



The Disabled Rambler

The Newsletter of the
Disabled Ramblers

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Hello Everyone,

I hope you have all been out and about enjoying the good, and sometimes not so good weather, during the summer months.

I was very pleased to meet so many of you at the AGM in Woburn and glad to be able to help Jan and Stuart with the meal afterwards. Bernard and myself thoroughly enjoyed the speakers from the Ramblers Association and Duncan Booth, 10in10, who told us about his life before, and how he now copes with his disability.

In June we attended all four of the rambles in the Cotwolds, where Bernard and I helped, along with Bryan, towing the Mobility Support Unit for the first time. Yes it was hard work, and long days, but we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves meeting and chatting with so many of you.

I have had lots of positive feedback from the Spring Newsletter and I have been asked to produce four newsletters next year so I am looking at March, June, September and December.

I have set the deadline for the next newsletter as **6th March 2017**, please let me have your articles and photographs in by then. I will have a few printed copies of this newsletter and the next ready for the AGM on 1st April.

Judy



In Horsham, West Sussex, Val, Bob Paula & David met with Councillors and Riverwalk organisers on the 21st April to discuss the tricky wooden gateway. Those that came on Horsham Riverwalk last year might remember this tricky gate near Littlehaven Station and some scooters even needed a manual bump around the corner from a strong friendly River Walker.



The meeting goes well with lots of ideas and options on the table. Val asks can the ends be removed, the Riverwalk organiser would like to remove the whole thing. We jokingly offer to hook up all the scooters and pull it down.



Paula and Bob have a go at the tricky gate on a 3 & 4 wheel, Bob's Supersport navigates it well but the mini crosser was a very tight fit with its larger turning circle and bigger body. It is agreed by all on looking that the gate is and will be a problem for the bigger Trampers on Riverwalk day.



The result of the meeting is fantastic, Horsham council have done it already, the gate has been sorted, the two ends have been completely removed and scooters now pass through with ease.



This years Riverwalk on Saturday 16th July will be very scooter friendly. Many thanks to the Riverwalk Team and The Horsham Council.

Thunderbird 2

I start with a question...

What does one of these,



Have in common with one of these?



Well I'll get to that!

My name is Jamie, I'm 23 and have been a member of the Disabled Ramblers for a few years now. I studied history at Uni and now volunteer at Tyntesfield, my local National Trust house.

Last May, while in the Poldice Valley as part of the DR's Cornish tour, we all found ourselves in a bit of an adventurous situation!! Ultimately it even became international news! (Ok, so I count an Irish newspaper as international but, it was the ROI so, it counts!)

Shortly after our lunch break we were heading back to our car park, we were a reasonable sized group of ramblers on this occasion when we heard a 'hello, hello, hello' seeming to echo around the hills. We called back, and then heard again, 'hello', and then this time, 'I'm hurt'. Realizing something was badly wrong our walkers headed up the rough paths, searching for the poor man who had obviously badly hurt himself.

Thankfully, we found him, and it instantly became evident we needed the professionals, (and no, not the T.V. characters!) Paul Lane, a gentleman from Birmingham was stuck. Ultimately 3 ambulances and 4 paramedics couldn't get him off the hillside, though the morphine evidently helped. So it was time for the Cavalry, the search and rescue helicopter! But there was problem... Fog!

The helicopter couldn't take off, couldn't help, what other options were there? Then our walkers thought, we had a rescue trailer, never mind it was designed with scooters in mind. So I, who was towing it for the first time ever, was radioed in, I became the Cavalry.

I 'sprinted' up the hill, got to Paul and our walkers, and with Paul on the trailer, got him safely back down to the ambulances. Turns out that a mobility scooter can stand in for, and complete the same rescue as a search and rescue helicopter!!

My Trumper, with the help of that trailer had saved the day, and as I now insist upon, will forever be referred to as Thunderbird 2 over the radios!

It made the radio, TV news and even the telegraph. What a fantastic publicity coup for the DRs! And as for Thunderbird 2, well, he's still around, I'm thinking of getting him to take on the role of a supersonic fighter next!!!



Jamie Burns *Aka Virgil Tracy*



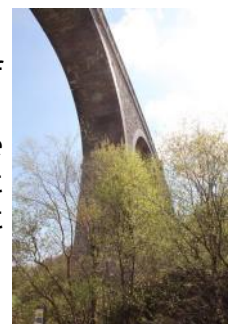
May—Carnon Downs—Cornwall

Well after a long journey to drive 80+ miles to Cornwall, due to a tractor and convoy pulling a heavy load up hills and narrow roads, we finally arrived at the campsite and made our presence known! I needed to use the loo in the van as soon as we stopped and unknown to me Keith tripped and fell on uneven ground and cut the side of his face. I came out of the van to find people standing round Keith, who was sat at the picnic table with blood dripping down his face! Keith was given the all clear, though today he's very achy and a bit battered and bruised looking! Luckily no black eye, so I can't be accused there!

The cut was probably due to Keith smashing his glasses as he fell and banged his head!. We cannot thank the Wardens at Carnon Downs Camp Site enough, for parking and levelling the van for us, making us cups of tea and bending over backwards to help. As Keith's been advised to take it easier for a couple of days, that's probably for the first one/two Rambles maybe, because of the driving. The Rambles will probably be quieter without us two and Max going! Lol



Had our own short ramble in the sun this afternoon. Scooted from Carnon Downs Campsite to the bottom of the Carnon Viaduct that passes over the cycle route. Took some photos but then we had a two and a half mile long, slow haul uphill all the way back to the campsite! It was good fun taking photos close up/under the viaduct with cold water dripping down on you.



Kathy Gould's photos



Poldice Valley Cornwall

In Poldice Valley from Bissoe Bike Hut Cornwall there were heard cries from Paul Lane who slipped whilst walking a dog.

Disabled Ramblers rescue man with broken leg from hillside while Ambulance Crew look on.



Hi All

I contacted ViewRanger because the Open Street maps had become unavailable in my phone app. The following is the response I received and applied successfully.

Email from L&P

Reply from ViewRanger

Hello L

The Open Street Map (MapQuest) map service has been discontinued. The maps were provided by a third party service which is outside our control.

Any saved areas of maps will continue to work but no new areas can be saved.

The discontinued map has been replaced by "ViewRanger Landscape Map".

Before you can see the new map you must perform this task in the app; Menu tab (in green bar) My Maps, MY MAPS tab (right hand tab) and pull the list downwards to refresh it



For over 30 years I have had rheumatoid arthritis and experienced increasingly limited mobility, while working full time in London. In the build-up to my retirement in April 2016 we had been thinking about buying a Trampler or similar. My wife Bee (a keen walker) persuaded a slightly reticent me to take the plunge and give Disabled Ramblers a go. So we signed up for a trial ramble at Ashridge in late April, using a loan scooter.

The pre-ramble gathering in the car park was initially daunting but everyone was incredibly friendly and helpful. Once I had been initiated into the basic rudiments of handling a Trampler we circulated amongst the participants, especially interested to see the range of scooters being used and the variety of methods of transportation, which was really helpful.

It was a fairly chilly day but the ramble was very enjoyable for us both. It was refreshing to meet not only new people whose principal common background is their restricted mobility, but also their more able-bodied families, partners and friends - and dogs! - who give them so much support, as do the DR organisers. For me, who had hardly ventured far from my home or car for many years, it was enormously refreshing to get out into the countryside and close to nature, enjoying the fresh air, views, sights and sounds.

We took another big plunge and placed an order for a new Trampler and trailer, which arrived in early July. After a few forays on our own we joined the Long Causeway ramble in August. It was really well attended, the weather was perfect and I got to enjoy the beautiful sights of the Peak District, which I would never have done without joining Disabled Ramblers. We're looking forward to seeing the calendar of rambles for 2017, so we can plan our year around them as much as possible - enabling me to visit places that otherwise I just wouldn't have got to.

For anyone wondering whether DR is for them, I would urge you to give it a go, book a loan scooter and enjoy the ride! Mark de Rivaz

Mary Grant—A tribute by Bob McLellan

Those who knew Mary will be saddened by the news of her passing, and I would like to give this tribute to the Mary I knew for nearly 30 years.

Mary came to the UK when she was 17 from the St Mary's district of Jamaica, she then did her Nurse's training and went on to have a very successful career in many of the major hospitals in London, and also in the United States where she lived for a time in her younger days. Mary married and had two dearly loved children, Maria-Elena and Gershwin, she continued her nursing career as they grew up. I got to know her through my own career involving adapting schools to cater for the needs of the disabled in East London and Mary came to discuss certain ideas through a disabled network she belonged to. From this meeting she became a firm family friend to myself and my wife and was a huge support when I lost my wife in 2001.

On a visit to the Motor Museum at Beaulieu she was persuaded to try a scooter to get around and that was the start of her interest in scootering in general. In 2007 she saw an advert in Transport for London for Disabled Ramblers, contacted the number given and spoke to Rosie Norris. I managed to get her scooter in my car and she and I attended a ramble that took us along the Thames Path and from that ramble we met Tony & Dorothy, Rosie & John, Jim, & Dorothy, Keith & Brenda and many more. They remained friends and were a huge support to her during the last 2 years when she was getting gradually more ill, this meant a great deal to her and her family. Everyone was so welcoming and she really enjoyed the rambles.

When Mary felt the time was right she decided to join her family in New York to spend her remaining days with them. Her daughter was amazing and came back and forth across the Atlantic over the last 18 months to give her Mum the care and love she deserved. They even went on a cruise to the Bahamas last year for a week which Mary loved. To sum up, Mary was a very much loved and faithful friend to many and her vibrant personality and company will be sadly missed. Mary's wish was that her ashes are brought back to Britain to be scattered here and Maria-Elena will be bringing Mary home to have her last wish granted. I valued her friendship hugely and will remember her very fondly and all the fun we had over the years.

Wynne Batchelor

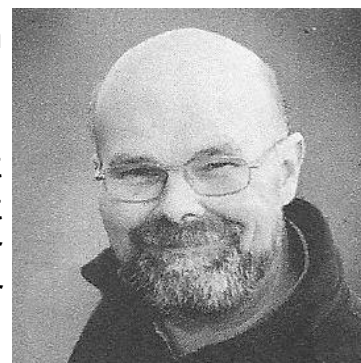
We are saddened to learn of the passing of Wynne Batchelor, who died on 20th July. Wynne lived in Birmingham and had been a member since 2004. She has not rambled with us very frequently in recent years but has remained a strong supporter of DR throughout. We have sent condolences to her family.

Jan Kemp

Chris Jones—Treasurer

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the sudden death during August of our Club Treasurer, Chris Jones.

Chris stepped into the role of Club Treasurer this year at very short notice and will be sadly missed both in that role, and as a very friendly member on our rambles over the years who mixed and talked with everyone during our walks.



This is an extract from an article by Jenny Sutton, National Trust, Sticklebarn, Langdale

Access for all, with a little help from the Disabled Ramblers....



We have a plan to significantly improve access for mobility-challenged visitors in Langdale by installing two all-terrain hydro-powered electric Trampers for people to borrow from Sticklebarn.

Our hope is that people who cannot access the countryside can use a Trumper on the cycle trail between Sticklebarn and Elterwater. Eileen Tomlinson, from the North West, and some members of the Disabled Ramblers group, went along to assess the route which is in a lovely Langdale valley that could be used all year round.

The group set off from Sticklebarn on a sunny day in July and gave valuable feedback on the route, which after a few tweaks here and there, could be fantastic for Trampers.

Laura Whittaker, National Trust Ranger in Langdale, is delighted the Disabled Ramblers were keen to help and she said 'The input that the Disabled Ramblers gave us is so valuable'. 'The added benefit with this project is that our hydro scheme at Stickle-ghyll will allow us to charge the Trampers with hydro-electricity, making them kind to the environment as well as our visitors'.

With the feedback given the trail will be improved and over the winter it is intended to upgrade the facilities at Sticklebarn making it more wheelchair friendly, including new toilets for the disabled.



Snowdonia - WOW

After the DR rambles in September we stayed on another 4 weeks and then didn't run out of rambles to do. Some were repeats from previous years and a couple were repeats from when Linda could walk in 1996. What we did each day very much depended upon the forecast for the area that day, the ones in the mountains we only tackled when the precipitation was <5% (minimal chance of rain) as the Trumper tyres would not get a grip on the track surface when wet.

Easy rambles included:

Lôn Las Ogwen - where we went from our base into Bangor then along Lôn Las Ogwen as far as Ogwen Bank before returning. 22 miles cat 2 mostly off road but where the old tunnel was we had to divert onto a B road for a mile as they need a further £4K funding to reopen the tunnel.

Caernarfon Castle - again from our base at Treborth we tramped along Lôn Las Menai to Caernarfon Castle (where we gained free entry after chatting to a member of staff at the bottom of the ramp). This route went through the interesting coastal village of Y Felinheli and had minimal road work, 16 miles cat 2.

Lôn Las Cefni is a cycle track which stretches from Newborough Forest via Llangefni and The Dingle up to Llyn Cefni, 22 miles Cat 2+. First crossing the Bar with wonderful views of Malltraeth Sands, then a rather boring stretch to Llangefni with approx a mile on little roads. Here we encountered a different type of RADAR barrier - one of the cycle A frame barriers but one side opened up with a RADAR key by a strong person. The Dingle is very pretty with a boardwalk going up by and over the river.



Note: Lôn means Lane and Las means blue in Welsh.

L&P

Part 2 –Tougher Snowdonia Walks to be continued in next newsletter





An extract from the National Trails Team on behalf of the Ridgeway Partnership

The First ever rambles for scooter and wheelchair users was along The Ridgeway, over 25 years ago.

The first ramble was organised by Mike Bruton, founder of the



Disabled Ramblers, who had previously tested out 50 miles of the Trail in a rickshaw pulled along by six people. Fortunately, it is much easier these days for disabled people to get about in motorised scooters.

In August the Disabled Ramblers returned for the Annual visit to The Ridgeway, drawing people on scooters, friends and helpers from all over the country. On a busy, very warm, Saturday with many others enjoying the countryside they met in a large temporary car park at Hill Barn Farm by kind permission of the landowner. The start was from Sparsholt Firs, where they were met by Ridgeway Officer Sarah Wright who explained a little about the area before setting off towards White Horse Hill. The Ridgeway is a wide track and great for a sociable groups to chat as well as ramble. In places there were sections with ruts and as Val Rawlings said 'You had to concentrate to try to stay upright and not do a sideways roll'. The highlights of the ramble included views of the Vale of the White Horse, wild flowers and an auto-gyro flying overhead.

John Cuthbertson, Rambles leader, is keen on circular routes of 5 to 8 miles and the current favourite route links the Ridgeway to Ashdown House which he is working on together with The Ridgeway Partnership to enable more disabled ramblers to enjoy the area.

The following is an extract from 'My dream machine' by Tony Gould, which was published in the August issue of the Oldie. Tony's disability was caused by polio, contracted during his National Service.

In my seventieth year I bought a Trampler, designed for off-road use. I had a trial run with one before I took the plunge. A sales rep called John unloaded the machine and asked where I wanted to go. I pointed to the mound rising out of the valley below and said, 'How about up there on Dartmoor?' expecting him to demur. But he simply nodded and said, 'Let's go.' We set off, John walking behind me as we went down the narrow road into the valley before turning into Pullabrook Wood. The Trampler made light of the increasingly steep ascent on the stony track through the wood to open moorland, where we pulled into a layby overlooking the wooded Bovey valley. John, who was not a young man, was puffing a bit and as I had already made up my mind I suggested we turned back.

I could barely contain my exhilaration. This silent, twin-battery powered machine would revolutionise my life, opening up countryside that had been inaccessible to me for half a century. And what countryside! The whole of the East Dartmoor Nature Reserve, including the lovely Yarnar Wood, was on my doorstep and I spent the next five years exploring it greedily.

I got to know several Dartmoor National Park and Natural England rangers, with whom I worked as a volunteer on various projects to do with improving access. Normally I am not much of a joiner but for once I did not hesitate: I wanted to give something back and to share my feeling of liberation, the uplift I experienced in being out on my own (and often in places with no mobile phone signal) in a challenging terrain.

For risks were an important part of the challenge. Could I get up that steep slope, or negotiate a dodgy camber without turning over the Trampler? I did have accidents, and one in particular that might have been fatal, when I crashed into the side of an ancient quarry and was thrown head over heels a yard or two downhill from the undamaged machine. To my amazement, I was okay; even the glasses hanging round my neck were intact. I was lucky then. But some months later I fell at home at the kitchen sink and damaged my knee so badly I couldn't stand or walk for six weeks. Soon after, my wife was told she had Parkinson's disease. We knew then that our Devon days were numbered. In retrospect, I think of this time as a kind of Indian summer.

Congratulations to John Cuthbertson, who attended the ViewRanger Annual Meeting in London in September and received a Top Publisher Award on behalf of Disabled Ramblers, for his work in producing maps on ViewRanger for people with limited mobility to help them get back into the countryside. He and his colleagues research routes, in all weathers and terrains, and also work with local authorities to improve access to the countryside. Download their routes at

<http://my.viewranger.com/user/details/678500>



Email received from Moyra and Michael McDermott, Bolton Greater Manchester

Dear John

Just a quick email to let you know how successful the Snowdonia and Northumberland Rambles we went on this year were for us.

Joining Disabled Ramblers has opened a new world to me that had become enclosed through disability. To meet other people and their families and carers has really helped me to live and adapt to a life with disability.

To be able to access wide open spaces, the countryside and coast has really helped me psychologically and spiritually.

I really wish to thank you and all the people who volunteer to reconnoitre and walk the routes beforehand to make fun, worthwhile and accessible walks for people affected with a disability.

Being able to hire a Trampler is invaluable and I hope 2017 sees me with my own and more involved with the Regional Ramblers.

Thank you and your colleagues who maintain Disabled Ramblers. I really appreciate all you do.

'A Life of Fun'.

Born in Mansfield, Notts, I grew up in the northern outskirts of Bristol. Like boys at that time, I made the most of all the opportunities to have the "Boy's Own Adventures" that were waiting, there on my door-step. Camping, making fires, scrumping, we had such fun! It was perfect for 'exploring' woods, and 'haunted houses'. Via Cubs, and later Scouts, I widened my horizons to hiking in the Bristol area, on the Cotswold and Mendip Hills. When the opportunity to try rock-climbing came up within the Bristol Scouts Area. I signed up instantly!

This was, at the time, perhaps **the** crucial point in my life. I was still at school, and with no idea of what I wanted to do. I discovered that rock-climbing was to be run by one of the teachers at my own Grammar school, and that he also worked as a Climbing Instructor in the Alps, during the summer holidays, working for the Mountaineering Association. I loved rock-climbing, and must have asked him 'endless' questions. Imagine my surprise, when I found out that you could get paid to take others climbing. I had already discovered, by then, that this was exactly what I wanted to do, but with no idea that people would pay you for doing it! From then on, that became my 'Number One Objective'. I was, by then, a Civil Servant, in the Ministry of Works, a so-called "job for life".

I meticulously worked out how to best organise the Annual Leave-Bank Holidays balance, so that I could maximise my time in the mountains. This enabled me, in 1962, to visit the Alps for the first time, in the Ötztal, Austria. I was immediately 'hooked', needless to say.

In 1965, I realised my long-term ambition of working as a Climbing Instructor in the Alps, spending two months in the Austrian and Swiss Alps, for the MA, and coming back fitter than I'd ever been in my whole life! Without a job! But I soon found another one!

Then came 10.10.65.....when my life changed drastically, FOR EVER.!

Sunday afternoon, October 10th, a lovely sunny day on Clogwyn d'ur Arrddu, one of the biggest, 'bad-est' cliffs in Wales. Having just done a hard route on the East Buttress, we decide to finish on "Pinnacle Flake" to get to the top of the cliff. Not to be I'm afraid! I have a big fall, and my rope mate is killed (I find out later!) I barely survive, with numerous fractures and injuries, after the 350ft 'free-fall'!

It was the end of my climbing career.....for quite a while.

Terry Taylor

Terry's story will be continued in the Spring Newsletter

MOBILITY

Until it went - twas neither known nor loved
Now I dream, I yearn, I want
But IT has forever -ever GONE
Gone for ever - can't get it back!
Lazy me! years sat in a car
Chatting to an even lazier friend
Over the hill, beyond the hedge
Out of sight and out of love
Too late in life I heard of groups - Ramblers, HF
and alike
New ways - New sights -Iceland, Canada, Norway -
UK

Now gone for ever, ever gone - can't get it back
Somehow a pair of walking boots I got
Alas, Alack they were not well worn
Now IT has forever ever GONE
Gone for ever - can't get it back
Balance, muscles, joints, ALL GONE
Gone for ever they can't come back
Now I only look and yearn - pictures, TV and
books
Replace but IT has gone forever
EVER GONE!

Winifred

(Published in my Church Magazine May 2016)

Hi All

These are the wonderful invention I mentioned on Maves ramble. If you have favourite shoes or boots with fiddly laces these are so much easier to do up. Please see email below.

L & P



Greeper sports in Black are ideal for most school shoes, or the Greeper Execs are that little bit smarter for a more "Gentlemen's" style shoe! Greepers sports in White will be great for PE footwear. Website www.greeper.com



While on holiday in Lyme Regis in September we had the opportunity of doing our own ramble thanks to the National Trust based at Filcombe Farm Morecombelake Bridport. DT6 6EP. They have 3 routes you can do using one of their trampers (there is a small fee) and they provide maps to follow giving spectacular views of the coast (weather permitting) it was a

misty day to start off but well worth it when the clouds lifted. The National Trust were so accommodating and the staff were exceptionally helpful. We can highly recommend it. Here are a couple of photos of our ramble. I would class it as a category 2

Keith and Clare Boswell



At the age of 55 the prospect of a NHS Wheelchair driving and control test was a concern for me. Despite a working life driving all manner of vehicles starting with a motorbike, dad's car then my own cars. I am someone who has to learn by experience. I can pass driving tests which included my HGV licence but after the test my driving goes downhill.

My working life at a motorsport centre gave me access to all sorts of Big Boys Toys. Quad bikes, hovercraft, off road buggies, JCBs, Military vehicles as well as racing karts to name a few. Sadly my confidence in my own driving ability has always exceeded the reality. Even gaining my Motor Sport Association racing licence just resulted in more hospital visits. Now as I get older, I regret the fact that I am getting more sensible. Still it's better to have the scars and stories to tell, than no scars and no stories!

I passed the NHS Wheelchair test which resulted in the delivery of a powered wheelchair. My first thought is what are its limits? The only way to find out the limits driving any vehicle is to exceed them. My NHS Wheelchair can do 11 miles on tarmac but can't cope with adverse cambers on pavements and driveways. It keeps going up steep hills but slides down them, wheels locked, when wet. That's scary! I have found that Joe Public rush to help if I'm on my side on a footpath but they stand well back while manoeuvring the wheelchair on a bus.

A purpose built off road wheelchair was spotted by me at an exhibition after a year in my NHS chair. My condition causes the loss of strength in all muscles including the arms so a Trampler wasn't for me. The fun in off road driving Landrovers or quad bikes is the challenge of a steep climb, a muddy, rutted track or even getting the vehicle out of trouble after getting into it. Most sensible people, including my neurologist and wife, don't understand this attitude towards off-road driving but both Terry and Victor will. Fortunately I have a couple of friends who come with me to explore a new route. They are happy to pick me and the chair up when it goes over. They use a tow rope to pull me through boggy sections, followed by cup of tea, then decide if the route goes onto my 'never again' list.

I have found, with a friend, over 30 off-road routes close to home that I can do on my own which include sections of the quiet lanes of N Yorkshire where two cars an hour is rush hour, so I feel safe in a wheelchair. Mobile phones and a whistle can summon help but when there is no signal, and the local woods are being explored, the "SOS only" service really does work. If you are coming to the North York moors I can supply you with details of Trampler friendly safe rambles.

Ian Lawson

"As some Members have asked me about the cushions which I use on my Trampler I thought others may be interested. They are called Airospring and are not cheap - I saw them at Naidex a few years ago where the University which had developed the filling material was showcasing it - they were not available to buy at that time.

Before using these I had tried cheap foam cushions with a gel layer in the middle (£8) but the foam compressed and broke down very quickly; the foam also soaked up rain so that I was sitting in just as large a puddle on my scooter seat as I was without that type of cushion.

On my Trampler seat I now use two Airospring honeycomb-mesh filled cushions. The thicker one which I sit on provides quite good support, it does not compress much, but because of its structure is fairly shock-absorbing so that riding on the Trampler becomes more comfortable. I use a thinner cushion of the same type behind my back which lessens some of the jarring through my spine. The cushions also have mesh covers so the rain drains through them completely. Though the cushion cover becomes damp when it's raining I do not end up sitting in a puddle. As the mesh is a plastic material the cushions do not rot when wet. The covers are zipped (and can be removed to wash the mud off!) I have attached plastic groundsheet eyelets to the corners, and used thin elastic cord (like thin bungee cord) to tie the cushions onto my Trampler, after having once lost one on Dartmoor. Luckily Veronica found it when out walking the next day. I was very grateful as that cushion had cost about £30. They are rated as "medium" pressure relief.

They are available from the Airospring website and also from Amazon (it's worth comparing the prices and delivery costs). Sadly I don't get any commission!

Liz Cuthbertson."

Access to the Fells—Open to All

This is an extract taken from an article by Ron and Chris Lyon which has been published in the Lakeland Walker Magazine, 2016.

For the last year Ron and Chris Lyon, Regional Representatives of the Disabled Ramblers Association, and Tricia Brown, National Park volunteer, have been working together to devise suitable fell routes for off-road mobility scooters, in the Lake District. The aim is to find routes, which will be led by National Park volunteers, are suitable for the Disabled Ramblers to try out first before they are opened up to the general public. Ron and Chris had to teach Tricia to look at footpaths in a different way from that of a fit and healthy person which she is. Tricia had to quickly learn that an able bodied person does not need to take into consideration boulders, and ruts—they just step over them, slopes which take a strain on batteries, which can make all the difference to a disabled ramble. ‘Miles Without Stiles’ routes are great but Disabled Ramblers want more challenging routes. National Park estate workers have been very keen to help improve the paths that have been identified by taking down stiles, filling in ruts and drainage ditches, and removing rocks. Tricia says that working with Ron to find suitable routes for the disabled ramblers, has been particularly challenging but is sure that routes will be found. Their hopes were raised along the Old Coach Road at the base of Clough Head but were dashed when they found a long section where off road vehicles had created knee high ruts, which was unfortunately a massive job to put right. National Trust team leader Tim Duckmanton has faith in Tricia’s abilities, he says that she is ‘very creative’, and is a ‘driving force’ to find fell routes for the disabled, and is sure that she and Ron will succeed in finding them. The biggest stumbling block in finding routes is the terrain in the Lake District, and as David Switzer, National Park Ranger laughingly summed it up, ‘there are just too many hills’.

Southern Tour Hampshire –October

Our thanks go to Di Pettit for the 2 rambles she organised in the New Forest and for Val Rawlings for stepping in at the last minute to lead the first ramble.



Steamer Point - A beautiful Autumn day here in Hampshire, one of those lovely zingy, bright and uplifting times that made perfect conditions for our ramble along the coast from Highcliffe Castle to Mudeford Quay. Val and Bob



Andrews Mare—Starting from Bolderwood across the heathland we were lucky once again with the weather. We stopped for lunch at Foxhill Pond before returning via the Canadian War Memorial to Bolderwood. Val and Bob



CURRENT LOCAL CONTACTS

Name	email	Home county	Runs local rambles
John Cuthbertson	rambles@disabledramblers.co.uk	Local Contact Co-ordinator & Worcestershire contact	Yes
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