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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>. 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.

WalkFest 2025

The Bristol Walking Festival will be back, running throughout May in 2025. Do you have a favourite walk you would like to share? Could you lead a walk for the Festival? If you are interested, please contact carew.reynell@gmail.com for more information.

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://www.bristolramblers.org.uk/display-programme>

Wed 1 Jan – Highlights and Hidden Corners of Bristol (B walk, 6 miles)

Join us for views of famous sights in Bristol, and maybe to discover some attractive hidden corners you don't know.

We will be passing through Clifton, Hotwells, and Ashton Court Estate, before returning via the Clifton Suspension Bridge. There is one steep hill at Ashton Court, where paths are slightly muddy (you may find a walking pole helpful).

Please bring a drink and packed lunch for short stops along the way. There is the possibility of refreshments in a pub or cafe in Clifton Village at the end of the walk.

This walk will be repeated on Saturday 11th.

Sat 4 Jan – Chepstow and Lancaut Circular (B walk, 6 miles)

We will walk from Chepstow, along Offa's Dyke close by the River Wye, to the ruin of St James's Church, and then inland for the return. This walk has great views, but some steep climbs and descents. It is likely to be muddy in places, and there are some stiles.

Bring a flask and snack for the short mid-walk break. Pubs and cafes are available in Chepstow at the end of the walk.

Sun 5 Jan – Mendip (B walk, 11 miles)

Up to Crook Peak, down the ridge to Compton Bishop. Then up and over to Cross. In the afternoon back through Kings Wood to Winscombe.

Sun 5 Jan – Downham Hill (A walk, 13 miles)

A meander through the Cotswolds, not too far from Bristol, through pastures medieval and modern, ancient forests and younger plantations, with fine views from a variety of angles if the weather is kind.

OS maps: Expl 167

Wed 8 Jan – Sea Mills, Sneyd Park, Westbury-on-Trym & Blaise Estate (B walk, 6 miles)

A moderate walk with some hills on the green, western fringes of Bristol. Walking on footpaths, lanes and pavements. Probably muddy in places, so boots strongly advised.

The start near Sea Mills station is accessible by train and bus. Note that parking is limited, so allow plenty of time.

Sat 11 Jan – Highlights and Hidden Corners of Bristol (B walk, 6 miles)

Join us for views of famous sights in Bristol, and maybe to discover some attractive hidden corners you don't know.

We will be passing through Clifton, Hotwells, and Ashton Court Estate, before returning via the Clifton Suspension Bridge. There is one steep hill at Ashton Court, where paths are slightly muddy (you may find a walking pole helpful).

Please bring a drink and packed lunch for short stops along the way. There is the possibility of refreshments in a pub or cafe in Clifton Village at the end of the walk.

Sun 12 Jan – Nailsea and Backwell (B walk, 8 miles)

This is a short walk after the New Year festivities.

We cross flat fields towards Backwell, before climbing up the hills to the Jubilee Stone. We go down past Chelvey Farm to the far end of Backwell village for the lunch stop at the Rising Sun pub.

There is an opportunity to do just this part of the walk as the X1 bus back to Bristol Bus Station passes the pub along the A370.

From the lake, we will follow the edge of Nailsea back to Wraxall House.

Railway enthusiasts will notice that the title of the walk is the same as that of the railway station. We will pass this in the afternoon on the way to the coffee break at Backwell Lake. If anyone wants to do about three quarters of the walk, they could catch a train back to Bristol from there!

Sun 12 Jan – Wansdyke Wanderer (A walk, 13 miles)

If you enjoy a good, rural undulation or two (and who doesn't?) then this is for you.

Beginning at the handsome, historic hamlet of Queen Charlton, we will circumnavigate the hills & valleys bordering the River Chew, passing through several little settlements, farms various, and a number of managed woodlands. We will also encounter an intriguing paintballing site, plus a lovely fishing lake!

Lunch is at Compton Dando, (with pub available), before we reach Woollard, then Publow, with an entertaining climb up to Black Rock required thereafter to complete the excursion.

This is delightful countryside, and the route, although complex, is pleasantly undemanding. Nevertheless, it is likely to be muddy at this time of the year, so walking-poles may prove useful.

Look forward to enjoying your company on this!

OS maps: Expl 155

Wed 15 Jan – North Bristol Parks (B walk, 5 miles)

This walk ascends to Purdown, past the tower and round to Stoke Park. Then we follow the path under the M32 to Snuff Mills and across the Frome. The return is via the Frome Valley Walkway and through Eastville Park. There are some hard surfaces, but also be prepared for some muddy stretches.

Sun 19 Jan – Hinton from Hawkesbury Upton (B walk, 9 miles)

An easy walk for the short days of winter, enjoying the beautiful countryside along the Cotswold edge. It's likely to be muddy and slippery at times.

Starting from Hawkesbury Upton we'll head along the Cotswold escarpment on the Cotswold Way to Alderley and Wortley. Then we take paths and tracks to Hillesley and the affable Fleece Inn.

After a stop and a warm-up at the pub we'll take lanes to Hawkesbury and then, like all great expeditions, we will face the crux of the walk. This is the steep and slippery ascent up the escarpment back to the start.

Sun 19 Jan – Chepstow (A walk, 14 miles)

Soon after leaving Chepstow we shall be viewing a ruined building with an interesting history. After a section of woodland walking our route climbs to eventually reach a complex series of paths through fields and woodland. We then descend to reach Tintern and the lunch stop.

Inevitably we have a steep post-prandial climb to reach the Devil's Pulpit. The remainder of the walk is much easier and we should have good views of the Severn before our final section along Offa's Dyke Path.

OS maps: Expl OL14

Sat 25 Jan – Rowberrow Warren and Dolebury Warren (B walk, 6 miles)

Starting from Shipham, this circular hilly walk is initially over Rowberrow Warren, returning across Dolebury Warren, past an Iron Age fort, with great views. Some hills, muddy in places, some stiles.

Refreshments may be available at the Shipham Inn at the end of the walk.

Sun 26 Jan – Bruce Trail Cotswolds (B walk, 9 miles)

This route mainly follows the Bruce Trail in the Cotswolds (not the Canadian sister route which is several hundred miles).

This route is about 9 miles long, following paths along the edge of the Cotswolds including woodland paths, tracks and minor roads. The woodland tracks are likely to be muddy. Climbs tend to be moderate and not too long.

The Edgemoor Inn is just over half way. The patio of this pub has spectacular views along the Painswick valley. Unfortunately the open picnic site is 300 metres further along from pub.

The walk then takes us to Haresfield Beacon with spectacular views and to the topograph at Shortwood.

Sun 26 Jan – Darren Rocks (A hill walk, 13 miles)

A short sharp hill walk to start the new year! Up and down 2 Black Mountain ridges, together with a third optional scramble up Darren Rocks. Some steep ascents and descents with fine ridge walks in between. About 3,000 ft ascent.

OS maps: Expl OL13

Wed 29 Jan – Durdham Down and friends (B walk, 6 miles)

A moderate, circular walk along pavements, alleyways and footpaths. We go from Durdham Down, through Canford, to Coombe Hill and a coffee break. We then proceed to the River Trym, on to Sea Mills, to Sneyd Park and return to the start point.

There is one moderate climb and descent. It will also probably be muddy along the River Trym footpath.

Walking News and Events

Don't Lose Your Way (and we won't)

For those who have been too busy to pay attention to the news over the festive season, there has been some good news; the government has repealed the deadline for including historic rights of way on official maps. This decision may be partly due to the huge backlog of applications submitted to local authorities.

During the Don't Lose Your Way campaign, Ramblers volunteers identified thousands of miles of paths at risk of being lost.

For more information: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy89yddgg7yo>

The Ramblers response: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/news/threat-thousands-paths-removed-uk-government-repeals-2031-deadline>

Bristol Footpaths News

In Bristol, a consultant has been appointed to deal with the backlog of DMMOs (requests to add footpaths to the official map). A number of routes around Stoke Lodge are now set to be made official, assuming no objections are lodged. The consultant is now looking at routes around the Avon Riding Centre.

Surprisingly, the council is very rarely notified of deliberately blocked public rights of way. If you notice a blocked right of way, please do email the appropriate rights of way team. You can find the details here: <https://bristolramblers.org.uk/report-a-foot-path-problem/footpath-reference.html>

For information about planned footpath works, or the official map:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/streets-travel/public-rights-of-way-service>

Area AGM – Sat 22 February

Bristol Ramblers members are warmly invited to come along for all or part of this event at the Somerdale Pavilion, Keynsham BS31 2FF.

The programme will include a walk from the Somerdale Pavilion, a free buffet lunch for Ramblers members, the AGM, and a talk by the Ramblers Chief Executive, Ross Maloney.

This is your opportunity to meet up with members of other Ramblers groups, and to find out more about Ramblers activities locally and nationally.

Full details will be added to the area website at: <https://www.avon-ramblers.org.uk> and be included in the next e-Boot.

Feature Articles

Editorial

Despite how much I complain about the cold, we've enjoyed a surprisingly warm December; and dry, too, despite the sticky going underfoot. I hope you all enjoyed it, and didn't think too bitterly about how nice it would have been to have had this sort of dry weather back in July.

Now that Christmas is done, though, it seems like the weather has made a New Year's resolution to be less gentle, and cold snaps approach! Fortunately even for those of you who are, like me, a lizard with terrible circulation, there are ways to avoid staggering home an icicle.

Firstly, and I know that here I am teaching my granny to suck eggs, the warmest coat you can find. If necessary, this can be combined with multiple layers until you resemble the Michelin Man (especially if you've been hitting the mince pies as hard as I have over the past few weeks).

Gloves, obviously; I like flip-top mittens, which enable me to check my phone occasionally without the palaver of taking the whole glove off, tucking it in the crook of my arm, and then losing it somewhere in the middle of the woods.

Of course, when you're staggering about on top of a mountain in high winds (and isn't that an attractive proposition?), a big heavy coat and woollen mittens might not cut it – so it might be worth investigating electrically heated gloves and gilets. These can be a bit bulkier, and have a battery pack located somewhere slightly awkward, but in sub-zero temperatures my heated gloves have occasionally saved, if not my life, then at least my frozen fingers.

And last but not least, don't forget a thermos full of coffee. Or hot chocolate. Or both. And while you're sitting down for a drink, why not just one more mince pie...

Ceiswyn

(pron. KICE-win)

Partners and Sponsors

For a full list of official Ramblers partners, see the website at:

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/offers-and-promotions>

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.
