



# South Cheshire Group

Newsletter No: 40  
November 2014

Website: <http://www.ramblerssouthcheshire.org.uk>

*As you will see, this is the 40<sup>th</sup> Edition of the South Cheshire Ramblers Newsletter. The first was produced in November 1995, a copy of which is on the Website. How times have changed, or perhaps not, as the Group still relies on active members and volunteers to support the activities and events and provide articles for the Newsletter.*

*Did you know that the first on-line copy of the Newsletter with colour photographs was made available on the South Cheshire Ramblers Website in October 2010. .... Bev Brady, Editor*

## Chairman's Chat Phil Guest

I find it hard to believe, but I think that this 'chat' will complete a round dozen of my ramblings. I mention this because at our last AGM, we saw a 'sort of' changing of the guard with so many offices changing hands. One week before the AGM with so many positions still to be filled. I was most apprehensive that the group could continue, we needed the volunteers and lo and behold 'they came forth'. I am most appreciative for all of them.

Volunteering for an office or as a member of 'the Committee' involves time given and a level of commitment that many people do not understand until they take the plunge. Those members of our group who have retired from their roles this year understand these requirements well and have given the group good service over the years they have held the posts, on your behalf I wish to thank them, wish them well in their roles as members and hope one day they will step forward again to help the group do its business.

The recent AGM was one of the best I have attended. Numbers present were high and the talk given by Mike Taylor from Cheshire East's Rights of Way team on the history of countryside access was most interesting and stimulating. Mike, although he has to stick to the law in handling footpath issues in our county showed that he personally appreciates the footpath network that we all enjoy so much.

It was also good to hear from Eileen that her records on membership appear to show that we maintain a steady number of just over 200 members. I suspect that the number of walk leaders also remains steady, BUT we essentially have to find leaders for weekends, midweek, lunchtime and evening pub walks. Still quite a challenge, so if anyone is still wondering if an offer to lead is going to be accepted, don't wait, we will take it. Next year we will run a workshop on leading walks and I do appreciate the offer to run this from some of our more experienced leaders.

I hope to see you at the Annual dinner but in the meantime can I offer all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

### Committee

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## **Wednesday Walks**

**Eileen Dorman**

In the last Newsletter, I asked if anyone would be interested in a mid-week walk. Well, it seems that the idea did 'have legs' – quite a few - with the number of people coming along on the walks increasing each month. The walks are 6-8 miles, not too far away and finish around 3.00pm, which seems to be a convenient time for fitting in 'afternoon duties': meeting children from school, shopping, cooking, laundry, etc .....

So far walks have been scheduled for one per month. Over the 6 months from June to December walks were: All Around Haslington, Yarnfield-Swynnerton, Barlaston-Downs Bank, Rainow-White Nancy, Brown Moss and Mow Cop.

I have been very grateful to have Leaders readily volunteering Wednesday walks for the next 6 months. Look out on the programme for: Market Drayton, Bickerton Hills, Audlem to Nantwich linear, Biddulph Fig.8, Aston, Old Pale-Delamere.

So, keep an eye on the website for latest information and more details and who knows, we might be able to slot in some additional walks. I should think that everyone has a favourite walk in their local area and you'd be surprised how many people would like to share them with you. It will certainly boost your confidence as a Walk Leader !

So thank you to everyone who has come along and supported mid-week walks, and a big thank you to the Leaders, they wouldn't happen without you.

## **Countryside Watchdog at Work**

**Carole Bentley**

The Ramblers' efforts to protect footpaths and rights of way are well known but there's another group doing similarly important work in Cheshire East that is probably not so well known. Its title is (the not exactly headline-grabbing) Cheshire East Local Access Forum - CELAF - and it's a body of volunteers, tasked with encouraging greater public access to the countryside without damaging the natural environment and respecting the needs of land owners and managers.

Local authorities are required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to appoint a Local Access Forum to oversee implementation of the legislation. Until the splitting of Cheshire into two separate councils, one Forum covered the whole county. This was dissolved in 2012, and the new Cheshire East Forum began work last year. It currently has 10 volunteer members (of which I am one) who represent various interests such as walking, cycling and horse riding, land management and wildlife conservation. It has a wide remit in advising Cheshire East Council and other bodies such as government departments, Natural England, the Forestry Commission and Sport England. It also gives advice to planners of major housing and transport developments about protecting existing public rights of way and incorporating the needs of what are known as non-motorised users.

It has already identified two major issues which it is prioritising. These are the problems faced by people with disabilities who want to enjoy the countryside, and the dangers for walkers, cyclists and horse riders on rural roads. The Forum has set up two sub groups to further investigate both issues and to suggest possible remedies.

The Forum meets in full session four times a year, alternating between the Municipal Offices in Crewe and the Town Hall in Macclesfield. Its meetings are open to the public. The Forum covers all of Cheshire East except for that part of the county inside the Peak District National Park – the National Park has its own forum.

I became involved after seeing an item in the local newspaper asking for interested people to apply to be a member. Once I had been selected, I offered to try to publicise the existence and work of the group because I had never before heard of Local Access Forums which, despite their low profile, fulfil a vital role.

If there are issues which you feel the group should be concerned about please email me [carole.bentley@gmail.com](mailto:carole.bentley@gmail.com) or come along to a meeting. There's more about CELAF, its membership and the minutes of its meetings on the Council's website [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/prow](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/prow) but, importantly, the body is independent of the Council.

## Ramblers in Scotland : Spring Break 2015

Eileen Dorman

This was in answer to: what shall we do for the next Group holiday?

People wanted something different, for some without having to drive and not too expensive. Quite a brief.

I suggested Scotland – but with a difference – a Highland Heritage coach tour! So in April next year 39 pioneering souls are off to Dalmally, a village in the Strath of Orchy in Argyle & Bute. Along with the travel, the holiday includes excursions to Edinburgh, Oban, a Highland Concert and Loch Lomond.

So what about the rambling ?

As an alternative to the daily coach tours, members of South Cheshire Ramblers are offering to lead some walks in the local area. Thank you to Robert and Judith Spowage, Carole Bentley and Phil Guest.

With something for everyone, and hopeful of decent weather, this adventure fits the brief and should be an enjoyable experience for tourists and walkers alike.

I'm sure there will be plenty of news and gossip in the next Newsletter !

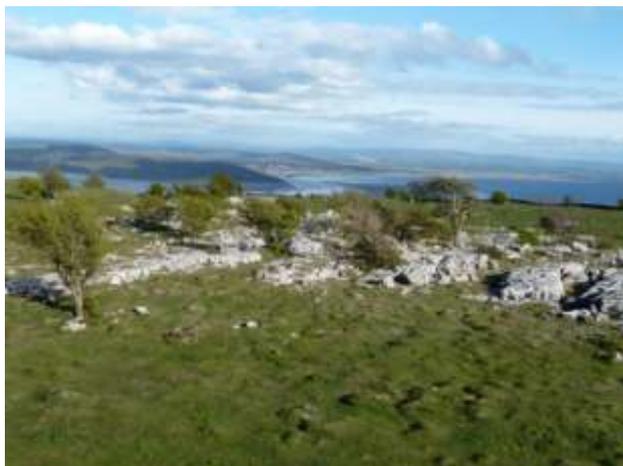
## LDWA Hillwalkers' Registers and new certificates

Philip Lund

Readers of my articles on peak-bagging (Newsletter 37 ) may be interested to know that the LDWA have now updated the certificates, or introduced new ones, for each of the ten separate registers of 'completers' which are maintained. One of the new certificates is for completion of the total of 330 summits in the original Wainwright Guide books to the Lake District Fells (214) and in that to the Outlying Fells (116, this number being the now recognised total of separate summits in that book).

In the course of designing the new certificates the compiler of the Registers sought photos for the new certificates and I submitted some for the this particular certificate. One of these photos was then selected - one taken by a friend from near the summit of Hampsfell, above Grange-over-Sands, which I ascended with a group of family members and friends on the evening prior to a lunch party held to celebrate this completion - and also my 70th birthday (but I would prefer not to be reminded of how long that is now past!).

### *Hillwalkers' Register Certificates*



High quality certificates, A4 size, are available from the Recorder. All those hillwalkers who have satisfied the requirements for entry into the Hillwalkers' Registers are eligible for a certificate. There are certificates for all the Register categories, viz. the 2000ft Summits of England & Wales, the Wainwrights, the Wainwrights and Outlying Fells, the Birketts, the County Tops of England & Wales, the County Tops of Ireland, the 2000ft Summits of Ireland and the Deweys of England & Wales. To claim your certificate simply send a cheque for £3.00 per certificate, made out to the L.D.W.A., to the Recorder (no cash or stamps please) and indicate which category certificate you require and your completion

date. The cost includes postage and package in a stiff-carded envelope, so do not send an SAE in this case (but always send an SAE with all other correspondence with the Recorder, please). It is most convenient if a certificate is requested at the time a completed Claim Form is submitted.

## **Reflections on a Lanzarote and Tenerife Holiday**

### **Robert and Judith Spowage**

This year we chose to go to the Canary Islands for our winter break. Not having been to the Canary Islands before we were unsure as to what it would be like. The only way of finding out was to go there. We chose a walking holiday with HF as it offered a two week package, taking in two of the islands. i.e. Lanzarote and Tenerife.

All the islands are of volcanic origin and perhaps we thought they would all be of a similar character. How wrong we were. The two islands are very different from each other in many respects.

Lanzarote lies at the northeast tip of the island group and is about 200 Km from southern Morocco. Thus its climate is influenced by its proximity to Africa. It is much drier and is subject to continuous winds that can be a little annoying after a short time. It is fairly arid with few natural trees. The vegetation is mainly water retention orientated with cacti related plants dominating.

Tenerife is located much further out into the Atlantic and is influenced more by the ocean than the land. It rains there so trees and a wide range of shrubs and flowers abound.

Both islands are volcanic but although Tenerife has the highest (Pico de Teide 3718 metres above sea level) volcanic activity is less obvious than Lanzarote. Here the landscape is dominated by old lava flows and caldera of dormant volcanoes culminating in the Timanfaya National Park. A place of Martian character with abundant stretches of lava as far as the eye can see.

As a consequence of the differing nature of the two islands the walking was also different. In Lanzarote we were based in Costa Teguisse; a coastal town on the south side of the Island. This central location enabled us undertake a wide variety of walks in different parts of the Island including a trip to La Graciosa an island off the north tip of the main Island. Here the walk was primarily desert like with paths through scrubland and sand. This was the only circular walk of the week.

Other walks involved walking through areas of cultivation including grape growing areas. Here due to the low level of rainfall and the continuous wind lead to the limited soil being protected by crushed black lava to reduce erosion and to collect dew for the plants roots.

Tenerife was significantly different. We stayed in the tourist town of Puerto del la Cruz which could only be reached by steep road down to the town. It was carnival time so the town was packed with visitors producing a party atmosphere.

The land is much more fertile with many trees and flowers. This was typified by the first walk. From the Mirador del Jardina passed the Las Mercedes valley down to San Cristobel La Laguna, the old capital of Tenerife. Many of the paths were grassy in nature with an abundance of shrubs and flowers. Other walks were through woodland with a wide range of birdlife. One of these walks took us to the Arenas Negras, which involved a climb through woodland to the summit of a dormant volcano. Here the black ash was warm indicating that it was only sleeping and could erupt at any time. This contrasted with a walk through the collapsed crater of Las Calderas below the summit of El Teide. We were at a height of over 6500 ft with snow on the slopes of El Teide and small remnants of snowdrifts by the paths we walked. Yet the temperature was warm and pleasant.

The final walk took us through a Laurel forest on the Anaga Peninsular towards the coast and great views.

So the two islands are quite different from each other. Which was the best? Each has something unique to offer, both in walking terms, climate and cultures. We had our likes and dislikes on both islands. Other visitors may have different perceptions. The only way to find out is to go there.