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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.

Some walks from the October 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 1st Oct - Purton & Sharpness (B walk, 7 miles)

A pleasant, circular walk starting at Purton, walking along the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal alongside the 'ship's graveyard', through Sharpness Docks. We still stop for a short break in Sharpness. Then over the hill back to Purton with spectacular views of the Severn. The walk is largely flat.



Sat 4th October - Hidden Hamlets of the Woolley Valley (B walk, 6 miles)

Join us for stunning countryside views on this beautiful 6-mile walk, which passes Langridge Church, and the site of the Civil War Battle of Lansdown Hill (1643). Walking boots advisable, and you may want to bring walking poles for use on the sections with a steep ascent or descent. Bring a drink, and a light picnic lunch, to enjoy on a short stop during the walk. Very close to the end of the walk, our route passes the Charlcombe Inn, and the walk leaders will give everyone the options to either continue straight back to Lansdown P&R, or to take a break for refreshments at the pub. On Saturdays the pub serves food from 12.00 noon - 9.00 pm. Please note that dogs are not allowed on this walk.

Sun 5th Oct - Kilve (A walk, 13 miles)

This is a special walk as Louise has a significant birthday the day after it takes place. It is a figure-of-eight walk which includes hills and a section of coast walking. The hillier section will include Dowsborough hill fort and Black Hill while the second part heads for Kilve for a section of coast walking before returning inland to follow an

attractive path below the higher ground. On our return to the start for the lunch stop Louise will reveal some goodies to mark her imminent birthday.

OS Maps: Expl 140

Sun 5th Oct - Dean: Worgreens & Staple Edge (B walk, 12 miles)

A walk in the wilds of the Forest of Dean, mainly amongst nature and handsome trees, but there are signs of coal and stone mining now overgrown and not now so obvious. Starting from near the Speech House (with toilets available shortly thereafter) we follow parts of the sculpture trail at first, enough perhaps to draw you back for more another time? Lunch break is at the White Horse pub in Soudley. Most of the walk is on firm surfaces on forestry roads and former railways and tramways but it can be muddy in places after rain.

Wed 8th Oct - Hawkesbury Upton to Horton Hill fort and return (B walk, 7 miles)

A couple of ascents and corresponding descents and walking along a small section of the Cotswold Way. Lovely views across the Severn Valley may be expected, given suitable weather. Please bring own coffee/snacks for break midway. Refreshments in pub afterwards. Village shop sells sandwiches. Please note that parking is limited, so car share if possible.

Sat 11th Oct - Blagdon, Rickford and Burrington Ham (B walk, 6 miles)

Join us for this varied and rewarding walk on the Mendip Hills. We will have terrific views of Blagdon Lake from the start, walk through the picturesque village of Rickford, climb up to overlook the Rock of Ages and finish by crossing Burrington Ham back to Blagdon. There are a mix of surfaces and some are uneven. The walk is undulating throughout with one long, steady climb. Plenty of kissing gates but no stiles.

The New Inn at Blagdon is available for refreshments at the end. Please do not use the car park if you do not intend to eat or drink there.

Sun 12th Oct - Ruperra, Mynydd Machen & the Rhymney Valley (B walk, 11 miles)

An entertaining day out in the Rhymney Valley & it's adjoining hills....! Beginning at Rhiwderin, the walk follows 'The Sirhowey Ridgeway Walk' all the way to the top of Mynydd Machen via its splendid, gradual ascent. There's steeper going towards the end, but the views from the top are superb! In good weather one can see the Quantock Hills beyond the Bristol Channel to the south, Twmbarlwm to the east, & the Brecon Beacons to the west... From there it's down to the small town of Machen & lunch, (+ pub for those interested!).

Thereafter we head pleasantly towards the village of Draethen, following a path beside the R. Rhymney - A steady climb thru' forestry is then required so as to reach the intriguing ruins of Ruperra Castle, before a further short pull brings us to the unique 'Ruperra Lookout'! This former hill fort site affords not just a lovely vantage point, but also enables an opportunity to overlook the almost entire view of the day's excursion - If you haven't previously visited, you will, I think, be delighted.....

Anyhow, from the 'Lookout' it's speedily down to the delightful Tre'sguthan Lake, & then we cross the River Rhymney via its famed, restored Iron Bridge - Flat terrain is now the order of the day, & after initially walking beside the river, we complete the

walk thru' a pleasing mix of woodland & rural settings to return to our urban start point.

Sun 19th Oct - Newark and Hillesley (B walk, 9 miles)

(This walk replaces the previously advertised Cam Down walk) Scenic Cotswolds walk, some steepish ascents/descents, excellent views. Pub stop at Hillesley.

Sun 19th Oct - Rhymney Valley Explorer (A walk, 15 miles)

Starting from Rhiwderin, this walk explores the Rhymney Valley & visits a variety of interesting places & high points in the surrounding hills.

The going is often via fields & woodlands, with a degree of riverside walking thrown into the mix, but some steep, hilly departures also feature prominently; the climb to the 'Ruperra Lookout' & then to the castle are both demanding & spectacular for instance, & the afternoon trek to the top of Mynydd Machen, at 362m, is quite a tough prospect. That said, the views subsequently attained are more than worth the effort involved!

At 15 miles & close to 3,000ft of ascent, this represents a good day's outing, with much to engage one's interest & energy...

Sun 26th Oct - South Stoke (B walk, 12 miles)

Walking parts of the Limestone Link, the Wansdyke and the Fosseway.

A/B Trip to West Cornwall, May 2026

Keith and Carew will be leading a five day trip to Penwith, 13-17 May 2026. There will be short walks on the first and last days, to break the journey, and three full day walks. The day walks will be circular walks, incorporating stretches of Cornwall's beautiful coastline and some exploration inland, rich in prehistoric sites and industrial archeology.

If you would be interested in joining the group, please contact:

secretary@bristolramblers.org.uk

It would be helpful if you could indicate whether you would join for all or part of the trip, and whether you would be interested in shared accommodation.

News and Events

Bristol Ramblers Annual General Meeting - Wednesday, 29th October

This year's AGM is taking place in Redland Green Bowling Club, on Wednesday 29th October, from 7pm to 9pm. Previous attendees will be aware that plenty of refreshments are always provided, and this year Paula will be organising a Pub Quiz with a walking theme. All members are welcome, so if you haven't been before then why not pop along and see what it's all about? This is also your opportunity to find out what your committee does for you, and to contribute your views and thoughts.

Feature Articles

Bristol Walking Alliance

By Susan C

Those of you who are interested in how Bristol might be made a better place for walking may like to join the mailing list of the Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA). BWA is a consortium of organisations and individuals campaigning to improve the walking environment, in order to make it welcoming, safe and convenient for all. Bristol Ramblers was one of its founder members, and Susan Carter currently represents us on its Executive. (Carew Reynell did so in the past).

BWA seeks to Influence Bristol City Council and the West of England Combined Authority through discussions and responses to consultations. Recent topics have included a parking and kerbside strategy, the area around Temple Meads, and pedestrian crossings on cycleways. BWA holds occasional meetings for supporters and organises public events. Supporters receive a regular email newsletter with updates on campaigns and events.

You can read more about BWA at <https://bristolwalkingalliance.org.uk/> , where you will also find a link to subscribe to its mailing list.

Walking in the Cairngorms

by Ceiswyn B

The Cairngorms is not exactly a hidden secret. With almost two million visitors every year, it must be one of the best-known areas for hiking in the UK. On the other hand, there is good reason for that.

From a base in the pleasant town of Aviemore, you're within easy reach (less than a half-hour drive) of several of the highest mountains in the UK; some of them accessible to almost any able-bodied person, others holding attractions for the more adventurous walker. The eponymous Cairn Gorm is the sixth highest peak in the UK, but parking at the ski centre will take you a significant way towards the top, with a handy little funicular going much of the rest. The path to the summit is easy to follow and has been levelled - using rocky cobbles that are unpleasant underfoot but rather safer and more convenient than the natural going - meaning that almost anyone can enjoy the views to be found at the top.

From that same ski centre, a longer and less engineered path will wend you gently towards Ben Macdui, the second highest peak in the UK. Not far away is the beginning of the route to Braeriach, the third; this one a hike for rather more experienced walkers, with elements of clambering over boulders. Similarly, in the heart of the mountains is the hidden Loch A'an, which can't easily be seen from outside its valley and which can be reached only by steep descents (not all of which are mapped).



View from the summit of Braeriach

© Ceiswyn B, 2025

But keen walkers aren't the only ones who can enjoy the area; a number of beautiful lochs provide fine level walking through natural conifer forests and their heather undergrowth – but beware the midge!



Your editor overcome by the arduousness of it all

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And if the weather fails you completely, Aviemore may not be able to provide much in the way of entertainment; but you can't fault its devotion to the cause of highland cow-themed souvenirs, outdoor accessories, and really excellent fudge.

Editorial

October already? Then it must be time for our annual toadshroom-themed editorial!

(What exactly is the difference between a mushroom and a toadstool? Let's just say that there's a reason why your editor splits the difference and refers to them all indiscriminately as toadshrooms.)

It's rare, in the UK, to go out foraging fungi. We look upon wild mushrooms with deep suspicion, and leave them to experts, certain that if we tried picking them ourselves we would end up discovering for ourselves the truth of Terry Pratchett's wisdom: *All fungi are edible. Some fungi are only edible once.* However, we are the rarity; all across the northern hemisphere, from France to Japan, families greet the approach of autumn with joy and head out into the woods with basket and knife. And, one must assume, back again without too many of the once-edible kind.

In fact, most poisonous mushrooms will not kill you. They're far more likely to give you a dodgy tummy; unpleasant, but survivable. And the rewards, if you like mushrooms, are significant. A pound of fresh porcini mushrooms could set you back as much as £60 in the shop, but if you go to the right bit of the Quantocks in mid-September you can fill your boots with those 'penny buns' and enjoy some excellent views into the bargain. Or so I am assured by a work colleague who was still alive as of the writing of this editorial.

The trick is, of course, to know which is which.

There are mushroom foraging courses that will teach you what edible mushrooms look like in the wild, which is essential as the one thing you can be certain of is that they will look nothing like the illustrations in the books. But what is really key is to know your lookalikes. For example, young puffball mushrooms are edible, but also look a little bit like baby death caps (apparently you can tell the difference by cutting them in half). My first venture into mushroom-hunting was significantly aided by the knowledge that only two mushrooms looked even a little bit like the one I was after; and one was even tastier while the other was also edible with a bit of cooking. That seemed like the sort of risk I could live with.

Admittedly it also helps if, for example, you've been walking in the same puffball-riddled woodland for five years without ever seeing an adult death cap.

So maybe sometimes it's worth being a little less timid. There is, after all, a lot of satisfaction in making a mushroom risotto with the kind of bright orange, strongly-flavoured mushrooms that you will never see in the shops.

But it's always worth remembering that the oh-so-distinctive spots of the fly agaric wash off in the rain.

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.
