

Walking Bristol

Routes in North and East Bristol
Walk 4 - Montpelier to Purdown



Bristol Group Ramblers

As members of the Ramblers we promote walking, protect the rights of way, campaign for access to open country and the coastline and defend the beauty of the countryside.

We have regular walks of varying distance and difficulty on Saturday mornings, Sundays and Wednesdays. In the Spring and Summer we have shorter walks on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Our walks on Wednesdays and Tuesday evenings are usually accessible by public transport.

Non-members are most welcome. After a few walks they will be invited to join the Bristol Ramblers Group. We have a membership of almost 1000 walkers in Bristol and over 2000 in the West of England area.

For details of membership and our walks programme visit **www.bristolramblers.org.uk**. Then just choose a walk to suit your ability and contact the walk leader to introduce yourself and obtain further details.

Even though these walks are within the city, suitable footwear and a waterproof are still advised. All of the walks are accessible by public transport. The times for buses and trains can be

checked at **www.travelinesw.com**. We have done our best to provide accurate and up to date information, but services are liable to alteration at short notice.

Whilst every effort has been made to check the routes in this book, mistakes do happen and the city is subject to changes, so neither Bristol City Council or the Ramblers can accept responsibility for any inconvenience this may cause. To advise of mistakes or recommend new walks for future editions contact Bristol City Council at **transport.plan@bristol.gov.uk** or **0117 9036701**.

Neither Bristol City Council or the Ramblers necessarily endorse the opinions expressed by the authors of the walks.

All rights reserved. No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

Introduction

Walking is the simplest and cheapest form of travel and also one of the best forms of exercise. It helps you to feel good, reduces stress, increases your energy levels, reduces blood pressure and helps you to sleep better at night. It is a very good way to help you to lose weight.

Walking also helps you to appreciate the city that you live in. Other forms of transport race you past those lovely views or small points of historic interest. They make it more difficult to pop in to that small shop or stop off for a drink and a bite to eat. Walking lets you appreciate all of these at a leisurely pace.

In 2002 Bristol City Council and Bristol Group Ramblers collaborated to produce a delightful publication called 'Bristol Backs – Discovering Bristol on Foot'. This book contained 27 walks around the city, all over varying length and all taking in various features of this great city.

The book was intended to be sold, as it had been lovingly produced to a high quality. Unfortunately, this meant that when stocks began to run low, the cost of re-production proved to be prohibitive.

It seemed a real shame that access to these walks could be denied to so many people, so it was decided to re-produce a selection of these in a smaller format. The beauty of this new publication is that it will be free for all to enjoy.

Trying to decide which walks to exclude was very difficult and this led us to producing two booklets, one for the north and east of the city and the other for the south and central. You may wish to pick up the one that is local to you or both of them to explore other parts of the city. Although a number of walks are in or close to the city centre a conscious effort has been made to take these walks to the majority of the population out in the suburbs. There are some little gems in the most unexpected of places.

So please, go out and walk around your city and enjoy its little hidden pleasures and explore those alleys and lanes that you might not have known existed and if it means that you occasionally leave the car at home, it will have all been worth it.

Montpellier - Purdown



Montpellier - Purdown - *walk*

Description: This walk commences in inner Bristol but soon leads along urban paths that beckon the Rambler into open countryside with fine views of Bristol and distant countryside banishing the experiences of traffic jams and fumes.

Length: 6 miles. (2.5 to 3 hours)

Refreshments: St Werburgh's City Farm Café: Wed.-Sun. 10.00am-4.00pm. The Farm Public House. Cookies Café, Gainsborough Square. 7 days a week, King George VI Inn, Filton

Transport: Bus Services 70 and 73 serve both the beginning and end of the walk. Alight at 'the Arches' (the Gloucester Road /Cheltenham Road junction) and walk up Station Road to Montpellier Station (approx 300 yards). Return from the King George VI inn. Trains to Montpellier station on the Severn Beach Line, but no direct connection back from Filton Abbey Wood to Montpellier.

Taking the footbridge over the railway line at Montpellier station, climb the steps to Cromwell Road and turn right. Where the road bears left continue straight

ahead into Balmoral Road and then take the right fork into Hurlingham Road, which gives fine views of the city.

Montpellier Station **A** was once so well used by commercial travellers that extra porters were needed on a Monday morning to handle their samples. Even in the '50s, it was staffed by two booking clerks, four porters, a checker and a weighbridge attendant. Like all the

stations on the line, it has since been vandalised officially and unofficially. The only remaining building has been brightly decorated in twenty-first century neofolk style. The spelling of Montpellier was decided by the railway company.

The Lord Protector really did have a connection with Cromwell Road, but the farmhouse he used during a siege of Bristol was demolished by the Victorians.

On reaching Ashley Hill cross to the tarmac footpath opposite via the traffic island taking care across this major thoroughfare. Initially downhill, houses are left behind as one passes allotments on both sides of the path.

The communications tower, such a prominent feature later in the walk, can be viewed in the distance.

Ignoring side paths, continue straight ahead at St Werburgh's City



*Farm **B**. Turn right at St Werburgh's City Farm, down Watercross Road, then left into Mina Road to Boiling Wells Road and under railway bridge **C**.*

The railway line is the main line to Cardiff built to serve the New Passage ferry crossing at Aust, then slightly diverted through the Severn Tunnel. It goes also, via Bristol Parkway, to Birmingham, the original Midland Railway link into Bristol having been closed and converted to a route for pedestrians and cyclists.

Continue to Muller Road and cross at the traffic lights. Climb and cross the field/ recreation ground diagonally upwards towards the top (east) corner. Close to the corner there is a wide gap in the right-hand hedge. Pass through to

the next field and very soon turn left at a similar gap on the left. Head towards an old stone gatepost at the edge of the field ahead.

Turn left again across the grass with the hedge on the left aiming for another post opposite a house. Where the track meets the tarmac road, pass through two metal swing gates to turn right into Sir John's Lane **D**. Continue the full length of the lane with Lockleaze playing fields on the left and views to the west. Pass the communications tower **E** and continue on to the dirt track. Shortly veer to the right at a junction of paths passing through

the gun emplacements of the former Purdown Camp.

Alternative link path to Lockleaze--On reaching broken gate take the middle of 3 paths and walk diagonally across the field to church to go to Lockleaze. Retrace route to re join the walk

At the tower note the fine views south and east over the city to the countryside north of Bath.

Continue on to a grass track in a north-easterly direction where a wire fence will appear on the right. Just before a gap in the hedge ahead, turn half left on an initially indistinct path and aim for the left-hand edge of the woods ahead, beyond which may be seen a burnt tree stump, partly black and partly white.

Pass this stump **F** but then turn half right along the edge of the hill.

(Note a gap between blocks of woodland ahead, not to be confused with a clear gap that comes into view after a short distance).

On reaching a crossing track continue ahead veering left across the grass towards what now turns out to be a bay in the woodland boundary. A number of swing gates come into view; head for the gate at the end of the field beside a track gateway into the woods. Take this wide track into a wood that in season is filled with bluebells.

Continue until a tarmac drive **G** is reached and turn right past the entrance to Hewlett Packard to the end of the road barrier. Turn left taking the left-hand path with green iron fence on the right, passing the University of the West of England. Continue on the dirt path ahead until the ring road **H** is reached. Turn left down the ring road a short distance to the combined cycle/footpath leading to the M.O.D. Abbey Wood building.

An alternative, noisy, short cut to the King George VI inn is alongside Station Road, the ring road.)

When the cycle/footpath reaches a roundabout, cross to the white perimeter fence and turn right following the fence on the left to the 'deliveries' security entrance (not the main security gate just beyond the roundabout). Crossing in front of this security gate take the combined cycle/footpath to the entrance to Filton Abbey Wood rail station **I**. For buses and the King George VI inn, use the station footbridge to cross to the opposite platform and take the path leading to the station car park.

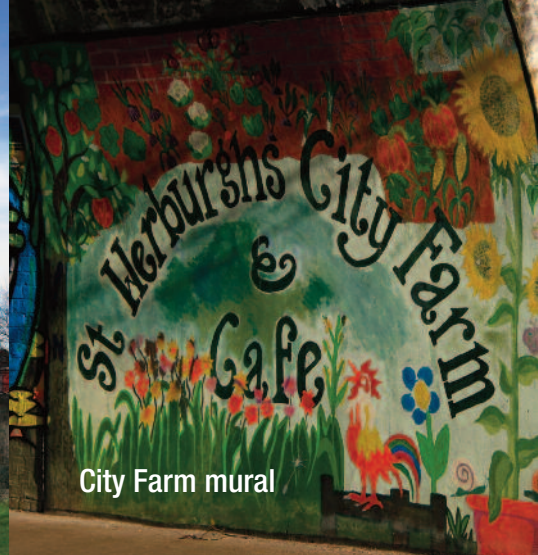
A path, left, leads into Nutfield Grove which in turn leads to Filton Avenue.

The inn and bus stops are located right.

Walk devised by David James Bristol Ramblers



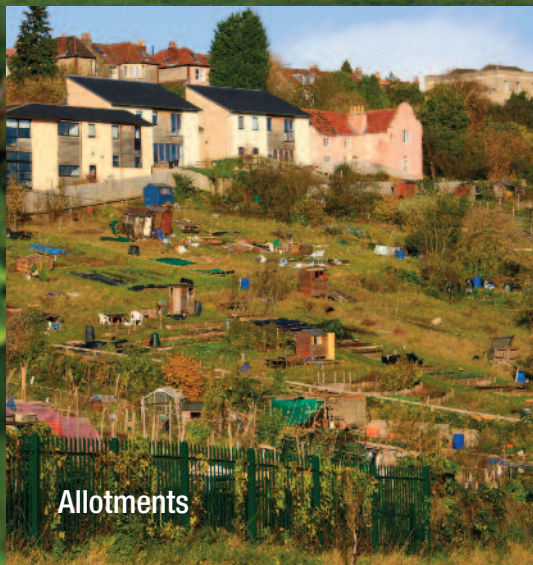
E Communications Tower



City Farm mural



Wildlife



Allotments



City Farm