



ISSUE No. 98

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The Ridgeway from Ancient Path to A Baseline

Walk in the footsteps of Celtic druids, Saxon kings, Victorian poets and OS Surveyors

The Ridgeway is an ancient 87-mile path in southern England that has been used by Celtic druids, Saxon kings, and Victorian poets. It was once part of a longer trading route connecting Dorset and Norfolk and follows a chalk escarpment, serving as a natural division between low-lying vales and river headwaters. Originally used as a defensive structure during the Iron Age, it later became a military road for Saxon armies and a track for medieval drovers and herders. In 1973, it was designated a national trail, and its 50th anniversary was recently celebrated.

In 1937 and 1951, the 'Ridgeway Baseline' in Oxfordshire and a second baseline in Scotland were surveyed to map the entire country. Before the use of satellites and electronic devices, distances. Each feature on a map had to be surveyed to establish its location in space, vertically (height) and horizontally (easting maps were created by people walking across the countryside with chains and tapes to measure and northing coordinates).

Numerous trig points along the Trail are reminders of the people and stories behind the maps we use today to enjoy the countryside. https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/top_50_trig/



Surveyors faced challenges such as strong winds and steep slopes while carrying heavy equipment and 24-meter tapes to measure the land between Liddington Hill trig point in Wiltshire and White Horse Hill trig point in Oxfordshire. The surveyors even had to remove obstacles such as hedges, road signs, and manure piles. They endured tough conditions, including wet clothing, frozen fingers, and eye strain.

Biby Towers erected to cross a ravine for the Ridgeway Baseline. Credit Ordnance Survey History of Triangulation of Britain 1967

The accurate survey measurements were used to map out the entire country. Around 6,500 concrete 'trig pillars' were installed in prominent locations to provide a fixed network of surveying stations. These trig points allowed for triangulation, enabling accurate plotting of field boundaries, roads, railways, bridges, and other features.

Today, the trig points are redundant due to the Ordnance Survey's Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receivers network, allowing quick and highly accurate measurements. However, trig points still serve as a reminder of the effort and precision that went into mapping the countryside in the past.

Surveyors taking measurements with a theodolite on a trig. Credit Ordnance Survey, Flickr



Ramblers Dorset Area 50th Annual General Meeting
The AGM will be held at 11.00 am on Saturday the 30th November 2024
at Broadmayne Village Hall, Cowleaze Road, Broadmayne, DT2 8EW
OS Grid Reference SY 730 864: what3words: ///decently.silk.rivals

1. Welcome, apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting
3. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts – Area Report and Financial Report
 - a. Request approval of Accounts
4. Elections
5. Chairman, Secretary*, Treasurer*, Vice Chairman*, Footpath Secretary*, Countryside Secretary*, Publicity Officer++, Membership Secretary*, Newsletter Editor* (Dorset Footnotes), Access Officer*, Web Master*, Individual Members++ (3)
** indicates current holder willing to stand again ++ indicates role currently vacant*
6. Representative of the Affiliated Clubs
7. Area Delegates to General Council 2025
8. Appointments
9. Independent Examiner
10. President and Vice Presidents
11. Discussion of Motions: *(if any)*
12. 50th Anniversary Event: plans to celebrate (information to follow)
13. The guest speakers:
 - a. Speaker from Ramblers Board of Trustees: TBC
 - b. Terry Sweeney: one-time Dorset
Dorset Council Countryside Service Manager, now SWCPA Planning Consultant
14. Questions
15. Thanks to the guest speakers
16. Thanks to the AGM organisers.

There will be the opportunity to talk to Area Officers and guests over a shared lunch after the AGM (please bring a plate of either savoury or sweet food for sharing). This will be followed by cutting a 50th Anniversary Celebratory Cake and, if time/weather/energy permits, a short walk.

(There will be the opportunity to submit a report for a mention in the Spring edition of Walk, so photographs will be taken at the AGM.)

Secretary

Cats, Dogs and Cat Lady's

Cats are appealing due to their independence, unique nature, and companionship. Unlike dogs, they offer a deep connection without constant social interaction, making them attractive to introverted individuals. Professor Gosling's study suggests that cat owners are often inclined towards intellectual and imaginative pursuits.

The independent nature of cats and their apparent lack of dependency on humans offer a glimpse into a world removed from human interactions. These traits serve as a catalyst for introspection and philosophical contemplation, qualities valued by cat lovers. This sentiment is reflected in the caretakers of street cats in Istanbul, who exhibit a profound capacity for introspection despite their diverse backgrounds.

Dog enthusiasts seek loyalty and companionship, while cat lovers are drawn to cats' distinctive, enigmatic, and independent nature, which offers a unique perspective on life.

The concept of a "Cat Lady" dates back to the Middle Ages when people believed that witches could shape-shift into cats or use them to do their bidding. Meow. **Doug Pigg**

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/oct/03/purring-parasites-and-pure-love-what-exactly-makes-someone-a-cat-person?>

The Loneliness Trap

Let's break out together on a good walk and talk or two

The Campaign to End Loneliness (CEL) defines loneliness as "a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of our social relationships and those we want."

According to the CEL, almost 4 million Britons are chronically lonely, meaning they feel that way often or always. Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of premature death by around a quarter.

According to researchers from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in the US, it follows a U-shaped curve, with a peak in young adulthood, a trough in midlife, and another rise after 60, becoming particularly steep around 80.



The message is that loneliness is not insurmountable at any stage of life. But it's tough when it's rusting away at your mental and emotional life without you even naming it. Bringing it into the light and sharing it with yourself and then with others is the first step to breaking that cycle.

To effectively combat loneliness, it is crucial to stay engaged in fulfilling activities such as walking, even if it's just going to the shops. These activities must be fun and fulfilling; just walking to the local shops or the bus stop brings you into contact with people, and a simple hello can make a big difference. Just listening to the voice of someone you like can help you feel less lonely. A good walk, however long, is so much more than just stretching your legs. It's a chance to unwind, meet new people and discover nature on your doorstep.



Participation in walking activities, especially with a group where talking is part of the experience, can generate positive feelings and energy. Ramblers Wellbeing Walks are a great solution. These free, short walks occur all across England and are designed to help you take the first step towards better health, well-being, and happiness. With hundreds of weekly walks, you'll find one right on your doorstep.

We can't promote Ramblers Wellbeing walks enough. If you haven't been active for a while, check them out; better still, bring a friend or two. Experienced volunteers lead our Wellbeing Walks, so there's no need to plan your route. And because they're all accessible on foot or by public transport, you can be sure they're safe and suitable for all. You don't even need to register: find one of our walks online, even on holiday, grab your shoes and come along to a walk near you. www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/wellbeing-walks

Dorset Ramblers Wellbeing Walks take advantage of the beautiful parks, green spaces, towns and villages waiting to be explored in Dorset; these community walks allow you to discover new places and meet new people. After the walk, there's always the chance to have a social cuppa and chat with fellow walkers. www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/wellbeing-walks-groups/ramblers-wellbeing-walks-dorset

The loneliness trap is said to be as bad as smoking. So, will it shorten my lifespan?

Lonely people are more likely to get heart disease, strokes, anxiety, depression, dementia ... Add it all up, and they're 26% more likely to die early. How do you avoid joining the unhappy millions? by Phil Daoust

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/article/2024/jun/16/the-loneliness-trap-it-is-as-bad-as-smoking-15-cigarettes-a-day-so-will-it-shorten-my-lifespan?>

Editor

Changes to Rights of Way in Dorset

Orders affecting changes to the following rights of way have been confirmed since DFN Issue 97. Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) and Public Path Orders (PPOs) are again being processed by Dorset Council and can be found here: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/current-definitive-map-modification-orders-and-public-path-orders



Confirmed Orders

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Batcombe FP11 (part): } | (# identifies any New Numbers)
Upgrade to BOATS; adding a BOAT (one continuous route) |
| Leigh BR59: } | Confirmed by PINS. To be renumbered. |
| Beaminster BR35: } | Upgrade to BOAT, add BOAT, along Crabb's Barn Lane.BY97# |
| Beaminster add } | |
| Cheselbourne BR8 (part): } | Upgrade to BOATS. Confirmed by PINS. |
| Dewlish BR18: } | To be renumbered. |
| Corscombe BR47 (part): } | Diversion |
| Marshwood FP16 (part): } | Diversion (Marshwood Farm) |
| Marshwood FP17: } | |
| Poole FP71 (part): } | Diversion |
| Thorncombe FP93 (part): } | Diversion |
| Turnworth BR8: | Modification to upgrade to RB (Application was for BOAT)
<i>(NB Order will need to be re-made due to a drafting error in the Schedule.)</i> |

Denotes new number

Please note that unless otherwise stated, the above Orders are also made/confirmed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(Section 53A (2)).

Long Term Temporary Closures/Diversions under Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984: Section 14(1) or 14/2 (unless otherwise stated) all are needed to comply with H&S Regulations.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Bryanston FP3: | From ST 878 057 to ST 882 057 , from 01.07.24 for 26 weeks. To allow residential development. Alternative route. |
| Bridport FP25: } | From SY 464 902 to SY 474 897, from 03.06.24 for 26 weeks, |
| Burton Bradstock FP18: } | due to severe erosion and danger from cliff falls. Alt route. |
| Gillingham FP78 (part): | From GR ST 819 252 to ST 817 253 from 11.06.24 for 26 weeks. To allow construction of residential development. Alternative route. |
| Mapperton BR2 (part): | From SY 211 997 to SY 509 998 from 14.08.24 for 26 weeks. Due to landslip and remedial works. No suitable alternative. |
| Okeford Fitzpaine: parts of FPs 4, 5 & 6: | From 15.07.24 for 26 weeks, to allow construction work. Alternative signed. |
| Portland FP6 (parts) SWCP: | From SY 6858 7290 to SY 6830 7254, and SY 6820 7208 to SY 6797 7177, from 03.09.24 for 26 weeks. Alt route. |
| Shaftesbury FP3 (part): | From ST 8705 2398 to ST 8703 2395, from 29.07.24 for 26 weeks. To allow development. Alternative route. |
| Sturminster Newton FP10: } | From 08.05.23 to 08.05.25 (extension) to allow |
| Sturminster Newton FP12 (part): } | construction of residential development. Alt route. |
| Thorncombe FP47 (part): | From ST 352 022 to ST 350 020, from 10.09.24 for 26 weeks. Water damage to surface. No suitable alt. |
| Verwood BR16: | From SU 0895 0608 to SU 0895 0558 from 06.09.24 for 26 weeks. Dangerous bridge. Alt route. |
| Weymouth FP74: | From SY 658 770 to SY 665 762 from 03.09.24 for 26 weeks. Unstable ground below footpath. Alt route. |

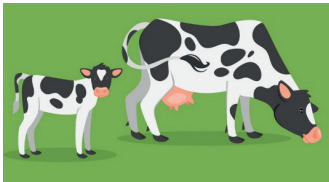
(Please Note: All the above closures are for Health and Safety reasons. Any person who uses or permits the use of the footpaths in contravention of any of the above orders will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000.)

Jan Wardell

Don't be Cowed, But Be Careful

Cattle are a significant cause of death in the UK farming industry. Some figures suggest that cows are responsible for more deaths than dogs. So, what should you do if a herd approaches?

It is particularly shocking that members of the public, especially walkers using public footpaths, are killed or severely injured in cow attacks. However, farmers are also victims. Cattle are the most common cause of accidental death in the UK agricultural industry. Are they the most dangerous animals in Britain? According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics, dogs were responsible for 16 deaths in England and Wales between 2019 and 2023. During the same period, cattle were responsible for 22 deaths in England, Scotland, and Wales—of both farm workers and members of the public. This raises the question: are cattle possibly the most dangerous animals in Britain?



Deaths are only part of the picture. According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 257 cattle incidents, including fatalities, injuries, and concerns, were reported from 2015 to 2021. However, this may significantly underrepresent the actual number of incidents. Cows, a small group of walkers who campaign to raise awareness of the dangers posed by cattle, reported 889 incidents in England and Wales through their Killer Cows website since July 2017.

This picture contradicts many people's image of cows as docile and gentle animals.

Despite this, cattle pose a significant risk. Cows are gigantic, with an average weight of 620kg (98st). Even a gentle knock from a cow can result in people being crushed or falling. Additionally, cows move as a herd, so if one runs, it's likely the rest will start running as well.

The presence of dogs seems to increase the risk, presumably because cows perceive them as a threat. Research has shown that dogs were present in two-thirds of incidents and 94% of fatal incidents. However, 52% of reports to the Cows website did not involve a dog.

The presence of young calves is also a known risk factor. Cows seeking to defend their young are likely to be more reactive. Farmers are advised to use fields or areas not used by the public when cattle are calving or have calves at foot, especially during periods of greater public use.

There is also tension between the recommendations for farmers to provide warning signage when cows are in fields with footpaths and offer alternative routes and the desire of walkers' groups to ensure rights of way are respected. Therefore, farmers and walkers need to exercise extreme caution when in the presence of cattle.

How to Stay Safe in a Field of Cows

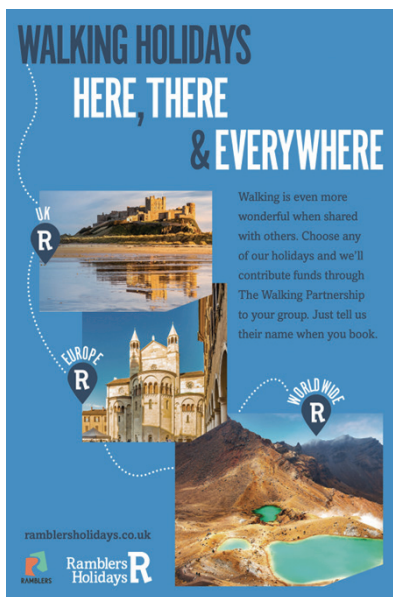
- Be alert: watch for any signage warning of cows on your route.
- Give cattle space: don't walk through a herd and never separate cows from calves (stay clear of calves altogether).
- You are allowed to leave a footpath to walk around cows, according to www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/how-walk-through-field-animals. Position yourself so cattle are not between you and your nearest exit route.
- Walk, don't run through fields with cows quickly and quietly and avoid sudden movements or using your phone. Unfamiliar sounds are stressful for cattle so stay quiet and calm. If you panic or run from them, they may also start running.
- If you are walking with a dog, keep it under close control (ideally on a lead) and away from cattle. But let your dog off the lead if you feel threatened: it will be easier for both of you to get away.
- If cows run towards you, don't try and confront them: get yourself to a safe place.
- Once you're safely home, report problems with cattle to the local authority and the Health and Safety Executive (www.hse.gov.uk/contact/tell-us-about-a-health-and-safety-issue.htm) with as much detail on the location and what happened as possible.

Dorset Areas Fiftieth Anniversary Walking Celebrations

Help choose how to celebrate through your walks

On 1st January 1935, the Ramblers Association was officially created. It was committed to campaigning to keep our countryside open to all and fighting for the things that matter most to walkers. Dorset Area was formerly part of the Southeast region of the Ramblers' Association (later renamed The Ramblers). It then became part of Wessex, and when the local government reorganisation in 1974 put parts of Hampshire into Dorset, the Dorset Area was created. 1995, the Dorset Jubilee Trail was established to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Ramblers founding.

This year's Area AGM will mark the 50th anniversary. During a recent meeting, the Area Council suggested that the year following the anniversary (from December 2024 to November 2025) should be a 'rolling' celebration with walks based around the theme of '50', involving the entire area, including groups and individuals. Your participation is crucial to make this celebration a success.



Area Council is considering two walk-based themes:

50 'Bottoms': Find 50 places with 'Bottom' in their name to link up by a walk. After 'bottom fishing,' we have found circa 100 bottoms, including hotspots such as Brimstone Bottom, Hell Bottom, and Burnt House Bottom – all very welcome in a cold winter. You may have noticed Scratchy Bottom being used to promote a nappies brand. We could have a competition to find the walk with the highest B-rating. We could ask walk leaders to include how many bottoms their walks pass close to and offer 50 bottom-passing walks in the Dorset Area over the year. Individuals can try to have close encounters with 50 Bottoms in the year, possibly with a prize on offer. These walks could be given Bottom grades, such as 3B, with the rating referring to the number of close encounters they had with Bottoms.

Each group nominates their favourite walks in their area with a range of distances, and then the groups choose the best ones for the final 50 list. A good geographical spread of the selected walks will encourage members to spread their walking experiences throughout Dorset, possibly on Group Away Days. Some of the walks may be suitable for incorporation into a series of Dorset History Walks,

complete with a narrative, photos, route map, and GPX references.

Additionally, a digital celebratory photo calendar could be published and purchased online.

The Ramblers Dorset Area Website and Footnotes would be part of the support for the celebration. We would like your ideas on how these proposals can best contribute to the 50th-anniversary celebration. Please share your thoughts and suggestions. Area Council will also be looking to publicise this celebratory year, which will be considered in the choice made.



To manage the 50th Celebration Area Council will decide at the AGM on one of the above options for the Anniversary Theme. However, they want your views to inform the decision. Your input is highly valued and will be crucial in shaping this celebration.

Please email DorsetRamblersSecretary@outlook.com with your views. A decision will be made at the 50th Area Council AGM on Saturday the 30th November, 2024.

Editor

First Aid – Treating Injuries

Rip this page off and backpack it

Administering basic first aid does not invalidate Rambler's insurance. Rather, it is better to do something than nothing.

Heart attack

- Dial 999/112 for an ambulance immediately.
- Help casualty into a half-sitting position with knees raised and supported.
- If the casualty is conscious, give one aspirin to chew slowly.
- If the casualty has angina medication, help him/her to take it.
- Monitor vital signs and be prepared to give CPR (see below).



Fractures

- If spinal injury is suspected, do not move or allow the casualty to move unless in danger.
- Steady and support the injured part.
- Protect the injury with padding.
- Cover an open wound with a sterile dressing.
- Evacuate the casualty to the hospital using emergency services if necessary.
- Do not move injured parts unnecessarily. Do not bandage if assistance is on its way.

Severe bleeding

- Put on rubber gloves. Remove or cut any clothing over the wound.
- Place a dressing over the wound. Apply firm pressure directly on the wound.
- Raise the injured part above the level of the heart if practicable and bandage the wound.
- Bandage another pad on top if blood seeps through. If blood seeps through the second pad, remove all dressings and apply a fresh one, ensuring sufficient, accurately placed pressure is exerted.
- Check circulation below any dressings.
- Monitor for any signs of shock.

Shock

- Treat the cause (e.g. bleeding, injuries, etc). Call 999/112 immediately.
- Lay casualty down (if injuries allow) and raise and support the legs.
- Loosen tight clothing and keep warm (insulate from the ground).
- Do not allow eating or drinking.
- If the casualty loses consciousness, follow Basic Life Support procedures.

Sprains and strains

- Rest the injured part.
- Ice. Apply cold. Use a cold, wet cloth or similar.
- Compress injury. If it is the ankle, consider replacing the boot after examination.
- Elevate the injured part. If it is too severe for the walker to continue, Call 999/112

CPR

Start with 30 chest compressions followed by two rescue breaths. Continue this sequence until emergency service arrives and tells you to stop, the casualty recovers, or you become exhausted, when someone else should take over. *[Editors Note: Medical students use the tune of Nellie the Elephant to administer the correct rhythm for CPR chest compressions]*

Summoning Help

Use the mobile phone to call 999/112 and ask for "Ambulance" or "Mountain Rescue" as appropriate. Send others for help (2 recommended) if there is no mobile signal. When calling:

- Stay calm and describe the nature of the emergency.
- State location accurately.
- Answer all questions clearly.
- Be patient. Your call will be prioritised and handled as quickly as possible.

Finally, ensure the scene is left clean and tidy.