

SOMERSET RAMBLER

Somerset Area – RIGHTS OF WAY – Facts and Figures

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL has 3752 miles of rights of way – the 4th longest per square mile in England

RIGHTS OF WAY are made up of:

- 2964 miles of footpaths
- 595 miles of bridleways
- 184 miles of RUPP's – road used as a public path
- 4 miles of BOAT's – byway open to all traffic

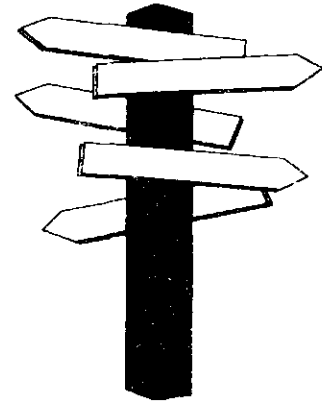
Footpath distribution is uneven:

- South Somerset has 522 miles
- West Somerset has 185
- Taunton Deane has 522
- Sedgemoor has 479
- Mendip has 742 miles

Within Somerset County Council Right of Way work is divided between the County and District Councils (except for West Somerset). The County keeps the definitive map and changes to it. District councils undertake maintenance work for the county by agency agreements.

The Rights of Way Officers for maintenance work are:

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| South Somerset: | Claire Freeman – Yeovil |
| | David Shears – Langport |
| | Paul Attwood - Wincanton |
| | George Montague - Chard |
| West Somerset: | Glen Martin of Somerset CC |
| Taunton Deane: | Trevor Noyes |
| Sedgemoor: | David Edwards |
| Mendip: | Sheila Petherbridge |



NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL as a unitary authority undertakes all aspects of Rights of Way work. It has 514 miles of Rights of Way, made up as follows:

- 440 miles of footpaths
- 25 miles of bridleways
- 23 miles of RUPP's
- 1 mile of BOAT's

The Rights of Way Officer is Richard Phillips

(Much of this information was given by Mrs Paula Hewitt of SCC who was Guest Speaker at our AGM in February)

Any problems with footpaths can be taken to the Rights of Way Officers – their phone numbers can be obtained from the Area Secretary. Back-up is also available from our Group Footpath secretaries.

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The Ramblers



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Over 30% paths in England (50% in Wales) are difficult to use and the local highway authority has a legal duty to maintain all their rights of way for public use. So if you report a problem they should fix it. If they fail to act on these reports the RA pursues the matter further. In extreme cases all the way through the courts but mostly by applying local pressure on the council. And it all starts with your report.

The RA tries to make it as simple as possible for everybody to do this. We've produced a very handy *Reporting Path Problems* leaflet and we've got plenty of stocks for you to request. Or if you prefer in this electronic age we have a couple of online options to try. You can link to www.ramblers.org.uk/campaigns/report.html which will make sure we get a copy of the report. Alternatively you could e-mail your highway authority direct. See www.ramblers.org.uk/info/contacts/links.html for highway authority contact details) with the details of the problem.

Extract taken from *Get reporting*
Footpath Campaigner Issue 35

Walking and Public Transport

Eco-walking - how about walking and using public transport and leaving the car behind? It is worthwhile contacting TIC's for transport information e.g. First has a service 300 Exmoor Coast Link which runs daily between 9th April to 29th October 2004 travelling between Taunton and Barnstaple and with 12 bus stops with access to the coast path.



SAMARITANS WAY SOUTH WEST a new 100 mile walk - BRISTOL - LYNTON

Devised by two Bristol RA members over some 11 years.

Guide book £5.45 (including p & p).
Cheque to Samaritans Way SW Association,
6, Mervyn Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 9EL

Details from Neil Burton, Bristol Ramblers,
Tel 0117 909 6062 or 07814 520326
e-mail samaritansway@aol.com

The RA is playing a key role in this major media health campaign. Launched on ITV on 29 April, the campaign's core messages are to encourage people to take up walking as a regular form of exercise and promote a more active lifestyle. The RA is working in partnership with ITV as well as the Department for Health and Sport England.



Of course an essential element in encouraging the nation to take up walking as a part of a healthier lifestyle is an open and usable footpath network. A network that meets the needs of this new and keen audience. A network that is welcoming to families and welcomes walkers of all ages and abilities. Local authorities will need to play their part as well and we'll be monitoring the success of this ambitious project – paying attention to thought and feeling of first-time walkers.

As a key partner in the campaign we are providing our walking for health booklet – Take 30 – for people who need help and encouragement, as well as publicising walking with RA groups and the benefits of membership. The project will build up to the ITV Day of Walking on Sunday September 19 when the nation will be encouraged to take part in a wide number of organised walks across the country, in partnership with the RA's 'Welcome to Walking Week' festival (18 – 26 September). A key element to this will be the Walks Finder Database on the RA website and we would be grateful if you could advertise as many of your walks on the database as possible. It is the best way of informing people that we have a varied walking programme for them to participate in.

Taken from *Footpath Campaigner* Issue 39



Discover North Tenerife ; warm-winter walking (Nov.-Easter); three mountain ranges; experienced Winter-resident guides ; private coach ; discount hotel accommodation. KWA, 91 Broad Valley Drive, Bestwood Village, Nottm. NG6 8XA.

www.kwa-guiding-tenerife.com

For anyone who is looking for a winter walking holiday in the sunshine, Gran Canaria is just the place. Not for the faint-hearted though – we found the trails strenuous and, at times, challenging.

As usual, the Sunflower Landscapes book provided us with plenty of choice and we alternated the days between long and short walks. Any of the walks based in the centre of the island (umbrel) involved lengthy bus journeys so we didn't want too many 7 am starts (at least Bev didn't!) The resorts, described as lively, tend to be noisy at night. Therefore, to avoid being kept awake until 4 am, it is worth checking things out before you book.

One of the most fascinating places to visit was Arteara where we found a Guanche cemetery dating back some 4000 years. It consisted of a mass of simple stone graves covering about two square kilometres. Most of the tombs are open to the elements with ashes and remains of bones still visible. On a more cheerful note the scenery was stunning and full of surprises. There were emerald green reservoirs hidden in the mountains and magnificent ravines which go on for mile after mile. They can be reached by ancient cobble tracks, edged with flowering shrubs, which seem to suddenly finish in the middle of nowhere. Many of the isolated villages have no permanent residents but people return there at the weekend to tend their vegetable plots and they use the old cottages as retreats.

We have loads of photos to remind us of another super holiday.

Bev Palmer/Carole Simpson (West Somerset)

WALKING BOOTS FOR SALE

"Unfortunately our walking days are over"

Men's SCARPA

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Size 45 | £25 |
| SCARPA with Gortex leggings attached | |
| Size 45 | £30 |
| BERGHAUS | |
| Size 45 | £30 |
| SKYLARK | |
| Size 44 | £20 |

Ladies' SCARPA

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Size 40 | £25 |
| SCARPA with Gortex leggings attached | |
| Size 40 | £30 |

Please phone Mrs Rayland
Taunton (01823) 331508

Mendip Group's recent press release

This year's Festival of Walks organised by Mendip Group of the Ramblers' Association centres on the parish of Westbury-sub-Mendip, in Somerset, between Wells and Cheddar. Following the success of the last two years, when the members arranged three days of walks to celebrate re-opening a series of public paths, plans for August Bank Holiday Weekend 2004 have been announced. The walks all start at 10 am on each day, 28th, 29th and 30th August, from the Lodge Hill Industrial Estate, Westbury-sub-Mendip (Grid reference 499484). Each day there will be a choice of walks between 5 and twelve miles in length.

In 2003, Mendip Ramblers completed installation of 65 stiles, 54 finger posts, 4 bridges and countless waymarks in and around the parish of Binegar, opening up a series of walks to places with rustic names like Moon's Bottom and T'other Side of the Hill. Materials were provided by the district council with volunteers doing the physical work. Three walks of various lengths were available for each of the three days of the Festival. Over 100 people took part altogether – a mixture of local people, Mendip Ramblers and visitors from other areas. The television weatherman and his dog were invited: this ensured there were several mentions on BBC Points West and perfect weather each day!

Publicity Officer Derek Baker commented, "the popularity of last year's Festival of Walks showed how important it is for walkers to help with the re-opening of our blocked or impassable footpaths. Our volunteers are currently busy each week, building stiles and bridges around Westbury-sub-Mendip. We will be delighted to welcome visitors from other areas in August to see and enjoy the results of their labours. Please contact 01458 860751 for further information."

PERU and NEPAL

Sponsored walks raising money for MIND

PERU TREK 3 – 13 Sept 2004.

NEPAL TREK 20-29 Nov 2004-05-25

Information packs available (are any individual members interested?) on 08700 129001 or e-mail peru@mind.org.uk or nepal@mind.org.uk

Family Countryside Walkers

helping families with young children to enjoy walks of around 3 – 4 miles. All members of the family welcome.

25th July KILVE towards LILSTOCK
Details: John 01278 423078
28th Aug BURNHAM ON SEA and RIVER BRUE
Details: Jackie 01278 785249
26th Sept 2ND ANNIVERSARY and
WELCOME TO WALKING SPECIAL
Details: Mary 01823 333369
31st Oct QUANTS MOOR NATURE RESERVE
and WELLINGTON MONUMENT
Details: Mary 01823 333369
28th Nov ORCHARDLEIGH, FROME
Details: Peter 01373474369



Regrettably there was no response to my plea in last month's newsletter for help with collecting the printed newsletter in Taunton. I am still hoping that someone may step forward as having it printed there saves a huge amount of money. As I said, I am willing to continue to type and copy fit the newsletter. Please get in touch if you can – your help would be very much appreciated.

*Many thanks to all contributors to the newsletter
Entries for the next issue before **October 1st 2004** please to:*

*Lindsay Proffitt
35 Amberlands Close
Backwell
Bristol
BS48 3LW*

01275 463635

Articles can be sent via e-mail to lindsay.proffitt@whsmithnet.co.uk