



WWW Walkers Web Words

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A Derbyshire Ripple?

In 2004 Dennis Ransby threw a pebble into the Chesterfield 'pond' by suggesting the existing 50 mile Chesterfield Round Walk be revamped to a more manageable (for some) 34 mile circuit nearer to the town.

Dennis acted as Project Manager leading a team including Geoff Bell, Anne Exford, John Morris, and Beryl Ransby which created the new route which was launched in 2005. Since that time the circuit has been regularly walked in one day notably by Mel Hardy and Gavin Johns and it forms the 'flagship' walk of the local Walking Festival. It has also been walked in shorter sections by many others and often features in our walks programme as linear sections.

A key part of the project was the securing of funding notably from Viridor. This included an amount for ongoing maintenance giving rise to the groups Footpath Practical team which has existed ever since.

The pebble was well thrown as the Round and Practical Work has gone from strength to strength. The recent Festival saw a record 38 participants set off early on a May Sunday morning. The practical work has gone from purely the route, to the whole of Chesterfield & North East Derbyshire and now also the Bolsover area. Work moved from a monthly basis to weekly and the tasks undertaken are now more complicated including structures e.g. bridges, on almost a routine basis.

More recently the ripples have spread with nearby Erewash, Amber Valley, and Sheffield Group also launching practical work teams. To see the impact of our activities one only has to look at the map of Path Successes shown on the main Ramblers web site (<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/support-us/map-of-successes.aspx>). Note also the volume and compare with more vocal groups elsewhere in the country. Not only are we the original practical team but clearly the best as well.

But hopefully the ripple will not stop there. You may have seen on the main web site that Bedfordshire Group has started a ripple and come up with the acronym RIPPLE standing for **Restoring, Improving, Public Paths for Local Enjoyment**. Working with Bedfordshire County Council they are seeking to do what the name says and are making an impact there. (<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/what-we-do/news/2014/june/ripple.aspx>)

As is well known Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and Derby County Council are facing cuts in their funding and public paths may well be amongst the innocent victims. DCC are cutting a third of the budget of the Countryside Service, who deliver a lot of the maintenance and improvements, over the next 3 years. Derby CC does not have a Definitive Map or Statements, both are a legal requirement, or a current Rights of Way Improvement Plan. What happens in 2026 when map additions cease nationally under the terms of the CROW Act is by no means clear.

To ensure public paths in Derbyshire do not join those on the recent national 'Paths in Crisis' report urgent action by the Ramblers Groups in the county is required.

(http://www.ramblers.org.uk/~media/Files/Campaign%20with%20us/PATHS_IN_CRISIS.pdf)

A meeting of all the Footpath Secretaries of the main Ramblers Groups in Derbyshire took place in Cromford this month, the first since 2012. Unfortunately Ramblers have been hampered by an archaic Area structure (Derbyshire falls in 3 Areas), and general apathy.

Our Group representatives proposed a Derbyshire-wide ripple to ensure we speak with authority and one voice to get the best out of DCC and Derby CC. To be effective we must have the active support of all the Derbyshire Ramblers Groups and their goodwill. The Derbyshire Groups have a collective membership of around 2500 and organise over 1000 guided walks mostly in Derbyshire each year. It is considered the Ramblers has been punching below its weight for far too long in its dealings with the two Highway Authorities.

The cuts are definitely coming to Derbyshire, together with a plethora of wind turbines, and solar farms, closely followed by HS2 and off road vehicles are already here – often where they should not be!

To avoid becoming a crisis area we must act now. The support of the other Derbyshire Groups is keenly awaited.

Basil Merry.

(The views expressed are personal but known to be shared with other local activists).

Representatives of groups present at the meeting came from Amber Valley, Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire, Derby and South Derbyshire, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, and New Mills.

‘The Round’ 10th Anniversary

As you have read the Chesterfield Round walk in its current form is 10 years old in 2015. How are we going to celebrate that?

Suggestions so far are walking the route in tenths (sections of about 3.5 miles making it accessible to more), framing the map and presenting it to key pubs for display purposes e.g. The White Hart, Calow, and Peak Hotel at Stanage (formerly known as The Red Lion) and using it for display purposes at shows/events, putting a narrative version of the route on Ramblers Routes for those who can't read maps, and re-creating the old 50 mile circuit. We could also compile a record of 'Round in a day' completers.

Please pass any further suggestions to any committee member. More importantly if you are prepared to help bring any of the suggestions to fruition please let us know.

2014 Walking Festival

As reported in Newsflash 78 this year's festival was a further success. There were a total of 1160 participants, an increase of over 9% from last year. Whilst the majority came from the NE Derbyshire/North Nottinghamshire/South Yorkshire triangle as you would expect there was an increasing number from further afield including Cambridge, Leicester, Newcastle, Leeds, Hull, and London.

The most popular walks with over 30 participants included the Chesterfield Round, Ogston & Ashover, and the Brampton bus and brewery walk.

259 of the participants took the trouble to complete survey responses and 63% rated the walks as excellent +31% rating them as good. Only 0.4% rated them as poor – obviously someone having a bad day!

Next year's Festival is planned for **9 to 17 May**. If you can assist in any capacity please let us know. This is particularly important as it will be the 10th anniversary of the launch of the current Round Walk as above

Long Causeway update

More good news from the Peak District Green Lanes Alliance and the Peak District National Park Authority. There is to be a Full Traffic Regulation Order (FTRO) placed upon Long Causeway on the iconic Stanage Edge in September 2014. This will ban all mechanically propelled vehicles i.e.: 4x4's, Trail Bikes and Quad Bikes from this route.

John Newrick from PDGLA.

Something to CROW about

A Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act in the Peak District 'The Right to Roam'

In recognition of the 10th anniversary of the implementation of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 the SYNED Area, of which our group is a member has arranged the following:-

Saturday, 27th September 2014

At the Moorland Discovery Centre, the Longshaw Estate, Fox House

All groups in SYNED are invited to attend the above celebration event by walking to the event from various locations of their own choice, arriving at the Centre between noon and 12.30 for a picnic lunch (bring your own).

Lunch will be followed by a few short reflective speeches before Groups are welcome to continue their walks.

Speakers are:-

Allen Pestell, Area Chair, will act as MC of the event:

Roly Smith, Area Vice President, will talk about the early access campaigns.

Terry Howard, Area President, will talk about recent campaigns leading up to the Right to Roam.

Cath MacKay, Area Vice President, will present a 'roll call' of access campaigners, past and present.

Nicki Speakman, Area Council member, will take the access campaigns into the future.

Details of any walk organised by our group to this event will be notified in due course.

Derbyshire Area Get Together

19th October, 2014

Start: Stanley Village Hall , Park Avenue (off Coronation Road) , Stanley, Ilkeston
DE7 6FF (Explorer Map260; SK420408)

Time: 10am

Lunch: The Eventide Hall,
Hayeswood Road,
Stanley Common

Choice of 3 circular walks:

6-7 miles

8-9 miles

10-11 miles

Pick and choose and mix 'n match your walks, start with one and if you like, finish with another.
See you all there, we shall be pleased to see you.

The event this year is organised by Erewash Group

A new Walks Finder system

The present system, to which all our group walks are added, is currently being improved to make it more effective and accessible. Changes will include making input available to walks leaders or organisers, for subsequent authorisation, more accurate distances (currently only rounded off mileage is shown), a time estimate, route profile, a link to a Ramblers Route used, and the possibility of after walk comments and pictures. Post codes would be an asset for start points - it is appreciated lay-bys do not have them. Groups would be able to print their programme from this base walks information.

The system is being tested at present. As there will be a switch from old to new not all our Winter programme will be uploaded on one go as is customary. To ensure a smooth transition we will restrict our input until we are confident all is in order. Please therefore don't expect to see more than two months walks at one time for a while.

New Members

Since the last full Issue the Group has been joined by Jane Alexander, Maggie Friend, Trevor Howarth, Ray Keating, Denise Booker, Ebony Williams, and Michael Bunting all from Chesterfield, Richard Smith, Unstone, Peter Stott, Cutthorpe, and Gretta Carne, Matlock.

Please make them all welcome.

Walking in Scotland

A group of 4 'bus walkers', for their annual back packing walk, chose a section of the Borders Abbeys Way, a circular route in Southern Scotland, linking historic towns and villages.

We started walking from Jedburgh, by the ruins of the majestic abbey, with a steady climb past the Castle Gaol (now a museum). The route continued with a gradual descent through agricultural land to the River Teviot, eventually arriving at the town of Hawick.

Our arrival in Hawick coincided with a special event in the borders, namely the Common Riding, when hundreds of riders young and old re-enact the ancient custom of riding through the streets to mark the capture of an English flag, in 1514, and also to define the borders of common land.

Each day offered a steady climb followed by a gradual descent to tranquil valleys, with an abundance of wild flowers and birdsong, but few ramblers.

On day 3 we reached the Royal Burgh of Selkirk, noted for its connection with Sir Walter Scott.

Our 4th and final day began with yet another climb along the Old Drove road before descending to the River Tweed into Melrose, and at its centre, the magnificent red sandstone abbey ruins.

The route is clearly way marked and supported by an extremely informative guide book.

Jean Ashworth, Pat Briggs, Anne Hart, and Shirley Sykes

(Similar reports of other walking activities that members engage in are appreciated.)