

READING WALKS FESTIVAL

10 - 18 May 2025

Telling the stories of
Reading's heritage and
natural landscapes



Official Travel Partner for Reading Walks Festival

DATE	NAME OF WALK	LENGTH OF WALK (KM)	TYPE OF WALK	WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE	FAMILY FRIENDLY	PRICE OF WALK	PAGE NO.	
10 MAY	1. Kendrick Conservation Area Walkabout	3	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	6	
	2. Reading – the home of photography	1.5	☺		👨👩	£6	6	
	3. River Kennet and Green Park	8	☺			£3	7	
	4. St James' Way Camino Pilgrimage (Starter)	7.5	☺			£3	7	
	5. University Heritage Trail – Northern Whiteknights Campus	2.5	☺			£3	8	
11 MAY	6. An introduction to Reading's heritage	2	☺	♿	👨👩	£6	9	
	7. A Tranquil Thameside Walk West from Reading	13.8	☺			£3	9	
	8. Exploring East Reading's Lakes	9	☺		👨👩	£3	10	
	9. On the trail of Danish POWs from the Napoleonic Wars	1	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	10	
	10. Reading in the time of Jane Austen	2.5	☺		👨👩	£3	11	
	11. Reading to Shiplake Social	13	☺			£3	11	
	12. University Heritage Trail – Earley Gate	2.5	☺			£3	12	
12 MAY	13. And now for something completely different ... A Bike Ride!	8	🚲			£3	13	
14 MAY	14. A Caversh-AMBLE - surprises north of the river	10	☺			£3	14	
	15. Coming Up for Air! (Discovering George Orwell)	12	☺			£13	14	
	16. Kendrick Conservation Area Walkabout	3	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	15	
	17. Lake and Woods at Maiden Erlegh	2.5	☺		👨👩	£3	15	
	18. Leafy Victorian Splendour: Redlands Trees	3	☺			£3	16	
	19. Reading in the time of Jane Austen	2.5	☺		👨👩	£3	16	
	20. St Frideswide's Way Camino Pilgrimage (Final Stage)	13	☺	☺		£3	17	
	21. Tech Town Today	2	☺			£10	17	
	22. Talk: Walking the Camino de Santiago	-	-		♿	£3	18	
	15 MAY	23. 3 Bridge Stroll	4	☺		👨👩	£3	19
24. Abbey Quarter Walking Tour		1	☺	♿		£10	19	
25. Green Health and beyond		1.5	☺		👨👩	Free	20	
26. Medieval Reading Walkabout		4	☺		👨👩	£3	20	
27. Nature Notes – Stories in the Plants		8	☺			£13	21	
28. Our Green Stories: Local to Global walking tour		1.5	☺			£10	21	
29. South Oxfordshire Woods and Fields		14.5	☺			£3	22	
30. The Kennet & Avon Canal at the Heart of Reading		5	☺		👨👩	£3	22	
16 MAY		31. Accessible Forest Bathing at the MERL Garden	1	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	23
		32. A walk around Reading's IDR	5.5	☺			Free	23
	33. Bats at Fobney Meadow	1	☺		👨👩	£3	24	
	34. Estates and Manors of Earley	8	☺			£3	24	
	35. Historic Reading Walking Tour	1	☺			£10	25	
	36. Kennet & Avon Canal at Aldermaston	4	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	25	
	37. Loddon and Wood of Eagles	4	☺			£3	26	
	38. St James' Way Camino Pilgrimage 2 day walk	18.4 & 13.2	☺			£3	26	
	39. The Kennet & Avon Canal and the River Kennet at Aldermaston	7	☺		👨👩	£3	27	
	40. Two Nature Reserves and a Serial Murderer	11	☺		👨👩	£3	27	
17 MAY	41. Accessible Forest Bathing at the MERL	1	☺	♿	👨👩	£3	28	
	42. Literary and artistic Reading	1	☺	♿	👨👩	£6	28	
	43. Medieval Reading Walkabout	4	☺		👨👩	£3	29	
	44. Pangbourne Circular	10	☺			Free	29	
	45. Reading's green corridor – Kennet, Old Coley Branch Line & Holybrook	11	☺			£3	30	
	46. The stories of Reading's Entertainment Venues	8	☺		👨👩	£3	30	
	47. University Heritage Trail – London Road	1.5	☺			£3	31	
18 MAY	48. Discovering Calleva Atrebatum: A Guided Walk through Roman Britain	3.5	☺			£6	32	
	49. Pangbourne Circular	10	☺			Free	32	
	50. Reading's Independent Gems & Visitor Spots	7	☺			£12	33	
	51. Reading Town Centre's Brutalist Architecture	3.5	☺			Free	33	
	52. University of Reading Heritage Trail – Central Whiteknights	2	☺			£3	34	



READING WALKS FESTIVAL



Wheelchair Accessible



Family Friendly

TYPE OF WALK:



A healthy walk



Guided tour



A sociable walk



A bike ride

PLEASE NOTE:

You MUST book in advance. We are not able to accept people who turn up on the day.

BOOK YOUR WALK:





readingwalks festival.org

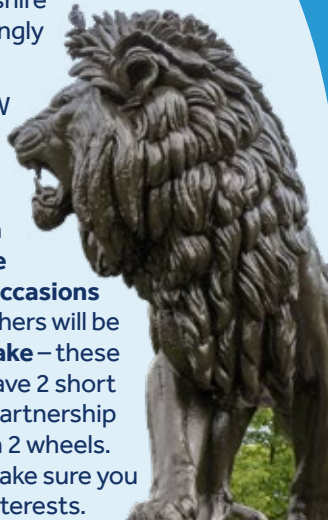
WELCOME TO THE READING WALKS FESTIVAL 2025

This is our third year and if this is the first time you have come across us, welcome! Our festival is a *walks* festival rather than a *walking* festival with the emphasis on sharing the stories of Reading as we walk over the nine days of the festival. Thanks to our volunteer guides, we hope you learn something new, enjoy the Reading outdoors and make new friends.

Newcomers to Reading are often surprised that Reading is home to 1,000 years of history and our guides will be sharing many of these stories with you on your walk. The Thames and Kennet / Kennet & Avon Canal flow through the town with lovely towpath and river bank walks, while the Chilterns, North Hampshire and West Berkshire are on our doorstep, so Reading is a surprisingly green and pleasant place to visit.

The majority of the walks this year are NEW for 2025 but there are a few old favourites enjoying a 'run out' so if you missed them last year, here's your chance! Although our guides will be sharing their knowledge with you along the way, some walks will be **more talking than walking**, some will be **social occasions** designed for you to walk and chat, while others will be about just **enjoying the walk for its own sake** – these will tend to be the longer walks. We even have 2 short **cycle rides** in the programme this year in partnership with Sustrans to explore Reading gently on 2 wheels. Please read the descriptions carefully to make sure you sign up for a walk (or ride) that suits your interests.

-  A healthy walk (more walking/less talking)
-  Guided tour (less walking/more talking)
-  A sociable walk (make new friends while you are walking)
-  A bike ride (gentle short ride to explore Reading)



In each walk description you will find the **approximate length in kilometres and hours**. We hope there is something for every ability. The difficulty icon will give you an idea of what to expect (**Easy/Medium/Hard**). Where we think the length, terrain or subject matter would make it a suitable **family walk** we have indicated.

Difficulty:  Easy  Medium  Hard  Child friendly

All our walk leaders have assessed whether their walk is **wheelchair accessible**, by which we mean the walk features smooth-ish pathways with ramps (if there are steps) and wide entrances for individuals with mobility challenges. However, we do recommend that you get in touch with us if you have any accessibility queries about a specific walk because access requirements differ from person to person.

 Wheelchair accessible

Dogs are not permitted to join any of our walks unless a guide dog or assistance dog

Last year, over 70% of festival walkers reached the walks starting points without the need for a car. **All our walks link into Reading's excellent public transport network** so please do try and help us make the festival as sustainable as we can by avoiding car use if possible. Each walk description will include public transport information.

The majority of the walks cost £3 – the same price as last year. The £3 charge lessened the number of no-shows in 2024 and was re-invested in the Festival. A few walks will remain free while others, led by professional guides or organisations, have a higher cost. However, £3 from EVERY walk will be reinvested in the Festival, which is a not-for-profit enterprise.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WALKING WITH YOU.



Book your walk – readingwalksfestival.org

1. KENDRICK CONSERVATION AREA WALKABOUT

10 MAY, 10:20 (& 14 MAY, 17:30)

3km | 2.5 hours | | | | £3



This Conservation Area Walkabout will take you back over 150 years to when the Kendrick area of Reading looked very different. You'll discover lost swimming baths, Kendrick Court, Albion Terrace, the original University campus, impressive Listed buildings, lovely mature trees and the stories of the people who lived there. Led by local guide Terry Dixon and Richard Bennett (Reading Civic Society).

START: Corner of South & East Street RG1 4GP

GETTING THERE: Reading Station is 12 mins walk & London Street Bus stop (Nos 5 & 6 buses) 3 mins

2. READING – THE HOME OF PHOTOGRAPHY

10 MAY, 14:00 | 1.5km | 1 hour | | | | £6

Discover Reading's photographic legacy on a guided walk exploring Fox Talbot's innovations, historic landmarks and the town's pivotal role in shaping modern photography. Learn how his groundbreaking experiments in the 19th century revolutionized image-making, setting the foundation for photography as we know it today. We'll visit locations that connect to Fox Talbot's work and influence. A walk for anyone curious about the intersections of art, science and history. David has lived in Reading for over 20 years and has been leading tours in Reading since 2018.



START: Outside Abbey Medical Centre, 41 Russell Street

GETTING THERE: Close to bus stops for 15,16,17 and 33

3. RIVER KENNET AND GREEN PARK

10 MAY, 10:00 | 8km | 2.5 hours | | | | £3



A linear walk from Reading station along the Kennet towpath to the old Fobney pumping station and on to the modern Green Park development with its network of paths and lakes. The walk will terminate at the new Green Park station, from where participants can catch a train back to Reading Station, or a bus back to the town centre. Joyce is an experienced walk leader with Windsor & District Ramblers.

START: Reading Station outside the Three Guineas PH

GETTING THERE: Most Reading buses routes stop at Reading station

4. ST JAMES' WAY CAMINO PILGRIMAGE (STARTER)

10 MAY, 09:00 | 7.5km | 4 hours | | | | £3

A Camino de Santiago introductory walk starting with the Camino sites of Reading followed by a short walk along the first 4 miles of the St James' Way. Take your first steps on the St James' Way and learn about this modern-day long-distance pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. David is the volunteer development lead of the St James' Way Camino for the Confraternity of St James UK. He has walked several Caminos and has self-published a book, 'Not Just a Long Walk' about his experiences.



START: Our Lady & St Anne Church, Caversham

GETTING THERE: 20 minute walk or Buses 24 / 25 to Caversham Gosbrook Road and short walk. Return by bus

5. UNIVERSITY HERITAGE TRAIL – NORTHERN WHITEKNIGHTS CAMPUS

10 MAY, 11:00 | 2.5km | 1.5 hours |  |  |  £3



A tour of the University's northern campus, featuring some newer buildings and some old, and some not even there anymore! We will be walking around the northern perimeter of the campus, seeing where the original student halls of residence were constructed in and around some of the older buildings on campus, including Foxhill House and the site of another old house since demolished. Chris is a former University employee and now a trustee of the Friends of the University.

START: Car park 1A Whiteknights campus
GETTING THERE: Bus 21 from Reading town centre



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A RIP ROARING
RAMBLE**

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Book your walk – readingwalksfestival.org

SUNDAY 11 MAY

6. AN INTRODUCTION TO READING'S HERITAGE

11 MAY, 10:00

2km | 1 hour |  |  |  |  |  £6

Explore Reading's rich heritage on a guided walk, uncovering historic landmarks, stories from the past, portentous events, and hidden gems that showcase the town's fascinating past and dynamic present. From Reading Gaol to the turbulent events of the Battle of Reading and the modern day. For history enthusiasts, literature lovers or the plain curious. David has lived in Reading for over 20 years and has been leading tours in Reading since 2018.



START: Banksy mural on corner of Reading Gaol

GETTING THERE: Short walk from Reading Station and town centre bus stops

7. A TRANQUIL THAMESIDE WALK WEST FROM READING

11 MAY, 10:00 | 13.8km | 4 hours |  |  |  £3



Walk a scenic stretch of the Thames, explore Elizabethan Mapledurham and cross the Victorian toll bridge at Whitchurch in the land of Kenneth Graham. Diana is an experienced walk leader for Pang Valley Ramblers. The return to Reading is by train from Pangbourne station or by bus from the village (transport tickets not included). Bring a packed lunch.

START: North exit Reading Station

GETTING THERE: Trains and most Reading Buses routes connect to the start point

Book your walk – readingwalksfestival.org

8. EXPLORING EAST READING'S LAKES

11 MAY, 14:30 | 9km | 2.5 hours |  |  |  |  £3

A circular walk visiting three lakes to the east of Reading – South Lake, Maiden Erlegh Lake and Whiteknights Lake – and exploring their landscape and wildlife. The walk will include brief details of the history of these three man-made lakes and will show how they provide oases for humans and habitats for wildlife. Steve is an experienced walk leader with Loddon Valley Ramblers and has lived in Earley for over 30 years.



START: Three Tuns PH, Wokingham Road

GETTING THERE: Reading Buses 17, Lion 4 and 4a

9. ON THE TRAIL OF DANISH POWS FROM THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

11 MAY, 18:00

1km | 1.5 hour |  |  |  |  |  £3



START: Reading Minster

GETTING THERE: Close to many bus routes and 10 minute walk from Reading Station

Between 1807-1814, nearly 600 Danish and Norwegian ships' captains, first mates and boys lived embedded in Reading as POWs on parole in private lodgings. Hear how they became valued members of the community with a short walk from Reading Minster to Forbury Gardens. John is the author of 'The Gentlemen Danes', which has filled a huge gap in our understanding about this fascinating period of the town's history.

10. READING IN THE TIME OF JANE AUSTEN

11 MAY, 10:00 (& 14 MAY, 10:00)

2.5km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  £3



Part of Jane Austen 250, a celebration of 250 years since the famous author's birth. Jane Austen spent 18 months at school in Reading Abbey Gateway in the late 18th century. Join the walk around Reading to see the town as she might have seen it. Please note – this walk does not include an interior visit to the Abbey Gateway. Joy is an active member of the Jane Austen Society and of several local history societies and enjoys discovering new walks in town.

START: St Laurence's Church, Town Hall Square

GETTING THERE: 5 minutes' walk from the station and close to main bus routes

11. READING TO SHIPLAKE SOCIAL

11 MAY, 10:00 | 13km | 5 hours |    |  |  £3

A social longer walk along the Thames from Reading to Shiplake with the temptation of a pub lunch at the end. As we emerge from Reading, we walk towards Sonning, and on to Shiplake on a section of the Thames Path that takes us through some lush woodlands and beautiful rural countryside. Option of joining us for a pub lunch at the Baskerville in Lower Shiplake. Return to Reading by train (ticket not included). Clare works for the Thames Path National Trail and is passionate about walking in the great outdoors.



START: Reading Train Station

GETTING THERE: Train and most Reading Buses routes drop off nearby

12. UNIVERSITY HERITAGE TRAIL – EARLEY GATE

11 MAY, 11:00

2.5km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  £3



A walk around the Earley Gate area of the University's Whiteknights campus. The walk will take us from the entrance through the buildings to the Friends Bridge over the lake, then on through the Wilderness to the Harris Garden entrance, passing the site of Wilderness House, sadly now demolished, and returning via The Citadel, the purpose-built war room built in the 1950s as a regional government outpost. Chris is a former University employee and now a trustee of the Friends of the University.

START: University of Reading Earley Gate entrance

GETTING THERE: 19 or 19A from the town centre

MONDAY 12 MAY

13. AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT... A BIKE RIDE!

12 MAY, 10:30 & 15:00 | 8km | 2 hours |  |  |  £3

A Sustrans-led leisurely bike ride from Forbury Gardens on some of the many stretches of Sustrans National Cycle Network on shared use paths, quiet ways and low traffic roads. After a bike check, we will be heading south, following the Kennet to Fobney Island Wetland Nature Reserve before returning into town. You'll need your own working bike and helmet, appropriate clothing, no open toed shoes. Riders will be covered by Sustrans separate insurance.



START & FINISH: Forbury Gardens

GETTING THERE: Close to Railway Station and easily accessible by bike!



14. A CAVERSH-AMBLE – SURPRISES NORTH OF THE RIVER

14 MAY, 11:00 | 10km | 3.5 hours |   |  |  £3



START & FINISH: Reading Station

GETTING THERE: Trains and most Reading Buses routes connect to the start/end point

A gentle stroll through the green spaces north of the river. This 10km circular walk takes in some of Caversham's most recognisable places – such as Thameside Promenade and Caversham Court - but also meanders through some of the hidden gems that can be found north of the river. Led by Mark, Sustrans Active Travel Officer for Reading and Bracknell, experienced walk leader, tree & bird enthusiast.

15. COMING UP FOR AIR! (DISCOVERING GEORGE ORWELL)

14 MAY, 14:00 | 12km | 4.5 hours |   |  |  £13

A journey of discovery in the footsteps of a young George Orwell through his lost 'Golden Country.' Along the way we hint at various aspects of his life and work, share his interest in natural history, and reveal how his childhood here in the countryside around Henley may have influenced some of his writing. Philippa of Pipsticks Walks is an experienced outdoor guide who is passionate about the Chilterns.



START: Shiplake Station

GETTING THERE: GWR to Shiplake (Henley branch line) or Reading Bus Aqua 28

16. KENDRICK CONSERVATION AREA WALKABOUT

14 MAY, 5:30 (& 10 MAY, 10:20)

3km | 2.5 hours |   |  |  |  |  £3



This Conservation Area Walkabout will take you back over 150 years to when the Kendrick area of Reading looked very different. You'll discover lost swimming baths, Kendrick Court, Albion Terrace, the original University campus, impressive Listed buildings, lovely mature trees and the stories of the people who lived there. Led by local guide Terry Dixon and Richard Bennett (Reading Civic Society).

START: Corner of South & East Street RG1 4GP

GETTING THERE: Reading Station is 12 mins walk & London Street Bus stop (Nos 5 & 6 buses) 3 mins

17. LAKE AND WOODS AT MAIDEN ERLEGH

14 MAY, 10:00 | 2.5km | 2 hours |   |  |  |  £3

Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve is a gem in the heart of Earley. It is home to many different living creatures and plants which can all be enjoyed on this walk around a scenic lake where you may be lucky enough to catch sight of a kingfisher or heron. There are several Veteran Oak trees in the woodland and many examples of careful habitat management to encourage biodiversity. The walk is led by former Park Ranger Grahame Hawker supported by Earley Environmental Group.



START: The Interpretation Centre, Near 13 Instow Road RG6 5QH

GETTING THERE: Reading Buses Claret 21

18. LEAFY VICTORIAN SPLENDOUR: REDLANDS TREES

14 MAY, 14:00 | 3km | 2 hours |   |  £3



An informative guided tree walk through the elegant leafy Victorian and Edwardian streets of Redlands. This walk features a beautiful historic suburb of large Victorian and Edwardian houses with dramatic mature species of trees, the Cedar trees in the Old Cemetery and the landscaped gardens and cloisters of the original University. Anna is an enthusiastic walker and Reading Tree Warden. She has created numerous guided tree walks round the town's parks and open spaces.

START: Lodge, Palmer Park

GETTING THERE: 17 bus, direction Wokingham Road

19. READING IN THE TIME OF JANE AUSTEN

14 MAY, 10:00 (& 11 MAY, 10:00)

2.5km | 2 hours |   |  |  £3

Part of Jane Austen 250, a celebration of 250 years since the famous author's birth. Jane Austen spent 18 months at school in Reading Abbey Gateway in the late 18th century. Join the walk around Reading to see the town as she might have seen it. Please note – this walk does not include an interior visit to the Abbey Gateway. Joy is an active member of the Jane Austen Society and of several local history societies and enjoys discovering new walks in town.



START: St Laurence's Church, Town Hall Square

GETTING THERE: 5 minutes' walk from the station and close to main bus routes

20. ST FRIDESWIDE'S WAY CAMINO PILGRIMAGE (FINAL STAGE)

14 MAY, 12:15 | 13km | 5 hours |   |  £3




Get a sense of the Camino de Santiago walking the last stage of the St Frideswide's Way along the Thames Path from Whitchurch to Reading. The St Frideswide's Way is part of a modern-day long-distance pilgrimage route from Oxford to Reading, connecting to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. David is the volunteer development lead of the St James' Way Camino for the Confraternity of St James UK. He has walked several Caminos and has self-published a book, 'Not Just a Long Walk.'

START: St Mary the Virgin Church, Whitchurch on Thames

GETTING THERE: Train from Reading to Pangbourne and short walk across Whitchurch Bridge

21. TECH TOWN TODAY

14 MAY, 10:00 | 2km | 2 hours |   |  10

A town centre walking tour, telling the tale of Reading's transformation into a tech town today of international prominence. The walk complements the current Reading's Digital Revolution exhibition at Reading Museum. Join its curator as he visits some of the key sites in Reading's post-war ICT industry development. Brendan is the Community Engagement Curator at Reading Museum.



START & FINISH: Reading Museum

GETTING THERE: 2 minutes' walk from Reading Railway Station and all town centre bus stops

22. TALK: WALKING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

14 MAY, 19:30

2 hours



A series of short talks about the phenomenon of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, including its recently established connection to Reading. The Confraternity of St James UK, a charity who assist walkers who undertake the Camino, will provide introductions to the wider Camino network and a local emphasis on walking the Camino in the UK, in particular the St James' Way from Reading. The evening will be presented by CSJ volunteers and will include a visit to the Shrine to Our Lady of Caversham.

VENUE: Our Lady & St Anne Church, Caversham

GETTING THERE: 20 minute walk or buses 24 / 25 to Caversham Gosbrook Road and short walk to Our Lady & St Anne Church

THURSDAY 15 MAY

23. 3 BRIDGE STROLL

15 MAY, 13:00

4km | 2-3 hours approx.



A Thames-side green and picturesque walk in the heart of Reading joining up Reading's three bridges – Reading Bridge, Christchurch Bridge and Caversham Bridge. This year's route also includes an extension to the Hydro system and Caversham Lock. Led by Clare from Thames Path National Trail.



START: Reading Train Station

GETTING THERE: Trains and most Reading Buses routes connect to the start/end point

24. ABBEY QUARTER WALKING TOUR

15 MAY, 11:00

1km | 1.5 hours



Explore the heart of medieval Reading. The tour will focus on the highlights of the Abbey Quarter, including the Hospitium, the impressive Reading Abbey ruins and the Abbey Gateway. The tour is led by a Reading Museum experienced Volunteer Tour Guide.

START: Reading Museum

GETTING THERE: 2 minutes from Reading train station and all main bus stops

Book your walk – readingwalksfestival.org

Book your walk – readingwalksfestival.org

25. GREEN HEALTH AND BEYOND

15 MAY, 15:30

1.5km

1.5 hours



Green Health is something we can all benefit from in our day to day lives. Explore this urban area with new eyes and find ways to 'find the wild' wherever you are. This walk takes in a community garden, a therapeutic horticulture garden and the private gardens along the way to refreshments. Find out more about the history of Green Prescribing, the benefits of nature connection and how this little corner of South Reading is helping the community to thrive. The walk is led by Charlotte, an environmental centred educator passionate about helping people find awe in the ordinary and beauty in even the least promising of spaces.



START: Green Health Thames Valley, The Well Centre, Next to 29 Dawlish Road RG2 7SD

GETTING THERE: Reading Bus routes 5 and 6 are within a 5 minute walk from Northumberland Avenue or Basingstoke Road

26. MEDIEVAL READING WALKABOUT

15 MAY, 10:00 (& 17 MAY, 10:00)

4km

2.5 hours



This Walkabout brings to life a time when Reading was a bustling medieval hub. From Viking invasions to trials by combat, this walk reveals the captivating stories, landmarks, and events that shaped the town's history. Led by Terry Dixon who leads themed walks of his home town, with Jennifer Berdollt.

START: Reading Minster

GETTING THERE: Reading Station is 15 mins walk & many buses stop close by

27. NATURE NOTES – STORIES IN THE PLANTS

15 MAY, 10:00

8km

3 hours



A fascinating circular walk taking you into nature to discover some curious plant-lore facts about trees and wildflowers in the countryside north of Reading. Our walk starts out from Peppard and includes towering beechwoods, Kingwood Common, crossing fields into New Copse and returning to Peppard. The route follows well used paths and tracks which may be rough and muddy in part. Philippa of Pipsticks Walks is an experienced outdoor guide who is passionate about the Chilterns.



START: Peppard Common (opposite Peppard Stores)

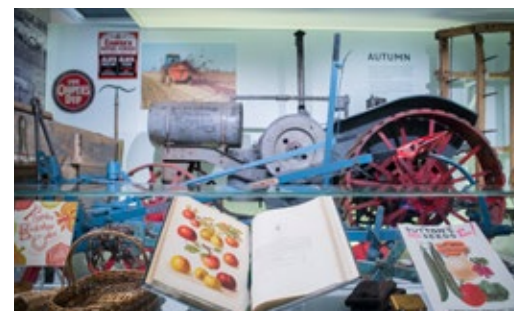
GETTING THERE: Reading Bus Pink 25

28. OUR GREEN STORIES: LOCAL TO GLOBAL WALKING TOUR

15 MAY, 14:00

1.5km

1.5 hours



Look for urban nature and explore the links between the town's history and impact on the wider world on a walk between Reading Museum and The MERL. Angela has a lifelong interest in wildlife and the environment and has been curator of natural history at Reading Museum for 20 years.

START: Reading Museum

GETTING THERE: 2 minute walk from Reading Station and town centre bus stops

29. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE WOODS AND FIELDS

15 MAY, 10:00 | 14.5km | 6 hours |  |  |  £3

A circular country walk from Caversham through woods and fields of South Oxfordshire, visiting Chalk House Green, Crowsley Park, Binfield Heath to Dunsden Green, with a stop at Loddon Brewery before returning across the fields to Caversham. Mary is an experienced walk leader with Loddon Valley Ramblers.



START: Clayfield Copse Recreation Ground Carpark

GETTING THERE: Reading Bus 23 Berry

30. THE KENNET & AVON CANAL AT THE HEART OF READING

15 MAY, 14:00

5km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  £3



A circular walk along the canal and river, looking at points of interest. The walk takes in the canal through the centre of Reading and a stretch of the Thames, returning via Forbury Gardens and the Abbey ruins. David is a volunteer with the Canal & River Trust, leading walks in Reading, Aldermaston and Bedwyn.

START & FINISH: County Lock, 34 Bridge Street

GETTING THERE: Short walk Reading Station or any town centre bus stop

FRIDAY 16 MAY

31. ACCESSIBLE FOREST BATHING AT THE MERL GARDEN

16 MAY, 14:30 (& 17 MAY, 10:30)

1km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  |  £3

Join us in the serene MERL Gardens to relax, reconnect with nature and explore how trees and landscapes inspire ideas for more sustainable, thriving communities. Forest Bathing is a mindful practice that encourages slowing down, tuning into your senses, and deepening your connection with the natural world. Dr. Jen Clarke is an anthropologist, artist and educator. Open to everyone aged 14 and above.



START & FINISH: The Museum of English Rural Life

GETTING THERE: Crown Place Passage bus stop on claret 21 / Reading Station 20 minute walk

32. A WALK AROUND READING'S IDR

16 MAY, 10:00 | 5.5km | 2.5 hours |  |  | 



The monumental project to complete Reading's Inner Distribution Road (IDR) took 20 years and, love it or hate it, the route is a fascinating circular walk around the town. Appreciate the road itself, the destruction that allowed it to be built, the heritage along the route and the new developments that are springing up. Evelyn is chair of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee and interested in Reading architecture and heritage.

START & FINISH: Evans Cycles, Mill Lane

GETTING THERE: 900m walk from Reading Station. Bus stops on Bridge Street / London Street + short walk

33. BATS AT FOBNEY MEADOW

16 MAY, 20:30 | 1km | 1.5 hours |  |  |  |  £3

Discover a different aspect to Fobney Meadows by visiting at night to see these nocturnal aerial acrobats as they hunt for their evening meal. The habitat is perfect for several UK bat species and you will learn fascinating facts about them as well as watching the sun set over one of the most picturesque parts of our town. Rose Ann is chair of the local bat group and is passionate about sharing her interest with others. Bring a torch.



START: Fobney Lock, Island Road
GETTING THERE: No direct buses or trains

34. ESTATES AND MANORS OF EARLEY

16 MAY, 10:00 | 8km | 2.5 hours |  |  |  £3



Explore the history of former Erleigh Court, Maiden Erlegh and Bulmershe Court manors in Erleigh. The walk also aims to show how development of housing over the years has treated the need for public open space and the importance of maintaining green space and green corridors. Mary is an experienced walk leader with Loddon Valley Ramblers and co-author of *Walking through history: Walks and cycle rides in and around Earley*.

START: Sol Joel Park Carpark, Earley
GETTING THERE: Reading Buses 17 (purple) or 4 Lion and 4a Lion / Earley Station and 15-minute walk

35. HISTORIC READING WALKING TOUR

16 MAY, 10:30 | 1km | 2 hours |  |  |  £10



START: Reading Museum
GETTING THERE: 2 minutes walk from Reading Station and all town centre bus stops

A linear walk between two Reading museums to find out more about the people and historic developments that have shaped Reading's history over 900 years. Reading's streets, buildings and monuments offer clues about the people and the historic developments that have shaped our town's story over the last 900 years. Join Reading Museum's Matthew Williams to discover more on a walking tour between Reading Museum and The Museum of English Rural Life.

36. KENNET & AVON CANAL AT ALDERMASTON

(Wheelchair/Pushchair friendly)

16 MAY, 10:00



4km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  £3

A "there and back" walk along the Kennet & Avon canal from Aldermaston Wharf. The circular walk is along a section of the canal towpath which is wide, smooth and level. It is suitable for wheelchair users and pushchairs. David is a volunteer with the Canal & River Trust, leading walks in Reading, Aldermaston and Bedwyn.

START & FINISH: Towpath outside Aldermaston Tea Rooms
GETTING THERE: X1 bus service or train – alight Aldermaston



37. LODDON AND WOOD OF EAGLES

16 MAY, 13:30 4km | 2 hours |  |  |  £3



A beautiful walk including the River Loddon that quickly changes from urban to tranquil. Discover local history as well as fascinating flora and fauna. A circular journey across what was the marshy floodplain for the Loddon and into newly established woodland and other wildlife habitat. Grahame was the local Park Ranger for many years and has co-authored Walking through History, from where this walks emanates.

START & FINISH: The George Public House, near Winnersh Triangle

GETTING THERE: Reading Buses 4 Lion, Reading Buses 4a Lion, Reading Buses 19a. Train – Winnersh Triangle

38. ST JAMES' WAY CAMINO PILGRIMAGE (2 DAY WALK)

16 MAY, 08:30 & 17 MAY, 08:30

DAY 1: 18.4km | 9 hours DAY 2: 13.2km | 8.5 hours

 |  |  £3

Walk the first two days from Reading on the Camino de Santiago. Suitable for modern-day pilgrims who intend to continue along the St James' Way to Southampton or Santiago, Spain.

Day 1 – St James Church to Mortimer (return to Reading by bus)


Day 2 – Mortimer to Pamber End (bus from Reading to Mortimer in the morning/bus & train back to Reading from Pamber End)



START: St James Church

GETTING THERE: Bus or train to central Reading, short walk to St James Church

39. THE KENNET & AVON CANAL AND THE RIVER KENNET AT ALDERMASTON

16 MAY, 14:00 7km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  £3

A circular walk taking in the River Kennet and the canal, along quiet footpaths. The walk shows how the building of the canal (a canalised river) affected the River Kennet in rural Berkshire. David is a volunteer with the Canal & River Trust, leading walks in Reading, Aldermaston and Bedwyn.



START & FINISH: Aldermaston Tea Rooms

GETTING THERE: X1 bus service or trains between Reading and Newbury alighting at Aldermaston Wharf (5 minute walk to start)

40. TWO NATURE RESERVES & A SERIAL MURDERER

16 MAY, 14:00

11km | 3 hours |  |  |  |  £3



Flat and mostly waterside walk through two areas recovered and reconstituted as nature reserves – View Island and Thames Valley Park. On View Island we look at the community funded hydroelectric power plant and learn something about one of the Victorian era's most prolific serial murderers. Further along the Thames we turn into the reserve created when the Suttons Business Park was built and explore its various environments before returning via the Kennet and Avon Canal.

START: Reading Station

GETTING THERE: Reading station is a hub for all buses

Richard has been a keen walker and trekker all his life. He has lived in Reading for decades and is a great believer in walking as a social occasion.

41. ACCESSIBLE FOREST BATHING AT THE MERL GARDEN

17 MAY, 10:30 (& 16 MAY, 14:30)

1km | 2 hours |  |  |  |  |  £3

Join us in the serene MERL Gardens to relax, reconnect with nature and explore how trees and landscapes inspire ideas for more sustainable, thriving communities. Forest Bathing is a mindful practice that encourages slowing down, tuning into your senses, and deepening your connection with the natural world. Dr. Jen Clarke is an anthropologist, artist and educator. Open to everyone aged 14 and above.

START & FINISH: The Museum of English Rural Life

GETTING THERE: Crown Place Passage bus stop on claret 21 / Reading Station 20 minute walk



42. LITERARY AND ARTISTIC READING

17 MAY, 10:00 1km | 1 hour |  |  |  |  |  £6



START: Outside Kendrick View Dental Practice, 39 London Road RG1 5BL

GETTING THERE: Short walk from Reading Station and town centre bus stops

Explore Reading's rich creative heritage, uncovering literary landmarks, artistic inspirations and the stories of writers and artists who shaped the town. Our journey begins outside the former home of Mary Russell Mitford. The walk then takes us through the town's literary history, from Jane Austen to Michael Bond, Oscar Wilde and John Man, as well as T.E Lawrence, Jules Verne, Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens. David has lived in Reading for over 20 years and has been leading tours in Reading since 2018.

43. MEDIEVAL READING WALKABOUT

17 MAY, 10:00 (& 15 MAY, 10:00)

4km | 2.5 hours |  |  |  |  £3

This Walkabout brings to life a time when Reading was a bustling medieval hub. From Viking invasions to trials by combat, this walk reveals the captivating stories, landmarks, and events that shaped the town's history. Led by Terry Dixon who leads themed walks of his home town, with Jennifer Berdollt.

START: Reading Minster

GETTING THERE: Reading Station is 15 mins walk & many buses stop close by



44. PANGBOURNE CIRCULAR

17 MAY, 10:15 (& 18 MAY, 10:15)

10km | 4 hours approx. |  |  | 



START: Pangbourne Station

GETTING THERE: Train to Pangbourne

A stile free circular walk with 2 hills around Pangbourne to breathe in some fresh air and learn more about the nature reserve and hiking tips! Along the way, you will learn more about Berkshire traditional & historical villages and countryside and hiking tips so it might take around 4 hours to walk, including breaks. Lily is a qualified Lowland Leader, French expatriate and the creator of The Flamingo Hiker blog.

45. READING'S GREEN CORRIDOR – KENNET, OLD COLEY BRANCH LINE AND HOLYBROOK

17 MAY, 14:15 | 11km | 3 hours |  |  |  £3

Exploring a peaceful, green and almost rural corridor, formed by two rivers to the south-west of the town, including a walk along the track bed of a disused railway. The walk leaves the bustle of the town centre and follows the Kennet towpath, the old railway and attractive riverside meadows, ending on the banks of the Holybrook. Steve is an experienced walk leader with Loddon Valley Ramblers. He grew up in Coley and knows the area well.

START: Reading Station

GETTING THERE: Train services to Reading station & most Reading Buses routes



46. THE STORIES OF READING'S ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

17 MAY, 11:00 | 8km | 3 hour |  |  |  |  £3



START & FINISH: Whiteknights House, University of Reading

GETTING THERE: White Knight 20 or Claret 21 bus

Visit some of Reading's entertainment venues and discover their amazing histories on a University of Reading-led walk. The walk will stop at some of the town's well-known entertainment venues, from South Street Arts Centre to the Abbey Ruins, the Purple Turtle to the Rising Sun. Hear about the unique stories linked to our treasured cultural venues and the artists and theatre groups associated with them! Kathryn works at the University of Reading. She is a passionate individual with a keen eye for our entertainment venues and their social and personal histories that connect with us.

47. UNIVERSITY HERITAGE TRAIL – LONDON ROAD

17 MAY, 11:00

1.5km | 1.5 hours |  |  |  £3

The walk explores the London Road campus and its history, taking us around the campus which became the University's new home in the early 1900s. It includes several buildings generously donated by the Palmer family. The specially constructed newer buildings form a quadrangle reminiscent of many Oxford colleges. Chris is a former University employee and now a trustee of the Friends of the University.



START: University of Reading London Road campus

GETTING THERE: Bus 21 from the town centre then a short walk



48. DISCOVERING CALLEVA ATREBATUM: A GUIDED WALK THROUGH ROMAN BRITAIN

18 MAY, 10:00 | 3.5km | 2 hours |  |  |  £6

Explore Calleva Atrebatum's Roman ruins at Silchester on a guided walk uncovering ancient stories of life, commerce, and entertainment. The remarkable ruins of the Roman town nestled in tranquil countryside provide an extraordinary glimpse into life during Roman Britain. Includes the impressive Silchester Roman Town Walls and the amphitheatre. David has lived in Reading for over 20 years and has been leading tours in Reading since 2018 and is passionate about local history.



START: Car Park, Calleva Atrebatum, Wall Lane, Silchester

GETTING THERE: 30 minutes walk from Mortimer station or stop on Lime 2a route from Reading

49. PANGBOURNE CIRCULAR

18 MAY, 10:15 (& 17 MAY, 10:15)

10km | 4 hours approx. |  |  | 




A stile free circular walk with 2 hills around Pangbourne to breathe in some fresh air and learn more about the nature reserve and hiking tips! Along the way, you will learn more about Berkshire traditional & historical villages and countryside and hiking tips so it might take around 4 hours to walk, including breaks. Lily is a qualified Lowland Leader, French expatriate and the creator of The Flamingo Hiker blog.

START: Pangbourne Station

GETTING THERE: Train to Pangbourne

50. READING'S INDEPENDENT GEMS & VISITOR SPOTS

18 MAY, 10:30 | 7km | 2 hours |  |  |  £12

Join Walk Works to visit some of Reading's best independents including Shed, Blue Collar Food, RISE Bakehouse, South Street Arts Centre and many more as well as some of the town's gems including Chocolate Island, St. John's Conservation Area, Huntley Wharf, The Abbey Ruins and Forbury Gardens. Liz and Caroline have been leading guided walks in Reading town centre and the surrounding counties for four year. Their walks are friendly and sociable.



START: Blue Collar Corner, 15 Hosier Street

GETTING THERE: Reading Buses town centre stops/ 10 minute walk from Reading Station

51. READING TOWN CENTRE'S BRUTALIST ARCHITECTURE

18 MAY, 14:00 | 3.5km | 1.5 hours |  |  | 



Travel back to Reading in the 1970s/80s when key sites in Reading were redeveloped in a modern brutalist style. The clockwise route heads south and across the IDR (Inner Distribution Road) before turning back to the town centre and the soon to be redeveloped civic area. Evelyn is chair of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee and is interested in Reading architecture and heritage from all eras.

START: Reading Station

GETTING THERE: Train and most Reading Buses routes drop off nearby

Reading Walks Festival is organised by REDA, Reading's Economy and Destination Agency, with the support of an amazing group of volunteer walk leaders, who are passionate about what Reading has to offer.

Thanks to

Steve Vale, Clare Jarratt, Anna Iwaschkin, John Nixon, Reading Abbey Quarter volunteer guides, Matthew Williams, Brendan Carr, Lily Tocqueville, Chris Rayner, Philippa Saunders, David Sinclair, Graham Hawker, Charlotte Allchin, Richard Bennett, Terry Dixon, Joy Pibworth, Mark Lyford, David West, Liz Bradbury, Caroline Gratrix, Evelyn Williams, Susanna Ivy, Jen Clarke, Mary Bather, Joyce Keegan, Richard Hanson James, Diana Lincoln, Angela Houghton, Kathryn Whittington, David Palfrey, Ho Kit Lam, Jennifer Berdollt, Guja Bandini, Thames Path National Trail, Reading Tree Wardens, Reading Museum, Friends of the University of Reading, Pipstick Walks, Confraternity of St James, Canal & River Trust, Berkshire Ramblers groups, Earley Environmental Group, Terry's Reading Walkabouts, Sustrans, Walk Reading, Walk Works, Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading, Reading Buses, GWR, Mono Creative Design, WhatsonReading.com



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