



Walking Together Winchcombe Sat 14th Sept 2019

Members, non members, Groups, Affiliated Clubs and Walking for Health got together for some bright late summer walks. Above North Cotswold Ramblers & visitors pause before heading up Langley Hill, part of a figure of 8 walk including lunch at the Corner Cupboard. An enjoyable day ending with a sociable round of tea and cake and wrapped up by Brian Payne of the hosts Cleeve Group.

Diary Dates

Gloucestershire Area AGM
Sat 7th Dec 2019 10:00 am
Blockley Jubilee Hall GL56 9BY
Hosts: North Cotswold Group
Bring and Share Lunch. Short afternoon walk.

Gloucestershire Ramblers
Area Council Meeting
Wed 29th January 2020 7:30pm
Gloucester Room, Premier Inn,
A38 Twigworth. GL2 9PG

First Aid Days 11 Oct Staverton,
22nd Oct Bourton on the Water
Ramblers Roadshow 26 October



Find us on Facebook and Meetup

A417, Air Balloon, Cotswold Way, please respond:- 'Environmental Impact' Consultation

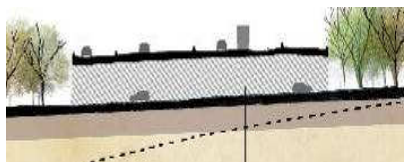
Imagine standing on the Cotswold Way outside the Air Balloon Inn with all the through traffic taken away onto a new road (preferably a tunnel). This was the goal of our forebears, holding placard protests, some twenty years ago.

The road scheme is now gathering pace. Highways England have set out their plans for the minimum they feel would meet the aims of the project. They're running a consultation at which they're naturally expert & produced some nice water colour plans. Overlaying these onto an OS map highlights the losses in accessibility & impact on the landscape. Ramblers Central Office is assisting too.

Most footpaths, bridleways etc crossing the route are slated to be extinguished or diverted. The plans still don't show Other Routes of Public Access, indicated by round green dots on OS maps, used by many popular walking & riding routes ->

There is also no mention of the loss of the Air Balloon Inn, one of the landmarks on the Cotswold Way. Nor that the proposed deep cutting impacts on Neolithic Emma's Grove - the Gloucestershire Way is diverted away from the site.

The new A417 takes most traffic off the Air Balloon roundabout. Highways England intends to create a new Shab Hill junction instead of the roundabout to link the A436 to the new road but no bridges for the two paths north & south.



The new junction is built up at the highest point in the landscape. The dotted line left shows the current lie of the land, with the new road flying over the junction, higher again – ideal for maximising spread of traffic noise for miles around. If the junction needs to be there, why isn't the top busy dual carriageway in a cutting underneath? The tree planting hopes to minimise noise in the future.



Highways England proposed Green Bridge for the Cotswolds vs. Green flanked bridges being constructed elsewhere:-



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Using Ramblers Pathwatch as a Navigation Tool

Pathwatch isn't just a means for reporting footpath issues. The 'Locate Me' function can be used as a useful navigation tool.

If you're not quite sure where you are in the Countryside, open Pathwatch on your smart phone. Select the 'Report it' page, then press 'Locate Me' as shown bottom left in the image on the right.

The small red symbol on the map indicates where the phone thinks you are.

It may need a minute or two to calculate your position from the satellites travelling around the earth, so press 'Locate Me' a few times to make sure.

Note that if you're using Pathwatch for the first time, the phone may not allow Pathwatch to use your location. The little arrow next to the battery percentage, top right of the screen, can give a clue. Check Privacy Settings in the phone, look for Pathwatch & allow it to use 'location services'.

If you need to report a feature (say a dodgy stile or blocked path) you can slide the map around so the green cross-hair shape is centred on the feature. Press 'Add Feature' to begin to submit a report. Note that the report uses the green symbol rather than the red one so make sure it's in the right place!



Lost Ways & Don't Lose your Way

Perhaps two different projects but the 1st January 2026 cut off date to register definitive map updates can apply to both.

Lost Ways is about use of historic maps to claim routes currently missing from maps and so not widely in use - eg a railway bridge with no path below.

Don't Lose Your Way includes paths in use today that may not be marked on the map or their indicated status may need updating. For example the green spots on the map above indicate Other Route of Public Access ORPA where the status has not been fully defined. Sometimes Ordnance Survey uses black dashes for an undefined path.

Ramblers Central Office should have a new mapping system in the New Year. Meanwhile use Pathwatch to report a lost path (press 'Other'), contact footpaths@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk or search Ramblers website for DLYW.

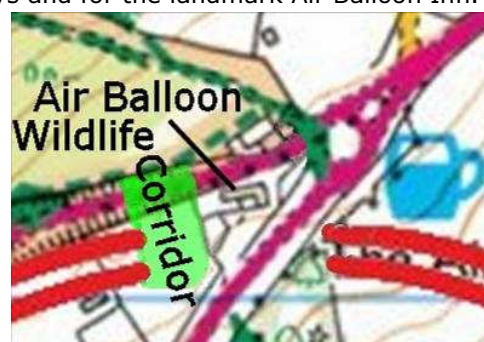
A417, Air Balloon, Cotswold Way, Environmental Impact Consultation – continued

Highways England current 'Option 30' proposals may be great for the new dual carriageway, but could do a lot more for Rights of Way, the landscape & the countryside. Many organisations are continuing to press for a 1km tunnel. Option 30 could be said to have a 1km tunnel but with the top removed – it's a 100ft deep cutting. The roof could be kept in place for paths & tracks including the Cotswold & Gloucestershire Ways and for the landmark Air Balloon Inn.

The proposed 50 metre wildlife bridge across both the new & current roads seems more concrete than green. Its use for riding, cycling etc may not be complementary. A better option could be a green wildlife corridor alongside the 100 metre Air Balloon site and separate from current crossings, all on the roof of the cutting – altogether a 150 metre bridge or short tunnel-->>

It is worthwhile responding to the consultation. Previous suggestions have updated the plans; the road is now low in the landscape towards Cowley.

Suggestions to close local roads to 'reconnect the landscape' may not be good for local villages, tourism or the economy. Reconnect the landscape over the new road should be more use to walkers, wildlife & the landscape.



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| 1. From Brockworth to Shab Hill, current A417 traffic levels mean crossing paths can be difficult to use. The new road must have bridges for bridleways & footpaths. | 5. Traffic on the current road could reduce by some 90%. As a B road it can retain local access & tourism. Funding should reconnect the landscape across the new road. |
| 2. The proposed 50 metre wildlife bridge is not very green & could be relocated next to the Air Balloon site so both can remain on top of a short (150m) tunnel. | 6. While construction of the new road is in progress, footpaths, bridleways, tracks etc should remain open particularly during evenings and at weekends. |
| 3. From Shab Hill to Cowley Junction the route should remain low in the landscape & include a restricted byway and an ORPA crossing missing from plans. | 7. A new A417 should take through-traffic off local roads, leaving the landscape & environment as it is today. This should minimise the impact of the new road & keep the Air Balloon, Gloucestershire & Cotswold Ways in place. |
| 4. Alternative 2 as a link road has 1-2 mile longer journey distances for connecting the A436 than keeping the Air Balloon roundabout. Consider taking the east bound slip off the new road near the Cold Slad turn. | 8. If the scheme is truly landscape led and implemented to minimise impact and to benefit the Cotswolds AONB this could become a future exemplar road project. |

Gloucestershire Ramblers Area includes eight Ramblers Groups and a number of Affiliated Organisations. Over 60 Ramblers' Areas join together to form the Ramblers Association.

Cirencester Ramblers Group

It has been a full on Summer for the Cirencester group with walks in Oxfordshire, Wiltshire as well this county. We also had one evening and one midweek walk with dogs permitted, the evening one being especially well attended. Another dog friendly walk is planned for December.

Members gathered on 30th June for the Strawberry Tea. This was hosted by Morag at her home in Cricklade, when 44 members and guests enjoyed the wonderful choice of cakes, generously donated by members, plus of course strawberries & cream, washed down with tea or coffee.



Highlights to come include "A Taste of the West Country", 4 night mid-week Torquay break in October, visit to the Longleat "Festival of Light" and our next Away Weekend is planned for Ilfracombe in April 2020.

Path Maintenance Volunteers have made two visits to a very overgrown footpath in the village of Winson. The first session in June cleared a very dense hedge that had been allowed to take root and grow in the footpath. Second session in September through woodland was easier.

Pat Beckley - Cirencester Ramblers



Cleeve Ramblers Group

A walk in July near Winchcombe found this walkway that the Cotswold Wardens had added non-slip surfacing. It's part of a new tramper route for people with some disability.

The Group Committee continues to meet every 2 months. A full programme of weekly Sunday walks continues and membership remains relatively stable. More walk leaders have come forward and walk numbers appear higher than last year.

Gloucestershire Walking Group

In celebration of the life of Jonathan Moore who passed away on a walk a year ago.

An enjoyable 11 mile linear July walk from Cricklade to Lechlade along the Thames Path National Trail including a recently negotiated section avoiding the busy A361.



First Aid Training Days

St John Ambulance is holding some First Aid training tailored for Ramblers walks.



Friday 11 October at Staverton between Cheltenham and Gloucester.
Tuesday 22 October, Bourton on the Water. Book your place at Ramblers.

Ramblers Roadshow Gloucestershire. Saturday 26 October, Cotswold Water Park, Cirencester

The De Vere venue will have various workshop sessions - essentially two categories, technical and volunteering. The technical ones help members deliver our mission on the ground say walk leading, or footpath issues.

Volunteering sessions focus on ensuring that the Ramblers can continue to function, committee team work, recruiting members or helping volunteers.

Volunteer with us

We're a close knit team. Why not join us to share with the roles, edit this newsletter, create a database, help with member's queries or help with footpath issues? There is no pay but the rewards are great!

A page of Mid Week walks for the Gloucestershire Ramblers Area

Gloucestershire Ramblers Area organises a series of day walks, approx 10-12 miles long, usually mid-week, in or perhaps outside the county. If you're not yet a member, why not give us a try (please contact leader beforehand). Once a member, all our walks are free! (Sorry Registered Assistance dogs only but see www.fodramblers.org.uk)

Wed 6 Nov 09:30 10mi/16km Moderate **A Wood & Beyond**
FC car park in Haugh Wood, off minor road between Woolhope and Mordiford. E189. (HR1 4QX, SO592366)
A wander around Haugh Wood and nearby hills, including part of the Wye Valley Walk and passing Mordiford and Checkley. Picnic. Please note earlier start time.
Susanne, 01453 757212 or 07587 713668 on day.

Wed 13 Nov 10:00 10mi/16km Mod **Bromsberrow Church**
(park on verge near church). E190. (HR8 1RU, SO743336)
Southern Malverns Ramble Walk Bromsberrow, Chase End Hill. Circle Ragged Stone Hill from White Leaved Oak. Howler's Heath (access land), Wayend Street, Hillend. Easy walking. Picnic.
Roy & Anne, 01242 245488 or 07766 413176 on day

Wed 20 Nov 10:00 10m M **Getting High on Brockhampton**
Park in Station Road, Andoversford Village Centre by old cattle market site. OL45. (GL54 4AZ, SP024198)
Walk Whittington, Puckham Woods, West Down, Charlton Pool, Brockhampton for pub lunch or drink/picnic. Return via Elsdon Covert and Syreford.
Moderate with a couple of climbs.
Guy, 01242 251412 or 07968 797186 on day.

Wed 27 Nov 10:00 10mi/16km Strenuous **Malvern Hills**
Car Park opposite Malvern Hills Hotel. Parking charge £4.40 cash only. E190 (WR13 6DW, SO763403)
A linear walk along the top of the Malvern Hills via the Wyche Cutting to the Worcestershire Beacon and North Hill. We will take a similar route back to the start but using some alternative paths
Michael, 07986 6162575

Wed 4 Dec 10:00 11mi/18km Mod **North Cotswolds walk 1**
Fish Hill picnic site, off A44 Broadway to Moreton-in-Marsh road. Limited parking, please share cars if possible. OL45. (WR12 7LD, SP118371)
Cotswold, Monarch and Heart of England Way. Chipping and Broad Campden, Blockley and Central Wood. Some gradients but nothing strenuous. Picnic.
Barry, 07407 359600

Wed 11 Dec 10:00 10m/16km Mod **North Cotswolds walk 2**
Fish Hill CP off the A44 Broadway to Moreton-in-Marsh Rd. Limited parking, please car share if possible. OL45. (WR12 7LD, SP118371)
Walk to Broadway, Saintbury, Weston-sub-Edge and Dover's Hill. Picnic.
Robert, 07807 342238

Wed 18 Dec 10:00 A mystery short walk before **Christmas Lunch**. More details available later - please check web-site.
Contact: Catherine, 01452 559924 or 07456 425880 on day

Wed 25 Dec 10:00 Currently no walk planned, but a Christmas Day walk proved popular last year.

This walks list is also available at
gloucestershireramblers.org.uk/midweek

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. Could include hills and rough country, and may be at a brisk pace.

Wed 1 Jan 10:00 10m/16km M **Stroud New Year's Day Walk**
Meet at the corner of Folly lane and Loveday's Mead, Stroud. Should be plenty of parking on a Bank Holiday. E179. (GL5 1SD, SO851055)
An approx. 10m walk in the hills and valleys to the north of Stroud to welcome in the New Year. Picnic.
Hilary, 01453 753398 or 07503754620 on day

Wed 08 Jan 10:00 10m/16km Moderate **Why oh Wye**
Fownhope recreation ground CP. Has toilets and plenty of parking. (HR1 4PE, SO577342) E189.
A winter walk in Herefordshire. Picnic.
David O'B, 07976 941676

Wed 15 Jan 10:00 10m M **Winchcombe 3 Roels, few Abbots**
Winchcombe Back Lane CP (£1). OL45. (GL54 5PZ, SP023284)
A walk out to the site of Winchcombe Abbey's Leper Colony for coffee. Onwards through bronze and iron age history and medieval villages. Lunch with distant views of Sudeley Castle. Picnic.
Bernard, 01242 602024

Wed 22 Jan 10:00 11m/17km M **Climb to Nibley Monument**
Farmers Table Upper Car Park. L162/E167. (GL12 8HF, ST704930)
Walk Tortworth, Huntingford, Bradley Green, Nibley, Avening Green. Bring a picnic. Cafe open at the end of the walk.
760 feet ascent.
Richard, 07512758229

Wed 29 Jan 10:00 10mi/16km Moderate **Uley**
Park on road in Uley near to the church. E167/168. (GL11 5SN, ST792986)
A walk in the countryside around Uley. Moderate with several climbs. Picnic.
Mick, 01453 542082 or 07443 643462 on day

Wed 05 Feb 10:00 10mi/16km Mod **Bredon Hill**
Park at Beckford Village Hall. E190 (GL20 7AA, SO974358)
Walk up to the Banbury Stone tower & downhill to Kemerton. Picnic or optional lunch at the Crown. Return to Beckford via Oldbury and Conderton.
Jo, 07990 595246

Wed 12 Feb 10:00 10mi/16km Moderate **By the Severn**
Meet at Cotswold Canal Visitor Centre, Saul Junction. Access from the NW side of Sandfield Bridge. Park at the Pay & Display CP (£5.00) or nearby. L162/OL14 (GL2 7LA, SO755092)
Start at Saul junction, along the course of the disused canal to Upper Framilode, then following the Severn Way with views of Westbury-on-Severn, Newnham, Bullo Pill and Awre on the other side of the river. After Hock Cliff the walk takes us inland along the Sharpness canal back to the CP. No hills. Picnic.
Lawrence, 07486 415265

Wed 19 Feb 10:00 10mi/16km Moderate **Coaley Peak**
Coaley Peak CP. E168 (GL10 3TP, SO795015)
A walk in the hills and valleys from Coaley Peak. Picnic.
Sue L, 01452 741229 or 07808 116725 on day

Wed 26 Feb 10:00 11.5mi/18.5km Mod **Stow on the Wold**
Start from the Market Square, Stow. Free parking in the car park by Tesco. (GL54 1AF, SP191258)
Walk Mangersbury, Bledington, Lower Oddington, Upper Oddington and back to Stow. Bring a picnic lunch. Possible pub stop.
Martin, 07790437908

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