

North Wessex Downs National Landscape

A National Landscape is a protected landscape recognised for its nationally important and distinctive character and natural beauty. The North Wessex Downs is the third largest of Britain's 46 National Landscapes, covering an area of 668 square miles and straddling four counties.

From remote, rolling hillsides to picture-postcard villages, the North Wessex Downs is truly special.

Dominated by chalk, the geology of the area defines its characteristic wide-open downlands, dramatic scarp slopes, and sheltered valleys with sparkling chalk streams. This ancient landscape has a fascinating history and is shrouded in myths, inspiring artists and writers for centuries.

Ancient woodland and forest contrast with chalk grassland and rivers; combined with farmland and pockets of heathland, these places provide valuable and diverse habitats for both common and vulnerable wildlife.

This is your North Wessex Downs – so why not join us to explore more of this fascinating patch of English countryside?



**BOOK
ONLINE
NOW**



**North Wessex
Downs
National
Landscape**

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DON'T MISS OUT!

Head to our website and sign up to the newsletter for seasonal updates and news on our work and events

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NORTH WESSEX DOWNS

WALKING FESTIVAL

31 May – 9 June 2024



**North Wessex
Downs
National
Landscape**



Scan or visit:
northwessexdowns.org.uk/walkingfestival



**BOOK
ONLINE
NOW**

Visit northwessexdowns.org.uk/walkingfestival or scan the QR code for more walk details and to book



- Public transport
- Accessible
- Family friendly
- Dog friendly



MONDAY 3RD JUNE 2024 9.45AM
RidgeWAY ramblings
Near Wantage 8 miles, 5.75 hours
£12 per adult
Join us for some 'RidgeWAY Ramblings' and immerse yourself in the rolling downland of the Oxfordshire-Berkshire border. On this undulating walk, we discover ancient trackways, panoramic views, wildlife and a stained-glass window designed by John Piper.

SUNDAY 2ND JUNE 2024 2.00PM
Geology and landscape around Ashdown House
FREE near Lambourn 3.2 miles, 2 hours
This walk explores the Lambourn Valley where Ashdown House is set. We will take in some of the interesting features of the areas geological history over the last 100 million years, including a chalk valley and sarsen stones.

SUNDAY 2ND JUNE 2024 1.00PM
Farm walk: Stanford Dingley and Rushall Manor
Bradfield 3.75 miles, 4 hours
£5.50 per adult, children free (under 16)
A walk through the beautiful Pang Valley, led by local farmers who explain about farming crops and animals in this countryside. A gentle walk with lots of interest for the young and old alike with a chance to meet the lambs and cows and hear about what farmers in the area are doing to care for wildlife whilst producing our food.

SUNDAY 2ND JUNE 2024 11.00AM
Barbury Castle and Burdorp circular: a ramble through history and literature
FREE near Swindon 4.5 miles, 4.5 hours
A leisurely walk exploring the ancient tracks, flower-studded downlands and scenic panoramas around Barbury Castle and Burdorp Downs. This walk explores the landscape immortalised in the acclaimed nature writing of Richard Jefferies, and makes connections to the past through art and objects.

SATURDAY 1ST JUNE 2024 2.00PM
'The Big Drop' farm walk
FREE Boxford 2.6 miles, 3 hours
To mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings, this circular walk on a farm just outside Boxford uncovers the role it played in March 1944 for 'The Big Drop' rehearsal. We discover what happened that day and the significance of the landings, as well as exploring the farmland and farming practices today.

SATURDAY 1ST JUNE 2024 11.00AM
The natural history of Ranscombe Bottom and the River Marden
FREE Cherhill 3.75 miles, 3 hours
A leisurely walk from the village of Calstone Wellington along the valley of the River Marden to its source in Ranscombe Bottom, taking in Cherhill Downs (famous for its white horse) and Calstone Combes. The combes are brimming with wildflowers, butterflies, moths and farmland birds.

SATURDAY 1ST JUNE 2024 10.30AM
Pewsey and its surrounding hamlets
FREE Pewsey 3.5 miles, 3 hours
This lovely walk full of historic and natural interest, never strays far from the centre of the village of Pewsey. Walking at a gentle pace, we skirt the edges of the village to explore the hamlets that lie in the valley.

FRIDAY 31ST MAY 2024 11.00AM
Cocklebury Farm family walk
FREE near Pewsey 1.5 miles, 2 hours
Bring your little ones to this family focused, educational farm walk in a beautiful location west of Pewsey. There will be plenty of stops along the way to explain how the farm works and how wildlife is encouraged and protected.

Welcome to the fourth North Wessex Downs Walking Festival. With 29 walks on offer, our festival is a celebration of the stunning scenery and top-class walking country that the National Landscape has to offer.

31 May – 9 June 2024

WALKING FESTIVAL

NORTH WESSEX DOWNS



Join us on social this Walking Festival
Follow us, share your walks and tag photos: use #NWDWalkingFest24

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northwessexdowns.org.uk/walkingfestival

MONDAY 3RD JUNE 2024 10.00AM

Treacle Bolly and the margins of the River Kennet

Marlborough **1.75 miles, 2 hours**
£7.50 per adult, £4 per child (under 16)

Discover some of the history and stories of Marlborough on this gentle walk along the margins of the River Kennet and through 'Treacle Bolly'. Explore churches, learn about former water meadows, historic Marlborough College and its Mound; all brought alive by Wiltshire History Man aka Nick Baxter.



MONDAY 3RD JUNE 2024 2.00PM

Nature and landscape recovery at Ewhurst Park

FREE near Kingsclere **3.75 miles, 3 hours**

This circular walk will showcase the various biodiversity projects being put into action on the Estate, as well as taking in wonderful landscape and views. Discover how the projects aim to encourage nature's recovery through habitat creation and the reintroduction of native species.

TUESDAY 4TH JUNE 2024 10.00AM

Exploring the Watership Down Trail

FREE near Whitchurch **6-7 miles, 3.5 hours**

Explore part of the recently established Watership Down Trail. See some of the beautiful Hampshire countryside where Richard Adams' much-loved novel, Watership Down, was set. There is an optional detour for fabulous views from the Iron Age hillfort at Ladle Hill.

TUESDAY 4TH JUNE 2024 4.00PM

The Historic Ridgeway

FREE East Hendred **4 miles, 3 hours**

A walk around a selection of sites along The Ridgeway, illustrating the evolution of the landscape and land use through time, and the archaeological footprint of people from the early prehistoric period to the Cold War.



WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024 10.00AM

Hippenscombe Bottom and Fosbury Hillfort

FREE near Vernham Dean **4 miles, 3 hours**

An invigorating walk up to Fosbury Iron Age hillfort above Hippenscombe Estate to enjoy the far-reaching views over the North Wessex Downs and learn about the settlement. We will see chalk grassland restoration as we walk, returning through private farmland, stopping to look at soils, and discuss farming practices.

WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024 11.00AM

Morgan's Hill nature walk

FREE near Cherhill **5 miles, 3.5 hours**

Join the North West Wiltshire Ramblers for a lovely walk through Morgan's Hill Nature Reserve – a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its orchids, butterflies and chalk grassland. We will spend time exploring the wildlife and taking in the incredible views of Cherhill Down and the plains of North Wiltshire.



WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024 3.00PM

Bucklebury Common – history and natural history

FREE near Thatcham **4 miles, 3 hours**

A gentle walk through the woodland and heathland of Bucklebury Common. Led by Alex Cruickshank, a local ecologist working with The Bucklebury Estate to manage and restore the common.



WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024 6.00PM

The Road Less Travelled: exploring lesser-known sites in the Avebury landscape

FREE near Swindon **4 miles, 3 hours**

Explore the wider landscape of Avebury World Heritage Site with staff from Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service who will discuss some lesser-known sites and monuments, including the Beckhampton Long Mound, the Adam and Eve stones and Knoll Down.



THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2024 10.00AM

Chalk grassland restoration in the Goring Gap

FREE near Goring & Streatley **3 miles, 3 hours**

The Goring Gap is where the Thames River cuts through the ridge of chalk. Taking in the views across the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs National Landscapes, we'll visit a farm restoring prime chalk grassland. Along the way, we'll learn about this chalk landscape and enjoy the flowers and butterflies it supports.



THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2024 10.15AM

Peace in Peasemore – a walk for women

FREE near Newbury **3.8 miles, 4.25 hours**

A leisurely walk for women only. Women of any faith or no faith are most welcome! It will be a walk to feel uplifted by being in the great outdoors and by walking with others. Please do join us!



THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2024 4.00PM

Savernake Forest family walk

FREE near Marlborough **1.5 miles, 1.75 hours**

Join Community Ranger Sian for a short walk and fun facts about the trees in Savernake Forest. The walk itself will be 1.5 miles and the trail will be flat and pram-friendly, with plenty of stops for little legs to catch up, and some great nature-based activities.



THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2024 6.00PM

Forestry and veteran trees of Savernake Forest

FREE near Marlborough **2 miles, 2 hours**

Join Forestry England to explore the wonderful woodlands of Savernake! This guided walk takes you behind the scenes to learn about how the forest's unique landscapes and habitats are being looked after, and introduces you to Savernake's important role in producing sustainable timber.

FRIDAY 7TH JUNE 2024 10.30AM

Facca's Valley: the woods, hills and valleys of the Facombe Estate

FREE Facombe **3 miles, 2 hours**

Explore the ancient tracks and woodland paths through the hills and valleys of the Facombe Estate. This is a peaceful walk with plenty of wildlife and beautiful vistas. Along the way, you will also learn the story of the Estate and the people that helped to shape it.



FRIDAY 7TH JUNE 2024 10.30AM

Pewsey, Jones's Mill Nature Reserve and Kennet & Avon Canal

FREE Pewsey **3.5 miles, 3 hours**

Starting in the village of Pewsey, we go out to the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's Jones's Mill Nature Reserve (orchids a-plenty) and then back along the Kennet & Avon Canal, returning to Pewsey via The Scotchel, a lovely little nature reserve with the River Avon running through it.



FRIDAY 7TH JUNE 2024 2.00PM

Ramsbury and Littlecote history walk

FREE Ramsbury **5 miles, 3 hours**

A walk from the pretty village of Ramsbury – across countryside with great views and wooded valleys – to the Tudor mansion of Littlecote House. The walk returns past a Roman villa with an impressive, restored mosaic floor.



SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2024

Wiltshire 3 Peaks Challenge

Near Pewsey **10 km or half marathon**

£8 or £16 per adult (including discount), children free (under 12)

Join local charity the Youth Adventure Trust in the beautiful Pewsey Vale on the Wiltshire 3 Peaks Challenge. Walk, jog or run to raise funds for vulnerable local young people. Use discount code NWD20 to get 20% off when you register. Find out more at <https://bit.ly/Wiltshire3Peaks>.

SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2024 10.00AM

Wetlands and regenerative farming around Wilton

FREE Wilton **4 miles, 3 hours**

A circular walk through the countryside of Wilton exploring regenerative farming and local history. Starting at Wilton Windmill, we will see newly created wetlands and the Kennet and Avon canal, and return along a Roman Road.



SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2024 10.30AM

Coopers in the Wood and Cowdown Copse

FREE Whitchurch **6 miles, 3 hours**

A circular walk from Whitchurch railway station, taking us into the North Wessex Downs towards Coopers in the Wood, looping back towards the Harrow Way (Neolithic road), and finally returning via Cowdown Copse.



SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2024 2.00PM

Going underground: transforming the landscape of Roundway Hill

FREE near Devizes **5 miles, 3.5 hours**

Explore Roundway Hill on this walk which takes in an Iron Age hillfort, the site of a civil war battlefield and glorious open downland country. See work underway on a major landscape enhancement project from National Grid which will remove 10 pylons from Roundway Hill on the western edge of the National Landscape.

SUNDAY 9TH JUNE 2024 10.30AM

A walk around Lambourn Downs and Sheepdrove Organic Farm

FREE near Lambourn **3.3 miles, 2.5 hours**

In the heart of the North Wessex Downs, this circular walk explores Lambourn Downs and Sheepdrove Organic Farm taking in the drovers' roads and footpaths that criss-cross this 2,000-acre mixed farm.



SUNDAY 9TH JUNE 2024 3.00PM

Sunday saunter

Hampstead Norreys **4.5 miles, 2.5 hours**

£8 per adult, £5 per child (under 16)

Join us for a Sunday afternoon walk through woods and over open fields from Hampstead Norreys, an historic village nestled deep in rolling downland on the upper reaches of the River Pang. There is plenty of interest to discover along the way, including a sparkling stream, wildflowers, and ancient mounds to wartime relics.



Scan me to explore all walks, learn more and book, or visit northwessexdowns.org.uk/walkingfestival