



The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Newsletter

ISSUE 1

MARCH TO MAY 2016

News for everyone who enjoys and cares for The Ridgeway

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Connecting up The Ridgeway 1
- Chiltern Society Circular walk 2
- Volunteer Task Diary 3
- Events along The Trail 4
- Volunteer Recognition 5
- Keep your Eyes Open 6

Connecting up The Ridgeway

Imagine you want to visit The Ridgeway for a day out....you would need to reach the Trail and then you might need to walk or ride to places to eat, to nearby visitor attractions or to a toilet! Overnight visitors would need to find their way to a place to stay too.

To help and encourage visitors to the Trail, The Ridgeway Partnership is starting a project to identify routes that link walkers, cyclists and horse riders using The Ridgeway to nearby car parks, local shops, train stations, visitor attractions, campsites, pubs and so on. Routes popularly used by local



National Trust Ashdown House is a just walk away from The Ridgeway

Photo Credit Peter Orr 2010, downloaded from Flickr-March 2016

residents in nearby villages and towns to reach The Ridgeway are another priority.

The Ridgeway Partnership aims to identify 'strategic links' with help from volunteers, local communities, landowners and the Highway Authorities. The first step is to attract volunteers to survey rights of way and roads picked out by desk research.

It is hoped that the first set of strategic links will be confirmed by The

Ridgeway Partnership in winter this year. These linking routes will then be signed and any necessary improvement work carried out to surfaces or structures, e.g. replacing stiles with gates. The Partnership hopes funding for the project will come from grant-giving bodies but also local communities and businesses benefiting from improved visitor access to and from The Ridgeway.



Photo Credit Sarah Wright

A project to make it easier to get to the pub!

Please support this project! You can get the latest news from the Ridgeway Officer's blog at www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway or @TheRidgeway1972 on Twitter. To volunteer or donate money/resources to The Ridgeway strategic links project, please email: ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk

A walk connecting The Ridgeway to The Chiltern Way

New Circular Walk

A windmill, nature reserves, wooded hills and rural pubs.....what more could you ask for on a day out along The Ridgeway? Enjoy all of this on a 7 mile walk near the market town of Princes Risborough in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Thanks goes to the Chiltern Society volunteers who researched the walk and provided inspiring photos. The walk connects The Ridgeway to The Chiltern Way,

another Chiltern Society creation.

Download the walk leaflet for free from www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/plan.



Or visit the Chiltern Society website www.chilternsociety.org.uk/about-ridgeway.

The leaflet provides

details of public transport and local pubs and cafes to help you plan your day out.

The Chiltern Society is a member of The Ridgeway Partnership. Find out more about the Society on their website, including membership, volunteering, guided walks, The Chiltern Way and more.



Photo credit: Colin Drake

Enjoy the view from Brush Hill on The Ridgeway

Task Diary

March

- 8th Old Windsor **WC 1**
- 10th Workshop **2**
- 14th Ashton Keynes **WC 3**
- 15th Tring **WC 4**
- 21st Upper Upham **WC 5**
- 22nd Binsey **S 6**
- 29th Cholsey **D 7**
- 30th Uffington **G 8**

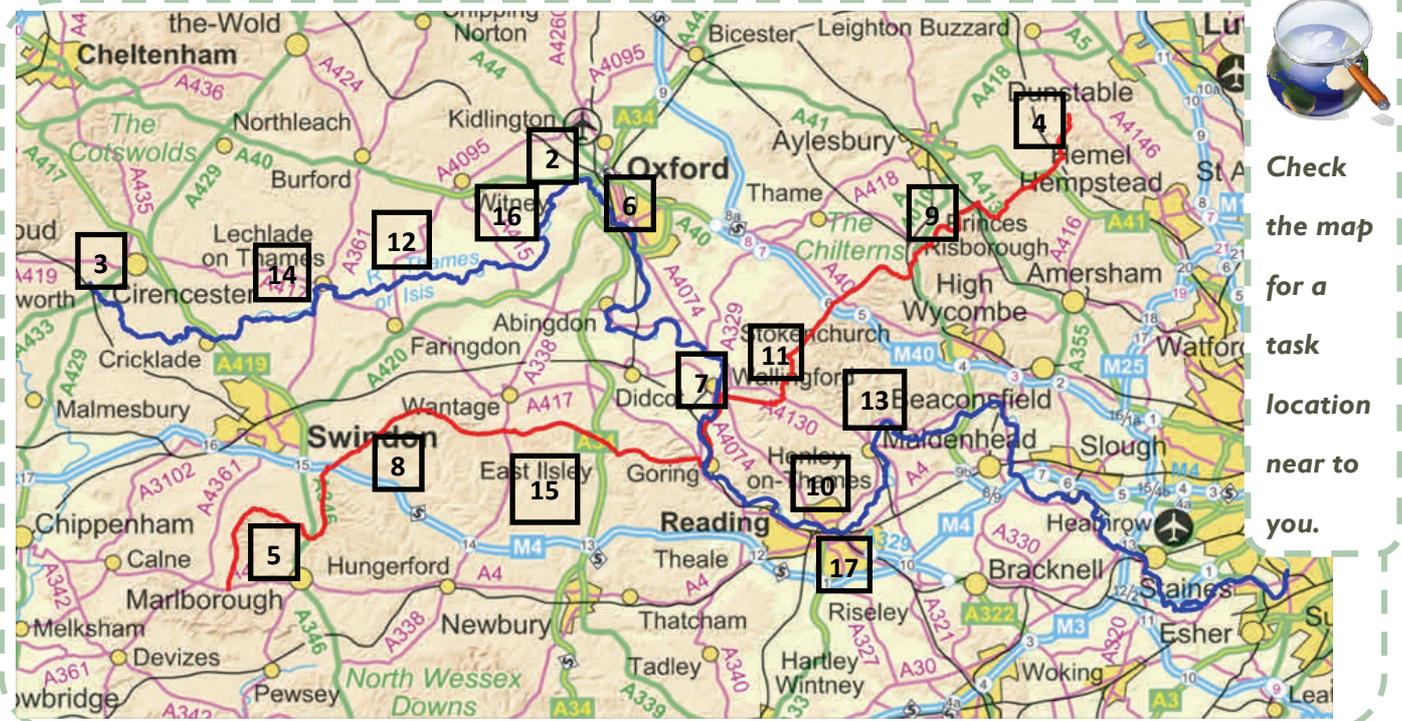
TBC=to be confirmed
 WC= winter clearance
 S = signage
 D= drainage
 BC = brush cutting
 M= mowing

April

- 5th Chequers **G 9**
- 6th Whiteleaf **G 9**
- 7th Workshop **2**
- 11th Tring **G 4**
- 12th TBC
- 13th Godstow **G 6**
- 19th Henley **G 10**
- 20th Nuffield **G 11**
- 21st TBC
- 25th Chimney **M 12**
- 26th Monkton **M 5**
- 27th Marlow **BC 13**

May

- 3rd Lechlade **M 14**
- 4th Oxford (FI) **BC 6**
- 5th Oxford (O) **M 6**
- 9th Grafton **M 12**
- 10th Ashbury **M 15**
- 11th Newbridge **M 16**
- 16th Sonning **BC 17**
- 17th Snap **M 5**
- 23rd Ildstone **M 15**
- 24th Princes Risborough **M 9**
- 25th Workshop **2**
- 26th Swinford **M 2**
- 31st South Stoke **M 7**



Check the map for a task location near to you.

Task Bookings

The task locations are shown as numbers on the map so that you can see which locations suit you. Please ensure that you book early as the practical tasks are becoming very popular. Occasionally we may have to change a task location or date as issues of a higher priority may occur or if the weather conditions are not suitable. If this happens, we will try to keep you as up-to-date as we can.

To book onto a task please contact the office:
E: nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk
T: 01865 810211

Enjoy events on
The Ridgeway –
visit our
[website](#) for
more details
and other
events. Many
events require
booking in
advance.



Easter Egg Hunts
near The Ridgeway:
White Horse Hill
(Uffington, Oxon),
Basildon Park (nr
Reading, Berks)
and College Lake
(Tring, Herts).

Events along The Ridgeway

Sat 2nd April

In Search of Spring Flowers

Dancersend nature reserve (BBOWT), nr Wendover, Bucks

A guided walk to discover flowering plants in woodland and chalk grassland.

Sun 29th May

Family Kite Flying

White Horse Hill (National Trust), Uffington, Oxon.

Bring your kites and enjoy the views.

Saturday 18th June

The Helen Brownings Ridgeway Revenge Half Marathon & 10K

Starting in Bishopstone, Wilts.

Designed to encompass incredible views and challenging undulations, this course has been well received in previous years.

Saturday 18th June

The RidgeWalk 2016

Starting in Watlington, Oxon.

A trekking challenge in aid of the charity SENSE which supports and campaigns for deafblind people.

Sat 25th June

Glow in the Dark

Whiteleaf and Brush Hill Nature Reserves (Chiltern Society), nr Princes Risboro', Bucks.

Witness the magical display of nature's own fairy lights. Hot drink and treat included.

Saturday 2nd July

Chalking the Horse

White Horse Hill (National Trust), Uffington, Oxon.

Get hands on and help keep this iconic Horse white for future generations.

Sunday 3rd July

Family Festival

Tring Park, (Woodland Trust) Herts.

Experience the history and atmosphere of the Rothschild family shows of old.

Tues 12th July

Lapierre White Roads Classic

Starting in Goring, Oxon.

Cycle sportive inspired by the Italian classic 'Strade Bianche' and sanctioned and insured by British Cycling.

Sat 16th July

Dixons Carphone Race to the Stones

Starting at Lewknor, Oxon.

Fully supported 100 km walk/run which ends at Avebury stone circle. Suitable for elite runners through to keen walkers.



Volunteer Recognition Event

Just before Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council's Volunteer Recognition Celebration highlighted the outstanding work residents do in their communities with certificates, open appreciation, and a few mince pies for good measure. We asked National Trails volunteer representatives Ian and Martin, to tell us how they got on.



County Cllr . Chairman John Sanders, Deputy Leader Cllr. Rodney Rose with Ian and Martin

'Approaching Christmas Oxford was buzzing with shoppers and it set the upbeat and festive tone for the event. I was amazed how many different volunteers and groups there were but I found my way first for a coffee and then joined my colleague, Ian. There was much chatter which eventually quietened for the Welcome Address by Rose Rolle-Rowan, Works Initiative Manager. Following that there were a few more short speeches from Cllr John Sanders (Chairman of Oxfordshire CC) and Cllr Rodney Rose (Cabinet member for the Voluntary and Community Sector). Both thanked the volunteers for their dedication, hard work and commitment to the various needs and related some interesting facts about the volunteer groups. The amount of hours donated by the volunteer groups was really quite staggering. There were 16 different volunteer groups—from 'Abingdon Health & Wellbeing centre' through to

the 'Youth Justice Service' - and with several members in each I was wondering how they were going to present all the certificates in time for the Closing Remarks at 5:30. Sensibly, each group came up together and were handed their certificates at the same time. This not only meant the presentations and photographs were much quicker, it also meant we didn't have to clap for each and every volunteer (which would have made the hand sorer than a scratch from a Blackthorn bush!).

After the formalities, wine and more mince pies were on hand to lubricate further discussions amongst the various volunteers milling around.

All-in-all it was a very heart-warming event and greatly expanded my understanding of the other volunteer groups there are in Oxfordshire. Hopefully these will continue.

Martin B.

'Just before Christmas I received an invitation to the Volunteer Recognition Event held by the county council in Oxford. I arrived quite early to find a massive empty hall full of hundreds of chairs all labelled for each volunteer group. I walked up and down the rows taking a look at who was expected, dozens of librarians and care workers and I was particularly intrigued by the many chairs labelled 'Master Composters'. There were just two seats for the National Trails volunteers, myself and Martin.

People arrived, seats filled, and wine and mince pies were served. An interesting display was shown on screen of the various organisations with photographs and descriptions of what they do. Someone had made a good effort to put that together. Once under way there were a few short speeches from the dignitaries and then the groups went up to receive certificates. All was over within an hour or so and the whole thing turned out to be far more pleasant than expected. Lots of wine and mince pies were left over so it seemed a shame to see it all go to waste. I had my bus pass after all and an afternoon to fill. I highly recommend this event if they do it again next Christmas.

Ian L.

For Volunteering information please contact:

E: nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk

T: 01865 810211

Keep Your Eyes Open!

Most visits to The Ridgeway are a positive experience but a recent story in the local papers is a useful reminder that crime does happen on The Ridgeway, as anywhere else. Whilst The Ridgeway is unlikely to ever be rife with crime, it is important to take care of ourselves, our belongings and our local area.

In January, two men were charged with theft following a Thames Valley police operation around Ashbury. The men were involved in stealing a purse from a vehicle in a car park near The Ridgeway. PC Robert Maris said "These arrests come after a number of continued rural crime patrols watching the car parks for suspicious behaviour ... we have increased efforts to tackle the problem of beauty spot thefts in our area over the past few months working with the National Trust and other stakeholders to better inform and educate users of the car parks. I would like to urge members of the public not to leave anything of value in their vehicles and to report any suspicious behaviour at the earliest opportunity, and remind your friends, family and fellow dog walkers to do the same".

Everyone can be vigilant and report criminal activities. National Trail volunteers who monitor The Ridgeway are particularly well placed to notice problems. Reports help the police to track patterns or identify hotspots, so a crime should never be left unreported. If a crime is in progress, dial 999 but otherwise reports should be made to the non-emergency number 101. This is a good reason to carry a mobile phone, as well as for personal safety reasons.

Other useful advice is to be discrete so that you avoid putting yourself in danger!

It is reassuring to know that there are police officers dedicated to rural crime helping to keep The Ridgeway a safe

and pleasant place to enjoy the outdoors. They deal with crime affecting agricultural property such as farm buildings, agricultural machinery, fencing, straw, horses, livestock, horseboxes etc. Offences include burglary, criminal damage, fly-tipping, hare coursing and vehicles driving on restricted sections.

The Ridgeway Partnership supports the police in the work they do by sharing information and seeking to educate Ridgeway users.

So, next time you are out on The Ridgeway, just take care and set a good example for others to follow. And make sure you don't leave your mobile phone at home!



The Ridgeway National Trail Team



Signal Court, Old Station Way, Eynsham, Oxford, OX29 4TL
 General Enquiries: 01865 810224 Volunteer Enquiries: 01865 810211
 E: ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk
 @TheRidgeway1972.
 W: www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/

Email us to add or remove your name from the mailing list. Get in touch to provide feedback and article suggestions for this newsletter.