

STRIDERS 2025

January 2025: THIEVES WOOD & HARLOW WOOD

Despite the weather, 5 of us enjoyed a forest walk in the rain. Fortunately, the route was on good tracks, so we managed to avoid most of the mud.

Starting the walk at the Thieves Wood car park we walked out through the forest to the A60. Crossing into Harlow Wood we then returned via the Robin Hood Way.

The rain had almost stopped by the time we got back to the car park, so we decided to have our picnic lunch before returning to Gedling.



February 2025: HIGH PEAK

This month's walk saw seven of us back in Derbyshire on a beautiful sunny day. Our route of roughly eight miles was a circuit based around a section of the High Peak Trail, which we joined just below Middleton Top.

From the Moor, with wonderful 360° views, we made a gradual descent through the village, by Dene Quarry and Rose End nature reserve to Scarthin, where we found a table for lunch right next to the millpond.

Our return route took us back along Cromford Canal to High Peak Junction, then after a steady climb back to Middleton, we were able to enjoy a well-earned drink at The Rising Sun. This was a lovely, varied walk, which we all enjoyed, and it was great to see signs of spring at last, in such a beautiful setting.

March 2025: LINBY TRAIL

This month's 7 mile walk was nearer to home, starting with the Linby Trail. We had beautiful weather from the start, and signs of spring were everywhere. The trail leads to Newstead Lakes, on the old pit site, now transformed into a tranquil nature reserve, with plenty of birdlife on the water.

After a break for coffee here, we made our way along some less well-known paths and old lanes. There were great views over the surrounding countryside towards the source of the River Leen and through woods which will be full of bluebells in a month or so.

After a short visit to the old fort on the upper lake, we stopped for lunch (and a sunbathe) overlooking Newstead Abbey gardens, before making our way back through fields to Linby via Papplewick church. Although some of the paths were familiar, it was delightful to explore this previously unknown area around the lakes, particularly lovely on such a sunny day.

Many thanks to Kath for devising the route, which we all enjoyed very much.

April 2025: HELL BANK PLANTATION

For our Striders walk this month, we took a six and a half mile circuit, starting high above the beautiful village of Beeley. We followed a steep path down through the woods of the wonderfully named Hell Bank Plantation, scrambled on rocks over a stream before reaching the village and crossing the meadows to the River Derwent and Chatsworth Park.

Half an hour's walk through the parkland brought us to our lunch stop at Chatsworth (our own sandwiches, sadly, though some indulged in ice cream...) Luckily, we still had enough energy to tackle the climb through Stand Wood, where we passed some interesting water features, including the spectacular aqueduct designed by Joseph Paxton in the nineteenth century.

The last section of the walk crossed Beeley Moor with fabulous views of the countryside for miles around. This was a varied route with a real mixture of typical Derbyshire features within a relatively small area, and we had perfect weather with plenty of sun, and a cool breeze. It was just the right temperature for walking, and we all enjoyed ourselves very much.

May 2025: LEA and RIBER

This month's walk saw us back in Derbyshire, starting in the village of Lea, well known for its rhododendron gardens. We began by following a path through woods and flower meadows to the ancient church at Dethick, with beautiful views over rolling countryside towards the west.

Continuing through Tansley, we arrived in the picturesque hamlet of Riber where there are several wonderful buildings dating from Tudor times and before. From there we crossed the fields to Hearthstone Lane, an old track which once was the locals' walk to work at Smedley's mill in Holloway.

Our lunch spot had gorgeous views across Cromford and the High Peak Trail. After our well-earned rest, we made our way back past Alison Uttley's house, through Bow Wood with its maze of trails and masses of bluebells, still just about in flower, and crossed stepping stones to arrive back just in time for a welcome drink at the Jug and Glass in Lea.

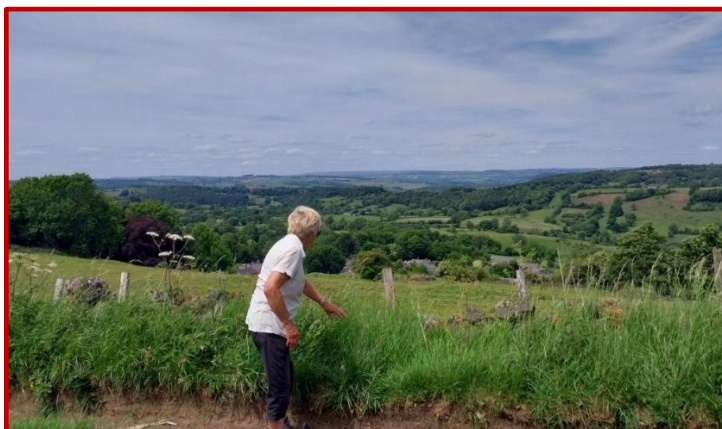
This was a lovely, varied walk with stunning views along much of the route, and even a little sunshine!

June 2025: BONSTALL

The walk was an eight mile circuit from Bonsall, which is a very picturesque and traditional Derbyshire village and a good centre for hiking. Six of us set off up an initially steep slope, but the rest of the walk was through gently undulating countryside with great views on all sides.

The area was well known for lead mining in the past and there is plenty of evidence of this in the uneven ground, now a haven for butterflies and beautiful wildflowers.

Our route took us through Ible, a tiny hamlet of farmhouses, well off the beaten track, then round to our lunch stop on the Limestone Way, with a fantastic view over Winster and beyond.



The threatened rain held off, and we made our way back in sunshine, past a striking local version of the Sycamore Gap (still with tree) through fields to Upper Town.

Seeing who could get most easily through some very narrow squeezer stiles gave us a lot of entertainment, but we all made it down to Bonsall and the lovely Fountain Tea Rooms - the perfect ending!

July 2025: TANSLEY

This month's walk was a 7 mile circuit from Tansley. The weather was dry and thankfully not as hot as it has been. There were some fabulous views along the way and an impressive waterfall which no one had seen before. Refreshments were enjoyed at the Tavern at Tansley at the end of the walk.





August 2025: SHINING CLIFF

Holidays and Grandparent duties reduced our numbers to 8 but we enjoyed a nice summer walk in Derbyshire. The walk started with a steady climb up through Shining Cliff Woods where a section of the path had become a stream in the recent rain.



The group got excited at the sight of some mud at the top of the climb, having seen none for the last few months. Fortunately, the rest of the route was mud free and we enjoyed magnificent views across the Derwent valley before descending to the Cromford Canal after our lunch stop. Just after we left the canal a passing shower forced us to take shelter under a horse chestnut tree while some of the group feasted on damsons from the nearby tree. A short walk along the A6 then took us back to the start.



September 2025: LATHKILL DALE

We enjoyed perfect walking conditions for our walk in Derbyshire this month. It started in Over Haddon and descended into Lathkill Dale before climbing steadily on the opposite side.

We had magnificent views towards Cave Dale when we stopped for coffee. Having been entertained by a cow and its calf we descended Cave Dale into Lathkill Dale and after a short distance we arrived at Kath's suggested lunch stop where we had fabulous views of the limestone cliffs and blue skies.

Walking back along Lathkill Dale which had been devastated by ash dieback we were pleased to see new trees had been planted to replace those that had been lost. There was a sting in the tail with a steep climb back to the car park before we returned home for a well-earned rest.





October 2025: ROWSLEY & BAKEWELL

Despite the dire weather warnings, four hardy souls set off for Derbyshire in the rain, however by the time we reached Matlock the rain had stopped and the wind had dropped. We set off from Rowsley and after a muddy start we walked through pleasant fields to Calton Lees.

A steady climb took us to Calton House where we walked along a ridge in a westerly direction. The views across the valley allowed us to admire the beautiful autumn colours.

A slightly treacherous descent then took us to Bakewell Golf Course which we crossed to join the Monsal Trail. After eating our packed lunch, we continued to the end of the trail and followed a track back to the start of the walk where we arrived dry and warm and feeling quite pleased that we had avoided the bad weather and enjoyed a really good walk.



November 2025: BELPER

6 people went to Belper for the November Striders walk & definitely picked the right day: it was 14C with no rain & the ground was mainly well drained.

There was an easy walk along the valley followed by one steep climb up to a ridge with views over to the East. We followed an old sunken trackway downwards until a slower climb up to another ridge overlooking Belper & the river Derwent.

The Chevin ridge was lined with Beech trees, with good views & a surprising wall structure which was built for target practice in the Napoleonic wars and used afterwards in the Boer & First World War.

The return followed the Derwent back to the grand weir & building of Strutt's Mill. An excellent day out except for Car Parking App-Rage at the end!



December 2025: BOXING DAY WALK

Our traditional Boxing Day walk was enjoyed by 9 of us. We were fortunate to have blue skies and sunshine throughout the walk. Starting at the car park on Ranmoor Road we made our way through Gedling village to Burton Road Jubilee Park. After walking through the park, we found the path from Chandos Steet to the Colwick Loop Road had reopened so we followed it before crossing the A612 and following the Willowbrook (not the Pub) to the Netherfield Lagoons which we circumnavigated. Richard then led us back to the car park through the new Rivendale development after which some of us enjoyed refreshments at the Willowbrook Pub.