



Gloucestershire Ramblers

News around Gloucestershire Area October 2015

www.gloucestershireramblers.org.uk/GRNews



Upper Forge Bridge – Forest of Dean Ramblers

As mentioned in previous GRNews, 9th June 2015 saw the opening of the bridge, stairs and newly dedicated footpath that replace a delapidated stone bridge over the River Lyd at Upper Forge, the culmination of 3 1/2 years of determination and hard work.

The Mayor of Lydney Councillor Bob Berriman together with Ramblers President Kate Ashbrook cut the ribbon in the presence of Forest of Dean Ramblers, representatives from Dean Forest Railway and Forest of Dean District Council.

AGM & Walk 10:00am Sat 12th December Chedworth Village Hall



ramblers.org.uk/bigpathwatch

The Big PathWatch, an ambitious survey of all the paths in England and Wales, is now well under way. It's a snapshot of what anyone walking might think is the state of our paths. It celebrates what makes walking great, and highlights walk issues. The survey results should be useful to Local Councils, land owners and anyone interested in public rights of way.

Big Path watch can either be run on your computer, or an App can be downloaded to your smartphone (Android or Apple).

Once there you'll be able to select a 1km OS square and report on features along the route good or bad, an excellent view or a dodgy stile.

Hopefully it should help develop greater awareness of the benefits of footpaths & walking and perhaps improve wider understanding of our work.

The Big Pathwatch project is generously funded by Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust as part of Ramblers 80th anniversary.



7:45 pm Thursday 12th November 'Green Road into the Trees' Talk

Hosted by GWG an illustrated talk from popular author Hugh Thomson outlining his book, an exploration along the Icknield Way from Abbotsbury to Seahenge



Exmouth Arms Bath Road Cheltenham GL53 7LX. Admission £3 on the day
Donations welcome to support the event & our work. For info events@gwg.org.uk



Message from the Chair

Ramblers Central Office is continuing to make strides in promoting the organisation across the country. The Big PathWatch has had national TV coverage on CountryFile and is a great way for anyone out walking to feed back the status of paths whether a fine view or a dodgy stile.

They also pursued the Andrews case to the Court of Appeal. John Andrews had been successfully claiming ancient rights of Way in Suffolk designated under the 1801 enclosure act. Often the line of these ways is obvious across the landscape but missing from late 1800 maps and more recent ones. Unfortunately a judgement a few years ago scuppered use of the act. Ramblers had to wait for another suitable case and one arose just south of us in Wiltshire. Again the local ruling went against us, so Ramblers was able to take the case to Appeal and eventually the courts agreed that a path designated under the old enclosure act could be claimed.

4th June 2016 Volunteer Support and Development days

It's early notice but the team from Ramblers Central Office is coming to the Warehouse in Gloucester GL1 1HY. Free courses currently are 2 full day, 5 morning and 4 afternoon:

Full Day

Making change happen: campaigning and working with the media.

Treasurer training.

Morning

Introduction to leading group walks.

Get more people walking with Routes, webpages and walks.

Promoting your group using social media,

Understanding and explaining Ramblers mission and structure to members and the general public.

Basics to rights of way law.

Afternoon

Successful short walks.

Leading more challenging walks.

Recruiting volunteers.

Rights of Way: Specialist Areas.

If you're keen, there are earlier days across the country

<http://ramblersvolunteerdays.eventbrite.co.uk?s=44375468>

Ray Chaney

Obituary It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing away of Catherine Benfield on 13th August 2015. It was in March 2014 that Catherine as GWG chair travelled to Liverpool General Council as one of our representatives. Catherine had already helped those wishing to form a 20-30s sub group in GWG and had great plans ahead. However it wasn't to be. Soon afterwards she became ill and despite a hard fight, eventually succumbed. She was just 52. Far too young for someone with so much to do. Our thoughts are with her family and all her friends. Ray Chaney

'Where does the Membership fee go' is often a question when I'm out walking. Currently it's £34 a year, not too dissimilar to other large national charities. It can be said that roughly a third £11 is for running the organisation group structure and walk insurance much the same as a typical walking club. As a charity we're here to support anyone out walking whether a member or not. The second third is for supporting our footpath teams so that if your local footpath is under threat, if all else fails we can pursue the matter through the courts and if necessary set out case law such as Andrews left. We'd prefer to prevent these issues arising so the other £11 is spent lobbying parliament and other bodies to ensure that laws include support for walking and that Government assists in funding footpaths. You probably know of The Wales Coastal Path and now The England Coastal Path is made possible due to our campaigns..

'What about Legacies?' Sometimes members are generous enough to remember Ramblers in their Will. We used a legacy of Lilian Wise of Churchdown to part fund the accessible path at Winchcombe. Nationally Ramblers uses legacies for specific time limited projects. These include the change to the membership system a few years ago. Signage, plaques and publicity materials can all be funded through legacies.

'What does the Area committee do?' Ramblers is organised into some 50 Areas across the country based on Local Authority Boundaries. Each Area is responsible for meeting the charitable aims. Gloucestershire is a large county. It can easily take 4 hours to travel from say Coleford to Fairford. Just over 40 years ago began a welcome change to Ramblers Gloucestershire Area introducing Groups loosely based on our Borough, District, Town and City council boundaries. Each Group looks after a more manageable district on behalf of the Area. A few years later GWG came into being to cater for walking for younger members. The Area acts as a conduit to central office supporting Groups in their role, passing knowledge gained in one group to another, and holding the tube of glue that helps the Area work as a team. Every Ramblers' member belongs to one Area and up to one Group. Gloucestershire Area still continues to run mid week Area walks for members in any of the Groups or outside. You won't often see the work of the Area publicised as it mainly operates behind the scenes while supporting groups.

Each Year an **Annual General Meeting** is held, so that members can both see how the organisation in Gloucestershire has been doing, and also allow anyone willing to help, become part of the team for the following year. All posts become vacant and subject to simple election. There are many jobs to keep the organisation going. A short list of posts: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Footpaths (location issues), Footpaths (maintenance), Membership, Publicity

Volunteer for Ramblers! We can't exist without the help of volunteers. If you are interested in helping Ramblers either to support Groups across the Area or locally please contact ray.chaney@btinternet.com or tel. 01453 811545.

Cirencester Group Report

The group has been very active during the summer months with some well attended beautiful walks. At the end of June our annual Strawberry Tea saw over 30 members tuck into bowls of strawberries and cream with lots of cakes, tea or coffee. On Sunday 6th September 53 members and guests “set sail” for Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. A First Aid course is planned for 26th September.

The footpath committee and our PMVs (Path Maintenance Volunteers) have been busy working too. We had three working parties on the path in the village of Down Ampney. The brambles and nettles were cut back, small trees removed and extra way marks installed. Eventually after 88 hours of labour on 20th July when we were able to put up 'Path Open' signs.

In May this year, we made a successful application for some grant funding from the Community and Environmental Improvements Fund to replace a single plank (and very rickety) bridge with a fully DDA compliant wooden bridge running from the canal tow path to the shores of Lake 6, at the Gateway Centre, near South Cerney. Thanks to a combination of partnership working, volunteering efforts, and some determination, this new bridge opens up a new accessible circular route in the Cotswold Water Park.



Coralie Dustin, Richard Holmes, Sid Mathews, and Jean Clemence make news in the Wilts Glos Standard

The recently opened Clemence Gate is named after Jean and Peter Clemence who were founder members of our group and acknowledges their commitment and involvement with Cirencester group over the years. Sadly Peter is no longer with us but the replacement of the original stile with a kissing gate means this important walking route from Cirencester to Preston is much easier for everyone to use, and could form some circular walks.

Pat Beckley Secretary

Winchcombe Country Show

Over at the annual Winchcombe Country show we again shared a Gazebo with Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome. It was a damp day but by the afternoon, hardy folk ventured out to see Griff Rees Jones in an anorak and some took time to find out what was available around the town for walkers. A free competition by WWaW to win a box of chocolates (great after a day’s walking) brought people in to see our displays.



Other News

Kate Clark of BBC Radio Gloucestershire recently carried out some interviews for her Sunday morning show featuring the Big Pathwatch, a walk around Gretton and other places around the County.

BBC Countryfile and Children in Need are organising rambles over 11th and 12th October.

South Cotswold members are helping with some walks at the Dursley Walking Festival 2nd -4th October

If you have a news item please contact us grnews@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk

Shorter Area Walks - a series of slow, short walks taking place on Thursdays in November 2015 .

A slow, short stroll for heart, lower limb, etc. Distance 2-3 miles. Slow and Easy. Contact: Molly, 01453 763813
Suitable for pushchairs if they can be lifted over occasional obstructions. Comfortable shoes or trainers can be worn.

<p>Thu 5 November 2.5 miles/4 km - Edge - walk no. 1 Starts at 10:30: Edge No. 63 bus stop on A 4173. (SO848100) Linear walk from Edge to Brookthorpe via Harescombe. Optional pub lunch at Fagins.</p>	<p>Thu 19 November 2.5 miles/4 km - Edge - walk no. 3 Starts at 10:30: Edge No. 63 bus stop on A 4173. (GL6 6PG, SO848100) Circular walk via Scotsquar and Pitchcombe. Optional pub lunch at Edgemoor Inn</p>
<p>Thu 12 November 2.5 miles/4 km - Edge - walk no. 2 Starts at 10:30: Edge no. 63 bus stop on A 4173. (GL6 6PG, SO848100) Linear walk from Edge to Brookthorpe via Huddinknoll. Optional pub lunch at Fagins.</p>	<p>Thu 26 November 2.5 miles/4 km - Edge - walk no. 4 Starts at 10:30: Edge No. 63 bus stop on A 4173. (GL6 6PG, SO848100) Circular walk via Stockend and Randall's Farm. Picnic or Pub.</p>



A page of Mid Week walks for the Gloucestershire Area

2015	2016
<p>Wed 4 November 9.5 miles/15.3 km - Moderate Newnham 10:00: Park Riverside CP, Newnham, WCs. OL14/LR162 (SO693120). Walk to Dean Hall, Blaize Bailey, Lower Soudley, Dean Heritage Centre, Bullo Pill. Moderate riverside and woodland walk with wonderful views of the bends in the river Severn. Picnic. Contact: Henrietta & David, 01452 302024 or 07831 234790</p> <p>Wed 11 November 10 miles/16.1 km - Moderate Windrush Valley Starts at 10:00: National trust CP, Ewepen Buildings (OL45/LR163/ North of A40) (SP159143). Walk Sherbourne Park, Windrush, Barringtons, Worthfield Barn. Picnic lunch. Contact: Trevor, 01242 230511 or 07729 822636</p> <p>Wed 18 Nov 11 miles/18 km – Moderate Herefordshire Ramble Starts at 10:00: Meet at CP just off the road on Marcle Hill approx. 1m north of TV mast. Please use grid ref. Parking is limited so please car share if possible. E189/LR149 (SO630347). Walk Ridge Hill, Rushall, Putley, Durlow Common and back along Marcle Ridge. Lovely views on a clear day. Picnic. Contact: Gill, 01531 670864</p> <p>Wed 25 November 10 miles/16.1 km - Moderate Rodborough Starts at 10:00: CP on Rodborough Common (SO851034). A hilly walk going via The Heavens and Toadsmoor Valley. Picnic. Contact: Catherine, 01452 615382</p> <p>Wed 2 December 11 miles/18km - Moderate Coaley Peak Starts at 10:00: Coaley Peak CP (SO794014). A moderate walk with some lovely views. Bring a picnic.. Walk through Nympsfield and around Uley through Bencombe and Elcombe to have lunch on top of Downham Hill. Return via Uley Bury, Ham Farm and Frocester Hill. Contact: Mick, 01453 542082 or 07443 643462</p> <p>Wed 9 December 8.5 miles/14km – Moderate Lower Dowdeswell 10:00: Park layby A436 (near Pegglesworth). OS 179 (SO989185). Walk Foxcote, Dowdeswell Manor, Andoversford, Sandywell Park, Lower Dowdeswell, Castle Barn Farm, Lineover Wood. Picnic. Short afternoon but almost all uphill! Contact: Roy, 01242 245488 or 07766413176</p> <p>Wed 16 December 6 miles/9.7 km - Moderate Shortstanding - Walk and Christmas Dinner Starts at 10:00: Park in the New Inn car park on Ross road, Shortstanding, Forest of Dean, OL14 (SO572135). Walk Joyford, English Bicknor, Redinghorne, Mailscot Wood. Please book with Roy by 25th November. Deposit required. Menus distributed as soon as available. Contact: Roy, 01242 245488 or 07766413176</p> <p>Wed 30 December 10 miles/16.1 km - Moderate Andoversford Starts at 10:00: Park Station Road, Andoversford. (SP024198) Walk Sandywell Park, Upper Dowdeswell, Shill Hill, Withington, Shipton Sollers. Picnic. Contact: Roy, 01242 245488 or 07766413176</p>	<p>Wed 6 January 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate Moreton in Marsh 10:00: Park considerably in Fosseyway Avenue, first turn right, opposite petrol station in Moreton coming from Stow on the A429. OL45 (SP207317). Walk Bourton on the Hill, Draycott, Aston Magna, Moreton in Marsh. Picnic. Contact: Roy, 01242 245488 or 07766413176</p> <p>Wed 13 January 11 miles/17.7 km - Moderate Chedworth 10:00: Park Chedworth disused airfield (turn off Chedworth/Withington road to Compton Abdale, park ~ ¼ mile along by right hand bend). (SP039132). Walk Postcombe, Hill Bar, Thorndale, Withington, Roman Villa, Yanworth Mill & Chedworth. Picnic. Contact: Barry & Robert, 07407 359600 or 07807 342238</p> <p>Wed 20 January 10 miles/16.1 km - Moderate Malverns Southern End Starts at 10:00: Hollybush CP 200 yards NW of Hollybush Church (A438) (L150/E190) (SO767368). Walk Hollybush, Chase Hill, Ragged Stone, Midsummers Hill, Gullet, Hangman Hill, British Camp and Golden Valley. Lunch/picnic at British Camp. Note two steep climbs early in the walk. Contact: Richard and Pete, 07984853775 or 07759262245</p> <p>Wed 27 January 9.5 miles/15.3 km - Moderate St Arvans 10:00: Meet: Car Park just off A466 Chepstow to Tintern road. (ST528972). To St Arvans into Chepstow Park Wood, Black Cliff Wood to Eagle's Nest Lookout, picking Valley Way returning via 360 steps. Walking through fields, on woodland trails and country lanes permitting some lovely views. Undulating terrain with a few stiles and two streams to ford (lets hope it is not a wet January). Picnic. Contact: Jackie, 01594 564417</p> <p>Wed 3 February 9 miles/14.5 km - Moderate Bisley and Swift's Hill 10:00: Park in Bisley in lay-by opposite Windyridge (E179). (SO903064). Walk Bisley, Swift's Hill, Steanbridge, Down Hill and return via Dillay farm and Sydenhams. Picnic. Contact: Susanne, 01453 757212</p> <p>Wed 10 February 10 miles/16.1 km - Moderate Forest Green Starts at 10:00: Park in Forest Green Football Club CP (E168) (SO837001). Walk to Shortwood, Wallow Green, Horsley, Avening, Longford Mills, Box, Dunkirk Mills. Picnic. Contact: Dave, 01452 721792 or 07593 296983</p> <p>Wed 17 February 10.5 miles/16.9 km - Moderate Winchcombe 10:00: Winchcombe Back Lane (Pay & Display £1) (OL45/LR163) (SP023284). Walk Sudeley, Humblebee, Woodpeckers, Cleeve Hill, Langley. Picnic. Contact: Arnold, 01242 603576 or 07789 317291</p> <p>Wed 24 February 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate St Briavels Starts at 10:00: Roadside parking near St. Briavels Church and Castle (Youth Hostel). Meet at church gate (OL14/LR162) (SO558046). Hilly walk via Slade Bottom, Wyegate Hill, Bigsweir Bridge, The Hudnalls, Offa's Dyke Path, St. Briavels Common. Picnic. Contact: Anne B, 01242 863504 or 07718499523</p>
<p>Gloucestershire Area organises a programme of day walks approx 10-12 miles long usually mid-week anywhere in the county and occasionally in neighbouring counties</p>	<p>Join Ramblers to support our efforts to keep footpaths open. For members all our walks are free. Anyone new is welcome to try a walk or two but check with leader beforehand gloucestershireramblers.org.uk/midweek/ Sorry no dogs except access dogs. All walks M = Moderate, S=Strenuous</p>