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## *Redspearlands Footpath Group*

### **Newsletter #7 - August 2005**

**Pre-Walk Report** This month's walk was surveyed by Judith and Alan early one mid-July morning, which was just as well as most of the stiles were found to be heavily overgrown and the route extremely un-definitive in a number of places. However, now that the route and the overgrown stiles have been sorted, there's no excuse for not enjoying this attractive walk with some knockout vistas and interesting twists and turns. The way is mostly over level ground but with a couple of uphill bits, which are OK if taken gently, and some road work. This walk starts and finishes at Primrose Hall, so we are intending to have the hall open and all facilities available for a welcome cuppa, etc. on our return.

**July Walk** An extremely hot day without a cloud in the sky saw our party setting off from Raughton Head school towards Rose Bridge, along the Cumbria Way to Lime House, then by bridleway and white way to Raughton, finally by road back to Raughton Head. Twenty walkers participated; one casualty (a blistered heel) was effectively administered to by Sister Mandale. Even in near drought conditions, the Willowclose Wood and Highwath Bridge sections of BW114013 were extremely muddy and deserve to have a proper bridleway surface constructed. The Group has a copy of British Horse Society specifications for these conditions which we will be pleased to pass on to the County maintenance folks. Ron Putz (IFG) pointed out the invasive, pestilential Himalayan Balsam growing on the banks of the River Caldew. This plant had taken root in many Stockdalewath gardens, including mine, following January's Great Storm and Flood. Initially I had thought 'how nice' until Ron acquainted me with the facts. All mine have now been pulled up.

**Evening Walk** A most enjoyable outing at the invitation of our Ivegill friends was an evening walk along the Cumbrian Way from Sebergham to Caldbeck, finishing up in the beer-garden of the Oddfellows Inn at Caldbeck. I feel sure I

speaking for us all when I say how much we value the tie-in with Ivegill Footpath Group. Mutuality of this sort is, for me at least, one of the added-values of country living. And there are practical benefits, too, with our shared aims (hopefully) influencing the shape of Cumbria's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

**Dalston Parish Plan** Those who have read the copy of this document recently delivered to your door will have seen RFG featured in the Environment section. We will be following up this publicity with a display stand at the Parish Plan launch event on 3 September in the Victory Hall, Dalston. We do need more members if we are to have the 'clout' required to influence the decision-makers. There's no lack of goodwill towards us as Liz Craig and I found out when we canvassed nearly 50 signatures of support for a bridleway improvement scheme, but it's membership numbers that cut the mustard.

**Grant Application** Although East Cumbria Countryside Project are contracted footpath maintenance providers to the City and County Councils, they will only do as much as their budget allocation allows...and that isn't a huge amount. With autumn on the horizon and recent experiences with overgrown stiles in mind, the Group is applying for a Neighbourhood Forum grant with which to purchase equipment and insurance cover for our volunteer upkeep workers, and also some money for the photo competition prizes.

Recipients of the Newsletter who would like to come on the next walk is most welcome. We shall be meeting at 2:00pm on 13 August at Primrose Hall, Gaitsgill.

*Alan Lyne*

Hon. Sec.