



**Chilterns
National
Landscape**



Chilterns Walking Festival

Health and wellbeing events
Taster sessions and outdoor learning
Walks for all

**Welcome to the 13th
Chilterns Walking Festival
18 May – 2 June 2024**



© Colin Wharton, Chiltern Explorers

From Hitchin in Hertfordshire to Goring in Oxfordshire, the Chilterns Walking Festival provides over 60 opportunities to enjoy beech woodlands, nature reserves, family walks and much more, all in the expert care of a knowledgeable guide.



Book online

Please visit our website www.chilterns.org.uk/walkingfest where you will also find full details of all events, including information on walk grades, suitability for children and dogs, accessibility and proximity to public transport. You can search for walks by location, date, theme or walk distance to help you find the right walks for you.

This programme gives you a taste of what's on offer during the Festival. But additional walks and events are being added regularly, so do check online for the latest, or follow us on Facebook @ChilternsWalkingFestival



Chesham Beating the Bounds

 Saturday 18  8am  25 miles  0801

Come and join us on this challenging walk around the ancient parish of Chesham which celebrates the old custom of Beating the Bounds.

Mindful walk through stunning woodland and park

 Saturday 18  9am  3 miles  3602

We will explore the woods and park, down and up footpaths in a slow mindful way, paying attention to our surroundings and the impact our environment has on how we feel. Option of tea/coffee and cake after.

Walk to the WW1 Trenches at Marlow Common

 Saturday 18  9.45am  2 miles  0201

Starting from the Royal Oak at Bovingdon Green we will walk to the lovely Marlow common. Enjoy an illustrated talk on the troops, their camp and their activities before exploring the wonderfully preserved First World War practice trenches. Soak up the magic of these beautiful beech woods, then stroll back to the pub for a beer or lunch if you fancy.

Suffragists, bodgers, mosquitoes and goals

 Saturday 18  10am  1.5 miles  2601

Come and hear about the industry that made Wycombe famous throughout the world, learn about Wycombe's serial criminal and why Wycombe Wanderers score in the Guinness Book Records.

Mixed farming and farmland birds - a special farm walk

 Saturday 18  10am  2 miles  2701

A lovely walk along farm tracks and across grass fields with beautiful views across the Thames Valley and Shiplake Marsh local wildlife site. On the way you will see the different crops grown on the farm as well as areas grown especially for birds and wild pollinators. Skylarks should be in full song and the handsome male yellowhammers singing from the hedgerows. If we are lucky we will see lapwing and other wading birds in the water meadows where the beef cattle graze.



Midsomer Murders & more: Amersham film locations from Four Weddings and a Funeral to Poirot

 Saturday 18  10am  5.5 miles  5101

Amersham is a quintessentially Midsomer town and is used as a location in numerous episodes. Amersham also represents the perfect place to live in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, the perfect Cornish fishing village in *My Cousin Rachel*

Our walk starts outside Amersham station and descends through classic beech woods and rolling fields to Old Amersham. We will walk around the Old Town pointing out the *Midsomer Murders* and other film locations, then stroll beside the River Misbourne before turning up the hill towards the station and passing the Modernist house, *High & Over* which is used in filming *Poirot* and *Midsomer Murders*.

Book online

www.chilterns.org.uk/walkingfest



Chesham Beating the Bounds - 5 Mile Walk
 📅 Saturday 18 ⌚ 2.30pm 📏 5 miles 📍 0701

Come and join us on this walk around part of the ancient Parish of Chesham as we celebrate the old custom of Beating the Bounds. The first section of the walk will make its way to Tylers Hill and then follow the old parish boundary as it winds its way back to Chesham. The route will take us through some beautiful Chilterns scenery and alongside the lovely River Chess.

Sarratt Circular – exploring the Chess Catchment
 📅 Sunday 19 ⌚ 10am 📏 6 miles 📍 5501

Our route begins at the Cock Inn Pub in Sarratt. We walk past the picturesque church and almshouses at Sarratt, before a steep descent to join the Chess Valley Walk. Highlights along the walk include the historic site of Sarratt Mill, woodland wanderings through Mount Wood, followed by the river crossing on the newly restored bridge. We pass the Crystal Watercress Beds stopping on route to look at other heritage features within the Chess Landscape. Finally a steep climb will see us returning to the Cock Inn for a welcome drink.

Murder on the Ridgeway
 📅 Sunday 19 ⌚ 10am 📏 5 miles 📍 0901

We start with a short introduction to the history of the Old Kiln Lakes area and its link to the Chinnor heritage railway before boarding the steam train for an hour's return journey to Princes Risborough. Arriving back at Chinnor, we then walk a scenic part of the Ridgeway to Bledlow.

We explore the village, a regular venue in Midsomer Murders, with the "Lions of Bledlow" pub and church appearing frequently. We then visit, courtesy of the Carington Estate, the Lyde Garden, a secluded glade planted with bamboos and ferns. There will be time for a stop at the pub for light refreshments, or a picnic on the village green before returning to Chinnor.

Frieth, Fingest, Turville and Skirmett circular walk
 📅 Sunday 19 ⌚ 10am 📏 6 miles 📍 3904

A scenic 6-mile walk via the picturesque Fingest, Turville and Skirmett villages, offering wonderful views and scenery and some steep climbs.

Dunstable Downs, Whipsnade and Kensworth
 📅 Sunday 19 ⌚ 10.30am 📏 6.2 miles 📍 3801

Our walk begins atop Dunstable Downs, a long section of the northwestern escarpment offering wide and expansive views over the Ouzel valley and the Vale of Aylesbury. We pass along the edge of the large and striking Kensworth chalk quarry, through Kensworth village and across Whipsnade Heath into Whipsnade village. We will visit the Tree Cathedral, a unique site, before returning to Dunstable Downs enjoying wonderful views along the way.

A Christmas Tree Farm in Spring - a special farm walk
 📅 Sunday 19 ⌚ 2pm 📏 2 miles 📍 2702

Enjoy a gentle circular walk on farm tracks and across fields, through a Christmas tree plantation, woodland, and beautiful wildflower meadows restored from arable fields. You will learn about what the farm is doing to support biodiversity including planting and restoring hedgerows. We will take in the birdsong and look out for spring butterflies and seasonal wildflowers in the meadows.



Guided Stanley Spencer Gallery Walk around Cookham

Monday 20 10am 4 miles 3901

Join Ann Danks from the Stanley Spencer Gallery and Andrew Clark from the Chiltern Society for a special guided walk around beautiful Cookham where you'll enjoy a morning through the eyes of Stanley Spencer - a local artist who became well known for depicting biblical scenes as if in Cookham itself, where he was born and spent most of his life. The walk will start from the Stanley Spencer Gallery and visit the places that provided inspiration for many of Spencer's paintings.

Nature's Lore

Monday 20 10am 5 miles 3701

On this short walk around Maidensgrove Common and Warburg Nature Reserve, we will delve into some 'plant-lore' to foster a greater connection with our natural world. Through the plants we find along our way we explore the intimate relationship between human and plant worlds, and discover how they have shaped our culture, customs, legends, folklore and medicinal practice.



Chesham Bois Common Architecture and History Walk

Wednesday 22 1pm 1 mile 4101

Starting at Chesham Bois Parish Centre this walk will take us around the outskirts of Chesham Bois Common, looking at the history of Chesham Bois from the early Manor Farms, through the development of the village after the railway to WWII. We will talk about the architects and developers who built the houses and the artists, artisans and social campaigners who lived in them.

Mysterious Earthworks

Wednesday 22 10am 5 miles 1101

A circular walk led by the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group Gallowstree Common, looking at the fascinating archaeological features in the area. We walk through woodland that contains ancient sawpits, the site of a reputed Gallows and ancient earthworks. We will pass by Wyfold Grange, site of a 12th century monastic grange, as well as the Victorian Gothic Revival mansion of Wyfold Court, an iron age hill fort, and an intriguing earthwork enclosure in Old Copse.

Discover the History and Wildlife around the Marsworth Waterways and Tring Reservoirs

Thursday 23 10am 4.75 miles 4401

Discover the history and the wildlife of the waterways near Tring on this gentle waterside walk. The route includes a visit to one of the best birdwatching sites in the area, Wilstone Reservoir. There is also the opportunity to learn how mobile technology can help navigation with some great tips from Delphine from Visorando UK www.visorando.com/en/

Sundown Saunter

Thursday 23 6.45pm 5 miles 3704

Join us for a short eventide walk from Maidensgrove. Our route takes us to Bix Bottom to join the ancient track leading up to Cookley Green, past Russell's Water pond and returning over Maidensgrove Common discovering flora, fauna and local history along the way. As the golden sun sets, we take time to tune into the sights and sounds of the evening - look (and listen) out for owls, deer, and more! If the weather is kind, we will get to marvel at the sunset and finish our walk as the Full Flower Moon rises.



Stunning Hambleden Valley
 📅 Friday 24 ⌚ 9.30am 📏 5 miles 4501

Starting from Hambleden Village Stores, we will head up to the top of Hambleden and Rotten Row for epic views and stunning countryside.

A Turnpike down a Holloway
 📅 Friday 24 ⌚ 9.45am 📏 7 miles 3703

The Lambert Arms, an old coaching inn near Aston Rowant, is the perfect place from which to explore the highways and byways of the Chilterns escarpment. We set off along the ancient Icknield Way (Ridgeway National Trail) and, after discovering a vanished railway, we climb the hill on the medieval 'London Weye' and the old London to Oxford turnpike. Continuing through the towering Chilterns beechwoods and out onto Beacon Hill we have time to marvel at the panoramic views, including the impressive M40 Stokenchurch cutting. An old 'holloway' then leads us back down to the Icknield way. From here it is a short walk to Lewknor and back to the Lambert Arms.



Mindful Feet walk through beautiful woodland
 📅 Saturday 25 ⌚ 9am 📏 5 miles 3601

We will explore Crowsley Park wood, down and up footpaths in a slow mindful way, paying attention to our surroundings and the impact our environment has on our feet and lower legs. Optional tea/coffee and cake afterwards.

Butties, Birds and Beautiful Views - A walk from The Alford Arms
 📅 Saturday 25 ⌚ 9.30am 📏 4.5 miles 1201

Join us for a bacon butty and cuppa (on the house) at The Alford Arms before venturing out into the lovely Gade Valley. The walk starts out along a Roman Road, passes a Buddhist monastery and through the water meadows beside the River Gade. Along the way there are outstanding views over the valley and the opportunity to spot local wildlife.



Amersham Drovers' Walk
 📅 Saturday 25 ⌚ 10.30am 📏 5 miles 5102

While some drovers' routes covered very long distances, every town and village had tracks along which animals were driven to reach common land. Drawing on research into Amersham's history, we will explain the importance of common land and drovers to the local economy. Starting outside Amersham Museum we will take the drovers' track towards Wycombe Heath and then to Little Missenden. From there we will follow the route of the original Aylesbury to London road, through the park designed by Humphrey Repton on our way back to Amersham.

READING WALKS FESTIVAL
 11-19 May
 readingwalksfestival.org
 Guided walks: 40 minutes to 2 days



Lane End in the two world wars and old village industries
 📅 Saturday 25 ⌚ 10.30am 📏 2.5 miles 2501

We remember the men from Lane End who did not come back from the two world wars. Also places where the wars came to this village - some sad, some narrow escapes, and King Zog's favourite wartime dance venue. We also consider the water supply problems and geology high in the chalk Chilterns. Most of the walk is through the village but includes a climb up through Widdenton Park Wood.

Coleshill to Penn Bottom scenic loop
 📅 Sunday 26 ⌚ 10am 📏 5.8 miles 3903

An interesting countryside walk through woods and farmland in the heart of the Chilterns. From Coleshill we take in Hertfordshire House, Penn Bottom and the Penn Estate, before following the Chiltern Way back.

Wendover Woods loop from Wendover
 📅 Sunday 26 ⌚ 10am 📏 6.5 miles 5301

Walk from Wendover up the Hale and the Outer Aylesbury Ring path through Wendover Woods to Haddington Hill the highest point in the Chilterns. We will return via the visitor centre and cafe, passing the ancient Boddington Hill Fort along the way.

A worker's village, a medieval settlement, and four ways to climb a hill
 📅 Sunday 26 ⌚ 10.30am 📏 3 miles 0101

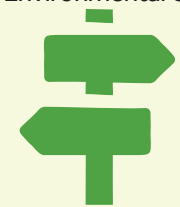
We start at a "worker's village" and discover which of their products can be seen on TV every day. Then explore several routes up the hill - first a cattle drovers road forming a deep hollow-way, then a toll road which was made too steep for the traffic (!), a third way built using a team of tiny steam engines, and the 4th route which was shown on Vicar of Dibley titles. On the way we see a well-preserved medieval settlement which was investigated by the police. Finishing back at the village pub.

Explore the Chiltern hills : Hughenden Manor to West Wycombe circular walk
 📅 Monday 27 ⌚ 10am 📏 6.2 miles 4301

Setting off from Hughenden Manor our walk offers heaps of views, wildlife spotting, and history preserved by the National Trust. It goes up and down the Chilterns hills and woodlands where we hope to see bluebells. Keep your ears and eyes wide open listening to the whistling red kites and other wildlife along the way. Guided by Delphine from Visorando UK www.visorando.com/en/

Deep Time Walk and Yoesden Nature Reserve
 📅 Monday 27 ⌚ 10am 📏 8 miles 5701

A circular 8 mile walk from Chinnor including Hedgerley Wood Deep Time Walk and BBOWT Yoesden Nature Reserve. Led by Catherine Campbell of Friends of the Earth, Climate Action Now! and Risborough Environmental Group.





Chilterns Electric Bike Tour
 Tuesday 28 10.30am 20 miles 5401

A 20 miles electric bike tour visiting Berkhamsted Castle, Tring Park, Aldbury, Ivinghoe Beacon and Ashridge House.

A Gentle Stroll: Whipsnade Tree Cathedral and Whipsnade Heath
 Tuesday 28 10.30am 1 mile 4601

Join us for a walk across the Whipsnade Estate surrounding Dunstable Downs. Our circular route takes us from the Chilterns Gateway Centre, to Whipsnade Tree Cathedral and to see the bluebells out on Whipsnade Heath. You will learn interesting facts about the history and nature of Whipsnade and the Downs along the way.

Amersham-on-the-Hill between the Wars
 Tuesday 28 1pm 2 miles 4001

A circular route from Amersham Station, providing an insight into the development of Amersham on the hill between the wars, with a particular focus on Metroland.

Family Friendly riverside night time wildlife walk
 Tuesday 28 8.30pm 2miles 5601

As the sun goes down we will walk along the River Chess to see if we can spot any night time wildlife. There will be bat detectors available to help us spot these amazing creatures. The walk will be short with lots of stops to watch wildlife.

Stokenchurch and the Chiltern Way Walk
 Wednesday 29 10am 6 miles 5001

Starting in Stokenchurch, this is a scenic and undulating walk through woods and over commons. We follow sections of the Chiltern Way and Bledlow Circular Ride enjoying wonderful views through classic Chilterns landscapes.

Book online
www.chilterns.org.uk/walkingfest

Wendover hills and dales
 Wednesday 29 10am 8.5 miles 0301

A scenic walk with several steep climbs. Starting in Wendover we go up Bacombe hill via the burial mound to Coombe Hill memorial, then back paths to St Mary's church Wendover. From there we join the Ridgeway to Wendover Woods and the cairn marking the highest point in the Chilterns. We return to Wendover via Boddington Hill Iron age hill fort.

A walk around Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve
 Wednesday 29 10.15am 1.5 miles 4301

The walk will start at the Nature Reserve office and take in Beacon Hill. We will meet the sheep and learn how they, and other management tools, keep the chalk grassland in good condition. Whilst watching the Red Kites dive above us, we'll learn about their reintroduction; why our Junipers are so special; how we've addressed Ash die-back on site, and why we love our yellow meadow ants! We'll finish the walk with tea and locally sourced cake.



A short walk on Naphill Common

Wednesday 29 10.30am 3 miles 0601

A circular walk of 2-3 miles around one of the largest wooded commons in the Chilterns, the walk leader will share information about the geophysical, natural and historical aspects of the Common.

To A Skylark!

Thursday 30 7.15am 4 miles 1001

Join us for this early morning walk to discover and celebrate 'the herald of the morn' - the joyous song of the skylark, and more! The arable fields of the Chilterns are home to the 'the morning lark', a small bird which has been the subject of many works of literature from Chaucer to Shelley, and the music of Vaughan Williams and more. Our walk takes us through the Chilterns countryside around Binfield Heath and Shiplake Row where the wide-open fields of Shiplake Farm are a perfect place to experience an 'exultation' of skylarks and to discover what makes this 'ethereal minstrel' so special.



Midsomer Murders in Hambleton, Turville and Frieth

Thursday 30 10am 9.4 miles 1001

This circular walk visits contrasting Chilterns villages of Hambleton, Turville, Fingest and Frieth. In all those places you will see filming locations of the long-running popular TV series Midsomer Murders. Graham will tell you all about the episodes filmed there and the stories behind the filming. From Hambleton the route ascends the valley past Skirmett, then through woodland and farmland to Turville. After a look around the village we continue through similar terrain to Fingest and Frieth, with more stops to discover some Midsomer Murders filming locations.

Red Rose Ramblings

Friday 31 8.45am 13 miles 3702

This is a linear day walk using the Red Rose Bus 122 to take us from Watlington to Peppard. Our 13-mile ramblings then take us through the bottoms and tops of Chilterns, via Nettlebed and Russell's Water, to return to Watlington. Our route is a hilly one through the towering beech woods clothed in their fresh green foliage, and with an awesome view to soak in on our descent into Watlington. This walk is supporting Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

Discovering The Ridgeway and The Wormsley Estate

Friday 31 10am 9.7 miles 2802

Starting from Lewknor, we will reach The Ridgeway and follow it for a couple of miles with great views. We ascend toward the crest of the Chiltern Hills at Christmas Common, then take a woodland footpath towards the Wormsley Estate.

On a footpath through the estate we may be able to see their cricket pitch, the Garsington Opera Pavilion and possibly the house itself. Further woodland paths bring us to the Aston Rowant Nature Reserve where there is one final panoramic view before the descent back to Lewknor. Graham will intersperse the walk with stories of the area.





Midsomer Mayhem meets Chiltern's Charm: Great Missenden to The Lee circular walk

Saturday 1 10am 7miles **5201**

Great Missenden and The Lee were used as filming locations for Painted in Blood and seven other episodes of Midsomer Murders. Follow in the steps of DCI Barnaby fighting crime in the deadly county of Midsomer.

We'll walk through woods and across fields to The Lee with its charming village green where amateur artist Ruth Fairfax was brutally murdered at her easel. This is the village of Badgers Drift which appeared in the 1997 pilot and in subsequent episodes. We will return a different way to the Misbourne valley and Great Missenden.

Meet the MTA- Introduction to Navigation (map reading skills)

Saturday 1 10am 7miles **5201**

Under the guidance of experienced NNAS tutors learn the essential basics of map reading during a half day outdoors, giving you the skills to confidently find your way around the countryside.

We will start with an introduction to maps before heading outside to learn basic techniques including understanding map features and symbols, measuring distances, timing and pacing, kit choices and the Countryside Code. No experience necessary and you are welcome to join up if you want to brush up on your existing knowledge.

Ramble on the Hamble Farm Walk

Saturday 1 2pm 2 miles **2703**

A circular walk through meadows alongside a chalk stream and up to the wildflower chalk slopes of the hills. Passing through the river valley you will see how the Hamble Brook is being restored and possibly see some river fly monitoring in action. A highlight will be meeting the Dexter cows and their calves and hearing why they are so important to Colstrop Farm and in managing the Chilterns landscape. An old orchard with ancient apple varieties, wildflower meadows, hedges and trees are all providing wonderful wildlife habitat and will provide plenty to enjoy on this family friendly walk.

Lane End to Fingest

Sunday 2 10am 5.5 miles **3902**

This is a hilly walk with lovely views of the Chilterns countryside. From Lane End we walk through Finings Wood and descend Hanover Hill into picturesque Fingest. We then head uphill towards Cadmore End and Wheeler End Common where we pass The Chequers Inn on our way back.



Book online

www.chilterns.org.uk/walkingfest



Meet the MTA -West Wycombe, Naphill Common, Bradenham village circular
 Sunday 2 10.15am 6 miles 4201

Our walk starts from West Wycombe Hill featuring the medieval St. Lawrence Church and Dashwood Mausoleum, descending past the infamous Hell- Fire Caves and into the lovely Chilterns countryside.

After a short heart pumping climb towards Downley we continue through Naphill Common woodland and then to the Bradenham Estate and manor house where Queen Victoria's favourite Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli lived as a part of his early life. After a picnic lunch on the common we return to West Wycombe through undulating fields and woods.

The Danesfield House Gardens and Hillfort Tour
 Sunday 2 11am 2 miles 0501

With our glorious 65 acres of manicured gardens, we are delighted to once again open our grounds this year with an informative 1.5 hour tour given by Head Gardener, Dave Brown and his team. You will discover the numerous unique plantings, the Italian garden, rare c1900 Pulham Stone monuments and the remains of an Iron Age Hillfort know as Danesfield Camp. This will be followed by a brief talk about the house as RAF Medmenham from 1941-1946, by resident historian, Peter Faarup.

The Danesfield House Gardens and Hillfort Tour
 Sunday 2 2pm 2 miles 0502

Repeat of 11am Tour – see above.

Exploring the beautiful Chess Valley

We are very pleased to have a number of walks taking place in the Chess Valley as part of this Festival. The River Chess, is one of the 9 chalk streams in the Chilterns. A rare and precious habitat, Chalk Streams are sensitive to how the surrounding land is farmed and managed.

The Chilterns National Landscape is working with partners, volunteers and landowners across the catchment to help conserve and protect these special features of the Chilterns National Landscape. This leaflet is kindly sponsored by the Chess Smarter Water Catchment Project. For more information about the Chess Valley water catchment, our conservation work and volunteering opportunities see www.chesssmarterwatercatchment.org

Book online
www.chilterns.org.uk/walkingfest





Nature friendly farming in the Chilterns – Meet the farmers!

Some of our wonderful Chilterns farmers have been busy planning walks to share what they're doing to encourage nature friendly farming whilst producing high quality food. You will get to see parts of the farm not normally open to the public, including restored wildflower meadows, hedgerows rich in wildlife and grazing cows.

Enjoy some beautiful views, and a variety of habitats whilst seeing and hearing first-hand the difference that this sensitive farming approach makes to wildlife.

18 May - Mixed farming and farmland birds

19 May – Christmas Tree Farm in Spring

1 June – Ramble on the Hamble farm walk

The farm walks have been organised with the help of Wessex Farm Wildlife.



Less than an hour away from London, the Chilterns National Landscape is easily accessible by both road and rail. With 20 railway stations, and even a London Underground line, our market towns are easily reached by public transport and provide an excellent gateway to the Chilterns. [Plan your journey www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)



www.chilterns.org.uk



River Chess
Smarter Water
Catchment

The Chilterns Walking Festival is an initiative of the Chilterns National Landscape.