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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/display-programme.html>. 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!

Sunday B Walkers Weekend Away (5-8 July)

This year's trip will take us to Charmouth in sunny Dorset.

We will offer a range of walks, from shorter ones inland on the Friday and Monday, to full day coastal walks on Saturday and Sunday, with shorter options available on each of those days. More details will be available after we have pre-walked in late April.

As in previous years, some of us will camp and others will opt for B& B, a room in a pub, self-catering or even a hotel. Whatever you choose, please book it yourself, leaving the organisers to focus on the walks.

We will plan a group meal on the Sunday evening.

Useful websites:

https://charmouth.org/charmouth_village/charmouth-accommodation/

<https://manorfarmholidaycentre.co.uk/> this is the campsite some of us will use. You may wish to book a pitch with one or more other walkers to share the cost. You can have more than one tent on the pitch, provided one of them is a 1 or 2 person tent.

To register your interest, please talk to Paula Cannings, Chris Dring, Marlies Morsink or Sarah Marshall. Please provide your email, so we can stay in touch with further details.

Some walks from the March 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>

Sat 2 Mar – Chew Valley Lake (B walk, 6 miles)

Starting at Woodford Lodge, this walk initially follows the recently extended tarmac Chew Valley Recreational Trail past the Sailing club and onto the road near the dam. Following the edge of the lake to the right we come into a car parking area with a restaurant and toilets. We then leave the lake and go up and over Knowle Hill before downhill onto Pitts Lane and Denny Lane which lead us to the edge of Chew Magna. Return to Woodford Lodge is across fields past Chota Castle, eventually re-joining the Recreational Trail.

Car parking is limited, so please car share if possible.

Sun 3 Mar – Priddy Winter Circuit (B walk, 8 miles)

This walk begins in Stockhill, and takes in the views of the Somerset levels at the Ebbor viewing area. We then descend to Priddy where we stop at the Queen Vic for a short break. From there we walk past the Bronze Age Nine Barrows site, winding gently back to our start point. The walk gives a brief flavour of the Mendips, taking into account the unpredictable weather of March!

Sun 3 Mar – Mendip Levels (A walk, 15 miles)

Up and down, sub and super, this walk takes in various levels on top of and below the Mendip ridges. Includes slightly over 2,000 feet of ascent.

Map OS explorer 141

Wed 6 Mar – Badocks Wood, Brentry, Southmead Circular (B walk, 5 miles)

An urban walk on surfaced paths and footpaths, some of which may be muddy in places. The walk is mainly flat, but with two short uphill sections. The entry to Badocks Wood can be reached by public transport, with a short walk.

Sun 10 Mar – Ozelworth/Bagpath (B walk, 11 miles)

We will be exploring the Cotswold countryside near Wootton-under-Edge. There are excellent views, at the cost of one or two steep ascents.

Sun 10 Mar – Caggle Street (A walk, 16 miles)

An exploration of the lowlands east of the Black Mountains: a mixture of pastures, woodlands, churches, a castle, a distant vineyard and a solar farm.

We start the walk heading west to visit the Skirrid summit, our morning stop. From there we follow an undulating route to our lunch stop at Llangattock Lingoed, home of the beautiful medieval church of St Cadoc's and the iconic Half Moon pub. 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 the solar farm, before returning to the start.

Wed 13 Mar – Blaise, Kingsweston Circuit (B walk, 6 miles)

A mixture of parkland, woodland and road walking around the Blaise and Kingsweston estates. This is a fairly gentle walk, although there is one steep climb, and it could be quite muddy towards the end of the walk along the river. The end of the walk is handy for Henbury Inn or Blaise café, if desired.

Sat 16 Mar – 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 Stoke Road on the Clifton/Durdham Downs, we will head north into the parks and hidden green spaces around Henbury, 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 may be somewhat muddy at this time of year in this area. There will be some ups and downs given the surprising hillyness of Bristol.

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 17 Mar – Wills Neck (A walk, 14 miles)

We start by contouring around the path on the lower north-eastern slopes of the hills. We climb steadily through Smith's Combe to reach Beacon Hill. Our route follows the high ground as we head south until we lose height to reach Triscombe and the lunch stop. Suitably refreshed we climb to the summit of Wills Neck. Soon after we head back to Crowcombe Combe Gate. A short climb leads to Black Hill from where a lovely descent takes us back to the cars.

Wed 20 Mar – Purton and Sharpness (B walk, 6 miles)

A pleasant, circular walk starting at Purton, walking along the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal alongside the 'ship's graveyard', through Sharpness Docks and over the hill back to Purton with spectacular views of the Severn.

Although the walk is largely flat, there are a few awkward stiles.

Wed 27 Mar – Marshfield (B walk, 6 miles)

The walk begins in Marshfield and takes in a few of the surrounding valleys, including part of the Limestone Link and St Katherine's valley. There are some ascents, and the going will be muddy in places.

Photograph copyright © Anne C, 2024



Sun 24 Mar – Cwmdru Horseshoe (A hill walk, 17 miles)

Map OLExp 13.

This hilly route traverses the ridges around the village of Cwmdru. Many regulars will have done this route previously, however for those less familiar with the area, the tops we shall ascend are amongst the highest in the western Black Mountains. These will include Mynydd Troed, Y Grib, Waun Fach (possibly Pen Twyn Glas), Pen Allt-Mawr and a few other bumps along the way. We can clear the cobwebs on what is a great walk and be on the right side of the spring equinox!

Please note there is no pub stop on this walk and we're expected to make a small donation (£1 per car) for use of the car park.

Total ascent is around 4,500 ft (1400 m).

Sun 31 Mar – Trellech (A walk, 14 miles)

A walk in delightfully attractive, hilly territory with much to commend it.

Expect farmland, woods, hamlets, valleys and streams, with the odd prehistoric monument or three thrown in for good measure.

All new to me, so probably to you as well, and consequently has that fresh, 'undiscovered' feel to it. If the weather is kind on the day, I'm sure you're gonna like this!

Sun 7 April – Clutton, Pensford and Keynsham Linear (B walk, 12 miles)

This is a linear walk using local buses, so bring bus and rail passes (if you have them), packed lunch and money. Catch the 376 that leaves Bristol Bus Station at 09:05 (final destination Wells) and alight at Clutton.

From there we do the last part of the 3 Peaks walk, going past Blackberry Hill and Hunstrete to Pensford, where there will be a drinks stop. (It is possible to start or finish at Pensford, though the 376 is hourly so you may be waiting a while).

After lunch we go past Publow, Woollard, Compton Dando, Chewton Keynsham into Keynsham. There are a number of options for the return journey from Keynsham, including possibly train. This is also a special birthday walk but using WECA's birthday bus pass.

Note that the leader will be away for a few days prior to the walk so may not be able to answer any last minute queries. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Walking News and Events

Not-so-Open Access Land

The 'right to roam' in England and Wales is more restricted than for most countries in Northern Europe, with only around 8% of land considered open access. But a recent investigation by the Right to Roam campaign group suggested that the situation is even worse than it appears – as while we have the right to roam on open access land, we have no corresponding right to actually get to it to do so.

In fact, hundreds of areas of access land – ranging from scraps of waste land to square kilometres of open moorland – are in practice not open at all, being entirely surrounded by private lands that are not crossed by footpaths or roads. The only way to reach them is to trespass.

For more information: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-68278444>

Many of these issues would be addressed by an expanded freedom to roam, which would enable walkers to pass through woodland or along waterways to reach these 'access islands'. For information on the Ramblers' call for expanded freedom to roam: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/what-we-care-about/expand-freedom-roam>

Feature Articles

Editorial

If you're feeling tired at the tail-end of winter, you're not alone. Seasonal fatigue is more than just being depressed by the darkness and cold (though that would be sufficient all on its own); there are real, physical effects that combine to make the sofa an ever-more attractive proposition, even while the days lengthen somewhere up there above all the clouds.

For starters, our brain produces the sleepy hormone melatonin in response to darkness. While this is all very well for getting us to bed on time, it's less useful when we're trying to get up on dark mornings. Supposedly daylight bulbs and similar items can help regulate melatonin production, though the editor has had one next to her laptop for several years now and mostly finds it useful for accidentally blinding herself on early morning Zoom calls.

Then there are changes to our diet and exercise; many of us turn to rich, stodgy foods to get us through the colder months, and also mysteriously spend less time outdoors. In shock news, months of eating fruit cake on the sofa may not be the best way to boost your energy levels. Though given the choice of being a bit tired or trying to virtuously bite a crisp apple while being belted in the face by freezing rain, I for one will take a second slice of cake, thanks.

Then there's vitamin D. We've all heard for years that we get less of it in the winter due to the lack of sunlight; but who knew that we don't get *any* for a whole five months? No matter how bright that February sun, or how long you stand out in it with your skin exposed (and presumably frostbite threatening), the sun is just too low in the sky. By this time of year, we've been running on our stores since the start of October. No great surprise if they're (and we're) getting a little run down.

But good news! It's almost March. The sun is getting higher, the days are getting longer, the Earth is accelerating towards the equinox on the 20th. With any luck, our energy will return with the sunshine.

Hopefully before we have to start building an Ark...

Ceiswyn

(pron. KICE-win)

Partners and Sponsors

Ramble Worldwide



Ramble Worldwide (previously Ramblers Walking Holidays) is the Ramblers holiday walking partner. If you book a holiday with Ramble Worldwide 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.rambleworldwide.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.
