



White Cliffs Ramblers – News, September 2021

CORONAVIRUS

Although many of the restrictions to manage and control the pandemic have been lifted, Covid is still with us. Whilst most of us will have been fully vaccinated, this does not offer a 100% guarantee against succumbing to the disease. Whilst walking with others in the open air is likely to be a low-risk activity, we all still need to exercise a degree of caution. This means maintaining a safe distance whilst on walks, using hand sanitiser especially after touching footpath gates / stiles.

We know that some of you are still not comfortable walking in large groups, whilst others are happy to do so. For this reason, we have continued to allow walk leaders to determine the size of group they are prepared to lead. Therefore, in the current walks programme you will find a mix of walks where you need to book in advance and others that you can simply turn up on the day.

If a walk has indicated that you need to book, please respect this, and do not simply turn up. It also follows that if you have booked a place but subsequently need to cancel, please let the walk leader know in advance.

WALK LEADER CONVERSATIONS

When I first moved down to Thanet from London just over three years ago, I became quite fascinated with the wealth of walking opportunities there were - in the countryside, along the coast and in and around historic towns, cities, and villages. I would spend inordinate amounts of time researching routes, testing them out and thus widening my knowledge and appreciation of what the beautiful county of Kent has to offer geographically, culturally, and historically.

I did get to the stage, however, where I sometimes spent more time on lengthier, more complicated walks poring over maps (either physical or on my phone) than enjoying them! I then suggested to my partner that we join the Ramblers, as they have organised walks which we can just go on and relax.

Of course, once we started going on Ramblers walks, although I did thoroughly enjoy them and the company they provided, I still had the urge to create and lead my own walks too, that others could benefit from. I spoke to several experienced and established walk leaders and realised that the Ramblers were in fact looking to take on new walk leaders.

I registered with Assemble, the Ramblers' volunteer portal, and before I knew it, was taking part in my first Walk Leader Conversation. It was led by Sara Murray and the main speaker was Andrew Gold from the Yorkshire Dales. He went through general planning procedures

and identified top features of what makes a good walk, key skills needed to be a leader, what to do when things go wrong and how we should use Assemble and its wealth of resources. He was incredibly enthusiastic about wanting others to enjoy his walks and promote the Ramblers to new members.

General discussion flagged up 'issues' around diversions, coastal walking, stiles, livestock etc, which more experienced walk leaders were able to comment on with some authority.

We were encouraged to take things we liked about walks we had been on and include those attributes in our own walks.

I led my first walk the other day and thoroughly enjoyed it. There were 16 of us on a gloriously hot and sunny Sunday. I was a little nervous to start. There was quite a bit of planning involved beforehand (with much appreciated help and support, I might add, from the WCR team), but was it worth it? – yes. Everyone thanked me and said how much they had enjoyed it. I have already planned a second walk for later this season and hope to continue to do several more into the future.

Deborah Quow



As Deborah mentions, we are continually looking to encourage new walk leaders. Ramblers head office are hosting another 'Walk Leader Conversation' also referred to in her article. This is an online, free, event taking place on 29th September from 18:00 to 19:00. To register

please go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ramblers-walk-leader-conversations-for-new-and-aspiring-walk-leaders-tickets-158585179541?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Please note that we have now started work on compiling the November / December 2021 programme. If you feel that you are able to offer a walk please contact Tony or Anne on at.bristow@gmail.com or anne.hickey1@gmail.com

WHITE CLIFFS WALKING FESTIVAL

All the indications are that another successful Walking Festival was held over the August bank holiday period. In light of the challenging circumstances that we have all faced this past 18 months, the scope and size of the Festival was scaled back this year. This meant that thirty-one of the thirty-three walks were restricted to a maximum of 20 possible attendances. The exceptions to this were the White Cliffs Challenge (organised by Kent LDWA) and the Carers' Walk. Except for these two walks over 73% of places available were booked. In total, 582 people took part in the Festival.



Perhaps, not surprisingly, the majority of people attending the Festival were from East Kent. It is also worth noting that the Festival clearly captures the imagination of non-Ramblers – 45% of bookings were from non-members. The Festival gives us an opportunity to showcase what we, as Ramblers, have to offer. It is therefore encouraging to note that there have been at least 10 new

membership applications from the time around the Festival.

At the end of the day, perhaps the success of the Festival should be judged by whether those taking part have enjoyed it or not. These are just a couple of comments that we have received:

Just wanted to say thank you and everyone involved for a great walking festival. Everything was well organised.

It's an absolute credit to you all to get this festival up and running again this year.

VEGETATION CLEARANCE AND FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE

Due to the Covid restrictions that were put in place in Spring 2020, we had to suspend all our vegetation clearance and footpath maintenance activity. In the intervening months several key members of the team that had undertaken this work decided it was time to hang up their tools. A big vote of thanks goes to all of those who were previously involved, especially to Averil and Steve Brice and John Polden.



We have been fortunate enough to recruit at least six new, and enthusiastic volunteers. With John Shale acting as the co-ordinator for the team, they have begun work on clearing several paths in our patch. This has resulted in significant improvements being made to a stretch of the White Cliffs Country Trail, and section of two paths that needed attention ahead of the White Cliffs Walking Festival. However, until they have received the requisite training in the use of power tools, they will

operate with hand tools for the time being.

When all activity was suspended in 2020 there was still one gate to be installed, on footpath HE69 between Barham and Elham. Earlier this week, members of the 'new team' met up with some from the former team to install the new gate.

If you are interested in helping out with this work, please contact John Shale at j_shale@live.com (please note there is an underscore between j and shale i.e. j_shale@). John is also happy to receive any concerns you may have about the state of a footpath. However before the team can undertake any work you must report this via KCC Public Rights of Way (PRoW) - [Public Rights of Way \(kent.gov.uk\)](https://www.kent.gov.uk/public-rights-of-way). If you have not used this tool before you will need to register your details to report a fault.

Whilst we are talking of footpath matters, just a quick reminder that Roger King provides a regular update on possible changes to the local footpath network. This can be found on the Group's website at: [White Cliffs Ramblers: Footpaths](#)

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th November 2021 at 13:30. White Cliffs Ramblers Annual General Meeting. We are planning to hold an in-person meeting, so to allow for social distancing we have booked the main hall at St. Margaret's Village Hall (rather than the smaller Channel Room we have used in previous years). Look out for fuller details nearer the time.

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2021 WALKS PROGRAMME

As there were a couple of last-minute additions to the walks programme, the full list of walks is re-produced below.

WHITE CLIFFS RAMBLERS

Walks Programme – September / October 2021

ALL WALKS START AT 10:00 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

Please plan to arrive at the meeting point at least 20 minutes before the start of the walk.

Date	Walk	Map ref. Postcode	Grade	Miles (Kms)	Contact
Thursday 02/09/2021	Chilham Meet in the lower car park. The route goes via Stump Shave, Downe and Church Woods. Maximum of 15 people. To book a place please EMAIL danandchrisdobson@gmail.com	TR067536 CT4 8BZ	Mod. 3	6 (9.7)	Daniel 01304 832396
Sunday 05/09/2021	Pegwell Bay /Cliffsend Meet at the Viking Café, Sandwich Rd., where there is free parking and toilets. (If inclement weather, café and toilets will be closed, and parking is available in a largish parking bay on main road or in smaller roads behind). We will walk a quasi-figure of 8, through the country park nature trail to Stonelees and back via the coastal path to Cliffsend, through the village and onto Chalk Hill, then down towards the sea and back along the clifftop, down to the old hoverport, then back up to the Viking Ship. There are glorious views en route across to Sandwich one way and Ramsgate the other. Maximum of 20 people (including the leader and back marker). To book a place on this walk, please contact Deborah Quow via TEXT on 07963 402294 or EMAIL deborahquow@gmail.com	TR351643 CT12 5HY	Mod. 2	5 (8)	Deborah 07963 402294
Thursday 09/09/2021	Rhodes Minnis / Sixmile Meet at the West Wood Forest car park. This is a fairly challenging, hilly walk with a total of about 1000 feet of ascent. Route is via Lymbridge Green, Hastingleigh, Waltham and Stelling Minnis. Bring food and plenty to drink. Lunch stop about halfway. Max 20 People including walk leader. To book please contact Andrew on 07754797848 or andrewswarbrick13@googlemail.com	TR143440 CT4 6XY	Mod. 4	12.3 (19.7)	Andrew 07754 797848 or 01233 720513

Sunday 12/09/2021	Lydden Meet near the village pond / Lydden Bell pub. Park on the main road or in the village hall car park (BUT NOT the pub car park). The walk goes through the nature reserve to Kearsney Abbey and back through farmland with livestock. Some steep hills.	TR261454 CT15 7EX	Mod. 4	7.25 (11.8)	Val E-N 01227 720324 or 07923 080623
Thursday 16/09/2021	Aldington Figure of Eight walk (6 + 5 Miles). Meet on the playing field opposite The Walnut Tree. Please park considerately on the road. NOT in the pub or village hall car parks. Some moderate slopes. Morning is out to Aldington Church then descending to Military Canal and along to St Rumwolds Church. Lovely views across Romney Marsh. Afternoon is across the East Stour valley to Mersham Church. Optional lunch stop at Walnut Tree pub which has a lovely outdoor patio seating area, or bring your own - lots of benches by the playing field. 20 places Book for morning or afternoon, or both. Afternoon re-start at 13:30. Please book a place by text or email - and let me know if you would like to make a reservation for you for lunch at the pub. andrewswarbrick13@googlemail.com	TR063366 TN25 7DY	Mod. 3	11 (17.5)	Andrew 07754 797848 or 01233 720513
Sunday 19/09/2021	Preston Meet in the school / community hall car park. The route will follow part of the Stour Valley Walk and will go through many apple and pear orchards. This will go via Westmarsh to Paramour Street, Upper Goldstone, Hoaden and Elmstone before returning to Preston. Bring own packed lunch / refreshments.	TR251609 CT3 1HA	Mod. 2	7.5 (12.1)	Paul 01843 601597
Thursday 23/09/2021	Appledore The walk will start from the temporary village car park, by the side of the recreation ground (the car park is well signposted in the village). The walk will head to Fairfield Church, where a lunch stop will be taken - bring own refreshments. The return to Appledore will be via the Royal Military Canal. Max 20 People including walk leader. To book please contact Andrew on 07754797848 or andrewswarbrick13@googlemail.com	TQ956299 TN26 2AE	Mod. 1	7.5 (12.1)	Andrew 07754 797848 or 01233 720513

Sunday 26/09/2021	Kearsney / Dover Meet in the car park opposite Russell Gardens. This walk will go via Lydden and temple Ewell Nature Reserve - there are some steep climbs.	TR285437 CT16 3EB	Mod. 4	7 (11.3)	Lee 07932 812514
Thursday 30/09/2021	Folkestone Meet at the Pavilion Green, Wear Bay Road. Pavilion Car Park costs £8.00 for the day - some on road parking (free) in Wear Bay Road may be available. This walk will head towards Samphire Hoe where there will be a 30-minute lunch break. Refreshments available from the kiosk or bring your own. The return is via the tunnel and will follow the North Downs way along the cliff tops back to Folkestone. There will be a further 30-minute break at the Battle of Britain Memorial. Please note there is a descent of approx. 3 metres down a ladder from the sea defences on to the beach. I will send photos electronically of the ladder and surrounding area for you to assess before final booking. If the weather is inclement after Samphire Hoe the walk will continue into Dover and return by bus to Folkestone, please bring your bus pass, if you have one, otherwise, the fare is about £4.30. Max 20 People including walk leader. To book please TEXT Tony on 07711068227 and leave a contact number or EMAIL tony.mcamara@icloud.com	TR239364 CT19 6BL	Mod. 4	12 (19.3)	Tony Mc 07711 068227
Sunday 03/10/2021	Goodnestone Meet near the entrance to the pub (The Fitzwalter Arms). Maximum of 20 people. To book a place please CALL Jane on 01304 611771 between 5:00pm and 7.00pm	TR256546 CT3 1PQ	Mod. 2	5 (8)	Jane G 01304 611771
Thursday 07/10/2021	Bekesbourne Meet at Bekesbourne railway station. The walk will head towards Fordwich woods, Littlebourne and the Nailbourne Valley. Maximum of 15 people. To book a place please EMAIL danandchrisdobson@gmail.com	TR190560 CT4 5DT	Mod. 2	7.3 (11.7)	Daniel 01304 832396

Sunday 10/10/2021	Hamstreet Start from the village car park, by the recreation ground. Figure of 8 walk (5 + 5 miles). The morning route will be via Hamstreet National Nature Reserve and Ruckinge, returning via the Royal Military Canal Path (RMCP). Lunch stop in Hamstreet - bring own food or shop, cafe, and pub in village - please make your own arrangements. Afternoon - departs at 13:30 via RMCP to Kenardington Church, returning via the Saxon Shore Way. Book for all day or either just the morning or afternoon. Max 20 People including walk leader. To book please contact Andrew on 07754797848 or andrewswarbrick13@googlemail.com	TR002332 TN26 2JF	Mod. 2	10 (16.1)	Andrew 07754 797848 or 01233 720513
Thursday 14/10/2021	Richborough Park in Richborough Road near the junction with Wantsome Lees. The walk heads towards Westmarsh and East Stourmouth before reaching Plucks Gutter. The return from Plucks Gutter follows the Saxon Shore Way alongside the River Stour all the way back to Richborough. Be prepared for wet conditions underfoot if there has been recent rain.	TR323588 CT13 9JF	Mod. 2	13 (20.9)	John R P 07414 863194
Sunday 17/10/2021	Canterbury Meet in Giles Road car park (free on Sundays). A walk around Canterbury, mostly following the Canterbury Rings' middle route. This is not a Canterbury Festival walk. Lots of interesting views looking down on the city. Potentially some muddy paths. Lunch - pubs or cafes or picnic around St. George's Street.	TR140600 CT2 7NB	Mod. 3	11.2 (18)	Chris B 07855 898234
Thursday 21/10/2021	Breach Downs Meet in the lay by on Elham Valley Road / Derringstone Downs. (NB take care when using a sat nav and the postcode, as this will take you to the wrong location in St Bartham Road). Lunch stop in Elham - pubs and café.	TR204485 CT4 6LJ	Mod. 4	10 (16.1)	John R P 07414 863194
Sunday 24/10/2021	Selling / Faversham Meet near Sondes Tea House, Station Rd. Selling.	TR051571 ME13 9HW	Mod. 2	6 (9.7)	Margaret M-W 01795 843927 or 07964 067915

Thursday 28/10/2021	Ramsgate Meet in Winterstoke Gardens, Victoria Parade, Ramsgate just before the King George VI Park. There is plenty of free parking on the road and also a café and public toilets just inside the park. We will walk down the East Cliff Chine to the undercliff then continue to walk on the beach (low tide) all the way round to Botany Bay via the beautiful arch at Kingsgate. (Parts of the beach between Broadstairs and Botany Bay are quite rocky and can be slippery at times). We will return partly by road and farmland to North Foreland Lighthouse, then along the clifftops back to Ramsgate. Maximum of 20 people (including the leader and back marker). To book a place on this walk, please contact Deborah Quow via text on 07963 402294 or email deborahquow@gmail.com	TR392656 CT11 8AJ	Mod. 2 / 3	9 (14.5)	Deborah 07963 402294
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Walk grades:

- We use the following grading system to categorise our walks:

Pace		Terrain	
EASY	LESS THAN 2.5 MPH	1	FLAT
MOD.	2.5 – 3.0 MPH	2	FLAT WITH SMALL INCLINES
FAST	3.0 – 3.5 MPH	3	FLAT WITH SOME SMALL HILLS
V. FAST	OVER 3.5 MPH	4	UNDULATING WITH SOME STEEPER HILLS
RADO: Registered Assistance Dogs Only		5	MIXED SMALL AND STEEP HILLS

Dogs

You may bring your dog on most of our walks, the only exception being where a walk indicates **RADO (Registered Assistance Dogs Only)**.

If you do bring your dog on a walk, please ensure that it is kept under effective and proper control, and does not spoil the enjoyment of other walkers. For detailed guidance please see: www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/safety/dog-walkers.aspx