

West London Ramblers Group – Chair's Report 2021

My first year as chair was dominated by the Covid pandemic. I was elected at a well attended Zoom meeting and the committee meetings I chaired were all held via Zoom. After each meeting I produced a newsletter. The committee took the decision to no longer post the newsletter and programme to all those who haven't provided an email address, but ask members to opt in to the postal system. This reduced the number from around 100 to 5. We did however post the recent newsletter as it advertised the AGM.

Shortly after the AGM walking was once again paused due to another lockdown, but eventually we emerged to walks with limited numbers advertised via a bimonthly programme sent out by email. Carolyn put together a survey to find out what sort of walks our members want us to provide and we had an amazing response with 133 returns. In summary, members want a variety of walks in terms of mileage and prefer the countryside as long as we can access the walks via public transport avoiding central London mainline stations. Thanks go to our walk leaders who have provided a good number of varied walks and put up with the booking system for most of the year. We have only just started to put the walks on the national Ramblers website but hope this will be able to continue. The committee is looking into getting a group licence for OS maps so walk leaders don't have to pay for their own licence.

On behalf of the group, I supported the campaign to turn Warren Farm in Hanwell into a nature reserve by contacting a number of relevant politicians, but so far there is no confirmation as to what will happen to the site. Howard our footpath officer has managed to find volunteers for most parts of the two boroughs Ealing and Hounslow and we have done a couple of litter picks and are investigating getting our own equipment. As in previous years we have organised walks with the London Blind Ramblers and contributed to keeping the London Loop and Capital Ring up-to-date.

Because of the limitations imposed by Covid our social programme has been more limited than before. We had however a very interesting Mindfulness session via Zoom led by Jyoti.

My thanks go to all the committee members for their continued work over the year and for Chris Parnell for taking on sending out the emails to members.

Monika