year, with a wide variety of walks enthusiastically received by our members. The total number of walks offered was 85, a small drop on the previous year. There were 23 midweek events and a number of joint walks with the Hammersmith Fulham and Wandsworth Group. We maintained our links with the Huntingdonshire Group. They organised a joint walk in their area, and this was followed by a London walk, led by Sue Chinn. We also enjoyed our annual outing with the London Blind Group, particularly since there was a good turnout of helpers this year. All of this was only possible because of our 25 fantastic leaders, offering walks reflecting their varied interests and enthusiasms.

The autumn weekend away in Richmond, North Yorkshire attracted 22 people who enjoyed good weather and varied walks organised by our member Don Crassweller. Richmond proved to be a great location for walking and accommodation.

During the year there have been the usual range of transport problems which have upset the best laid plans, but most of our regular walkers are now on the email alert list to receive last minute changes in arrangements.

Last year we abandoned our traditional evening AGM and opted for a Saturday morning walk followed by lunch and AGM at the Magdala pub on Hampstead Heath. The new arrangement proved popular so we repeated it this year, though with a different walk, and better weather.

There have been a number of changes on our Committee. David Jones, John Cox, Rita Kandela and Jacqui Lund have all stepped down. Sue Trenhaile and Heather Wheeler have joined. Sue Trenhaile has taken over as Programme Co-ordinator, but we have been unable to find a Secretary, so at present the duties are being shared out among the Committee.

CAPITAL WALKERS



The Capital Walkers is Inner London Area's group aimed at people in their mid-30s to mid-50s. Established in 2010, it is the fastest growing Ramblers group in Inner London.

In the year to the end of September 2013, we added 76 members to grow to 227; most of these are new to the Ramblers, but a significant number of people transfer from the Metropolitan Walkers.

Our programme has two walks most weekends and several socials a month, one of which had a guest appearance by Johnny Rotten/Lydon. We've had fantastic weekends away, including a very successful joint New Year event in Bath with the Metropolitan Walkers, festival trips, Weymouth and a casual camping weekend in the South Downs.



Johnny Rotten at Capital Walkers social

All of this reflects the huge amount of effort and commitment shown by people who've cared enough about what we do to give up their time and skills to make it even better. There are far too many to name but, as I hand the Chair on to the next generation of leaders, I'd like to particularly thank everyone who's been on the Committee.

Phil Marson, Chair, Capital Walkers

NORTH EAST LONDON

Membership has declined slightly.

We walk every Saturday, sometimes a short walk and a longer one and 1 Wednesday a month. Saturday walks take place outside London and Wednesday walks have consisted of the LOOP. Both walks attract regular walkers, some people attending both. Members from other groups also attend. The Walksfinder attracts people for a one off. Average attendances on walks is about 15 to 30. We continue to attract new people out on walks and also, members of other Ramblers' groups. We have had few social events, a goodbye meal for Steve Cheetham and a retirement meal for Jill. There is a general feeling that we are a walking group rather than a general social group. Members organise themselves into smaller groups and arrange weekends away, outings etc.



The last year's walks programmes have followed a very similar pattern to the previous year. The summer programme included 43 events, with a walk each Saturday, sometimes two (one short, one long); a midweek day walk once a month; and a few evening walks and one Sunday walk. The winter programme included 34 events, with a walk each Saturday, generally shorter, and a midweek walk once a month.

I would like to thank all those who have volunteered to organise and lead walks. I hope existing walk leaders will continue and that others will decide to lead walks in future. Although we manage to fill the programme, and especially to provide a walk every Saturday, we rely, and perhaps are over-reliant, on a relatively small number of walk leaders. It would be good if new leaders came forward too. It was agreed at the AGM that we would withdraw from the Walksfinder.

The Financial Report has been sent to the Treasurer. We are still having difficulty filling officer posts and the names are unchanged. Publicity and Paths were left vacant.

The Area Reps will take the suggestion that Met/Capital walkers link up with us in some capacity, especially to provide walks leaders and footpath and publicity posts.

Margaret Roe

[METROPOLITAN WALKERS](#)



Metropolitan Walkers has remained healthy throughout 2013, although faces some challenges that the committee have been monitoring this year and will act upon through 2014. On the whole feedback anecdotally and via the annual survey show the membership to be happy with the group as it exists today. Attendance across all varieties of walks offered are "about right" according to our members and the vast majority would positively recommend the group to friends & colleagues. The AGM held in early November echoed this sentiment – a typically good turn-out from members and good discussions around key themes and events, but no massive surprises or motions passed to introduce changes. All but two committee members stayed on for another year.

Membership has declined approximately 10% over the past 12 months and stands at approximately 725 members. It is worth noting that historically the group oscillates between 700-850 members annually. The committee did extensive investigation and monitoring to identify the reasons however obtaining conclusive, reliable causes proved difficult.

In 2014 we'll be making a push for recruitment via 'meetup' and more direct advertising/publicity. As discussed at our AGM we aim to reverse the decline through 2013 and will target 800 members as a stable, comfortable membership level. This is in part due to concerns about increasing above this size having a negative impact on the enjoyment by members and making the group unwieldy to run.

Parallel with a recruitment push we'll also be introducing a 'buddy' system to encourage and support more walk and social leaders from the wider membership. The annual survey gave us valuable insight into the reasons why potential leaders haven't offered walks already and we feel that pairing them with seasoned leaders could work well.



AFFILIATED GROUP REPORTS

FOREST RAMBLERS

2013 has been another successful year for the Forest Ramblers. Our average attendance of 12.6 represents a very high proportion of total membership and is slightly better than last year. We are almost back to the level of twenty years ago after a steady decline in numbers during the early 2000s. The past year has also seen a noticeable increase in the number of couples coming on our walks.

We still try when possible to maintain a cultural flavour within the framework of our walks, in line with our constitution of 1884, which states that “the Club’s object shall be to organise and carry out short rambles to places tending to healthful and instructive recreation and antiquarian interest”.

In our early days, when London was a more compact city than it is today, social events such as dinners, dances and soirées played an important part in the Forest Ramblers’ activities. A modest link with this tradition is retained, in that the pub lunch forms an important social centrepiece of our walks.

We look forward to continuing our progress in 2014.

MORLEY COLLEGE RAMBLING CLUB

The club has a sound financial base and a membership of 50-60. The average number of walkers per week is approximately 13, and there are an increased number of walk leaders. The club is open to all who attend Morley or join as friends of Morley. It may be noted that most regular walkers are at or near retirement age, and the pace of walks is moderate.

Our weekly Saturday programme is published and updated on the website www.morleyramblers.co.uk. Email: info@morleyramblers.co.uk.

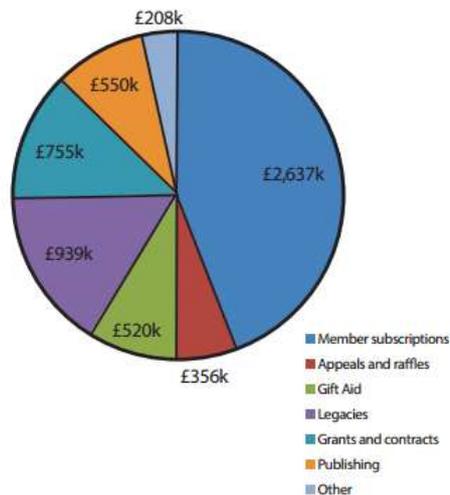
Walks are normally within one hour travel by train from central London, and average 8-10 miles (12-16km). There is usually an option for a pub/cafe lunch at a half way point, and sometimes options for alternative transport for those who wish a shorter walk.

A walking holiday is organised by our ramblers organiser in September, this year to Bath. Another longstanding member helps to organise an annual photographic competition, and other social events include a Christmas lunch in December.

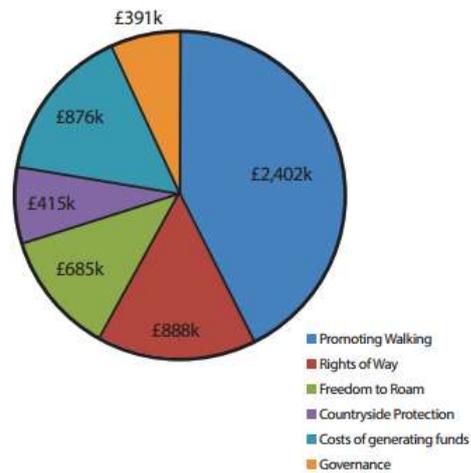
The Ramblers nationally (2011-12)

Where our funds came from and how we used them

Income 2011-12
Total £5,965k



Expenditure 2011-12
Total £5,657k



These diagrams are an illustration of Ramblers' overall income and expenditure for the year ending 30 September 2012. They do not include the £1.7m raised and spent by Areas and Groups on their walking activities such as coach parties, holidays and social events.

- We ended 2011-12 with a surplus of **£351k** and unrestricted reserves of **£2,319k**
- **78%** of our funds are spent directly on our charitable activities
- Over half our income, **£3,513k** is from membership subscriptions, raffles and donations
- Grant funding from partners to support projects, such as Get Walking Keep Walking, totalled **£755k**
- Macmillan Cancer Support provided **£124k** of funds for Walking for Health
- The 'costs of generating funds' includes **£248k** for Walk magazine
- **£99k** was spent developing our online library of walks, Ramblers Routes
- **70%** of our members have signed up to Gift Aid
- We reserve **£250k** for legal case work and **£350k** for our pension deficit

View the full audited annual report and accounts at www.ramblers.org.uk/about-us/our-finances