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Walks Programme

The latest information about our walks programme is available on our website: <https://bristolramblers.org.uk>. Any additional walks are added as they are submitted. To see all the walks on specific days, or of specific lengths or difficulties, go to <https://bristolramblers.org.uk/List-programme>. From this page you can also download or print the list of walks, or add walks to your calendar.

Walking with other Ramblers groups

Remember that your Ramblers membership entitles you to join walks all over the country. Locally, <http://www.avon-ramblers.org.uk> lists forthcoming walks organised by the eight Ramblers groups in the Avon area. The website also has links to other groups' websites. So if there is a gap in the Bristol walks programme, have a look to see what else might be available!

Some walks from the January programme

This is not an exhaustive list of the walks available. Always check the website for the most up-to-date information:

<https://bristolramblers.org.uk/List-programme>

Sun 24 Dec – Thornbury and River Severn (B walk, 9 miles)

A scenic, fairly flat pre-Christmas walk, visiting Thornbury, St Arildas Church, River Severn, Littleton Upon Severn and Jubilee Way.

Mon 25 Dec – Short Christmas Morning Walk (B walk, 6 miles)

A few modest ups and down around the Combe Dingle / Stoke Bishop neck of the woods, and the possibility of mince pies at the tea stop.

Sat 30 Dec – Around Stockwood (C walk, 5 miles)

A leisurely walk exploring the area around Stockwood. Stockwood Open Space is composed of old farmland and ancient woodland, and offers habitat for some rare flowers (albeit unlikely to be visible at this time of year). There is the option of a pub at the finish, and the start point can be reached by bus from central Bristol.

Sun 31 Dec – Oakhill (B walk, 8 miles)

The exact route may vary depending on ground conditions. Check the website for any updates.

Sun 31 Dec – Priors Wood (A/B walk, 13 miles)

This is the perfect antidote for Christmas overindulgence. Although very close to Bristol, stepping out in Failand provides a feeling of getting away from the city, offering views across gently rolling hills, wooded glades and pretty streams, the iconic Failand church and Bullocks Bottom. Were it not for the views of Avonmouth and the M5, it might seem that the scenery has changed little in 100 years!

Sat 6 Jan – Castle Coombe (B walk, 6 miles)

From the meeting point of Market Cross, we will walk along the Macmillan Way to Ford, and then back past Truckle Hill and Broadmead Brook. Note that there are two fairly steep climbs, and the route is likely to be muddy in places; however on the bright side, the village offers several cafes and pubs in which to recover afterwards.

Sun 7 Jan – Paulton (B walk, 11 miles)

A walk from Paulton, taking in Clutton Church, lunch at the Ring O'Bells in Hinton Blewett, and an afternoon stop at Farrington Gurney church. There are some moderate hills, and it is likely to be muddy in places.

Sun 7 Jan – Name tbc (A walk, distance tbc)

A pleasant, rural excursion into an area we haven't previously visited a great deal....

The walk climbs out of Mitchel Troy and then crosses Wyewood Common Nature Reserve via a web of paths and woodlands, before depositing us at Birchtree Well. It's then on to the Wye Valley walk, and thence to the popular "Boat Inn" at Redbrook beside the river.

A steep pull after lunch gets us back onto the ridge, before a series of fields and minor roads gets us into Pwllplithin Wood and to New Mills. It's then on to Ty-Mawr convent, then the handsome Caer Llan Manor, before we descend back to Mitchel Troy via lush open countryside.

Wed 10 Jan - Abbots Leigh, Ashton Court, Leigh Woods circular (B walk, 6 miles)

Walk through peaceful woods and open spaces to the west of Bristol. Mainly on firm paths and footpaths but likely to be muddy in short sections. A stop for coffee is intended at Ashton Court (golf) café, but be prepared with your own drink in case the café is closed. There is the possibility of a pub at the end of the walk. If driving, please park considerately along Church Road towards the church and car-share if possible.

Sat 13 Jan – Bleadon (B walk, 5 miles)

A circular walk following the River Axe. We pass Thatcher cider orchards on Shiplate Hill, and enjoy views from Hellenge Hill and Roman Road before returning to the start point.

Sun 14 Jan – Mendips (B walk, 11 miles)

We will go over the Mendips and down to Cheddar for lunch, and then back up the other side. It will be muddy, but let's hope that it is not too wet!

Wed 17 Jan - Shirehampton, Kingsweston and the River Avon (B walk, 7 miles)

A pleasant walk up the Avon, into Shirehampton, then up to Kings Weston Down where we can break for coffee at the house. We'll then walk towards the Avon, get some fine views over Horseshoe Bend and return to Shirehampton. It's mostly through green areas, apart from a necessary walk up into, and through, Shirehampton along the pavements.



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Much of the walk is surfaced but some stretches are along grass and one stretch on Kings Weston Down can be muddy if we have a lot of wet weather. There is one steep, stepped climb up onto Kingsweston Down. We'll start and finish by the Lamplighters Pub in Shirehampton. No lunch is organised. However I'm sure the Lamplighters would welcome anyone who wanted to eat there. Bring your own refreshments, but we'll have a break at Kingsweston House where the cafe (and toilets) should be open.

Sat 20 Jan – New Members Hike (A walk, 12 miles)

This introductory A walk is for fit people who want to try a harder grade walk than our B (Moderate) or C (Easy) walks. Starting from the Bristol end of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, we will head west across Leigh Woods, Ashton Court and the slopes of Clifton gorge, through woods and fields, past streams, pools and rivers, with occasional expansive views across the Bristol landscape.

The pace will be fairly fast, and should suit reasonably strong walkers. Ground conditions underfoot are likely to be quite muddy at this time of year in this area. There will be some ups and downs as we cross from the bottom to the top of the gorge a few times.

The walk will break into 4 quarters, with three short stops for elevenses, lunch break and mid afternoon snacks. Please bring a packed lunch, and ideally a sit mat or something to sit down upon while you rest for 10 minutes.

Sun 21 Jan – Two Nursery Rhymes and a Pub (B walk, 8 miles)

Starting from Kilmersdon, this interesting walk takes us for 8 miles (and around 500 ft ascent) with fine views over Somerset. Source of two nursery rhymes included. The terrain is mainly hard surface or minor roads, and there is a pub at approximately halfway.

Sun 21 Jan – East of the Arwallt (A walk, 14 miles)

An exploration of the 'foothills' and lowlands east of the Black Mountains; a picturesque mixture of pastures, woodlands, the odd vineyard, churches, a castle, and – to bring us bang up to date - a solar farm.

We start the walk heading west to visit the Skirrid summit, our morning stop, overlooking a rounded, very green lump - The Arwallt. There follows an undulating route to our lunch stop at Llangattock Lingoed, home of the beautiful medieval church of St Cadoc's and the iconic Hunter's Moon pub (also medieval). The

afternoon follows the Offa's Dyke path to the wonderfully preserved White Castle, taking our break in the sheltered recesses of the Keep. Finally we head off to visit a complete contrast, the Solar Farm, before shortly returning to the start.

Note that there is a charge of £5 per car at walk start, so car sharing is recommended!

Sun 28 Jan – Crug Mawr (A Hill Walk, 14 miles)

This walk through and over the more southerly Black Mountains will take in Crug Mawr, Gaer Fort, Sugar Loaf and possibly (should time permit) Bryn Arw. The stats currently mentioned in the programme are an estimate and are subject to revision once your dear leader gets the time and a decent weather window to do a pre-walk!

Sat 3 Feb - Shirehampton, Kingsweston and the River Avon (B walk, 7 miles)

A second chance at this pleasant walk. Up the Avon, into Shirehampton, then up to Kings Weston Down where we can break for coffee at the house. We'll then walk towards the Avon, get some fine views over Horseshoe Bend and return to Shirehampton. It's mostly through green areas, apart from a necessary walk up into, and through, Shirehampton along the pavements.

Walking News and Events

Rambler Response to Government Access Package

On 29th November, the Environment Secretary announced a package of measures to '[help] more people get access to our natural heritage and [put] nature at the forefront of government efforts to tackle climate change'.

The Ramblers have welcomed the package, but want political parties to commit to more, specifically the 'three key steps' of better supporting our existing path network, expanding the freedom to roam, and ensuring that nobody lives more than 15 minutes' walk from a green space.

For more information on the government package:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-pledges-to-boost-britains-access-to-nature-ahead-of-cop28>

For the full Rambler response: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/news/our-verdict-uk-governments-plan-boost-access-nature>

'Make Ways' Crowdfunder Appeal

The team behind the 'Slow Ways' project are launching a new venture – this time, to map the places where people would like to go, but can't. The idea behind 'Make Ways' is that people will be able to plot where they'd like to be able to go and map things that either help or hinder journeys by foot, wheel or bicycle. They'll be able to discuss, vote and act on what is shared.

For more information, or to support the campaign (deadline 2nd January) see the crowdfunder at: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/makeways>

Kings Weston Road Closure

From Monday 15th January, Kings Weston Road will be closed to all vehicles and pedestrians while work proceeds on the historic footbridge near Shirehampton Road. During this time, pedestrians and cyclists will be able to walk on a path around the closure, but motorists will need to follow a much longer route via Long Cross. This section of road is expected to remain closed until the spring.

For the latest information on the Kingsweston Iron Bridge repairs, see:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/streets-travel/road-closures/kingsweston-iron-bridge-restoration>

Feature Articles

Editorial

Late December is not a time normally associated with walking.

While the Bristol Ramblers' annual Solstice Stomp recollects old traditions of beating the bounds, establishing boundaries and calling down blessings upon the lands, said old traditions largely took place at warmer times of the year. Our ancestors were no fools. The old Bristol Perambulation, for example, was conducted during the rather more salubrious month of September.

Of course, there are a number of journeys that are very intimately associated with this time of year. The journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, for example, and their subsequent flight into Egypt. Or the long journey of the Three Wise Men following their star, as evocatively imagined by T S Eliot:

*A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For such a journey, and such a long journey;
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.*

- Journey of the Magi

I've definitely had morning walks like that, especially in January.

Many of us will be following in the Magi's footsteps; taking long journeys to visit friends or family, or shorter ones to places of worship. I've already made one such journey, walking through the pre-dawn darkness to sing up the solstice sun over the Severn.

Wherever you walk this winter, whether it be miles along ancient trackways or just down the road to the pub, you walk in good company.

Ceiswyn

(pron. KICE-win)

Partners and Sponsors

Ramblers Walking Holidays



Ramblers Walking Holidays is the Ramblers holiday walking partner. If you book a holiday with Ramblers Walking Holidays and let them know that you are a Bristol Ramblers member, this Group will receive a contribution (£10 for UK holidays, £20 for short haul, £30 for long haul). See <https://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk/faqs#tab-the-walking-partnership>

Note that this has no impact on the price you pay for the holiday.

Outdoor Retailers

Most outdoor gear shops offer discounts to Ramblers members.

Cotswold Outdoor



Cotswold Outdoor is the Ramblers national sponsor, and their discount is 15%.

Taunton Leisure



Taunton Leisure sponsors this local Group, and also offers 15% discounts. There are stores available in Bristol, Taunton and Exeter.

Books and Maps

Ordnance Survey

The Ordnance Survey are working with the Ramblers to open the way for everyone to enjoy the outdoors in a more accessible, safe and sustainable way.

Ramblers members can enjoy 25% off a new subscription to OS Maps Premium, using code RAMOSM. Additionally, £5 will be donated to the Ramblers for each valid subscription.

Stanfords Book Shop

Stanfords is a specialist retailer of maps, travel books and other travel accessories, with stores in London and Bristol. They offer a 10% discount to Ramblers members.

Cicerone Press



Cicerone publishes guide books for walkers and cyclists. They offer a 25% discount to Ramblers members, with the code RAMBMD25.

You are receiving this communication as a member of the Bristol group and you have previously asked to be kept informed of the Ramblers work by email. If you no longer wish to receive communications like this, please update your mailing preferences at www.ramblers.org.uk/my-account.
