



**Oxon
Weekend
Walkers**

Oxon Weekend Walkers

Committee meeting 27 July 2025

Combe Reading Room

Minutes

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Webmaster, W/O Portfolio 3, Area Rep, and Treasurer.

2. Minutes from last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting of 27 April 2025 were agreed as accurate.

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

4. Chair

- New plastic ICE cards have arrived and are being issued. Chair still has around 70 and can order more if required.
- Publicity secretary has investigated purchase of pens with OWW logo. Promotional pens could be ordered from Ramblers, but it was thought more useful to have pens with OWW logo and website. Publicity secretary to order.
- Purchase of a handheld navigation device for OWW walk leaders had been previously discussed. Vice Chair borrowed a Garmin from an OWW member to trial it but found it old, complicated and not especially useful. A newer watch-based device might be better, but committee agreed to leave the idea for now since most walk leaders are happy to use OS maps on phones. Group funds could perhaps be spent on power packs to support mobile phone use.
- Another idea for group funds could be to purchase some cooling towels to use in the hotter weather. Publicity Secretary to purchase a couple of samples for testing. If successful, Chair suggested giving a towel to all those who completed walk leader training as a reward.
- A further idea for group funds and an incentive to complete walk leader training, could be to give out OS vouchers which could be spent on the OS maps app.
- The Area Picnic was well attended by OWW with 13 on the longest walk and another 3 members of OWW on other walks. It will be OWW's turn to host this event in 2027.
- On 31/8/25, OWW have been invited to join a celebration. The Jarn Mound Walk by OWW members Sheila and Kevin is part of the Vale Group's celebration of 40 years of the Jubilee Walk. OWW walkers can meet walkers from Vale at Jarn Mound and there may be tea and cakes provided by Vale to enjoy.
- Chair recommended the British Red Cross app which is a free app for first aid questions and information.
- Chair reported two new members and one other non-member asking for lifts to the start of walks. Chair responded to explain that we can't organise lifts and sent them the list of all the Oxon walks for the month suggesting they find one nearer to them or that is accessible by public transport. We should discourage people from posting requests for lifts on the OWW Facebook page because not everyone on the OWW Facebook group is a member of OWW and it may not be safe.
- Committee discussed whether to restrict Facebook group to OWW members only, but it would be a significant task to remove everyone who is not a member and membership continually changes so it

would be an ongoing task. Committee thought better option would be to add some standard wording to each walk entry and the Facebook page saying that we cannot organise lift shares for safety reasons, with a warning on Facebook that users could be removed if they do not respect this.

5. Walks

- Since the last meeting, there have been 12 walks and only 1 with rain.
- Only one Sunday was missed because of the Area picnic.
- The average distance was 10 miles and the average number of walkers 15.
- There were 11 different walk leaders.

6. Weekends away

- The Dunster weekend in May was a great success and has been rebooked for 15/5/26 -18/5/26. Prices have gone up to £390 or £315 for three nights, depending on single / shared occupancy. No deposit is required this time, but the hotel will ask for half payment by end of Jan 26 with the remaining balance to be paid by May 26. 24 places have been reserved so far and all are OWW members.
- OWW member Carolyn led a weekend away to the Gower in early July for a small group of OWW members. This was also very successful.
- A pre-Christmas weekend away has been arranged for 19/12/25 - 22/12/25 at Holme Lacy House which is a Warners hotel. Everyone is to make their booking independently and should ideally be an OWW member, or at least Ramblers. The cost is approximately £240 for the three nights half board.

7. Socials

- There have been three social events offered since the last Committee meeting in April - a Depeche Mode tribute band (postponed from earlier in the year), a pub social for OWW member Petra, who was back from Australia, and the Charlbury music festival.
- A trip to the Mikron theatre is on the social calendar for early August and the Social Secretary hopes to offer another Saturday tour of the Bodleian Library soon.
- Committee discussed whether to have a Christmas or autumn meal this year. Autumn was thought preferable.

8. Membership

Since the last meeting the Membership Secretary has responded to 6 OWW enquiries via email (membership enquiries & welcoming new members), some of whom went on to attend a walk/join OWW. The OWW group membership has increased to 156, five new to Ramblers and one new to our Area/Group.

9. Committee

There were no items to discuss here.

10. Finance

- Since the last meeting there have been no outgoings or incomings, so the balance remains at £563.69.
- For the coming year Area suggested the following as our default allocation: £100 per group + £1.10p per group member. For OWW this comes to £269.40 which will be paid in 2 instalments throughout the year. OWW could ask for additional funds, but this wasn't thought necessary. OWW could also have asked to reduce the funding. Treasurer agreed to the default allocation.
- Treasurer has asked other groups what they spend funds on. She reported that one group had spent surplus on repairing a local gate or stile so this could be a possibility for OWW.

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

- Chair attended the Area meeting on 14/7/25 on behalf of the Area Rep.
- First Aid: Steve Walde is the contact to ask for St John's half day in Kidlington. Training is offered by a volunteer on Saturday morning for 12 people at a time. Could OWW members alone fill a course?
- Changes to Ramblers Governance:
 - Ramblers have produced a pre-consultation document on proposed changes to Ramblers Governance (the way Area and Groups communicate and receive finance etc). Chair can share this with anyone who wishes to read more.
 - Area is asked to provide feedback back during 6-17th Aug which Richard Birch as Chair of the Area will supply. In Richard's opinion 'the aim of the changes is to increase flexibility and reduce bureaucracy' so he is generally in favour. There will be an EGM in Dec to pass or reject the changes.
- There is £900 available for kissing gates.
- Ramblers has supplied a list of promotional items – e.g. tablecloths, banners, posters, fliers, pens which can be ordered from head office.
- Walk leader training was discussed. Most agree the online training is useful. One group has organised a group training session so now have 20 qualified leaders. This could be a possibility for OWW if walk leaders could be more motivated by training in a group. Richard Birch will keep an eye on how many walk leaders complete the training from each group.
- Chair noted that several OWW members have already done the training and have found it not as onerous as expected. She also suggested that we remember to thank walk leaders at the start of walks and congratulate them when they have completed the training.
- Oxford Open Doors 13th/14th September will include a guided walk along Love Lane, which is all that is left of an ancient lane that ran from Eastgate along Longwall St and into the Parks. It's been locked up at both ends (Savile Rd and South Parks Rd) since about the 1910s and is in danger of disappearing altogether.
- Next Area meeting is 13 October.

15. AOB

Date for next committee meeting needs to be after the next Area meeting on 13 October. Chair suggests Tuesday 21 October, online.