

Sevenoaks Ramblers

Aylesford, River Medway to North Downs circular - 10 miles

Wednesday, 13th May

Despite an unpromising weather forecast, 16 dedicated Ramblers set out on the 10 mile walk. Leaving Aylesford train station alongside the River Medway, we headed towards the iconic Aylesford Bridge, which is thought to date back to the 13th century.

Another local landmark we passed, was the Church of St Peter and St Paul, whose foundations are believed, in some accounts to date from the 12th century. Unfortunately, the Norman church is currently being refurbished, so we were unable to go inside.

Leaving the village for Eccles, we made our way towards the North Downs, and everyone took the long climb up to the Bluebell Hill viewpoint in their stride, where we stopped for our elevenses.

And then... without warning... the heavy rain arrived with a vengeance. Safe to say, it was a very quick break, spent sheltering amongst the trees.

Heading downhill and away from the North Downs, we crossed the golf course at Cobtree Manor Park before reaching The Malta Inn, where we enjoyed a sunny-ish lunch beside the river at Allington Lock. Whilst there, the group was fortunate enough to spot a handsome cormorant diving for its supper — only to drop it! It later perched on a buoy as the sun appeared, which we decided was surely an "omen of good luck".

It was then time to head back towards the station. Was that a roll of thunder we could hear? Surely not...

Before long, the heavens opened once again — torrential rain, hail, and even more rain. Sheltering once more beneath the trees, we may have been soaked, but like the rest of the day, it was all great fun!





