

West London Ramblers Group – Chair's Report 2025

It's been another good year. We managed to offer a full walking programme with over 150 led walks with our walk leaders offering between 2 -4 walks each week. Part of the success of the walks programme was the planning and execution of our long-distance route walks –we covered the London North to South, London to Brighton, and Chilterns Heritage Trail. We also have been walking the Thames Path, covering the distance from the source to Henley in 2025, with the rest to be completed next year. Once again, we supported the London Blind Walkers with a couple of walks. We also had a couple of meals out.

The group has also been very active checking footpaths, with over 200 public right of ways checked and some successes in getting signposting sorted.

The highpoints of the year were the holidays. For four of them we provided our own walk leaders, in Hastings, weekends away to explore the upper Thames, Aberystwyth and the Forest of Dean. We also treated ourselves to an HF holiday on the edge of Exmoor.

Looking forward we are planning more walking holidays in 2026. There will be a trip to Bavaria in May and others are in the pipeline.

We have established a working relationship with Ealing Council who are planning to set up a new Regional Park and a heritage walking trail to be called the Mauveine Line. We have also worked together with the Brent River and Canal Society and the Selborne Society.

Membership in late November was 623 which is a good increase from 566 a year ago. This includes 45 affiliates. For the first time we didn't mail out the AGM invitation; the programme gets sent by post to just 4 members.

Our group is checking public footpaths in the boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow. A team of 20 volunteers have been checking 200 paths during the year, with 60 still to be done.

The committee held regular meetings, some in person, but most via zoom. We introduced generic email addresses rather than using personal emails to for example send out the programme. This should also make it easier passing on the roles like chair and secretary to new officers. Walkers are encouraged to check the website re suitability of walks and also for changes to travel arrangements – we have been sending out less emergency emails.

We played an active role on the Inner London Ramblers committee and took part in the consultation on changes to the Ramblers constitution.

My thanks go to all the committee members for their continued work over the year and in particular to Martin Harris who has been our chair and secretary for many years. After 5 years in the role, I have decided to stand down as chair.

West London Group can celebrate its 70th anniversary this year and I hope it will go from strength to strength.

Monika