

I'd Like to Give Something Back

is a message we're hearing from people who've appreciated the ability to walk in the countryside, while Covid-19 lockdown restrictions have been in place.

In November Groups across the Area hold Annual meetings which summarise our progress over the year. It's an opportunity to see how things work, maybe join in with the team and make new walking friends. A warm welcome awaits!

Cotswold Way Celebration Saturday 11th – Sunday 19th September



Wednesday 15 September, half way from Bath to Chipping Campden. Ramblers led the relay that day, joined by Robert Welch (who had produced the relay Baton and a celebratory embossed chopping board). At Haresfield Beacon they met South Cotswold Group on a circular walk from Stroud. Cotswold Wardens led most of the relay while many Ramblers Groups organised walks along the trail. Everyone was welcomed on the 19th at the Marker Stone by Chipping Campden's Mayor and Ramblers' Kate Ashbrook. Speeches and a '50' cake followed at the school supported by the John Lewis Partnership.



Winchcombe Country Show Monday 30th August - Bank Holiday

We again shared a gazebo with Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers. Our stand was one side, the photo shows it surrounded by people interested in walking. Next door was a gazebo by the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly the AONB) demonstrating the work of the Wardens around the town. The weather held for the day - respite from months of lockdown.



Group AGMs

Tue 2nd Nov 7.30pm
Forest of Dean, Yorkley
Community Centre.

Sat 6th Nov 10am Cleeve
Zoom Video meeting

Sat 13th Nov 6:30pm
South Cotswold,
Zoom video meeting

Wed 17th Nov 4pm
Gloucester, The Pavilion,
Birchhall Lane, Upton-St-
Leonards GL4 8AD.

Sun 21st Nov 1pm
Cirencester Ampney
Crucis, Walk 10:00

Sun 21st Nov 1:30pm
GWG, Golden Heart,
Nettleton Bottom, Birdlip

Sat 4th Dec 1pm North
Cotswold, Little Village
Hall, Blockley

Area 2021 AGM

Sat 15th January 2022
Chedworth Village Hall
Hosts: Cirencester Group

Diary Dates

Gloucestershire Ramblers
Area Council Meetings

Wed 24th Nov 7:30pm
(post year end)

Wed 26th January 2022

Wed 23/30th March 2022

Find us in Meetup
and in Facebook



Public Inquiries

Gloucestershire Ramblers are involved in two public inquiries that have meetings during November.

1. Leckhampton CHL9

A new secondary school is rapidly under construction and is associated with recent housing nearby. One of the aims of the school is for parking to be kept to a minimum and to encourage walking and cycling. A footpath CHL9 is a useful link across fields between Farm Lane and Kidnappers Lane and forms part of a circular route with another path from Leckhampton church.

The proposal is to extinguish CHL9, where it crosses the new school grounds. However the plans show the line of the path with sports pitches either side, allowing access from Farm Lane. The other end is shown blocked where it reaches a designated green space.

Local people and the Parish Council have objected and asked for the path to remain open. It is not uncommon for a path to cross school grounds and organisations such as the Open Spaces Society have won cases where closure was proposed.

In this instance the path is not only a popular route to countryside but it could give good access to the sports pitches whilst avoiding the road.

The line of CHL9 is indicated by dots on the image right. The path surface has already been excavated. The planning inspector will take representations and assess the benefits of retention either way.



2. A417 Missing Link at the Air Balloon

Highways England is now called National Highways although there are still devolved organisations in Wales and Scotland. An application was made for a Development Consent Order 'DCO' in September for the proposed A417 Missing Link.

There are a number of criteria for a new road scheme within an AONB and the planning inspector will assess how well these have been met. Other AONBs such as the North Downs and South Downs resorted to tunnelling to protect the countryside including footpaths. (Image google maps A27 South Downs)



Here a short tunnel (or bridge) could be used under the Air Balloon car park to help retain the landscape or a longer one to save some SSSI too. The scheme should overall demonstrate a biodiversity net gain. The current plans try to use mitigation i.e. claim that extensive measures have been included nearby to compensate for losses due to the new road.

The DCO planning process allows for significant changes to be put forward before a decision is made.

Barrow Wake Viewpoint Car Park

Although not directly part of the Missing Link scheme, converting the car park to grassland is being considered as a way to mitigate the impact of the proposed road. To give an idea of parking numbers there are currently 30 spaces at the Air Balloon + 30 in overflow, 70 spaces at Barrow Wake and some 80 spaces in the access road leading to Barrow Wake from Birdlip. Of these 210 spaces the proposed A417 scheme removes the 140 at the Air Balloon and in the access road. The further loss of 70 spaces at Barrow Wake could exacerbate parking on road side verges or within nearby villages such as Birdlip.

Don't Lose your Way!

The process continues. If you're interested in helping find lost ways or researching old maps to find evidence that they're lost, please contact us at DLYW@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk or via GRNews.

Some Group and Area News

There are seven Ramblers Groups within Gloucestershire Ramblers Area : Cirencester, Forest of Dean, South Cotswold, Gloucester, Cleeve, North Cotswold, Gloucestershire Walking Group. GWG has a 20-30s sub-group. A number of Affiliated Organisations are also represented at our Area Council meetings. Some 60 Ramblers Areas join together to form the Ramblers Association.

Forest of Dean Ramblers

Our AGM date is Tuesday 2nd November at 7.30pm to be held at Yorkley Community Centre. This year we're looking for a new Chair and Footpaths Officer and are grateful to Peter and John for their work over the last few years. The walkway on the Black Bridge over the Wye at Lydbrook has proved popular while a more permanent solution is sought.

On 3rd September we put on what we called a re-launch event. We had two walks, one 8 miles and one 3 miles starting at different times and programmed to finish together for tea and cakes at Yorkley Community Centre.

The walks were open to all comers, ie no limit on the numbers, and members were also welcome to just come along for the tea and cake if they didn't feel up to walking just yet. We had over 40 attend. During the tea we had a demonstration of the booking system and held a Q&A session for those not sure how it all now works. John was there to talk about his footpath work and I talked about what is involved in leading a walk. All this aimed to get more active engagement in the Group again.

Jackie Huck, www.fodramblers.org.uk



South Cotswold Ramblers

As restrictions have gradually lifted both nationally and for Ramblers we have been working to get the group back to normal. Throughout the last 18 months our membership numbers have not fluctuated much and we currently have 368 members. Initially we started with a rolling walks programme, the numbers of people walking were low, generally below 10 but this is gradually picking up on our latest two month programme. We intend to continue with a two month programme until the end of February which will then get us back to our normal time frame. Our biggest problem is finding enough walk leaders and if this doesn't improve there could be gaps in the programme in the future.

A number of members took part in the Cotswold Way celebrations which seems to have been a great success (see page1).

Ann Adams, www.southcotswoldramblers.org.uk

Cirencester Ramblers

Our AGM is on Sunday 21st November at 1:30pm at the Village Hall in Ampney Crucis after a morning walk and bring and share lunch.

We are looking for a new secretary as Pat is stepping down after many years. Membership is up largely due to a full walks programme with some new walk leaders. In October we are celebrating Coralie Dustin's 90th Birthday with a very short easy walk with her and lunch afterwards. Footpath Maintenance Volunteers are getting back into action and 30 members are off to Torquay for our annual mid-week break, "A Taste of the West Country". Christmas Lunch is 28th November.

Mike Bailey, www.cirencesterramblers.org.uk



North Cotswold Ramblers

We're beginning to bring a walk programme together again and also introducing amble rambles for those who love to walk and talk but can't manage our full or half day walks.

The first one is on Thursday Oct 28th 1pm a flat walk at a leisurely pace along quiet lanes and field paths to Broadwell church.

For the Cotswold Way 50+ we chose a morning walk - the Chipping Campden Circle ending at the marker stone outside the Market Hall.

Sue Salmon

www.ramblers.org.uk/north-cotswold



Gloucester Group

We're about to put together a full 4 month programme for the first time since the Virus struck. Our mid week walks are very popular and our weekend walks gaining ground.

As part of the Cotswold Way 50+ Celebrations we had an afternoon walk, which passed by the Tony Drake Memorial at Painswick (pictured), followed by tea at the Golf Club.

We continue to respond to footpath issues as they arise.

John Bent-Marshall

www.gloucester-ramblers.org.uk



Gloucestershire Walking Group

on the Cotswold Way, 12th September, at the 2007 National Trail Plaque at Stanway
www.gwg.org.uk



Cleeve Group

also on the Cotswold Way during the celebrations at the 25th Anniversary seat on Cleeve Hill.
www.ramblers.org.uk/cleeve

Area mid-week walks are currently in abeyance but check on-line as some walks begin to take shape. We're grateful to Susanne Zamze who has been co-ordinator for many years but has now decided to step down. The role could be split into a walks gatherer and a walks uploader, if anyone is able to help. Together we can do great things.