



Rochdale Branch Newsletter No 194

July 2026

Welcome to the July newsletter, the weather has been centre stage again during June, with the exceptional temperatures last week causing cancellations to many events, Craig's walk on the 25th of June (M62 & Hollingworth Lake) had to be cancelled due to the extreme heat, I've had a walking football match and training sessions cancelled, and I'm sure many of you will have had events cancelled, but hopefully everyone was sensible, staying out of the sun and keeping hydrated, that way we live to "walk" another day, as I'm typing this it's Saturday evening and the temperatures are coming down nicely, let's hope Craig can re-schedule his walk and things return to normal from now on.

David Butterworth asked me to remind people that the viaduct is still closed at Healey Dell, and I was there the other night picking the grandson up from his Cub's bike ride and the work is still on going, there are alternative routes around the viaduct but just be aware if you are planning a walk in that area.

Right of Way (path) gates

The group still has a couple of Rights of Way gates available to offer to farmers/landowners f.o.c.

They are made from galvanised steel and are 92 cm wide. The height depends on how deep the frame is buried. They are self-closing. They are intended to replace an existing stile in order to improve accessibility on our R.O.W. network.

If anybody knows of a stile, they think is suitable for replacement with one of these gates please let Stuart Smithies or Greg Goddard know. By all means you could speak with the landowner about these gates if you happen to know or 'come-across' them, but please do not make an offer of a gate, instead pass the details (Farm name, location etc) to Stuart Smithies or Gregg Goddard who can then recce the location and speak with the landowner.



The salient points are:

They gates are described as a “One-way self-close bridle gate” made from galvanised steel, in the supplier’s catalogue.

They will be offered to landowners/farmers on the condition that they are used to replace an existing stile but please do not make an offer of a free gate. Instead pass the details to Stuart or Greg.

We plan to take ‘before & after’ pictures which may be used for publicity.

The landowner/farmer would need to collect the gate (from Rochdale) and install it themselves. (Stuart/Greg may be able to assist with installation).

The path must be in the borough of Rochdale.

Stuart can liaise with the council to inform them of the change from a stile to a gate.

Thank you.

Stuart Smithies – Chair

07537830253

SUMMER EVENING STROLLS 2026

We are very pleased to be able to offer 8 summer evening walks on Tuesdays in July and August. All will start at 6.30 pm and be 4-5 miles leisurely. I attach a schedule. It's a good opportunity to bring friends who might be interested in getting into walking or who just want a nice social evening. Thank you to our fantastic walk leaders who have enabled this as well as our usual full programme of walks.

Amanda

RR Walks Coordinator

Date	Leader	Start point @ 6.30 pm
Tuesday		
7 July	Eugene Warrener	Meet car park The Pack Horse Inn, Birtle Rd, Heywood, BL9 6TY
14 July	Greg Goddard	Meet car park The Pack Horse Inn, Birtle Rd, Heywood, BL9 6TY
21 July	Gill Hollas	The Healey, 172 Shawclough Rd, Shawclough, OL12 6LW
28 July	John Blackburn	Meet opposite Stocco Italian Restaurant, <u>Edenfield Rd, Norden, OL11 5XH</u>
4 August	Bernadette Taylor	Meet outside The Bull's Head, Ogden Lane, Milnrow, OL16 3TE
11 August	David & Maureen Butterworth	The Donkey, 21 Syke Road Rochdale, OL12 9TB
18 August	Amanda Thorp	Helmshore Textile Mills Museum, Holcombe Road, Helmshore, BB4 4NP
25 August	Katia Chadwick	Meet car park The Pack Horse Inn, Birtle Rd, Heywood, BL9 6TY

HF Walking Holiday

Katia asked me to mention that we have 1 single room left for the Church Stretton trip at the end of October and if anyone is interested to email Katia directly.

Katia Chadwick
Group Secretary
Rochdale Ramblers
secretaryrochdaleramblers@gmail.com
Mobile: +44 7779 119850

Brief details of the trip are below:

We are delighted to offer Rochdale Ramblers members the opportunity to join a self-guided walking holiday for 3 nights in the Shropshire Hills from Friday 30th October to Mon 2nd November 2026.

Accommodation is at the Londmynd Hotel, Cunnery Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire, SY6 6AG and board includes the following:

- En-suite accommodation in our 4-star country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Easy-to-follow routes, maps, and information available in our Discovery Point if you want to explore independently

You will be responsible for your own transport to and from the hotel. Please ensure you have adequate travel insurance.

July Walks Programme

Please note that dogs (other than assistance dogs) are not allowed on our walks.

Start time is when the walk commences. Please arrive earlier to ensure you are ready for the start

Thursday, 2nd July Rushy Hill and Healey Dell

A circular walk taking in parts of Healey Dell and surrounding moorland. The cobbled bridleways will be slippery when wet. There are no stiles on this walk, but there are some gentle inclines.

Circular Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 2:15pm

Start place: Meet for roadside parking at Healey Corner (junction of Market Street and Shawclough Road), Whitworth, OL12 8RP

Grid Ref: SD883159

Postcode: OL12 8RP

[What3Words: ///fend.known.magic](http://www.what3words.com/word/fend.known.magic)

Distance: 5.5mi / 8.9km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details: Name: Nicola Almond Telephone: 07751 317824

Saturday, 4th July Discovering Greenbooth

This is a scenic walk from The Bridge Chippy in Norden walking around both reservoirs at Greenbooth.

Circular Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 2:30pm

Start place: The Bridge Chippy, Edenfield Road, Norden, OL11 5TT (parking is available in Blackpits Road which is the road on the left before The Bridge Chippy if you are travelling from Rochdale)

Time: 11am

Grid Ref: SD858145

Postcode: OL11 5TT

[What3Words: ///cheering.plants.pronouns](#)

Distance: 5.2mi / 8.4km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Jon Hallett

Telephone: 07484 651853

Sunday, 5th July

Wycollar and the Atom

This is a pleasant walk along the river to Wycollar, before a short steep climb to The Atom, which is one of four Panopticons in Lancashire. It offers wide ranging views over the Pendle countryside and beyond.

There are several stiles to negotiate and two short steep climbs.

Free parking and cafe at start. Toilets en route. This is a circular walk.

Circular Walk

Start time 10am

Estimated finish time 2:15pm

Start place: Ball Grove Park car park, Ball Grove Drive, off Keighley Road, Colne BB8 7HZ

Grid Ref: SD908403

Postcode: Location is 125 metres to the North North-east of BB8 7HZ

What3Words: ///finishers.evidence.reactimg

Distance: 8mi / 12.9km

National Grade: Moderate



Contact Details:

Name: Mike Beaman

Telephone: 07982 403288

Tuesday, 7th July

Birtle Saunter (Summer Evening Stroll)

This is the first of a series of Summer Evening Strolls on Tuesdays during July and August. We will enjoy a scenic walk and those who wish can stay to enjoy the facilities of The Pack Horse afterwards.

Please wear boots as Scott Lane can be muddy.

Circular Walk

Start time 6:30pm

Estimated finish time 8:30pm

Start place: The Pack Horse Inn, Birtle Rd, Heywood, BL9 7TY

Grid Ref: SD835125

Postcode: BL9 6TY

[What3Words: ///damp.agent.teeth](#)

Distance: 4.5mi / 7.2km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Eugene Warrener Telephone: 07974 755324

Thursday, 9th July

A Leisurely Linear

This is a very leisurely and scenic walk that follows the River Irwell through Summerseat and Burrs Country Park ending at Bury Interchange. Return will be on the 472 bus to Ramsbottom.

Free parking, an ice cream opportunity (The Jersey Girls) and toilets en route.

Linear Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 2:30pm

Start place: Nuttall Park car park, Nuttall Hall Road, Ramsbottom, BL0 9LU

Grid Ref: SD796162

Postcode: BL0 9LU

[What3Words: ///date.screeches.loyal](#)

Finish: Walk ends at Bury Interchange where we will get the 472 bus back to our cars in Ramsbottom.

Grid Ref: SD803106

Postcode: BL9 0AY

[What3Words: ///spoil.custom.stir](#)

Distance: 5mi / 8km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Mike Beaman

Telephone: 07982 403288

Saturday, 11th July

Fairfield Horseshoe (Lake District)

Fairfield Horseshoe is a classic Lake District walk offering stunning views of Grasmere, Windermere and the surrounding mountain ranges. This is a strenuous walk and more detail can be found on Google (Fairfield Horseshoe).

Website: https://www.walklakes.co.uk/walk_42.html

Circular Walk

Start time 10am

Estimated finish time 4pm

Start place: Rydal Road car park, Ambleside. LA22 9AR

Grid Ref: NY375046

Postcode: LA22 9AR

[What3Words: ///gong.poodle.indicated](#)

Distance: 10.5mi / 16.9km

National Grade: Strenuous



Ascent: 3281 ft/1000 m

Contact Details:

Name: Greg Goddard

Telephone: 07742 545177

Tuesday, 14th July

More of Birtle (Summer Evening Stroll)

This is the second in a series of Summer Evening Strolls on Tuesdays during July and August. We will enjoy a scenic walk and those who wish can stay to enjoy the facilities of The Pack Horse afterwards.

Circular Walk

Start time 6:30pm

Estimated finish time 8:30pm

Start place: The Pack Horse Inn, Birtle Road, Heywood, BL9 6TY

Grid Ref: SD836124

Postcode: BL9 6TY

[What3Words: ///cheer.dame.cable](#)

Distance: 5mi / 8km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Greg Goddard

Telephone: 07742 545177

Thursday, 16th July

6 Res Ramble

This is a moderate circular route on generally good paths (PW, PBW) but with a few (permanently) boggy and muddy stretches as we seek out 6 reservoirs. The inclines/descents are gradual but taxing in length. We will be in some high exposed areas offering extensive views but weather conditions can change quickly so pack accordingly.

Circular Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 2:30pm

Start place: Meet at The White House, Blackstone Edge, Halifax Rd, Littleborough OL15 0LG There is a free car park at the start adjacent to The White House (what3words: users.rift.mercy) and some nearby parking at a lay-by at what3words: bolsters.minder.drags

Grid Ref: SD968178

Postcode: Location is 117 metres to the North of OL15 0LG

[What3Words: ///helpless.waistcoat.anyone](#)

Distance: 6.5mi / 10.5km

National Grade: Moderate



Ascent: 975 ft/297 m

Contact Details:

Name: Ian Barber

Telephone: 07781 835951

Sunday, 19th July

Ice Cream at the End

This is a very scenic walk in the Jumbles reservoir area and ending with an optional stop at Holden's Ice Cream Shop.

Circular Walk

Start time 10am

Estimated finish time 3:15pm

Start place: Car park, Barlow Institute, 216 Bolton Road, Turton, BL7 0AP

Grid Ref: SD741166

Postcode: BL7 0AP

[What3Words: ///counters.overlaid.satin](#)

Distance: 10mi / 16.1km

National Grade: Moderate



Contact Details: Name: Margaret Haygarth

Telephone: 07436 926240

Tuesday, 21st July

Shawclough Evening Stroll

This is the third of a series of summer evening strolls on Tuesdays in July and August. We will enjoy a scenic walk and those who wish can stay to enjoy the facilities of The Healey afterwards.

Circular Walk

Start time 6:30pm

Estimated finish time 8:30pm

Start place: The Healey, 172 Shawclough Rd, Shawclough, OL12 6HQ

Grid Ref: SD886149

Postcode: OL12 6HQ

[What3Words: ///myself.actors.drum](#)

Distance: 5mi / 8km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Gill Hollas

Telephone: 07899 995837

Thursday, 23rd July Harden Moor and Grants Tower

This is a nice moorland walk with good views along the way. Several stiles, some mud if the weather is wet, but mostly good paths. Bit of climbing but not strenuous.

Circular Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 2pm

Start place: Lay-by opposite Owd Betts Public House on Edenfield Road, OL12 7TY. (Don't park in Owd Betts car park - plenty of parking spaces on opposite side of road).

Grid Ref: SD829160

Postcode: OL12 7TY

[What3Words: ///screaming.tape.donor](#)

Distance: 4.8mi / 7.7km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: Maureen Rush

Telephone: 07907 135524

Saturday, 25th July Haslingden Grane, Hog Low Pike, Causeway End and Bull Hill

A richly varied and interesting walk offering fine panoramas. Expect rough ground and inclines/descents!

Circular Walk

Start time 10am

Estimated finish time 3:30pm

Start place: Helmshore Textile Museums car park, Holcombe Road, Helmshore, BB4 4NP

Grid Ref: SD778214

Postcode: BB4 4NS

[What3Words: ///aimed.voted.something](#)

Distance: 9.9mi / 15.9km

National Grade: Moderate



Contact Details:

Name: Jim Hargreaves

Telephone: 07899 818199

Tuesday, 28th July

Summer Evening Stroll - Delayed Santa Special!

This is the fourth in a series of Summer Evening Strolls on Tuesdays during July and August. We will enjoy a scenic walk and those who wish can stay for a social drink in Norden afterwards.

Circular Walk

Start time 6:30pm

Estimated finish time 8:45pm

Start place: Meet opposite Stocco Italian Restaurant, Edenfield Rd, Norden, OL11 5XH

Grid Ref: SD866142

Postcode: OL11 5XH

[What3Words: ///marker.part.corn](http://marker.part.corn)

Distance: 5mi / 8km

National Grade: Leisurely



Contact Details:

Name: John Blackburn

Telephone: 07919 165280

Thursday, 30th July

To Birtle and Back

A walk through woodland and fields with some short climbs as we cross from one side of Cheesden valley to the other. A small number of low-level stiles.

Circular Walk

Start time 11am

Estimated finish time 3:30pm

Start place: Queen's Park car park, Queen's Park Road, Heywood, Rochdale

Grid Ref: SD856116

Postcode: Location is 155 metres to the South East of OL10 4AL

[What3Words: ///popped.modest.games](http://popped.modest.games)

Distance: 7.5mi / 12.1km

National Grade: Moderate



Contact Details:

Name: Nicola Almond

Telephone: 07751 317824

On this Day in History July 1st 1916

Article courtesy of Ray Setterfield, Feature Writer, On this Day.

Five Miles of Mud Costs a Million Casualties



Over the top: Thousands of British soldiers scrambled out of their trenches and were dead within minutes

The First World War Battle of the Somme began on this day – one of the bloodiest conflicts in human history and the worst ever for the British army. A staggering 19,240 men died on that first day – one killed every five seconds.

Trench warfare along the western front in France had been going on for nearly two years, locking in stalemate the Germans on one side and the French and British on the other.

The front had hardly moved but for a number of months the French had been taking severe losses at Verdun, east of Paris. It was decided to attack the Germans to the north of Verdun at the Somme so that the Germans would move men away from the Verdun battlefield, thus relieving the French.

The battle at the Somme started with an artillery bombardment of the German lines. Using 3,000 guns, more than 1,738,000 shells were fired constantly over a period of eight days in the expectation of destroying the German trenches and barbed wire mounted in front of them. Additionally, gigantic underground mines were detonated under German positions.

The expectation was that when the British infantry left their trenches, they would be able to cross "no man's land" with little or no resistance. Indeed, at "zero hour" of 7.20am, soldiers from the East Surrey Regiment kicked footballs as they began to advance towards the German lines, which they believed would be empty after the week of shelling.

However, most of the barbed wire remained intact and the Germans had deep dugouts. All they had to do when the bombardment started was to move their men into them. When the bombardment stopped, they knew it was the signal for an infantry advance, so they moved from the relative safety of their dugouts and manned their machine guns.

As 100,000 British soldiers, each carrying 30kg of equipment, climbed out of their trenches and began to advance they met a barrage of machine gun and artillery fire by the Germans.

George Coppard, a British soldier who served with the Machine Gun Corps, recorded in his memoirs: "The next morning (July 2) we gunners surveyed the dreadful scene in front of us. It became clear that the Germans always had a commanding view of no man's land.

"Our attack had been brutally repulsed. Hundreds of dead were strung out like wreckage washed up to a high water-mark. Quite as many died on the enemy wire as on the ground, like fish caught in the net. They hung there in grotesque postures. Some looked as if they were praying; they had died on their knees and the wire had prevented their fall. Machine gun fire had done its terrible work."

Despite the horrendous losses, Britain's High Command, led by Field Marshal Douglas Haig, decided to continue the assault. The Battle of the Somme, along a 15-mile front of Northern France, lasted for 141 days, finally ending on November 18, 1916.

The official number of British dead, missing or wounded during that period is 419, 654. For France, the figure is 204,253 and for Germany, about 500,000, making the total casualties 1,123,907. The furthest advance of any Allied force was five miles.

It's a shame none of the current world leaders are members of Ramblers, maybe they could learn a valuable lesson from the history of conflicts.

Frank Langman - Editor