

Walking and Nature Awareness

About the retreat

On this retreat we will explore how our connection with nature, landscape, and the elements can support a deepening of awareness and a more embodied and harmonious approach to life. We will weave together Buddhist teachings, meditation practice, and an appreciative and playful investigation of the natural world around us to create an experience of depth and connection.

The retreat will include led walks, outdoor activities, an introduction to Buddhist meditation, Buddhist ethics, and basic Buddhist teachings looked at from a practical perspective. And perhaps more importantly than all of this is the opportunity to experience ourselves away from the trappings of our everyday lives and to relax into the freedom and spontaneity of our basic relationship with natural world around us. For it is this relaxation that supports a deeper understanding of ourselves and stronger appreciation of the connection with those around us.

These retreats are suitable for complete beginners to meditation, and those who already have some experience.

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 or bag for a packed lunch, and a water bottle. We would also recommend you bring wicking quick drying clothes to walk in.

What can I expect from the programme?

The retreat day starts at 7am with a rising bell and a meditation at 7.30. Meditation sessions will be guided and will normally last for between 20 and 30 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.

There will be periods of silence on the retreat to support reflection. These will normally be overnight, periods during the day and often leading up to one full day 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.