

AGM Report to Chorley Ramblers 2020

Committee Members

The following are committee members in their respective positions elected at the 2019 A.G.M. They have all agreed to continue as members of the Committee in their various capacities in the Financial Year 2020/2021.

Chairman	Mike Wisdom
Secretary	Sue Poynter
Treasurer	Dennis Wilson
Membership Secretary	Eileen Entwisle
Programme Co-ordinator	Lorraine Eaves
Footpath Co-ordinator	Marian Owen
Website and Social Media	Mike Wisdom
Publicity and Marketing	Derek Statters

Chairman's Report from Mike Wisdom

This year has been very difficult for the Ramblers with some groups like Chorley flourishing and others are falling away. Strangely our Chorley membership has actually increased in the last 12 months.

When coming out of the COVID-19 lockdown I was struggling to restart the Chorley walk programme when an unexpected phone call from Helen Oliver offering us 8 Tuesday walks for a two month period. I quickly drew up and emailed this out to our Chorley members. Straight away other walk leaders began to offer walks and very shortly we had more walks on our programme than in normal times. Sid Calderbank even completed the same historical walk six times in six week and most of the time he was oversubscribed.

This year has given us the opportunity to revolutionise the way we collect and produce our walk programme by Email, Website and Social Media.

Walk Programme Report

The walk programme is being produced flexibly with regular updates. See the Chorley Ramblers Website and Social Media Report for more information.

Due to Cov1d 19 all Coach Rambles have had to be cancelled. However, when we resume Coach Rambles our first one should be to complete the final stage of the Yoredale Way.

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Membership Report from Eileen Entwisle

September 2016 - 291 members
September 2017 - 286 members
September 2018 - 314 members (302 paid and 12 pending payment)
September 2019 - 341 members (332 paid and 9 pending payment)
September 2020 - 351 members (337 paid and 14 pending payment)

For the year ending 30th September 2020 Chorley Ramblers have increased their total membership by 10 to 351. In actual fact the group gained 48 new members during this period but 38 existing memberships lapsed. In all probability this is due to the current Covid-19 situation. We had no members join for two months during the first lockdown.

I would like to thank the volunteer team for their time in October and February in helping to distribute the walks programme and newsletters. These two items have now moved over to email distribution because the walk programme is updated monthly in line with Covid-19 guidance changes. If anyone is not receiving these emails from us and would like to, then please email chorleyramblers@gmail.com with a request and I will inform head office of your change of preference to receive emails.

Website and Social Media Report from Mike Wisdom

Over 600 people have joined our Facebook Site. For a walking group this is quite a considerable number. Members are regularly posting details of the walks they have been on.

The epidemic has given us the chance to produce a more dynamic walk programme. Now walk leaders can submit or edit walks just days before the event. Walk leaders with a gmail email address can now update the walk programme themselves. The only drawback to this arrangement is that the Ramblers National walk finder is not updated. Previously this has involved considerable effort and when we see how many people from other groups actually came on our walks it is debatable if all the effort is worthwhile. Over the years there have been many resignations of walk coordinators. A simple solution would be to have somebody upload selected walks from our walk programme to the national site. If anybody is interested in doing this then it would be very much appreciated. Our website was developed using a commercially available programme which is now no longer supported. Website Developers now mainly use Wordpress Software which is more suitable for viewing on Smart Phones and Tablets. We therefore may move over to this system in the near future.

Marketing Report from Derek Statters

Since 1st January 2018 Chorley Ramblers has increased its membership by 67 to 351. We have attracted new and retained existing members through our : a) upbeat promotion of Chorley Ramblers , b) full and varied walks programme, c) friendly welcome to new and existing members on our walks, d) strong social media presence through Facebook and our website.

I attended a Mid Lancs Area Ramblers meeting a few weeks ago, and of the 6 groups represented it was reported that during the last 12 months there were very few cases of members having covid 19. On that basis, we seem to have a fairly safe sport, but we should not get too complacent. Take care and stay safe.

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Treasurer's Report from Dennis Wilson

Financial Report

Account Balance 2020							
Current Year 2020				Prior Year 2019			
Restricted	Main	Self-funded	Total	Restricted	Main	Self-funded	Total
7479.53	1547.21	2876.69	11903.43	7479.53	1205.57	2475.64	11160.74

Main Income			Main Expenditure	
Head Office Funding	1339.00		Printing (Walk Programme & Leaflets, etc)	363.00
Donations (RWH Travel)	130.00		Walk Related (Admin Postage, Stamps, etc)	438.24
			Website Admin	63.31
			AGM Room Hire, expenses & speaker	164.30
			Various expenses & Bank Charges	194.81
Christmas Dinner (Members Contributions)	323.70		Christmas Dinners (members contributions)	217.70
TSB Coach Account	2745.00		TSB Coach Account	2353.65

The Independent Examiner, John Warner, has carried out procedures in accordance with the guidelines and consider the accounts give a fair representation of the Groups activity. (not yet undertaken)

General Information

(a) All subscription monies are paid direct to the Ramblers Association Head Office by the individual members (**not to Chorley Ramblers**). Chorley Ramblers then receive two smaller amounts over the current year based on our submitted budget.

(b) RWH Travel (Ramblers Worldwide Holidays) pay a donation to the Chorley Ramblers based on holidays booked with them provided Chorley Ramblers are mentioned at the time of booking.

(c) The self funded coach rambles were very popular up until the Covid-19 lockdown began in March. The final stage of the Yoredale Way could not be completed (or the after walk meal) so any monies paid are in the process of being refunded or paid to charity in accordance with the wishes of the individual members.

(d) The Terry Lewis Legacy money still stands at £ 7308.80 (same as last year) as none has been spent because of the lockdown. The money can be used for kissing gates etc. as part of the Miles without Stiles project, or on other potential future projects.

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Footpath Report from Marian Owen

Public Rights of Way (PROW) Checked

494 (55%) out of 904 PROWs in the Borough of Chorley have been checked by the Chorley Ramblers Footpath checking team in the year from November 2019 to October 2020. This is an excellent achievement against the background of Footpath Checkers being constrained by the limitations of the corona virus lockdown arrangements. This compares to 79% for 2019 and 67% for 2018. The good news is that 6 of Chorley's 23 Parishes have had all the accessible PROWs checked unfortunately no checks have been undertaken in 5 of Chorley's parishes.

Footpath Obstructions Reported

52 obstructions reported to Lancashire County Council (LCC) in 2109 - 2020.

This compares to 215 in 2018- 2019 and 85 in 2017-8.

Our four most commonly reported issues are:

Type of Obstruction	Issues Reported by Chorley Ramblers
Stiles	19
Signpost from the road	13
Surface Issue	8
Obstructions	5

Footpath Checkers

Thank you Footpath Checkers for all your hard work during this very difficult year. Our work in reporting issues to Lancashire Council as well as clipping back vegetation and waymarking really does make a difference in keeping Chorley paths clear of obstruction and well signed. I would like to thank Peter Eccles and Maurice Houghton, who have retired after decades of undertaking Footpath Checker duties in Whittle-le-Woods and Anderton.

Footpath Checker Vacancies

We have vacancies for Footpath Checkers in 7 of Chorley's parishes: **Brindle, Charnock Richard, Coppull, Heskin, Hoghton, Mawdesley, Whittle-le-Woods**. Please contact Marian Owen if you are interested in becoming involved in Footpath Checking in any way.

Miles without Stiles

Little has happened to progress Miles without Stiles following our successful opening of stile free routes in Cuerden Valley and in Duxbury. Preliminary investigations commenced with Chorley Borough Council and Euxton Parish Council regarding converting 5 stiles to kissing gates to make a stile free route from Euxton Skate Park to the Chorley Circular at Common Bank. **We still have funds available in the Terry Lewis Legacy pot, so please let us know of other potential Miles without Stiles routes that you think we should investigate.**

Miles without Stiles walks published on Ramblers Routes

Two Miles without Stiles routes in Chorley Borough, (a) Duxbury Circular and (b) Anglezarke Circular have been published on the Ramblers Association's application, "Ramblers Routes". These routes are free for members to download with the option to print the route or download the GPX data to your phone.

Planning Applications, Closures and Diversions and Modification Orders

Neither Chorley Borough Council nor Lancashire County Council have reported any Planning Applications, Closures, Diversions or Modification Orders to Chorley Ramblers during the period November 2019 to October 2020.