

# Walk

## BEDFORDSHIRE AND BEYOND



MAGAZINE AND WALKING PROGRAMME AUTUMN / WINTER 2025



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## Bob's Corner

by Bob Wallace, Chair of IVW Ramblers Group

Exciting times for Ivel Valley Walkers over the last four months. Our first holiday abroad in Calvados - thanks to Carolyn, Mark and Roger - and the more recent holiday in Wales (Anglesey) - thanks to RoyC, RoyD and Tom. For the mountaineers in the group there was the walk across the Millennium Dome!! And there was IVW's busy Walks programme - about 70 walks.

And now a busy autumn leading up to Christmas including:-

- Our AGM to be held at Old Warden Village Hall on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November
- Our Christmas lunch to be held at Bedfordshire Golf Club on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December
- The Mulled Wine Ramble will be held at Wootton on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December

and

- Roy's annual Sherry Amble will be held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> January

Look out for news on Roy's regular bulletins of the IVW London Christmas walk on a Saturday in early December



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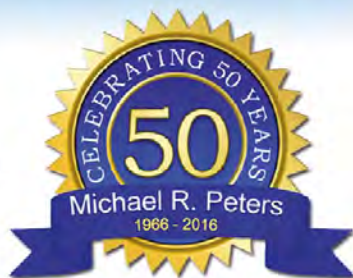
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# Know even more about your pub

by Graham Fetcher



Continuing from last time's article here's some pubs that you may have visited with the club or personally, including some in Cambridge.

**The Pig and Whistle** from Anglo Saxon 'piggin wassail' meaning good health

**Cross Keys** the sign of St Peter

**White Horse** sign of the House of Hanover

**Hole in the Wall** there's various origins of this one although based usually on small premises squeezed in somehow. In Little Wilbraham, the agricultural workers left their container on the way to work and then collected them filled up on the way home. In Bristol it commemorates the time of the press gangs when the hole gave early warning of the press gang coming down the street.

**Baron of Beef** a top sirloin roast joint.

**Alma** this is a small river in the Crimea where the British and French overcame the Russians just prior to the disastrous Battle of Balaclava.

**Blue Moon** the second of two full moons in a single month.

**The Eagle** near King's College was previously The Eagle and Child and opened in 1667. This came about when Sir Thomas Latham wanted a son. His wife failed to get pregnant but that did not stop Sir Tom from fathering a son with a maid. He devised a plan to leave the child at the

base of a tree where eagles nested and persuaded his wife the child had been stolen by the birds and abandoned and asked her to adopt it thereby legitimising him to be the heir.

**Earl of Beaconsfield** this was the title Benjamin Disraeli took in 1876. He refused a dukedom in 1878, accepting an Order of the Garter instead. He died childless in 1881.

**Pickerel Inn** near Jesus College, a pickerel is a baby pike and is supposedly the oldest pub in Cambridge (1608)

**Queen Edith** She was the common law wife (married under Danish law) of Harold II (of arrow in eye fame) and a large landowner including parts of Cambridge. She probably lived at Hinton Hall which was local to Cherry Hinton.

**Moon under Water** this is the name of an essay by George Orwell for the Evening Standard, written in 1946, about his perfect pub. It details 10 key points that a pub in London should have. This name has been used 14 times by Wetherspoons and talking of that....

**J.D. Wetherspoon** is a made-up name. The company is owned by Tim Martin who was once told at school by a teacher named Mr Wetherspoon that he would come to nothing. Tim's favourite TV show was the Dukes of Hazard and his favourite character was "Boss" Hogg whose initials were J.D.

See you down the pub.....

# Quite a challenge.....

## 100 MILES

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By Roy Dunham

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A few years ago, out on an Ivel Valley walk, a few people asked "why don't you join the LDWA? You walk 12 miles regularly so you can manage a few more!" I looked into it and thought yes why not I'll give it a go!



The Long Distance Walking Association was formed by a few people in 1972 and has now grown into a national association with many 1000s of members. The first area group was formed in 1973 and now there are at least 43 groups spread across the UK.

Our local one is the BBN - Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire - and we run social walks from around 15 miles and perhaps 20 miles at the weekends. Several times a year there are Challenge walks, usually 18 or 26 miles, to be completed in a certain time, usually

10.5 hours and to visit three checkpoints along the way. For a small fee you're provided with snacks and drinks along the way, a light meal at the end and a certificate if you finish in the time.

These are very well organised with volunteer marshals, checkpoint helpers and kitchen staff all very welcoming and helpful.

The flagship event of the LDWA is the 100mile Challenge event, to be completed within 48 hours, held over the late May Bank Holiday weekend and each year it is held in a different county. In 2025 it was the turn of the Norfolk & Suffolk group to host the event. Having by now done quite a lot of Challenge events, the conversations became "have you thought about entering for the Hundred?"

"No not really!"

But the seed was sown and with it my entry into a 50 mile qualifying event, the Surrey tops, in September 2024. It has to be completed in 20 hours with a significant amount of night walking and navigation so at 10am on a Saturday morning off we go. Then it rained, it rained some more and then it rained again!



The night time walking was awful with flooded paths, water over the top of your boots, deep mud and numerous exposed tree roots. I'm thinking "what am I doing this for its crazy, why oh why?" Eventually I get back to the base and in just over 18 hours. I've done it, I've qualified for the Hundred !

The next step is shall I enter? The 50 was hard enough but I'll never know if I don't give it a try so in goes my entry along with 520 others!

You're given a written route description which is like another language and also a gpx route which is downloaded onto your phone enabling you to recce the route if you wish, which I did on a couple of occasions.

The big day looms and off I went to Ipswich and a hotel I've booked for four nights of which I'll only use for two. I hope.

A school at Rushmere St Andrew was the headquarters for the event and that morning it was absolutely buzzing with walkers being checked in, trackers fitted to rucksacks which enables friends and family to follow you along the whole route, your timings at all the 16 checkpoints to be, well, checked, and organisers able to find you if you happen to get lost or have an accident.

I'd decided beforehand to try to raise some money for a good cause and was very pleased to raise around £700 for Cancer Research.

10am arrived, we assembled and were escorted out of the school grounds by a steel band.

My plan was to walk steadily, not to rush things, eat and drink regularly and to enjoy the walk, only a hundred miles to go!

All was going well and I arrived at checkpoint three which is run by our local group, nice to see some friendly faces.



On again passing Framlingham Castle where I must do a 'self clip'. What's this? We all have a tally card and on reaching particular points there's clipper attached to some string and for us to clip our card to prove we've been. There's three of these plus three 'virtual self clips' which are where our trackers feed back that we've been.

Sitting in a farmer's large barn, a huge pile of grain behind us and a combine harvester to the right, we rested and enjoyed snacks.

Out into the night now and things slowed down as route finding is more tricky

looking for footpaths and other signs with your headtorch as well as not trying not to trip over.

Nights are short so dawn soon arrived and we passed through Thorpeness, down the beach to Aldeburgh and to the iconic sculpture shell on the beach which is a virtual checkpoint and the logo for the flower of Suffolk 100 mile event.



On then to Snape Maltings , to Orford, another self clip and then into Rendlesham forest, the scene of a famous UFO sighting in 1980. Or not? Where we self clip by a spaceship!

Into the night again heading towards Sutton Hoo and a gazebo checkpoint. Each checkpoint is hosted by a different area group and it is fascinating to hear accents from Northumberland, Wales, Yorkshire to Cornwall and many others.

We circuited the river Deben and Woodbridge in the dark to Woodbridge Sea Scouts at 94miles. Our last checkpoint is Little Bealings at 99.4 miles

where we were greeted by more BBN volunteers and a beer!

Tired and weary with aching shoulders carrying a rucksack for over 100 miles with a mandatory kit list which is checked at some point. Back at checkpoint three I had to show my waterproof over-trousers which I never wore for the whole walk.

Dawn is breaking again and I am greeted by a hunting barn owl, the perfect way to finish the walk!

I arrive back at the school grounds to be greeted by a marshall who walked me in to the finish, up some stairs(!!) and as I entered the hall he called out "Finisher" and the people in the hall applauded you in. Apparently the later walkers receive bigger applause than the early finishers.

So I've made it, my first 100mile challenge completed and after a rest and a meal it's back to the hotel for a sleep, the first for 48 hours!

What a fantastic experience which was brilliantly organised with amazing support from all the volunteers involved.

Will I do it again?

Next year it is being held in Kent, the Honeypot Hundred, the title coming from some of the locations used which are mentioned in the Winnie the Pooh books.

Well Kent isn't that far is it.....?

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# A Tale of Two Cities



By complete coincidence Ivel Valley's next two holidays are both centred in wonderful historic cities, Canterbury and Durham. Both endowed with magnificent cathedrals, both are World Heritage Sites.

This autumn, Canterbury in Kent is our destination. With origins dating from the 6th

century, the cathedral is the mother of the worldwide Anglican community, with the Archbishop of Canterbury at its head.

In 1170, the then Archbishop Thomas Beckett was murdered in the nave by 4 knights who, mistakenly, believed they were carrying out the wishes of King Henry II. Once buried many miracles were attributed to his grave, as a result of which he was declared a saint.

Following Canterbury's acquisition of a saint, the city became a popular destination for pilgrimages, made famous by Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Written in the 14th century, it tells us stories through the eyes of the pilgrims, giving us a window into life at that time.

Within the city, we also find St Martin's church, the oldest English-speaking church in England, occupied since the 6th century to this day. The graveyard contains the remains of many notable citizens, but my favourite is that of Mary Tourtell, originator of my childhood hero, Rupert the Bear.

During our walk we will discover many ancient and fascinating streets and buildings that still remain.





Next spring we will be travelling to the City of Durham, dating from 995 when it was established in a bend of the river Wear by Anglo Saxon monks, seeking a refuge from the Vikings.

Within the cathedral walls the tomb of the Venerable Bede and that of St Cuthbert are to be found and as in Canterbury, the tombs became destinations for pilgrimages, providing the townsfolk with a “nice little earner”. I suppose the forerunner of modern-day tourism.

Durham also has a most impressive castle, built to protect the city and area from marauding Scots. The English having found it difficult to protect the North, appointed, in 1075, a Prince Bishop, who had autonomous powers to raise an army, mint coins and levy taxes. I guess you could consider this an original form of outsourcing.

The cathedral is a wonderful example of Norman architecture with a huge stone vaulted nave remaining largely unchanged over 900 years, during which time it has been a place of continuous worship. Much of the wealth in this area stemmed from coal and lead mines, another claim to fame is that mustard was invented here.

I should, of course, add that although our holidays are based in and around these two cities, our walks explore the impressive surrounding countryside and coastline.

# NORMANDY

my take on a week in May  
filled with history, laughter, frogs, and a fair bit of delicious food.

by Sandra Axtell

Our Ivel Valley holiday kicked off with a smooth-as-silk crossing aboard what looked like a brand-new Brittany Ferry—so sleek I almost expected it to take off. After docking in Caen, a short drive brought us to Bayeux, a charming little gem that immediately impressed. With a free afternoon to explore, I wandered cobbled streets and soaked up the town's gentle elegance. The tone was set for what would become an unforgettable week.



## Day One: Bayeux & Vaux-sur-Aure

We met in the courtyard of the seminary that houses the iconic Bayeux Tapestry and strolled through narrow lanes, past grand 17th-century townhouses, Roman wall remnants, the majestic cathedral, and the vast British cemetery.

In the afternoon, we followed the Aure river to the fairy-tale village of Vaux-sur-Aure. Highlight of the afternoon was a pond absolutely booming with frogs—I've never heard such a thunderous croak chorus in my life! And then, the icing on the cake (or rather, six scoop on a cone): a stop at Ferme de la Haizerie where I tasted creamy, dreamy ice cream alongside the cows who helped make it. Heavenly.

## Day Two: Omaha Beach

This day left a mark. Standing at the American Cemetery, looking over Omaha Beach, you can't help but feel the weight of history. The stories of the 29th Division, the MG42s, and the brutal landings hit hard. And hearing about the Niland brothers—whose story inspired *Saving Private Ryan*—was deeply moving.

Later, we walked along the dunes, past German bunkers and memorials, the sea just a few metres away. It was emotional enough, but the day ended with the "TAPS" ceremony and flag lowering. I won't lie, I was holding back the tears.

## Day Three: Creully & the Seulles Valley

From the impressive Creully Château, we walked through pretty villages and lush countryside, and in the afternoon, followed the Seulles Valley back via Colombiers and Tierceville.

History came alive when we learned about war correspondent Chester Wilmot broadcasting from the square tower, and General Montgomery welcoming King George VI, Churchill, and Eisenhower just across the river. It felt like walking on sacred ground.

## Day Four: Gold Beach & the British Memorial

Starting at the British Normandy Memorial in Ver-sur-Mer, we wandered through quiet villages, fields and coastlines, eventually reaching Asnelles with breathtaking views of Arromanches and the ghostly Mulberry Harbour remains.

But nothing prepared me for the Standing with Giants installation—1,500 life-size silhouettes of those who landed here. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, nurses. It's one of the most emotional things I've ever seen. No words. Just gratitude for the freedom we have today.



### Day Five: Cerisy-la-Forêt

A peaceful walk through the Cerisy National Forest, bogage, and meadows, ending at the stunning Cerisy Abbey. It's hard to believe such tranquillity now exists in a place with such a turbulent past—Vikings, Normans, monks, revolutionaries... all left their mark. The unusual Sculpture Park was a hidden delight.

### Day Six: Port-en-Bessin & Longues-sur-Mer

We wrapped up in Port-en-Bessin, a working fishing port that's full of charm and character. Our walk took us past the German gun battery at Longues-sur-Mer, part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall. The encasements still stand, scarred but solid, with views stretching all the way to the Mulberry harbours.

From there, a stunning cliff-top path led us back to town. Sea air, history, and views for miles—a perfect finale.

### Celebration at Château Saint Gilles

What better way to end than with a celebration meal in the gorgeous surroundings of Château Saint Gilles. The ambience, the food, the laughter—it was one

of those evenings you never want to end.

#### A huge Merci

Now, I couldn't finish without a massive thank you to the dream team: Carolyn & Mark, Roger & Ligia, and of course Tom. You turned this trip into something truly special.

Carolyn & Mark—thank you for the gentle (okay, persistent) encouragement to try macarons from a particular shop in Bayeux. I hate the ones in the UK, but you were right. The French ones? Exquisite!

Roger—your advice to spend time with “our boys” at the cemeteries hit deep. That quiet reflection stayed with me and gratitude for the freedom I have today. Which should never be taken for granted.

And Tom—thank you for your ever-steady support and for constantly keeping me on my toes (usually by pulling my leg!). Your good humour and quick wit were as much a part of the journey as the scenery. Wouldn't have been the same without you!

This was more than just a walking holiday. It was a week of stories, emotions, and unforgettable moments. I came home with tired legs, a full heart—and a suitcase full of macarons.



# The Fran Interview



By Fran Stedman



## Stuart Tripcony

Prior to retiring Stuart worked with individuals with learning difficulties, starting with large institutions in the mid-80s, qualifying as a RNMH (Registered

Nurse Mental Health) He worked for the NHS for 10 years opening respite and residential services in Hampshire prior to moving into the voluntary sector in London. For the last 20 years he ran Central Bedfordshire Council's in-house service provision for those with learning disabilities and was also seconded to take a Social Work degree. He's lived in Bedfordshire for 20 years, has three grown up children and has been lucky enough to be married to Rachel since 2013.

## When and why did you join IVW?

I retired in the Spring of 2024 and my darling wife thought she better find me more things to do so picked up a copy of the IVW magazine. At some point I looked at it and thought I would check out all these fit and 'mature' people! I phoned Roy and my first walk was from Woburn as part of the Greensand Ridge walk.

## What does IVW mean to you?

Exploring, fitness and fun. I think IVW is a marvellous group with many interesting people and great walks, it's a privilege to be a member.

## You have an unusual surname. Discuss!

Tripcony originates from a small village in

Cornwall called St Keverne. Colloquially it breaks down to Trip meaning 'catch' and Cony meaning 'rabbit' so we were either game keepers or poachers. We have a family crest which features three rabbits and a cockerel with a viper in its beak!

## Are there any stories about famous or infamous relatives?

My father has traced the family tree back to the 13th century. At some point in the dim and distant past Cornwall made a bid for independence and there was a planned march to London, but the King at the time sent his troops and a court down to Exeter, where my forebear, Radus Tripcony was tried for treason and hung.

## Besides walking, what else do you enjoy doing?

Amongst other things sailing at Priory Lake, playing football, old convertible cars, and I am a bit of a collector. My biggest collection is over 330 pre-decimal Ladybird books dating back to the 1940s.

## Do you have a funny anecdote to share?

When others heard I was going to be doing this feature two specific people (you know who you are) told me that they wanted me to share the juicier aspects of my life. I am afraid dear reader that I have lived a wholesome life so have no anecdotes to share of that nature!

I love Poldark so this is my best Cornish for you Stuart....

Thank you Me 'ansum and Durdatha whye!





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# THE HISTORY OF ORDNANCE SURVEY – Part 2

By Graham Fletcher

**Now, where were we from our last issue? Ah yes, about to enter the 20th century.**



One element missing from maps was accurate elevation above sea level. Since the 1830s the measurements were conducted with a level instrument (stave) on a bench, a horizontal line

was marked and so future measurements could be taken exactly. An arrow mark indicated where it was; hence a benchmark.

**1920** The OS base level from which heights are measured was fixed at Newlyn harbour in Cornwall. OS had always been funded by the government so little attention was paid to its commercial side. This changed after WW1 when a commercial artist, Ellis Martin, improved the appearance of the maps to make them more desirable to purchase. Car numbers were on the rise so the maps included more road information, contours at 50ft were added and editions aimed at holidaymakers produced such as the Tourist and District maps which covered the whole of the holiday area in one map. The first Tourist Map was of Snowdon. A new direction with a map of Roman Britain was tried and proved immensely popular selling out in a matter of days. This was available up to the early 1980s.

**1930s** The whole country was resurveyed at 1:2500 and this was done on a new projection and a new system introduced that did away with the curvature of the Earth. The National Grid was born. This used squares of sides measuring 500km within which were 25 squares of sides of 100km and within them squares measuring 1km squared. The 100km squares were given a number. This was changed in 1951 to two letters with the letter I omitted.

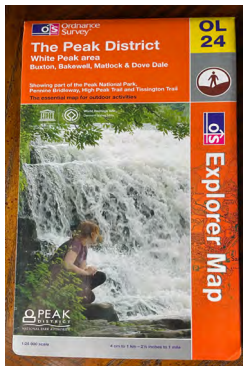
**1936** re-triangulation started and over 6500 trig points were built by 1962.

**World War 2** As in earlier times Ordnance Survey was to play an important part in providing maps war maps. They started surveying NE France and Belgium in 1936 in preparation for the war Churchill thought was certain. Specially updated maps were sent to local authorities, known as the Special Emergency (Air Raid Precaution) editions. Maps printed during the war concentrated on Europe and NW Africa. As in WW1 they printed maps on site and had mobile printing presses on lorries that would be moved as needed. OS HQ in Southampton was hit by bombs in 1940. They had prepared for this eventuality and moved temporarily to Nottingham and Chessington before returning to Southampton. The biggest loss was the original 3ft theodolite that had been used in the 18th Century.

**1964** The Land Registry decided that all properties had to be registered and the need for large scale accurate maps increased. By 1990 13million properties were registered: the remaining 9m would be registered when ownership changed.

**1970s** 1 inch to a mile maps were replaced by a scale of 1:50000. Sheet sizes were increased to 40 sq.km and no major centre of population was to be near the edge of a map which meant that the country was covered by 204 maps. The southern half of England was published in 1974, the rest in 1976. Other changes included clearer road networks, a change in font, sky blue tourist information and the legend translated to French and German.

**1979** Maps were given the name of Landranger after a staff competition. The concept of Outdoor Leisure maps was trialled in 1972 when the map of the Dark Peak was published. It sold 15,000 copies in the first year,



a great success and in three years 25% of all map sales were Outdoor Leisure. This series was at a scale of 1:25000 and eventually covered the whole country. Those not called OLM were called Pathfinder (1979).

A new numbering system was introduced - Number 1 was of Shetland with the last sheet, 1362 Newton Ferrers and Thurstlestone finished over 10 years later.

Waterproof maps were originally trialled in 1933 which could be washed and ironed.

They were liked but a high wastage rate and cost stopped production. The next attempt was made in 1979 (OL of New Forest) and whilst proving popular, production issues caused them to be discontinued too. Eventually a map was produced in 1989 using specialist paper requiring a higher price which proved acceptable to the buying public.



**1994** The now familiar Explorer maps (1:25000) arrived and covered the country within 10 years. Methods of map production had changed dramatically from the use of chains and theodolites, drawing by hand and scaling with pantagraphs, through the use of photographs and electronic distance measuring, etching on plastic coated plates (scribing) and arrived at the digital age. The first computer was used in 1952 and by 1973 they had produced the first large scale digital map.

**2000** A historic year as OS got its first female Director General. Vanessa Lawrence. Women were forbidden from working for OS for many years until the first women were taken on in 1902. Women surveyors were taken on in 1976 when equal opportunities deemed it necessary. The last 25 years has all been about using the latest technology to provide the most up to date service to its many customers. OS products and services are widely sought throughout government, industry, and business and it's now a huge data provider involved in most facets of modern life. 90%+ of its turnover now comes from these services. It has come a long way .....

Thanks to Graham Fletcher.

# GIANT TEARS

by Mark Lightfoot



Our cover picture may well have piqued your interest. "What's this about?" some will say. Others will know at least something of the story so let's have a look into the what it's about:-

Standing with Giants is a large scale, outdoor installation commemorating those who fell on Gold Beach on D Day 1944. Dan Barton is the inspiration and creator of this, which, like so many art projects started small and local and then grew. And continues to grow. Dan's from Oxfordshire and a few years ago created some almost 2 metre high steel silhouettes of soldiers, heads bowed, for sale around his village. Hundreds of pounds were donated immediately which went to the Poppy Appeal. He made some more and, with wife Janette, gained permission to place many more silhouettes on a hill near the M40. Passing motorists saw them, word spread, the site was visited, tears were shed and thousands of pounds raised. Things were getting bigger, the National Trust became involved and many people went to Stowe to see even more Giants. Why 'Giants'? Well, in short, the soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses made a giant sacrifice so that we may have our freedom today.

We move on to 2024 and the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings. By now the British Memorial had been built at Ver-sur-Mer overlooking Gold beach, one of the beaches where British troops landed. The Giants installation was now a thing, attracting sponsors and volunteers. And so, nicely in time for the ceremonies, 1,475 silhouettes were sent to Normandy, each representing a life lost on that day, in what's called 'stillages'. These are purpose built metal boxes, almost like the large tombs you might see in graveyards, printed with real letters home and then decorated with hand-knitted poppies given by the WI. More than 22,000 poppies, representing lives lost on D Day itself plus the battle for Normandy overall.

What a sight and how many tears were shed? The Giants came back to England and were seen in several locations. Then a return to Normandy this year for the VE Day ceremonies, brought on four lorries via Brittany Ferries and then erected by, among others, volunteers from Harley Davidson motorbike chapters.

If you're quick, you can see them in Normandy until 24th September after which they'll return to base at Stanton Harcourt near Witney for a rest. To find out more and for future locations, it's well worth visiting the dedicated website [www.standingwithgiants.co.uk](http://www.standingwithgiants.co.uk).

The Giants are only going to get bigger.





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# TOM JONES WAS RIGHT.....

by Mark Lightfoot



We eased off the A14, started to run down towards Kimbolton then home and were completely dazzled by what lay before us. A vast landscape drawn from a colour palette ranging from creamy white, through very pale green and on into white gold, lemon, deep yellows and old gold. Wheat and barley glowing from 30 degree plus heat. Sunlit lowlands as a politician might have said. What a contrast to the week we'd just had which had been more like Tom Jones' "Green, green, grass of home". This wasn't though Tom's land of south Wales but the green, pleasant, welcoming and hospitable island in NW Wales, Anglesey.

Yes, Ivel Valley Walkers were back on the road only a few weeks after our debut trip to Normandy (see page 10). This time the A team of Roy Carter, Tom Collier and Roy Dunham were leading and some 50 folks had made their way to the island by various routes and modes of travel. We'd arrived a day early, had picnicked on the way at the NT Chirk Castle in mid 20s warmth then

overnight in Ffestiniog in the heart of the Snowdonia range complete with thick mist and heavy rain. Oh dear, what would the week on Anglesey hold as England (inc Wimbledon) was about to hit regulo 10 and more ?

Well, in the main, glorious coastal walking be it along the Menai Strait, highly photogenic bays offering huge sandy beaches, gentle waves, blue skies (mainly), few people and spectacular cliff-top walking.



Birds were an attraction on many days. On one day we'd left the cars near Benllech Bay and returned late afternoon to the tide well in and eider ducks nicely visible. Holyhead was another starting point and that walk offered ravens around a former quarry, the stone from which had been used to build the snaking jetty at the port. A lovely climb from there, over the high point and there was South Stack with its lighthouse and thousands of guillemots and razorbills clinging to the almost vertical rock faces with

a constant traffic of birds flying off to sea and back. Puffins? Yes, several of our group saw a few through scopes but most were safe in their burrows. Choughs, those masters of the air, were seen by some around their preferred cliff tops, quite a sight with bright red bills against the black feathering.



As you can imagine, the coastal walks featured many flowers adapted to such an environment. What we hadn't expected was orchids. Lots of them, mainly common spotted orchids but also pyramid orchids, quite a sight.

Amlwch was once the second largest town in Wales after Merthyr Tydfil. Think California goldrush but somewhat smaller! Not gold here but a rich seam of copper ore found near the surface in 1768. The resulting mine was the biggest in Europe at one time, the extracted metal being used to 'copper bottom' ships (inc HMS Victory) so reducing ship hull maintenance whilst also making them faster and more manoeuvrable. Long abandoned, what's left is a startling landscape of open mine workings and a rich colour tapestry ranging from pale golds, through bronzes, coppers and deep blacks. Quite a sight and well worth a stop on one of our walks.

The coastal paths here are largely well-marked and easily followed. Stray from these however and it's a different story, probably reflecting far fewer visitors than Snowdonia, visible across the water. Few signs; often no signs; overgrown and neglected paths. Perhaps no paths. This is where our A team blossomed. Fairly easy to check out parking, bus routes and possible picnic places but a different pot of lobsters (lots on the island) when you're searching for an invisible path, lots of prickly vegetation, paths more akin to streams and nothing to mark the way. But the team were brilliant, led with confidence, a smile and many a joke. Great work lads.

They even found a chateau on the island (to remind us of a fab evening at a chateau in Normandy) and where the entire group got together for a celebration dinner.

A lovely week on the island in perfect walking temperatures drew to a close. The weather did show its claws on the final afternoon when a front rolled in from the west bringing very high winds (blowing us inland from the cliff edges), light but stinging rain...and then heavy rain but by then we were done and about to swap landscapes, green for gold.



# Ivel Valley Walks Programme

## Autumn/Winter 2025

**Top Tip:** check IV website, also Roy's bulletin for possible programme changes.

For a full list of walks in the Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks go to [www.bedswalkfest.co.uk](http://www.bedswalkfest.co.uk)

Sun 14 Sep	10:00	<b>Heath and Reach</b> Stockgrove Country Park CP, Brickhill Rd. Parking charge applies. NB do not confuse with Rushmere entrance on other side of the park. LU7 0BA (SP 919 293). Roger M 07989 307046	11 miles
Wed 17 Sep	10:00	<b>Ickleford</b> CP at entrance to Ickleford Sports & Social Club, Chambers Lane. SG5 3YA (TL 181 318). John N 07950 708087	7 miles
Thu 18 Sep	10:00	<b>Bedford</b> Mowsbury Park CP on Wentworth Drive. MK41 8DQ (TL 062 523). Jan W 07895 045410 on the day	4.5 miles
Sun 21 Sep	10:00	<b>Dunstable Downs</b> Chiltern Gateway Centre CP charge of £3.50, or free for NT members. LU6 2GY (TL 008 194). Sandra A 07789 777060	7 miles
Sun 21 Sep	13:30	<b>Dunstable Downs</b> Chiltern Gateway Centre CP charge of £3.50, or free for N T members. LU6 2GY (TL 008 194). Sandra A 07789 777060	5 miles
Tue 23 Sep	10:00	<b>Ickleford</b> CP by the entrance to Ickleford Sports & Social Club, Chambers Lane. SG5 3YA (TL 181 318). Antony C 07857 890829 on the day only	12 miles
Wed 24 Sep	10:00	<b>Woburn</b> CP opposite the church. MK17 9PG (SP 951 331). Bob & Celia W 07474 303545	7 miles
Sun 28 Sep	10:00	<b>Woburn Sands</b> Russell Street CP Woburn Sands. MK17 8NU (SP 930 358). David R 07305 561430	12 miles



Wed 01 Oct	10:00	<b>Flitwick</b> Flitwick Village Hall, Dunstable Rd. MK45 1HP (TL 033 348). Mel S 07966 210950	7 miles
Thu 02 Oct	10:00	<b>Old Warden</b> Shuttleworth Collection CP (free). SG18 9EP (TL150 449). Jan W 07895 045410 on the day	4.5 miles
Sun 05 Oct	10:00	<b>Barton</b> Old Road, near Recreation Ground. MK45 4LD (TL 083 304). Tom C 07743 128645	7 miles
Sun 05 Oct	13:30	<b>Barton</b> Old Road, near Recreation Ground. MK45 4LD (TL 083 304). Tom C 07743 128645	5 miles
Tue 07 Oct	10:00	<b>Toddington</b> Village Hall CP. LU5 6AN (TL 007 288). David R 07305 561430	12 miles
Wed 08 Oct	10:00	<b>Weston, nr Baldock</b> 'In George Orwell's footsteps' Holy Trinity Church CP, Weston Nr Baldock. SG4 7DJ (TL 266 299). Antony C 07857 890829 on the day	7.5 miles
Sun 12 Oct	10:00	<b>Cambridge</b> Madingley Park and Ride Cambridge. CB3 OEU (TL 424 584). Marcus K 07754 100266 on the day only	12 miles
Wed 15 Oct	10:00	<b>Great Offley</b> Near the Red Lion PH, Kings Walden Rd. SG5 3DX (TL 146 266). Dave B 07796 178659	7 miles
Thu 16 Oct	10:00	<b>Cranfield</b> St Peter and St Pauls Church, Court Road. MK43 ODR (SP 955 420). Nick M 07803 125876	5 miles
Sun 19 Oct	10:00	<b>Amphill</b> Amphill Park West CP. MK45 2HX (TL 023 382). Sandra A 07789 777060	7 miles
Sun 19 Oct	13:30	<b>Amphill</b> Amphill Park West CP. MK45 2HX (TL 023 382). Sandra A 07789 777060	5 miles
Tue 21 Oct	10:00	<b>Arlesey</b> Meet at entrance to West Drive. Parking in West Drive. SG15 6RW (TL192 355). Tony & Karen A 07875 210926	12 miles

Wed 22 Oct	10:00	<b>Great Linford</b> Great Linford Memorial Hall CP, Marsh Drive. MK14 5AX (SP 853 423). Tony S 07745 655938	7 miles
Sun 26 Oct	10:00	<b>Wheatthamstead</b> East Lane CP. AL4 8SB (TL 178 141). Mark and Carolyn L 07740 684923	10 miles
Wed 29 Oct	10:00	<b>Wilden</b> Please Park considerately near old Victoria Arms. MK44 2PB (TL 095 552). Bridget C 07807 931274	7 miles
Thu 30 Oct	10:00	<b>Broom</b> Meet on The Green. Park considerately nearby. SG18 9NP (TL 171 428). Antony C 07857 890829 on the day only	5 miles
Sun 02 Nov	10:00	<b>Wootton</b> Village Hall C P Church Road. MK43 9EU (TL 007 449). Bob & Celia W 07743 128645	6.5 miles
Sun 02 Nov	14:00	<b>Wootton – AGM</b> Village Hall CP Church Road. MK43 9EU (TL 007 449). Bob & Celia W 07743 128645	
Tue 04 Nov	10:00	<b>Woburn</b> CP opposite the church. MK17 9PG (SP951 331). Tony & Karen A 07875 210926	12 miles
Wed 05 Nov	10:00	<b>Marston Moretaine</b> Visitor Centre. (charge = £3 for over three hours). MK43 0PR (TL 004 417). Jon L 07854 240366	7 miles
Sun 09 Nov	10:00	<b>Bedford</b> Priory Park Visitor Centre, off Barkers Lane. MK41 9DJ (TL 072 494). Marcus K 07754 100266 on the day only	12 miles
Wed 12 Nov	10:00	<b>Bromham</b> Bromham Mill CP. MK43 8LP (TL 010 507). Steve A 07802 279486	7 miles
Thu 13 Nov	10:00	<b>Sharnbrook</b> Village CP, High Street near Church Lane. MK44 1PB (SP995 596). Sue T 07849 827049	5 miles
Sun 16 Nov	10:00	<b>Ashridge</b> Estate Visitor Centre, near Bridgewater Monument. HP4 1LX (SP 970 130). Sandra A 07789 777060	7 miles

Sun 16 Nov	13:30	<b>Ashridge</b> Estate Visitor Centre, near Bridgewater Monument. HP4 1LX (SP 970 130). Sandra A 07789 777060	5 miles
Tue 18 Nov	10:00	<b>Ickleford</b> CP at entrance to Ickleford Sports & Social Club, Chambers Lane. SG5 3YA (TL 181 318). John N 07950 708087	12 miles
Wed 19 Nov	10:00	<b>Sharnbrook</b> Mill Theatre CP, 103 Mill Road. £1 donation, please. MK44 1NP (TL 010 590). Sue T 07849 827049	7 miles
Sun 23 Nov	10:00	<b>Letchworth</b> Radwell Meadows Country Park CP, off Nortonbury Lane. SG6 1AN (TL 233 349). John N 07950 708087	12 miles
Wed 26 Nov	10:00	<b>Buntingford</b> 'In Charles Lamb's footsteps' Bowling Green Lane CP (charge = £4.20 all day). SG9 9DF (TL 359 296). Antony C 07857 890829 on the day only	7.5 miles
Thu 27 Nov	10:00	<b>Shillington</b> CP at top of Greenfields, off Bury Road. SG5 3NX (TL123 343). Derek T 07410 973338	5 miles
Sun 30 Nov	10:00	<b>Pegsdon Hills</b> Layby near gates to Hexton Manor. SG5 3JS (TL 118 302). Tom C 07743 128645	7 miles
Sun 30 Nov	13:30	<b>Pegsdon Hills</b> Layby near gates to Hexton Manor. SG5 3JS (TL 118 302). Tom C 07743 128645	5 miles
Tue 02 Dec	10:00	<b>Maulden Woods</b> CP lay by, off A6 north of Clophill. MK45 3UZ (TL 073 394). Graham B 07399 881460	12 miles
Wed 03 Dec	10:00	<b>Stoke Hammond</b> Three Locks picnic site. MK17 9DD (SP 893 283). Colin B 07787 413957	7 miles
Sun 07 Dec	10:00	<b>Ashridge</b> Estate Visitor Centre, near Bridgewater Monument. HP4 1LX (SP 970 130). Marcus K 07754 100266 on the day only	12 miles

Wed 10 Dec	10:00	<b>Stagsden - Christmas Luncheon Walk</b> Bedfordshire Golf Club, Spring Lane, Stagsden. MK43 8SR (SP 989 489). Colin B 07787 413957	6 miles
Thu 11 Dec	10:00	<b>Marston Moretaine</b> Park and meet on Denton Drive. MK43 0NQ (SP 994 413). Liz W 07762 430385	5 miles
Sun 14 Dec	10:00	<b>Old Warden - Mulled Wine Ramble</b> Old Walden Village Hall. Bring Festive food to share in the afternoon & enjoy a Mulled Wine. £2 at the door. SG18 9EB (TL 138 440). Roy C 07784 208997	7 miles
Tue 16 Dec	10:00	<b>Harrold</b> Harrold Odell Country Park CP. MK43 7DS (SP 956 566). Bob & Celia W 07474 303545	12 Miles
Wed 17 Dec	10:00	<b>Bedford</b> Priory Park Visitor Centre, off Barkers Lane. MK41 9DJ (TL 072 494). Dave B 07796 178659	6 miles
Sun 21 Dec	10:00	<b>Barton</b> Old Road, near Recreation Ground. MK45 4LD (TL 083 304). Tom C 07743 128645	12 miles
Wed 24 Dec	10:00	<b>Ampthill</b> West CP. MK45 2HX (TL 023 382). Marcus K 07754 100266 on the day only	7 miles
Sun 28 Dec	10:00	<b>Milton Keynes</b> Caldecotte Lake North car park, off Bletcham Way eastbound. MK7 8HP (SP 887 355). Sandra A 07789 777060	7 miles
Sun 28 Dec	13:30	<b>Milton Keynes</b> Caldecotte Lake North car park, off Bletcham Way eastbound. MK7 8HP (SP 887 355). Sandra A 07789 777060	5 miles
Tue 30 Dec	10:00	<b>Barton</b> Old Road, near Recreation Ground. MK45 4LD (TL 083 304). Tom C 07743 128645	12 miles
Wed 31 Dec	10:00	<b>Barton</b> Old Road, near Recreation Ground. MK45 4LD (TL 083 304). Tom C 07743 128645	7 miles



Thu 01 Jan	10:00	<b>Silsoe</b> Park Avenue, near Church. Bring Festive food left from Xmas Day & enjoy a Sherry under cover of Crawley Barn. MK45 4EH (TL 082 356). Roy C 07784 208997	5 miles
Sun 04 Jan	10:00	<b>Shefford</b> Town CP, Old Bridge way. SG17 5EF (TL 142 391). Roy D 0771 3464510	12 miles
Wed 07 Jan	10:00	<b>Woburn</b> CP opposite the church. MK17 9PG (SP 951 331). Jon L 07854 240366	7 miles
Thu 08 Jan	10:00	<b>Northill</b> Meet at the Church. Park considerably in the village. SG18 9AA (TL149 465). Jan W 07895 045410	4.5 Miles

# IVW PLANNED HOLIDAYS

## .....so far!

**KENT** a fascinating walking week exploring many places in eastern Kent

**SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER TO FRIDAY 3RD OCTOBER**

Led by Roger McLeod and Tom Collier

**DURHAM** exploring the city and immediate surrounding area plus the beautiful Durham Dales

**THURSDAY 14TH MAY TO MONDAY 18TH MAY**

Led by Kevin Barrett



# Rex and his crown



Not part of our walking week, our homeward trip included two diversions. Firstly to Beaumaris just along from the Menai bridges. Whilst most of the larger settlements on Anglesey are pretty run of the mill, Beaumaris is a gem and a proper destination small town. At one end there's a picturesque ruin of a castle; at the other a marina, ideal for the Menai strait. In between, there's a yacht club and a town boasting pastel coloured cottages, handsome Victorian town houses, artistic and artisan shops, lovely narrow streets, good pubs and restaurants and lots more. Proper seaside stuff without the usual UK tat.

Then to a gem of a different sort.

Plas Newydd was home to the Marquess of Anglesey, now a NT property. When first built there weren't any of those modern things called bridges linking the island and mainland so access here was by boat only.

The big attraction here is the great mural in the dining room, oil on canvas, almost 18 metres long and by the great artist Rex Whistler. He offers something for everyone. At first glance it's a reminder of Italianate works. But look out because this work is one

of deceptions. It's mash-up of an awful lot from Italian perched villages, Mediterranean harbours, landmarks of London including Windsor Castle and a wide variety of human figures. Look more closely (with the help of a brilliant and engaging room guide) and the painting is a mass of allegorical details and jokes. For example it was painted in the late 1930s at the height of the abdication period so Windsor Castle, complete with the flag of St George, is painted as being in ruins. There's a self portrait part of a Romeo and Juliet balcony scene; a figure with a fishing rod with no fishing line (because the boy never caught anything).

Then there's the tricks of the eye. A rowing boat heading out to sea from the harbour; but the rower only has one oar. So walk past it and it's circling back into the harbour. A crown that's dull brown. Walk alongside and it now glows gold. Keep walking and it fades away. At one end of the canvas is a tiny painting of an Italianate ceiling? Walk to the other end of the canvas and this 'small' ceiling is now much bigger and over a very large room. Incredible.

And by a strange chance there's an echo of our Normandy trip here. Whistler joined the army and was posted to a tank regiment. They went into action as part of the Normandy landings with Whistler keeping a pot of paint in a bucket hanging from his tank in case he needed to paint. He was killed in mid June when he left his tank to help a fellow soldier. Weirdly, there's an image of Whistler as a ghost in the painting.....

## Interested and new to Ramblers? Well, how about some Q &A's?

### **Q Okay, I'm interested. What next?**

- A** Have a look at the programme, choose a day, a walk, a distance to suit. Note the starting point/meeting place which will always be clear and easy to find and then just turn up. For most walks you don't need to book, just turn up. However, some leaders do ask you to book by phone or email.

### **Q What do I wear and what to bring?**

- A** From the bottom upwards we'd suggest walking boots /shoes or other strong footwear since most of the time will be in countryside of various types. Then it's dress for the weather be it hot, cool, wet or windy including hats where appropriate, suncream, waterproofs etc as per the weather forecast. Shorter walks will stop for a coffee break and longer walks will stop for lunch, often a picnic somewhere or perhaps at a pub/cafe, and also coffee breaks. So bring a flask, water and whatever you fancy to eat.

### **Q Start time?**

- A** The programme specifies the start time plus other important details. We leave promptly so arrive in good time and we're ready to hit the road!

### **Q What about the weather? Do you walk if it's raining?**

- A** Hey, this is the UK! We might cancel in extreme conditions but otherwise we go come rain, hail or shine. There's no bad weather, just the wrong clothes.

### **Q To get started then, all I need do is turn up and follow the leader?**

- A** You've got it!

### **Q Any paperwork, forms etc to bring or fill in?**

- A** No. We're not great fans of this.

### **Q How much?**

- A** The walks are free, but if you walk regularly with us and like what you find we'd like you to join the Ramblers Association. Ramblers membership is the best way to support the work done for walkers across Britain.

**Please visit [www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk) or telephone: 020 3961 3300 and nominate Ivel Valley Walkers as your local group**

### **Q How much to join?**

- A** The good news is that we don't want your money. Not yet anyway. We suggest you try before you buy. Have a look at the programme in this brochure, find something that suits you, turn up on the day and walk with us for a few times. You'll be made very welcome, there's no charge, no commitment, not even any paperwork. If you like what you find, join us. We want Rambling to be available as widely as possible. It's only £43 for one adult for one year and an unbelievable £58 for two adults.

**WE WALK ON:**

Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and  
occasional Saturdays and Summer evenings.

**New walkers are always made welcome**

## HOW TO BOOK IVW TRIPS...

To book and make payments to Ivel Valley please email the organiser and wait for confirmation before paying.

This avoids overbooking trips or events when we have limited numbers availability.

### TO PAY

Bank: Unity Trust Bank  
Account Payee: Ivel Valley Social Account  
Sort code: 60-83-01  
Account No: 20201274  
Reference: Please give the name of the individual activity you are booking/paying for.



## OUR TEAM

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