

# Stepping Out Newsletter

2022



YMCA East Surrey

## New name, same walks

By now, many of you will be aware of the name change from Ramblers Walking for Health to Ramblers Wellbeing Walks. The reason for this is to encompass all aspects of what the walks stand for: welcoming anyone wishing to improve their physical and mental wellbeing and to overcome loneliness and isolation. However, along with the new name, many other changes have been implemented, such as asking our walkers to sign up online to our walking group and an app for leaders to register attendances. The new system has taken some getting used to, but things are now settling down, and I want to thank our volunteers for their patience and help as things evolved. As you have received this annual newsletter by email, we know that you signed up online. Thank you. By doing this, you will continue to receive Stepping Out annually and can be sent an email if there are any changes to walks you regularly attend.

## Connecting with Nature

It is no secret that exercise, especially walking, is a tonic for continuing good health. There are several other reasons why walking offers a positive contribution to our body and mood: it engages over half the body's muscle mass, reduces the risk of heart disease, strokes, osteoporosis and certain cancers. In addition, walking with others provides people the opportunity to have someone to talk to. Staying indoors when feeling low has a negative effect. Therefore, immersing ourselves in nature is a more attractive option. Taking a walk with any of our groups throughout the year offers the chance to experience the changing landscape, sharing the warm spring days, the shady woodland in summer and frosty mornings in winter. If all, or even only one, of these examples entices you, then slip on some comfy shoes and join us today.

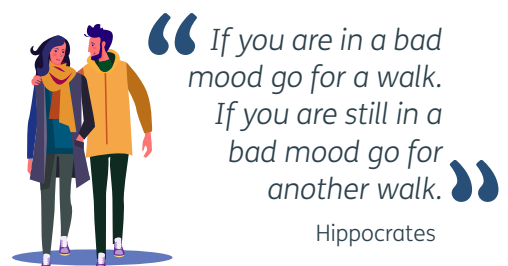
Philosopher Arnold Berleant suggests:

*“ it is when we're actually moving through a landscape, rather than treating it simply as scenery, that we most fully connect with a place and ignite all our senses ”*



## Our Volunteers

Volunteering brings huge benefits to both walkers and walk leaders. The walkers feel assured that they will be guided safely on walks that suit their ability, and by leaders who give up their time and show their passion for something they love. Our walk leaders know their routes and identify the hazards, keeping a steady pace and their group together. They demonstrate their qualities by turning up, whatever the weather, being friendly and welcoming walkers. Volunteering with us can happen once a week, twice a month or even once a month. You tell us what you can do, and we will try to accommodate your request. If you think you have the qualities, we can provide the skills. Come and see for yourself.



*“ If you are in a bad mood go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood go for another walk. ”*

Hippocrates

# Spotlight on Walks

Our walks are of varying lengths with many different features, including parks, woodland, water, fields and meadows. On some routes, walkers benefit from impressive views.

For instance, there is Burgh Heath Woods & Pond - a 45 minute walk route taking in the ever-changing woodland and the large pond at Burgh Heath, with wildfowl, a young Canada goose whose family left it behind, occasional cormorants and a lone heron. An easy paced – and not too long - walk to enjoy.

Townhill Green Lane sits on the edge of a large, unspoilt area of woods, fields and footpaths. In just a short distance walkers discover that they can escape traffic noise and hear birdsong. In spring the fields are full of wild flowers, including orchids, and later in the year the autumn colours are wonderful. The view across Happy Valley is an added bonus. Depending on the weather, routes can be taken undercover of trees or over the field paths in the sunshine. Two such examples of walks to ‘fully connect with and ignite your senses’.



## Leading by Example

On 19 November 2002, Mary Watson trained as a volunteer walk leader for Ramblers Walking for Health when it was still an independent charity (Action for Life). She spent the next 18 years helping others to stay fit and find company at Reigate Priory Park. Mary also served as a trustee on the charity's management committee. It was only when she reached the grand age of 90 that Mary decided it was time to hang up her volunteering boots. Wanting to stay fit and socialise, Mary continues to walk on the Earlswood Common & Lakes walk. This is quite an achievement and Mary is a shining example of the benefits of regular walking.



To quote Mary: “I have always loved walking and the outdoors. Some 20 years ago I trained to be a walk leader so I could share my enthusiasm with others. It has given me enormous pleasure to be part of the Ramblers and I hope to continue to be an active walker for as long as I am able.”

We are honoured to have had such a long-standing volunteer who has dedicated so many years of her time to our scheme. Thank you Mary. Carry on walking.

Total number of Wellbeing walks

20

Number of volunteers

40



**Thank you to the following establishments for allowing walkers to use their car park. Whenever possible, please take advantage of their hospitality after the walk.**

The Inn on the Pond,  
Merstham

The Farmhouse, Horley

Knights Nags Hall Garden  
Centre, Godstone

The Carpenter's Arms,  
Limpsfield Chart

The Beefeater, Epsom Downs

## Donations

Thank you for continuing to support us with your donations. They make all this possible.

## Join us on Facebook!

For up-to-date news and photos, join us at:

[www.facebook.com/groups/ymcawellbeingwalks](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ymcawellbeingwalks)



To find out more about our walks or becoming a volunteer, contact Julie Haslett for more information:

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