



2020 AGM – Chair’s Report

Welcome:

- A big thank you to all of you who have made the effort to join us online for this most unusual of AGMs.

Introduction:

- This has been an extremely difficult year where we have all had to learn to cope with some serious challenges to our normal lifestyles. This has included long periods where we have not been able to meet our fellow walkers to enjoy the fresh air and company that we all value. Let us hope that 2021 will see things gradually ease and a return to normal.
- There has already been one change to the committee since the last AGM, which is that **John Potter** reluctantly had to step down and has reduced his walking considerably due to family commitments. I am sure I speak for all who know John, that we hope he will be back with us as soon as possible.
- We are always looking for new people to help on the committee, either in specific roles or to assist.

Report:

- Having already mentioned the ongoing COVID 19 situation and its effects on us, I would just like to stress the important role the national WfH Scheme has played throughout. As part of the RAMBLERS, the staff at WfH main office have worked hard to lobby Government on our behalf, stressing the benefits of our walks for physical health and mental wellbeing. This resulted in some significant compromises by the authorities that allowed us to re-start and continue walking from early August until this current lock-down.
- The strength of the argument compiled and presented by RAMBLERS WfH convinced the higher powers that we could conduct walks safely and responsibly. If ever anyone doubts the benefits of WfH – T&W being an accredited scheme, here is some hard evidence.
- Lynne Kay, our scheme co-ordinator, has throughout this period, been doing an excellent job as key contact with RAMBLERS WfH. She deserves all our thanks.

- Before leaving the subject of RAMBLERS WfH, I would like to let you know that they have secured funding until at least the autumn of 2021. To access funding beyond this, they will have to rely on a case and proposal built on data **WE** provide in terms of walk registers and any evidence that shows the REAL and significant benefits of our walks. **Please bear this in mind** and help Lynne provide our information to WfH main office.
- I am please to report that locally, our relationship with **DENSO Manufacturing UK** continues, with financial support secured for the next 12 months, despite their own global business challenges resulting from the pandemic. We are incredibly lucky, that they also recognise the positive benefits of our walks.
- This last twelve months have been exceptional and I have been extremely pleased by the many reports of how you are helping each other to minimise social isolation, particularly when we have not been able to walk in our normal groups. Your committee and I recognise these efforts and the sacrifice very many of you have made. You all need to feel proud, however this year we have selected a few individuals who we believe have deserve special mention.

Conclusion:

- I have decided that this will be my last year as Chair of WfH – T&W, so will be stepping down at this AGM.
- It has been my privilege and pleasure to have served in this post for the past few years, but I believe it is right and appropriate for the position to be rotated regularly to inject new ideas and enthusiasm. I would like to thank you all, but especially your committee, for making the job so enjoyable. I hope to continue on your committee and will still be an active Walk Leader at Lilleshall.

Take care and stay safe.

Steve Shaw

Chair

Walking for Health – Telford & Wrekin