



Coast Alive! Newsletter

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Coast Alive Newsletter. We have lots of interesting updates from a summer of activities to take forward the Coast Alive mission! In this issue, learn how path improvements are giving access for all to an important war memorial site in Hordaland, Norway, how technology can drive new users to access our trails through the GPS run initiative in the Netherlands and find out how we are offsetting the carbon costs of necessary travel through the Greenland Arboretum initiative.

Keep on running

Enthusiastic runners on the Dutch island of Schiermonnikoog have been trying out the new "GPS Run". There are four trails to choose from ranging from 5 to 21 km and runners wear a watch that captures their performance by satellite (GPS).

Their time is registered at www.gpsrun.nl and appears in a league with rankings split into male and female creating a 'virtual' competition. The runner competes with others who have run the same distance but on another day, month or year. The rankings are an incentive to better their own time, or that of others.



The GPS run was made possible thanks to funding from the province of Friesland and the municipality of Schiermonnikoog. The initiative was started by the municipality, the local tourist office and a local runners group on the island who worked with research institution, Internet Academy for the technical implementation.

More information from: Femke van Akker
f.g.vanakker@fryslan.nl

The routes make the most of Schiermonnikoog, the smallest inhabited Dutch island, taking in the variety of beach, dunes, forest and salt marshes and the (almost) absence of motor traffic. Running the GPS combines the relaxation of running in beautiful nature with the effort of a sportive achievement.

Health, Heritage and Biodiversity Walks

Last month saw Norfolk County Council launch a free booklet of Coast Alive walks in and around the King's Lynn area to encourage local people to enjoy regular walking as part of a healthy lifestyle.

cont...



cont...

There are 12 circular walks from one to five miles that take advantage of the North Sea Cycle Trail and highlight the diversity of this fascinating area with its rich maritime heritage and stunning landscape.

The new booklet aims to raise awareness of Norfolk's coastal heritage and biodiversity amongst families and young people and demonstrate how existing green infrastructure can provide a safe and pleasant walking experience in urban areas, opening people's eyes to the opportunities that exist on their doorsteps.

Norfolk County Council will liaise with primary schools and outdoor education facilitators and will link up with health professionals such as NHS Health Trainers who are regularly working with local families to improve dietary habits, increase physical activity and stop smoking. It is hoped that the walks will provide an informative and enjoyable experience that motivates those who are new to walking and stimulates others to begin walking for fitness and pleasure.

More information from: Kirsty Webber-Walton kirsty.webber-walton@norfolk.gov.uk

Update on Café Mermaid

Cafe Mermaid, operated by women of different nationalities in Norway's Bamble municipality, is proving a popular meeting place for lunch on a Thursday. Some of the women have found full-time or part-time jobs as a result of Café Mermaid, making them feel more a part of the local community. Everyone's Norwegian has improved and some are taking courses to develop their language skills further.



During the summer, the women have tried out different forms of fitness training including Nordic walking, indoor rock climbing, swimming and training with weights at Skjærgårdshallen leisure centre. They are now in better physical shape than before and have a lot of new faith in their own skills and opportunities to gain a better social life in Bamble. Some of the women, who previously received regular treatment by doctors and psychologists, have even found that they no longer need it thanks to Café Mermaid.

More information from: Gjermund Ulvang Hagen gjermund.hagen@bamble.kommune.no

Much work has been carried out developing the North Sea Trail and various old trails on the island of Hovden in Norway's Flora municipality, so it was a natural location for the placement of Sogn og Fjordane County's first Coast Alive geocoin.



The geocoin was placed in a geocache on Hovdendagen or 'the Hovden Day' (6 July) - an annual happening where the locals invite everyone to visit their island and participate in various activities, most of them focused on outdoor activities such as hiking.

More information from: Guro Høyvik guro.hoyvik@sfj.no

Beautiful views for everyone

Hordaland, a county on the west coast of Norway has an abundance of trails, paths and routes reaching from the outermost islands to high mountain plateaus, but only a few are universally accessible. To provide access for all will, in many places, require unacceptable disturbance to the natural environment.

One way to overcome this problem is to use what is already there. A subsidy from Coast Alive has been used to create an accessible route to the protected war memorial of Fjell Fortress using an old road constructed during WWII. The road was built to get a mighty triple-gun turret, salvaged from the battle cruise "Gneisenau", to the hilltop.



The surface of the old road has been cleared and gravelled and bushes and trees along its edge have been trimmed. Benches are provided at several scenic spots along the trail and the edges of the road are marked to make it accessible for the visually impaired.

Fjell Fortress now houses a popular café with a breath-taking view of the surrounding landscape. The new route is one of the few places where wheelchair users can access a height that gives free view to both land and sea, from the glaciers in the interior to the open ocean in the west. It passes through a pristine landscape with lakes, woodland and open heather moors grazed by sheep in the summer months.

The next step in this development is to create points along the route where visitors can get a closer look at the animals.

More information from: Øyvind Dahl Oyvind.Dahl@post.hfk.no



Going by Bus to Stättared´s 4H-farm

‘Stättared is so nice that everyone should be able to come here’; this is what Stättared´s 4H-club is working towards.

Stättared´s 4H-farm is situated outside Varberg and Kungsbacka making it difficult to access without a car. However, this summer more people than ever were given the chance to experience Stättared and the surrounding area thanks to special buses from Varberg and Kungsbacka to Stättared.

Over seven weeks, 400 people took the chance to go and have a day in the countryside - grandparents looking at the farm animals with their grandchildren, teenagers going for a swim in the lake, mothers taking a ride with their children in our horse and carriage or young couples just having a coffee in the café.

It has been a fantastic summer with a lot of happy visitors at Stättared´s 4H-farm, more people than ever visiting thanks to the bus-project.

More information from: Karolina Reinhold karolina.reinhold@regionhalland.se

Get Up and Go

The North York Moors National Park has continued its Get Up and Go Award but has expanded it to young people between the ages of 12 and 18. The award sets a challenge to complete a range of health related activities within a certain timescale.

Coastal schools were approached and were enthusiastic but for several reasons, places were slow to fill up. After a rethink, the award was offered to Youth Shack youth club and Hallgarth School which have support for groups of children from socially challenging backgrounds. The advantage of working with these groups is that they already have staff resources, procedures and administration procedures in place.



Two groups and individuals from the coastal schools took part in a range of conservation tasks such as drystone walling, wildflower surveys and bashing thistles to get the heart rate pumping! Other activities included geocaching, teambuilding tasks, walking, cycling, bushcraft, canoeing and more. All children who took part were awarded a certificate and incentives to help them carry on being active.



The next step is to work with Eskdale School to set up a mountain bike group.

More information from: Sally Ann Smith
s.smith@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk

Planting for the future

A surprisingly lush vegetation is found in the inner south Greenland valleys but, because of Greenland's isolated position making it difficult for plants with heavy seed to invade, it is vegetation that is species-poor. For example, apart from the creeping common juniper, there are no conifers to be found.

This is all about to change thanks to a small voluntary levy paid by project partners on all travel, hotel and subsistence costs. The levy has provided the funds to plant 30,000 trees creating an arboretum near the town of Narsarsuaq. It is hoped the new trees will, over time, create a viable forestry system for the area meeting some of the local demand for timber and will also provide valuable information about the resilience of certain tree species to the often challenging conditions found in Greenland.

More information from:
Magne Haugseng magne@haugseng.co.uk



Overcoming Barriers

Odsherred Municipality in the Region of Zealand, Denmark helped local people unfamiliar with physical activity and with mobility issues to walk three 2-3 km hikes earlier this year. Led by a local nature guide, volunteers walked along as helpers and other volunteers provided transport.



More information from: Inger Helt Poulson
i hp@regionsjaelland.dk



Each hike involved a group of 16-20 with five followers/ helpers and a guide. The participants were offered transport to the starting point if they needed, creating a very secure atmosphere. The combination of physical activity in a natural setting and storytelling was very uplifting for all involved.

This method of reaching people was very effective with three groups completing three hikes in three weeks! Overall, 43 people from the target group, 7 NGO's and 5 staff members participated in the project and the NGO's organised two similar hikes with the same target group in the autumn.

Update for Partners from David Hassall

Last year's severe and long lasting winter delayed various planned Community Mobilisation Initiatives (CMI) preventing path preparation, route marking etc but equally provided a great learning point about the impact adverse weather can have on health-related activities.

A total of 32 CMI took place in 2009 and various learning points emerging from evaluations have been used to refine planning for 2010-2012. This year will see 41 CMI covering a wide range of target groups and activities.

We have also gathered a range of best practice examples from outside the Coast Alive project (25 to date with a target of 70 by March 2011) which provide useful information for our CMI planning. We'd like to see more examples of small business development linked to increased activity and health initiatives – does anyone know of anything in their area?

Priorities for 2011 and 2012 include incorporating the learning from 2009/10 to plan strategic initiatives; identifying the WP2 links to WP3 priorities of environment, climate and heritage; completing all evaluations before the last annual meeting in April 2012; and, aiming to complete the Toolkit by early 2012.

Go to it everyone, the adventure is out there!

More reasons to exercise

Here at Coast Alive we have always understood that exercise helps you mentally as well as physically so it's good to see some of the evidence for this shown in a new study. Published in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience*, the study found that moderate exercise such as walking a couple of times a week can improve connectivity in the brain for older people. Go to www.frontiersin.org to read the article.



Participants from the Open Coast meeting at Preikestolen, Norway looking great in their Coast Alive headbands!

The Coast Alive Project has a total of 26 partners and sub partners from the Netherlands, UK, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The aim of the project is to develop a set of strategies and procedures for mobilising more people to use local paths and outdoor facilities for recreation and for fitness. The project builds on two previous EU-funded projects that developed around 12,000 km of paths. Now we want people to use them, all year and as often as possible!

At the same time, we are very keen to preserve our natural and cultural heritage, work with relevant organisations and with small businesses along the routes to boost facilities, build reputations and map out ways of reaching new users of all ages. Through development of a toolkit, which will give specific details of the many approaches used to encourage countryside visits, the initiative will have a lasting legacy.

If you want to learn more, contact Tor Titlestad or Magne Haugseng

Centre for Culture-based Economic Dev.
Hordaland County Council
PO Box 7900
N-5020 Bergen
Norway

Phone: 00 47 55 23 99 85

Email: magne@haugseng.co.uk or tor.titlestad@post.hfk.no

