



A(S) GROUP TAKES A FURTHER STRIDE



The A(S) group has requested the LWR committee to change their name to the A+ group. The A(S) group was formed in March 2025 on a trial basis, becoming permanent 6 months later. The committee agreed to this request which means LWR has reverted to its walk structure prior to the formation of the A(S) group:-

GROUP	WALK DAY	STATUS	MILEAGE	WALK CO-ORDINATOR (S)
A+	Tuesday	Moderate/Strenuous	12 miles or over	Ian Haigh
A	Tuesday	Moderate/Strenuous	10/13 miles	Caroline Davies
B Tuesday	Tuesday	Moderate	8/10 miles	Keith Wilman
B Thursday	Thursday	Moderate	8/10 miles	Gina Brook
C	Tuesday	Leisurely/Moderate	5/7 miles	Tim Wilkinson & Adrienne Eaton
D	Tuesday	Easy	3/5 miles	Jim Heslop

This is not a re-creation of the previous A+group. Their walks are intended as a natural progression from the A group; a modest step up in distance and challenge, sitting comfortably within the LWR portfolio of walks and have already attracted two new members.

JACK JOWETT – A TRIBUTE

Jack Jowett who died on 16th December 2025, aged 98, was the founder of the LWR Footpath Maintenance Team. In 2008, Jack handed over leadership of the team to Richard Smith, who was a member of the team. After 10 years, Richard Smith handed the reins to Richard Brook, but is still actively involved in the work of the team.

We asked Richard Smith to write a tribute to Jack whose work and legacy has had such an impact on all those who walk in Wharfedale and beyond.



Jack repairing bridge at Bankfoot Farm

Timble, 1994



Colin Newton, Roger Stark, Jack repairing bridge at Norwood Edge

Oct 1996

It was only after joining that I realized the extent of his work around the area. He, and his team, rebuilt or replaced several hundred stiles, built countless lengths of fencing around gates and stiles, installed over 50 new or repaired gates, and built bridges of different types. On top of this, he led teams to clear overgrown rights of way and laid aggregates to improve surfaces in many areas.

Jack, who was also a keen mountaineer and gifted pianist, set exacting standards. Nothing was left to chance, especially if animal welfare was at risk from poor workmanship. He cared deeply for the countryside and did all that he could to maintain the path network, so that as many people as possible could experience the benefits of being outdoors.

Jack's legacy endures. We can all see the many green Ramblers signs placed upon the repairs that he and his team completed. LWR is the only group in the West Riding Area with a dedicated footpath maintenance team. The team works with North Yorkshire Council, Leeds City Council, Burley Welcomes Walkers, Otley Walking Festival and many other local groups to maintain our precious footpaths for the benefit of all.

The benchmark for all LWR footpath maintenance jobs remains, 'Would Jack be happy with this?' Not a bad legacy!"

A PERMANENT MEMORIAL TO JACK JOWETT

LWR committee have been in contact with Jack's family and will be funding a permanent memorial to Jack. Richard Smith and Richard Brook have been asked to design, word and install a plaque honoring Jack on a suitable stile, gate or bridge that Jack would have been familiar with. We will provide more details once these are available.

LET THE TRAIN TAKE THE STRAIN



The B group have recently run two successful walks where using the local rail network was an integral part of the route. For those members who enjoy combining rail travel with walking, 'Friends of Dales Rail' could be an attractive option at weekends. 'Dales Rail' are a walking society who specialize in organizing and leading guided walks for the general public. Most of these walks use railways in the Yorkshire Pennines which means linear walks are easy to organize. Most walks are based around using the Settle-Carlisle railway line, which LWR members can access from Leeds, Shipley, Bingley, Keighley and Skipton. Walks are held on weekends and usually range from 7 -18 miles, so there is a walk for everyone.

The walks are open to everyone. For more details or to view the 2026 programme, visit www.friendsofdalesrail.org or pick up a leaflet at your local rail station.

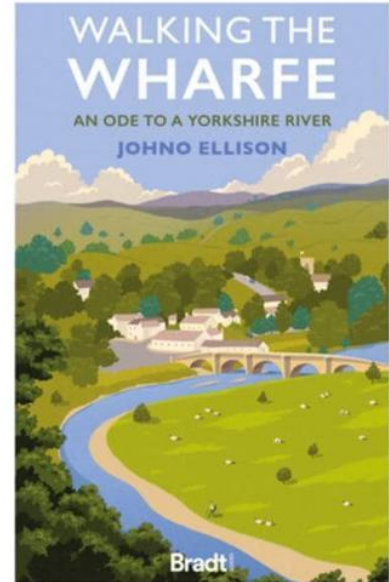
ONCEAYEARDAY UPDATE – TUESDAY MAY 5th



This year OYD is moving to the Wheatley Arms in Ben-Rhydding. Some members have asked why OYD has moved from 'Outside the Box' which has been so popular over the last few years, so a few words of explanation :-

- The location offers ample free car parking which is becoming a real problem in Ilkley
- The venue is free of charge
- The location opens a different range of walk options for all LWR groups
- The railway station and bus stop are very close
- Being a pub, a wider range of drinks are available. The 'Box' does not have a license.
- Many members provided feedback that whilst they liked the 'Box' the long narrow shape made it difficult to circulate and meet people, which is a key goal for OYD. The layout of our room at the Wheatley makes mingling much easier +
- There is an outside terrace to use if May 5th is a nice day.

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD HOLDER TO BE GUEST AT ONCE A YEAR DAY



Johnno Ellison grew up in Boston Spa and in his youth developed a particular fascination with the River Wharfe. His in-depth explorations of the river from source to mouth were the inspiration for his book 'Walking the Wharfe'

After school Johnno trained as a helicopter pilot in the RAF before studying Sustainable Product Design at Aston University. After graduating, Johnno, with two friends, spent 15 months driving a vintage London black cab through 50 countries. This marathon taxi ride earned the three adventurers the Guinness World Record for 'The longest and Highest Taxi Journey Ever'. His book about the journey, 'It's on the Meter' is available on Amazon as is 'Walking the Wharfe'.

Johnno will be interviewed by John Jackson (B group), a retired Barrister in what should be a fascinating discussion with a man who combines being a helicopter pilot and a taxi driver with his other careers as a consultant design engineer and expert on the Wharfe Valley. There will also be a Q&A session, plus the opportunity to have his books signed.

Don't miss it.

LWR RECRUITMENT LEAFLET

Those of you who use the local railway stations and libraries have probably noticed leaflets for Dalesbus, Friends of DalesRail, Walk the Line etc, containing details of their organization and their walks schedules. Obviously they are all designed to attract new members.

All the groups in the West Riding Area agree that recruiting new members is their biggest challenge. Our Otley Walking Festival participation is a new approach that LWR are experimenting with but we also need some more regular methods.

Ramblers produce a generic recruitment leaflet which is free of charge for all UK groups to use. The problem is that the content is very broad and doesn't tell the reader anything useful about LWR (eg location, variety of walks, frequency, website etc). Consequently the committee have agreed to examine the possibility of producing a specific LWR recruitment leaflet. The big challenge will be cost but first of all we need a draft leaflet.

We are not short of content but we are looking for somebody to help with the design, free of charge. You could be a retired graphic designer or have a grandchild studying design and needs a project for college. If you know somebody who would be willing to help, please ask them to contact Chris Tye - publicity@lowerwharfedaleramblers.co.uk