



SOMERSET RAMBLER



GET BRITAIN WALKING

The RA has given four steps to get Britain walking, following an announcement on anti-obesity strategy.

On the 23rd January the RA said that it strongly welcomed new targets to get Britain out walking as part of a national Government anti-obesity strategy, and called on the Government to follow four key footsteps towards implementing the walking scheme.

The proposed 'Walking into Health programme', which aims to get a third of England walking at least 1,000 steps daily by 2012, is part of a Cross Government Strategy to combat obesity, announced by the Department of Health.

Keith Roberts, Head of Campaigns at the RA commented: "Currently 70% of the population don't get enough physical exercise, often because they can't build an expensive and time consuming gym schedule into their daily lives.

Walking is the cheapest and most accessible form of activity known to humankind. It takes just 30 minutes a day, 5 times a week to stay fit and people can easily build it into their daily lives. It must be a key part of any anti-obesity campaign that plans to encompass the whole population."

Currently the RA is running a range of lottery funded 12-week 'Get Walking, Keep Walking' urban projects in London and Birmingham. These programmes target people from communities who might not normally build walking into their daily lives. There are plans to expand the project over the next year.

FOUR FOOTSTEPS TO GET BRITAIN WALKING

1. To ensure the provision of safe, accessible, convenient and attractive public space and infrastructure for walking in urban and rural contexts.
2. To engage and invest in promotion of walking to a wide range of audiences and communities. This includes the most vulnerable and most deprived who suffer disproportionately 1. from ill health, using social marketing and behaviour change campaigns, innovative and effective community projects and imaginative and accessible information provision, working through a range of agencies including community groups, the voluntary sector and the NHS.
3. To encourage the participation of all sorts of people walking in all sorts of contexts for all sorts of benefits, including: physical and mental health, and the wider well being agenda; social cohesion; sustainable transport, to name just a few.
4. To ensure effective partnerships across national, regional and local government and particularly joined approaches between the Department of Health, Communities and Local Government and transport, local authorities and NHS trusts, and government and voluntary sector including major walking charities like the RA, Government and third sector organisations.

For more information please contact the RA's Press Office on 0207 339 8531/32.

THE NEW RAMBLERS HANDBOOK

The RA is publishing a series of five new guidebooks which will replace the current members' handbook, **walk BRITAIN**. The new guide will feature the best walks Britain has to offer, all devised by the best route-developers in Britain: Ramblers' Association members!



The first edition will be published in November 2008. This edition is now currently in production with the title 'Hills & Mountains'. The edition has a copy deadline of 30 April 2008.

You can submit a route for any of the guides in the series, although this year concentration will be on selecting routes featuring hills and mountains.

One of the unique selling points of the guides is that the walks will be sorted according to the best time of the year to walk them, so be sure to mention this when submitting your walk.

You can use the template form, or email the walk as an attachment to yearbook@ramblers.org.uk but please follow the guidelines on the template to ensure you have included all the necessary information. Images are not required at this stage, but if your walk is selected for publication you may be contacted about supplying a picture.

Future editions:

Moor, Heath and Down (2010)
Coast and Riverside (2011)
Towns and Cities (2012)
Access All Areas (including the coast) (2013)

You can see an example of a route description by visiting the RA website www.ramblers.org.uk click on 'send us a walk' and follow the links.

If you would like help submitting your route or have any questions about the new series of guidebooks please contact the Publications Team at central office.

WAYMARK SIGNS

Whilst you're out walking in the countryside you may come across many different signs. Do you know what they all mean? Here is a short guide to help you out.

There are several different categories of rights of way.



Public Footpaths: Open only to walkers and may be waymarked with yellow arrows.



Public Bridleways: Open to walkers, horse riders and cyclists (although cyclists should give way to other users) and may be waymarked with blue arrows.



Restricted Byways: Open to all non-motorised users including vehicles such as horse-drawn carts. They may be waymarked with plum coloured arrows.



Byways Open to All Traffic: Can be used legally even by motorists. although most are inaccessible to ordinary motor vehicles, you may encounter

Don't forget to visit the area website at www.somersetramblers.org.uk

off-road vehicles like 4X4s and trials bikes. They may be waymarked with red arrows.



Cycle Paths: Often these form part of local cycle networks or National Cycle Network promoted by Sustrans but are also available to walkers.



National Trails: The standard logo of long distance paths in England and Wales e.g. South West Coast path.



Home Zones: Some roads and streets have been re-designated and legally reclassified to give equal priority to all users, including walkers, across the whole road surface, with low speed limits for drivers. These are clearly signed on the ground and usually include design features like road narrowing, coloured surfaces and traffic calming. In residential areas these are known as Home Zones.



Quiet Lanes: Rural roads with equal priority for all users.



Access Land in England and Wales: Around 1.4 million ha/3.4 million acres of land in England and Wales are designated access land, where the public has a right to walk under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The exact areas of land covered are shown on official maps prepared by the Countryside Agency and Countryside Council for Wales. Access land may be signed on the ground with the access symbol (above).



You might also see this sign indicating the end of wider access. This is only used where the boundary between access land and non-access land is unclear. It applies only to wider access, not for example to rights of way that continue beyond the sign.



THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OUTDOORS SHOW, 14-16 MARCH 2008, NEC BIRMINGHAM

Europe's biggest Outdoors Show returns to the NEC this March, promising a more action packed line-up of Outdoors fun than ever before. Whether you're looking for holiday inspiration, information about the latest gear or are keen to learn a new skill, this is the show for you.

It's the only place in the UK where you can:

- Explore the world
- Hear first-hand accounts from famous adventurers
- Get a health check-up at the Ramblers Walk-in clinic
- Brush-up on your map reading skills
- Learn how to survive in the wild
- Learn to dive
- Scale a wall of ice
- Tackle the high ropes
- Whizz round the dirt track on a mountain bike

There is an exclusive offer for Ramblers Members: Take advantage of fantastic discounts of up to 30% off door prices! Book your ticket online at www.theoutdoorsshow.co.uk or by calling 0870 010 9086. Simply quote **RAMBLERS** and get 2 tickets for £20 saving £12 on door prices, *All tickets subject to this offer must be booked before 15 March 2008.*

2008 SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

Get a check-up at the Ramblers Walk-in clinic:

The RA will be running a walk-in clinic at this year's show, offering visitors the chance to check their blood pressure and body mass index with a professional nurse. There will be information and tips available about the benefits of walking for health, as well as opportunities to find walks in their local area. Drop in and say hello!

Tips and Advice from the Experts:

see the latest clothing and equipment from the UK's leading outdoor brands such as Paramo, Columbia, Nike ACG, Vaude, Montane and Grangers.

Hear from the adventurers:

Climbers, explorers and TV personalities such as Bear Grylls, BBC's Simon King, Johnny Kingdom and Andy Rouse, and female presenters of BBC's Ultimate Outdoors show, Julia Bradbury and Kate Silverton, will be sharing their stories in the World Theatre stage.

Explore Britain in a day:

The UK's tourist authorities will be showcasing everything that's great about Britain; find out about spectacular walking destinations or speak to experts from each region about planning a holiday or day trip.

Photography master classes:

Presented by experts, in intimate workshops as well as theatre sessions, the Regatta Perfect Spot will teach you how to get the most out of your camera and never miss that perfect shot.

Learn Survival skills:

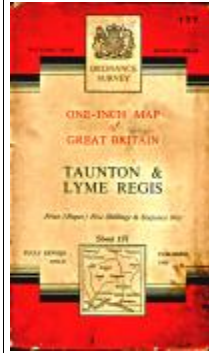
Join workshops at the wilderness camp to pick up tips from the experts on how to develop outdoor skills and survive off the land.

Remember to quote RAMBLERS when booking your tickets to obtain entry fee discount!

FORGOTTEN PATHS

Well over 130,000 miles of public paths criss-cross England and Wales. This network has evolved across the centuries; many of the paths date from medieval times. They link villages, hamlets and roads and all have their own unique history, often reflecting the changing patterns of human interaction with the landscape. Millions of people, in town and

country alike, are still using public paths every day.



But miles and miles of our public rights of way network are under threat of closure simply because they have never been legally recorded on a definitive map. At least 20,000 paths are reckoned to be missing from these maps, but it could be many more.

In 1949 Parliament decided that, in order that everyone may know which paths are public rights of way, they would be recorded on the definitive map. Definitive maps for England and Wales were therefore drawn up from 1949 onwards and are legal evidence of the existence of a right of way at the date of the map. All surveying authorities (county councils or unitary authorities with the exception of Inner London boroughs) should hold a definitive map and update it regularly. Ordnance Survey (OS) uses this information when showing rights of way (ROW) on its maps. But for one reason or another, many rights of way have never been registered on a definitive map and consequently are not 'proven' rights of way in a legal sense. The RA are calling these 'forgotten paths', although lots of them are still in regular use and far from 'forgotten' by those who use them, whereas many others have disappeared completely over time.

In the short term there may be problems in getting these 'forgotten paths' maintained; imagine trying to get an authority to keep a path open and in good condition if there is no legal proof that it is a public right of way!

In the long term, however, the problem is even more serious. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 has brought in a deadline to have all paths recorded on the definitive map by 2026 - after this date it will simply be too late and any historic paths, i.e. ones which came into existence before 1949, that are not registered will be extinguished forever.

This means that more than 20,000 paths would be at risk. We need to act now to claim as

Many forgotten paths as we can before the 2026 deadline.

For information on how you can help visit www.ramblers.org.uk/footpaths/lostways/.

There you can download a booklet 'Forgotten Paths Project' which explains what you can do to help save 'forgotten paths'.

January brings the snow...

Whilst out walking, battling through the wind and rain, or enjoying Spring sunshine, I often recall a few lines of a poem I had learned at school (many years ago I should add at this point) but could only remember a few verses. I found it on the Internet and was surprised to see that it is a delightful Children's Poem, to help young children learn the months of the year, written at the beginning of the 19th Century by Sara Coleridge the daughter of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his wife Sara Fricher.

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes sharp and shrill,
Shakes the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gillyflowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Brown October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast,
Then the leaves go whirling past.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire and Christmas treat.

Jenny Fawle Sedgemoor Ramblers

ARTHRITIS RESEARCH CAMPAIGN

BUTCOMBE BREWERY arc PUB WALK

21st MARCH 2008 (GOOD FRIDAY)



Swann Inn
Rowberrow

To

Ring O'Bells
Compton Martin

- Walkers meet from 11.00am at The Swan Inn, Rowberrow for a glass of mulled wine.
- Walk starts at midday
- Distance 8.75 miles.
- Walk through contrasting landscapes, ancient iron age hill fort, highest point on the Mendips, a nature reserve and old flues once used in the lead re-smelting industry.
- Outstanding views!

Get sponsorship and help the Arthritis Research Campaign. Put your boots on a register with Suzie Ladbrooke - arc's Southwest Area Appeals Manager. Challenge yourself and help us challenge arthritis!

- The walk ends at The Ring O'Bells at Compton Martin where walkers will enjoy a well-earned supper!
- Transport provided to return walkers to The Swan at Rowberrow.

Registration is £10 and includes mulled wine, supper and return transport.

Register with:
Suzie Ladbrooke,
The Old Sweet Shop, Church Street,
Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4AB.
Tel/Fax: 01934 713906.
email: s.ladbrooke@arc.org.uk

MENDIP RAMBLERS AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WALKING FESTIVAL

Have you heard about the three day walking festival organised every year by the Mendip group?

Every year the work party, in conjunction with Mendip District Council's Footpath Officer, Sheila Petherbridge, chooses an area where it is known that work is necessary to improve the footpaths: This year it's Wookey's turn, to the delight of the Parish Council. The group meets every Tuesday in all weather conditions, so old clothes are the order of the day - first choice for some of them anyway - to install/repair stiles and kissing gates, build bridges - which seems to give plenty of scope for discussion and deliberation, clearance and waymarking. In fact Tuesdays have become a "Boys' Day Out" - I'll leave this to your imagination!!



A few years ago Bob had the bright idea of celebrating the completion of the work with a festival to encourage as many walkers as possible to walk the newly accessible footpaths, in the hope that they would continue to be walked and thus kept open. This has been a very successful venture with just under 200 walkers attending over the three days in 2007 - at Coleford. Last year we decided to serve tea and cake after each walk, for a small donation, and this was definitely a resounding success, with most people enjoying the opportunity to relax and meet other walkers for a chat at the end of their walk.

Perhaps you may like to put the dates in your diary and join us:

Saturday 23, Sunday 24 and Monday 25 August 2008.

Each day there is a choice of walks:

10-12 miles, 8 miles, 5½-6 miles starting at 10.00am

OR

3-3½ miles starting at 1.00pm.

For more information see www.mendipramblers.co.uk/telephone Paula on 01458 860751 or
Alice on 01373 474695

Bluetongue Disease

Following the detection of Bluetongue disease in East Anglia in September 2007, walkers are advised that currently there is no need for restrictions on access to the countryside and all footpaths remain open.

Bluetongue is an insect-borne viral disease which affects all ruminants, such as cattle, goats, deer, llamas, alpacas, guanaco, vicuna, camels and, in particular, sheep. Bluetongue does not affect humans and there is no risk to human health.

Further information about bluetongue can be found at www.defra.gov.uk

every year the number wishing to participate is growing. The walks programme just gets better and better thanks to Rick, with the opportunity to walk not only on Thursdays and Sundays but we also benefited by additional walks over the Christmas break: A walk on Boxing Day followed by refreshments with Paula and Owen in Meare; Rick provided soup after the walk on New Year's Eve then Janet led the group off to a good start for 2008 with a walk on New Year's Day.

Paula Ruddock
Publicity Officer
Mendip Group

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY

Mendip

The Mendip Group's AGM in October was followed by a fun game of skittles with an excellent buffet once again provided by The Bell in Evercreech.

In November a group of us went ten pin bowling and tested our hand to eye skills - as opposed to our footwork - again, the pub meal afterwards ended a very pleasant evening. The sunny autumn weather was a real bonus for walking and in December 36 members enjoyed a short walk followed by Christmas lunch after which most of us took advantage of Gus and Glenis' hospitality.



The January Dinner arranged by Alice was "simply the best" and we're delighted that

Sedgemoor Ramblers

Sedgemoor Ramblers have been enjoying a varied Winter Walks' Programme. Leading up to Christmas, our weekly Sunday walks included The Quantocks Hills, a walk starting from Barrington Court (where we were able to enjoy their Christmas Market) and a walk in the Wells area, as well as around Trull, Corfe and the Blackdowns. The wet weather (and the mud) in January hasn't prevented us from enjoying our walks - Isle of Wedmore - Hawkridge Reservoir - Bawdrip, Stawell & Cossington - Cheddar Village & Gorge - Clavelshey & North Petherton and The Moors in Winter (a very warm and sunny Bawdrip and the Levels).

We are now looking forward to a good programme of interesting walks leading us into Spring. The Saturday afternoon walks are proving popular. These are once a month, approximately 4 - 5 miles long, easy walking and at a leisurely pace.

On the social side, our Christmas Lunch was excellent and our trip to Bristol to see Mama Mia, followed by a meal in an Italian restaurant, was enjoyed by all.

Jenny Fawle
Publicity Officer
Sedgemoor Ramblers

Taunton Deane

The group are due to launch a new circular walk 'The East Deane Way'. It is planned to launch the walk at the beginning of April but waymarkers delineating the route are still awaited so the launch date may be delayed. The route is approximately 43 miles in length and free leaflets will be available in Tourist Information Centres. When the launch does take place there will be walks along the route included in the Taunton Deane programme. The walks will appear in the Taunton Deane programme and can be viewed on the group's web site at www.tauntonramblers.org.uk.



West Somerset

We had our AGM in November followed by a walk, and attracted a few more attendees than last year. All the existing officials were re-elected.

We had a Christmas walk and lunch attended by 55 people. We put on several walks over the holiday, which were well attended. Apart from this everything is going on as usual.



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks to all contributors to this issue. All contributions are very welcome and I look forward to receiving your contributions for the next issue. I should like to hear from all of the Somerset Groups so that the newsletter can keep everyone updated on what is going on throughout the county.

Entries for the next issue before June 1st 2008 please to:

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