

AGM Report

Saturday 13th January 2018 saw members from across Gloucestershire meet at Norton Village Hall for the 2017 Annual General Meeting. Gloucester Group kindly hosted the event, which celebrates our efforts for the period to end September 2017 and follows Group AGMs in November.

The AGM mixed formal and informal business.

GWG's 20-30s organise 2 walks per month. Peter Hillier gave a lively slide show of their activities.



In May Members joined a National 20-30s event in Edinburgh. Young Ramblers are going places!

Dates for Diary

Fri-Sun 18-20 May 2018
Winchcombe Walking Festival
Why not meet us & our stand

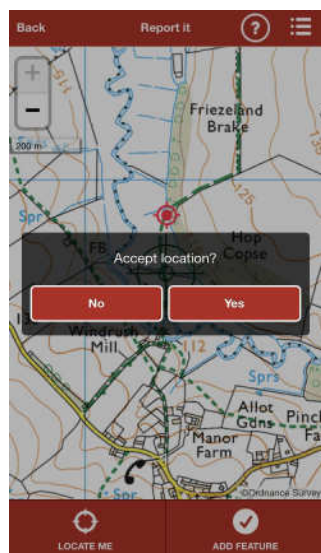
Wed 23 May 7:30pm
GR Area Council Meeting
Gloucester Room Premier Inn
A38 Twigworth GL2 9PG

Sat 26 May - Sun 03 June 2018
Ramblers Walk About Festival

- Walk more, live longer.
- Build more walking into your busy schedule.
- If you're taking your first steps, why not join a short health walk? Or if you're ready to step up, join a Ramblers group walk.
- Above all else-let's get active!

The talk was followed by a discussion of the 2017 Annual Report, membership numbers, publicity, finance and footpath issues.

Next Martin Thornley, Cleeve Group's Footpath Secretary, gave a brief presentation on 'How to report a footpath problem'. Most walkers realise that the Ramblers responds to footpath issues but everyone out walking can now help with reporting. Ramblers' members are able to download 'Pathwatch' (below left) to a mobile phone for free, or contact their local Group Footpath Secretary.

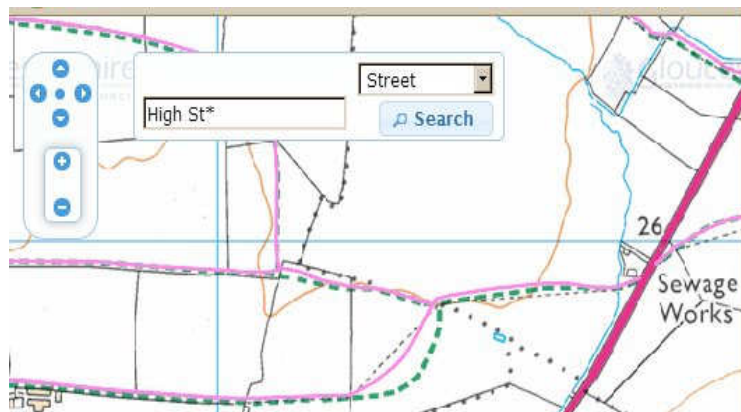


Another way to report issues is through Gloucestershire County Council website at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-rights-of-way/public-rights-of-way/

First select a type of issue to report, select 'location', and zoom into the map. Eventually a representation of the definitive map is displayed overlaying Ordnance Survey paths and a footpath name/number.

A report can be completed whereupon a reference number is issued, to return to later.

Martin took questions from those present before the AGM moved on to rest of business



Election of Officers

The AGM formal business concluded with election of officers for the next 12 months. We still have vacant posts such as Secretary, Publicity etc but hope to find a volunteer or two during the year.

Kate Ashbrook, Vice Chair, Ramblers Board of Trustees gave a short talk before the welcome bring and share lunch.



AGM Walk to Wainlodes

It's become traditional for the guest speaker to join us on a short afternoon walk, and Kate Ashbrook followed suit by joining Derek Hughes, Chair of Gloucester Group, leading us on a circular route to Wainlodes.



We soon found a sign of our forebears. However what was supposed to be a straightforward walk became a game of spotting footpath issues. Heading towards Norton Church no waymark and no obvious path. Soon a sign which won't be too visible with the green shoots of spring. Time to test Pathwatch!

It was a clear day though and the River Severn didn't disappoint with views across to the Forest of Dean. The return journey found us passing Norton Village Green and its duck pond. Altogether a great day.

Stowfield Bridge Update

Stowfield Bridge (or the Black Bridge), is an important connection across the River Wye at Lydbrook. It was used by over 20,000 walkers a year as part of the 136 mile Wye Valley Walk.

The bridge has been closed for some years now. Gloucestershire County Council and Herefordshire District Council have now produced a feasibility report with various schemes up to £1.4M for a full repair. Thanks to lobbying and public support from Wye Valley Tourism, Forest of Dean District Council and the Ramblers a plan has been agreed for the Wye Valley AONB to help the two authorities to prepare a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

2017-2018 Festival of Winter Walks

The beginning of the New Year invariably heralds an increase in people attending our walks. It's pleasing that some new walkers joined in having seen the promotion of the Festival.



The Footpath Maintenance Volunteers completed another section of the Wysis Way from Bisley on a very damp, misty day. Despite the gloomy weather an enjoyable time restoring parts of the Way





Over 50 Ramblers Areas get together form the Ramblers Association. Gloucestershire Ramblers Area includes eight Ramblers Groups and around a dozen affiliated Organisations and Clubs. Groups respond to footpath issues within their territory. A territory is reasonably aligned to Borough/District Council Boundaries:-

- **North Cotswold** - the northern half of Cotswold District, generally north of the A40.
- **Cirencester** – generally the southern half of Cotswold District except around Tetbury
- **South Cotswold** - mainly Stroud District, including Tetbury of Cotswold District
- **Gloucester** – Gloucester City plus nearby parts of Stroud District and southern Tewkesbury Borough
- **Cleeve** – Cheltenham Town plus northern Tewkesbury Borough
- **Forest of Dean** - all Forest of Dean District

Gloucestershire Walking Group GWG organises walks across the County for members of working age and has a 20-30s sub-group. **Gloucestershire Area** itself operates a get together mid week walks programme (see page 4) for any member. Most members join a Group but all are automatically a member of the Gloucestershire Ramblers Area.

Some Group News:-

Cirencester Group www.cirencesterramblers.org.uk



The Autumn period has again been very busy for the group with a variety of evening, mid week and weekend walks, all well attended. The mid week walks, a new venture for this group, have been very successful and usually finish at the pub!

Then 9th October saw 27 members and guests return to the Toorak hotel in Torquay to partake in walks, cider tasting and cream teas.

On 20th October 19 members and friends visited the Hook Norton Brewery After a 5 mile walk they had lunch in the cafe and then were shown around the 19thC brewery, which makes craft beers in the Grade II listed building, where they still use some of the equipment dating back to the 19th century.

The 43rd AGM was well attended on 19th November preceded by a walk and a bring and share lunch.

A new venue for our Christmas lunch on 26th November at the Corinium Court Hotel was excellent, with the earlier November date proving very popular. On 3rd December the trip to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard proved very popular as it was hosting a Christmas Market at the same time.

We received the following letter after a glorious sunny walk with Christopher Sommerville who then visited Waterstones book shop in Cirencester to promote paperback version of his book, The January Man.

"It's always a great pleasure to meet readers, and in particular the people who actually get out there, walk our footpaths, and work in different ways to keep them open. Congratulations and thanks, all of you, for your hard work and sometime tedious committee-ing - we wouldn't have a footpath network without you."

Pat Beckley

Cleeve Group www.cleeveramblers.org.uk

Cleeve Group continue to function as an active walking group with a full programme of walks, which have seen attendance improving through participation mainly from visiting Ramblers Members and a few potential members "having a look". In the current programme we have completed 13 walks at an average of 7.5 miles with average attendance approaching 19 and numbers ranging from 10 to 29. We have lost 3 walks, 2 due to weather and 1 to flooding.

Our frequent General Committee Meetings (move from Bishops Cleeve Council Offices to Prestbury Library) have continued with the benefit of easy parking and a considerable saving in costs. All participants agree that it has been a good and sensible change of venue.



The Group AGM was well received and the change of format to during daylight hours at the weekend. A new volunteer John came forward to join our Footpaths Committee, who will hopefully be a welcome and knowledgeable addition in our efforts to protect, improve and maybe enlarge our share of the network.

Brian Payne



A page of Mid Week walks for the Gloucestershire Ramblers Area

Gloucestershire Ramblers Area organises a programme of day walks of approx 10-12 miles long, usually mid-week, in the county & neighbouring counties. Why not give us a try (please contact leader beforehand).
Once a member, all our walks are free! (Sorry Access dogs only but see walks at www.fodramblers.org.uk)

Wed 7 March 10:00 11 miles/17.7 km Mod **The Malverns**
Meet 10am at Hollybush Car Park on the A438. E190, SO759369
Moderate but hilly 11mile walk walking over the Herefordshire Beacon. Wonderful views on a clear day
Catherine 01452 559924 or 07456 425880 on day

Wed 14 March 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Moderate **Bredon Hill**
Meet at Overbury Church, E190. Limited parking in the village. Please do not park at church as there is a service. (GL20 7NY, SO957374)
The walk goes up to the Tower at the top, down to Elmley Castle then up and over to (almost) Grafton, Conderton and back to Overbury.
Barry & Robert, 07407 359600 or 07807 342238 Picnic

Wed 21 March 10:00 11 miles/17.7 km Mod **Cotswold B's into Worcs**
Meet Beckford Village Hall free CP. E190. (GL20 7AA, SO974358)
Walk Conderton - Overbury village and then Park - up to Sundial Farm. Back down to Westmancote - Bredon for pub lunch/drink or picnic. PM - return via Kemerton Court.
Guy, 01242 251412 or 07968 797186 on day.

Wed 28 March 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Mod **Clearwell & Newland**
Park at Clearwell Caves Car Park. OL14/LR162. (GL16 8JR, SO578083)
A mixed walk with industrial archaeology, fine churches in hilly woodlands with field paths and green lanes. Picnic.
David & Henrietta, 01452 302024 or 07831 234790 on day.

Wed 4 April 10:00 11m/17.7km Mod **Wye Valley walk -Cathedral**
Bigswier woods car park on left after Mork. OL14. (GL15 6QG, SO543055) A lovely walk through oak woodland and along the tops of the Wye Valley to visit the Cathedral of the Forest, Picnic lunch.
Lynn, 01291 689954 or 07957 662209 on day

Wed 11 April 10:00 10m/16.1km Mod **Bronze Age Cairns Shepherd**
Meet Park Drive Llangatock, OL13. (NP8 1PA, SO212178)
Scenic ascent to the Craig y Cilau Twr Pen-Cyrrn bronze age cairns and the Lonely Shepherd, then returning through woodland. Picnic.
Pete & Jenny, 01600 715719 or 07455 257262 on day

Wed 18 April 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Moderate **Stretton on Fosse**
Park at Stretton on Fosse Village Hall. OL45. (GL56 9SE, SP223382)
Stretton on Fosse circular via Ebrington. Picnic or possible pub stop.
Martin 07790 437908

Wed 25 April 10:00 12 miles/19.3 km Strenuous **Redbrook**
Redbrook car park (charge) OL14 (NP25 4LR, SO536098)
Clearwell onto St Briavels via bridleways and country lanes before dropping down into the Wye Valley. Offa's Dyke, Redbrook.
Jackie, 01594 564417 or 07767 351190 on day Picnic lunch coffee.

Wed 2 May 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Moderate **Minchinhampton**
Meet CP by reservoir on Minchinhampton Common. E168. (GL5 2PP, SO855013) A route around Minchinhampton and Nailsworth.
Andy & Wendy, 01453 885498 Picnic.

Wed 9 May 10:00 10miles/16.1km Mod **Garway Hill & Herefordshire Trail**
Park by the side of Garway Common, off minor road to south of pub. E189/LR149. (HR2 8RF, SO466225)
An undulating walk with a climb up to and around Garway Hill returning past Kentchurch and taking in parts of the Herefordshire trail.
Susanne, 01453 757212 or 07587 713668 on day. Picnic.

Wed 16 May 10:00 10miles/16.1km Mod **A Springtime Forest Wander**
Meet Fedw Wood forestry commission CP, off minor road between St Arvans and Devauden. OL14. (NP16 6HJ, ST505984) Walk through Ravensnest wood, along Anghidi stream, fields & wood to Cobbler's Plain. Return via Great House, past Kilgwrrwg & through Chepstow Park Wood.
Susanne, 01453 757212 or 07587 713668 on day. Picnic.

----- New walks welcome for July-October programme -----

Wed 23 May 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Mod **Monnow Valley and Cats Back**
Meet Black Hill Picnic Site. OL13. (HR2 ONL, SO288328) A walk through some of the farms and drover's roads of the Monnow Valley then picking up Offa's Dyke path and returning along Black Hill and the Cats Back. A varied walk with panoramic views over Herefordshire if visibility is good.
Pete & Jenny, 01600 715719 or 07455 257262 on day Picnic.

Wed 30 May 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Mod **Bulls Cross & Cranham**
Meet Bulls Cross, large lay-by on B4070 1m north of Slad. E179. GL6 7QS SO877086
Walk Bulls Cross, Saltridge Hill and Cranham. Usual ups and downs, stiles etc but hopefully not much mud at this time of year.
Hilary 01453 753398 Picnic lunch.

Wed 6 June 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Mod **Kingscote**
Park at the back of Hunters Hall pub car park. E168 GL8 8YA ST814960
A walk to Binley Farm, Nupend, Wallow Green, Nailsworth, Horsley, Hazlecote Farm, Lasborough and Hay Bottom. Picnic lunch with drinks/food available at pub afterwards.
Dave 01452 721792 or 07593 296983 on day

Wed 13 June 10:00 11 miles/17.7 km Moderate **"The Golden Valley"**
Meet at Cowcombe Hill layby opposite Aston Down airfield. E168. (GL6 8HR, SO910019) Walk Hyde, Rack Hill at Chalford, Ashmead Wood, Strawberry Banks, Ile's Green, Siccaridge Wood, Daneway, Sapperton and Frampton Woods, returning via Astley Farm. Bring a picnic.
Bruno, 01451 822465

Wed 20 June 10:00 10.5 miles/16.9 km Mod **Axbridge and Crook Peak**
Meet at Winscombe Hill car park. Limited spaces so please share cars. E141. (BS25 1NW, ST422561)
A moderate Mendips walk with two climbs. Includes Cheddar Reservoir and a walk through a tunnelled section of the Strawberry Line. Picnic.
Mick, 01453 542082 or 07443 643462 on day

Wed 27 June 10:00 10 miles/16.1 km Moderate **Painswick**
Stamages Lane Car Park (£2.30 all day pay & display). E179. (GL6 6UU, SO865095) Starting in Painswick we will head over the ridge towards Slad, returning via the Painswick Stream. Picnic lunch.
Sue L, 01452 741229 or 07808 116725 on day

Moderate - a good level of fitness. May include some steep paths and open country, and may be at a brisk pace.

Strenuous - above average fitness level. May include hills and rough country, and may be at a brisk pace.

Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing are essential.
If in doubt about fitness please contact the walk leader beforehand.