



LWR NEWS & VIEWS

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AUTUMN EDITION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 21st November 2025

Church House, All Saints Church, Ilkley

2:00pm - 5:00pm

Join us in celebrating the many volunteers who make Lower Wharfedale Ramblers so successful.

WALK ADDED TO AGM PROGRAMME ON NOVEMBER 21st

Both Leeds and Harrogate Ramblers offer a short walk prior to the AGM. It is seen as a social occasion for people to get together and stretch their legs prior to the meeting.

This year, LWR are doing the same.

The walk will start and end at All Saints Church, the venue for the AGM. Walkers will have the opportunity to place shoes, clothing, lunch etc. in a secure place at the church, prior to the walk.

Former Chair, Keith Wilman will be leading the walk. The 4.5 mile walk is through Ilkley Tarn, Ben Rhydding and back along the Wharfe, with a 10 minute coffee break. It is a leisurely walk suitable for all abilities.

Walkers will be back at around 12:30pm leaving plenty of time to have lunch and take the optional heritage tour of the church.

LWR WALK LEADER TRAINING MAKES THE PAPERS

The article below and accompanying photo have been provided to The Ilkley Gazette, The Wharfedale Observer and the Craven Herald.



RAMBLER UPGRADE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR WALK LEADERS

Since its foundation in 1935, the Ramblers have always relied upon volunteers to lead their walks. With around 500 walking groups across the UK that means thousands of walks every year but the Ramblers safety record has been exemplary with less than 1% of walks incurring a reportable incident.

Typically walk leaders learnt from experience and acted as mentors for new walk leaders. This process has served the Ramblers well but from January 1st 2026, training requirements for all walk leaders, experienced or new, have become more formalised.

Mike Briers, Chair of Lower Wharfedale Ramblers, explained the reasons behind this major change in Ramblers policy.

“Since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in 2019, there has been a substantial increase in people across the UK choosing to spend more of their time in the outdoors. The biggest growth has been in the number of walkers.

Many people tend to see walking as a fairly simple pastime compared with other outdoor activities. This is probably true but walking has its fair share of potential hazards for the unwary. For instance 2004 was the first year in its history that the voluntary UK Mountain Rescue Service was called out every single day of the year. Significant problems are being caused by the number of walkers relying upon unsophisticated mobile navigation apps or being inadequately prepared or dressed.

The great advantage of walking with the Ramblers is that it is the clear responsibility of walk leaders to ensure the safety and enjoyment of walkers by being equipped with essential skills in route planning, hazard awareness, group management and emergency procedures, including first aid “

The introduction of compulsory training for all new walk leaders was so successful, the decision was made to introduce higher standards for all walk leaders.

Walk leaders must either demonstrate that they have successfully led 12 walks in the previous 3 years or complete an online training course.

The online training course comprises of two walk leadership modules. The first, ‘Walk Leadership Foundations’ features experienced walk leaders talking about what makes a great walk and providing tips on planning and mapping a walk. The second ‘Preventing and Managing Incidents’ covers how to minimize the risk of an incident when leading a walk. Both videos are supported by a comprehensive ‘Walk Leader Handbook’.

All Ramblers walk leaders are covered by public liability insurance and personal accident insurance, conditional upon completing the training modules.

Mike said, “Whilst many of our leaders had completed the training online, at home, we thought others would prefer a more interactive experience where they could share their experience with other leaders and potential leaders. All know the Wharfedale area well so talking about the potential hazards of Malham Tarn, Ilkley Moor or Beamsley

Beacon makes the training far more realistic. We were delighted that many of our experienced leaders who met the 12 walks criteria also decided to attend in order to refresh their skills.

Keith Wilman, our former Chair, who leads walks for many local Ramblers Groups agreed to join me as co-trainer in running a walk leaders workshop. We had 25 members from across our six groups in the session at Guiseley Guide Hut. They all watched both videos but were also able to share their own tips and experiences, based on local knowledge and experience.

LWR offer 6 walks a week of varying lengths and demands which means we need a large pool of leaders. This was a great way to substantially increase our leadership pool. We now have 62 qualified leaders which ensures we can maintain our comprehensive walks programme .Walkers can be confident that they are in safe hands “.

Mike will be running the course again in December. Non-members of the Ramblers can access ‘Walk Leadership Foundations’ via ‘Ramblers Stride’ , full details of which can be found on the Ramblers UK website – www.ramblers.org.uk

SITUATIONS VACANT

We have two key posts becoming vacant and seek volunteers to fill them.

LWR SECRETARY	C GROUP WALKS CO-ORDINATOR
	
Steve Rawlings is stepping down at the AGM on November 21st The important role of the Secretary is in organizing and recording LWR committee meetings, including the AGM. The Secretary will have a key role to play in implementing the proposals resulting from the Ramblers national organization review due to report in 2026. A job description for the secretary role can be found on the Ramblers website. Alternatively please chat to Steve or contact Mike Briers	After 6 years in the role, Mark Ludlam is stepping down as the Walks Co-coordinator for the C group. He will step down at the end of December 2025 which means the January 2026 walks programme will be the last one that he organizes. The C group is the largest group in LWR and if Mark is not replaced, the group will cease to function from February 2026. The role could be done as a job share. If you are interested in this role, please speak to Mark or contact Mike Briers.

A(S) GROUP BECOMES PERMANENT

In March 2025, the LWR Committee agreed to a request from a number of members of the A+ group to establish a more strenuous weekly walk. These new walks would sit between A and A+ and the distances involved would usually exceed that of the regular A group walks. The key difference was that the walks would always be strenuous and occasionally with a technical element included.

The committee agreed to a 6 month trial for the A(S) group which commenced in March 2025. Walks take place on a Tuesday and are open to all Ramblers members. The purpose of the trial was to assess the impact of the A(S) group on the other LWR groups and gather member feedback.

During the trial, the A(S) group have offered a walk every Tuesday, all in compliance with Ramblers guidelines, which are more demanding for strenuous walks.

In June the group completed all 13 Irish 'Munros' and 11 members tackled several Wainwright tops in the Lake District. A week long walking trip in Majorca is planned for April 2026.

Following the successful completion of the trial, the committee have agreed that the A(S) group will become permanent and replace the A+ group. The group has 15 members of whom 11 are qualified leaders under the new Ramblers requirements. For more information regarding the A(S) group, contact Ian Haigh.

The remaining 6 members of the A+ group, whilst remaining members of the Ramblers, have decided to form an independent walking group. They will not walk under the Ramblers banner and their walks will not be published on the Ramblers website. We wish them well and when their 12 mile days are over, we look forward to welcoming them to one of our other shorter distance groups.

TERRY BOSSONS IN MEMORY



Terry (in white shirt) having reached the top of Simons Seat with LWR companions (Photo courtesy of LWR member, Chris Bower)

Many LWR members will be aware of the recent death of Terry Bossons, following a short illness.

Terry was a long standing member of LWR for over 25 years but had not walked in recent years due to health problems with his knees and found much joy in the freedom afforded to him by his electric bike.

A devout Catholic, earlier this year Terry had the great honour of being presented with the prestigious 'Bene Merente' medal, directly awarded by the Pope for outstanding services to the Roman Catholic Church.

His funeral service took place at St Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Rawdon, on Tuesday October 2nd with many LWR members attending the service. In a moving tribute, his brother in law, spoke of the important role the Ramblers played in Terry's life

Terry was a much loved and respected member of the LWR Community. We send his family our deepest sympathies.

SINGO BINGO



There are still places for Singo Bingo on November 7th at Burley in Wharfedale Social Club, all proceeds going to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

Having got my grandchildren help me mug up on Taylor Swift and Swedish House Mafia, I discovered it is all 60's' 70's and 80's music! At £10 a ticket, it's a great night out with optional pie and peas. Contact Amanda Siswick for more details or make your booking at Social Secretary on LWR website. Over 100 tickets already sold.