

RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION
Barnard Castle Group Newsletter: Summer 2012

Dalegarth 2013

As many members are going on the trip to Lech in September, there will be no trip to Dalegarth in October this year. However, a booking has been made for next year. Our trip will take place from Monday April 22nd to Friday April 26th 2013. If you would like to go, please let Judith know by email (j.baker574@btinternet.com) or phone (01642 700062). Some members have already booked but everyone is welcome. We enjoy good walking of all types, hospitality and companionship. Come and try it - you'll not be disappointed! (Judith)

Tribute to Lis

Lots of tributes for Lis were given at her Remembrance Service at Romalldkirk. Thanks go to Frances who did a good job giving the tribute on behalf of the group. However, I would like to add a few words from Ian and I. We will all miss Lis for a very long time. Although she hasn't been among us for many years, she has touched so many lives with her love and understanding. Ian and I will never forget the number of days when Lis would ring up and ask us to go to Hollincroft for a coffee. This often ended up with lunch as well. The four of us had so much fun with lots of laughter, often sitting in her beloved garden on nice days. We hope that Tom will find some comfort in knowing that he has a lot of friends in Teesdale who will be around for him in the future. We regard it as a privilege to have known her and been able to call her our friend. (Joan and Ian)

Short walks

There are several short mid-week walks on the new programme. Ian and I try to use the local buses as much as possible. This of course means they are linear walks and the instructions may sometimes sound a little complicated. However, if there is anything you don't understand you only have to give us a ring. We can sometimes work out a slight alternative for people wishing to join us. We would also like to point out that although they are shorter walks our walks are not necessarily easy, in fact some of them are quite challenging for the distance. (Joan and Ian)

Survey of numbers on walks

The group are doing a very unscientific survey of the numbers we are getting on our walks. It somehow ended up with me collecting the data!! It was felt that it would be interesting to see which walking areas are most popular as well as the mileage. It will also be interesting to see what impact the weather has on the attendance. Therefore, would leaders either phone 01833 637825 or email me at ijmar8@tiscali.co.uk after the walk, with numbers on the walk, the weather and any other interesting factor, such as people here on holiday etc. Hopefully by the time we send out the next newsletter, we may be able to give you a short summary.(Joan)

Litter Pick

A small group of eight members, with two members of the public, repeated a highly successful litter pick on the public footpath from Teesdale School down to the old railway line. This was again part of County Durham's Big Spring Clean. It was a rather unpleasant wet Sunday afternoon at the end of April but, equipped with plastic sacks, rubber gloves and proper litter-grabbers, we removed every scrap of paper and every drinks container, and absolutely everything that could be described as litter, and we all felt well rewarded for our efforts. This path, officially Barnard Castle Footpath 10/ Marwood Footpath 21, is now crossed by a tarmac track leading from the Sports Centre to The Hub which was supposed to have been cleared of litter during the previous week. But we did a better job than whoever cleared that, as we also retrieved a long banner from a bank under trees that had originated from the Sports Centre itself, and this was returned to them. Thankfully there was hardly any dog mess in plastic bags this year, and it's clear that most of the litter is the responsibility of users of the sports centre, and we hope that publicity will play a part in keeping this area looking as pleasant as we left it. As an extra, it was discovered that the gate leading into the meadow beyond the old railway line had a 'Beware of the bull' sign on it, but no cattle were present, and no bull. (No bull!) It was later found that another footpath leading onto this land had a similar sign, and this has been reported so that the signs may be removed, or covered until a bull is present. Straggly overgrowth has since been removed from Marwood 21, so benefits all round.

Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership

The 'Paths for all People' section of the Partnership is currently being considered, with discussions to take place with relevant landowners. The actual work will be carried out by DCC, with a special post being funded by the Partnership. Included in this is improvement to the Teesdale Way, and Barnard Castle Ramblers' proposal for replacement of the rather crude stepping stones over the Woden Beck near Cotherstone. New and better stepping stones will be considered as well as a new footbridge. Paths close to the town with poor and difficult stiles may have kissing gates installed to allow use by a greater section of the community.

Get Walking Keep Walking

This project continues in the west of the county, with the 12 week sessions, and a special Get Walking for the Games Weekend programme at the end of May, in addition to the quarterly short walks programme that some of our members appreciate. There will also be a special GWKW walk, not in the Ramblers' programme, but in conjunction with the Bowes Museum's 'Our Sporting Life', on Wednesday 20th June, after the Olympic torch has passed through the town. It starts from the front of the Bowes Museum at 3.15pm, or as soon as the torch has passed (should it be delayed) and will be 3 leisurely miles, passing a great variety of sporting venues, formal and informal, which should be popular with those members who have enjoyed the short walks on our programme.

Coastal Access

Some progress, at last! The Draft Coastal Access Report for the Seaton Carew to South Bents section was published in May (see www.naturalengland.org.uk/coastalaccess for more details). Natural England is organising an event with presentation and question and answer session towards the end of the month. The consultation period runs until Friday 3rd August.

Consultations and other publications

In the last week a number of national consultations, discussion papers and briefings have been published regarding path and access issues. These include "A Family of unique trails: Natural England Discussion Paper on the Future Management of National Trails"; "The Right Way Forward - The CLA's common sense approach to access to the countryside" which user organisations so far have not agreed with; "Improvements to the policy and legal framework for public rights of way - A Public consultation" which includes the claiming of lost ways; "The New Forestry Commission England", with the Independent Forestry Panel due to report shortly; and "Paths for Communities" a scheme offering grants for access initiatives which Heart of Teesdale will try to make use of for restoration of a bridge over the Tees at Gainford. There has not been time to read all of these to enable a useful report.

Walking in Teesdale

We live in a fantastic area of countryside with a wealth of natural and other features to enjoy. Let's hope we soon have some good summer weather so that we can make the most of it!
(Jo Bird - Access and Walking Environment Officer)

Saturday 16th June - Coach Trip to Malham

There are still 4 spare places available on the Coach trip to Malham leaving Barnard Castle at 08:15 on Saturday 16th June. Contact Maureen on 01833 637601 if you would like to reserve a place. The route for the B-Walk has been modified following a reccy. The rocks on the Waterfall at Gordale Scar have now become rather treacherous and we will be going up the path across fields from Gordale Bridge. Anybody wishing to climb up Gordale Scar and meet up at the top may do so but they must understand that it is at their own risk. (Richard Hughes – Walks Programme Coordinator)

Online Maps and Routemaker

There is an incredibly easy to use free mapping and route making website at maptogps.com. It has the ability to create a standard GPX file which may be downloaded to your GPS or sent to anybody else so they may view your creation. The Zoom facility goes right down to Street Level. (Richard Hughes – Walks Programme Coordinator)

A Walk in the Woods Week - 27th October to 4th November, 2012.