

LONG WALKS PROGRAMME: Spring / Summer 2022

“The Age UK Striders”

<i>DATE</i>	<i>ROUTE</i>
5 th May	Up the Tyne Valley: Heddon-on-the-Wall to Stocksfield (9¼ miles, 700 ft.) <i>Meet at Eldon Square Bus Station</i>
19 th May	Wildfowl and the Weardale Way: Hylton Castle to Woodstone Village (8½ miles, 650 ft.) <i>Meet at Gateshead Interchange</i>
<u>Wednesday</u> 1 st Jun	The Highest Point in Sunderland: Houghton-le-Spring to University of Sunderland (7¾ miles, 450 ft.) <i>Meet at Gateshead Interchange</i>
16 th Jun	The Red Kite Trail: Lintzford circular (10 miles, 1050 ft.) <i>Meet at Gateshead Interchange</i>
30 th Jun	Druridge Bay: Ellington to Amble (10 miles, 200 ft.) <i>Meet at Haymarket Bus Station</i>
14 th Jul	The West Dipton Burn: Hexham to Dilston (8 miles, 1000 ft.) <i>Meet at Eldon Square Bus Station</i>
28 th Jul	Two Routes towards Bishop Auckland: Sunderland Bridge to Brandon (9½ miles, 400 ft.) <i>Meet at Gateshead Interchange</i>
11 th Aug	A Derwent – Tyne Crossing: Ebchester to Riding Mill (9 miles, 1100 ft.) <i>Meet at Gateshead Interchange</i>
25 th Aug	A 7th.-Century Battlefield: Hexham to Portgate (7¾ miles, 1050 ft.) <i>Meet at Eldon Square Bus Station</i>

OUR LONG WALKS GUIDELINES

Age UK Gateshead has guidelines in place to safeguard our members during our long walks, and in the interests of walkers and volunteer walk leaders alike, we trust that these will be respected. We have therefore listed some important points for members to take into account:

- It is important to wear suitable footwear, appropriate outdoor clothing, and sunscreen when necessary.
- Please bring refreshments with you. For those walks that start a little further afield, you may wish to bring a packed lunch.
- Walks are free, apart from the cost of any food or drink that you may wish to purchase, and public transport fares if not covered by a Concessionary Travel Card or Gold Card.
- Walkers may wish to inform a family member that they are embarking upon or leaving a walk.
- Please ensure that you complete our Registration Form on your first visit and return it to our volunteers straight away.
- Whilst walkers are, of course, at liberty to leave a walk at any point, they **must** inform a walk leader if they need or wish to do so – not only for health and safety reasons, but also out of consideration for the other walkers in the group, and to keep to the timetable.
- Travelling on public transport now appears to be a much lower-risk activity than at the beginning of the pandemic, thanks to the precautions taken by NEXUS and the bus companies to make their vehicles Covid-secure. Whilst we cannot enforce we would ask each walking group member to wear a face covering to help stop the spread.

Walking is one of the best forms of exercise for improving circulation and flexibility. Our Programme offers the health benefits of a brisk walk in some of the region's interesting locations, as part of a friendly and welcoming group. You will also have the opportunity to learn more about local history and the natural environment, thanks to our knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteer leader **Robin**. To contact Robin directly regarding a walk, please call **0191 4692400**, or e-mail robinstanaway@hotmail.co.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Our long walks normally take place on alternate **Thursdays**. In the exceptional circumstance of a Bank Holiday falling on a Thursday, there will be a walk on the **Wednesday** instead. Walkers meet in time for a **prompt 10.30 a.m. departure** on public transport.
- The usual meeting point is at the top of the escalators at **Gateshead Interchange**, although sometimes it is more convenient to meet elsewhere, such as the main concourse of **Eldon Square** or **Haymarket Bus Station, Newcastle** (as indicated in the list overleaf). However, if our outward journey on public transport passes near your home, you are welcome, indeed encouraged, to join us *en route*.
- These arrangements have been adopted so that holders of Concessionary Travel Cards can use them for bus journeys. Regular walkers who are eligible will also find it worthwhile to purchase a Gold Card for use on the Metro.
- Walks are between 7 and 10 miles in length, and may include a fair amount of ascent, as indicated in the list. The pace, when on comparable ground, will generally be rather brisker than on the short and medium walks.
- Walks are planned in the expectation that everyone is setting out to cover the full distance. If someone does need or wish to drop out midway, the leader will endeavour to give directions to public transport, but it should be noted that, in the more remote countryside, this may be infrequent or even non-existent.
- All our walks are led by **Age UK Gateshead** volunteer walk leaders whose training (which includes Health & Safety and First Aid) meets the standards required by **Age UK Gateshead**.
- The leader's responsibility for a walk includes choosing the designated starting and finishing points, and appropriate transportation.
- We usually arrange to stop for lunch at a place where tea, coffee *etc.* are available for purchase. Only occasionally is it not practicable to do this.
- All walks are reconnoitred and risk-assessed for their suitability before they take place. The leader may change a walk if the planned route is found to be unsatisfactory.
- Walk leaders also reserve the right to change or cancel an **Age UK Gateshead** walk if there is a health and safety issue or other good reason on that day (e.g. bad weather conditions, public transport strikes, new advice regarding Covid-19, *etc.*).
- **Age UK Gateshead** endeavours to publish a detailed description of each walk, a few days in advance, on our web-site at www.ageuk.org.uk/gateshead

**For more information, please contact Sharon Dryden at Age UK Gateshead
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