



**Oxon  
Weekend  
Walkers**

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**Committee meeting 22 January 2025**

**Via Zoom**

**Minutes**

**1. Apologies**

- Apologies were received from Membership Secretary.

**2. Minutes from last meeting**

- Minutes from the last meeting of 22 October 2024 were agreed as accurate.

**3. Matters arising - to be discussed at relevant agenda item**

**4. Chair**

- Sit mats and secateurs have been purchased. Tick cards/tweezers to be ordered soon.
- Suggestion to order some OWW pens to hand out with pre-printed ICE cards when new walkers join the group as pens tend not to come back once handed out. Treasurer has some spares that can be used for the moment.
- All committee members and walk leaders should have a stock of ICE forms to hand out to new walkers/visitors so the responsibility does not always fall to the Chair. This is especially important when groups are large.

**5. Walks**

- 3 members of the group have recently enquired about leading a walk.
- Another Oxfordshire group recently offered a group training session to encourage more walk leaders. This could be combined with something social and would also encourage people to discuss the training afterwards.
- Another navigation course could also give potential walk leaders the confidence to offer one.
- A group first aid course might also be useful in giving walk leaders confidence although it is currently not a requirement.

**6. Weekends away**

- Chair received deposits from nearly 30 people for the Dunster weekend in May. Payment of the remaining balance is due soon, with payment directly to the hotel. The hotel requires email addresses of all who have signed up. Chair to contact everyone about passing emails to the hotel.
- Social Secretary will be in Dunster the month before the trip and offered to do any last-minute checks/hotel visit if necessary.
- Publicity and Vice President plan to offer a day trip to the Malvern Hills on Sat 12 April. Exact details to be decided but as this is further afield than other OWW walks, walkers will be encouraged to share lifts or use the train (though it was noted the train station might be some distance from the start point). It was also noted that some years ago a Malverns walk used to be offered each year, with everyone going on the train to the start point, walking an A-B route and

then getting the train back from another station. This could be a possibility again, but the walk would be shorter and using the trains would mean less flexibility.

## **7. Socials**

- There has been one social since the AGM – Christmas drinks in a pub in central Oxford – which around 9 people attended.
- Another social is planned soon – a tribute band at a pub in Witney. This is not yet on the website as Social Secretary has had problems uploading to the website (post-meeting note: this issue now seems to have been resolved).
- Social Secretary is considering organising a meal in the coming months for which people would need to sign up.

## **8. Membership**

- Since the last meeting, Membership Secretary has responded to eight OWW membership enquiries via email, some of whom went on to attend a walk. There has been one lapsed membership and one person who has left the OWW group. Two OWW members have resigned from Ramblers altogether, but two have transferred to OWW. Current membership is very stable at 147.

## **9. Committee**

- All agreed that the OWW AGM in November had been very successful. It worked well having the AGM directly after a normal Sunday walk, and despite the very poor weather both the walk and the AGM were very well attended. The pub, the Red Lion in Eynsham, were responsive and very accommodating and it was helpful to be able to order drinks and snacks from the bar and take them through to a private room. Chair reported that the total cost was very reasonable at £137. If we want to use same pub again next year, it would be best to avoid the weekend of the Eynsham 10k since this fills up the public car park.

## **10. Finance**

- The current balance is £508.64 with an outstanding payment for £17.95 for a chocolate "thank you" to Louise Lipsham who audited the OWW accounts at the end of November. This will take the balance to £490.69. The following has already been paid/reimbursed:
  - AGM £137.35 (£92.35 + £45)
  - Walk draw £30
  - Thank you to outgoing Social Secretary £5
  - Sit mats £13.99
  - 3 secateurs & covers £43.45 (£29.97 + £7.39 + £6.09)

Treasurer noted an email from Area to all treasurers saying they are looking into a way of taking debit/credit card payments. Groups are to contact Area if interested, but OWW Treasurer thinks this is not relevant for OWW.

## **11. Web**

- Web Manager reported that the one change to the committee following the AGM had been updated on the website.

## **12. Publicity**

- Publicity Manager noted that we could do actively do more publicity but walk numbers are high already, so it is not necessary.

## **13. Ramblers guidance/policies**

- No items discussed here.

## **14. Area**

- **AGM**
  - Area Chair will stand again for election
  - Walking Environment & Access Officer is standing down. To encourage someone to volunteer for the post, there is an Area plan to simplify this role.
  - Sir Muir Gray is expected to attend in addition to the speaker, Clive Sanders, the Ramblers Chief Commercial Officer. Clive Sanders responsibilities include fundraising, helpdesk, communications and campaigns, IT and Walk Magazine.
- **First Aid Course**
  - The course on 22nd February is full but people can apply to be on a reserve list.
  - Additional courses are likely to be offered.
- **Walk Leaders**
  - 305 are registered in the Oxfordshire Area
  - 37 have completed the training
  - Thame & Wheatley have 14 trained leaders. They found running a group training session was a great success.
  - Area will fund hall hire for group training - need to check whether there would be a requirement to make it generally available.
  - OWW has been asked to ask walk leaders to check the Ramblers website for existing walks starting from the same place before submitting to avoid overloading villages. Apart from Hike Oxford, other groups schedule their walks months in advance and so are likely to pre-date ours. Walk leaders can easily check the Ramblers website for other walks going on in Oxfordshire <https://www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/patrick/walks-programme.html>. To ease parking more generally, it was suggested that for very popular starting places it may be better to list a meeting point in the middle of the village rather than in one car park so that walkers might park in various places and not completely fill one space. One walk leader had done this recently for a walk starting in Charlbury.
- **Membership**
  - Area membership is at an all-time high of 2384
  - There's an increasing number of unallocated members, for whom retention is poor. It appears that a telemarketing company has been registering new members and allocating them only to an Area
- **Botley West Solar Farm**
  - The Chairman has submitted his application for the Area to be an interested party

## **15. AOB**

- Date for next committee meeting needs to be after the next Area meeting on 13 April. Chair suggested the next one should take place online and proposed Thursday 1 May, 7.30pm. The following meeting in August could then be in person after a walk.