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Get Walking Day 2009

Thank you very much to over 150 Groups who organised short introductory walks for this year's Get Walking Day on 30 May. The weather was glorious and around 3000 people got involved in special Ramblers events nationally, with at least 1500 of these people walking with the Ramblers for the first time!

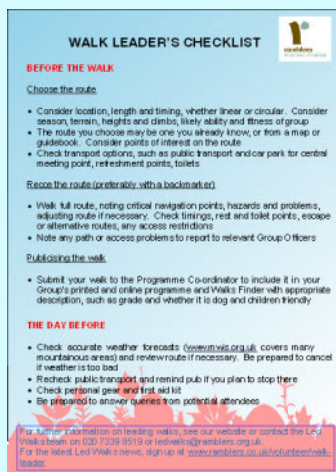
We received excellent media coverage both nationally and locally, with pieces in the Times and Independent newspapers, on numerous websites and through many regional radio stations, newspapers and magazines.



Feedback so far suggests that walks from town centre locations were successful in attracting newcomers. A big thank you to everyone who put on walks and related events. Plans are already underway for Get Walking Day 2010. Look out for a full report in the Autumn edition of WALK.

Walk Leaders Checklist

The handy laminated pocket sized Walk Leaders checklist has been revamped and now incorporates an "incident checklist". It was introduced in response to Groups asking what they should do if an accident happens on a walk and includes basic first aid tips. For copies to distribute to your Group, email the Led Walks team at ledwalks@ramblers.org.uk



Training News

Work is progressing to develop new training for Walk Leaders. Attention will initially focus on piloting voluntary training for Leaders and Groups involved in leading 'upper end' walks - those which take in remote and mountainous terrain. Many Groups have been in touch expressing an interest in helping to pilot training. More news will follow as this area of work develops.

Lots of walk leader training is already organised by Areas and Groups. We hope that this will continue and, in time, evolve with support from the Led Walks Team.

The Bucks, Milton Keynes and West Middlesex Area, for example, organised a training day last year, which was oversubscribed by people looking to refresh their knowledge and, perhaps more importantly, by those who needed a little encouragement and a confidence boost to lead a walk for the first time. With support being offered on their first walk, like a mentoring system, five new walk leaders came forward within just one Group alone. The training was so popular that it is being run again.

Identifying Leaders and Co-ordinators

Over 1200 Walks Leaders and nearly 150 Programme/Walks Co-ordinators have signed up using our online form at www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/LedWalksForm.htm Thank you for doing so - that's why you are receiving this newsletter. We know there are still many more leaders and co-ordinators out there so please encourage others to sign up. The Ramblers is moving towards electronic communications wherever possible. If you know of Leaders without email, why not print this off and give them a copy to read?

We'll be adding more information to a re-vamped volunteering section of the Ramblers website, which will be progressively updated. Keep an eye on www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer for information about all volunteering roles.

Family Walking

Change4Life, the Department of Health's campaign to encourage everyone to become more active and eat more healthily, has just launched the Walk4Life toolkit. Supported and partly developed by the Ramblers, the toolkit is full of information, advice and walking games for children and families. It's likely to be of particular interest to Groups interested in offering more family friendly walks. The toolkit is at www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/PartnersC4LWalk4LifeToolkit.aspx

What Makes a Ramblers Walk?

This Spring, your Group was invited to respond to the proposed introduction of an approval process for Led Walks. The purpose of the consultation is to standardise best practice that is already widely used - for example ensuring that each walk has a nominated leader and that the walk is publicised in advance. Thank you for all your feedback, which is currently being reviewed. It will inform the new insurance guidance which will be issued in October.

The new guidance will also include a new single Incident Reporting Form - replacing the two that currently exist. We hope that the new single form will make incidents easier to report on the rare occasions that they do happen.



How do walking schemes recruit participants?

Have you used innovative approaches to recruit walkers and Walk Leaders to take part in your led walks? Would you like to share them with like-minded people and learn from others? If so we'd like you to take part in a focus group for a research project being led by the British Heart Foundation Health Promotion Research Group at the University of Oxford.

The project will review the effectiveness of recruitment approaches across a range of community based walking schemes and make recommendations that the Ramblers and like-minded organisations can learn from. The focus group will take place in Sheffield between 4 and 5pm on Sept 5th, after Walking '09 - the Ramblers new event to inspire and share best practice about all things walking. To register for Walking '09 visit www.ramblers.org.uk/walking09.htm

To take part in the research study please email a short paragraph explaining your approaches to recruitment to ledwalks@ramblers.org.uk

Themed Walks & Walksfinder

Please don't forget that you can classify themed walks or Festivals on Walksfinder. Themed walks needn't take any extra effort to organise. For example, many walks will pass by bluebells in April and May each year and they can be tagged as "Bluebell Walks" on Walksfinder. It's as simple as that! Do you have any evening walks coming up that could be tagged as summer evening strolls? Or Walking Festivals?

Before you publish your ramble on the Walksfinder, don't forget to tick one or more of the special boxes, such as the "car free" box if the ramble is starting from a bus or train station.

If your Group would like to find out how to use Walksfinder please email volunteer@ramblers.org.uk

Do You Know a Walking Local Hero?

Country Walking Magazine is on the look out for the unsung heroes of the walking world - someone who has achieved extraordinary feats against the odds or who has inspired others to start walking. Perhaps you know of someone in your group who fits the bill? Why not nominate them? Both the winner and the person nominating them will win £300 of Regatta vouchers. Simply send a 200 word submission on why your nominee should be the Country Walking/Regatta Local Hero, along with their photo to Local Hero, Country Walking, Bauer Media, Lynchwood, Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough, PE2 6EA or by email to country.walking@bauermedia.co.uk. Include your name, address, telephone number and email address. Entries close on 27th July 2009.

