

It's AGM season again. During November Groups hold Annual Meetings which summarise progress over the year. It's an opportunity to see how things work, maybe join in with the teams and make new friends. A warm welcome awaits. Some AGMs have a morning walk too.

www.gloucestershireramblers.org.uk/grevents

Winchcombe Country Show Mon 29 August Bank Holiday



A number of visitors dropped into the tent we shared with Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers after the break due to Covid. The Cotswold Wardens were next door and Happenstance Morris helped add to a glorious day.

Cheltenham Rambling Club 80th Anniversary Sat 20 August 2022



Cheltenham Rambling Club gathered at Witcombe & Bentham Village Hall to celebrate the Club's 80th anniversary. Three sunny walks of various lengths returned to a buffet tea (with over 100 members) including the CRC 80th cake!

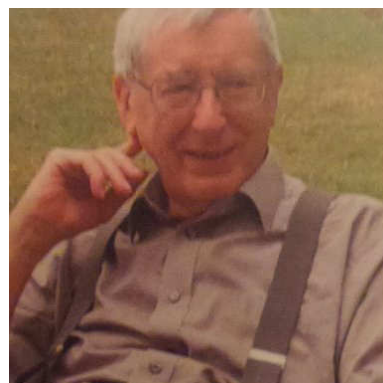
The Club was founded in wartime 1942 when local people were encouraged to have "holidays at home". Harold Chipp placed an ad in the Echo inviting walkers to meet at the railway station and bring packed lunch and tea for a train walk. CRC continues as a welcome Affiliate of the Gloucestershire Ramblers Area.

Derek Cooknell Founding Member Mid-Glos

Derek Cooknell was the first Chairman of the newly-formed Mid-Glos Group in 1986; a position he held until 1989. He was also the first Group Footpath Secretary from its formation in 1987 until 1996 after the family moved to Winchcombe. There Derek joined Cleeve footpath committee and was the Group Footpath Secretary from 2005 to 2008. After a break of a few years he became a member of the committee again.

A claim for a path near Winchcombe is, after 13 years, just beginning to make progress with site notices erected. Once Derek got his teeth into something, he was someone to see it through!

Derek's passing away was a shock to many - he'll be fondly remembered.



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Group AGMs

Sun 6 Nov 1.30pm
 GWG, The Bell Inn,
 Shurdington, GL51 4XQ

Thu 17 Nov 3:00pm
 Gloucester, The Pavilion,
 Upton-St-Leonards.

Sat 19 Nov 1:00pm
 North Cotswold, Little
 Village Hall, Blockley

Sat 19 Nov 1:30pm
 Forest of Dean, Yorkley
 Community Centre

Sun 20 Nov 12:45pm
 Cirencester, Ampney
 Crucis, GL7 5RY

Sun 20 Nov 12:45pm
 Cleeve, Southam Village
 Hall, GL52 3NS

Sat 26 Nov 12:30pm
 South Cotswold,
 Rodborough Tabernacle

Area 2022 AGM

Sat 14 Jan 2023 10:30am
 Chedworth Village Hall
 Hosts: Cirencester Group

Diary Dates

Sat 22 April 2023 Birdlip
 Walking Together Event

Gloucestershire Ramblers
 Area Council Meetings

Wed 30 Nov 2022 7:30pm
 Wed 25 Jan 2023 7:30pm

Find us Meetup Facebook



Group and Area Activities

One of 60 Ramblers Areas, Gloucestershire has 7 Ramblers Groups : Cirencester, Forest of Dean, South Cotswold, Gloucester, Cleeve, North Cotswold, Gloucestershire Walking Group with its 20s-30s sub-group.

Gloucester Ramblers

Our Group walks continue to be well supported but we would still like to see some more walk leaders.

Recent activities included our June walking holiday in Porlock where 15 members enjoyed a variety of beautiful and challenging walks. Several of these were led by Ros from West Somerset Ramblers Group. The picture right was taken at the "Lorna Doone" church.

Other activities included a walk and picnic at Upton St Leonards and a coach trip to Waterperry Gardens.



Our Group AGM will be held on 17th November at 3.00pm in Upton St Leonards Pavilion. We will be seeking several new committee members including a Footpaths Secretary. Our Annual Lunch will be held on Friday 20th January at St Andrews Church Centre, Churchdown starting at 1.00pm.

For almost 35 years Geoff Wilkes has been in the role of Footpath Secretary or Footpath Representative and this AGM will not be standing for re-election. That's a great innings with many paths defended. We mustn't forget Geoff's 'it's no use having Secateurs in your rucksack - they need to be in your hand!'

John Bent-Marshall (Secretary) www.gloucester-ramblers.org.uk

South Cotswold Ramblers

We continue to have a pretty extensive walks programme, walking mid week, Saturdays, every other Monday and for the first time in several years we have had some Thursday evening walks which usually have the bonus of a pub visit after. Numbers on our walks are also increasing and I would say are back to pre covid levels and although we have had some new walk leaders come forward we could still do with a few more but I suspect we're not alone with this problem.

We have also just had one of the hottest summers on record, in the past we have cancelled walks because of bad weather but we did cancel a few walks because of the heat.

Unfortunately we still don't have a footpath officer and the Area Footpath Secretary and Chair are still dealing with our footpath problems. We did however buy four kissing gates with money that we raised, two of which were installed in Nailsworth Parish and the other two are waiting to be installed in Rodborough Parish.

We continue to hold our committee meetings on zoom as we feel this is a better option for us but will be having a face to face AGM this year.

Ann Adams, www.southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Forest of Dean Ramblers

In early September a group of 11 FoD Rambler members enjoyed a three ramble tour based at Aberystwyth organised and led by our Treasurer and walks Coordinator, Ronnie Walker. The first day's walk took the group along the coast to Borth and inland to Talybont where day two's walk started taking in Nant-yr-Arian and a silver mine. The last day was an equally great walk from Cwm Rheidol reservoir to Aberystwyth encountering the Devil's Bridge to Aberystwyth Railway. All successfully done in near perfect weather. Ronnie has organised and led walking holidays for us for many, many years and it was wonderful to have this opportunity again after COVID lockdowns. Members not able to join the holiday still had a growing and varied summer programme of walks to take part in with many taking full advantage of the glorious weather; it certainly kept our boots mud free!

Jackie Huck, www.fodramblers.org.uk

PS. GCC has announced that they're applying to put the popular footpath onto the map that crosses the River Wye using the Stowfield Black Bridge at Lydbrook. The Herefordshire path half is already mapped.

Walking Together - Saturday 22 April 2023 Birdlip



Groups from across the Area have decided to meet up for another Walking Together in April.

The event at Birdlip Village Hall, kindly hosted by GWG, features a variety of led walks in the countryside surrounding Birdlip. Ideas so far include :- Witcombe Villa, Barrow Wake, Brimpsfield, Coldwell Bottom, Cranham Woods and Painswick Beacon. Walks long and short return mid afternoon for refreshments including tea and cake - time to catch up with other members. If you're able to help with organising or plan a walk please let us know. The hall has plenty of parking along the old Ermin Way, Roman Road.

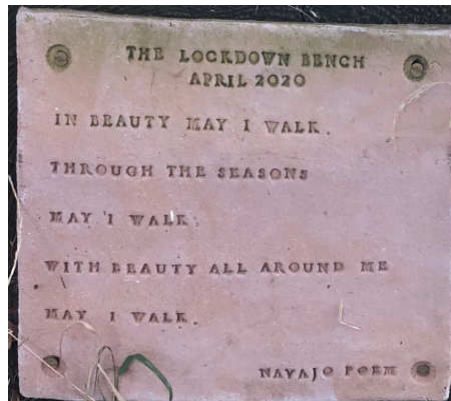
Benchmarks



These curious marks can often be seen on old buildings or gateposts. They were carved from the 1850s when Ordnance Survey was creating maps and needed to measure height from one place to another. The 6 inch and 25 inch maps of the time show the location and height in feet at the horizontal line. In some places a flush bracket has been added to the Benchmark and the number can be checked online.

The Bishop's Norton Lockdown Bench

With the peak of Coronavirus pandemic now hopefully behind us, here is a seat put in place for those times of isolation, overlooking a tranquil village pond.



The Lockdown Bench
April 2020

In Beauty May I Walk
Through the Seasons
May I Walk
With Beauty all around me
May I Walk

Navajo Poem

Responding to Planning Applications - Solar Farms

With the climate emergency and increasing demand for locally produced energy, there have recently been more applications for planned solar developments in the county. Some power lines crossing the countryside are under capacity and a solar farm located nearby can add supply to the system. Although Ramblers is generally supportive of increasing renewable energy capacity, sites need to be appropriately located, visual impact minimised and walking routes retained with suitable width and access.

Solar farms are often visible from some of the long distance and national trails such as the Severn Way and Cotswold Way, especially where footpaths are elevated along hilltops and the escarpment. Panels have a lower visual impact when they are a low reflectance type without reflective frames.



Above - Solar site near the village of Alderton receives comments that the arrays look like lakes.

Where Public Rights of Way are affected, any responses to the local planning authority can address keeping footpaths on their present alignment, especially as solar farms are typically short term 25-40 years. Fields can revert to their former use when the expected life is complete.

Paths should be kept wide enough for walkers to pass without quarrelling - at least 2 metres wide with an additional clearance of at least 0.5 metre either side (to any boundaries). Some developers offer much more than this in order to keep the infrastructure well clear of the path.



At Willersey (above right) wildflowers were planted. Sheep can keep vegetation short under the panels. Any fencing should be no more than 2 metres high, green in colour and allow migration of wildlife.

Pylons removed, Cables Underground

National Grid plans to take a 4 mile section of pylons underground between Postlip and Dowdeswell near Cleeve Hill to clean up the landscape of the AONB. The 3 landmark aerials will remain. Where the cables go underground there will be a transfer station at each end (as seen right).

During the process a wide trench will be cut through the grassland and woodland a short distance from the pylons. The pylons will be demolished once power is transferred.



A similar scheme has been underway within the Dorset AONB - National Grid website has more details.