

Dear Friend and Fellow Rambler

I don't know about you, but when I'm out walking I love to listen to nature in all its forms – birds singing, wind blowing, the sound of a brook running. It's something that's helped me through tough times in my life.

At the time I found Ramblers, I was very low. I lost my husband a few years ago and the loneliness was overwhelming. When the pandemic started, I felt so worried about being isolated. I'd retired from my hectic job as a healthcare assistant and didn't have any family nearby.

During the first lockdown, I started going for walks on my own. Unfortunately, I broke my wrist – at the time, it felt like one more thing I had to deal with alone! When I recovered, I decided to find a walking group and joined Ramblers.

It was the best thing I could have done. At that time, group walks weren't possible, but just keeping up to date with what was happening felt like a way forward and something to look forward to.

When I went on my first group walk, everyone was so friendly and welcoming, so I signed up to more and more. I loved the

variety and the chance to be at one with nature. But the walks gave me so much more than just walking opportunities! I made new friends and my mental and physical health improved: I've even managed to lose four stone.

Walking with this fantastic group and being a Rambler has given my self-esteem a real boost. But best of all, I found the confidence to lead my first Ramblers' group walk and I'm planning to lead more. I've come so far.

Before I go, I'd like to say a huge 'thank you'. Ramblers only exists because of members like you, so I wouldn't have it in my life today without you. I hope you'll join me in giving a gift this Christmas so that more people can wander to wellbeing.

Stephanie
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