A programme of short walks

The Group has stepped up its publicity to attract new members and you may have seen the shop window display in The Pavements shopping precinct in Chesterfield as one example. The pull-up posters and photo displays can be used elsewhere in other indoor venues – please let us know of any suitable locations.

Our contribution to next month’s Walking Festival is a major generator of publicity and we hope members will either participate or take an active role as back markers or supporters of events e.g. the Round in a day on Sunday 10 May when the participants rely on others for water, energy supplies, and possibly lifts. If you can assist in any way with the Festival please contact Mel Hardy. This is the 10th anniversary of the current 34 mile route.

Publicity on its own is not enough. Whilst we have a strong walking programme we need to create the conditions which make it possible for new walkers to progress to the Ramblers.

To that end we wish to establish a programme of short walks starting from August once our evening walks programme is over. We are looking for walks from 1.5 miles up to a maximum of 5 miles, from across the North Derbyshire.

Walks finishing in a tea shop or pub are welcome. Walks with added local history, flora, fauna and points of interest too are ideal. You choose the day and either a morning or afternoon start time - there isn’t a set day/time.

There is no need to conjure up specific routes as there is a wealth of ‘off the shelf’ material available from published leaflets to Audio Trails to Ramblers Routes. If you need assistance in selection please just ask.

The intention is to make a collection on these short walks in support of the new Royal Macmillan Cancer Support Unit at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. This is appropriate as the Ramblers and Macmillan work in partnership to manage the Head office of Walking for Health. £6.4 m of the £8.9m required has already been pledged and we, and others, should help to bridge that gap.

Please contact cnedra@btinternet.com if you are prepared to lead a walk or help in any way. Those members already assisting with Walking for Health groups would be great but offers from anyone with goodwill will be warmly received.

Basil Merry (cnedra@btinternet.com)

Walking with Politicians

We have three members of parliament in our group area and on 11th March we were pleased to have one of them walk with us. The others were also sent invitations. Natascha Engel had been trying to fit in a walk with us on her own constituency footpaths of NE Derbyshire - but in the event, due to heavy commitments, had to settle for a programme route from Cromford Meadows. 24 of us, led by Jack Frobisher, had a good 8 mile circular walk with Natascha via Lea and Dethick, fortunately avoiding the heavier rain that was to come later.

Natascha in 2012 sponsored an Early Day Motion (EDM) in Parliament recognising the 80th anniversary of the Kinder Trespass. An EDM is an opportunity for MPs to draw attention to an event or cause.

She said at the time;

"I sponsored (this motion) because the 1932 Kinder Scout Trespass played an important role highlighting the need for a legal right of access so that ramblers and the wider public can enjoy our open countryside. The event helped to win public support for the right to access Britain’s countryside and has been credited by Natural England and the Ramblers Association as playing a vital role in the creation of our National Parks in 1949. It is right, therefore, that we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Kinder Scout Trespass and I know that the Ramblers Association has organised a number of events to mark this."
My name was the first on the motion because I recognise the important role that the Kinder Scout Trespass played in creating the right to access our countryside.

I welcome the progress that has been made on this issue over the past eighty years.'

A walk like this was a good opportunity for our NE Derbyshire members to meet their MP and for the MP to get to know who we are and how we feel about walking and countryside matters.

Natascha subsequently wrote;
'Many thanks to Jack and the Group for the warm welcome and extremely pleasant morning spent walking with you. I can’t wait till the election is over so that I can come back again. All good wishes and hope to see you soon.'

We do of course welcome any politician who has the time to walk with us at any time.

David Moore,
Group Chairman.

**Derbyshire Rights of Way Co-ordination**

The co-ordination of the Ramblers dealings with rights of way matters in Derbyshire (and Derby City) was referred to in Issue 29 – July 2014 and Issue 30 – October 2014.

Since then 2 further meetings of all the Ramblers Groups in the county has taken place and a policy and strategy been agreed. An initial meeting with DCC has already taken place to acquaint them with the new arrangement, to give praise where due, and express our concerns over certain matters. Obviously the possible impact of financial cutbacks looms large and this has brought about a re-organisation within DCC which is still ongoing.

County and Borough/District Councils will work closer together in a Combined Authority. Derby and Derbyshire are also working with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) to produce wider benefits.

We are pressing DCC over the availability of mapping of rights of way, and Central Office has written to the CEO of DCC outlining our understanding of the legal position on paths affected by ploughing and cropping. We have also contacted Derby CC about the current situation as to their Definitive Maps and Statements.

In respect of the latter please ensure any cropping obstructions are reported to DCC in the usual way (and copy in our Footpath Secretary, Mel Hardy – mhardy5771@aol.com). Already a number of paths are blocked by 3 foot high oil seed rape and we are seeking enforcement action by DCC.

Basil Merry
Ramblers Derbyshire Footpath Co-ordinator

**Footpath Practical Work – More jobs done**

Since our last report, in Issue 30 – October 2014, on practical work undertaken by our volunteers, work has continued throughout winter.

Obviously weather conditions determine what can be undertaken but 8 wicket gates, 5 finger or way mark posts, 1 bridge, 18 revetment boards, some flights of steps, and fences have been installed. Drainage issues have also been solved and 1 long path restored to its definitive line by cutting a way through the trees and brambles.

Work has taken place in Ashover, Barlow, Brampton, Chesterfield, Holmesfield, Unstone and Wingerworth not counting minor cutbacks. A total of 462 hours of labour has been provided to DCC and CBC in the last 6 months.

The number participating has also increased with usually a minimum of 6 – the largest attendance being 9 volunteers, supported by council rangers.

But there’s room for more as ‘unpaid holiday’ is allowed to volunteers. If you would like to participate please contact Mike Sims on 01246 276803.

**Bill to Act**

The oft referred to De-Regulation Bill finally became the De-Regulation Act 2015 when, on the very last day of the Parliamentary session before the General Election, it received the Royal Assent.

The Act is intended improve the processes surrounding the recording of paths on official Definitive Maps through a package of measures.

The new law is important because historic paths (paths which came into existence before 1949) which are not listed on the Definitive Map by 2026 will be lost forever.
However, the rights of way provisions in the new Act still require a great deal of work, through regulations and guidance for local authorities and the public and it is estimated that it will be another year before they actually come into effect. In 2013 nationally there were more than 4000 paths waiting to be processed and added to maps. These new provisions should make it easier for local authorities to deal with the backlogs.

**Forgotten paths**

Even with the new procedures that the Deregulation Act 2015 brings, it is still vitally important that we continue to research and record historic paths (paths which came into existence before 1949) because many of those which aren’t listed on definitive maps by 2026 will be lost forever.

If you’re interested in researching these forgotten paths and getting them recorded on the definitive map, take a look at our ‘Investigating Forgotten Paths’ toolkit. This is available on the main Ramblers web site and it details the reasons, and process based on the experiences of Ramblers elsewhere.

Ideally, we should form a small group of people to look at each parish in detail to determine where we are, what needs to be done, and whether it’s worth the effort to make path claims.

Please contact cnedra@btinternet.com if you are prepared to assist on the project or parts of it i.e. just a parish.

www.ramblers.org.uk

**DCC Mapping Portal**

In view of the above it is timely to remind members that details of the public rights of way network can be viewed via the DCC Mapping Portal which covers the whole of Derbyshire (except Derby City).

The portal is available at [http://derbyshiremaps.derbyshire.gov.uk](http://derbyshiremaps.derbyshire.gov.uk)

After ‘I accept’ click on ‘Change Map Information’ then select ‘Environment’ to see the Public Rights of Way and other mapping layers stored there.

Zooming in you can identify the path identity and Status e.g. Barlow FP9, Chesterfield BW14. Using the ‘ + sign’ basic information such as path length is shown.

The portal contains a host of other Derbyshire information that you may find of interest e.g. parish boundaries, grit bins etc.

*DCC Countryside events 2015 leaflet*

**DCC Path Plans for 2015/2016 – Didn’t we do well?!**

As you are aware DCC, is the Highway Authority for Derbyshire excluding Derby City and its suburbs, and is responsible for the public rights of way network.

During the current financial year £708k has been allocated to rights of way maintenance from the Capital Programme + £111k to Greenways (multi-user trails) maintenance. A further £78k and £280k respectively comes from Integrated Transport block funding. In addition there is £160k for county wide proposed improvements of which £140k is for Green Lanes.

There are 8953 footpaths in the county with a total length of 4509km, plus 602 bridleways with a total length of 557km. DCC is keen to increase the length + connectivity of bridleways (and Greenways) as it encourages cycle use.

Please note that unless existing public rights of way have been upgraded many Greenways in the county do not have that status e.g. parts of the Trans Pennine Trail. ‘Greenways’ is a Natural England designation not a legal status. It was a stated DCC objective that public rights of way status be achieved on Greenways and we will press DCC to complete the process.

18 footpaths and 11 bridleways are specifically mentioned in the Service Plan for improvement this year at a cost of £311k and £237k respectively. Of interest to us locally is £167k, 30% of the specified county spend for this purpose, has been allocated to paths in the CBC/BDC/and NEDDC area.

Bridleways in Barlow, Brampton, Brimington, Eckington, Holmesfield, and Scarcliffe will be improved (usually to drainage, surface, resilience and in 1 case a ford re-construction). Footpaths in Holymoorside and Dronfield will similarly receive drainage and surface improvements.

The importance of members highlighting and reporting path problems appears to have been demonstrated as we are far more active than most other Derbyshire groups in doing so.

Martins Lane, Wingerworth

The last report on the application to turn Martin’s Lane into a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) was in Newsflash 84 of December 2014.

We are pleased to report that the lane has been saved as it will become a bridleway with no rights for vehicle users. In addition connecting Stocksmoor Lane will also become a bridleway.

These decisions end the uncertainties of the previously ‘unclassified highway status’ which had threatened these green lanes.

Whilst there is still time for last minute objections by the Trail Riders Fellowship we congratulate the residents of Wingerworth and Tupton on their success which was well supported by our local members.

Wings, April/May 2015.

New Membership Rates

To help support the growth of the organisation and carry on with our charitable work benefiting Ramblers members and walkers in Britain membership rates will be increased from 1 May 2015.

Individual annual membership becomes £34.00 (or £20.50 concession). Monthly costs are £3.25 and £2.25 respectively.

Joint membership becomes £45.00 (or £27.50 joint concession). Monthly costs are £4.25 and £2.75 respectively.

There are restrictions on concessionary rates and monthly rates are by direct debit only.

Please see www.ramblers.org.uk for full details.

New Members

Since the last full Issue the Group has been joined by Claire Cukurs, Chesterfield, Carol Wilkinson, Renishaw, Alison Frost, Eckington, Bridget Hemstock, Staveley, Goffrey Birkinshaw, Brimington, George Dodsworth, Chesterfield, and Ron Howard, Chesterfield and Peter O’Brien, Chesterfield.

Please make them all welcome.

Supporters and friends of the Peak District Green Lanes Alliance

There are two main items of news.

PDNPA has published its Action Plan for 2015/2016. We report on the contents of the Action Plan and on the debate at the ARP Committee meeting where it was discussed and agreed.

The second main item of news is a case recently decided in the Supreme Court. This case affects us locally because Derbyshire County Council had previously rejected over 60 applications to upgrade footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways to BOATs following a court case known colloquially as the Winchester case. The recent judgement has upheld the Winchester case; which means these routes are safe from any further application to upgrade them to BOATs.

Many regards to all

John Newrick

Membership Secretary and Treasurer,
Peak District Green Lanes Alliance -The PDGLA

p.s. The March 2015 Newsletter is available on request – please see below.

‘Fare’ enough and bus options.

In News Flash 83, November 2014, we requested that those interested in bus travel in the county take part in the DCC Consultation on bus funding in the light of reduced government funding. We thank all those who participated.

The end result is that DCC has confirmed it will continue funding bus services after taking on board results of the public survey.
The original proposal was to remove a £3.5m subsidy (Note: most bus routes operate commercially) on specific routes but these tend to be the ones that serve rural areas, or are at off peak times. Nevertheless 3.7 million journeys a year are made using them.

Subsidised routes/times are indicated on bus timetables usually by a large letter ‘D’ or other comment. As an example of a subsidised service the 16A from Chesterfield to Barlow and Dronfield on Sundays and Bank Holidays, via Millthorpe, and Holmesfield operated by Stagecoach only runs because of a DCC Contract.

The Group offer many walks accessible by public transport and sometimes use these services. Many circular walks in our summer programme shown as ‘car rambles’ but a bus option is available. Where known these have been added to Walks Finder.

To see if a walk is accessible by bus you can contact traveline for public transport information on 0871 200 2233 – Cost 10p per minute from landlines. Or use www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk. Alternatively www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/public_transport

Derbyshire Times and DCC Countryside leaflet

Walk Reports

We need new members and operate in a competitive market with organisations like U3A (both in Chesterfield and now Dronfield), 9 Walking for Health groups, Dunston Walking Group, Hasland Church walkers, Fresh Start, Peak Walking Group, Brampton Strollers, etc.

We therefore need publicity and reporting on the walks we’ve successfully completed is an important part of the armoury. Reports received go on our website + photos if provided, and also in to the Derbyshire Times who use them as space permits.

However, only about half the walks we undertake are given the oxygen of publicity because no reports are submitted.

Why when it only takes 1 quick phone call or email?

Even a late report is better than none. The range of walks we offer, and numbers participating demonstrates how active we are which helps considerably in recruitment. Bits of local interest, history, quirky events raise our profile.

Please ensure your walk is publicised - Contact David Moore on 01246 274699 or david.z.moore@gmail.com after the walk.

(No his middle name isn’t Zebedee!)

Apperknowle Air Strip

Apperknowle remains a working air strip with a small number of private planes based there. When the strip was set up footpaths across the grass runway were either legally stopped up or diverted around the working area.

Unfortunately this leaves a truncated path (Unstone FP 7 – SK380 785) as cul-de- sac with a stone wall and barbed wire barrier at the northern end. This does not deter some irresponsible walkers who continue to cross the strip to or from there which is disconcerting to the pilots of small planes coming in to land.

Unstone FP7 does connect with Unstone FP6 to form a short triangular walking route from Summerley Road but there is no access to the north. No public rights of way cross the strip itself.

We sincerely hope these walkers are not our members who are urged to follow the legally diverted routes around the strip. This is clearly sign posted from Summerley Road (Unstone FP55 @ 377788).

Pending

There have not been any HS2 announcements in the run up to the general election. What happens thereafter remains to be seen but we will monitor and respond as necessary.

Mel Hardy attended a briefing in Birmingham on the proposed Big Pathwatch and further details are awaited from Central Office.
On request
The following are available on request to cnedra@btinternet.com:

PDGLA March 2015 Newsletter
Peak District National Park - Access Newsletter – March and April 2015
Peak District National Park - Green Lanes Newsletter March and April 2015
Group Consultation response to NEDDC Draft Local Plan 2011-2031
Ramblers Derbyshire Rights of Way Committee meeting minutes – 14 March 2015
Dronfield Footpaths and Bridleways Society full Summer Programme including walks not in our programme.

Newsletter contributions
Articles and updates from members are always welcome. Please send them to cnedra@btinternet.com.
The next full Issue will be in July with Newsflashes in between as matters of interest arise.
You can unsubscribe at any time just by letting us know but we hope you find the information relevant and informative.