

# Loddon Valley Ramblers Committee Members

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## *How far is that in kilometres?*

Miles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Km	1.6	3.2	4.8	6.4	8.0	9.7	11.3	12.9	14.5	16.1	17.7	19.3	20.9	22.5	24.1

# LODDON VALLEY RAMBLERS' NEWSLETTER

## May to August 2019

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Since my last newsletter, we held a Leaders' Dinner & Dance in January. This was started a few years ago, to thank the Leaders for their time devising, pre-walking and leading walks for our Group. Nick Johnson, our Walks Coordinator, has reported that average attendances on walks have improved, with a 44% increase in the Sunday long walks and a 33% increase in the Thursday short walks. A clear response to the efforts of our leaders. If there is an area you want to walk, just contact Nick and we will try to arrange it.

Look out for some evening walks in our next programme. Then on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, a walk that ends at a Beer Festival and you can go home by train. Also in this programme, we are trying some joint walks with other Berkshire Ramblers groups, to meet some new faces: on 8<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> June and 21<sup>st</sup> July. Later this summer, we have something completely different: on 27<sup>th</sup> August, a walk and a boat trip; starting from Hambleden with a walk to Marlow, then take Salters 'Steamer' upstream to Henley and walk back to your car.

On Fridays between March and May Ray Sharp's team of volunteers will be installing six more kissing gates in Hurst. We have also been asked by The Chiltern Society to install some gates on the Berkshire Loop of The Chiltern Way. All worthwhile work, to improve access to the countryside.

On the social side, our second Barn Dance on 15<sup>th</sup> March was a resounding success, with over 80 members & friends dancing to a live band, all smoothly directed by Mary Childs, with catering by Nick Johnson.

As you read this newsletter, the group will have returned from a weekend in Dovedale organised by Ellen Holmes & David Bromley.

You will find a flyer for a Hog Roast planned by Bobbi Ginty's team in July. The field behind Barkham Village Hall is a perfect venue and there will be background music.

The holiday organised by Barbara Curtis to Bellevaux in June is now full but our next foreign holiday, to Madeira in September 2020, is being arranged by Ian & Marianne Murray. There were enthusiastic reports on the similar visit organised in 2013, so sign up quickly, as numbers are limited. Before that, we

have a weekend in the Yorkshire Dales in April 2020 being planned by Graham Smith.

*David Moffett*  
**Chairman**

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### Membership changes

*Welcome to:* Tony E, Dee and Denis O'B, Alan and Pat C, Neil A and Molly B, Nina S, Guy G, Peter R.

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### Email

You are receiving this communication as a member of Loddon Valley group and you have previously asked to be kept informed of the Ramblers work by post. If you no longer wish to receive communications like this please update your mailing preferences at [www.ramblers.org.uk/my-account](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/my-account).

We maintain a list of the email addresses of our members. This is used to inform them about last-minute changes to walks, additional walks and events, or unusual weather conditions. We will keep your details confidential and won't share them with anyone else. If you haven't yet done so please visit the *Latest News* page on the website [www.lvra.org.uk](http://www.lvra.org.uk) and send us your email address via the link. This is required even if you supplied an email address when you joined Ramblers, since no permission for us to use it was given then.

Email [derekalansmith@virginmedia.com](mailto:derekalansmith@virginmedia.com) to be removed from the list, or send an alert to everyone on it. You should also contact him if you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email.

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### Walking partnerships

Loddon Valley are proud to be affiliated to the Walking Partnership. Help support our group by booking your walking holidays with Ramblers Walking Holidays, Chapters Experience Holidays, Adagio or Load off your back and nominate Loddon Valley Ramblers when booking to ensure we receive vital funds through the walking partnership. See [www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk](http://www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk) for details.

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### Facebook

Loddon Valley Ramblers Facebook page is now available for news of walks, weekends etc. Follow [www.facebook.com/groups/623821047752746/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/623821047752746/) to access it, or search Facebook for "Loddon Valley Ramblers".

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### First Aid

The following First Aid course has been arranged with St John Ambulance for 2019:

- Evening course at the St John Ambulance Centre, Deadmans Lane, Theale, RG7 5FB (6:30pm to 9:30pm) on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October.

These 3-hour courses have been tailored for Ramblers and cover CPR and how to deal with chest pains, choking, severe bleeding, sprains and strains, bites and stings, foreign objects, asthma etc. After attending the course you will get an Essential First Aid Certificate which is valid for **three** years.

The courses are being subsidised and the cost to the individual is £15. If, however, you are a current Loddon Valley walk leader there will be no charge.

To book a place please contact David Turner ([turnerd2@btinternet.com](mailto:turnerd2@btinternet.com), 0118 977 4184).

Those of you who have been on a previous course should remember that the certificate you received is valid for only **three** years, so contact David to arrange a refresher.

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### Advice on Insects, and ticks in particular

Insects on walks at best are an irritation, but can also be carriers of deadly diseases, even in the UK. Scottish midges can make a walk in the glens very unpleasant, but a tick bite can lead to Lyme Disease and other dangerous infections. The Ramblers' website gives some sensible advice at <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/safety/insects.aspx>, with a helpful link to the Lyme Disease Society. There is also a good fact sheet at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tick-bite-risks-and-prevention-of-lyme-disease>.

The basic advice is to be vigilant, starting with prevention by assessing how likely you are to encounter insects on a particular walk and protecting yourself by covering up appropriately and/or using insect repellent. Then after a walk, check yourself (and any pets) for ticks, carefully remove any you find and if you show any symptoms seek medical advice.

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### Forthcoming events

- ★ **BELLEVAUX HOLIDAY 12-19<sup>th</sup> June**  
Fully booked.
- ★ **HOG ROAST Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July**  
See enclosed flyer.
- ★ **KINGCOMBE WEEKEND 13-16<sup>th</sup> September**  
Places available.

### ★ LODDON VALLEY RAMBLERS AGM

7.30pm on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October at Barkham Village Hall, Church Lane (off Barkham Street), Barkham RG40 4PL.

### ★ RAMBLERS BERKSHIRE AREA AGM

2pm on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November at Woolhampton Village Hall.

### ★ LEADERS' DINNER Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020

★ **YORKSHIRE DALES WEEKEND 24-27<sup>th</sup> April 2020**  
Based in Ilkley & walking in the Yorkshire Dales; organised by Graham Smith.

### ★ MADEIRA HOLIDAY 14-19<sup>th</sup> September 2020

See enclosed flyer.

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### Wokingham May Fayre Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May

HELP NEEDED PLEASE!

Loddon Valley Ramblers will, once again, be having a stall at the Wokingham May Fayre in the town centre. If you could help man the stall for an hour at some time throughout the day please contact me by email. If you're visiting the May Fayre please stop by and say hello!

Thanks

*Bobbi Ginty*

Publicity Officer

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### Footpaths

#### *Don't panic*

Publicity and consultation material recently sent to every household by Wokingham BC might lead to the worrying conclusion that the whole borough is about to be inundated with new development and new roads, without any thought being given to rights of way.

The leaflet showing major improvements to the road network listed eight developments across the borough (either in progress or due to start within a year or so), but did not comment on how they would impact on the footpath network. For clarity, and to allay any unnecessary fears, I have set out below details of what is happening in relation to rights of way affected by these developments.

- **Shinfield Eastern Relief Road:** all existing rights of way have been preserved, plus the permitted path southwards from Oatlands Road towards Magpie & Parrot. There is a planning application for housing development on the land between Cutbush Lane and the new road, but this also proposes to preserve both public footpaths and the permitted path.

- Arborfield Relief Road: construction work is just starting, but all rights of way will be preserved, with some upgrading. Two footpaths cross the line of the new road – one will do so by means of a green bridge, and the other will be a flat crossing.
- Barkham Bridge: there are no detailed plans for the new two-lane bridge yet, but there is obvious scope to retain and improve the pedestrian route across the bridge, thereby linking up existing footpath routes in Barkham. LVR will do everything possible to ensure this happens.
- Winnersh Relief Road: the footpath crossing Phase 1 of the Road has been preserved following construction (with a flat crossing). There are no rights of way affected by Phase 2, construction of which is due to start in late 2019.
- North Wokingham Distributor Road: there are no rights of way affected by the construction of this road.
- South Wokingham Distributor Road: planning for the central and western sections of the road is at an early stage, but will have major impacts on a number of rights of way. LVR have been involved in consultations about these, and there is every prospect that all rights of way will be preserved, with some enhancements and upgrading of routes.

(Note also that the East Reading Mass Transit scheme is now very unlikely to proceed, following the rejection of the planning application by Wokingham BC.)

The Council's consultation on the updating of the Local Plan set out every proposal that developers and landowners have put forward across the borough, however speculative. It was not even necessary to own a site in order to submit a proposal to develop it. All these proposals were then set out on a map, which (with the exception of Wargrave and Remenham parishes) made it look as

if virtually the whole borough would be subject to some sort of development. We can only hope and expect that the response to the consultation will ensure that the final update allows for very much more limited development, although central government requirements mean that there must be some. LVR will have a vital role to play in ensuring that the footpath network is preserved in the face of any development and that opportunities to upgrade it are taken.

#### ***Gates to replace stiles***

Six gates in Hurst will be installed over the spring and summer of 2019, plus one in Swallowfield. Longer term plans include more gates in Barkham, plus gate installations on the Berkshire Loop of the Chiltern Way in Remenham and Wargrave. These are subject to landowner permission and funding being obtained – always a challenge.

#### ***Cropping of paths***

We want to tackle any problems vigorously of paths being blocked by crops this year. If you come across any crop issues within Wokingham Borough, please report them immediately to Wokingham Borough Council as per the instructions on the Footpath Problems page of the LVR website. Please also let me know about them by e-mailing [paths@lvra.org.uk](mailto:paths@lvra.org.uk).

#### ***Footpath Wardens***

Derek Johnson has now retired from the warden role in Swallowfield, after many years of service. Graham Croucher has taken over in Swallowfield, and Ian Mackenzie has taken over from Graham in Wokingham Within. We also, at long last, have a new Area Footpath Secretary for the whole of Berkshire. Naomi Rich from Berkshire Walkers has taken on the role, and her appointment will strengthen Ramblers work in protecting the rights of way network across the whole county.

Happy walking  
Steve Vale



Ramblers Charity England & Wales No: 1093577 Scotland No: SC039799

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Walking holiday partner



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**Holidays** 

## FOOTPATH OFFICERS

**Area Footpath Secretary** Naomi Rich [footpaths@berkshirewalkers.co.uk](mailto:footpaths@berkshirewalkers.co.uk)

**Group Footpath Secretary** Steve Vale 07740 406869  
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