

## Waymarking the future – June 2006

### 1. TO PROMOTE WALKING

- We have secured a stand at the Bucks County Show 31<sup>st</sup> August at which we will be recruiting new members and using the new Take a Hike display materials. Anyone interested in helping out on the day contact Bev Lufkin (07850 713400)
- The Festival of Winter Walks is 26<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006- 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2007 to raise the profile of the RA. It will be a challenge to beat the success of last year which recorded
  - i. over 435 organised walks
  - ii. 11,000 participants
  - iii. 416 new members joining as a result.

Not to mention over 162 articles published in the press with exposure to a readership of over 26 million people. We will be registering some of our favourite winter walks on the walks finder with the code FWW06. General comments to [mariuszw@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:mariuszw@ramblers.org.uk)

- The Chilterns Group are proposing to set up a 40s walking group. As their group expands, this is seen as a good way to maintain the success of walking for young people in the area.

### 2. TO PROMOTE THE INTEGRITY OF THE PATH NETWORK

- The RA Board of Trustees have appointed Christine Elliot as the new Chief Executive. For the past 8 years she has been CEO of the Bletchley Park Trust, where her marketing background has contributed to the Park's success.
- The latest Best Value Performance Indicator (BV178) stats for paths in England were released by the audit commission at the beginning of 2006 Overall the all England average of paths classed as "easy to use" has fallen from 69.2-66.8. Our authority Buckinghamshire is 7<sup>th</sup> out of 34 in the county council category.
- We still have work to do to keep the paths usable to join us on one of our footpath check walks during Use your paths week 2006 (Sat 24<sup>th</sup> June-Sun 2 July) where we make extra effort to report problems to the council or report your checks at: [www.useyourpaths.info](http://www.useyourpaths.info).

Over 2000 grid squares have already been reported in little over 2 months since its official launch on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

### **3. TO SECURE GREATER ACCESS ON FOOT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE**

- Local meetings have been held in Suffolk, Cumbria, Devon and Durham to gather views on how access can be improved. The RA Access committee has finalised our policy on coastal access and will begin a campaign for the legal right of access to the English coast. Comment have been in the press about this recently.

Research into the different improvement options is being conducted by Natural England (NE) and is being published in June. This will be passed onto DEFRA who will consider the findings and issue a consultation document in October.

- Coastal photographs that you would let the RA use in their campaign send to [robertc@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:robertc@ramblers.org.uk)
- Natural England will officially come into being in October to take over from the "landscape access and recreation" arm of the Countryside Agency, English Nature, and the Rural Development Service.
- The next issue of WALK magazine will feature a coastal walking survey – Do complete it by the end of June, to give your view and you may even win a holiday! The survey is also on the RA website.

### **4. TO PROMOTE THE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT**

- The group is building a social programme to promote the outdoor environment – keep your eyes on the website as details of these emerge! They include:

Ariel Extreme at Willen Lake:

[www.mkweb.co.uk/home/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=35149](http://www.mkweb.co.uk/home/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=35149)

Big Boat Weekend (8/9/10<sup>th</sup> Sep):

Private charter of two "round the world" 72ft yachts, £219 for two nights sailing to Cowes. An all inclusive weekend, great for non sailors or sailors alike. Space limited to 24. Typical itinerary: [www.challengebusiness.com/cas/voyage\\_details.asp?voyage=Introduction%20to%20Sailing](http://www.challengebusiness.com/cas/voyage_details.asp?voyage=Introduction%20to%20Sailing)

Monthly Pub evenings:

A short 3-4 mile walk followed by a pub meal. Great if you have just started and are unsure of distances, or if you want to get to know the group before joining.

Long Weekends away:

Following successful weekends to Derbyshire and Wales, we are planning weekends to the Cotswolds and Scotland.