

OPEN COUNTRY NEWS - JANUARY - MARCH 2003

Membership money is now long overdue. Costing £5, it lasts until January 1st 2004. Membership gives you priority booking, and discounts at several local outdoor shops. Non-members can still come on activities, but only if there is space on the bus, and they will have to pay a higher transport charge.

British Waterways have constructed the Smeaton Information Centre at Ripon Marina. Seating, picnic facilities and hot beverages are available inside. They have improved access along the canal, which now has several wheelchair accessible fishing platforms. There is also a 3km wheelchair accessible walk via Littlethorpe (the last half is along a quiet road). The walk passes the recently completed wetlands reserve with two accessible bird hides.

Global grants.....

It's questionnaire time again! Please help us to improve what we do by completing and returning it by February 1st. Anyone who returns a form will receive a free copy of our new 'Countryside Directory'.

The tandem season will soon be upon us and it would help us greatly if all volunteer front riders could try and get their clearance forms to Henshaw's College ASAP. Many thanks.

OPEN COUNTRY **COUNTRYSIDE ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME**

JANUARY - MARCH 2003

The Open Country Project is a charitable organisation that enables anyone with a disability to access the countryside, through the provision of countryside activities and information. Fully accessible transport is provided and teams of trained volunteers are on hand to help as necessary.

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS AND TRAILBLAZERS

We work from 10 a.m. until around 5 p.m. on Tuesdays (Trailblazers) and Fridays (Conservation). Both groups meet at Community House, and we drop people home afterwards. The jobs may be dirty, but are suitable for most capabilities. Tools, training and transport are provided. **Programmes for each group are issued separately.**

WALKING GROUP

The walking group runs all year round, with walks ranging from 6 to 15 miles. The group is friendly, enthusiastic, and some members have learning disabilities and mental health problems. The walks are generally held on the first Sunday of the month, with two residential weekends each year.

We meet at the Open Country office at Community House, 46 East Parade, Harrogate at 10.00 a.m. sharp. If you cannot come, please ring us so that we are not waiting around for you.

You will need to bring: For comfort and safety, all walkers must be properly equipped with a waterproof jacket and trousers, walking boots (not wellies or trainers) and a good supply of food and drink. Scarves, hats and gloves are recommended in cold weather. Day sacks to carry kit are also important. We may be able to lend you some equipment.

WALKING GROUP PROGRAMME

Sunday January 5th

HAREWOOD

An 8 mile walk around the estate, all on good paths with no stiles.

Saturday January 18th

BURTON LEONARD

A 9 mile walk through rolling countryside.

Friday 14th - Sunday 16th February

WINTER WALKING WEEKEND

Another chance to get away from it all at YMCA Lakeside, on the shores of Lake Windermere in the Lake District. The cost for the weekend is £40, which includes food, accommodation and transport.

Please book by January 10th!

Sunday March 2nd

WASHBURN VALLEY

An old favourite – 7 1/2 miles of easy walking around Yorkshire's Lakeland'.

Saturday March 15th

GRIMWITH RESERVOIR

Wrap up warm for a 5 mile walk around the reservoir, retiring to Stump Cross Caverns for a cuppa afterwards.

EASY GOING WALKING GROUP

These walks are particularly suitable for more casual walkers and wheelchair users.

Saturday January 4th

Easy Going: RIPON RAMBLE

A chance to explore the access improvements along the Skell.

Saturday February 8th

Easy Going: ROMAN IN THE GLOAMING

Journey back through time at Cawthorne Army Camp, near Pickering.

Saturday March 1st

Easy Going: SWINSTY

A 3 mile circular walk around part of 'Yorkshire's Lakeland'.

COUNTRYSIDE OUTINGS

There is a Countryside Outing at least once a month to a wide range of wheelchair accessible locations. The fully accessible minibus picks up participants from home and drops them off afterwards. You can come on your own or with a friend. If you require any assistance, volunteers will be there to help. The interest in our outings means we are only able to accept bookings for one trip at a time, in order to allow everyone to participate.

You will need to bring: Food/drink/clothing as advised in the programme. Most of the activities are outside, so bring warm and waterproof clothing. You will also need to bring money for any admission charges, and any extras.

OUTINGS PROGRAMME

Sunday January 12th

THORP ARCH

Shop 'til you drop before a quick look around Wetherby on the return leg.

Admission charge: FREE Travel time: 3/4 hour

Sunday January 19th

ABBEY HOUSE MUSEUM

Step back through time at this amazing museum on the banks of the River Aire. Full disabled access throughout, including 'The Refectory' restaurant.

Admission charge: £3, Senior citizens £2, Carers free. Travel time: 3/4 hour

Sunday February 2nd

HERRIOT MUSEUM

A return visit to the former home and surgery of our nation's favorite vet. Lunch in one of the local cafes.

Admission charge: £4, £3 Seniors Travel time: 1 hour

Sunday March 16th

LOTHERTON HALL

Something for everyone, with a Victorian Country House, Edwardian garden, deer park and bird garden - the new aviary should be open. Hall partially wheelchair accessible. Some gravel paths. Accessible toilet, cafe and shop. 2 scooters available - please book.

Admission charge: Hall £2, £1 concessions, rest of estate free. Travel time: 1 hour

Saturday March 29th

KILNSEY PARK

A day in the Dales, where we can see Red Squirrels, feed trout and have lunch in the fully accessible restaurant.

Admission charge: £1 Travel time: 1 hour

THE WILD THINGS

Monday December 30th

ON THE HOOF

Watch the 500 strong herd of Red, Fallow & Sika at Studley Royal in the company of an expert guide.

Admission: FREE Travel time: 1/2 hour

Sunday February 9th

THE DEEP, HULL

By popular demand, another visit to the World's first submari-um. All indoors. Fully accessible, including toilets.

Admission £6, £4 Senior citizens, Carers free. Travel time: 2 hours

Sunday March 9th

SEA LIFE CENTRE

Fully accessible, including toilets

Admission: £4, carers free.

ADVENTURE CLUB PROGRAMME

All active Open Country members are welcome. We meet at Community House at 10 a.m. but can pick up by arrangement.

Friday January 11th

SWIMMING

Come to Ripon Spa baths for a fully accessible session. You must attend if you would like a go at Sub-aqua diving later in the year. Cost £1.60, Carers free. 6.30 – 10 p.m.

Sunday February 23rd

CAVING

A chance to go down Long Churns in the Yorkshire Dales. Cost £8

Saturday March 15th or 22nd

ORIENTEERING & INDOOR BOWLING

Try two completely different sports on the same day! Cost £1.10.

COMPANION CYCLING

Through the winter, our off-road group has day rides of 15-20 miles. We meet at Community House at 10 a.m.

Sunday January 5 th	Tandem Club Get Together.
Saturday January 25th	Ripley
Saturday February 1st	Spenn Valley Greenway
Saturday March 23rd	Eccup and Harewood

TO BOOK A PLACE

To book a place, telephone David and Kerry at Open Country on (01423) 507227, Fax: (01423) 528219. Please do let us know if you are unable to attend a Countryside Activity, as we can then give someone else your place. Our address is Open Country, Community House, 46 East Parade, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 5LT. Our email address is info@opencountry.org.uk. Our website is www.opencountry.org.uk.

Please remember that the transport charge for all activities apart from Conservation and Trailblazers £3.00 per person, including Carers.

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