



**Oxon
Weekend
Walkers**

Oxon Weekend Walkers

Committee meeting 27 April 2025

Crown Hotel, Faringdon

Minutes

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Social Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and Publicity Secretary.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting of 22 January 2025 were agreed as accurate.

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

4. Chair

- Area AGM was very successful – Chair thanked everyone who contributed to the day. The venue (Eynsham village hall) worked out well, cakes were well received and refreshments served efficiently. Walk was muddy in places but brilliant weather.
- Tic tweezers have been purchased and will be handed out to walk leaders first. If used, feedback would be helpful.
- Pens for handing out with ICE cards are still being researched but likely to purchase fewer, cheaper pens with the OWW website address on. Publicity Secretary to check the price difference between ordering 50 and 100.
- The new credit card sized ICE cards have been ordered, and we are awaiting delivery.
- Chair has two of the new sit mats which could be given out to any walk leaders who don't have a spare for new members.
- Proposal to buy a handheld navigation device (e.g. Garmin) for use by OWW walk leaders. This would be expensive but potentially very useful and OWW has sufficient funds to cover the cost. Some advantages would be that since walk leaders no longer have access to a shared OS maps account, it could keep a record of all routes, and would not run down a phone battery as OS maps does. One member of the group has an older model and has offered it to the Chair to try out.

5. Walks

- Since the last meeting, there have been 14 walks, 11 of them with dry weather.
- The average mileage was 10.5 miles and the average number of walkers was 17.
- There were 13 different walk leaders.
- Two more members are in the process of doing walk leader training and should be able to lead their first walks soon.
- The schedule is not quite full for the coming months – walks secretary encouraged more people to submit a placeholder in advance even if they don't yet have the details of the walk.

6. Weekends away

- 28 are signed up to join the Dunster trip (16/5/25 - 19/5/25) and all have paid the required amount.

- Information email went out on 23/4/25. Everyone must book meal choices for the first night via an online form which will be passed on to the hotel.
- Walks have been recced and will be jointly led by sharing the OS tracks and copies of maps.
- Chair noted that the Dunster trip needed to be booked a year in advance because of availability in the hotel. If a group trip will be offered in 2026, committee should start thinking about this soon, but it was agreed to wait until the Dunster trip had taken place. It would be good to build up a list of tried and tested venues so that the group didn't need to find an entirely new place each year. HF are a possibility.
- The Malvern Hills day trip planned for Sat 12 April has been postponed.

7. Socials

- There have been four social events offered since the last Committee meeting in January. These included two musical nights at Fat Lil's in Witney, a comedy night at the Oxford Playhouse and a Nepalese meal.
- The Depeche Mode tribute band on 31 January was cancelled by the venue on the day, with tickets valid for a rescheduled date in June.
- Fifteen Weekend Walkers enjoyed the meal out.
- The comedy night didn't attract any takers but Sara Burnell who kindly organised it wanted to go in any case.
- The soul music night attracted one member in addition to the organiser.
- Although these socials have had mixed success in terms of numbers, the organisers wanted to attend the events so were happy to put them on – many thanks to all of them for their contributions.
- There are a more socials on the calendar for the summer including the Charlbury Festival and Mikron Theatre, both popular in previous years.
- The Social Secretary hopes to offer another Saturday tour of the Bodleian Library in due course, but it might not take place until the Autumn.

8. Membership

Since the last meeting the Membership Secretary has responded to 11 OWW enquiries via email (membership enquiries & welcoming new members), some of whom went on to attend a walk/join OWW. One rejoined OWW, two were new to Ramblers and four were new to Area/Group. The current membership is stable at 152.

9. Committee

There were no items to discuss here.

10. Finance

The current balance is £563.69 with no outstanding payments. Since the last meeting, the outgoings have been as follows:

- £17.95 - Thank you to Louise for checking the accounts
- £37.81 - tick tweezers
- £17.25 - Easter thank you gifts
- £73.01 Total

There have also been incoming funds from Ramblers of £128.

11. Web

The Web Manager had nothing to report.

12. Publicity

The Publicity Manager had nothing to report.

13. Ramblers guidance/policies

There were no items to discuss here.

14. Area

The Area Representative provided the following notes from the recent Area meeting (although was not able to attend the first 30 minutes):

- **Membership**
 - Membership has continued to rise and at the end of March it stood at a record high of about 2440.
 - Nationally membership has increased too. There is still concern about the 149 unallocated members.
- **Paths**
 - A new system of distributing information on path changes to groups and Parish Path Wardens is working well. Members are encouraged to complete a questionnaire on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) at <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip>. It will provide input to a plan for the next 10 years. The closing date is 19th May.
- **Area Picnic**
 - The Area Picnic, which is scheduled for Sunday, 29 June, at Chilton Recreation Ground, might serve as a celebration of Ramblers 90th anniversary.
- **General Council**
 - A "new vision" for Areas is to be developed, with focus groups held in April and May. The Charity Commission has highlighted a need to improve communication between Central, Areas and Groups, e.g. through changes to the management of email lists.
- **Botley West**
 - Representative of West Oxfordshire (WO) and the Chairman will observe the first meeting on 13th May.
 - A national organisation is setting up walks to highlight impact of solar farms. The Oxfordshire walk will be on 8th June.
- **Reservoir**
 - Chairman attended a workshop for interested parties last week. There was no new information but the Chairman was able convey the need to connect routes with the existing path network. There will be information events in villages and the public consultation starts in the autumn.
- **Equipment**
 - A Google calendar will be created for booking equipment. A 5-day gap between bookings is required to allow for transfer. A larger screen will be bought.
- **Next meeting 14 July**

15. AOB

- Date for next committee meeting needs to be after the next Area meeting on 14 July. The Chair proposed an in-person meeting after the walk on 27 July.
- A note that the Area Picnic this year is on a Sunday 29 June and so there will be no OWW walk. This is made clear on the OWW website. 7-8 walks are expected to be on offer.