Minutes of The Carmarthen and District Ramblers Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 25th October 2025

Meeting held in Meeting Room at Abergwili Museum.

Present:

Chair: Barbara Strobel
Walks Programme Secretary: Sue Lewis
Treasurer: Graham White (and minutes)
Webmaster: Dave Luxton
Members: David Bush, Cliff Cleaton, Ian Driver, Peter Loughran, Lorna White

Welcome:

Barbara welcomed everyone to the 2025 AGM on a very wet and cold day.

Apologies for Absence:

General Secretary: Noeline Thomas (Minutes)
Footpaths Officer: Richard Leggett
Social Secretary: Carys Thomas-Ray
Assistant Social Secretary: Colin Thomas-Ray
Carolyn Hills
Wyn Davies
Wes Josey
Sian Taylor
Dawn Umberto

Minutes of Last Meeting

These were circulated to all via E mail prior to the meeting. Richard Leggett had proposed that these be accepted as a true record of that meeting and Graham White seconded the motion.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not covered within the Agenda.

Treasurer's Report- Graham White

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The accounts had been circulated by e mail to all.

Income

The Ramblers Association contribution for this year was £775 and 90% of this was spent on walk related expenses, this being the mileage paid to walk leaders at 45 pence per mile.

Net Surplus and Bank Balance

The accounts showed a net surplus of £45 and a bank balance/ annual expenditure ratio of 74.2% for main funds which is within the Ramblers Association guideline of 40%-100%. The bank balance at 30th September was £728 and this is sufficient to meet the expense of the group until the next allocation is received which would normally be in the first quarter of next year.

Financial Examiner – Wyn Davies

Wyn Davies was thanked for acting as an independent examiner again this year.

Wyn had commented on the excellent presentation for the well maintained accounts submitted.

Footpaths Officer Report - Richard Leggett

Richard provided a report for the meeting, please find below.

Footpaths Report for Carmarthen and District Ramblers AGM 2025

The role of the Footpaths Officer

The role of the Footpaths Officer is broadly to help members of the group when they encounter problems on footpaths within Carmarthenshire, to get the problems resolved.

One aspect of this is to provide assistance to members of the group to report problems and get assistance from the Carmarthenshire Countryside Access Team.

Another important role is to advocate for the maintenance and improvement of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across the areas that the group walks in, principally Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and the Brecon Beacons. In this role I have built up links with officers across the area involved in the management of Public Rights of Way.

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum

I have been a member of the Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum for several years, which provides an opportunity to liaise with the Footpaths Officers of the other Ramblers Groups in Carmarthenshire as well as people interested in access to the countryside with other interests (e.g. horseriding, landowners, tourism providers, cycling etc.) , hear news about developments relating to access to the countryside, and contribute to plans relating to the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network.

The term of the previous Local Access Forum ended at the beginning of the year and a new Forum was appointed. I have been accepted to serve on the new Forum, and have been elected as vice-Chair.

Activity over the past year

- I have continued to walk a lot of paths around Carmarthenshire and beyond, noting footpath issues along the way which have been reported to the relevant authorities.
- I have participated in the Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum quarterly meetings, representing the needs of walkers in Carmarthenshire.
- I have been an active member of the sub-groups of the Local Access Forum covering the Marketing and Promoting of PRoWs, and also the Byway Users Group.
- I monitor planning applications and applications to divert footpaths within Carmarthenshire that might affect PRoWs.
- I have been a member of the Ramblers Cymru ROWAG (Rights of Way and Access Group).

Richard Leggett
Carmarthen Ramblers Footpaths Officer
21.10.2025

Web Masters' Report - Dave Luxton

The current web site, although slightly, dated still functions well. There have been a high number of visitors to the site and more than 600 downloads a month for map gpx files from the 'Find a Walk' page.

Wes Josey has completed a lot of work on creating the new Carmarthen Ramblers website which will interface with the national Ramblers site. However, transitioning to the new website requires walk details to be uploaded to Walks Manager.

This would logically be carried out by walk leaders, who have varying degrees of IT skills and require training. In order to accelerate this, Lorna offered to carry out the uploads onto the Ramblers website and she believed that Carys would be happy to check and publish them.

Walk leaders will in future need to complete a template with the required details for data entry and Lorna agreed to provide such a template. Dave Luxton offered to act as a standby to upload walks if Lorna was not available.

One issue that has been raised by members previously relates to the provision of details on the precise starting location of walks (as opposed to the meet point prior to the walk). This could be a security concern by advertising where cars were likely to be left unattended for several hours. It was suggested this could be addressed by not providing precise location details on the Ramblers website where cars would be parked in a rural area, instead limiting the information to the meeting/car share point prior to setting off to the actual start point. Any individual members wishing to drive directly to the start point of the walk have the option of contacting the walk leader privately.

The transition to the new Ramblers Website offers an opportunity to change the way personal contact details are published. There was some discussion about whether there should be one generic email address for enquiries (for which one person would be responsible and then redirect individual enquires appropriately), or whether generic email addresses could be adopted for all Committee members eg. Chair@CarmarthenRamblers or Treasurer@CarmarthenRamblers etc. and mapped through to the respective individual committee members. Dave agreed to talk to Wes about what would be possible.

It is hoped that the changeover to the new website will take place before the Summer walks program in April.

Social Secretary Update - Carys Thomas-Ray

Carys provided a report for presentation at the meeting, please see below.

Social Secretary Report for AGM

Ramblers Cymru Page

Many interested people get in touch via our page on Ramblers Cymru. Not many of those will actually join us on a walk but those that do report we are in fact a very warm and welcoming group. When walk leaders put forward their walk on to Walk Manager, that information can reach many more people and we often have one or two new walkers join us as a result. The next step is for all walks to be submitted and advertised in this way as to attract more walkers. Please do get in touch if you would like help in using Walk Manager. Also as Walks Editor, do make me aware if your walk is ready to be published.

Facebook Page
Our Facebook page has increased its followers and Facebook users are able to "like" and comment on the photos .129 followers and still increasing! Hopefully seeing lots of smiling happy faces in beautiful surroundings can attract other walkers as well as being a way of thanking walk leaders for a successful walk. Please encourage friends and family to like and share our page.

Annual lunch at the Falcon
We enjoyed lunch together in February during which Carolyn Hills was presented with gifts as token of our gratitude for all she and her late husband Dennis have done for our group over the years. For all the walks they led, holidays organised, support given to new leaders and for developing and maintaining the website. The date of our next lunch will be February 1st 2026 as usual at the Falcon Hotel in Carmarthen.

Election of Officers:

The Chair noted that the following officers had expressed a willingness to continue with their current roles as follows;

Chair - Barbara Strobel
Treasurer – Graham White
General Secretary - Noeline Thomas
Social Secretary - Carys Thomas-Ray
Web Master- Dave Luxton
Footpaths Officer - Richard Leggett
Independent Examiner - Wyn Davies
Barbara Stroebel proposed and Graham White seconded that all Officers be re-elected en bloc.

The Walks Program Secretary - Sue Lewis is standing down.

The meeting thanked Sue for her sterling work as Walks Programme Coordinator and presented her with some flowers. We hope that we will continue to see her on walks in the future.

Proposal for new Officer:

Lorna White offered on take on the position of Walks Program Coordinator. Barbara proposed and Dave Bush seconded this.

AOB

The walk program for the 6 months to 31 March 2026 was discussed. The program is complete in terms of offering a walk every week with just two few unfilled spaces in January 2026. Dave Bush offered a walk for the Turkey Trot on 1st January and Ian Driver offered a walk for Sunday 4th January thereby filling the two gaps.

DATE OF 2026 AGM

Saturday 24th October 2026

Venue TBC .