



# LANCASTER GROUP NEWSLETTER

March 2021

[www.lancasterramblers.org.uk](http://www.lancasterramblers.org.uk)

contributions to Gareth Thomas

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## Spring Newsletter

The newsletter is also available at [www.lancasterramblers.org.uk/information/group/newsletter](http://www.lancasterramblers.org.uk/information/group/newsletter).

Walk and trek reports, path news, personal news, and any other contributions to the next newsletter will be very welcome.

Gareth ([newsletter@lancasterramblers.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@lancasterramblers.org.uk))

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## Annual General Meeting

Many thanks to those who took part in the voting in the 2020 AGM. The results are on our website at [www.lancasterramblers.org.uk](http://www.lancasterramblers.org.uk). We look forward to a "normal" AGM in 2021!

David Johnson

## Bowland Mountain Rescue

The Committee agreed to donate £200 to the Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team towards urgently replacing rope rescue equipment which has reached the end of its life. The team has been exceptionally hard hit as their funding collapsed during the pandemic even though they have experienced the busiest year in their history.

David Johnson

## Dales Footpath Improvements

Several footpath improvements have been reported in the Friends of the Three Peaks Newsletter.

These include

- parts of the route from Chapel-le-Dale to Ingleborough summit, especially the steep part at High Lot,
- the Suber path up Ingleborough from Horton, and
- parts of the paths on Whernside.

The shelter on Ingleborough summit has been repaired. The four walls of the shelter were dismantled and rebuilt, the large flag stone seats were replaced, and a new, replica bronze toposcope was installed. More information about the shelter and the repair work is available at <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/ingleborough-tribute-to-queen-elizabeth-repaired/>.

Brian Jones

## Pepper Pot Repainting

In November, last year, two members of the Ramblers Lancaster Group went to Eaves Wood in Silverdale to repaint the signposts for the Pepper Pot. This striking structure was built in 1887 to commemorate the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria.

These signposts have been in place since 2007, paid for, partly, by a donation from the Ramblers Lancaster Group to the National Trust, who own and manage the wood.

Before then many people found the elusive Pepper Pot difficult to find because of the maze of unmarked footpaths in the wood.



*Repainting in progress*

The signposts have been a great asset in guiding walkers to the structure and viewpoint overlooking Morecambe Bay and Silverdale.

Since they were first erected, the white paint on the Pepper Pot logo had faded and was in much need of another coat of paint. So, with permission from the National Trust, they have been repainted, making the signs whiter and more easily visible. Later this year a further coat will be added.

Mary Garner

## Footpath Check Success – Thurnham



*New gate in Thurnham*

On our Footpath Check walk in the Thurnham area in October 2020 we came across a broken down stile almost impossible to use. We subsequently reported this to Lancashire County Council. This week we received a report to say it had been replaced by a kissing gate. In fact, two stiles on a path near Thurnham Hall have been replaced by very impressive kissing gates. Heartfelt thanks to both the volunteers from our Ramblers' group for inspecting the route and Lancashire County Council for replacing the stiles so promptly.

Jean Walker

## Snuff Mill Lane, Stodday

Snuff Mill Lane between the River Lune path (at SD 4586 5865) and the Lancaster wastewater treatment plant entrance (SD 4619 5871) has, for some years, regularly been impassable because of flooding. A collapsed drain has recently been repaired and the lane resurfaced. More information is available at <https://aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org/snuff-mill-lane-footpath-clearance/>.



*Snuff Mill Lane, resurfaced and flood-free*

Gareth

## Slow Ways

The Lancaster group recently joined the Slow Ways Project, which is not part of the RA, but has had discussions with RA Central Office.

### *What is the Slow Ways Project?*

Slow Ways is an ambitious initiative by Dan Raven-Ellison to create a comprehensive network of walking routes that connect all of Great Britain's cities and towns as well as thousands of villages. While there are thousands of miles of paths linking places across the country, there isn't a comprehensive network designed to help people walk off-road between all towns and cities. That's what the Slow Ways project aims to do. Using existing footpaths, people will be able to use the Slow Ways routes to walk between neighbouring settlements or combine routes for long distance journeys. As far as possible routes are direct, off-road, safe, accessible, easily navigable and pass through settlements with services and public transport hubs.

Slow Ways can be used for both recreational and functional purposes, aiming to offer reasonably direct walking options backed by trusted route information. It is aimed at the general public. The average Slow Ways route in England and Wales is 7.5 miles while in Scotland it is closer to 12.5 miles. Hundreds of routes in urban areas are under 3.1 miles. For more detail see <https://slowways.uk/supporting-slow-ways/>.

During the Spring lockdown 700 volunteers from across the country collaborated to produce a first draft of the Slow Ways network, creating a Slow Ways map in the process. This has led to the creation of 7,500 routes that collectively stretch for over 68,000 miles. All of the route information that is collated will always be free to browse, search, view, share, download and enjoy.

Additional information can be found at <https://slowways.uk/frequently-asked-questions/>.

The organisers are now looking for 10,000 volunteers to help walk, review, record and improve the Slow Ways routes. This should have started, along with completion of the web site, in

late January but has been postponed until "a suitable date" because of Covid-19. This date has yet to be decided.

If you are interested in volunteering to walk some of these routes, with the group, in our locality, please let me know (Neil Herbert, [footpaths@lancasterramblers.org.uk](mailto:footpaths@lancasterramblers.org.uk)) and I will keep you informed of developments.

Neil Herbert 05/03/2021

## Parental Behaviour in Cattle

We found interesting Neil's piece in the last newsletter about curious cow behaviour. We had seen something which, to us, was novel.



*The cattle*

We were on Borwick Lane and passing a field at Warton with quite a large herd. Next to the lane wall was a little group of bull, cow, and calf. The calf was new born, such that it collapsed on the ground. When it did, both the bull and the cow nuzzled it upright and continued to attend to it. It briefly went under the bull to suckle, before realising this wouldn't work, and turning to the cow. The little group of three stayed together, interacting as well as feeding, until we moved on. It was charming, and unique in our experience.

Sheila and Brian Jones

## **Phil Wraith: A Personal Tribute**

I hadn't known Phil for long - I met him when he joined Lancaster Ramblers in 2011 - but in that time we developed a friendship which I continue to value.

First impressions were of a large guy who talked incessantly. His large size caused him much difficulty on narrow stiles and, I'm pleased to say, he saw the funny side of it as did his fellow ramblers. He also had a tendency to fall over - many a time we would hold our breath, anticipating serious injury, but he always bounced back ready to carry on. Mind you, David T's car stank for a week after Phil was a passenger coming home from the walk where he fell into the midden! And many will remember the near disaster of him missing his step coming out of a cafe in Kendal, resulting in him breaking all the crockery and covering Denise and Roy in milk as they quietly drank their tea in the sunshine!

But underneath this large exterior lay a sharp wit, a keen interest in music of all genres and a wealth of experience in accounting from his time in industry and as a university lecturer. Indeed, the latter was on my mind when I approached him about taking on the role of Ramblers' Lake District Area Treasurer, which he accepted and fulfilled until his recent illness forced him to relinquish the post.

I have many happy memories of accompanying him on walk recces. We would take turns in choosing the music to play in the car, and our very different tastes introduced us both to music we would probably have never heard otherwise (and in many cases wouldn't want to hear again). But most of all, I will miss the laughter brought on by his seemingly infinite catalogue of funny stories, his quick wit and, when requested, his wise words.

I will end with one of Phil's famous off-the-cuff remarks, when we were on the Ramblers Holiday coach in North Devon, and he saw a double decker bus going to Westward Ho! Quick as a flash, he said "Well, I've read the book, I've watched the film, and now I've seen the bus!". He will be missed.

David Johnson