

## **BARNRD CASTLE RAMBLERS**

### **NEWSLETTER**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **Notes from the Chair**

Well, Spring is almost here and that means more walks over a wider area. We have already seen some lovely displays of snowdrops and aconites on our walks and it shouldn't be long before the bulbs appear. Teesdale seems to have avoided, so far, the extremes of the winter weather, for which we are grateful.

At the end of last year we had a successful AGM held at Romalldkirk village reading room. Richard Betton was our guest speaker, giving an illustrated talk about the life of an upper dale farmer. We thank him for that and also our thanks to Tom for arranging the venue. The AGM was preceded by two short walks in the morning, thanks to Ian and Joan. A month later we held our Christmas lunch at the Langdon Beck Hotel, preceded by a walk led by Lynda. Excellent food and company. Thanks to Lynda for organising this. After two attempts, thwarted by the weather, a small group of us eventually managed to come together with Steve Owers in December for an advanced navigation course on a cool morning on Cockfield Moor. There is every reason to hope this has given all of us more confidence in navigating in adverse weather

Your committee met and have set some dates for certain events. On Sunday April 5 we will meet as part of the County Durham Big Spring Clean litter pick. Saturday June 20 we intend to make a Lakes visit by shared cars with a walk. A month later on July 25, after the success last year, we will hold another Strawberry Tea at Stainton Village Hall, preceded by a walk. We also intend to venture to the North York Moors during the summer months and to arrange some evening walks in the summer ending at a pub, as these have been commented upon favourably in previous years. Then come November we have our AGM on the 7<sup>th</sup>. And a month later our Christmas lunch on Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup>. Please note that we are trying to hold this on a Saturday this year due to popular demand, but it may depend on satisfactory catering arrangements. Full details of all these events will be put on the web-site nearer the time.

Our group is largely a walking and social group. We do feel that when possible we ought to give something back to the environment and recently two projects have come up to do with the path network. One suggestion is that we survey all the public paths in Newbiggin parish, checking their condition and compile a report for Durham County Council Rights of Way. The committee chose Newbiggin Parish because it has many paths which the group makes use of fairly often. This an experiment as it is many years since this type of survey was done by the group. We will see how long it takes to complete the survey and how onerous it is. At the moment the committee is putting ideas together – whether they should be part of regular walks or done as a separate project. Your comments and any ideas you may have about how to conduct it would be appreciated. Please let a committee member know.

The second project is a national Ramblers one entitled “Don't Lose Your Way” (DLYW). It is a follow up to a previous campaign called “Follow Your Path”. Details have only been released this week. The whole country has been divided into 150,000, 1 Kilometre squares. As far as I can tell you take one of these squares and compare the Definitive paths with those on the Ordnance Survey map and any missing paths are reported to Ramblers. Then the job is to report them to the relevant Highway Authority to have missing paths put on the Definitive Map. It is all to do with registering as many missing paths as possible by the cut-off date of 2026. The Highway Authorities (i.e. County Councils) have another 5 years to register them on the map. I thought it would be good if we could systematically cover our area between now and 2026 and would be a contribution towards making sure our paths are open and on the Definitive Map. Again ideas about how to do this would be appreciated. Details are available on the Ramblers web-site as DLYW. It has received favourable comment from the media.

Ramblers have produced a new leaflet about the organisation, as an introduction to possible new members. We have stuck our group name and contact on a sticker to the leaflet and we are hoping to put them out at various outlets in Barney, such as the doctor's surgery. If anybody would like some to distribute please contact Pauline.

Finally, a really grateful thanks to our devoted walk leaders during this winter time. And please don't forget the Pancake Wednesday walk and lunch arranged by Lynda at the Forresters in Middleton-in-Teesdale on Wednesday February 26<sup>th</sup>. Please come and bring a friend too and let Lynda know you are coming by Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. Details are on the walks web-site.

Wishing you all a good year of walking.

Gordon