



Jim Parke receives Ramblers Commendation. (Photos W Klauke)



A Bus Walk from Wootton (Photo J Gordon)

Summer 2018 Walks Programme Highlights

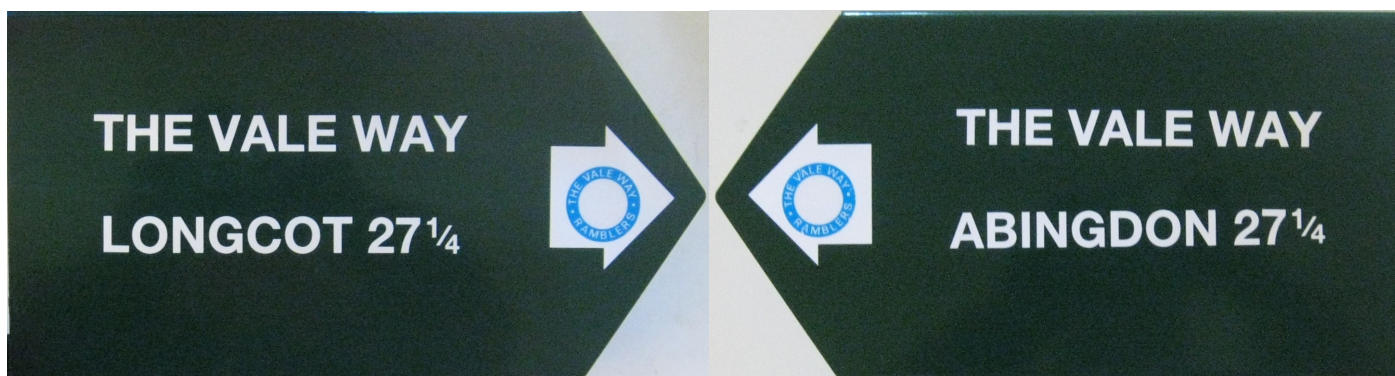
Once again our wonderful volunteer walk leaders have created our largest programme yet. We welcome some new leaders and leaders returning after illness. Including the joint programmes of walks with neighbouring West Oxfordshire group there are at least two walks a week, often three for you to enjoy. Whether it is an easy grade short Stroll up to a more challenging thirteen mile hike or a guided history walk there should be something to suit all tastes. There is a walk every Thursday, most weekends and most Tuesdays including all our regular walks. Our awayday this year starts at Bourton-on-the-Water and on through the glorious Cotswolds. It is nearer to us and less strenuous than last year's so we hope many of you will join us.

Following the popularity of our walking of the Ridgeway National Trail last summer we plan to walk more trails. We will be walking our own Vale Way in the spring when we will unveil our new signs at each end of the route. From July to September we will be walking The Oxfordshire Way in six sections. In late September we will walk the first of five sections of The Oxford Greenbelt Way, continuing in the autumn. There will also be an evening walk in Oxford, two weekend walks to London to see many of the city's fascinating and historical sights and a joint walk with the local CAMRA group. Additionally there are two longer leisurely paced walks and also a few walks from Grove on Tuesdays.

Disabled Ramblers

The Disabled Ramblers <http://disabledramblers.co.uk/> are an independent charity which exists to help mobility-challenged people get back out into the countryside. They ramble in all weathers and over a variety of terrain, usually in the summer months. The rambles are graded according to difficulty. A few are suitable for shopping buggies and power chairs whilst most need large scooters capable of travelling over rough ground. They usually have some of these available for hire.

In 2017 they had a few rambles in Oxfordshire and Henley & Goring Group is organizing a couple of events this summer. I wonder if there is any demand for such events in Vale of White Horse. Do we have any members who can no longer walk unaided and would benefit from such a ramble? Do you have any friends, neighbours or family who might be interested? If so, please get in touch and we will consider hosting something.



New Signs for the ends of the Vale Way.

(Photos P Skuse)

Request for Walk Leaders

I know we regularly ask for new leaders but to sustain a vibrant programme we really need volunteer leaders. There is a leadership course every October where the aspects of leading walks are explained and demonstrate how easy a task leading can be. Or you can just watch and ask a leader at any time. If you can only lead one walk it would be a tremendous help. Perhaps you would be happier leading with a friend. We have a number of pre-planned routes so the task becomes easier and you would be fully supported if required. Please give it a go. Contact Peter Skuse, Walks Organiser, tel. 01235 533757 or email: peter.skuse11@gmail.com

Abingdon Strolls

In summer 2016 Peter Skuse started a programme of short 'strolls' in Abingdon. These were easy paced walks no more than 3.5 miles in up to two hours. No hills or stiles and plenty of time to stop, observe, and chat. These have been reasonably successful and in 2017 we had two strolls every month. However Peter had hoped that he would find some leaders from among those who turned up and that the strolls could become self-supporting. Unfortunately this never happened and Peter ended up leading the bulk of them. This commitment has limited the other walking he can do so we have reluctantly reduced the strolls to monthly on the first Thursday in the summer programme. We have six different leaders for them. If we can find a few more then we may reintroduce the Tuesday strolls next winter. If you feel you could lead a gentle walk around Abingdon some time in the future then please get in touch. Meanwhile why not join a stroll this summer if a slow gentle walk appeals.



Vale Group now has its own Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/valewhitehorseramblers/> or search for us with @valewhitehorseramblers

If you are a Facebook user please 'like' or 'Follow' this page and you will get notified about new items posted.

Communication from Ramblers

Ramblers keep in touch with members in a variety of ways. As well as Walk and Walk South East magazines, and local group newsletters like this one, there are a number of email newsletters which don't necessarily go to everyone.

The **Ramblers Members Newsletter** is sent to all members for whom Ramblers has an email address. If you don't receive it monthly, go to the Ramblers website <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/> and click on Register at the top. This will take you to a page which will ask for your details including membership number (it's on your membership card).

The **CEO Vanessa Griffiths** sends a monthly email to all known volunteers. The biggest group of volunteers are walks leaders. If you don't receive this email, have registered as a member, and consider yourself a volunteer in any way, then email volunteerupdate@ramblers.zendesk.com with your membership number, details of the role/activities you carry out for the Ramblers, and whether this is at group or area level.

If you haven't previously volunteered with Ramblers then there are many ways you can help. Take a look at <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone.aspx> or have a chat with me.

John Gordon
valeramblers@gmail.com
07968710869

Dates for your Diary

Sat 28th April	Spring Social, Childrey
Sat 9th June	Vale Summer Awayday, Bourton-on-the-Water
Wed/Thur/Sat 10/11/13 October	Navigation&Leadership Course Abingdon
Sat 19th August	London Blind Ramblers, Chilton
Thu 2-Sun 5th August,	CountryFile Live, Blenheim Palace



New signs on the Ridgeway

(Photo: D Cavanagh)

The Chairman's Ramblings

You may have seen the photo in the area newsletter of Jim Parke receiving a framed award at the recent Oxfordshire AGM (also on front page). This was in recognition that he is one of the finalists in the 'Protecting and Expanding Where We Walk' category of this year's Ramblers awards. Voting for these has closed and the results will be announced at General Council in Bangor in April. Jim has been recognised for his work on Oxfordshire's Parish Path Warden Network and his leadership of the Vale Path Volunteers path maintenance group.

The **Ridgeway National Trails Team** have recently started an initiative to improve access between the Ridgeway and nearby settlements where travellers along the Ridgeway can make a diversion to a town or village for refreshments or other amenities. A selection of these 'Strategic Routes' have been chosen and the first one at Bishopstone was officially opened in October. The fingerposts (see above) have been installed. The sign on the right will be installed soon. Other local routes in the first wave will include Letcombe Regis/Wantage and Compton.

I have heard from several walks leaders recently that some walkers expect detailed instructions on the number and types of stops that there will be during a walk and feel unprepared if this isn't explicit in the description of a walk. There is limited space in the paper programme so such detail is not encouraged. There are general instructions on page 3 of the programme. Item 3 ends with 'In general walks leaders will have a rest stop every 1 to 1½ hours and walkers should take drinks and snacks appropriate for the length of walk and the weather conditions.' So, only you can decide whether you need hot and/or cold liquids and how much for the length of walk and the weather conditions. Similarly, some people can/will walk all day without food, others will have sandwiches one hour into the walk. The walks leader who states 'bring a picnic' in the programme won't send you home if you don't. They are just reinforcing that this walk is long enough that most people will feel like eating during it and there is nowhere to get food en route. In the end it is your choice. Of course, none of the above will stop leaders reminding you about taking plenty of liquids in very hot weather.

For many years now our programme has had regular walks on Thursdays from Faringdon/Abingdon/Wantage, on some Tuesdays just over the Thames in West Oxfordshire and from a variety of places on other days, mainly Saturdays. In the summer programme we plan to test the market for **walks from Grove on three Tuesdays**, in May, July and September. If these prove successful we may make it regular and extend to other months. This requires leaders though so if you know your way around Grove and its surroundings, why not plan a walk for next winter? Don't let this request stop you joining this summer walks though.

Happy Walking!

The Ridgeway
 NATIONAL TRAIL

Visit Bishopstone
 Follow signs for 1 mile / 1.6km

For map and more details, scan
 QR code below or visit our website:
www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/bishopstone

You are standing at this location:
 Ordnance Survey SU249823
 Google Maps 51.5392, -1.6426
 N51°32'21" W1°38'33"

John Gordon
valeramblers@gmail.com

Vale Pocket Programme - Spring 2018

See programme or website for full details

APRIL

Tue 3rd	10:30	6.5 miles	Stanton Harcourt, the church
Thu 5th	10:30	6 miles	Faringdon, Market Place
Thu 5th	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Tue 10th	10:00	8.5 miles	Ardington, Church Street by Holy Trinity
Thu 12th	10:30	6.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 14th	10:15	6 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Thu 19th	10:00	5.5 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sat 21st	10:00	11 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Tue 24th	09:30	9 miles	Ardington, Christopher's Wood
Thu 26th	10:30	7 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 28th	14:00	4.4 miles	Vale Spring Social.
Sat 28th	16:00	.	Childrey, village hall

MAY

Thu 3rd	10:30	6.25 miles	Great Coxwell, St Giles Church
Thu 3rd	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 5th	10:00	10 miles	Eastleach Turville The Victoria Inn
Tue 8th	10:00	5.8 miles	Hailey, King William PH
Thu 10th	10:30	5.3 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 12th	09:30	9 miles	Stanford in the Vale, Church Green
Sun 13th	09:00	11.5 miles	Badbury Hill Car Park
Thu 17th	10:30	5.5 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sat 19th	09:30	13 miles	Ridgeway, south of East Hendred
Tue 22nd	09:30	9 miles	Longcot, The Green
Thu 24th	10:30	7.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Tue 29th	10:00	6 miles	Grove, Millbrook Square
Thu 31st	10:30	10.25 miles	Abingdon, Market Place

JUNE

Sat 2nd	10:00	4.5 miles	Appleton, Church Road
Thu 7th	10:10	7.8 miles	Faringdon, Market Place
Thu 7th	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Thu 7th	11:05	4.1 miles	Littleworth, Holy Ascension church
Sat 9th	10:00	11 miles	Bourton-on-the-Water
Tue 12th	19:00	3.8 miles	Oxford, the Town Hall, St Aldates.
Thu 14th	10:30	6.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 16th	09:15	5.6 miles	Didcot, station ticket hall
Thu 21st	10:30	6.5 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sun 24th	10:00	9.4 miles	Kidlington, St Mary's Church
Tue 26th	10:00	6.7 miles	Warborough, south side of the green
Thu 28th	10:30	9 miles	Abingdon, Market Place

JULY

Sun 1st	09:30	11.8 miles	Ascott under Wychwood, Shipton Road near church
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Tue 3rd	10:30	5 miles	Bampton, St Mary's Church
Thu 5th	10:10	5.9 miles	Faringdon, Market Place
Thu 5th	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 7th	10:00	10.7 miles	Ardington, Christopher's Wood car park
Tue 10th	10:00	8.5 miles	Sparsholt Firs, park near Ridgeway
Thu 12th	10:30	6.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 14th	09:30	13.5 miles	Tackley, layby north of Sturdy's castle
Thu 19th	10:30	6 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sat 21st	09:30	6.5 miles	Compton, High Street
Thu 26th	10:30	10.2 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 28th	09:30	12 miles	Beckley, the High Street
Tue 31st	10:00	6 miles	Grove, Millbrook Square

AUGUST

Thu 2nd	10:30	6 miles	Southmoor, Waggon and Horses PH
Thu 2nd	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 4th	10:00	10.5 miles	Catmore, church car park
Tue 7th	10:30	7.1 miles	Bampton, St Mary's Church
Thu 9th	10:30	5.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 11th	09:30	10 miles	Tiddington, The Fox and Goat
Tue 14th	10:30	8.5 miles	Goring, village car park
Thu 16th	10:30	5.5 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sun 19th	11:00	5 miles	Chilton, near Chilton Garden Centre
Thu 23rd	10:30	8 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 25th	09:30	11.8 miles	Watlington Hill NT car park
Sun 26th	.	.	White Horse Show
Mon 27th	.	.	White Horse Show
Thu 30th	10:30	7.5 miles	Lambourn, car park off High Street

SEPTEMBER

Sun 2nd	09:15	5.6 miles	Didcot, station ticket hall
Tue 4th	10:30	5.2 miles	Northmoor, Red Lion car park
Thu 6th	10:10	6 miles	Faringdon, Market Place
Thu 6th	10:30	3.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 8th	09:30	11 miles	Henley-on-Thames, Dry Leas car park
Tue 11th	10:30	7.7 miles	Oxford, the Crown Court, St Aldates
Thu 13th	10:30	4.5 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 15th	10:00	13 miles	Middle Assendon
Thu 20th	10:30	5.5 miles	Wantage, Market Place
Sun 23rd	10:00	11.5 miles	Faringdon, Market Place
Tue 25th	10:00	6 miles	Grove, Millbrook Square
Thu 27th	10:30	8 miles	Abingdon, Market Place
Sat 29th	09:30	12.5 miles	Wolvercote, Port Meadow car park

To report a footpath problem to the council

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/report-issue-public-right-way>

Your Vale Group Committee

Chairman	John Gordon
General Secretary	Vacancy
Treasurer	Joan Wyatt
Membership	Pat Lonergan,
Walks	Peter Skuse
Footpaths	Jim Parke
Publicity	Vacancy
Countryside	Vacancy
Ordinary Members	Bob Evans, Christine Tunna, Graham Cross

As well as this paper newsletter, the Vale Group and Oxfordshire Area circulate news items by email. This includes notice of extra walks and cancellations. Sign up to our email list by mailing patlon@ntlworld.com

Navigation, Walk Planning & Leadership Course

We will be holding another Navigation, Planning and Leadership course in 2018. It will be held in Abingdon on 10/11/13 October. It is classroom-based on the Wednesday and Thursday evenings with a practical session outdoors on Saturday. Come along to learn about map-reading and/or tips on leading a walk.

Contact valeramblers@gmail.com or 07968 710869 for more information or to book a place.