

November is the Season to visit Group AGMs



South Cotswold above, Forest of Dean below

Members help keep the Ramblers going, whether monitoring local paths, joining walks, leading walks, responding to path modifications, and running or taking part in meetings.

An Annual General Meeting is where we meet up to see what's been going on and review plans for next year. It's an opportunity to speak, maybe help or even vote. Feel welcome to come along and join in with fellow Ramblers.



Winchcombe Country Show - 25 August Bank Holiday



The parched grass shows it was one of a sequence of hottest days of the year. It was blustery too. Table top displays turned upside down or inside out. Tent gratefully shared with Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers.

Group AGM Dates November:

Sun 2 Cleeve, Southam
 Sat 8 South Cotswold, Frampton Mansell
 Sun 16 GWG, Shurdington
 Mon 17 Gloucester, Upton St Leonards
 Sat 22 North Cotswold, Blockley
 Sat 22 Forest of Dean, Yorkley
 Sun 23 Cirencester, Ampney Crucis

Area Council Meetings Zoom

Wed 26 Nov 7:30pm
 Wed 28 Jan 2026

Looking ahead

Sat 17 Jan Area AGM Gloucester
 Sat 9 May Walking Together, Chedworth

Find us: Meetup, Facebook





Some Group Activities

One of 59 Ramblers Areas, Gloucestershire has 8 Ramblers Groups: Cirencester, Forest of Dean, South Cotswold, Gloucester, Cleeve, North Cotswold, Gloucestershire Walking Group with its 20s-30s sub-group.

It is a feature of individual membership of Ramblers that the individual member agrees to respect the countryside, especially its beauty and wildlife, and to promote access to it on foot.

Forest of Dean Ramblers

We recently completed in one day the three Soudley Circles, a series of 3 mile walks created with Tony Drake between Mallards Pike and Soudley Ponds. These walks along Forest Footpaths include spectacular views across the river Severn to the Arlingham peninsular. The walk leaflets are available from the FoDR website. www.fodramblers.org.uk

Gloucester Ramblers

Our midweek and weekend walks for July to September were well attended and another full programme for October to December has been issued. Gloucester Group now has 17 walk leaders who have run through the latest Ramblers guidance and 4 others are in progress.



In July we held a walk and BBQ at Robinswood Hill which was well attended and enjoyed by all. Our AGM will be held on Monday 17th November at 2.30 for 3.00 in the Pavilion at Upton St Leonards. This year we will be seeking at least 3 new committee members - the more the merrier!

John Bent-Marshall (Secretary)

North Cotswold Ramblers

This summer our walks programme was full and attracted some new members. The evening walks proved especially popular, including this midsummer sunset on Cleeve Hill, a medieval manor house at Minster Lovell and an adventurous time discovering wildlife at Kemerton Nature reserve.



A Whatsapp group has been established where interested members can share information about walks, navigation instructions, photos and even recipes for what to enjoy on a walk.

Highlights have included a long weekend break to Church Stretton organised and led by our Chair Simon with great support from Charles with his camper van (and its teas).

Recently members got together to take part in Ramblers on-line walk leader guidance.



RAMBLERS

Some Group Activities continued

Cleeve Ramblers

We have an enthusiastic group of walk leaders and although there has been some decline in numbers coming along to our walks, members from other groups often join in.

At our recent committee meeting we agreed to change the way walks are organised:-

Second and fourth Sunday of each month

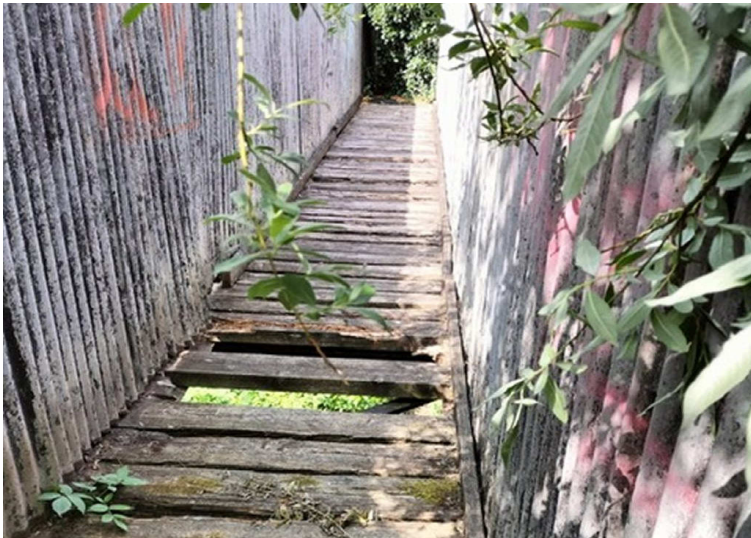
One Wednesday walk every other month (at least)

The footpath committee continues to actively review planning applications and address path challenges in the region covering Cheltenham and Tewkesbury.

For example recently a developer applied for a temporary diversion during construction work but accidentally built upon the line of a path. There are now some interesting conversations.



ZCK51 Pilley Footbridge Charlton Kings



The footbridge over the old trackbed (now a nature reserve) has been temporarily closed for some 10 years following discovery of rotten planks which have since worsened. Ordinarily there would be little issue with replacing the path surface however there was the minor question of whether the bridge itself needed maintenance. A proposal to fully refurbish the bridge including allowance for a few rusty beams has been priced at around £350,000.

If anyone knows of a suitable bridge restorer able to assess relevant works, it could be helpful.

Ramblers Governance Review

During the past 12 months, Ramblers Area and Group representatives have been engaging in a national consultation on whether the charity is structured and governed in the most effective way, and whether some change might be helpful. An Extraordinary Meeting is proposed for December.

Currently Ramblers is based on proposals generated from its grass-roots. Changes discussed are:-

- a) adopt a company structure where Trustees and Staff run and decide policy for the organisation.
- b) reduce the size of the Board from 15 to 12 Trustees, in line with Charities Commission Guidance
- c) Are Areas necessary or could they be replaced with regional hubs aligned to local authorities
- d) Members vote directly for Trustees and Resolutions, rather than Area geographical representation.
- e) Area and Group AGMs could become gatherings with a less formal approach to appointing Officers.
- f) Discussion forums could be created regionally rather than debate Motions at the national AGM.

Initially Areas and Groups will remain, but the Board and staff could determine future structure.

If you have views on the proposals please let us know or contact your Group Committee Team.



A417 Missing Link and the Gloucestershire Way

The green bridge is taking shape near Crickley Hill. There are two arches; one is over the new A417 dual carriageway which is 5 lanes wide including a crawler lane. The other arch is for the 3 lane A436 link road to connect with Andoversford and Oxford.

The bridge surface, once landscaped, is hoped to resemble a green field. Migrating wildlife, sheep and walkers should be largely unaware of traffic passing below. The Wildlife Trust raised the bridge concept which was eventually included due to Ramblers efforts to retain the Gloucestershire Way.

The Gloucestershire Way devised by Gerry Stewart 30 years ago, runs from Chepstow to Tewkesbury via Gloucester, Crickley Hill and Stow on the Wold. An updated guidebook is being prepared. Test walkers of the new guide are wanted. Each of the eight stages is broken down into shorter "sections" 2-5 miles long. If you'd be ready to provide feedback on drafts of the new guide, and of the accuracy of the GPX route, please get in touch with Dan@cheltenhamoutlier.uk



A435 Cycle Spine Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve

Although primarily for cycling, walkers should also have some gain especially if the parallel footway is segregated to avoid conflict. Requests have been made to minimise impact on the countryside green belt and retain dark night skies, which have been balanced by the installation of street lights.



It can be seen that the scheme includes a narrow central reservation between carriageway and cycleway. Suggestions to reinstate the old hedge there may yet take hold to benefit wildlife and the countryside, minimise noise, and protect cyclists from falling into traffic. For now the gap has been grassed and demonstrates some green credentials, alongside the green gravel based surface.

Perhaps the biggest issue for the cycleway has been the width of the road bridge over the GWSR railway. The scheme needs walkers and cyclists to share space along the east side of the carriageway. To make space a section of the west side pavement, used by walkers from Cheltenham heading for Webbs, GE and onwards, is removed at the bridge. During the significant bridge refurbishment, workers created a parapet walkway. If reinstated in future, it could restore a pavement link.



Towards Cheltenham, CHP22 (part of the Cheltenham Circular Path from Swindon Village to the Race Course Station) is temporarily closed along the top of the roadside embankment but should reopen soon.