



News for everyone who enjoys and cares for The Ridgeway

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Oxford University on the Trail!

Oxford University is launching a new three year scientific study of The Ridgeway. The project will extend our understanding of how long-distance trails can connect our increasingly fragmented landscape, providing habitat and dispersal opportunities for plants and animals.



The Duke of Burgundy butterfly is a species needing help to expand populations along The Ridgeway. It seeks out cowslip and primrose in scrubby chalk grassland.

We will begin by drone-mapping the western end of The Ridgeway this summer – a drone will be flown 50 metres above the Trail to film a birds-eye view. This will give us an unprecedented and up-to-date view of semi-natural habitats and land-use along The Ridgeway and allow us to identify hedgerows and trees of significant conservation value.

This project has been made possible by an award from Mr and Mrs J A Pye's Charitable Settlement which will support a new DPhil student in the Department of Plant Sciences, under the supervision of Dr Lindsay Turnbull. The student will start this October and his first task will be to select species of plants and animals to focus on. Selection will be based on characteristics such as rarity and dispersal abilities, but species valued by people are also of interest.

Over the longer term, this research will help The Ridgeway Partnership, landowners and others to manage The Ridgeway so that it is rich with wildlife.



Get involved!

Have you noticed significant declines of particular plants or animals along The Ridgeway during your lifetime? Would you like to help talk to the public on the Trail whilst the drone is flying? If so, please email ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



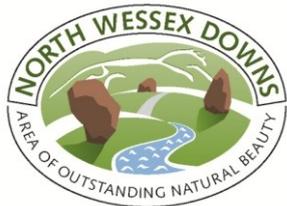
The Ridgeway is an 87 mile (139km) signed trail open to the public to enjoy walking, cycling, horseriding and events in attractive countryside.

The route lies to the west of London, passing over the chalk hills of the Chilterns AONB and North Wessex Downs AONB, taking in rural villages and market towns. Visitors come from near and far, including tourists from the United States and Europe, and are served by numerous local accommodation providers, shops, eating places and visitor attractions.

The Ridgeway is popularly known as Britain's oldest road - parts of the Trail follow tracks used by travellers, herdsman and soldiers over the centuries. The landscape is dotted with historic features and chalk grassland flowers, butterflies and farmland wildlife are a highlight too.

Living Ridgeway

The Ridgeway is one of 15 National Trails in England and Wales. It is also part of an international network of trails called the International Appalachian Trail.

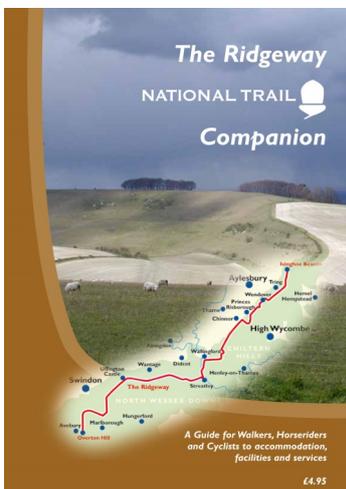


The Ridgeway is managed by a group of organisations called The Ridgeway Partnership. Day-to-day work is led by the National Trails Team hosted by Oxfordshire County Council. The Partnership works with user groups, landowners, local councils, local communities and others to realise social, economic and environmental benefits from The Ridgeway.

Plan your Visit

Plan your day visit or holiday to The Ridgeway using our interactive online map: <http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway> Our website also lists events along the Trail and there are circular walks and rides leaflets to download for free.

The Ridgeway Companion guide lists details of campsites, B&Bs, hotels, self-catering cottages and inns around the area. Other useful contacts, such as taxis, hospitals, vets, are provided as well as car park locations. It costs £4.95 and is available from our online shop: <http://shop.nationaltrail.co.uk>



Strategic Links

Connecting residents, local businesses and visitors

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

It will soon be easier for local people and visitors to walk or ride between The Ridgeway and nearby settlements. Routes following rights of way and quiet roads have been identified by The Ridgeway Partnership as 'strategic links' between the Trail and nearby settlements. These routes cater for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, unless the route follows a public footpath which is legally open only to walkers.

Drawing on what has successfully been done along the South Downs Way National Trail, signs will clearly point people 'To The Ridgeway' and 'To the village/town'. There will be small information plaques on The Ridgeway about services available in the nearby village or town. Signage in town or village centres will reflect any established local styles. Awkward gates and poor surfaces will be addressed so that the route is convenient to use. All this will make it easier for people to find and make use of pubs, shops, museums and other services near The Ridgeway.



After a walk along The Ridgeway, it's time to find a place to take a break

Strategic Links

Over the next 12 months, the Trail Team and volunteers will be working with local parish and town councils and landowners to improve signage and gates along routes linking the Trail to Ogbourne St George, Bishopstone, Letcombe Regis, Wantage and Compton. This is thanks to a grant awarded by the North Wessex Downs AONB which is enabling the purchase of signs and gates.

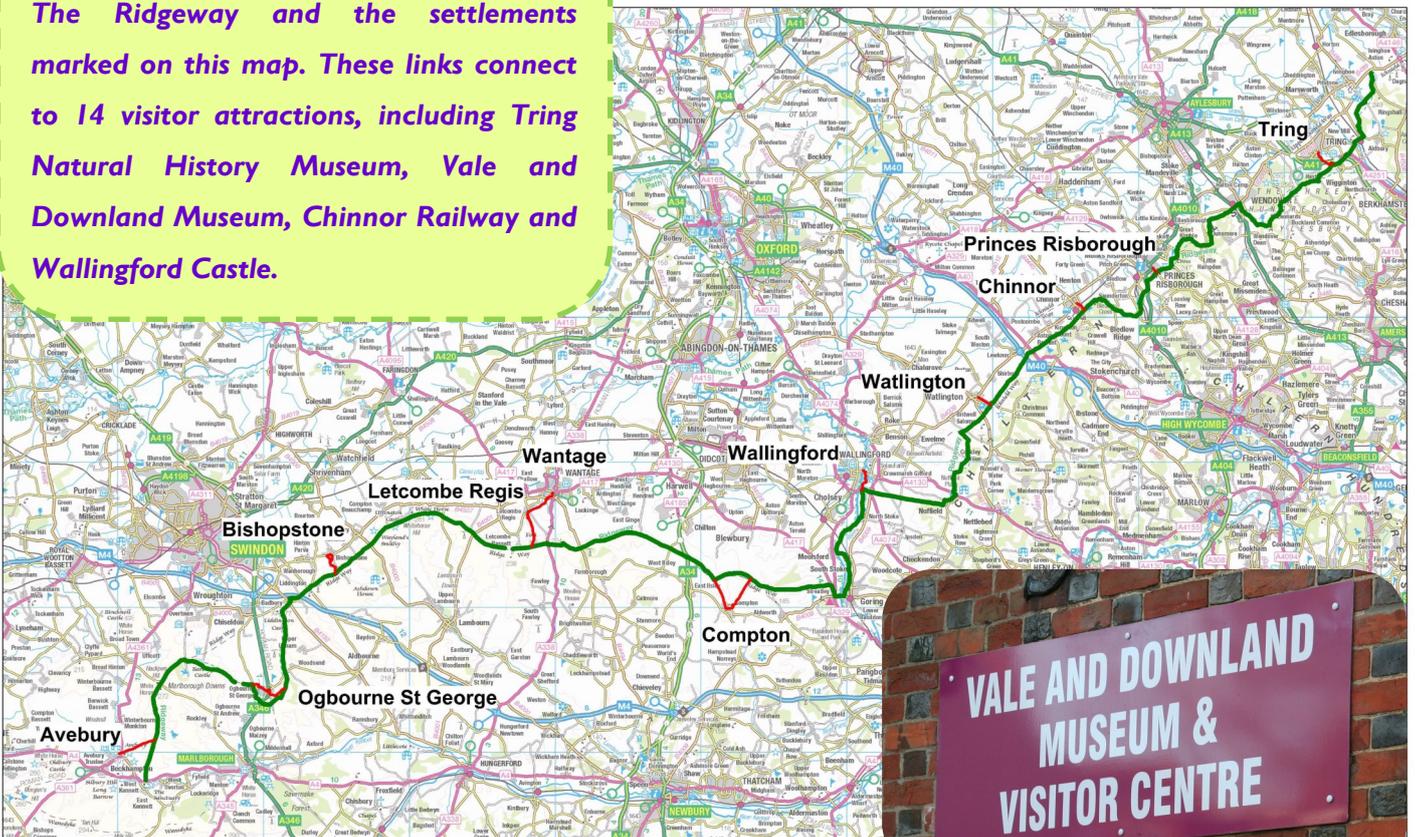
These improvements will progress as funds and local support builds. The Friends of the Ridgeway charity are working with us to attract donations of any amount from local residents, local businesses and any other interested party - £5 or £5000, it all adds up! Donors can nominate a specific settlement to benefit or leave it to our discretion. All donors will be listed on the National Trail website, with major donors mentioned in our promotional work. Local pubs, cafes, visitor attractions and hotels benefitting from the custom of Ridgeway visitors are also invited to help cover the costs of ongoing maintenance of the strategic links by paying for long term advertising on our website.

Other settlements near to The Ridgeway will be addressed once work is complete on this first phase of the Strategic Links Project.

To indicate your support or to enquire about any aspect of this work, please contact ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

The first set of strategic links will make it easier for people to walk or ride between The Ridgeway and the settlements marked on this map. These links connect to 14 visitor attractions, including Tring Natural History Museum, Vale and Downland Museum, Chinnor Railway and Wallingford Castle.

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Settlements are listed in alphabetical order below. Symbols indicate if the route caters for walkers, cyclists and horseriders, with * indicating that only part of the route caters for horses and bicycles.

Further details about the routes are available online at www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/news

Strategic Links

Living Ridgeway

Links between The Ridgeway and nearby settlements to be implemented in 2017-2018

Avebury	  
Bishopstone	  
Chinnor	  
Compton	  
Ogbourne St George* (links to National Cycle Network route 482 Swindon – Marlborough)	  
Princes Risborough	  
Tring	
Wallingford and Crowmarsh Gifford	  
Wantage* and Letcombe Regis	  
Watlington	  

According to 2011 Census data, there are just over 51,000 people living in the settlements listed here - so there are lots of potential donors to club together to make these improvements happen! Any donation amount is welcome.



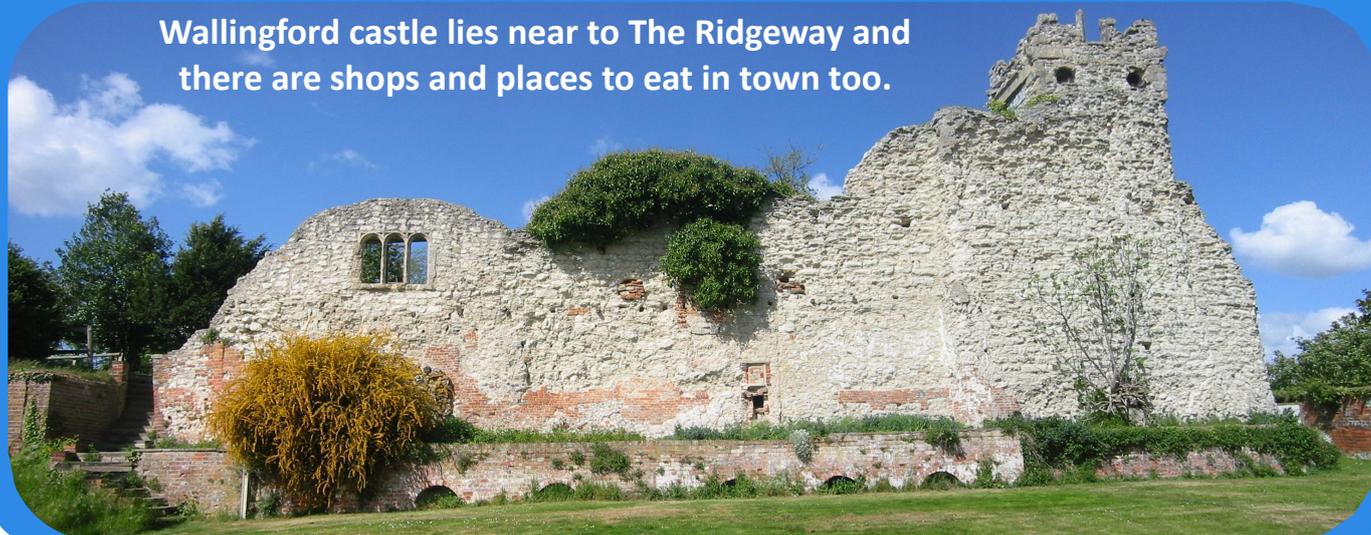
Friends of The Ridgeway

The Friends of The Ridgeway are accepting donations towards the Ridgeway Strategic Links Project. When making a donation, nominate a settlement from the list here or leave it to our discretion. Thank you!

Online: <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/ridgewayfriends>

By cheque: Payable to 'The Friends of The Ridgeway' and posted to c/o Treasurer, 29 Beverley, Toothill, Swindon, SN5 8BH

Wallingford castle lies near to The Ridgeway and there are shops and places to eat in town too.



Caring for The Ridgeway.....

The Ridgeway is a great place to enjoy the countryside and in difficult economic times, it is a welcome free day out! However, have you ever wondered where the money comes from to fix the potholes and broken gates, refresh faded signs, produce information boards.....?



And *imagine* what improvements we could make if we had more money? We receive requests for better circular trails, benches, better provision for mountain bikes and horse riding, easy access routes for families and wheelchairs, more water taps.....what ideas do you have?

Since The Ridgeway was designated in 1972, national and local government have allocated tax-payers money to keeping The Ridgeway in good shape. The fourteen other National Trails in England and Wales are supported in the same way. But the economic downturn and public sector cuts puts government financial support of National Trails at risk, and at the very least makes the future look uncertain. The new England Coastal Path is also creating additional financial demands. The 'family' of National Trails have been working together over the past year to strengthen support amongst Westminster politicians and government departments. A new campaign pack has been produced to help people seek support from MPs and others.

Whatever the future of government funding, we need to attract more investors and build support from as many as people as possible so that The Ridgeway is not at risk if one source of funding or support falls away.

Recent financial contributors

Event organisers

SENSE, Cycle Classics, Global Adventure Challenges Ltd, Extreme Energy Ltd, Cycle-tec Ltd, Trail Running Association, Wessex TREC

Local businesses

Ramsbury Brewery

Local charities and non-profit organisations

North Wessex Downs AONB, Friends of The Ridgeway, Natural England

A joint effort - a donation from Ramsbury Brewery funded materials to make the new display cabinets designed by Trail volunteers.



Information for visitors is now on display in the new cabinets at Sparsholt, Ashbury and Scutcher.

...and Covering Costs

The Ridgeway is fortunate in having a charity dedicated to its preservation – The Friends of The Ridgeway. The charity was established in 1983 and can offer support and money to projects to benefit The Ridgeway. For example, a grant from the charity bought new visitor signage that our volunteers installed at Sparsholt Firs, Scutchamer Knob and Ashbury. Anyone with an interest in preserving The Ridgeway can join the charity or make a donation. Regular giving through membership subscriptions means regular income towards The Ridgeway, and this makes it possible to plan for the longer term rather than tolerate short-term fixes.

The Friends of The Ridgeway also receive donations and legacies. Ramsbury Brewery, for example, made a significant donation to the charity last year to support work on the Trail. The charity's Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize awarded in April is also thanks to a benefactor.

It is estimated that around 400,000 people live within 5 miles of The Ridgeway.

Imagine if each person donated a £1!



Friends of The Ridgeway

For as little as £8 per year for an individual, members know they are helping to preserve The Ridgeway year after year – go to www.ridgewayfriends.org.uk/join-us

Other organisations are also helping The Ridgeway Partnership by pooling resources to deliver mutually beneficial projects. For example, the Trail Running Association made a donation this year to replace old kissing gates with modern gates. These new gates will make the Trail easier to use for trail runners and for every other visitor too. Look out for the new gates displaying a TRA plaque at the end of this year!

A new opportunity for individuals and businesses to make a difference in their local area is the Ridgeway Strategic Links Project. This is a project to make it easier for people to walk, cycle or horse ride between The Ridgeway and nearby settlements. We welcome donations from anyone of any amount to purchase signs and gates - £5 or £5000, it all adds up! For more details, see the article about Strategic Links in this newsletter.

Please spread the word to gather support and resources for The Ridgeway and other National Trails. Together we can ensure The Ridgeway is here for everyone to enjoy now..... and for years to come. ...

Email the Ridgeway Officer to enquire about giving support through making donations, campaigning, sponsorship, volunteering and more: ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Events along The Ridgeway

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

Join an event or seek solitude

There's something for everyone along The Ridgeway. Check out what's on and plan to either join in or find a quiet spot! Our most comprehensive events listing is on our website but there are some events we are not aware of. Many event organisers work with us to keep local communities informed.

Sat 10—Sun 25 June *Bucks Open Studios*

Various locations across Bucks

View and buy art from local artists in studios and galleries across Buckinghamshire.

Sun 25 June *Guided walk from Chinnor Hill*

Nr Chinnor, Oxon (Chiltern Society)

Enjoy some of the best views in the Chilterns.

Sat 1 – Sun 2 July *Chalking the Horse*

Uffington White Horse, Oxon (National Trust)

Help keep the ancient Uffington White Horse shining.

Sat 1 July *Glow in the dark at Brush Hill*

Nr Princes Risborough, Bucks (Chiltern Society)

Witness the magical light of glow worms, enjoy hot chocolate and marshmallows!

Sun 2 July *Orchids at the Rag Pits*

Nr Wendover, Bucks (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust)

Learn how to identify flowers with the BBOWT wardens and Tring Natural History Museum scientists.

Sat 8 July *Glow in the dark at Brush Hill*

Nr Princes Risborough, Bucks (Chiltern Society)

Witness the magical light of glow worms and enjoy hot chocolate and marshmallows!

Thurs 6 – Sun 9 July *Barbury International Horse Trials*

Barbury, Wilts

Spectate or take part in this famous equestrian event!

Sun 9 July *Sensational Sounds of College Lake*

Nr Tring, Herts (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust)

Experts from the Wildlife Sound Recording Society will play the sounds of diving beetles and other wild sounds of College Lake.

Sat 15 July – 31 Aug (various dates) *Archaeology afternoon*

Avebury, Wilts (National Trust)

A mini-dig for children to discover what it is like to be an archeologist.

Sat 15 July *Wildflower and butterfly walk*

Nr Henley, Oxon (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust)

Gentle guided stroll to see orchids, other wildflowers and butterflies. One Trumper available for wheelchair user.

Sat 22 July *Goring and Streatley Regatta and River Festival*

Goring, Berkshire

A fun festival with activities celebrating the River Thames.



Events along The Ridgeway

Sun 23 July *Guided walk from Ewelme Spot butterflies and yellow hammers.*

Nr Wallingford, Oxon (Chiltern Society)

Discover Ewelme and an ancient Danish entrenchment.

Sat 22 – Sun 23 *July Big Camp at Ashridge*

Ashridge, nr Tring, Herts (National Trust)

Special opportunity for camping and family activities

July: First four weekends *Marlborough Open Studios*

Various locations around Marlborough, Avebury, Pewsey and nearby
View and buy art from local artists in studios and galleries.

2 July *Tring Park Family Festival*

Nr Tring, Herts (Woodland Trust)

Numerous stalls and activities in Tring Park. See advert on back page.

6 Aug *Guided walk from Great Kimble*

Nr Princes Risborough, Bucks (Chiltern Society)

Enjoy beech and box woods and pass Chequers and Ellesborough Church.

Sun 27– Mon 28 Aug (Bank Holiday) *The White Horse Show 2017*

Nr Uffington, Oxon

Music, dogs, planes, fun fair, working horses and more, in the setting of the ancient White Horse.

Various dates in Summer *Picnic in the grounds of Nuffield Place.*

Nuffield, near Wallingford (National Trust)

Pre-book picnic. Booking essential.

Sat 12 – Sun 13 Aug *Aug Big Camp at Ashridge*

Ashridge, nr Tring, Herts (National Trust)

Special opportunity for camping and family activities

Sat 12 August *Moth monitoring at College Lake*

Nr Tring, Herts (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust)

See moths close-up and find out from experts how to identify and trap them.

Fri 18 August *Storytelling in Wendover Woods*

Nr Wendover, Bucks (Chiltern Society)

Bring your teddy bear to enjoy tales told by a professional storyteller.

18 September—01 October *Chilterns Walking Festival*

Various locations in the Chilterns

Enjoy the Chilterns AONB with a new autumn festival of walks, talks and more. Promoting family-friendly, accessible and inclusive walking for health.



Save the date!
Everyone welcome.

Wed 18th October
Uffington

The Great Outdoors!

The Ridgeway Partnership and North Wessex Downs AONB are hosting a day celebrating the great outdoors through talks, discussion and field visits. To book your place and for more details email:

ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Sporting Ridgeway

The Ridge Walk 2017

CONQUER THE WALK

Date: Saturday 24 – Sunday 25 June 2017

Location: Oxfordshire and Wiltshire

Discover your inner strength and trek 52 miles in 24 hours for a fantastic cause.

Use code 'NT50' to get 50% off your place today.

Email: events@sense.org.uk

Tel: 0300 330 9257

www.sense.org.uk/rw52

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MILES



sense

Produced by the National Trails Team on behalf of The Ridgeway Partnership.

www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway

Volunteer Task Diary

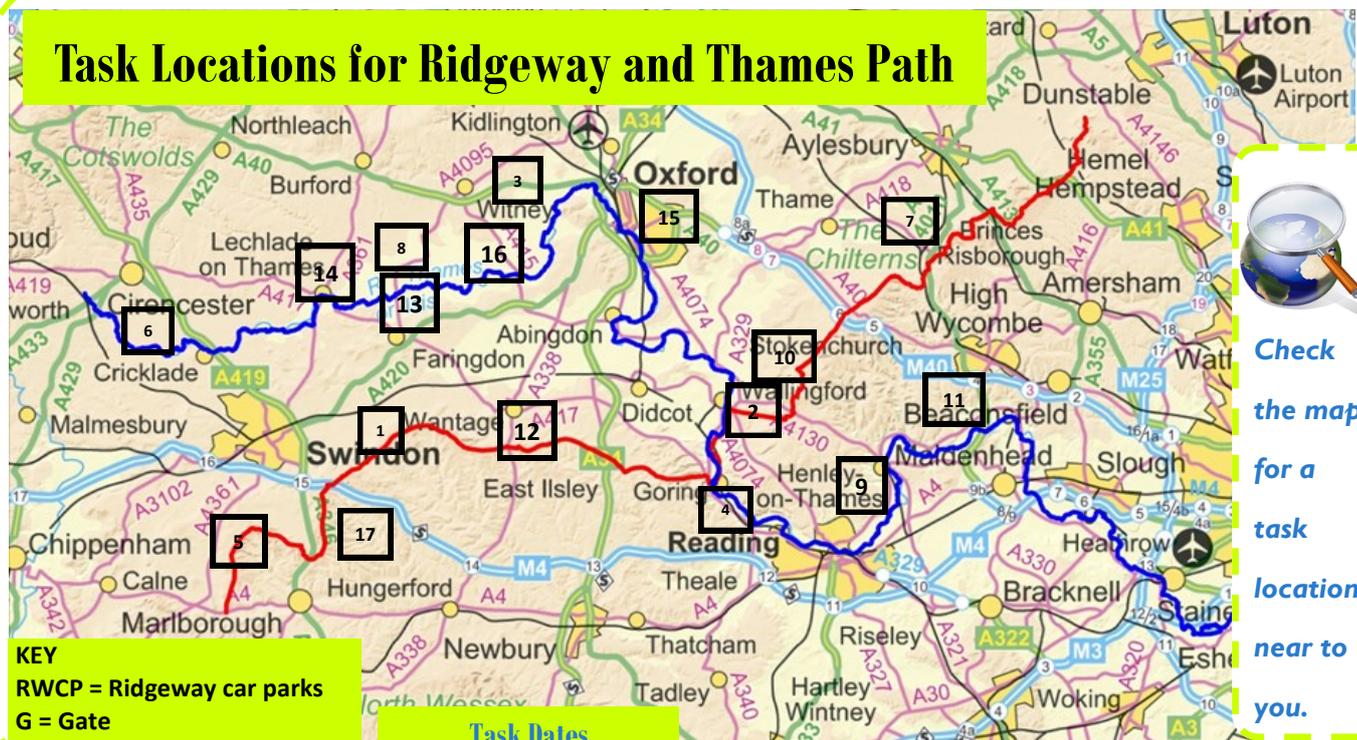
Practical work is carried out along The Ridgeway to ensure walkers, cyclists and horseriders enjoy using it. Work is carried out by the National Trail Team, local highway authorities, landowners and contractors. The Chiltern Society do occasional work on The Ridgeway in the Chilterns. Volunteers are welcome to help maintain The Ridgeway and Thames Path by joining the task team led by the National Trail Team. The location and activities for the next 3 months are shown below. Please ensure that you book early as the practical tasks are popular. Locations for tasks may change and volunteer numbers can be limited due to type of task.

Volunteer to help with a task by contacting the National Trail Team.

Book in advance and as soon as possible.

E: nt.volunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk **T:** 01865 810211

Task Locations for Ridgeway and Thames Path



KEY
 RWCP = Ridgeway car parks
 G = Gate
 S = Strimming
 M = Mowing
 TBC = To be confirmed

Task Dates

JULY

- 3rd Watlington - M 10
- 4th Marlow - M 11
- 5th Letcombe Regis - M 12
- 6th Chimney Meadow - M 13
- 11th Marlow - S 11
- 10th Workshop 3
- 12th Lechlade + Inglesham - S 14
- 13th Oxford Fiddlers - S 15
- 17th Oxford Osney - S 15
- 18th Grafton - M 8
- 19th TBC
- 20th Newbridge - M + S 16
- 24th Sonning - S 9
- 25th Snap - M 17
- 26th Idstone - M 1
- 31st Princes Risborough - M 7

AUGUST

- 1st Swinford - M + S 3
- 1st Workshop 3
- 2nd South Stoke - M 4
- 3rd Wallingford + Clifton Hampden - S 2
- 7th Hackpen Hill - M 5
- 8th Ashbury - M 1
- 9th Cricklade + Castle Eaton - S + M 6
- 14th Uffington - M 1
- 15th Kelmscot - M 8
- 16th Blowingstone - M 1
- 17th Chimney - M 13
- 22nd Workshop 3
- 23rd TBC



Check the map for a task location near to you.

When reporting a problem on the Trail, please give a grid reference. A photo is also very useful too!

Fun Fundraising



Bill Bailey, the well-known comedian, is walking The Ridgeway this July to raise money for Stand Up to Cancer (SU2C). He is one of hundreds of people who fund-raise for good causes by walking or riding along The Ridgeway.

Bill will be walking 100 miles in 6 days along the Icknield Way and The Ridgeway. He says on his fundraising webpage <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/bills-ridgeway-walk-2017>,

"It's a tough challenge but it should be fun and for an excellent cause! As a supporter of cancer charities I am always looking for the most effective use of the money raised, SU2C are doing just that! Turning the benefits of the breakthroughs in cancer research into treatments as soon as possible."

It may be that Bill inspires others to take on a challenge this year and there are plenty of organised fundraising events to support and guide people through the experience. If you are new to this sort of thing, being part of these events means you have the reassurance of information packs and, on the day, pitstops with water and First Aiders on hand! There are lots of opportunities every year, with numerous running, walking and cycling events on The Ridgeway. Some are long-established, such as the MacMillan Castles Bike Ride which is in its 21st year, and there are newer events such as SENSE's Ridgeway.

We have created, for the first time, a calendar setting out the major Ridgeway events for the year ahead— see opposite page. See if there is something to suit you!

Events on The Ridgeway raise money for all sorts of causes, from global to local issues. For example, a school in Moulsoford holds an annual cycling event and in May there was a walking event to improve a pre-school in Ramsbury. There is also the opportunity to collect money to keep The Ridgeway itself in good order. In grand style, our very own Chairman of The Ridgeway Partnership, Ian Ritchie, did a sponsored walk from Streatley to Avebury in May.

We are fortunate that event organisers are working with the Ridgeway Officer to make it possible for their participants to support The Ridgeway as well as their primary cause. We are pleased to report that this year, the majority of events listed in our 2017 events calendar opposite are making a donation to help maintain the Trail. A big *thank you* to the organisers and everyone taking part in these events in 2017! Event organisers who donate to The Ridgeway display a special National Trail acorn logo (shown here) on their websites and publications.

We look forward to a year of fun fundraising on The Ridgeway!



Photo credit: Brian Marks
www.flickr.com/photos/beanmunster/1190586987/

Events Calendar 2017

Lots of events take place along The Ridgeway each year.

Use this calendar to plan where and when to visit— take part or seek solitude.

Event organisers have started working more closely with the Ridgeway Officer to plan ahead, keep everyone informed and support improvements to the Trail. This calendar sets out the major events planned for the year ahead. Details about these events and also other events can be found on our website, dependent upon event organisers informing us: www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/event

* Events marked with a star will be using the entire Ridgeway from Ivinghoe to Avebury, or most of it. Those without a star use only part of The Ridgeway and their locations can be found online.

Date	Event	Activity	Event website for more details
Sat 22nd April	Wessex TREC	Horse riding	www.trecgb.com
Sun 28th May	SCOTT MTB Marathon	Cycling	www.mtb-marathon.co.uk
Sun 4th June	21 st Castles Bike Ride	Cycling	www.castlesbikeride.co.uk
Sun 18th June	*Ridgeway Relay (Marlborough Running Club)	Running	www.marlboroughrunningclub.org.uk/races/ridgeway-relay
Sat 24th June	Ridgeway Revenge	Running	Organiser not provided details
Sat 24th/Sun 25th June	*SENSE Ridgewalk	Walking	www.sense.org.uk/content/ridgewalk-2017
Sun 9th July	Lapierre White Road Classic	Cycling	www.cycleclassics.co.uk/white-roads-classic-sportive/
Sat 15th/Sun 16th July	*Race to the Stones	Running	www.racetothestones.com
Sat 29th July	Bury Down Horse Ride	Horse riding	www.chilterndistanceriders.wildapricot.org/
Sat 5th Aug	Ridgeway Century	Cycling	www.trailbreak.co.uk/ridgeway-century/
Sat 12 th / Sun 13 th Aug	Barbury Castle Endurance GB Ride	Horse riding	www.endurancegb.co.uk/main/Barbury
Sat 26th/ Sun 27th Aug	*TRA Ridgeway Challenge 86 Miles	Running	www.ridgewaychallenge.com
Sun 10th Sept	Chilterns 3 Peaks Challenge	Running Walking	www.renniegrove.org/support/our-events/chilterns-3-peaks-challenge
Sat 16th Sept	Chiltern Wonderland 50	Running	www.centurionrunning.com
Sat 23rd Sept	Ridgeway Run (Ashbury)	Running	www.theridgewayrun.com
Sat 24 th Sept	White Horse Ridge CX	Cycling	Organiser not provided details
Sat 21st/Sun 22nd Oct	Autumn 100	Running	www.centurionrunning.com
Sun 8th Oct	Ridgeway Run (Tring)	Running	Organiser not provided details
Fri 10 th /Sun 12th Nov	Druid's Challenge	Running Walking	www.xnrg.co.uk/events/details/the-druids-challenge-2017.aspx

Feedback from the public about events and the Trail helps us to manage The Ridgeway in the best way possible. Please email and/or complete our online survey: ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk or www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/contact-trail-team

Produced by the National Trails Team on behalf of The Ridgeway Partnership.

www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway



Do you love The Ridgeway or know someone who does?
Buy a gift and support National Trails too!
<http://shop.nationaltrail.co.uk/collections/ridgeway>

A BIG THANK YOU

to
**Ramsbury Brewery &
Extreme Energy Ltd**
for their donations
to The Ridgeway

Latest News

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@TheRidgeway1972



For more detailed news, visit
www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/

Autumn Edition

We'd love to hear
from you !

Get in touch to provide
feedback and suggest articles for
future newsletters.

£3 PER ADULT
U16s £1
U5s FREE

TRING

FAMILY FESTIVAL

2 JULY 2017 10AM TO 4PM

COME AND EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF TRING PARK AS WE CONJURE UP THE HISTORY AND ATMOSPHERE OF THE ROTHSCHILD FAMILY SHOWS OF OLD, AND CELEBRATE THE SUMMER WITH US

WOOD | WILLOW
CARVING | WEAVING

DOG SHOW

STORYTELLING | FACE PAINTING

BAKE & COMPETITION
AND MORE

For more information visit
woodlandtrust.org.uk/events

WOODLAND TRUST

tringpark@woodlandtrust.org.uk



The Ridgeway National Trail

Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford, OX1 1NE

General enquiries: 01844 810224

General email: ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk Volunteer email: NTvolunteers@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Social media: @TheRidgeway1972 Website: www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway/

