

Ramblers Association Scotland Glasgow Group

Annual Report of the Group Committee For year to 30 September 2024



Introduction

Glasgow Ramblers is a friendly walking group for people of all ages who enjoy walking in the countryside or the city.

We are part of the Ramblers' Association, a charity and representative body which campaigns for access to the outdoors and creates walking opportunities for all.

The Glasgow Ramblers Annual Report, prepared by the group's committee members, summarises our key activities and achievements over the year from the start of October 2023 to the end of September 2024.

You can find out more about Glasgow Ramblers and our walks on our [website](#).

Who we are

The Glasgow Ramblers' Committee is a group of members who are elected to co-ordinate Ramblers' activities in our area.

At the 2023 AGM no Chair was elected. Our Secretary is Sandra West and our Treasurer is Barry Pottle.

Other Committee members who served in 2023/24 are: Frances Arthur (Membership Secretary), Suzi Bateman, Terry Cassidy (Walk Programme Co-ordinator), Geoff Der (Web Controller, Yvonne Flynn, Gareth Morgan and Helen Sweeting (Minutes Secretary)

Jim Riddell served the committee as Access and Countryside Officer. You can read more about committee business and members' roles in 'The Committee' section on page 5 of this report.

Our walk programme

We arranged a variety of walks throughout the year, suitable for people with different levels of experience and fitness.

The main programme comprised 73 walks which included 11 during our 2024 weekend away, held in Aviemore. This is an increase in the number of walks we offered the previous year of 13, or around 21%.

Walks ranged from three to 19 miles in length. The majority were between seven and 10 miles and the average was eight miles long. All our walks continued to be popular with both members and newcomers and 70% were fully subscribed, sometimes within days of becoming available to book.

Thanks go to the 17 currently active walk leaders who contributed to our busy and varied programme. A special thanks go to four of our walk leaders who led their very first walk in 2023-24. We look forward to more of our members coming forward to lead a walk in 2024-25 as we continue to offer a full and diverse walking programme.

Thanks also to all Ramblers for their blogs and photos throughout the year, particularly for the pictures which feature on our front cover taken by Paula, Geoff and Sandra. They show

some of our walks at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, Rothiemurchus Forest, Loch Lomond, and the Lairig Ghru. In total, 47 blogs were produced during this reporting year.

Grade		Day	
Easy Access		Monday	5
Easy	8	Tuesday	
Leisurely	24	Wednesday	8
Moderate	37	Thursday	8
Strenuous	4	Friday	6
Technical		Saturday	32
		Sunday	14
Grand Total	73	Grand Total	73

Weekend Away

Our weekend away for 2024 saw 28 people take part in walks and social events in and around the town of Aviemore in the Cairngorms National Park.

The walk leaders offered 11 different rambles across the weekend which took place from Friday, 20 September, through to the Monday.

A group of seven Glasgow Ramblers completed the 19-mile long Lairig Ghru, Scotland's most iconic mountain pass. Other walks included the Corbett Meall a' Bhuachaille, sections of the Speyside Way, the Ryvoan Pass, and a foray into Feshie Bridge.

Highlights of the weekend have been captured in [a slideshow of photographs](#) provided by members.

Our social events

There were three successful social events held over the year, all following short walks. Thanks to Pauline Werninck for organising a Christmas meal, a summer lunch and an afternoon tea.

Membership

We continued to grow our membership over the year.

In our previous Annual Report we recorded that at the end of September 2023, the Group's active membership was 323. 'Active' means members who are fully paid up.

As at 30 September, 2024, the membership was 373. Over the year, therefore, the active membership has increased by 50 or 15.5%.

Communications and engagement

Newsletters

We issued monthly newsletters to our members by email, updating them on past and future walks, events, training and news about Ramblers and walking more generally. We refreshed the look of our newsletter with the aim of making it easier for members to see at a glance the information they wanted to read. The feedback was positive and we intend to carry out a further review of our communications channels in the year ahead.

Facebook

Our Facebook page had over 1,301 followers in September 2024. We post news and photos throughout the year about our walks.

Website

The website continues to be used as the main source of information on walks by our members while the Magnificent 11 page and blogs are also frequently accessed. Most visits (54%) come directly to the site, 41% come via search engines, mainly Google, and 4% from links from other web sites, including Glasgow Times, Glasgow City Council and Facebook.

As more and more people are using mobile phones to view the website, we are gradually adapting the content to make it more suited to smaller screens.

We've added information on what to do when walks are full and added a listing of walks by other local groups.

Walking for everyone

We are committed to playing our part in Ramblers Scotland's mission to make the outdoors accessible for everyone. Over the year, we were pleased to welcome partially sighted walkers on a number of our walks where it was considered safe to do so.

We compiled a list of members who are willing to act as guides on a walk for someone partially sighted. We agreed, and published on our website, [guidelines on how we can support individuals](#) with a visual impairment.

Our guidelines stress that if a walk leader, having considered all the risks, decides the group cannot safely support a person with a visual impairment on their walk, we will always help people find alternative walks.

The Magnificent 11

Glasgow Ramblers continued to support and promote the Magnificent 11, the four-part circular walking route on Glasgow's Southside, which officially launched in 2022.

A range of local groups led walks on the route, including Glasgow Ramblers. Our walk to mark its second anniversary was held on Saturday, 6 July, and was attended by Gary Linstead, the retired park ranger who was the driving force behind the route. It attracted interest from Ramblers members outwith Glasgow, with eight people from the Forth Valley Group joining us on the day.

A [Facebook group](#) for the Magnificent 11, set up in 2024 with support from Glasgow Ramblers, gained in popularity with a total of 235 members at the end of September.

The route also generated positive press coverage with two [articles in the Glasgow Times](#) praising the walk and the people who helped make it happen.

Previously there was no mention of the route on the Glasgow City Council website. Following liaison with the head Countryside Ranger this was rectified and a search on the council website now gives some information and a link to Glasgow Ramblers Mag 11 route details.

Access and countryside work

The committee noted that Glasgow City Council (GCC) appointed a new Outdoor Access Officer. The post that had been vacant since November 2021 resulting in the Local Access Forum (LAF) ceasing to function. Our Access and Countryside Officer Jim Riddell spoke with the council about reviving both the LAF and the Glasgow Core Paths Plan. Having a working LAF would give Glasgow Ramblers direct contact with the council regarding any access problems and provide more information such as around planned path closures.

Govan to Partick Pedestrian Bridge

The long awaited link across the Clyde from Partick on the north of the river to Govan on the south opened in September 2024. This crossing replaces the old chain driven Govan Ferry which closed to passengers in the mid 1960s. It will improve access across the city centre and opens up many potential new walks.

Our walk leaders began planning walks showcasing the new bridge with one planned to coincide with the 2024 AGM.

Ramblers Scottish Council 2024

The 2024 Ramblers Scotland Annual General Meeting (known as 'Scottish Council') was held at the Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld on 16th March. The Glasgow Ramblers representative was Suzi Bateman. In addition to the formal business, the AGM features presentations from staff, volunteers and members on various topics.

You can read more about Ramblers Scottish Council at www.ramblers.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-organised

The Committee

There were five Committee Meetings in the year, all taking place online through Zoom.

These were held in October 2023 and January, March, June and August 2024. Thanks to everyone who is part of the Committee for their continued advice and support.

As no chair was elected an interim arrangement was made at each committee meeting on who would chair the meeting. Barry Pottle chaired each meeting as agreed by the committee.

At the AGM two officers, Suzi Bateman, Gareth Morgan, Barry Pottle and Jim Riddell were elected to be our Group Representatives to the North Strathclyde Area Council.

The group is looking for members to join the Committee. Glasgow Ramblers is run by volunteers and we welcome anyone who could help us run our group.

website – www.glasgowramblers.org.uk

email – info@glasgowramblers.org.uk

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