

CHELTENHAM RAMBLING CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

NOVEMBER 2020

Forward by the Chairman

I believe I'm right in saying that this is the first year since the start of the club in 1942 that the AGM has been cancelled - not even WW2 got in the way! Strange times indeed! But from what I hear many of you are managing to get out on walks and enjoying our lovely countryside. One bonus (admittedly a small one) is that there will be no membership fees for current members for the coming year. Please see the membership secretary's report.

I would like to start by thanking David Johnson for providing us with some wonderful local quizzes to keep us busy in the early days of lockdown. I for one came across things and places I didn't know existed!

I'd also like to thank our membership secretary, Lynne Hindmarch, for connecting many walkers by email to arrange 'walks for six.' This has proved very popular but of course now has to go on hold. The good news is that you can walk with one other from a different household, so hopefully you'll have got to meet walking buddies and be able to continue getting out.

Sadly the planned holiday in April to the IOW had to be cancelled but the hotel is hoping to greet us next April, so fingers crossed.

My thanks to the committee who have agreed to remain in post. Particular thanks must go to Paul Finegan who has volunteered to stay on as Programme Secretary for the time being. Stephen Wall is standing down as Health and Safety officer but is staying on as an ordinary member.. Thank you Stephen for all your efforts in that role.

The committee will continue to review the situation and keep you updated. The main thing is to keep fit, active and well.

All best wishes,

Jenny Cotterell

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report:

Income :

Came mainly from membership fees. Interest rates on the reserve account fell in May to 0.01% or roughly 3p per month.

Expenditure:

2020 was no different to any other year in that the bulk of expenditure occurs between November and March and then again in October as the accounts close.

Committee room hire; We only had two full committee meetings prior to lockdown. The Victory club increased their prices to £20 per night in January.

The price of RA affiliation rose slightly. Although affiliated, Rambler's insurance does not cover affiliated clubs and we have to purchase our own Public Liability insurance. Payment part covers the 2020-21 financial year and forms part of the prepaid costs under assets.

Approved walk expenses were for the programme secretary's OS subscription. Website expenses remained static. Donations of £50 each were made to Cleeve Common Trust and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust on behalf of our membership. Variations in everything else can be explained by lockdown.

Other activities.

The Isle of Wight holiday obviously did not go ahead. The deposit paid to the hotel was retained by them and shows as part of the prepaid costs under Assets (against a possible 2021 booking).

Deposits that had been banked were returned to holiday participants less £3 (agreed by committee) to cover recce expenses. No balance cheques were banked - all were shredded.

It only remains for me to state that the Club's financial position remains healthy and to offer my thanks to Angela Gibbins for helping me keep my spreadsheets straight and for auditing the accounts again.

Patricia Ostojitsch

Programme Secretary's Report

CHELTENHAM RAMBLING CLUB WALK REPORT 2019-2020 (2018-2019)

Due to the Spring programme being suspended in March I am presenting the figures from the Winter 2019-2020 programme and comparing them with Winter 2018-2019.

Walk numbers from 2018-2019 are in brackets.

STATISTICS

Walk Number and Type

Average Attendances

Saturday 10 (15)

9.2 (12.86)

Sunday 5 (8)

18.6 (12.87)

Midweek 11 (14)

14.18 (17.21)

Total 26 (37)

13.11 (14.51) Overall Average Attendance

Total Attendance

341 (537)

Total Walk offers 36 (41) Cancellations 10 (4)

No walk offers 6 (0)

Highest attendance on a walk: 30 led by Mary H and Dave T

Most walks led: Mary H and Dave T with 4 walks

Total miles walked: 174.25 (273)

Average Miles: 6.7 (7.37)

All data taken from 1st November 2019 to February 29th 2020.

Events 2019-2020

Christmas Meal at the Exmouth

Isle of Wight Coach Weekend **Cancelled.**

Events 2021

Currently Unknown

A message from the programme secretary

At last year's AGM I announced I would be standing down as programme secretary this year. As of yet, despite the request for someone to take over no offer has been forthcoming. With the present situation in mind I have offered to stay on until we are able to walk in larger groups again and I will produce a final walk programme. I will then stand down with or without a replacement.

Regards

Paul Finegan
Programme Secretary

Membership Secretary;

It was agreed by the Committee that membership renewal fees will be waived for 2021 for existing members, but they will be asked to confirm their details for administrative purposes.

Below is membership information for 2020 and the previous 2 years for comparison. As you can see the numbers for 2020 have dropped. This is not surprising as the restrictions on walking in groups, and the need to suspend the walking Programme, meant that CRC was unlikely to attract many new members this year. Despite this 3 people joined CRC during the year, and we warmly welcome them to the Club.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Memberships	137	149	144
Members	180	195	188

Lynne Hindmarch

Cheltenham Rambling Club AGM Website Report 2020

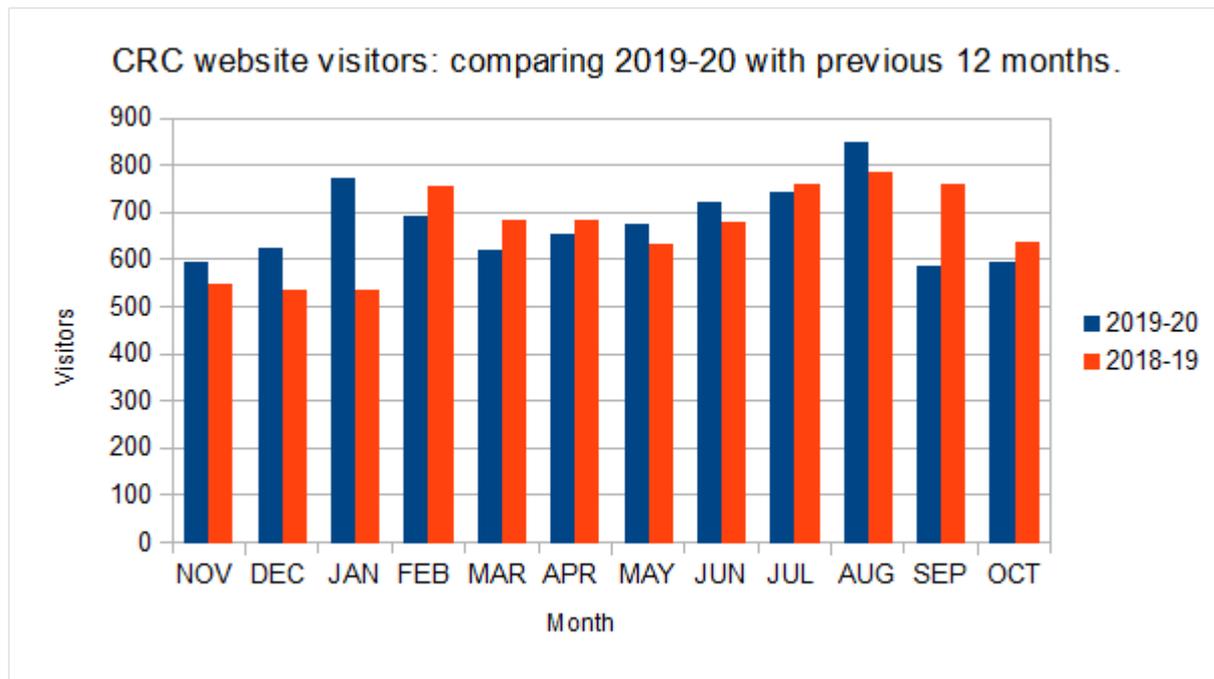
Looking through the website analytics for the year, I was expecting the website visits to be sharply down. This would be due to the obvious problem that our walking programme had come to a halt, there was no reason for a club member to visit the site and nothing to attract prospective new members. In fact, the figures show a degree of fluctuation over 12 months and as we emerged from the winter months in early 2020, the trends were encouraging. Visits inevitably dropped off during the lockdown months, although I suspect that members might have been revisiting the website during the summer months to see if the programme situation might have changed. There was a significant increase of visits in August when we saw good weather, but dropped off dramatically in September, when the weather turned colder.

A **big thank you** to all those who sent in lockdown photos and funny captions. I am sure that this particular initiative helped keep the website content fresh and may have encouraged a significant number of the site visits.

Headlines:

Highest number of visitors – August (851). 8% year-on-year increase.

Lowest number of visitors – September (588). -22.5% year-on-year decrease.



Going forward, I'm happy to continue managing the website for another year (assuming no one is eager to take on the role). However, I'm becoming more aware that the site may need an injection of fresh ideas and probably a new design, to attract new interest when the nation finally emerges from the COVID-19 crisis and our club is able to walk again without restrictions. While the CRC website remains the official front door to the club; it also has to be recognised that the committees' use of Facebook social media and the flexible organisation around the small group walks, has sustained the club membership during the months when there was no official programme. Bringing all these elements together might be a good challenge for a new website manager – perhaps at the next AGM?

Chris West (November 2020)

Health and Safety Adviser's Report:

As there have been few walks in 2020, there are no incidents to report, but as I am resigning from the post I shall make some general comments.

I have been pleased to be the H & S advisor and delighted with the support given to me by members and the committee.

The setting up of the post was prompted by the Club's insurance company. The club has rightly continued to take the view that H & S is mainly the responsibility of individual members. Clearly there is no way that CRC or any other rambling club could provide medical or other professional support to ramblers as rambling is a casual activity, Walks vary from walking the streets of Cheltenham looking at letter boxes to climbing the Black Mountains in gales and blizzards! There is a great variety of people in the Club, some of whom have disabilities, so rambles are not the same as going walking with a group of friends. Leaders have responsibilities as do members of the Committee. I have found compiling with officers the Guidance for Leaders and the H&S guidelines worthwhile.

H&S is maligned from time to time by writers of tabloid newspapers, It is mainly common sense, but sometimes uncommon sense is better. There is occasional disagreement about the vexed issue regarding walking on the right side of roads, probably the most dangerous activity for members. The club takes the Highway Code view, how could it take any other ?

I feel that recording and discussing incidents at committee is an important part of being a caring club.

After seven years in post I feel confident that my successor will take a fresh approach and wish him or her well!

Stephen Wall

Officers and Committee Members

The committee comprises the following members: - *Chairperson*, Jenny Cotterell. *General Secretary*, Alan Skidmore. *Treasurer*, Patricia Ostojitsch. *Programme secretary*, Paul Finegan, *Membership Secretary*, Lynne Hindmarch plus ordinary members: Elizabeth Johnson, Stephen Wall, Janet Aubrey, Peter Heffer and Carol Sadie.

Examiner of Accounts: Angela Gibbins.

Web Master: Chris West.