

CORSHAM WALKING FESTIVAL - FULL WALK DETAILS 2019

For booking arrangements and full terms and conditions please see our website page

FESTIVAL OPENING

The Opening Ceremony is at 12:00 on Friday 7 June, at Springfield Community Campus, Beechfield Road, Corsham, SN13 9DN.

WALK GRADINGS

- **Easy: Mostly level terrain; suitable for most walkers**
- **Moderate: Some short steep gradients or rough terrain; some stiles**
- **Challenging: Requires fitness and stamina; steep gradients, stiles**

FRIDAY 7 JUNE

FRI1 – South of Corsham

8 miles. Moderate. 4.25 hrs duration. 12:15 from Springfield Community Campus. £4

This circular scenic walk takes us on a largely flat circular route through villages south and east of Corsham including Neston and Chapel Knapp and returns by Corsham Park and lake. Passing through open pasture with livestock and along country roads and includes a stop for your packed lunch.

We also pass some current mine workings and enjoy vistas looking over to the Gt. Cheverell escarpment and the Westbury White Horse. The walk includes about 20 stiles, some of which are rather high.

Please bring a packed lunch

Sponsored by Airbus. www.airbus.com

FRI2 - Hartham Grounds and Weavertons Wonders

6 miles. Moderate. 4.5 hrs duration. 13:00 from Springfield Community Campus. £5 includes donation to the charity Asthma UK.

This walk offers a unique opportunity to see Hartham Park Estate, not normally open to the general public, by their kind permission and with the cooperation of the Jones's who farm adjacent to Hartham, as we will be crossing and using their fields to access Hartham and later the Weavertons Valley.

At Church Farm on the way to Hartham we will be met by Mrs Kate Jones, the farmer, who will lead us over fields into Hartham Estate. We will leave Hartham Estate grounds, via their farm tracks to join a public path into the Weavertons Valley.

The 18th century Georgian mansion has 50 acres of gardens and parkland, landscaped by Harold Peto, and one of only three functional stické tennis courts in the world (the other two are at Knightshayes Court, Tiverton, Devon and the former Viceroy of India's summer palace in Simla, India).

There will be a talk outside the house, about its history and a chance to walk in their gardens, including the Knot Garden, Stable Yard and Cock Tower and Ladies Walk. We then cross their meadow to the Sticke Tennis Court. We will be offered a cold drink outside.

Whilst under the ownership of Baron Islington, Winston Churchill was a frequent visitor to Hartham. Later, during World War II the upper floors of the house were used as dormitories for the WAAF serving with RAF No 10 Group based at Rudloe Manor. Hartham Park has been redeveloped into a prestigious business park and café.

The paths may be muddy if there has been recent rainfall, especially in the Weavern area. We will leave Corsham and cross the A4, along Middlewick Lane, turning right on to the private metalled track owned by Church Farm who has kindly given us permission for us to use on the day only.

After our visit to Hartham Park we exit the estate we follow a public footpath down into the Weavern Valley to Collets Bottom. There is then a long and in places quite steep, climb back up from the Weavern Valley to No Notion Cottages to join a minor road, past Rudloe Manor House, to cross the busy A4.

We will return to Corsham via the Rudloe Estate, crossing the B3109, the across Park Lane to Basil Hill Barracks, along Hudswell Lane to Pockeridge Drive and Pockeridge Lakes.

Dogs are not permitted in Hartham Park grounds.

Access to external grounds by kind permission of Hartham Park - www.harthampark.com

Access to farm paths by kind permission of Church Farm B&B - www.churchfarmbandb.com

FR13 - Corsham Park Amble

5 miles. Easy. 3 hrs duration. 13:00 from Springfield Community Campus. £4.

A delightful circular walk through Corsham's history via the Lady Margaret Hungerford Almshouses past the War Memorial and into the beautiful Corsham Park and lake designed by Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton.

Past the 'Ha Ha' and sunken fence and over the dry arch and on towards the Eastern end of the Park.

We then continue along country lanes to the quiet hamlets of Easton and Westrop via open countryside to return to Corsham Park.

Traversing the park towards St Bartholomew's a 12th Century Saxon Church and the High Street. Viewing the Mayo Memorial, Town Hall used as a hospital during WW1 and passing many of the towns' restaurants, public houses and shops.

An easy walk but there is a number of stiles.

SATURDAY 8 JUNE

SAT1 - Brown's Folly

19 miles. Challenging. 9 hrs duration. 08:30 from Springfield Community Campus. £4. 16+ years.

A circular, mainly level walk but with two fairly steep inclines of short duration between Wadswick and Kingsdown.

This walk takes us first to Brown's Folly, a Grade II listed building above the village of Bathford, set amongst flower-rich grasslands covering the old spoil heaps. Wild thyme, yellow rattle and several orchid species can be enjoyed here. The Brown's Folly Nature Reserve is managed by Avon Wildlife Trust and designated an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The disused Bath stone quarries are now home to several species of bat, including the rare Greater Horseshoe bat.

The Folly itself (known locally as the Pepperpot), was commissioned in 1849 by Wade-Brown, a local quarry owner, to promote the quality of his building stone while employing workers during a downturn in the quarrying business.

We then pass through Monkton Farleigh & South Wraxall on our way to the 15th century Great Chalfield Manor, owned by the National Trust and featuring in productions such as Wolf Hall, Poldark and Wives & Daughters.

The route continues north to Broughton Gifford and Atworth before returning to Corsham. The walk takes us through beautiful countryside including woods and farmland and has spectacular views towards Colerne and Bath.

Please bring plenty to drink and a packed lunch.

Sponsored by Airbus. www.airbus.com

SAT2 - Nordic Walking Taster

2 miles. Easy. 1 hr duration. 09:00 from Springfield Community Campus. . FREE but please book in advance. 16+ years.

This 1-hour session will help you understand just how beneficial Nordic walking can be. Get a taste of how light you will feel on your feet, how the whole body is mobilised and why you need to take the time to learn the technique. Nordic poles will be provided for your use.

Sponsored by Chafing Thighs.

SAT3 – Cotswold Corsham to Georgian Bath

11 miles. Moderate. 6 hrs duration. 9:00 from Springfield Community Campus. £4, 16+

A lovely linear walk with excellent views passing hamlets and intriguing places of interest before walking along the Kennett & Avon canal towpath into the Georgian city of Bath. The route passes close to the 2 mile railway tunnel built by Brunel through Box Hill and then to Westwells where Bath stone was once quarried.

Kingsmoor Wood, an army training base between the two World Wars but then turned over to the Royal Navy at the start of WW2 as Kingsmoor Camp, a holding depot for naval ratings awaiting drafts to sea and foreign stations, is then visited.

The route continues, passing a 13th century Anglican church used as a roadside refuge for pilgrims travelling to Glastonbury and areas mentioned in the Domesday book of 1085.

With views of Hazelbury Manor the walk descends thro' woodland before crossing a main road on the outskirts of Box, then an ascent to the charming and hidden hamlet of Washwell and village of Henley.

Continuing near Kingsdown the walk then follows the edge of the Box valley with glorious vistas before the gradual descent into Bathford.

The meadows at Bathampton are crossed followed by the long, flat walk alongside the canal, passing many beautiful bridges and locks with glimpses into the gardens of the lovely Georgian houses on the way to the final destination of the bus station.

With such a variety of landscapes and history the walk is very popular, and with the opportunity to stay in Bath mid-afternoon to explore the city or just relax with a cake and coffee!

Return to Corsham at you own leisure on the good bus service (X31); don't forget your bus pass.

Sponsored by BCH Camping.

SAT4 – A Murder Mystery

2 miles. Easy. 2 hrs duration. Starts between 9:00 – 1400 from Springfield Community Campus. FREE but please book in advance

A dead man was found in the High Street near the Royal Oak. He had a wound on his forehead, which police say could have been done with a blunt instrument. Police noted the victim's shoes were muddy.

Police have found a small holdall containing an axe, a hammer and a used syringe by the old metal stile in the Carriage Drive and a muddy handkerchief by the big gates at the end of the Carriage Drive. Police have three suspects but are still baffled?

Can you help the police and solve the mystery? Who was the murderer? How was it done?

A self-guided walk around Corsham Town and Corsham Park, suitable for teams of 2 – 4.

A map and questions are provided to each team and you can walk at your own pace, although you must finish by 16:30. Answer sheets will be sent out after the weekend.

Prizes donated by Automattic Comics and Toys of Corsham for the highest scoring team.

www.automatticcomics.co.uk

SAT5 – Lacock Loop and Village

10 miles. Moderate. 5.5 hrs duration. 09:30 from Springfield Community Campus, £4. 16+ years.

This walk through open countryside takes us, after tackling many stiles, to the renowned National Trust village of Lacock, for picnic lunch break.

This quaint village with half-timbered stone cottages and medieval tithe barn has provided a location for many film and TV productions, including Harry Potter, Pride and Prejudice and Downton Abbey. Step back in time and enjoy an unspoiled Cotswold village with a variety of buildings dating from the 15th to the 18th centuries. Bonnets and long swishing skirts are no longer required though!

Lacock Abbey, founded in the 13th century as a nunnery, is also notable as the birthplace of photography when owned by William Fox Talbot. His granddaughter presented the village and Abbey to the National Trust.

Please bring a packed lunch.

Sponsored by Carl Todd Clinic.

SAT6 – Wild Flower Walk

4 miles. Moderate. 3 hrs duration. 9:30 from the Quarryman's Arms Pub, Box Hill, SN13 8HN. See below for parking info. £5 includes donation to the charity Plantlife.

This is the 5th outing for Corsham Walking Festival's popular Wild Flower Walk with Viki Hess, a wild flower enthusiast, to identify plants on Box Hill Common and Chapel Plaister Common. These areas of unimproved limestone grassland are home to specialised plant communities, including orchids, Hoary Plantain (*Plantago media*) and Yellow Rattle (*Rhinthus minor*). We will examine their botanical features and significance to our ancestors, as these once familiar plants are now largely unrecognised and in decline. However, in knowing more about wildflowers we begin to love them and aim to protect them and their fragile habitats.

Box Hill Common comprises a mosaic of various habitats including woodland and scrub, which give valuable cover and habitats for wildlife. The plants sustain a multitude of insects, which in turn provide food for foraging bats, reptiles, birds and mammals. Large numbers of bats, including rare species, hibernate in adjacent disused stone mines - now an SSSI. Common Lizards can be seen basking on sunny banks on warm summer days, while red kites, sparrow hawks and many other bird and mammal species add to the ecosystem's biodiversity.

Box Parish Council bought Box Hill Common after protests against development in the 1970's. See www.boxpeopleandplaces.co.uk/box-hill-common. In the 1980's Box Archaeological & Natural History Society (Box NATS) undertook a botanical survey and created a Nature Trail. During their 50-year celebrations members again walked the Trail. www.boxnats.com

Sadly 97% of the UK's wild flower meadows have been destroyed since the 1940's, often due to neglect and development, causing the decline of many wild flowers. Box's species rich grasslands have survived because they are never ploughed, but managed by mowing annually, which allows wild flowers to thrive, along with the invertebrates that depend upon them. This is similar to traditional management back when horses hauled blocks of limestone from the mines and were fed hay cut from these meadows. On Box Hill Common clippings are raked and removed to maintain the low levels of nutrients that wild flowers require. Otherwise the clippings would rot down and fertilise the soil, encouraging nettles, docks and coarse grasses which shade out more

delicate flowers. Unmown grassland would be taken over by scrub, saplings and finally woodland in the process of ecological succession.

Box Parish Council and its staff manage Box Hill Common on behalf of the local people. They are assisted by volunteers and the wonderful Cotswold Volunteer Wardens in cutting back scrub and invasive species to allow the growth of more delicate plants. The work is carried out carefully to avoid damaging old anthills, important for several butterfly species. This is one of the few local sites for Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*), which often grows by ant hills, and is the sole food of the dazzling Adonis Blue butterfly caterpillar which the ants 'milk' for its sugary secretions. When the chrysalis forms the ants bury it and protect it from predators.

The soil of calcareous grassland is alkaline due to underlying limestone. The Cotswold AONB contains half the UK's unimproved limestone grassland. We are fortunate that local fragments survive in Box and with conservation management they will continue to thrive into the future.

Bring a hand lens and i/d book if possible, and a notebook and pen to record your finds. There are two stiles and possibly mud. The pub car park is ONLY for those lunching after the walk. Street parking is available nearby.

Optional group lunch at The Quarryman's Arms is not included in walk fee.

www.quarrymans-arms.co.uk

SAT7 – West of Castle Combe

9 miles. Moderate. 5 hrs duration. 10:00 from the Castle Combe Market Cross, SN14 7HT, free car parking at upper Castle Combe car park, SN14 7HH, £4

Leaving the delightful village of Castle Combe we follow the Macmillan Way for a short distance towards Nettleton Shrub and the nearby site of a Romano-British settlement adjacent to the Fosse Way.

Using a mixture of footpaths and bridleways we make our way through both wooded and open countryside to the villages of West Kington and North Wraxall.

We pass the site of a Roman Villa at Truckle Hill on our return route to Castle Combe.

Please bring a packed lunch.

SAT8 - Circular Route Through the Avon and Frome Valleys

9.6 miles, Moderate, 5 hrs duration, 10:00 from Bailey's Barn the Canal and Rivers Trust pay car park, Bradford on Avon (BoA), BA15 1BX, £4, 16+

A walk lead by the BoA Walkers are Welcome.

This is a circular walk through the valleys of the Rivers Avon and Frome passing Farleigh Castle and Iford. Parking charges apply at Bailey's Barn, Canal and Rivers Trust car park.

The route starts from the car park for the Kennet and Avon Canal at Bailey's Barn. It starts off up Jones Hill road and then into the fields near the top of the hill. It then proceeds across fields to Westwood, passing the church there. Look at the font and the figure above it!

From Westwood the trail goes across the fields and then onto the minor road to Farleigh along the A366 and crosses the River Frome, before turning right into a pretty little cul-de-sac, passing Farleigh castle, as we head north along the Macmillan way and the Frome valley towards Iford Mill where we turn west to follow the river Frome towards Dunkirk Mill.

Heading north again along quiet lanes and fields towards Limpley Stoke and follow the road through Lower Limpley, before turning east across the river Avon and then onto fields to the canal towpath, leaving the river Avon.

Before reaching Avoncliff, we turn north, crossing the canal and climb across fields towards Winsley, where we pass the war memorial and turn east again on quiet roads and then down through Turleigh where you can see the old spring water trough and lay-by which is still running today.

From Turleigh we continue on quiet roads back to Bradford on Avon where we climb down through the edge of town and cross the medieval bridge heading towards the Tithe barn which we leave to our left as we come back to the canal towpath and head back across the Frome road into Bailey's Barn car park.

Please bring a packed lunch.

SAT9 – The Hidden Quarries of Box Hill

7.5 miles. Moderate. 5 hrs duration. 10:30 from Springfield Community Campus, £5 includes donation to Wiltshire Air Ambulance. 16+ years.

This walk goes from Corsham to Box Hill and back. The outward-bound journey from Corsham passes along Pockeridge Drive and Spring Lane to Westwells and across fields and quiet lanes to Box Hill.

At Box Common, near to the top of Quarry Hill, the group meets with an expert on the history of the Box Hill mines and an experienced mine guide. Our expert will give his popular, fascinating and informative talk on the history of the mines during their working life and since closure. At Box Hill there are excellent views down the valley to Batheaston.

After the talk and lunch/refreshments, walkers cross the A4 to follow a path towards the old RAF Rudloe Manor Site where there are excellent views across the By Brook Valley towards Colerne.

The return journey via wood and farmland paths goes through Rudloe Wood, then a steep descent and climb through the Larches and then uphill towards Pickwick Lodge. The remainder of the walk goes along farm tracks and quiet lanes towards Corsham via Middlewick and Pickwick, returning to the Campus.

Additional Information: Bring packed lunch

SAT10 – Mindfulness Walk

1.5 miles. Easy. 10:30 am Springfield Community Campus. Finish at Church House, Church Street, SN13 0BY. 2 hrs duration plus optional after walk tea and discussion - 45 mins. FREE but please book in advance. 12+ years

Mindful walking, also known as walking meditation, allows us to slow down and cultivate a sense of calm and wellbeing as we appreciate being out in nature.

Beginning from the Campus, the walk passes through alleys and along paths to the War Memorial where we will pause and be given a brief introduction to mindful walking.

We will then continue our walk in silence, noticing the sounds and colours of Corsham Court's beautiful parkland. We will walk without hurrying to the lake, paying attention to our environment and the experience of walking quietly in a group. No meditation experience is required. We finish at Church House where there will be time for a cup of tea and questions about Mindfulness.

"We walk just for walking. We walk with freedom and solidity, no longer in a hurry" –
Thich Nhat Hanh

This walk is organised by Mindfulness Generation - www.mindfulnessgeneration.co.uk.

Sponsored by People Business Psychology - www.peoplebusinesspsychology.com

SAT11 – Hidden in Plain Sight

2 miles. Easy. 2 hrs duration. 15:00 from Springfield Campus. FREE but please book in advance.

Donations to TRANSCOCO optional. Walk with Transcoco using zoom-in hand lenses to see lichens, mosses and ferns on walls and trees. They're always there. You never noticed.

Most of green stuff out there is flowering plants, including trees and grass. Flowers are very nice. There's a story about the 18th-century Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus at a posh dinner party. Many high-born young women, knowing of his interest in plants, had brought along their flower paintings to show the great man. Painting flowers was thought to be a suitably decorous occupation for young ladies. At which point he proceeded to tell the company about his latest discovery: that flowers were actually the sexual organs of plants. Imagine the horrified mothers, tittering girls and smirking fathers!

The flowering plants have done very well for themselves. Kicking off about 120 million years ago, they did a deal with the insects and now both groups dominate the planet. But there are lots of other non-flowering plants, much older, yet still with us, and visible in plain sight all year round. We'll be looking at three distinct sorts: ferns, mosses and lichens. They often don't look much to the naked eye, so we'll be using strong hand-lenses to zoom in. Then they are fantastic.

Ferns are usually quite big, often used ornamentally. Most of the big ones die back in the winter, so we are more interested in the small tough ones that are there all the time and grow on walls, with charming names like the rustyback and the maidenhair spleenwort.

Mosses are small but there are many different kinds, easily distinguishable under the lens. You'll be amazed. They've been relegated to tricky spots by the flowering plants but hold their own on walls, trees and cracks in pavements. They can stand drought, but sometimes need the wet because they still reproduce in the old-fashioned way with swimming sperms and eggs. Plants with sperms! Even Linnaeus didn't know that.

Lichens are not really plants at all, but fungi with tiny plants inside them that produce food from sunlight, making them self-sufficient. It's a clever trick, and lichens were probably the first organisms to cover the land, long before animals or any other kinds of plants. And they are still here, absolutely everywhere. It is said they cover 6% of the earth's surface. All those grey and black and yellow marks and blobs on walls, zoom in and you'll find real living organisms quietly getting on with their lives, rain or shine, as they have been for at least a billion years.

SAT12 – Children’s Treasure Hunt

1.5 miles. Easy. 1 hour duration. Start any time between 14:30 and 15:30 from Springfield Community Campus. FREE but please book in advance.

This self-guided treasure hunt encourages young people to discover the High Street and Corsham Park in a novel and enjoyable way. Families will hunt via flat pavements from the Campus to the High Street.

Answers to treasure hunt on return to the Campus where participants will be awarded a certificate and small gift. **Suitable for 5-12 year olds accompanied by an adult.**

Prizes kindly donated by Automattic Comics and Toys of Corsham.

www.automatticcomics.co.uk

SATURDAY EVENING QUIZ AND BUFFET SUPPER

From 19:00 – 23:00 at Springfield Community Campus, Corsham. £12

This popular event completely sold out last year and strong demand for tickets is expected, so please book early to avoid disappointment. The evening provides much fun and laughter with a quiz open to walkers and non-walkers. Maximum of 6 people to a team, bring your own team or join one on the night to compete for The Golden Boots and an impressive array of prizes donated by local businesses.

Price includes a delicious buffet supper by award-winning Elior Catering. www.elior.co.uk.

Special dietary needs catered for – please notify in advance to The Pound Box Office.

Licensed paying bar available. Raffle proceeds to Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

SUNDAY 9 JUNE

SUN1 – Box, St Catherines and Marshfield Long Loop

17.5 miles. Challenging. 8 hrs duration. 08:30 from The Selwyn Hall free car park, Valens Terrace, Box, SN13 8NT, £4, 16+

This is a beautiful circular walk that takes us from Box into the Cotswolds AONB and is newly added to the Festival programme for 2019.

Walking is mainly on footpaths and at times we walk alongside pretty brooks and at other times enjoy stunning views into these valleys as we walk paths on adjacent ridges.

It is a hilly walk (ascent approx. 1000m).

Starting from Box we travel west along the By Brook valley before climbing up Banner Down, which has been managed by The Batheaston Freeholders Association since 1719... that’s nearly 300 years!. Following parts of the Limestone Link we walk along the secluded St Catherine’s Valley past St Catherine’s Court to the ancient and attractive Cotswold market town of Marshfield.

We then return southeast via Lucknam Park and Thickwood to pass Widdenham Farm and Euridge Manor Farm following the Bybrook alongside Drewetts Mill and on into Box.

Please bring a packed lunch.

Sponsored by Carl Todd Clinic.

SUN2 - Nordic Walking Taster

2 miles. Easy. 1 hr duration. 09:00 from Springfield Community Campus. FREE but please book in advance. 16+ years.

This 1-hour session will help you understand just how beneficial Nordic walking can be. Get a taste of how light you will feel on your feet, how the whole body is mobilised and why you need to take the time to learn the technique. Nordic poles will be provided for your use.

Sponsored by Chafing Thighs.

SUN3 – Corsham Bounds

14 miles. Moderate. 8 hrs duration. 09:00 from Springfield Community Campus. £4. 16+ years.

This walk will completely circumnavigate the town of Corsham.

It takes in the diverse terrain including woods, parkland, open fields, country lanes and roads.

You will see Historic Corsham and heading east through the Park walking through the local hamlets of Easton, Thingley and Gastard. Then south through Neston and Westwells.

The terrain becomes slightly more undulating as we approach Hazelbury Manor and over Box Hill.

To go north towards the Bybrook and through the wood returning to Pickwick.

Please bring a packed lunch.

SUN4 – A Murder Mystery

2 miles. Easy. 2 hrs duration. Starts between 9:00 – 1400 from Springfield Community Campus. FREE but please book in advance

A dead man was found in the High Street near the Royal Oak. He had a wound on his forehead, which police say could have been done with a blunt instrument. Police noted the victim's shoes were muddy.

Police have found a small holdall containing an axe, a hammer and a used syringe by the old metal stile in the Carriage Drive and a muddy handkerchief by the big gates at the end of the Carriage Drive. Police have three suspects but are still baffled?

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A map and questions are provided to each team and you can walk at your own pace, although you must finish by 16:30. Answer sheets will be sent out after the weekend.

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www.automatticcomics.co.uk

SUN5 – Hidden Valleys, Woods and Panoramas

11 miles. Challenging. 6 hrs duration. 09:30 from Springfield Community Campus. £4. 16+ years.

The circular cross-country walk to Colerne has excellent far reaching views. The route uses rights of way across farmland, through old woodlands and along quiet country lanes.

We depart from Corsham, along the old tramway and through a nature reserve area with ponds to Hudswell and on to Guyers Lane.

The walk takes us into peaceful countryside through the atmospheric Weavern Valley with its derelict farmhouse. We skirt Monks Wood, an SSSI and ancient woodland managed by the Woodland Trust. Briefly, we follow the Macmillan Way, a long distance footpath from Lincolnshire to Dorset, then onward past Euridge Manor to Thickwood and Colerne.

We make our way back through Widdenham, another hidden valley, before a steep climb back to Middlewick and Pickwick where Charles Dickens apparently stayed at the Hare & Hounds. The Innkeeper, Moses Pickwick, may have inspired Dickens' novel, *The Pickwick Papers*.

Walking poles may be useful tools for this hilly walk with numerous stiles.

Please bring a packed lunch.

Sponsored by BCH Camping – www.bchcamping.co.uk

SUN6 - Castle Combe's Babbling Brooks and Reserve Revealed

8 miles. Moderate. 5.5 hrs duration. 10:00 hrs from Castle Combe Upper Car Park (Free). GR ST 846777. £5 includes donation to Cotswold Voluntary Wardens' Countryside Fund.

Accompanied by Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, this circular walk provides an interesting day, and includes a unique opportunity to visit a nature reserve managed by the Wardens and not normally opens to the public.

We venture along the wooded valley of the Burton Brook to the hamlets of Nettleton and West Kington. Our return route includes the Broadmead Brook, a clapper style bridge and Nettleton Mill, and then back to the dreaming Cotswold village of Castle Combe with its limestone cottages, often described as the prettiest village in England. Castle Combe has provided the location for many film and TV productions including *Warhorse* and *Downton Abbey*.

The Cotswold Voluntary Wardens celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2018, marking half a century of dedication to the landscape and wildlife of the wonderful Cotswold countryside. They are keen to recruit new members to continue this valuable work, while learning new skills. For more information see the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty website at www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/looking-after/volunteering.

Please bring a packed lunch.

SUN7 – Biddestone, Slaughterford and Colerne Loop

**8.5 miles. Challenging. 5 hrs duration. 10:00 from Biddestone Green. SN14 7DG
Grid ref ST863735. On street parking. £4. 16+ years.**

We leave the picturesque village of Biddestone and its busy duck pond using footpaths across open farmland, along bridleways and quiet lanes.

The walk passes through the village of Slaughterford on the By Brook and onward to Thickwood. The name Slaughterford is thought to combine the old English for sloe bush and ford, or possibly ford of slates – referring to the limestone strata used for stone roof tiles. Mills on the By Brook are of Saxon origin. They milled corn, prepared wool and eventually high quality paper and some mill relics can still be seen here.

After Eastrip the route approaches Euridge. The creator of the Jigsaw fashion chain owns Euridge Manor. We can enjoy lovely varied open views across the Weavern Valley before arriving back at Biddestone.

There will be hills, possibly livestock in fields and muddy areas.

Please bring a packed lunch.

SUN8 – Walkies

**3 miles, 2 hrs, Easy, 10:30 from Box Common, SN13 8HN. 8+. FREE but please book.
Donations to Guide Dogs for the Blind optional.**

A circular walk around Hazelbury Manor and Box Common accompanied by dogs and volunteers from the local Guide Dogs for the Blind Support Group. Dogs to be kept on lead until agreed with walk leader. Suitable footwear needed as ground is uneven at times.

Please bring water for the dogs.

Please park with care on Box Common.

SUN9 – Charmy Down and the Splendours of St Catherines

**10 miles. Challenging. 5 hrs duration. 10:30 from Market Place, Marshfield,
SN14, 8NP, GR ST 781737. £4. 16+ years.**

A walk from Marshfield to Charmy Down's disused airfield, then back via St Catherine's Valley.

Charmy Down

It is thought Charmy may be derived from 'enchanted' or 'charmed', referring to several round barrows of Early and Middle Bronze Age. The already damaged barrows were destroyed in 1940 during construction of Charmy Down Airfield. Used during the Second World War by the Royal Air Force and later by the United States Army Air Forces, it was mainly a night fighter interceptor airfield. It closed in 1946 though the remains of its control tower, buildings and runway can still be seen. According to local legend the disused airfield is haunted by a wailing ghost still awaiting the return of her pilot fiancé.

Neolithic walkers may have used the nearby ancient Jurassic Way, which crossed the River Avon and passed around Little Solsbury hill. They left pottery shards and flint implements on Charmy Down, which was their likely home. There is evidence that another very ancient track crossed Charmy Down and descended into the valley along the present Hollies (previously Hollows) Lane. High banked lanes worn low over time, known as holloways, may be partly prehistoric.

On the slopes of Charmy down, groups of Celtic fields are clearly visible from a distance. These small square fields surrounded by banks date from the last centuries BC.

St Catherine's Court

Fast forwarding to Tudor England, Henry VIII granted Catherine Court together with “the ewe flock of Charmy Down”, to his tailor John Malt whose daughter, Ethelreda was probably the illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII himself. Eventually Ethelreda married a John Harington, who after her death, re-married. His son, also John Harington, inherited St Catherine's Court. He was a godson of Queen Elizabeth I and probable inventor of the water closet (hence it's American nickname the 'John').

To bring this convoluted story up to date – a current descendant of John Harington is Kit Harington, the actor who played Jon Snow in Game of Thrones.

Please bring a packed lunch

SUN10 - Hazelbury Challenge

7.5 miles, Challenging, 4.5 hrs, 11:00 from The Selwyn Hall Car Park (Free), Valens Terrace, Box, SN13 8NT, £4, 16+

This delightful circular walks exploring the countryside in and around Box and is a new addition to the Corsham Walking Festival.

The route starts deceptively, a gentle stroll through the water meadow alongside the By Brook to Drewetts Mill. Here we head up hill and are eventually rewarded with a panoramic view across the valley.

We wind our way through the lanes and field paths via Box Hill and on towards Chapel Plaister and past Hazelbury Manor. The intricate route zigzags down and up before bringing us back down into Box.

Just as you think we are about to head back to the car park, we zig, or perhaps zag, up Hazelbury Hill for the final climb of the day.

An airy stroll with superb views across the valley then through the woods and fields down to the western entrance of Box tunnel and, finally, to the car park and the finish.

SUN11 – Living on the Sun

4 miles. Easy. 3 hrs duration. 11:00 from Springfield Community Campus. FREE but please book in advance. Optional donations to Transcoco.

The sun provides the energy needed to sustain all life on earth, in its great diversity. On this walk around the town, we will explore the varied and sometimes-surprising ways humans and wildlife use this energy for life.

Photosynthesis is the process by which plants use sunlight to produce sugars they can use as energy. Plants in turn are a food source for invertebrates and other creatures - including us. We will explore local food production and other sustainable uses of the sun's energy while visiting Corsham Community Orchard, allotments, back garden bee hives, the wildflower garden at Springfield Campus and a private garden with green roofs and rainwater collection - cleverly designed by www.jillfenwick.co.uk.

We will see Transcoco's recent tree planting and find out more about the hidden biodiversity in Corsham's hedgerows, path borders and pockets of secret wilderness, under the expert eye of Peter Harper, a leading environmentalist from Bath University. www.peterharper.org

Solar energy is also harnessed for fuel, reducing our dependence on the fossil fuels that drive climate change, and we will see local examples including domestic and commercial solar installations. Sustainable, clean transport options will be explained by Spindles Bike shop - www.spindlesbikes.co.uk, who will introduce us to electric bicycles and the '20 Is Plenty' campaign.

There will even be an energy boost for walkers in the form of delicious free snacks from Corsham Fairtrade. If you wish to litter pick during our walk please bring gloves, a bag and litter picker if you have one. If you love litter picking why not join in Transcoco's popular monthly litter pick, Clean Up Corsham, on the 4th Saturday of each month at 10 am from Springfield Campus with free coffee and cake at 12 noon – just turn up and kit will be provided.

Transcoco is a local environmental group aiming to develop local solutions to local sustainability issues, helping to address the global challenges of climate change and other environmental challenges. By finding sustainable local solutions, we will help make the Corsham area a more positive and rewarding place to live, work and visit, and contribute to creating a more sustainable future for everyone. To find out more or to join Transcoco please see our website: www.transcoco.org.uk

SUN12 – In and Around Corsham Town

5 miles. Easy. 3.5 hrs duration. 13:30 hrs from Springfield Campus. £4.

A mainly flat walk with views of a number of Corsham's important houses and surrounding countryside. Architectural delights include the Lady Margaret Hungerford Almshouses (c.1668) and The Pound Arts Centre in the Victorian Corsham Primary School.

This delightful walk takes in some of the historic features of Corsham and part of the surrounding countryside, which offers some good views of the local area.

Starting at the Springfield Leisure Centre, the Walk passes through parts of the Victorian and Edwardian residential areas of the Town and takes in the Alms Houses and Corsham Court, both Grade 1 listed buildings.

It then follows Church Street and Priory Street before crossing the main road onto Middlewick Lane and into the countryside.

A well-used track leads to Guyers Lane (which can be fairly exposed) and after passing through a more modern residential area to the Carriage Drive, which, like Middlewick Lane is a picturesque tree lined avenue.

From the end of the Carriage Drive, it is a short walk back to the Leisure Centre.