

LMC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

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Next Newsletter: Please send copy for the next issue by **midday** on the **10th of the month**.

LMC Meets & Events Programme 2023

Date/s	Meet	Meet Leader	Comments
Sat/Sun 7/8 Oct	Brookwood-Weybridge	Charles Harrison	Day Walk
Fri 13-Mon 16 Oct	Sandown Isle of Wight	Hilary Pettit	Weekend - Update
Fri 24-Sun 26 Nov	Wookey Hole/Mendips	Angela Leaman	Weekend

LMC Meets & Events Programme 2024

Date/s	Meet	Meet Leader	Comments
Sat 13/Sun 14 Jan	AGM & Annual Dinner Salisbury	Angela Leaman	Weekend
Thu 11-Sun 14 Apr	Exmoor	H & A McGinn	Long Weekend - FULL

LMC Meets Details

Saturday 7 or Sunday 8 October - Brookwood to Weybridge – Charles Harrison

This is a walk of 11 miles from Brookwood along the Basingstoke Canal to the junction with the River Wey & then on to Thames Lock at Weybridge. [There is the option to join at Woking which would make it 7 miles.] The day will finish a short distance away at our Chairman's house for tea & cake plus (weather permitting) a canoe/SUP excursion on the Wey.

Brookwood & Weybridge stations are on South Western Railway: David is happy for people to park at his house then catch the train to the start point. Please let me know if you are interested & which day(s) you can make – we will go with the majority.

Friday 13 / Monday 16 October – Sandown Isle of Wight – Hilary Pettit

(Friday to Monday or choose to stay for Friday & Saturday nights only)

Following some very enjoyable weekends located in Newport, this meet will be based in Sandown to give us a chance to explore the coast & country walking on the east of the island. We currently have a select group of 4 people booked for this weekend, with 3 of us staying for all 3 nights. As at early September there is still accommodation available for anyone else who would like to join us, with the prices having increased slightly as shown below.

Accommodation will be in the relatively new Premier Inn on Sandown Seafront with its adjoining Cookhouse & Pub restaurant. Rooms are currently priced at a total of £257 fully flexible for the 3 nights or £210 standard (non-refundable), also £191 fully flexible for Friday & Saturday nights or £158 standard. Breakfast is charged separately. Please make your own booking & check that you are booking for the Premier Inn Seafront hotel on the Esplanade & not the Premier Inn Merrie Gardens also in Sandown but further out of town.

Travelling by public transport has proved to be easy for previous meets, with many opting to take the train to Portsmouth Harbour for an easy stroll to the Wightlink FastCat terminal for the service to Ryde. The Island Line train links Ryde with Sandown, with the hotel a 10 minute walk from the station. There are also direct bus options from Ryde to Sandown. It is possible to buy a ticket which includes all trains & ferry. As at the beginning of September, there are no planned engineering works during the weekend & no strike dates advised. If you are planning to bring a car for the weekend, please note that there is no free parking at the hotel, but there is chargeable parking at St John's car park which is a 5 minute walk away.

The final 2 days of the 9 day Autumn Isle of Wight walking festival are taking place but their programme will have no impact on our plans as they are either very short walks or at a different part of the island. There are plenty of options for walking: varying lengths from the doorstep or using local transport to go further afield.

Please let me know when you have booked & for how many nights.

Friday 24/Sunday 26 November – Wookey Hole & the Mendips – Angela Leaman -

The Mendips around Wookey Hole are beautiful in the Winter: we can walk from the village to explore Ebbor Gorge & the Mendip hills. If you are into witches, you can explore the Wookey Hole Caves!



The proposal is to stay at the **Wookey Hole Hotel** (the witch answers the phone). Stephen & I have stayed there in the past &, while lacking olde worlde charm, it is good value & has a large car park. It is right in the middle of the village which is very pretty. I had hoped to have full details, but their pricing is proving as labyrinthine as the caves so I haven't been able to finalise things yet.

Weekend price for a double with breakfast will be max £88. If you would like to come on this trip, as a first step, please send me an email with: **Room type – double, single occupancy or share a twin. For the latter I can try to match people up**

I will then sort out options after which everyone can go ahead & make a booking. My understanding is that cancellation t&cs are generous, a few days before arrival.

Look forward to hearing from you.

2024

Saturday 13 / Sunday 14 January 2024 – AGM & Annual Dinner – Angela Leaman

The 2024 AGM will be held at the White Hart Hotel in Salisbury. The hotel is a 17th century Grade II* listed building in the historic centre of Salisbury, opposite the cathedral. The AGM followed by dinner will be held in the private St Anne's suite in the hotel courtyard on Saturday evening.

This note is about arrangements for accommodation. The provisional booking to accommodate numbers likely to attend was held until Friday 30th June : these rooms have now been released. However, the hotel seems to have plenty of space: also there are other hotels in the centre of town if you wish to book nearer the time. We have preferential rates for a group booking as follows:

Standard double or twin: £83 - double or single occupancy

Compact double or single: £69 - single occupancy

Please call the hotel to make your booking quoting my name & LMC Mountaineering Club to obtain the discount group rate. Tel: 01722 327476

All rooms are ensuite; cancellation is free up to 28 days ahead, with a sliding scale closer to the event. The hotel has free parking. Check-in is from 3pm with checkout at 12pm. Rooms may be booked for either one or two nights.

I do hope you will be able to come. My foodie friends tell me the best place to eat in Salisbury is Anokaa, a contemporary Indian restaurant which sounds delicious & an option for Friday night!

There will be a walk from mid-morning on Saturday in the Wiltshire countryside. Sunday morning would suit a walk around Salisbury, taking in views of the cathedral across the water meadows (famously painted by Turner) & the ramparts of Old Sarum. Tourist attractions I can recommend are Arundells, Edward Heath's former home in the cathedral close & a tour of the cathedral spire (advance booking required).



Meet Report[s]

Sunday 3 September – South Downs [South Harting] – David Wells

After a brief summer break, the autumn LMC walking season started with 4 intrepid walkers (Heather, Andrew & Alan entrusted themselves to David W's navigational skills). On a bright warm very summery day with temperatures promised in upper 20s we set out from South Harting NT car park (conveniently at the top of the South Downs).

With plenty of daylight in front of us, we headed off towards Beacon Hill at a brisk pace, swinging south to the first view of Uppark National Trust property. Avoiding disturbing the remnants of the campers from the previous day's Compton Music festival who were still in bed at 11am, we headed up Telegraph Hill. David Abbott had kindly provided some historic information on the former telegraph station - in action from 1815-1847 as part of the London-Portsmouth naval communication chain, replacing the previous beacon (obviously!) on Beacon Hill. The station itself is long gone, now replaced by a ploughed field in which the attractions of the first of many sightings of ripe blackberries in the hedgerows were too strong, leading to an early snack break!

Having got going again, next stop was at the very pretty St Marys Church in Compton.



This was quickly followed by a coffee stop at the village well, augmented by cakes from the busy village café.

More great downland terrain, with gentle hills, a mix of fields, woods & grassland, only briefly hindered by the group managing to split in two at a junction. As lunch approached, the obligatory short cut on a supposed but long-gone path progressed through brambles & mixed woodland, before re-locating the path with a view of our lunch destination.



This was the isolated & picturesque, if simple, St Huberts Church in Idsworth, a village comprising all of 2 houses, the manor having disappeared in the 1950s. The church dates from 1053 at least, likely 900s, & includes many frescoes, including a wall painting from around 1330.

Anyway, a quiet spot for lunch with peace broken only by the occasional train on the London-Portsmouth line!

Having generally descended in the morning, the afternoon featured lots of gentle uphill, through with plenty of shade in the woods to keep cool. Views of Uppark featured again. We passed some really great gardens, including one where we admired plenty of examples of topiary (will have to work out how to do this in my garden!).

The final long uphill brought us back to the picnicers at the car park. The walk overall was close to 14 miles, but in the late summer sunshine nobody was complaining.

We all look forward to the rest of the Indian summer!



Next time

Saturday 9 / Saturday 16 September - Pooley Bridge/Martindale – Sarah Dixon

Out Walking Reports & / or Photos . . .

Not your usual Meet . . .

Wednesday 16 August – Glyndebourne – Alan Dunworth / report by Sarah Bulling [Ed]

Not long after two o'clock, Alan's splendid organisation had five of us [Alan, John, Marion, Rob & Sarah B] gathered with picnic accoutrements under the spread of a magnificent walnut tree. The day was fine with a clear blue sky plus gentle breeze. Occasionally, gentle bar-ing could be heard but sheep not seen for much of the time. We set out in our unusual walking gear at a gentle pace, admiring the views & catching up with news. The level of the expanse of water to our left had dropped somewhat, leaving a grubby stain on stems of rushes & other aquatic plants; water-lilies still floated serenely. There were plenty of wild flower varieties in bloom & large patches of gunnera displayed their magnificent leaves. Providing welcome shade, a number of mature beech & willow trees stood back from the lake. The swimmer at the far end of this stretch of water has

yet to enter the water. For many years she has stood on the brink of diving in but [never takes the final plunge](#) – an arm just in evidence in the shot below:

Photo of the five at Glyndebourne (and the arm)

The return stroll towards the manor house & formal gardens from time-to-time revealed the solitary wind turbine atop its hill. Once the centre of controversial debate, it has now acquired an elegance & grace of the familiar. The gardens were their usual delight to the eye & nose plus the 'new' rose garden is coming into maturity. Our circuit completed, time for one of three wining & dining sessions [a course at each sitting] interspersed with Handel's Semele. The whole event was splendid, marred only by the protracted journey home for three of us: road works, roadworks, roadworks [& we'd beaten the start of a fourth set as we drove through before 2200].

England Coast Path: Woolwich to Grain – Charles Harrison

Introduction

I have been walking the Thames Path with a friend: we finished at the Thames Barrier in March 2022. While wondering what our next challenge would be, the answer came in the form of a new trail which had opened just two months previously – this is from [GOV.UK](#): 'The route links with the existing Thames Path at Woolwich to create a continuous 'source to sea' National Trail along the length of the River Thames'. This is actually a new stretch of the England Coast Path so (with apologies to John B whose territory we were invading!) Grain was our new destination.

Route

Details of the route can be found on the [National Trails website](#). There is also a 'Trail information & Map' option. For ease, we used the Ordnance Survey app when out on the trail.

The route passes Woolwich, Thamesmead, Crossness Pumping Station & a fairly industrial stretch before reaching Erith. Next is Crayford Marshes where a (7 mile) detour inland is needed to circumnavigate the River Darent & its tributaries before reaching Dartford Marshes, there re-joining the Thames. Utilities are next (sewage works, power station) before the Queen Elizabeth II bridge, followed by industry, then Swanscombe Marshes, before re-joining the river at Gravesend. From Gravesend, the route gets more remote, following the sea wall along the north side of the Hoo Peninsula. Towards the end, there is a holiday park at Allhallows-on-Sea then the last few miles to Grain.

Items of Interest

Pocahontas Memorial at St George's Church Gravesend:



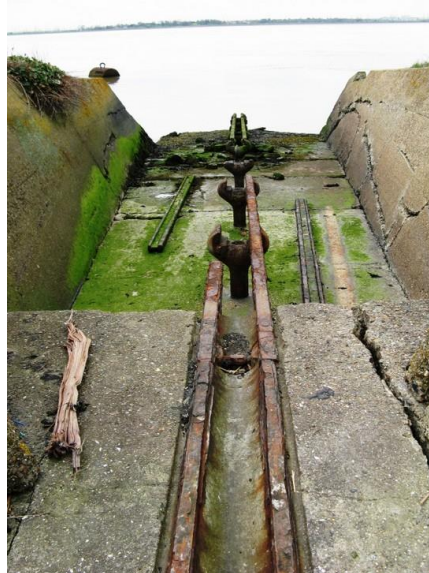
[Pocahontas](#) came to England with husband John Rolfe in 1616. Early the following year, they boarded a ship to travel back to Virginia when Pocahontas became ill; she was taken ashore at Gravesend where she died.

Napoleonic Era Forts: New Tavern (Gravesend), Shornmead & Cliffe:

[Brennan Torpedo](#) launch rails at Cliffe

Fort

Cliffe has the dubious distinction of being the only known Brennan Torpedo Station to sink a ship, albeit in error. In August 1901 a Ketch, WS Flower, was struck by a torpedo on trials. The torpedo, containing a full charge but no detonator, made a large hole below the ship's waterline & it sank quickly. Fortunately, no one was injured & the vessel was recovered (Royal Engineers Museum).



[Thames & Medway Canal](#): another Napoleonic Era project, built to provide a safe route between Gravesend & the naval dockyards at Chatham. Gravesend Basin is now a marina.

Port of London Authority headquarters, Gravesend:



Old Light Bouy, Port of London Authority Wharf

[Explosives Factory, Cliffe](#)

Allhallows to Grain: this page from [Remote London](#) highlights a number of interesting items along this section which include the London Stone which marks the eastern boundary of the City of London's jurisdiction over the Thames.

Public Transport

Southeastern provide train services as far as Gravesend where the path & railway diverge – the path following the northern edge of the Hoo Peninsula along to Grain. There are bus services from Rochester station (also Southeastern) to Cliffe, Allhallows-on-Sea & Grain so this is the practical way to proceed. We suffered a couple of cancellations so best to factor in a later bus for this eventuality.

Conclusion

This is a walk that reaches some fairly out-of-the-way places with interesting history. There is a lot to see on both sides of the river but transport options on the Hoo Peninsula are limited so more time should be allowed – & sections can be long.

If anyone would like to know how we split the route into sections, our transport arrangements & (more importantly) where tea & cake is, please get in touch.

Other Events / Items . . . *None this time*

Extra Elements: Books, DVDs, Films, other Walks / Climbs – views & comments . . .
If you've read any walking / mountaineering / travel books which you've enjoyed, please share.

- Extra Elements to Sarah -

LMC Newsletter link to send *to interest future possible members*:

<https://www.hillsandvalleys.co.uk/LMC/LMCdownloads.htm>

BMC: <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/> Newsletter at: <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/newsletters>

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