

**RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION SCOTLAND – GLASGOW GROUP**  
**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GROUP COMMITTEE**  
**FOR YEAR TO 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2023**

**Administration**

At the 2022 AGM no Chair was elected. At each Committee Meeting an interim arrangement was made to agree who would chair the meeting. Barry Pottle has chaired all of the Committee Meetings since the last AGM.

Alan Watt resigned as Treasurer at the AGM. The Committee thanked him for all his work, in various different roles. Alan indicated that he would be happy to stay on the Committee.

The election of the other honorary office bearers at the 2022 AGM was as follows:-

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| Chair     | Vacant       |
| Treasurer | Barry Pottle |
| Secretary | Sandra West  |

In addition to the above office bearers, the following officers were elected at the AGM:-

|                                |                                                            |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Access and Countryside Officer | Jim Riddell (not a Committee member)                       |
| Membership Secretary           | Frances Arthur                                             |
| Minutes Secretary              | Helen Sweeting                                             |
| Programme Coordinator          | Alan Watt                                                  |
| Web Controller                 | Geoff Der                                                  |
| Committee Members              | Terry Cassidy, Yvonne Flynn, Gareth Morgan, Catherine Watt |

Also at the AGM one officer, Gareth Morgan, was re-elected to be our Group Representative to the North Strathclyde Area Council. This leaves two vacancies for representation of Glasgow Ramblers at the Area Council, although Barry Pottle does attend in another capacity. Paula Wise also agreed to be our Representative at the Scottish Council in 2023. There were five Committee Meetings in this AGM year all held by Zoom. These were held in October 2022, January 2023, March 2023, June 2023 and September 2023. In addition, in September 2023, an additional meeting was held to discuss Diversity and Inclusion.

At the Walk Leaders Meeting in January 2023 Alan Watt indicated that he wished to relinquish the Programme Coordinator Role and Terry Cassidy agreed to take this role on and lead on the new Walks Manager system, with Alan and Geoff's support.

At the September Committee Meeting it was unanimously agreed to co-opt Suzi Bateman onto the Committee.

Several of our committee members are stepping down this year so our group are looking for some of our members to join the Committee.

## **The Magnificent 11**

It is over a year since the official launch of the Magnificent 11. A First Birthday walk was held in July. This was led by Gary Linstead, the countryside ranger whose dream it was to way mark the route, and we were joined by Jeannie Cranfield and Danny Carden from Ramblers Scotland and Zahrah Mahmood, the Ramblers Scotland President. On the day, Ramblers Scotland hired a professional team to make a video. Gary, Alan and Zahrah were interviewed. We were delighted with the results and the video was widely circulated.

The walk continues to be popular with some people doing the whole walk very regularly. Gary has led the walk many times over the past year, both for local people and for large parties of schoolchildren. Leaflets are available at the gates to Linn Park, Visit Scotland in the city centre and by post through the FB page.

Over the winter, on the Beech Walk section, a lot of work was done to improve the drainage. Thanks to all who have participated in path maintenance days.

Glasgow Ramblers has continued to support the route with small sums of money. Gary plans to set up a Friends of the Magnificent 11 group.

## **Other Access & Countryside**

### Glasgow City Council (GCC).

The council has a statutory duty to have a Local Access Forum (LAF) and the LAF in turn has statutory duties.

GCC has been without an Access Officer since November 2021 when the staff member left. The LAF has now essentially ceased to function. Contact with the council via its Access Officer and contact between members of the LAF (walkers, landowners & land managers, cyclists, canoeists, horse riders, wheelchair users etc.) has also now ceased. The Glasgow Ramblers Access and Countryside Officer now reports matters of concern directly to GCC. This carries less weight than the LAF and does not make up for its loss.

### Ramblers Parliamentary Reception. (Scottish Parliament 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023).

To mark the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Land Reform Act, the Ramblers held a reception in parliament. Ramblers volunteers, including the Glasgow Ramblers Access Officer, talked with MSPs and other attendees about local issues pertinent to access. These issues included mapping local paths, walking locally, keeping active in later life, protecting & improving access and reducing barriers for young people.

### Opening of Stockingfield Bridge. Forth and Clyde Canal, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2022.

Most of the Glasgow group committee, and the access officer, attended the grand opening. This commenced at Maryhill Burgh Halls with speeches and background to the building of the bridge. Just as it began to get dark, lantern lit processions set off from each of the three local areas to meet at the bridge that would more directly join their communities. The bridge was lit by coloured lights/light-show and there were bonfires, jugglers with lit up clubs and rings, swans & colourful canoes in the canal.

### Dawsholm Park approach road from Kelvindale.

As mentioned at our last AGM, this narrow approach road to Dawsholm Park has no pavement, relying on faded paint lines on the road to delineate pedestrian edges from vehicular traffic. The lines have since been repainted.

The Glasgow Ramblers Access Officer continues to liaise with local groups such as Glasgow National Park City (talks & walks) and participates in relevant GCC consultations such as the Glasgow City Centre Transformation Plan.

## **Programmes**

The main programme for the year October 2022 to September 2023 comprised 60 walks with a further seven added during the weekend away on Arran.

| <b>Grade</b>       |           | <b>Day</b>         |           |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| Easy Access        | 0         | Monday             | 0         |
| Easy               | 5         | Tuesday            | 1         |
| Leisurely          | 26        | Wednesday          | 7         |
| Moderate           | 25        | Thursday           | 8         |
| Strenuous          | 4         | Friday             | 0         |
| Technical          | 0         | Saturday           | 38        |
|                    |           | Sunday             | 6         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>60</b> | <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>60</b> |

The average walk length was eight miles (13 km), with the majority being between 6.5 and 9.5 miles (10.4 and 15.2 km). There was an excellent variety of locations on offer throughout the year. These ranged from city walks, Bute's West Island Way, Bannochburn, Fife, The Union Canal, The West Highland Way and the rolling hills of the Borders. There was something there for everyone, rounded off with the fabulous scenic walks on the Arran weekend.

A sunny and successful weekend away was held on the Isle of Arran from 29<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October. A total of 28 members attended, most of them choosing accommodation at the Sleep Huts in Lamlash. A diverse range of seven walks was offered by three walk leaders over the four days. The walks included Goatfell, Arran's highest peak, a trip to Holy Isle, sections of the Arran Coastal Way and a foray into Glen Rosa. A group dinner was held at the Lamlash Golf Club on the Saturday night.

## **Membership**

The 2021/22 Annual Report stated that, as at the end of September 2022, the Group's "active" (i.e fully paid up) membership was 303.

As at 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 the membership was 323. Over the year, therefore, the active membership has increased by 20.

## **Publicity**

This year saw the introduction of new IT systems throughout Ramblers, including a new website for Ramblers GB and a change of system for managing Ramblers walks. The previous system was called the Group Walks and Events Manager (GWEM for short). The new system is simply called Walks Manager. Walks Manager, like GWEM before it, is the system used by walk leaders to enter details of group walks onto a central database. This database is then used to display the upcoming walks on the Glasgow group website ([glasgowramblers.org.uk](http://glasgowramblers.org.uk)), on the Ramblers GB website ([ramblers.org.uk](http://ramblers.org.uk)) and on the Ramblers App. Despite a number of delays in implementation, the change of systems went fairly smoothly.

Throughout the year the group continued with a rolling programme of walks meaning that future walks appeared on the website as soon as the details were entered into the walks manager database. To simplify organisation for walk leaders, members are asked not to contact the walk leader more than two weeks prior to the walk.

In addition to our own website, the group is active on social media with both Facebook and an X (formerly known as Twitter) accounts.

### **Ramblers Scottish Council 2023**

The annual meeting of Ramblers' Scottish Council (SC) was held at Stirling Court Hotel, Stirling, on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2023. Paula Wise attended as the Group's representative and reported it was an enjoyable day, offering an opportunity to meet ramblers from across Scotland. Group Committee member, Barry Pottle, also attended as a member of the SC Motions Committee.

A new President of Ramblers Scotland, Zahrah Mahmood, was elected. Although Zahrah was unable to attend, a video was played in which her message - that access to the outdoors is more difficult for Muslim women like her - came across loud and clear.

Outgoing Ramblers Scotland President, Lucy Wallace, became one of the Vice-Presidents and a new Convener of Ramblers Scotland, Malcolm Dingwall-Smith, was also elected.

SC noted an update on motions passed at the previous year's Conference, adopted the Annual Report, and received a Statement on Scottish Council and Gathering Accounts, and a Summary of Ramblers Scotland finances 2021-22.

You can read more about Ramblers Scottish Council at [www.ramblers.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-organised](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-organised)

### **Group Committee (as at 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2023)**

Chair – Vacant

Secretary - Sandra West

Treasurer - Barry Pottle

Other members - Frances Arthur, Suzi Bateman, Terry Cassidy, Geoff Der, Yvonne Flynn, Gareth Morgan, Barry Pottle, Helen Sweeting, Alan Watt, Catherine Watt

Access Officer (not a committee position) - Jim Riddell

website – [www.glasgowramblers.org.uk](http://www.glasgowramblers.org.uk)

email – [info@glasgowramblers.org.uk](mailto:info@glasgowramblers.org.uk)

X (formerly known as Twitter) – @ramblersglasgow

facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/glasgowramblers.public>