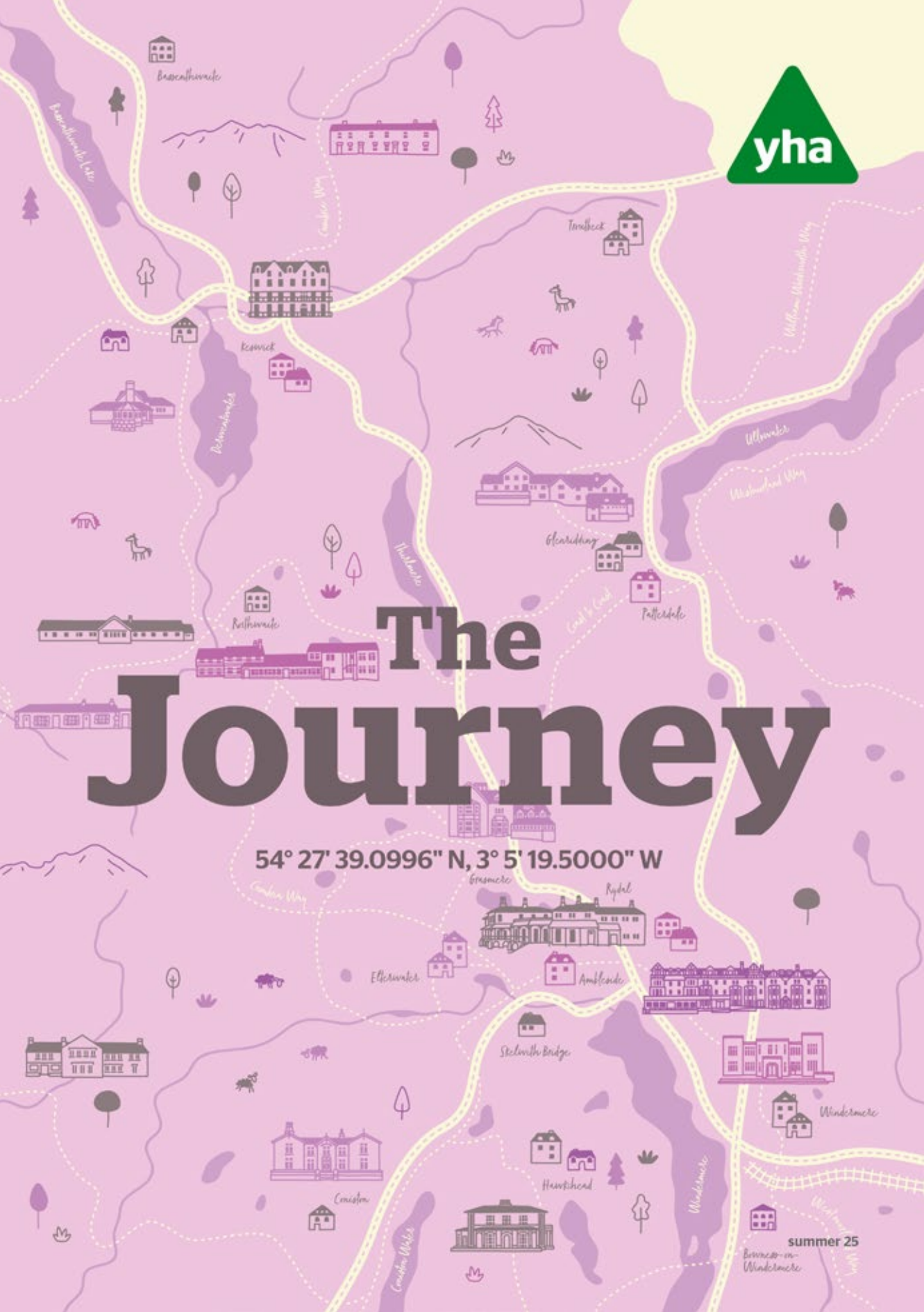




The Journey

54° 27' 39.0996" N, 3° 5' 19.5000" W



summer 25

Summer is for discovering

From rugged coastlines to stunning National Parks, a YHA stay offers access to adventures in some of the most beautiful locations in England and Wales.

Dorm beds available from £18 per night and private rooms from £35 per night.

yha.org.uk/breaks/summer-holidays





Hello

...and welcome to the summer issue of The Journey.

We're incredibly proud that this year marks our 95th anniversary, but an organisation like YHA is nothing without you: our members, guests, staff, volunteers and supporters. Every single time you stay with us — donate your time or money to the work we do — you're helping us to achieve our goals as a charity. A heartfelt thank you.

In this issue, we're celebrating some of the things that make England and Wales so ripe for hostel-based exploration. We take a look at our rivers and chalk landscapes, explore the evolution of long-distance hiking and chat with Kate Rew, the founder of the Outdoor Swimming Society.

You'll also find an overview of the latest YHA news, a selection of great hostels located near National Nature Reserves, and regular slots such as our gear reviews, our readers' competition, and Let's go!, our four-page pull-out for young hostellers.

If you fancy a challenge for the months ahead, meanwhile, we're currently recruiting people to join our running team for the 2026 TCS London Marathon. You'll be taking on one of the world's showpiece marathons, and helping us raise vital funds in the meantime. Could this be the year you sign up?

Huge thanks again for your support — and happy reading!



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Competition

Win a Lifesystems mountain safety bundle worth £144







The Salt Path

"The story celebrates the resilience of the human spirit," says Elizabeth Karlsen, producer of *The Salt Path*, a new film starring Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs (pictured here), and an ode to the landscapes and people of England's South West.

The film is based on the autobiographical book of the same name, telling the inspirational true story of Raynor and Moth Winn who walked the 630-mile South West Coast Path after becoming homeless. Things are compounded by Moth being diagnosed with the rare disease corticobasal degeneration (CBD), which usually gives the individual less than five years to live (although 10 years later, the real Moth is still here).

Making the film meant walking, and filming, in all weathers. *The Salt Path* was filmed at coastal locations in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. To experience it yourself, there are numerous hostels along the path, including YHA Treyarnon Bay, YHA Boswinger (Partner), YHA Land's End, and YHA Penzance.

In the words of Gillian Anderson, the film has three main stars: Raynor, Moth and the path itself. "It's actually about the three of them: the two of them on the journey and their relationship to the nature that is unfolding in front of them and around them."

The *Salt Path* film is out now, and Raynor Winn's book remains a bestseller.

southwestcoastpath.org.uk



Refreshed strategy launched in Parliament

Earlier this year at Westminster, YHA launched a refreshed strategy to increase access to first-time adventures

In April, a refreshed strategy for YHA was launched in the Churchill Room at the House of Commons. The event, hosted by Lord John Mann, brought together partners, policymakers, young people and supporters, who heard details of YHA's refreshed mission to connect people with each other, the outdoors, nature and heritage, and improve confidence, connection and sense of belonging with every hostel stay.

The overall approach was summed up by Baroness Hayman (seen below), the minister responsible for access to nature at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who said: "We know that

access to nature is unfortunately unequal. It is vital that children have the opportunity to access our most special places and have

adventures away from home. YHA's new strategy is a crucial part of ensuring that every child has this opportunity, whatever their background."

Nisbah Hussain, founder of Equalinks and the Muslim Youth Alliance, also spoke about her first night under the stars on a school trip, and the moment that sparked her drive to break down barriers to inclusion in outdoor spaces.

Also speaking were Khalid, Thomas and Jayden from the Bobby Moore Academy, who described with humour and heart



their residential experiences post-COVID, outlining how those moments had shaped their reconnection with their peers and the wider world.

YHA Chair Margaret Hart and Chief Executive James Blake both explained that, through this refreshed strategy, YHA will focus on responding to the needs of society and building on successful programmes like Generation Green, Outdoor Citizens and No Child Left Behind to target support to disadvantaged young people and those accessing adventure for the first time.

A shared approach, however, will be crucial. As James Blake said: "We need to extend these opportunities to more people, as so many miss out. But YHA cannot do this in isolation; strategic partnerships and funding are key to make the greatest impact in society."

YHA launches life membership

Life membership means exactly that: becoming a lifelong member for a single, one-off fee.

What are the benefits?

- Be part of a movement that values community, nature and adventure.
- Peace of mind with no renewals and no future price increases.
- Unlimited access to over 100 unique and unforgettable locations across England and Wales.
- A lifetime of member-only benefits, including discounted stays.
- An exclusive life member welcome pack, complete with a jazzy card, pin badge and stamp book to capture every YHA memory.
- Automatic Hostelling International membership.
- Savings on top outdoor brands every time you shop.



Life membership costs £500, and also makes a great gift.
You can sign up here: yha.org.uk/membership

Festival of Walking returns

YHA's hugely successful Festival of Walking returns from Friday, 12th September to Sunday, 12th October 2025. Visit yha.org.uk/festival-of-walking to see the packed programme of free, guided social walks, and a 20% discount at 50 hostels. You'll also find a huge range of self-guided, mapped walks, with downloadable PDFs, from dozens of hostels.



Raise money at the TCS London Marathon

Applications for charity places are now open for the TCS London Marathon held on Sunday 26th April, 2026. YHA carefully reviews each entry, so be sure to tell us why you want to support YHA and how you plan to fundraise. And if falling through the sky seems more appealing (!), then charity skydives can also be booked at the same URL.

getinvolved.yha.org.uk

Walk of the season:

YHA National Forest

254 Moira Furnace and Measham

Distance: 9 miles (14.6km) **Ascent:** 180m (591ft)

Time: Allow 3h 45m to 6h 30m **Start/Finish:** Grid ref SK 305 156

It can be tempting to think of the National Forest as somewhere young. The project was given the go-ahead only in the 1990s, covers around 200 square miles, and has seen the planting of millions of trees. YHA National Forest, an exclusive hire property at its centre, is an eco-hostel dating to 2007.

All this hints at a region without a long heritage, but this is off the mark. The newer plantations – which largely comprise native trees – link together belts of ancient woodland, while the forest as a whole covers history-rich swathes of North Leicestershire, South Derbyshire and South East Staffordshire. This walk makes a fine choice for groups looking to combine woodland, countryside and a fascinating industrial past.

The former coal-mining village of Moira, near the start, is a prime example. Its 19th-century iron-making blast furnace sits on the banks of a 200-year-old canal and provides one of the hike's cultural highlights. Hick's Lodge, another ex-mining site but now a lake with bird hides, a café and cycle trails, arrives soon afterwards.

The path then winds south, snaking into Willesley Wood and crossing the A42 before arriving into Measham. The village has a traditional pub, The White Hart, and a long pottery tradition. It's also where you'll join the old railway line leading north. After passing the village of Donisthorpe, the route heads through Donisthorpe Woodland Park before returning to the hostel.

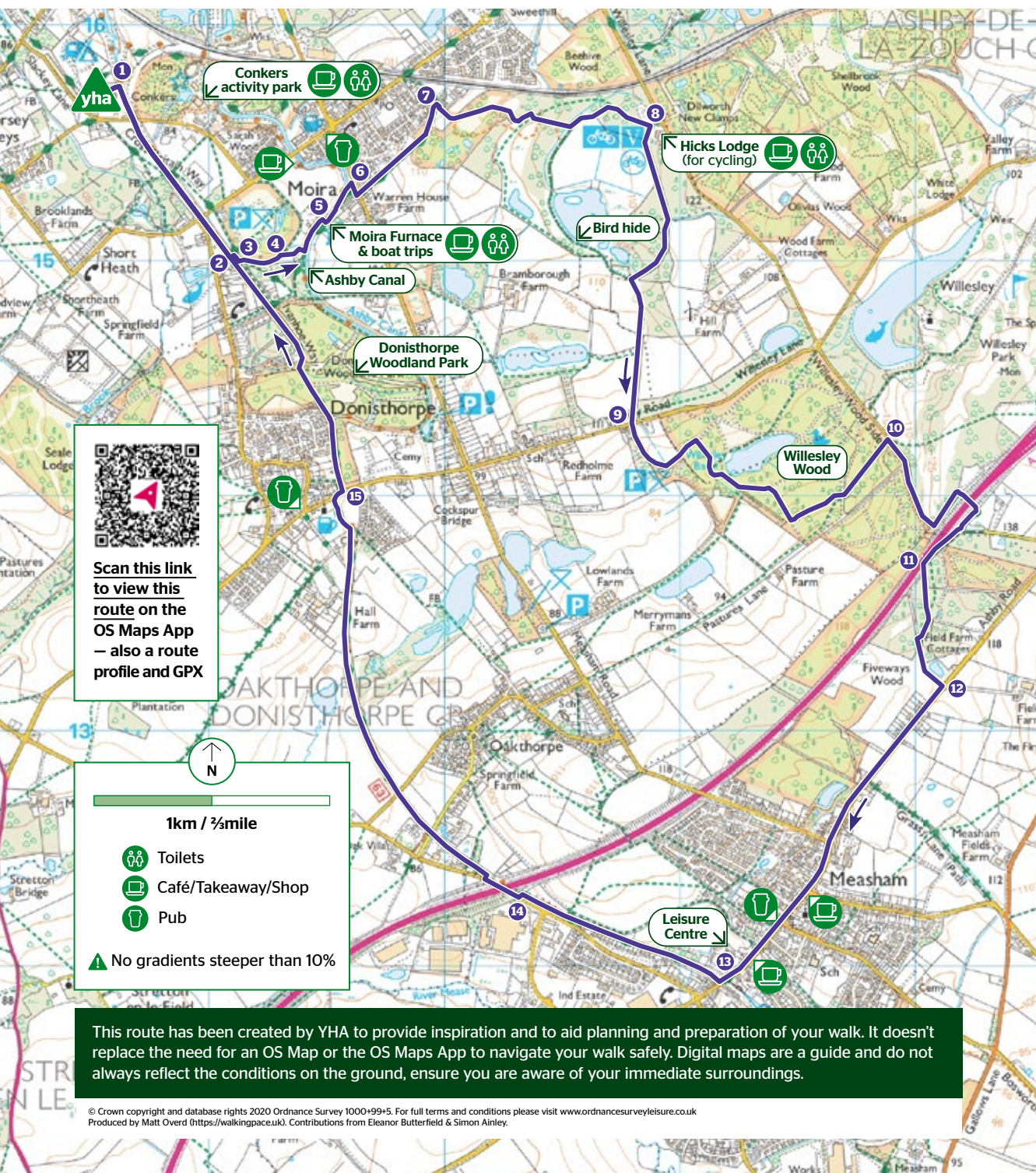
Directions:

- 1 From the hostel car park head to the track on the right and turn right.
- 2 Leave the track via steps on the left to Park Road.
- 3 At the road junction take the footpath ahead and to the left, between the road and the track, into the trees.
- 4 Bear right to the canal and turn left alongside it.
- 5 At Moira Furnace cross the canal and turn left.
- 6 Turn right onto Measham Road, then left onto the footpath.
- 7 At the road turn right and immediately bear right onto the bridleway signposted to Hicks Lodge.
- 8 Bear right to pass Hick's Lodge visitor centre and follow the trail to Ashby Road.
- 9 Cross the road and go straight ahead to Oakthorpe Colliery Picnic Site, then turn left into Willesley Wood.
- 10 Leave the woods onto Willesley Wood Side, turn right and follow the lane, then cross the bridge over the A42.
- 11 Turn left and head across fields.
- 12 At Ashby Road turn right into Measham and head along High Street.
- 13 Cross over the mini-roundabout, then turn right onto the path along the old railway line.
- 14 Leave the old railway path onto Burton Road. Turn right to head under the A42, then rejoin the old railway path.
- 15 Cross over the road at Donisthorpe to remain on the old railway line, then retrace the route to the hostel.

Hazards: Some walking on lanes and narrow roads without pavements. Road crossings. Deep water. Some paths are shared with cyclists and horses. May be livestock in fields. Parts of the route may be muddy after rain.

Accessibility: There are stiles and steps on the route and paths and gates less than one metre wide. There are stretches of rough ground with ruts or stones up to 10cm.

Visit yha.org.uk/festival-of-walking/self-guided-walks for more information and for walks from other hostels.



This route has been created by YHA to provide inspiration and to aid planning and preparation of your walk. It doesn't replace the need for an OS Map or the OS Maps App to navigate your walk safely. Digital maps are a guide and do not always reflect the conditions on the ground, ensure you are aware of your immediate surroundings.

Kate Rew

As the Outdoor Swimming Society pushes for a greater legal right to swim, we speak to founder Kate Rew about the popularity of outdoor swimming, what she loves about it, and why she joined YHA

Q Tell us about the foundations of the Outdoor Swimming Society.

The Outdoor Swimming Society (OSS) was basically a happy accident. I was at a point in my life where I'd started swimming more often, and a friend and I decided to go on a swimming trip to the Lake District. It was late autumn, during a huge storm, and dark by the time we got there, but we managed a swim in Buttermere. As we lay in our beds that night, I resolved that we should really get more people into this.

That was 2006, and it was groundbreaking then. It seemed really radical. I thought, why don't we actually set out to go for a swim, and go and do it with purpose, like people go surfing, climbing or mountaineering? And that's really what the OSS has done: create a community and a lifestyle around it.

Signed copies of Kate Rew's book, *The Outdoor Swimmers' Handbook*, are available, with a wealth of information and inspiring features, at outdoorswimmingsociety.com.



Q What attracted you to swimming in the first place?

Like many people, I grew up swimming in rivers. Most kids will get into any water that they happen to be near, and what happened was that I just recaptured it. I went on a swimming tour around Greece and then down the Thames, and it just flipped a switch.

Q Why do you love swimming outdoors?

There are many reasons. I love the physical mind-state changes that come from swimming. If you do the type of swimming that I love – unpaid for, free – it alters your mind-state faster than any other sport. I love all repetitive sports like rowing, running, anything outdoors really, but there is a literal immersion that you get when you're in water that returns you to a much more natural and unbothered state. It's about one of the only things that makes you feel calm and energised at the same time.

That flick from being an overthinking adult with a million things to do to being a happy, content person who doesn't really need very much to have a lovely day, happens really fast for me when I get into water.

Q Is there still a place for the Outdoor Swimming Society now that swimming is so popular?

Obviously, years ago, we could have stopped talking about swimming and everyone else would have just carried on swimming. Everyone who goes swimming wants to take someone else swimming; it doesn't need the originator to still be in the conversation. But one of the reasons I've carried on with the OSS is that we wanted to put our elbows out around the heart and soul of free swimming. It's become so popular that the attempts to commodify it and market it and make it into a product are just relentless.



We get so little in life that you can hold on to with a kind of free, wild spirit, where you're just doing something because you love it as an amateur. That's why I like the community. I like the independence that it fosters in people.

Q What do you say when people ask about getting into swimming?

There are different ways in for different people. The key thing to understand is that there is no right way to swim. You've got permission, from me, for which I'm completely unauthorised to do, to swim any which way you like. You can attach five tow floats to yourself and go to a lifeguarded session or you can just plunge into your river.

Q And why did you recently join YHA?

To swim with puffins! The first one I stayed in was in Pembrokeshire at YHA Broad Haven, to go snorkelling with puffins. It's a beautiful beachside youth hostel. We swam out with puffin decoys on our heads and tried to camouflage ourselves in a kind of raft of fake puffins with the aim of confusing the puffins into actually swimming near us. My most recent visit to a youth hostel was at YHA Hathersage (Partner) in the Peak District when I wanted to discover the 'Sheffield Lake District'. I'd heard so much about the swimmers in the reservoirs up there, I had to swim there myself.



Take me to the river

Our rivers are a playground for us and a breeding ground for the ecosystem that depends on them. A summer day by the river is one of the most idyllic days possible – and they're worth fighting for

To follow a meandering river is to follow the rhythm of nature riven into the earth: its whims, its history, its weaving journey through the land's geology. It never follows the most direct route from A to B, and that's one of its most beautiful elements. A riverside walk is a mindset shift, one that almost demands you slow down and pay attention to the minutiae of life that congregates along the banks, an ecosystem in delicate balance.

See the pond skater, the brown trout, the kingfisher, the damselfly, the otter, the heron. Listen to the summer hum of mayflies, the plop of a surfacing fish, the torrent of water squeezing through rocks or gushing over a weir. Float your hand in the cooling water, or jump in, gasping at the chill. Droop

your fingers through the bullrushes. And breathe in the fresh, damp air.

Rivers bring us joy and adventure, fun and health. We walk beside them, fish along them, paddle in them. On the River Derwent in the Peak District there are rapids you can raft down; Devon's River Dart provides a technical descent for kayakers; on Yorkshire's River Swale, you can watch paddlers drop over waterfall after waterfall.

It's no coincidence that some of our classic books are based on rivers: *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame and *Three Men in a Boat* by Jerome K. Jerome, for fiction, and non-fiction books including *The Flow* by Amy-Jane Beer and the essential (really essential) *Waterlog* by Roger Deakin. Each evokes the woozy,



dreamy, unruffled nature of messing about on a river. It is part of our British tradition, part of our life. Some seven and a half million of us routinely head to outdoor swimming spots, including rivers.

Not all sections of a river are idyllic, of course. Navigable rivers double as highways, trading routes and power sources for the settlements alongside them. There are very few towns and cities not built on a river; even Birmingham has well-hidden rivers supplemented by a vast canal network. Rivers and canals alike are often places of industry and graft. Along some canals, the ingenuity of Victorian engineering can be wondered at in places including Foxton Locks on the Leicester line of the Grand Union Canal, Anderton Boat Lift on the Trent and Mersey Canal and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct on the Llangollen Canal.

However, our waterways, by their nature, are fluid and often carry the things we don't want to swim in: sewage and pollution.

According to The Rivers Trust's 2024 State of Our Rivers Report, only 15 per cent of our rivers achieve good or above ecological health status. This is Environment Agency data that examines the presence, absence and abundance of species as an indicator of the general health of a river. Taking into account chemical health – the

presence of chemical pollutants – not one river is in good, or even, high health. The main reason for this is attributed to agriculture and rural land management, and the second main cause is 'activities attributed to the water industry' – treated and untreated sewage, for example.

Reading statistics such as those can scare people away, but in fact, it should be the opposite. If you want to swim in the rivers, do your research first, ask in the area, visit theriverstrust.org to see the health of your local water source, or speak to local swimmers or groups. The vast majority are perfectly swimmable.

And there are causes for optimism. In the words of writer Robert MacFarlane, whose new book *Is A River Alive?* has already become a bestseller, 'rivers do heal themselves very fast if you give them the right conditions'. Their future is worth fighting for.

If you're walking along these waterways, take notice of the wildlife, perhaps join The Rivers Trust's Big River Watch by downloading the app and spending 15 minutes surveying your local river. Let's all watch these rivers, for their health, but also ours. It's about experiencing these beautiful places with all of your senses and introducing others to the joys of the river.



©veronique

Beautiful riverside walks from hostels

Stroll out of these hostels and straight onto some of the loveliest river walks in England and Wales

YHA South Downs

River Ouse, Lewes, East Sussex

From the youth hostel, follow the Sussex Ouse Valley Way through Rodmell (and by Monk's House, Virginia Woolf's countryside retreat) and head north through Lewes. The prettiest stretch is around Barcombe Mills, where, in the summer, you'll find picnicking families and bathers swinging off ropes into the meandering river. You can even hire boats from the Anchor Inn pub.



©edward

YHA London Thameside

River Thames, Rotherhithe, London

Our bet is to head east along the Thames Path National Trail and follow the last stretch of the 185-mile path that starts at the river's source in the Cotswolds and finishes at Woolwich. A couple of miles after that and you'll be in Greenwich, where you'll find the Cutty Sark and the National Maritime Museum. Then to the O2 Arena and the Thames Barrier.



© chrisdorney

YHA Cambridge

River Cam, Cambridge

Take to the water like Roger Deakin, who writes beautifully about swims in the Cam ("Sunset was coming up, and reflections trembled on the willow trunks"), or rent the classic punt for a posh picnic at Grantchester Meadows. The Fen Rivers Way runs almost 60 miles north from Cambridge, by pastures, through the Fens to the Wash at King's Lynn.



©Papa Bear Explores

YHA Hartington Hall

River Dove, Peak District

Just under a mile from the hostel is the River Dove, one of the most beautiful stretches of river anywhere (for our money). Head south to Wolfscote Dale, as idyllic a Peak District landscape as could possibly be. Explore the caves, trot across the Stepping Stones and cross ancient bridges. On the return, fork right into Biggin Dale and work your way around Wolfscote Hill.



YHA Grinton Lodge

River Swale, Swaledale, Yorkshire Dales

Look down from this Victorian hunting lodge to see the River Swale, and the quintessential patchwork Yorkshire Dale it offers its name to. The river is considered to be the fastest flowing in England (the word 'Swale' derives from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning rapid) and attracts experienced paddlers who drop down its waterfalls. There's a path along most of the river west, but make a loop out of it and return across the moors.



YHA St Briavels Castle

St Briavels, Gloucestershire

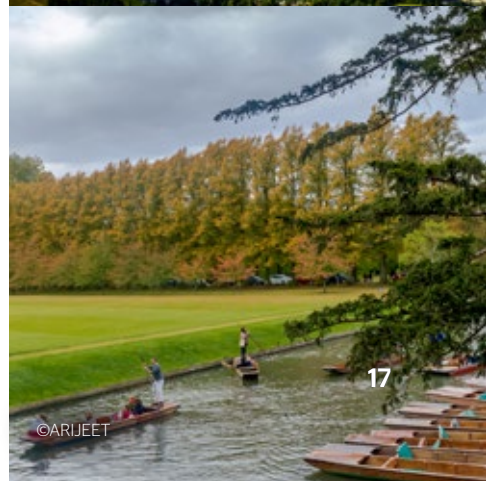
This 12th-century castle is only a 20-minute walk from one of the most scenic stretches of the River Wye, near Llandogo and Tintern. Here, the wide river quietly flows through woodland, but the number of medieval ruins, including the magnificent Tintern Abbey and, of course, St Briavels Castle, belies the historical tumult of the area. Today, the river is perfect for canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding.



YHA Keswick

River Greta, Lake District

Across our entire network, YHA Keswick is probably the hostel nearest to a river. More than likely, you'll hear the relaxing shush of the water while having breakfast. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge wrote about the noise the river makes as it hits the boulders. The River Greta is a tributary of the River Derwent, and upstream, on the other side of Derwent Water, you'll find YHA Borrowdale, also within earshot of the river.



Give a child the gift of the great outdoors

For many children, a YHA school residential is the only chance they'll have to experience life beyond the city. When you help fund these trips, you're helping a child dream bigger and reach higher.

Make sure no child is left behind. Visit our website at yha.org.uk/child or scan the QR code to donate now.





Grey heron

Stepping slowly through the shallows — and sometimes standing so still you might think it's a statue — the grey heron is a tall and graceful bird with a long and flexible neck. It catches its food by watching and waiting.

Let's go!

River birdlife

For animal-lovers, a river can be the perfect wildlife habitat to explore — particularly if you like birdwatching! Here are six species to look out for



Moorhen

Smaller than its close relative the coot, the moorhen has a bright red and yellow beak and can be spotted on our lakes and rivers year-round. In the springtime it makes a messy nest on the water.



Dipper

This busy, white-bibbed little bird can often be seen whirring up and down quiet stretches of river, looking for food. As its name suggests, it can 'dip' into the water to find insects and shrimps, sometimes bobbing right under the surface!

Mallard

This is our best-known duck. The male has bright, shimmering feathers to attract females, whereas the females have a plainer pattern, to help them stay camouflaged when they're sitting on eggs in the nest.



Coot

The coot is easy to recognise by its white beak and headplate, which contrast with its jet-black feathers. It has large — and rather strange-looking feet — which help it paddle when it's in the water and walk when it's on land.



Kingfisher

As colourful as a paintbox and as quick as a blur, the kingfisher is a small but beautiful bird. It's shy, so it can be hard to spot, but if you're lucky enough to watch it hunting, you might see it plunge right into the river, beak-first, to catch a fish.





Five facts you need to know about the Lake District

© Adobestock/XtravaganT

It's big!

The Lake District is England's largest National Park. It covers a whopping 912 square miles — that's around 350,000 football pitches! It first became a National Park way back in 1951 and it's famous for its lakes and mountains. About 40,000 people live in its towns and villages, surrounded by the great outdoors. It's located in the county of Cumbria, in North West England.

It's full of huge hills

There are well over 200 peaks in the Lake District, and they all have names. Gummer's How, Castle Crag and (for more of a challenge) Catbells are all good for family hikes, while experienced mountain-walkers head to higher summits like Helvellyn and Skiddaw. The biggest is Scafell Pike, which at 978 metres is the tallest mountain in England!

It has lots of YHA hostels!

YHA has no less than 18 hostels in the Lake District, including tried-and-tested family favourites like YHA Borrowdale (with a valley location and dog-friendly camping), YHA Windermere (with wooded grounds and glamping options) and YHA Ambleside (with easy access to climbing, walking and water sports).

It's brilliant for adventure

The Lake District wasn't named by accident. Within its borders you'll find 16 large lakes (the biggest is Windermere, which is more than 10 miles long!), so it's a great place for watery adventures. Pleasure cruises, paddleboarding, kayaking and swimming are all popular in the summer months. On dry land, meanwhile, you can try things like hiking, cycling, rock climbing, railway journeys — and even llama-trekking!

It has lots of connections to literature

Beatrix Potter — who created famous characters like Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin and Jemima Puddle-Duck — spent several decades living and writing in the Lake District. Today, you can still visit her old house. Many other writers have strong connections to the National Park, including William Wordsworth, who wrote beautiful poems inspired by the landscape, and Arthur Ransome, whose adventure novel *Swallows and Amazons* is set here.

How to prepare for a hike

Hiking is a brilliant way of keeping fit, getting fresh air and enjoying the outdoors – but it's always best to be prepared

Wear the right thing

If you're doing a big hike with your family or friends, it's important that you're comfortable. Walking trousers (or shorts) and walking boots, plus two or three layers for your top half, will all be very useful. They don't need to be expensive.

Take water and food

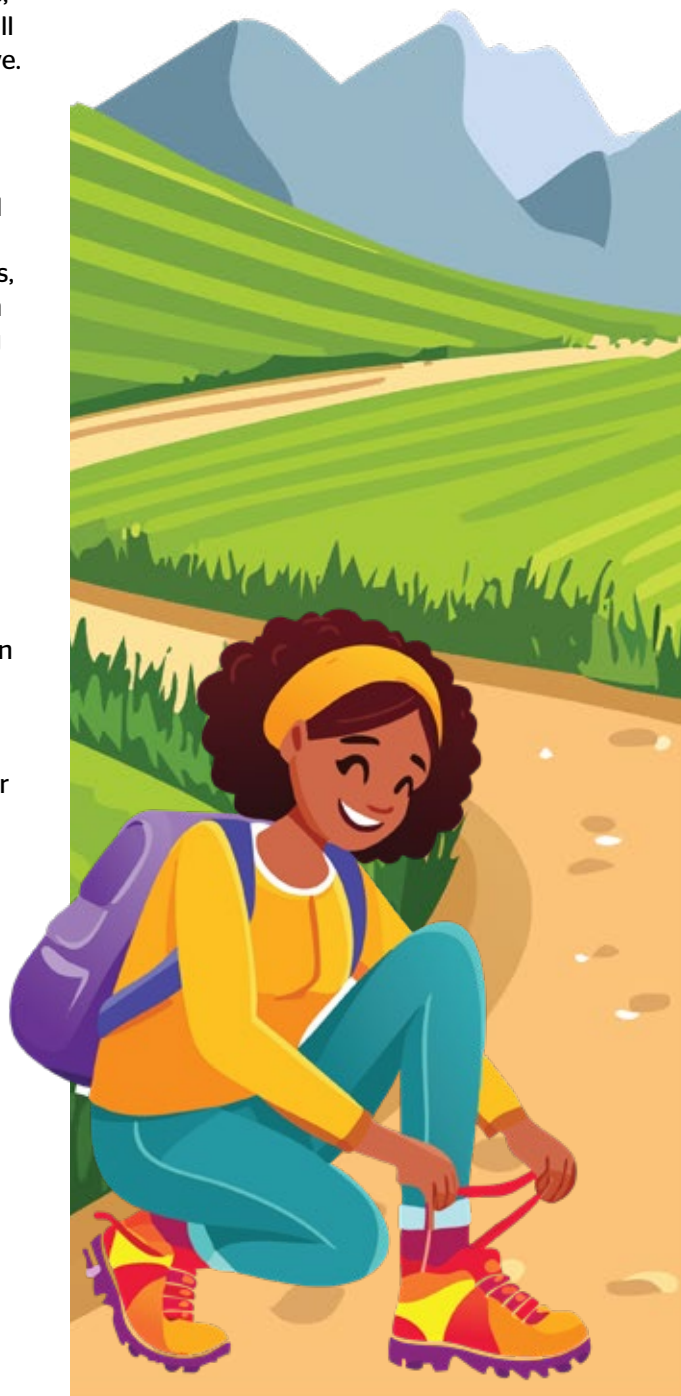
A sturdy backpack is always handy. Take a filled water bottle with you, and drink little and often as you go along – it's best not to wait until you're really thirsty. Bring snacks too: nuts, dried fruit and sugary treats like chocolate can all help with your energy levels. If you're going to be walking all day and won't be passing a shop or café, take a packed lunch with you.

Be prepared for a change in the weather

Sunshine can turn to rain very quickly sometimes, so unless you're 100% certain it's going to be dry, always stick a waterproof top in your backpack. Getting soaked to the skin on a hike isn't much fun! Temperatures can also rise and drop, so having two or three layers to use, including one nice warm top, will help you stay comfortable. Stick a headtorch in your backpack, too.

Stick to marked trails

If you're following a set route, always stick to the path. Having a map will help you see how far you've gone and how far you've got left to go. And if you want to know how long it's going to take to walk from A to B, you can estimate it using something called Naismith's Rule: it says that it takes around one hour to walk five kilometres, with an extra 10 minutes added on for every 100 metres of height you climb along the way.



Are you ready for... the Women's Rugby World Cup?

The international tournament comes to England this summer

When is it? The Women's Rugby World Cup starts on Friday 22nd August and finishes with the final on Saturday 27th September.

Where is it? It's being held in England, with matches taking place in different host cities including London, Manchester, Bristol and York – all of which have YHA hostels.

Who's competing? Sixteen countries are taking part, including England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, as well as talented rugby nations like New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and Fiji.

Who are the favourites? England are tipped to win. They're currently ranked number one in the world, with top players like speedy Ellie Kildunne and captain Zoe Aldcroft, but eyes will also be on New Zealand, who have won the tournament six times before.

rugbyworldcup.com/2025

Wordsearch

The UEFA Women's Euros are also taking place this summer. Can you find the names of these football-playing European countries?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGLAND |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ITALY | <input type="checkbox"/> DENMARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WALES | <input type="checkbox"/> SWEDEN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SPAIN | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GERMANY | |



The joys of hiking

How walking has evolved over the centuries

"After a day's walk, everything has twice its usual value." So wrote the historian and author GM Trevelyan, who in the 1930s became the first president of Youth Hostels Association. He was a committed lover of the British landscape, recognising long ago that the outdoors was the greatest of balms to the soul. And pertinently, he was also a lifelong hiker, memorably describing his legs as the two doctors that kept him hale and hearty.

Call it trekking. Call it yomping, wandering, backpacking or plain old walking. The concept of covering long distances on foot is as old as humanity itself – our hunter-gatherer forebears needed to be mobile, after all – and while hiking for pleasure can't claim the same ageless timescale, it's emphatically nothing new or modern. The pastime has, however, evolved greatly over the past two and a half centuries, and particularly within the 95-year lifespan of YHA.

Consider these dates. In 1778, Father Thomas West published *A Guide to the Lakes*, the very first outdoor guidebook to the Lake District. In 1824, the earliest known ramblers' group was established in York, some eight decades before 12 such groups banded together to form the first Federation of Rambling Clubs in 1905. In 1932, the now-fabled Kinder Scout Mass Trespass took place — a demand for greater rights to roam — and in 1965 the Pennine Way was inaugurated as the country's first official long-distance trail (there are now 16 across England and Wales). The enactment of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act in 2000, bringing broader freedoms for walkers, was a further landmark.

Today, according to The Ramblers — current membership in excess of 100,000 — there are more than 140,000 miles of rights of way in England and Wales. Huge swathes of the map still remain jarringly off-limits (that's a whole other, rather more bitter, feature), but whether it's a 20-minute dog walk or a two-month coastal epic, we're a nation that loves pulling on our boots and striding out of the door.

And we do it, in short, because it brings us joy. The philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote in 1956 that unhappy people “would, I am convinced, increase their happiness more by walking six miles every day than by any conceivable change of philosophy”. That was almost 70 years ago, but it's perhaps even truer today than it was then.

To hike is to have the chance to decompress, to mull things over, to unlock knotty problems, to talk, to reflect and to lose yourself in your surrounds. When you're on Glyder Fawr with the wind in your hair and craggy valleys at your feet, nature has a way of putting things in perspective.

Hiking is an activity that relies on having the time to undertake it. During the Industrial Revolution, it became common for 19th-century factory workers to escape the smoky confines of the city to go hill-walking at weekends; on those precious days off, swapping the deafening clank of the manufacturing floor for the breeze and birdsong of the countryside held a powerful allure. By the 1920s and 1930s, meanwhile, when reduced working hours and a greater



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In an age of screen addiction, rolling news and culture wars, the appeal of being able to fix your eyes on the horizon and walk away from digital demands — both literally and metaphorically — is huge.

Walking comes in many forms. What's your route of choice? A long trek culminating at a pub fireside? A hostel-to-hostel fell-walk leading you slowly but satisfyingly across the OS grids?



© AdobeStock/Darius SUL



© AdobeStock/Alexey Fedorenko

living wage started to grant people more leisure time and extra income, this flow of hikers had grown from a stream to a surge.

Those between-the-wars wayfarers might well have been open-mouthed to learn how the pastime has grown to become a bona fide cultural mainstay. Magazines, TV programmes, podcasts and slick social media posts all extol the virtues of different walks, international kit brands invest in multi-million pound advertising campaigns, and the waymarked 2,674-mile England Coastal Path is close to joining the 870-mile Wales Coastal Path in being completed.

Crucially, it's also taken strides to become a more inclusive hobby. The rise of walking groups such as Black Hikers, Steppers UK and Every Body Outdoors – in tandem with a marked increase in accessible walking trails – has helped hiking to begin to change its traditional image. At the same time, awareness around its importance to both physical and mental health, particularly for young people, has never been greater.

A woodland saunter with the kids, perhaps, a clifftop ramble or a group ascent to a local summit? Some get a kick from ticking off the best-known trails and peaks in the UK while others seek out less trammelled paths, but regardless of the specifics, it also remains that choicest of outdoor hobbies: one that's feasible all year, open to all ages, and free.

YHA's month-long Festival of Walking returns this autumn, taking place between Friday 12th September and Sunday 12th October, with free, guided social walks from many of our hostels. If you're yet to get the bug, why not join one? Think of it as a chance to get closer to nature, to meet new people and to put some miles in your legs. Few things clear the mind more than placing one foot in front of the other – indeed, the American activist Rebecca Solnit summed up its rare, liberating qualities when she penned the following in her book, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*.

"Doing nothing is hard to do," she wrote. "It's best done by disguising it as doing something, and the something closest to doing nothing is walking."

yha.org.uk/festival-of-walking

Four hostels near National Nature Reserves

England and Wales collectively have close to 300 National Nature Reserves (NNRs), places that were set up to conserve our landscapes, seascapes and wildlife. Most of our hostels are close to at least one NNR — here are four to know about



YHA Haworth (Partner)

One of the country's newest National Nature Reserve is Bradford Pennine Gateway. It was created in May of this year as part of the 'King's Series', an initiative which is seeing King Charles III designate five new NNRs in each of the first five years of his rule.

It's not hard to see why this one was chosen. Split over eight different sites on the outskirts of Bradford – including Ilkley Moor, Shipley Glen and Baildon Moor – it covers much of what is often described as Brontë Country, encompassing the brooding landscapes that inspired the famous literary sisters.

Wildlife across these eight West Yorkshire sites includes notable birds such as golden plovers, curlews and short-eared owls, while the land itself is an important mosaic of moorland, heathland, peat bog and wetland.

YHA Haworth (Partner), less than 10 miles from central Bradford in the heart of Brontë Country, provides a great base for exploring the NNR. It's set in a Victorian Gothic mansion brimming with period features and granting ready access to the surrounding countryside. If you're keen to combine the rural and the urban, meanwhile, it's also worth noting that Bradford is this year's UK City of Culture.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-haworth

YHA Broad Haven

With a gem of a location on the Pembrokeshire Coast Path – a mere stroll away from a long, sandy Blue Flag beach – YHA Broad Haven has long been a magnet for walkers, families, cyclists and seaside-goers. But there's more to the place than pretty views. The hostel sits on the curve of the handsome St Brides Bay, with Skomer Island to the south and Ramsey Island to the north – both of which are NNRs.

Both of these islands can be visited by boat. Skomer is a real heart-tugger, hosting one of the most impressive seabird colonies in the UK. In the breeding season, its inlets play home to thousands of puffins, razorbills, guillemots, kittiwakes and fulmars, while its windswept, wildflower-dotted interior has a pull of its own. It can be visited from April through to September.

At the northern end of the bay, meanwhile, Ramsey Island is very much a draw in its own right, with high cliffs, swooping choughs and soaring peregrine falcons. It's open until the end of October, which also gives the chance to see the grey seal pups born here each autumn.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-broad-haven



YHA Dartmoor

The recent Supreme Court decision to uphold the right to wild camp on Dartmoor wasn't just a rapturously received piece of news for outdoor-lovers. It also shone fresh light onto one of our last areas of wilderness, a place of isolated tors, wild valleys and dramatic expanses of open moorland.

Within its borders, the East Dartmoor National Nature Reserve takes in three interconnected areas within the National Park itself: Trendlebere Down, Yarner Wood and the valley of the River Bovey. Together they take in high moors and wooded riverbanks, with excellent potential for walks and the chance to spot wildlife including woodpeckers, bats and beetles. There's also a rich human history in the area, with old medieval farmsteads and Bronze Age remains.

Also within the National Park, of course, is YHA Dartmoor, a stone-built getaway surrounded by green woods and rolling contours. Off-road routes for hikers and cyclists both pass close by, and as with so many of our hostels, there's also a licensed bar – just the thing after a long, blustery day on the all-enfolding moorland.

www.yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-dartmoor

YHA Sheringham

The coast of North Norfolk has a reputation that goes before it. A trip here is about seaside piers, marine wildlife and long stretches of beautiful shoreline – not to mention some of the best fish and chips in the country. And YHA Sheringham, which sits midway along the celebrated Norfolk Coast Path, is well placed for making the most of it all.

It's just a five-minute wander from the centre of Sheringham itself, a traditional fishing town looking out across the North Sea and still boasting a heritage steam railway. Looking slightly further afield, it's also under 10 miles from the Blakeney Point National Nature Reserve, the home of the country's biggest grey seal colony. Boat trips are on offer year round.

The birdlife, too, is spectacular, not just at Blakeney Point but slightly further along the coast at Holkham, the largest NNR in England. It's especially renowned for its wintering wildfowl, but birdwatchers will find plenty to train their binoculars on at any time. Oystercatchers, meadow pipits, great skuas and fast-moving sanderlings are among the species you might spot. From time to time, the country's largest bird of prey – a white-tailed eagle – even shows up!

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-sheringham

Sleep under the stars this summer

Bring your own tent or pick from our range of outdoorsy accommodation.

From tipis to safari tents, Landpods to Airstream trailers, you'll find the perfect pitch at our campsites. And dogs are welcome too!

yha.org.uk/camping-and-cabins



Camping pods at YHA Manorbier



Safari tent at YHA Truleigh Hill



Airstream at YHA Windermere



Tipi at YHA Hawkshead



Camping at YHA New Forest



How to read a chalk landscape

Chalk covers around 19 per cent of the English landscape, harbours unique wildlife and offers some of the most picturesque landscapes in Britain

© AdobeStock/J.F. Phillips

There is much that is mind-fuddling about our chalk landscapes. Chalk itself is a rock made of the skeletal remains of countless microscopic plankton, such as foraminifera and coccolithophores, laid down when what is now England was covered in tropical seas between 65 and 100 million years ago. They were tropical seas because England was, at the time, near the equator.

Geologists call this period the Cretaceous period, after Creta, the Latin for 'chalk'. The rock is effectively a large sponge, and often saturated; the aquifers inside the chalk provide much of the drinking water for the southeast. And because it's also soft and porous, its landscapes settle into convex hills and concave valleys — just think of the Seven Sisters, or the White Cliffs of Dover. Where you find a chalk stream, meanwhile you're looking at a scarce,

mineral-rich habitat; there are fewer than 300 on Planet Earth, and most of them are in England. Key examples are the Itchen and Avon in Wessex, and the River Wensum in Norfolk. They are loved by species such as salmon, trout, native white-clawed crayfish and the beautiful water-crowfoot plant.

Chalk defines many of England's landscapes: the Chilterns, the North Downs, the South Downs, East Yorkshire, East Anglia, Yorkshire Wolds, North Wessex Downs, the Lincolnshire Wolds, the Dorset Downs, and the Isle of Wight. The Chalk Escarpment, as it's known, is the largest and most significant geological feature in Britain. It is a vast slab of chalk, averaging around one kilometre thick, that stretches across England from Yorkshire to Dorset, Kent, and just into Wales.

Much of this chalk is subterranean. In the Thames, for example, once you've snorkelled down and dug through clay, gravel and sand, you'll hit chalk. But where the chalk does rise to the surface in outcrops, it does so in spectacular fashion: The Needles in the Isle of Wight, Beachy Head in East Sussex, Old Harry Rocks in Purbeck, Flamborough Head in East Yorkshire (the only chalk sea cliff in the north) and the White Cliffs of Dover, a landform so recognisable it has entered popular culture (although the bluebirds in the sentimental song made famous by Vera Lynn in 1942 are not endemic to Britain, a fact perhaps lost on the American lyricist Nat Burton).

At home on chalk

There may be no bluebirds, but chalk grasslands hold abundant wildlife. Around a third of our native butterfly species are found here, including the characteristic Adonis blue. The grass is usually short in places such as the South Downs because of grazing, but it also means that wildflowers have less competition. You might find a remarkable range of up to 40 species in a single square metre, including meadow clary, devil's-bit scabious and orchids.

Human impact

Humans have made their mark on chalk landscapes, notably through farming but also through a penchant for carving things into them. A bright white outline is easily revealed through the shallow grass: think of the beautifully figurative horse at Uffington in Oxfordshire, the hill figure holding two staves at Wilmington in East Sussex, and the rather large phallus belonging to the Cerne Abbas Giant in Dorset.

Humans have made use of chalk throughout history. 'Rag' is a type of chalk suitable for building, and chalk quarries known as 'ragpits' can be found in places such as the Aston Clinton Ragpits near Wendover. There are also flint mines and grave complexes built by our Neolithic ancestors.



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Lightweight accessories

Packing light doesn't mean skimping on the things that can make your outdoor adventure more comfortable and enjoyable

Did you know?

All YHA members receive discounts at gear stores including Cotswold Outdoor, GO Outdoors, Snow+Rock, Runners Need and Blacks.

[yha.org.uk/membership/
member-benefits](https://yha.org.uk/membership/member-benefits)



AeroPress Go Plus

[AeroPress.co.uk](https://aeropress.co.uk)

Whether you're camping, backpacking, cycling or just wandering a trail, great coffee can put extra bounce in your outdoor adventure. AeroPress has long been the go-to brand for a quality cup of Joe with minimal fuss, and the new Go Plus takes things further by combining its lightweight coffee press with a vacuum flask. The former can be packed in the latter, making this a top piece of kit for your caffeine hit.



Nature-Trek Compact 8x25

hawkeoptics.com

Good binoculars can be heavy and clunky, presenting a tricky choice for nature-lovers looking to pack light. This entry-level model from the well-respected Nature-Trek offers a solution, weighing less than 300g and tucking easily into a jacket pocket. It feels robust, focuses quickly and smoothly, and gives sharp viewing. Is that shape in the distance a ring ouzel or just a trick of the light? Wonder no longer.



Lifesystems Bike First Aid Kit

lifesystems.co.uk

Since 1989, Lifesystems has been developing first aid kits for adventure. This new Bike First Aid Kit is designed for, yep, cyclists. This exceptionally lightweight pack (225g) is made from waterproof polyamide fabric, and the kit's roll-out design means it can be opened and the proper treatment readily identified. It also wraps securely around the frame tubes. The kit is designed for common cycling injuries.

Inspiring podcasts



Now, we're advocates for listening to Nature Radio when we're out walking. The audio experience of walking by a riverbank on a mountain is hard to beat, so we're not going to be drowning out the call of a curlew with Jeff Buckley hollering through the noise-cancelling headphones. But for the times we're stuck on a train or a long car ride, podcasts can offer a brilliant dose of inspiration. Here are some of our favourites

Countrystride



The Countrystride podcast is an amiable companion if you're looking for inspiration, particularly in the Lake District. It's

presented by Mark Richards and produced by Dave Felton. Mark, once acquainted with Alfred Wainwright, probably knows more than anyone about the Lakes, having written the seminal *Lakeland Fellranger* series of books. Episode 149 was recorded in YHA Borrowdale all about hostelling in the Lakes. Although now on hiatus, these podcasts are as evergreen as the Lake District fells.

Wander Woman



This magazine-style show from travel writer Phoebe Smith takes you on travels around the globe. Recent episodes have seen Phoebe

explore Togo and Benin, the Maldives, Ireland and Australia, but as a passionate long-distance walker, she has also presented from Scottish bothies and along the South West Coast Path for an episode about The Salt Path. Each episode also highlights important female figures who are doing amazing work.

The Adventure Podcast



Now more than 200 episodes in, The Adventure Podcast, hosted by outdoor filmmaker Matt Pycroft, has covered a lot of ground.

Each episode is a long-form conversation with people who are at the forefront of exploration and adventure. Recent episodes have featured cave scientist Dr Gina Moseley, Olympic climber Shauna Coxsey, and Jane Dotchin, who has ridden a horse from Northumberland to Inverness every year since 1972.

The Dirtbag Diaries



This long-standing American podcast is one of the best proponents of the medium, with genuinely compelling storytelling; they're just really good at finding

great stories. A stand-out episode featured Scottish runner Jasmin Paris, who recently completed the Barkley Marathons, the most difficult race in the world. Another great episode, Tales of Terror, delves into fun, scary outdoor stories.

Hostel guide



Book now

Visit yha.org.uk

YHA All Stretton Bunkhouse	Meadow Green, Batch Valley, All Stretton, Shropshire, SY6 6JW
YHA Alnwick	34 to 38 Green Batt, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1TU
YHA Alston	The Firs, Alston, Cumbria, CA9 3RW
YHA Alstonefield	Gypsy Lane, Alstonefield, nr Ashbourne, Staffordshire, DE6 2FZ
YHA Ambleside	Waterhead, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 0EU
YHA Bath	Bathwick Hill, Bath, Somerset, BA2 6LA
YHA Beer	Bovey Combe, Beer, Seaton, Devon, EX12 3LL
YHA Berwick	Dewars Lane, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 1HJ
YHA Beverley Friary	Friar's Lane, Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17 0DF
YHA Black Sail	Black Sail Hut, Ennerdale, Cleator, Cumbria, CA23 3AX
YHA Blaxhall	The Old School House, Blaxhall, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 2EA
YHA Boggle Hole	Mill Beck, Fylingthorpe, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO22 4UQ
YHA Borrowdale	Longthwaite, Borrowdale, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5XE
YHA Borth	Morlais, Borth, Ceredigion, SY24 5JS
YHA Boscastle	Palace Stables, Boscastle, Cornwall, PL35 0HD
YHA Boswinger	Boswinger, Gorran, St Austell, Cornwall, PL26 6LL
YHA Brecon Beacons	Libanus, Brecon, Powys, LD3 8NH
YHA Brecon Beacons Danywenallt	Talybont-on-Usk, Brecon, Powys, LD3 7YS
YHA Bridges	Ratlinghope, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 0SP
YHA Bristol	14 Narrow Quay, Bristol, BS1 4QA
YHA Broad Haven	Broad Haven, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3JH
YHA Buttermere	Buttermere, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 9XA
YHA Cambridge	97 Tenison Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 2DN
YHA Canterbury	54 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3DT
YHA Castleton Losehill Hall	Castleton, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 8WB
YHA Cheddar	Hillfield, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3HN
YHA Chester Trafford Hall	Ince Lane, Wimbolds Trafford, Chester, Cheshire West & Chester, CH2 4JP
YHA Cholderton Stonehenge	Beacon House, Amesbury Road, Cholderton, Wiltshire, SP4 0EW
YHA Clun Mill	The Mill, Clun, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 8NY
YHA Coniston Coppermines	Coppermines House, Coniston, Cumbria, LA21 8HP
YHA Coniston Holly How	Holly How, Far End, Coniston, Cumbria, LA21 8DD
YHA Conwy	Larkhill, Sychnant Pass Road, Conwy, LL32 8AJ
YHA Cotswolds	New Brewery Arts, Brewery Court, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1HW
YHA Dalby Forest	Old School, Lockton, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 7PY
YHA Dartmoor	Bellever, Postbridge, Devon, PL20 6TU
YHA Edale Activity Centre	Rowland Cote, Nether Booth, Edale, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 7ZH
YHA Edmundbyers	Low House, Edmundbyers, Consett, Co Durham, DH8 9NL
YHA Elmscott Bunkhouse	Elmscott, Hartland, Bideford, Devon, EX39 6ES
YHA Ennerdale	Cat Crag, Ennerdale, Cleator, Cumbria, CA23 3AX
YHA Eskdale	Boot, Holmrook, Cumbria, CA19 1TH
YHA Exford	Exe Mead, Exford, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 7PU

YHA Eyam	Hawkhill Road, Eyam, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S32 5QP
YHA Gower	Borfa House Activity Centre, Port Eynon, Swansea, SA3 1NN
YHA Grasmere Butharlyn Howe	Easedale Road, Grasmere, Cumbria, LA22 9QG
YHA Grinton Lodge	Grinton, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6HS
YHA Hartington Hall	Hall Bank, Hartington, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 0AT
YHA Hathersage	Castleton Road, Hathersage, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S32 1EH
YHA Hawes	Lancaster Terrace, Hawes, North Yorkshire, DL8 3LQ
YHA Hawkshead	Hawkshead, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 0QD
YHA Haworth	Longlands Drive, Lees Lane, Keighley, BD22 8RT
YHA Hawse End Bunkhouse	Hawse End Cottage, Portinscale, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5UE
YHA Helmsley	Carlton Lane, Helmsley, North Yorkshire, YO62 5HB
YHA Helvellyn	Greenside, Glenridding, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0QR
YHA Holmbury	Radnor Lane, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6NW
YHA Honister Hause	Seatoller, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5XN
YHA Idwal Cottage	Nant Ffrancon, Bethesda, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 3LZ
YHA Ilam Hall	Ilam Hall, Ilam, Ashbourne, Staffordshire, DE6 2AZ
YHA Ingleton	Greta Tower, Sammy Lane, Ingleton, LA6 3EG
YHA Ironbridge Coalbrookdale	1 Paradise, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7NR
YHA Ironbridge Coalport	John Rose Building, High Street, Coalport, Shropshire, TF8 7HT
YHA Jordans	Welders Lane, Jordans, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, HP9 2SN
YHA Keswick	Station Road, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5LH
YHA Kettlewell	Kettlewell, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 5QU
YHA Kings	Kings, Penmaenpool, Dolgellau Gwynedd, LL40 1TB
YHA Land's End	Letcha Vean, St Just-in-Penwith, Cornwall, TR19 7NT
YHA Langdale	High Close, Loughrigg, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 9HJ
YHA Langdon Beck	Forest-in-Teesdale, Barnard Castle, Co Durham, DL12 0XN
YHA Leominster	The Old Priory, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8EQ
YHA Littlehampton	63 Surrey Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5AW
YHA Liverpool Albert Dock	25 Tabley Street, off Wapping, Merseyside, Liverpool, L1 8EE
YHA Lizard Point	The Polbrean, Lizard Point, Cornwall, TR12 7NT
YHA Llangattock Mountain Bunkhouse	Wern Watkin, Hillside, Llangattock, Crickhowell, Powys, NP8 1LG
YHA London Central	104 Bolsover Street, London, W1W 5NU
YHA London Earl's Court	38 Bolton Gardens, Earl's Court, London, SW5 0AQ
YHA London Lee Valley	Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, EN8 9AJ
YHA London St Paul's	36 Carter Lane, London, EC4V 5AB
YHA London Thameside	20 Salter Road, Rotherhithe, London, SE16 5PR
YHA Malham	Malham, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 4DB
YHA Manchester	Potato Wharf, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4NB
YHA Mankinholes	Mankinholes, Todmorden, Oldham, Lancashire, OL14 6HR
YHA Manorbier	Manorbier, nr Tenby, Pembrokeshire, SA70 7TT

YHA Medway	351 Capstone Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 3JE
YHA National Forest	48 Bath Lane, Moira, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 6BD
YHA New Forest	Cott Lane, Burley Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 4BB
YHA Ninebanks	Orchard House, Mohope, Ninebanks, Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 8DQ
YHA Okehampton	Klondyke Road, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1EW
YHA Okehampton Bracken Tor	Bracken Tor, Saxongate, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1QW
YHA Osmotherley	Cote Ghyll Mill, Osmotherley, Notherallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 3AH
YHA Penzance	Castle Horneck, Penzance, Cornwall, TR20 8TF
YHA Port Eynon	Old Lifeboat House, Port Eynon, Swansea, SA3 1NN
YHA Pwll Deri	Castell Mawr, Trefasser, Goodwick, Pembrokeshire, SA64 OLR
YHA Ravenstor	Millers Dale, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 8SS
YHA Rowen	Rhiw Farm, Rowen, Conwy, LL32 8YW
YHA Sheen Bunkhouse	Peakstones, Sheen, Staffordshire, SK17 OES
YHA Sheringham	1 Cremer's Drift, Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8HX
YHA Sherwood Forest	Forest Corner, Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire, NG21 9RN
YHA Skiddaw Bunkhouse	Bassenthwaite, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4QX
YHA Snowdon Bryn Gwynant	Nantgwynant, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4NP
YHA Snowdon Llanberis	Llwyn Celyn, Llanberis, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4SR
YHA Snowdon Pen-y-Pass	Pen-y-Pass, Nantgwynant, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4NY
YHA Snowdon Ranger	Rhyd Ddu, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 7YS
YHA South Downs	Itford Farm, Beddingham, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 6JS
YHA St Briavels Castle	St Briavels, Lydney, Gloucestershire, GL15 6RG
YHA St Davids	Llaethdy, Whitesands, St David's, Pembrokeshire, SA62 6PR
YHA Stratford-upon-Avon	Hemmingford House, Alveston, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 7RG
YHA Streatley-on-Thames	Reading Road, Streatley, Berkshire, RG8 9JJ
YHA Street	The Chalet, Ivythorn Hill, Street, Somerset, BA16 OTZ
YHA Swanage	Cluny, Cluny Crescent, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 2BS
YHA The Sill at Hadrian's Wall	Military Road, Bardon Mill, Northumberland, NE47 7AN
YHA Tanners Hatch Surrey Hills	Off Ranmore Common Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6BE
YHA Tintagel	Dunderhole Point, Tintagel, Cornwall, PL34 ODW
YHA Isle of Wight Totland	Hurst Hill, Totland Bay, Isle Of Wight, PO39 OHD
YHA Treyarnon Bay	Tregonnan, Treyarnon, Padstow, Cornwall, PL28 8JR
YHA Truleigh Hill	Tottington Barn, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5FB
YHA Wasdale Hall	Wasdale Hall, Wasdale, Seascale, Cumbria, CA20 1ET
YHA Whitby	Abbey House, East Cliff, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO22 4JT
YHA Wilderhope Manor	Wilderhope Manor, Longville in the Dale, Shropshire, TF13 6EG
YHA Windermere	Bridge Lane, Troutbeck, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1LA
YHA York	Water End, Clifton, York, North Yorkshire, YO30 6LP
YHA Youlgreave	Fountain Square, Youlgreave, nr Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1UR



Readers' room

Readers' views from The Journey's inbox. Get in touch with your stories and thoughts on YHA and The Journey magazine at magazine@yha.org.uk. You'll also find us on Instagram, Facebook and X. Don't forget the hashtags **#YHANatureChallenge **#LiveMoreYHA****

Beautiful Borrowdale, where Dawn spent her birthday

"Thank you for the spring issue of The Journey. It has been very fresh and inspiring. All topics were very interesting, and I especially liked the Tent life section with new destination ideas for our next adventure. It was also very engaging to find out how it all started, the whole YHA movement. It is hard to believe that it has already been 95 years! And to imagine how many people have benefited from all those years, including myself and my family: all these memories that we create, beautiful places that we can see. So grateful. Thank you, YHA!"

Anna

"This is my 1st edition of The Journey....absolutely loved it. Great articles! It's good to read about YHA and the work being done around the country to encourage young people among others to get outside and enjoy nature. I volunteer for a group helping inner city kids who face different challenges and use activities in the outdoors to overcome those challenges and fears. The charity uses YHA for their regular meet-ups. This introduced me to the hostel environment, I love it so much, I became a member and stayed in Borrowdale recently when celebrating my birthday."

Dawn

"Thanks for all the YHA does for those living in deprived areas. For me, that's one of the most important ways my membership is put to use. I'm lucky to have been introduced to YHA and to have used hostels over the years, and it's heartwarming to read about how others are discovering the joys of the great outdoors."

Penny

Win a Lifesystems mountain safety bundle worth £114

We're giving away a Lifesystems bundle including the brand's new Water Purifier Filter Bottle, a first aid kit, and a survival shelter. To enter, just tell us the name of the long-distance trail that runs from Edale to Kirk Yetholm?

- A) South West Coast Path** **C) Hadrian's Wall Path**
B) Pennine Way **D) Cotswold Way**


To enter, email your answer to magazine@yha.org.uk by 30th September 2025. Feel free to leave your thoughts on this magazine at the same time.



About the prize

Lifesystems is offering one reader a bundle including its Water Filter Purifier Bottle (£49.99), the Trek First Aid Kit (£19.99) and the Survival Shelter 2 (£43.99). The new Water Filter Purifier Bottle incorporates an innovative Disruptor® filtration system, incorporating electro-adsorptive technology, ensuring access to safe drinking water anytime, anywhere. For more information, visit lifesystems.co.uk.





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