

REDSPEARLANDS FOOTPATH GROUP

Newsletter #8 - September 2005

Firstly, a warm welcome to Trevor Allison, a Cummersdale resident and a staunch supporter of Rights of Way, who is RFG's first Associate Member. Trevor does a lot for countryside access as Dalston's (LibDem) City Councillor.

There's a definite hint of autumn in the air as we move towards the last of our group walks. Unbelievably, all the outings so far have been blessed with fine weather, including those led by our Ivegill friends over on their territory. Let's hope our luck continues to hold.

This month's walk is from Bridge End to Gaitsgill. We were considering doing it the other way around so as to finish up at the Bridge End Inn's beer garden. However, as this attraction now seems to be a children's play area, we thought better of it and have booked the Primrose Hall for the serving of after-walk refreshments. (Should anyone be tempted to contribute a cake or similar for the goodies table, would they please liaise with Judith (016974 76487) so we don't wind up with too many of one variety).

Arrangements for the walk are as follows:-

Meet at Primrose Hall, Gaitsgill, at 2:00pm on Saturday, 10th September. (Dalston-based members may prefer to meet at Forge Green at 2:15). Car-share to Bridge End leaving some cars behind as retrieval transport. Walk to Gaitsgill, via the 'Cumbria Way' or the 'white way' via Fir Bank, depending on weather conditions. Tea break at Primrose Hall. Retrieve cars left at Bridge End/return Dalstonites - or are they Dalstonians?

We look forward to seeing RFG and IFG members at Gaitsgill (or Forge Green) on Saturday week.

Judith (Chairman) Mandale

Alan (Secretary) Lyne

Alan (Treasurer) Jackson

NB. It is said that present day children and young people do not walk enough, so, if you have access to any, why not bring them along?

From the Horse's Mouth We are told that this month's item was dictated by an equestrian member's horse! Well, whoever wrote it, it is a salutary reminder of the treatment horses and their riders have to put up with on road and track. The rider in question is actually our *only* equestrian member, so this is a good opportunity to remind other equestrians that RFG represents *all* Rights of Way users. Here's hoping that more riders will join us and perhaps even come on an occasional walk.

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Dear Fellow Redsppearlands Perambulators-

I am a 17 hands high, 17-year-old, dark bay Dutch Warmblood mare. I have travelled the Dalston Parish tracks, and its airts, since I was 2-years-old. I am what humans call 'sensible in traffic' and am a reliable ride for beginners, though I'll plod given half a chance, but with the more experienced we have fun!

If you live near Dalston you probably know me; my owner wears a bright yellow hat and tabard and I wear Day-glo cheek straps. This is so motorists, hopefully, will see us and not pass too close or too fast. I say 'hopefully' advisedly as some shave us very close indeed and don't appear to slow down at all. This is very upsetting and causes me to dance, which is unnerving for the following drivers or any nearby pedestrians. Liz, my rider, tries to acknowledge all who slow down and go wide, as the Highway Code requires, but if there are a lot vehicles her hands will be too full to do this. She has asked me here to give her heartfelt thanks to all the courteous drivers who she may have missed in the past, and no doubt will in the future.

Most Sundays we mooch along the Buckabank to Durdar road to take a birl around one of the best bridleways in the district. This is at Park Faulds at the entrance off Blackwell Wood Lane. We are restricted to Sundays because of the volume and size of the traffic on the narrow, unclassified 'Wigton Euro-route' that even I find daunting and not worth the effort. In contrast to most bridleways there is only one gate, which is a well-hung, metal farm gate, with an extra-long handle that Liz can open without dismounting or wracking her or my back. Someone has recently greased the bolt so that it no longer sticks or worse, shrieks, breaking the morning peace of some very pretty countryside. A nice touch is a mounting block either side for riders who have to dismount, thereby avoiding the necessity for the horse to thrust its face into a prickly, rampant hedge while the rider works the catch.

Once through the gate, whatever the weather, we have 2.5 miles of good going on grassy tracks round the farmer's barley fields with wonderful views over the Caldew valley and cycleway (wish-list bridleway) towards Cummersdale and Carlisle, and the Border and Northumberland hills beyond. We have wonderful gallops there, although not when the pheasant and partridge families are using the crop cover.

Because this farmer has diversified into horse livery, there are paddocks of horses and one stallion, 'Pride'. He is well-mannered so long as we keep going and don't mess about near his territory. (He shows off a bit; probably because I am a very fine mare indeed). There are two of Pride's foals to delight us as we amble past.

Anyway, Liz and I have been commissioned to survey some of Dalston's bridleways from the rider's point of view, and I look forward to meeting some of you in our beautiful, peaceful countryside. I'll let you know how we get on.

With best wishes to all road and track users for a better mutual understanding of everyone's countryside perspective.

Jema (as dictated to Liz Craig)