

Programme of the Wessex Wanderers Railway Walks

April to October 2026

Public Guided Walks from stations
along the scenic Bristol to
Weymouth (Heart of Wessex)
Railway Line

Organised and led by volunteers
who are members of the Avon,
Dorset, Somerset
& Wiltshire Areas of the
Ramblers

Supported by Great Western Railway and
Community Rail Partnerships



www.wessexrailwaywalks.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/wessexwandererrailwaywalks>

e-mail: admin@wessexrailwaywalks.org.uk

General Information

Please be prepared for undulating or hilly terrain, mud which can be slippery, uneven paths both rural and urban, stiles and livestock. There may be busy roads to cross or walk along.

Trekking poles can be useful on many of the walks.
Sturdy footwear/walking boots recommended.

Please bring food and drink (*refreshments not provided*) and waterproofs (just in case).

Whilst the walks are risk assessed, and may be changed at short notice, if necessary, it is your responsibility to ensure your own personal health and safety.

Train times are given in good faith based on information available at the time of producing the programme but do ensure you check travel updates before setting off to join a walk.

The walks will start at the scheduled arrival time of the latest train specified in the programme. Should a train be delayed, the leader may, at their discretion, await its arrival up to a maximum of 20 minutes. Walkers on a delayed train are encouraged to contact the leader and should be aware that the walk may depart without them in order to allow time to complete the route and be back for return trains.

Train times are shown from Bristol Temple Meads (BTM) and Weymouth stations only. Please refer to the relevant timetables for services from and to your local station.

Go to www.gwr.com or National Rail Enquiries
<https://www.nationalrail.co.uk>, Tel: 03457 484950

For linear walks buy a ticket to the station which is furthest from your departure station.

Due to changes to the Heart of Wessex line timetable, not all the trains now stop at all the stations and may require a change of train to reach your destination.

Thornford, Yetminster and Chetnole are request stops.
To alight tell the Train Manager.

When joining the train, signal your intention to the driver as soon as the train is in sight.

Thornford, Chetnole and Avoncliff have short platforms, and the front carriage only is used to enable passengers to join or leave the train.

Most railway stations along the line do not have toilet facilities, including Weymouth, so it's advisable to use the train toilets before alighting if necessary.

ETD Estimated time of departure
ETA Estimated time of arrival

Whilst Leaders endeavour to keep to the advertised programme, they reserve the right to make changes or cancellations to suit weather conditions, the needs of the party or any other unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

Information as known at the time of producing the programme. TBC – to be confirmed.

April

Wednesday, 1 April - Guaranteed - No Mud!

A mainly flat leisurely walk starting at Bristol Temple Meads Railway station, but with one or two ups and downs, plus some steep climbs up to and on Brandon Hill.

There is now the fun of a wobbly footbridge at the historic Underfall Yard.

The walk follows the harbourside before eventually ascending to Brandon Hill, back down to the Centre, St Nicholas Market, then more harbourside walking before returning to Bristol Temple Meads.

As well as snippets of history, keeping up the reputation I seem to have acquired for knowing so many real ale pubs, we will pass one or two which we've not done so on previous walks.

Bring lunch and a drink.

Trains to Bristol Temple Meads:

Weymouth ETD: 07:30 ETA: 09:50

Return to Weymouth: ETD: 16:30

Walkers on a delayed train are encouraged to contact the leader (Sylvia P 07779 699848) and should be aware that the walk may depart without them in order to allow time to complete the route and be back for return trains.

Circular Walk

Start time 10am

Start place: Meet outside the front of Bristol Temple Meads Railway station. The walk will start after the arrival of the 07:33 from Weymouth.

Estimated finish time 3pm

Distance: 6mi / 9.7km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Sylvia P

Telephone: 0117 979 3828

Saturday, 11 April - Portland Heights to Weymouth depths – walking Britain's coastal defences

We will catch the bus to the Heights at Portland for the start of this linear walk which is slightly under 7 miles. There is a sharp descent down a disused tramway at the start but then it follows the historic Portland railway line and so is reasonably flat. This walk encompasses much of the history of Portland and Weymouth and their importance to the defence of the realm, and we will pass two castles from the time of Henry VIII and one Victorian Fort. We will also pass the site of the Whiteheads Torpedo factory. There are some wonderful views, and there will be many options to stop in Weymouth at the end of the walk. The walk leader will briefly talk about points of interest during the walk.

Additional Notes:

Bring lunch and drink

No dogs

Trains to Weymouth:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD: 08.03, ETA: 10.29

Return

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD: 17.34

Linear Walk

Start time 10:30am

Start place: Meet outside Weymouth station, where we will catch a No. 1 bus to Portland. Bring a bus pass if you have one.

Estimated finish time 3:30pm

Distance: 7mi / 11.3km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Chris M.

Telephone: 07403104180

Wednesday, 15 April - Bath 7 Crescents

A circular walk exploring Bath's 7 beautiful Georgian Crescents and architecture with superb views across the city. Covering the more famous landmarks and those hidden and lesser-known Crescents. Starting from Bath Spa station along the River Avon towards Green Park Station and then Norfolk Crescent. Continuing up through Victoria Park and the famous Royal Crescent. Climbing up through the disused golf course further on towards the smaller Cavendish and Somerset Place Crescents. Then onto the splendid Lansdown Crescent then a short walk to Camden Crescent, before heading downhill to Hedgemoor Park. Then onto Sydney Gardens to get onto the Kennet and Avon Canal path. Towards Widcombe Locks and climbing up the hill to Widcombe Crescent. Then back down to the river and finishing at Bath Spa station.

Additional Notes:

Please bring a picnic lunch and drinks. Please ensure that you wear suitable clothing and footwear and are fit enough for the given distance.

Trains to Bath Spa:

From Bristol Temple Meads: 09.23, ETA 9.35

From Weymouth: 07.33, ETA 9.29

Return Trains

To Bristol Temple Meads: 15.25

To Weymouth: 16.22

Circular Walk

Start time 9:45am

Start place: Please meet outside the front of Bath Spa Station, just to the left, near to the bus stop and seated outdoor spaces.

Estimated finish time 3pm

Distance: 7mi / 11.3km

National Grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Tony R. **Telephone:** 07561 371166

May

Wednesday, 6 May – Gardens, a Fort, Tudor to Modern History, an award-winning Beach and more – Welcome to Weymouth

A leisurely walk giving time to impart snippets of history and admire the views. It will be approximately six miles of mainly easy walking but with several ups and downs and some steps.

We start by visiting Greenhill Gardens, then follow the prom back to the King's Statue, down to the harbourside, eventually reaching the often-unknown Peace Gardens where we will probably stop for lunch, with the adjacent Nothe Tavern if anyone wishes to have a quick drink there.

As well as snippets of history, once again keeping up the reputation I have acquired, I will now point out several Hostelrys on the way, imparting their history where applicable, something I haven't really done on my walks around Weymouth in the past. After lunch we continue the walk by going to the coastal path and Nothe Gardens, eventually returning along the prom to the railway station.
Lunch – picnic or pub.

Well behaved dogs kept on leads welcome.

Outward trains to Weymouth:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD: 0803 ETA: 1034

Return trains from Weymouth:

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD: 1528 or 1738

Meet outside the front of Weymouth railway station. The walk will start after the arrival of the 0803 train from Bristol Temple Meads. ETA 1034

Circular Walk

Start time 10:34

Start place: Please meet outside the station

Estimated finish time 3pm

Distance: 6mi

National Grade: Easy/Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Sylvia P

Telephone: 07779699848

Saturday, 16 May – A fresh look – Freshford

A walk visiting various parts of Freshford village, including the site of the old station, the weir and stretching over to Pipestone.

Bring lunch and a drink.

Trains to Freshford Railway Station:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 11:42 ETA 12:09

From Weymouth: ETD 09:30, ETA 12:01

Return trains:

To Bristol Temple Meads: 15:59

To Weymouth: 16:31

Circular Walk

Start time 12:10pm

Start place: Please meet at the station

Estimated finish time 3:30pm

Distance: 5mi / 8km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Joy H

Telephone: 07985 472844

CANCELLED - Wednesday, 27 May -

Dam the Bruems

Heading out from the station following tracks alongside streams towards the Bruton Dam, which is an impressive flood storage reservoir built in the 1980s. Continuing up and over various fields past Colinshays Manor and then down to South Brewham village. We will stop at St. John's church and village hall for some refreshments and a comfort break. From here we head up out of the village towards the hamlet of Hardway again with great views of the rolling countryside and Alfred's Tower further in the distance. From here we eventually turn back towards Bruton covering various paths and fields. Arriving back in Bruton at the famous Hauser & Wirth exhibition/gallery/farm shop& cafe centre based at Durslade Farm premises, where refreshments and toilet facilities are available. From here then crossing the busy road it is a short walk back to the station using the designated footpath which is very close to the Dovecot landmark. A moderate walk across the countryside using mainly footpaths/tracks across mostly fields and some wooded areas, which can be muddy in places. There will be several climbs up and down the rolling countryside throughout the walk. In addition there are several stiles to negotiate along the walk. Bring lunch and a drink.

Trains to Bruton:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 10:04, ETA 11:14

From Weymouth: ETD 09:32, ETA 10:43

Return:

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 16:40

To Weymouth: ETD 17:12

Circular Walk

Start time 11:15am Start place: Meet outside station.

Estimated finish time 4pm

Distance: 7.5mi / 12.1km **National Grade:** Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Tony R **Telephone:** 07561371166

Saturday, 30 May – Four Churches and Two Hills

From Bath Spa Station, we will visit four churches in the hills north of Bath, with spectacular views, courtesy of the steep hills we will climb, one of which could be strenuous. Returning to Bath Spa Station.

Additional information:

There will be livestock en-route – registered assistance dogs only.

Walking poles plus stout walking boots recommended.

Bring a picnic and drink.

Trains to Bath Spa Railway Station:

From Weymouth EDT 07:33 ETA 09:29

From Bristol temple Meads ETD 09:30 ETA: 09:41

Return trains from Bath Spa:

To Weymouth ETD 17:22

To Bristol Temple Meads: Frequent service

Circular Walk

Start time 09:45

Start place: Please meet outside Bath Spa Station

Estimated finish time 3:15pm

Distance: 9mi / 14.5 km

National Grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: David B

Telephone: 0742 894 9433

June

Wednesday, 3 June – A Town and Country walk with a Roman & Thomas Hardy Flavour

A leisurely walk starting at Dorchester West Railway station. It will be approximately six miles of mainly easy walking, giving time to impart snippets of history and admire the countryside views. Some stony paths. Could be muddy (good bladders an advantage!).

After viewing the Roman Town House, we make our way to the Water Meadows and the River Frome. We will visit St Michales Church at Stinsford where the Hardy family gravestones are. Eventually following the River Frome again, we return to the outskirts of the town centre. Up past Salisbury Fields, the Martyr statues and other historical and Hardy related building in the town.

Well behaved dogs kept on leads welcome.

Bring picnic lunch.

We will set off after the arrival of the 0803 train from Bristol Temple Meads. ETA 1009.

Train to Dorchester:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 0803 ETA 1009

From Weymouth: Train or bus

Return trains:

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 1544 or 1742

Circular Walk

Start place: Meet outside Dorchester West Station

Start Time: 10:15

Distance: 6 mi

Estimated finish time: 2:00pm

National grade: Easy/Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Sylvia P

Telephone: 0117 979 3828

Saturday, 6 June - Railways and Riverways of Keynsham

Following Monarchs Way and Bristol to Bath cycle path to Bitton Steam Railway station. We make our way across to lovely views and down into Bitton village and church. Rejoin the Bristol to Bath cycle path to Avon Riverway. Follow the river back to Keynsham.

Trains to Keynsham:

From Weymouth: ETD 07.33 ETA 09.40

From Bristol Temple Meads ETD 09.08 ETA 09.14

Return Trains:

To Weymouth ETD 2.11 or 4.11

To BTM ETD 2.40, 3.20 or 3.40

Circular Walk

Start place: Meet outside station

Start Time: 09:45

Distance: 7.25 mi

Estimated finish time: 2:00pm

National grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Joy H

Telephone: 07985 472844

Wednesday, 10 June - Bradford on Avon and Beyond - old, new and countryside

A circular walk from Bradford on Avon, walking steeply uphill to Tory for fine views over Bradford on Avon, across the fields to and around Cumberwell golf course (well away from flying golf balls) returning via Woolley and Kingston Farm housing development. A mixture of lanes and fields and a couple of stiles. Bring lunch and drink (may be an option to visit a cafe at the end of the walk).

Registered Assistance dogs only.

Trains to Bradford on Avon:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 10:45 ETA 11:17

From Weymouth: ETD 09:32 ETA 11:17

Return trains:

To Bristol Temple Meads – frequent service

To Weymouth: ETD 16:36

Circular Walk

Start place: Meet outside station

Start Time: 11:20am

Distance: 6 mi / 9.7 km

Estimated finish time: 3:30pm

National grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Val S

Telephone: 01225867454

Wednesday, 17 June - Climbing up on Solsbury Hill

A moderate linear walk starting from the front of Bath Spa railway station in the city centre. Heading first alongside the River Avon towards the Kennet canal to follow the towpath in the direction of Sydney Gardens. From here we head down through the fields and towards the River Avon, along footpaths until the Toll Bridge at Bathampton. From here continuing the walk using the new footpath towards Batheaston, and crossing over the river by footbridge, stopping for lunch at the Riverside community garden area. From here we must cross the busy A4, walking through the village finally heading up to Little Solsbury Hill. This a steady climb upwards but very worthwhile for the views back to Bath and countryside all round. Returning back down to Stambridge in Batheaston to get the bus back into the city centre.

Additional Notes:

Linear walk with a steady climb and descent at the end, some good footpaths but maybe muddy through some fields after rain. Couple of minor roads and the busy A36 at Batheaston to manage. Please bring light refreshments and drink. Also bring bus pass or credit card for purchasing bus tickets back into city centre from Batheaston.

Trains: BTM to Bath Spa 9.23 to 9.30 Weymouth 7.33 to 9.29. Return: BTM 15.30 (numerous trains to BTM) or Weymouth 16.22

Linear Walk

Start time 10:00am

Estimated finish time 3:00pm

Start place: Meet outside the front of the station by the seats

Finish: Return on bus to Bath City/Bath Spa Railway station

Distance: 7.5mi / 12.1km

National Grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Tony R.

Telephone: 07561 371166

July

Saturday, 4 July – Independence Day

Celebrate Independence Day with a scenic, easy linear walk from Bath Spa station to Bradford on Avon along the Kennet and Avon canal towpath. Return trains from Bradford on Avon station.

Bring lunch and a drink.

Trains to Bath Spa Railway Station:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 10:03 ETA 10:20

From Weymouth ETD 09:30 ETA 11:33

Return trains from Bradford on Avon Railway Station:

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 16:25 or 17:15

To Weymouth: ETD 16:36 or 18:26

Linear Walk

Start time 11:35am

Estimated finish time 5pm

Start place: meet outside the station

Distance: 10mi/16.1km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Simon F

Telephone: 07884 088836

Wednesday, 8 July - Westwood and Freshford with a Difference

A circular walk from Bradford on Avon, along the River Avon, up through Becky Addy Woods to Westwood, continuing along the lane to above Freshford with fine views, past Freshford station (option to leave the walk here), across the fields to Limpley Stoke, along the canal to Elbow, back to Bradford on Avon via Turleigh and Avoncliff. A mixture of lanes and fields. Bring lunch and drink. Registered Assistance Dogs only.

Trains to Bradford on Avon:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 10:45 ETA: 11:19

From Weymouth: ETD: 09:32 ETA: 11:17

Return Trains

To Bristol Temple Meads: frequent service

To Weymouth: 16:36

Circular Walk

Start time 11:20am

Estimated finish time 3:45pm

Start place: Meet outside the station

Distance: 7mi / 11.3km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Val S

Telephone: 01225867454

Wednesday, 15 July - Specially in Celebration of King Charles 111 England Coast Path

Using Weymouth Railway station as our start and finish point, we will go by bus to and from the spectacular Isle of Portland for a linear 6/7 walk mile along part of the coastal path, including Portland Bill. A mainly easy walk although there are one or two steeper parts and possibly some rough paths. Be prepared for rain and wind, or even sunshine, as it will be quite exposed, so whatever you do, don't mention the little furry things by name or indeed the weather could be inclement! There will be options to leave the walk before the end or to lengthen it (self-led at your own risk) Bring lunch and drink. **Additional Notes:** Well behaved dogs (on leads) welcome.

Bring bus pass if you have one.

Train to Weymouth:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 08:03 ETA 10:34

Return to Bristol

From Weymouth: ETD 17:28

Circular Walk

Start time 10:35am

Estimated finish time 4pm

Start place: Meet outside the front of Weymouth Railway station. The walk will commence after the arrival of the train from Bristol Temple Meads. We will use the bus from the stop on the road opposite the station forecourt.

Distance: 6.5mi / 10.5km

National Grade: Leisurely

Contact Details:

Name: Sylvia P

Telephone: 0777 9699848

Wednesday, 22 July – Along the River Frome

This is a 12 mile linear walk largely following the River Frome from Maiden Newton to Dorchester. It includes some climbs to ridgeways to enjoy views of the surrounding countryside. There are many cafes and shops in Poundbury and Dorchester at the end of the walk. It will be possible for walkers to finish the walk at Poundbury and catch the bus to Dorchester if they want to reduce the walk by about two miles.

Additional Notes:

Bring lunch and sufficient drink for the walk.

No dogs except assistance dogs – please contact the leader prior to the walk.

Bring bus pass if you have one.

Trains to Maiden Newton

From Bristol Temple Meads ETD 08:03 ETA 09:57

From Weymouth ETD 09:32 ETA 09:57

Return trains from Dorchester West

To Bristol Temple Meads ETD 17:42

To Weymouth – bus recommended.

Linear Walk – 12 miles

Start time 10am – meet outside station

Estimated finish time 4:30pm

National grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Chris M.

Telephone: 07403 104180

August

Wednesday, 19 Aug – Villages (one now hidden under water!) Churches and Thatch

A walk from Yeovil Pen Mill through Yeovil Country Park, then via lanes and fields to the village of East Coker, seeing the row of pretty thatched cottages, and pause by the ancient church for a refreshment break.

Poet and playwright TS Eliot's ashes are buried inside. Continuing via fields and lanes to Sutton Bingham reservoir for lunch, (picnic tables, water station and toilets available). Nearby is the tiny church of Sutton Bingham, where ancient fresco's have been uncovered - anyone interested can visit during the lunch stop. After lunch, fields take us to an ancient mill, over to the village of Barwick, past Barwick House and a couple of follies, through Nine Springs Country Park, finishing at a cafe. Allow 30 minutes to amble back to the station from here.

In the case of inclement weather, the walk can be shortened by 2 miles, with lunch at East Coker.

Bring lunch and drink.

Well behaved dogs on leads welcome.

Trains to Yeovil Pen Mill

From BTM ETD 08.03 ETA 09:33

From Weymouth ETD 07:33 ETA 08:21

Return trains from Yeovil Pen Mill

To BTM ETD 16:21

To Weymouth ETD 15:32 or 17:32

Circular Walk – 9.5 miles

Start time 9:35am - Meet at front of railway station

Estimated finish time 2:45pm

National Grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Sonia C

Telephone: 01935 321607

Wednesday, 26 Aug - Castle Cary Circular

Starting from the Castle Cary railway station, it is a short walk up into the town centre. From here we head up past the George Hotel onto a footpath climbing up to Lodge Hill. This is a steady climb upwards to the Beacon and Viewpoint location. All around there are superb views over Castle Cary and of the surrounding countryside, with Glastonbury Tor away in the distance. We then continue on the along the top ridge past a Solar farm to head back down the hill side towards the B3152 road eventually turning off to join part of the Macmillan Way route (the charity founder Douglas Macmillan lived in Castle Cary). Passing the nearby Cockhill area and continuing on a quiet lane in the direction of Dimmer near the River Carey. Again crossing several more fields to climb back up to the edge of South Cary then heading back down to the town near the parish church of All Saints. Finally returning back to our starting point at the railway station.

Additional notes:

Bring lunch

Trains to Castle Cary

From BTM ETD 9.45 ETA 11.04

From Weymouth ETD 9.32 ETA 10.37

Return trains from Castle Cary

To BTM (change at Westbury) ETD 15.31

To Weymouth ETD 15.18

Circular walk – 7.5 miles

Start time 11:05 – meet outside station

Estimated finish time 15:00

National grade: Strenuous

Contact Details:

Name: Tony R.

Telephone: 07561 371166

September

Friday, 4 September - Beautiful River Avon and River Frome Valleys

A circular walk from Bradford on Avon along the River Avon, up through Becky Addy Woods to Westwood, then past Iford Manor and the River Frome, across the fields to Freshford (option to leave the walk at Freshford station), returning alongside the River Avon to Avoncliffe, then the Kennet and Avon canal to Bradford on Avon. A mixture of lanes and fields and a couple of stiles. Moderately steep hills. Bring lunch and drink. There may be the option for a stop at a local cafe at the end of the walk. Assistance dogs only.

This is a joint walk with the [Bradford on Avon Walking Festival](#).

Trains to Bradford on Avon:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD: 10:45 ETA: 11:15

From Weymouth ETD: 09:32 ETA: 11:17

Return trains:

To Bristol Temple Meads: frequent service

To Weymouth: 16:36

Circular Walk

Start time 11:20am

Estimated finish time 3:45pm

Start place: Meet outside station

Time: 11:20am

Distance: 7mi / 11.3km

National Grade: Moderate

Contact Details:

Name: Val S

Telephone: 01225867454

Wednesday, 16 September -

Dam the Bruems

Heading out from the station following tracks alongside streams towards the Bruton Dam, which is an impressive flood storage reservoir built in the 1980s. Continuing up & over various fields past Colinshays Manor and then down to South Brewham village. We will stop at St. John's church and village hall for some refreshments and a comfort break. From here we head out of the village towards the hamlet of Hardway, with great views of the rolling countryside and Alfred's Tower further in the distance. From here we eventually turn back towards Bruton. Arriving back in Bruton at the famous Hauser & Wirth exhibition, gallery, farm shop & cafe centre based at Durslade Farm premises, refreshments and toilet facilities are available.

Crossing the busy road it is a short walk back to the station using the designated footpath which is very close to the Dovecot landmark. A moderate walk across the countryside using mainly footpaths/tracks across mostly fields and wooded areas, which can be muddy in places. There will be several climbs up and down the rolling countryside throughout the walk. In addition there are several stiles to negotiate along the walk. Bring lunch and a drink.

Trains to Bruton:

From Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 10:04, ETA 11:14

From Weymouth: ETD 09:32, ETA 10:43

Return:

To Bristol Temple Meads: ETD 16:40

To Weymouth: ETD 17:12

Circular Walk

Start time 11:15am Start place: Meet outside station.

Estimated finish time 4pm

Distance: 7.5mi / 12.1km **National Grade:** Moderate

Contact Details: Tony R **Telephone:** 07561371166

October

Walk details TBC

The Ramblers, 13 Dirty Lane, London SE1 9PA

Telephone: 020 3961 3232

Monday: 10am - 4.30pm

Tuesday - Friday: 9.30am - 4.30pm

e-mail ramblers@ramblers.zendesk.com

website www.ramblers.org.uk

The Ramblers' Association is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. Company registration no. 4458492. Registered charity, England & Wales no. 1093577, Scotland no. SC039799.