



NEWSLETTER September 2024

Chairperson Report

At the recent committee meeting on 27 August 2024, Peter Fletcher retired from the committee. Peter has been a member of the footpath Group and committee member for many years. He has undertaken the role of Chairman and recently has been treasurer. The current committee and all the members who have known and walked with him over many years wish him well. A letter of thanks has been sent to Peter.

David Worrall has been co-opted to the role of treasurer by the current committee.

The walk programme from June to August has been very successful. All our planned walks have gone ahead. The plan to introduce some new routes has continued.

During the summer months there have been some evening walks. The sunny July one had a particularly high turnout; and the start time wasn't a problem. The 22nd August one created concern as the timing and distance meant we just got back before the light failed. The date and distance will be reviewed when planning for next year.

The AGM is planned for 13 October 2024. To be held at Haskayne Village Hall. To start at 11:45 finish 12:30 and followed by a walk starting at 13:00. Confirmation and agenda will be sent out by email closer to the time.

Sunday 8 December 2024 has been designated as our Christmas refreshment walk. It is planned for an 11:00 AM start from Banks Old Hollow Farm. There will be two walks available with refreshments after. Details of the cost and booking arrangements will be confirmed at the AGM.

On a recent walk the group encountered livestock, most of us aren't concerned about sheep but are wary of cattle and horses. Below is some guidance from Ramblers:

- Have a look when you reach the edge of the field. Are there any cattle in the field, any cows with calves, horses, or sheep? Cows with calves are the most common cause of problems for walkers.
- Keep a good distance from the animals. If they are on the path, then you're allowed to go off path to walk around them. If you are on open access land, then you can walk across the field to give the animals space.
- Walk quickly and quietly. Animals in a field may approach you, especially groups of cows which can be quite intimidating. If you panic, or run from them, they may also start running.
- Do not approach any animals, do not feed them, or touch them. Animals on a farm will have strict diets, especially horses, and feeding them can be bad for them.
- Leave any gates as you find them. Close any gates that you open, and if any gates are open, then leave them that way.

Committee issues

The “contact us” and “join us” tabs on the web site have now been updated providing a link to an Office form which will go direct to our web manager Chris for action. These forms have the questions / answers needed for membership purposes. The email address below can still be used for more generic enquiries to the committee.

westlancashirefootpathgroup@gmail.com

The walks programme

At the recent committee meeting we discussed some generic issues that West Lancashire Footpath Group regard as being important to be included in the walk information. These are:

- Start time – e.g. 12:45 for 13:00
- Estimated finish time – including short refreshment breaks
- Distance
- Pace e.g. easy/ leisurely, moderate or strenuous
- Narrative information e.g. if the walk includes a theme
- Clothing or equipment information beyond the standard recommendation for sturdy suitable footwear and weather appropriate clothing

The October 2024 to December 2024 programme will be sent out by email with the Newsletter and will appear on the website and Facebook at the same time. The website walk programme is updated with any changes that have to be made during the quarter. Any major changes will also be notified by email to members and on our Facebook page. Chris is now also using the events tab on our Facebook page to publicise the next walk.

www.westlancsfootpathgroup.org.uk

As usual in the Newsletter there is an appeal for walk leaders as leaders are essential for the group to operate successfully. If you would consider being a leader please contact any committee member or Gwen directly.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that the start time on the programme is the departure time not the “meeting” time. Don’t forget you have to get your boots on!

Footpath Officer Report

In June there was a report done to the Canal and River Trust & Sefton council. Whilst this is outside the West Lancashire Footpath Group area it is a popular route used by a lot of our members.

In August 5 issues were reported; 2 of them in Haskayne and 3 in Scarisbrick. The full information and updates are available on our website in the reported problems tab. This is very well worth a look as the pictures and the narratives enable a clear understanding of the effort the footpath officers and leaders put into selecting and checking routes for the walk programme.

The ongoing issue of Mere Lane has resulted in a request from Mid Lancashire Ramblers to provide any examples of use of the Public rights of Way (PROW). The letter and map has been distributed to all our members via email; with a request to reply to David Kelly direct.

Communications with members.

The newsletter, website and email are now well established for our communications to members. The Facebook page is proving popular although there is some confusion over joining the Facebook page and becoming a paid member of the group. Chris and David follow up on this if non- members attend walks. As mentioned earlier in the Newsletter a link to the membership form is now available on the Facebook page and an explanation of membership is included in the welcome message which goes to people who join the Facebook page.

Our email address is:

westlancashirefootpathgroup@gmail.com

A link to Facebook is attached which will invite you to join the group. At present the group is private.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/267065369061420/>

Committee from 27 August 2024

Chair: Gaynor Culshaw

Secretary: Mary Ellis

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: David Worrall

Walk Coordinator: Gwen Veevers

Website Manager: Chris Rimmer

Footpath Inspectors: Doreen Bird and Gwen Veevers

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