

Walking in the Living Land: Walking, Animism and Meditation

About the retreat

This retreat takes Dhanakosa's well established walking and nature awareness retreat format and adds an extra element: an exploration of animism. We will not be doing this through a set of beliefs or views, but by encouraging what we will be calling an "animistic sensitivity" as a dimension of our awareness. A rich sense of the aliveness of everything that surrounds us. And, through this we will be exploring the positive qualities that this sensitivity can draw forth in our lives.

This retreat is part of our Going Deeper programme. These retreats are suitable for anyone who has already done an introductory retreat or who has been attending their local Tiratna centre and wants to take things deeper. We will continue to explore the Mindfulness of Breathing and Metta Bhavana, as well as a further introduction to Buddhist ritual. Longer periods of silence together with quiet walks will all support a deep and rich experience both of ourselves and the world around us.

Is there anything special I need to bring?

On this retreat we will be spending quite a bit of time outdoors. Possibly in all weathers! So please bring warm clothes (including hat and gloves), waterproofs (jacket and trousers), and suitable walking boots or walking shoes. Please also bring a small rucksack, a Tupperware box or reusable sandwich wrapper for your lunch, and a water bottle. We would also recommend you bring wicking quick-drying clothes to walk in.

You can [watch our short video](#) and hear from Bea, one of our walk leader team, talking about the guided walk options and what to bring with you.

What can I expect from the programme?

The retreat day starts at 6.30am with a rising bell and then a double period of meditation at 7.00am. Meditation sessions will be lightly guided and will normally last for between 30 and 40 minutes.

There will be some outdoor activities every day including short exploratory walks, and some longer walks of up to 8km. The longer walks will be mostly on tracks and paths but may include some off path stretches*.

There will normally be another meditation before the evening meal. In the evening there will be a mix of talks, group discussions and an exploration of Buddhist chanting and ritual.

There will be periods of silence during the retreat to support reflection. This will include up to 2-3 days of silence at the heart of the retreat.

*We may from time to time also take groups up into the hill country around Dhanakosa. However, when we do this, we follow safety protocols that may limit who we can take according to your fitness levels and appropriateness of equipment, as well as the availability of suitably experienced walk leaders.

About the retreat team

This retreat will be led by Nayaka, who is a senior member of Dhanakosa's retreat leading team and leads the popular 'Animist Dharma' regulars retreat. Nayaka will be supported by other members of the Dhanakosa retreat leading group and walk leading team.