



Coast Alive

Interreg IVB
**The Interreg IVB
North Sea Region
Programme**

Investing in the future by working together
for a sustainable and competitive region



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Coast Alive! Newsletter

www.coast-alive.eu

Welcome to the latest Coast Alive newsletter. It might be the final year for the project but there's still plenty of exciting work taking place to encourage people to get out in the fresh air and wonderful scenery. Spring has certainly got off to a very sunny start here in the North York Moors National Park – hope the sun is with you too!

Something to be proud of

As the Coast Alive project moves into the final six months, it is becoming clear that regardless of all the activity, we are only scratching the surface of what needs to be done. This is a project that looks very closely at how best to encourage people to move out of their comfort zones and do some sort of physical exercise. We even look at how best to reduce the impact of people on our countryside.

The project is nevertheless a success! The real problem is that too little resource has been deployed to tackle the significant health issues linked to our lifestyle and to modern living. At a time when national budgets are being stretched to their absolute limits, it would seem natural to look at savings. Clearly, whatever we do will have a cost attached to it, but if we can help improve the health of at least some of those who live in our partner regions, we are contributing something significant.

Europe sees a productivity loss of around Euro 28.5bn a year due to lost work days from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) alone. Every year around 41,300 workdays are lost per 100,000 of population and COPD is predicted to be the third leading cause of death worldwide by 2020. Heart Disease, Type 2 Diabetes, Strokes, COPD are all helped by exercise and diet, weight control and physical activity are recurring themes in the treatment for all of them. Regular physical activity will help reduce the chances of developing high blood pressure. A fit person will breathe easier and the fitter we are, the easier it will be to carry out daily activities. Keeping fit and active will help us stay healthy in the future.

Our partners work with frontline health professionals, we have run courses in Nordic Walking, we have discovered that it is easier to mobilise people to have their heart rates and weight etc. tested if you do not offer the test at the Health Centre, but at a sports hall etc. There is more, far more than what we can describe in a newsletter!

Our website is gradually filling up with descriptions of our trial projects. So far we have done over 100 of these, all to test how best we can attract people to use our trials. Keep up the good work and well done!

Magne Haugseng





The Child Wanderer Path

From Kvinesdal in the west to Landvik in the east you can follow 136 kilometers of well parked paths in the footsteps of the 'Childwanderers', as seen in the movie 'Yohan – the childwanderer'.

In the 1800s, up until early 1900, there was extreme poverty in the western part of the Norwegian Agder-region and as a consequence children from this area were sent to the richer eastern part of the region to work as shepherds and such. Children aged as young as seven years old wandered back and forth in large groups, leaving their home for months at a time to make a vital contribution to the economy of their household. This path follows in their footsteps, crossing the valleys in Agder in what is now perceived as wonderful landscape, but yet still gives us an understanding of the harsh reality they lived through over a hundred years ago.

All the partners in this project have agreed to join IATA (International Appalachian Trail Association). An English and German version of the website is expected in spring 2012, funded by the Coast Alive-project. The website will be a portal to attract international visitors to the path, to the connected Childwanderer-center and to the region. For more about the path and the center, see www.barnevandring.no

Using Geocaching as a tool

The treasure hunt activity of geocaching is establishing itself more and more as a way of experiencing and enjoying nature. A project in the Lister-region in the county of West-Agder in Norway will try to build on this by putting more caches into play to attract visitors to different sites, particularly those where visitor numbers are low.

Geocaching routes within the boundaries of three relatively small cultural sites - Nordberg Fort, Lista Lighthouse and Tingvatn Archeological Park - give the public a great arena to practice and learn the activity of geocaching. Caches logged with geocaching.com are used as a gateway to a route of 4-6 internal geocaches not logged with the website. QR-codes at the individual caches enable smartphone-users to access extra information.

A parallel paper version has been developed to enable those not using new technology to also experience and learn. A prize can be found in the last cache, giving a reward to those finishing the route. With the right set up, this product will run itself even when the sites are closed therefore adding value to the service the sites can give.

Despite being an activity on the rise globally, there is still relatively few geocaches in the Lister-region. This initiative also aims to establish some twenty new caches at places of special interest that will be either cultural sites or nature sites such as mountaintops. Coast Alive geocoins will be put in the caches creating traffic among all the different sites that are part of the project.

A brochure will be produced in Norwegian to encourage people to take part. Happy hunting!



'Bike it' gets people cycling

The 'Bike it' project in the North York Moors National Park has seen the delivery of a mass cycle ride that aimed to raise awareness and promote health and exercise by inviting groups, schools and individuals to participate. It was open to all ages, abilities and backgrounds and delivered under the guidance of the National Park Authority utilising the Coast Alive Project with the support of partner organisations and local businesses.

Meetings were arranged with the groups and an Outdoor provider qualified in Mountain Bike Training and a local cycle hire business. The groups were delegated a leader who helped them with the route planning and any health and safety issues, risk assessments and this leader then led their cycle events. They had support both from their designated leader and from the National Park Authority.

Overall, a total of 15 cycle rides were organised with 300 people attending. The groups involved were all mainly beginner groups and were made up of individuals with a wide range of fitness and skill levels. The evaluation received from participants was very encouraging and all wanted to continue cycling which is being assisted through the purchase of bike trailers to allow the countryside to be more easily accessed for cycling by the groups.



Nordic Walking in the North York Moors

One of the new projects in the North York Moors National Park has been to set up a group involved with Nordic Walking. This activity is increasing in popularity in the UK and now has some well documented health benefits.

We wanted a project that engaged with the health sector and included local business. For this we engaged a Nordic Walking Instructor and GP (doctors) surgeries from several locations along the coast were approached to see if they were interested in taking part in this activity.

We had hoped to see a full training course of participants who had been referred from the GP Surgeries taking part in the programme, however just three of the 12 needed came through that route. This suggests that there is considerably more work needed to build a relationship with GP surgeries in order to achieve a 'health' related success.

In the absence of referred numbers, the local paper promoted the activity and the event was oversubscribed. sessions and two further walks along the Cleveland Way National Trail under the instruction of the Nordic Walking trainer, Pauline Straw.

The outcome has been the forming of a sustainable group - the 'Sleights Striders' - who are continuing to meet to carry out Nordic Walking. One of the interesting results from the feedback received was that the social aspects of the activity were selected by most people as being important, over and above the physical health benefits.



Increasing use of a great website

People looking for ideas and inspiration for a nice walk in their local area or at a place they visit in Norway are being encouraged to head to www.godtur.no which gives descriptions and relevant information for finding experiences in all of Norway. Through text, maps and various multimedia the website presents a wide range of opportunities not only for walking but also for activities such as cycling and kayaking. The "Godtur" is a cooperation between the National Outdoor Activity Board and the National Forestry and involves regional Outdoor Activity Boards such as that in Lister, in the west Agder-region.

To increase visits to the new website and to promote the good hiking opportunities in the Lister-region (which aren't perhaps as well known as they should be), the Lister Outdoor Activity Board has worked with the six municipalities in the Lister-region to produce 10 great ways to enjoy the outdoors, nature and culture for each municipality. Using words, pictures, movies and GPS-plotted maps the information is aimed at people living nearby and tourists.



The website will be marketed locally as the place to go for information on new places to experience nature in the Lister-region. Good trip (god tur)!

Promoting the Dutch coastal area

To raise awareness of the North Sea Trail and the health and economic benefits of walking, Wandelnet in cooperation with the Province of Fryslân, is producing a digital route planner as a part of the Coast Alive project.

The existing North Sea Trail will be embedded into the new route planner. A community www.wandelnet.nl will be developed along with more promotional content and tips about staying fit and healthy. Ramblers from at home and abroad can more easily find the trails and the hotspots in the coastal area and share and promote this through their own social networks. This cross cultivation provides more digital functionalities and publicity to the trail but also promotes the coastal areas and its entrepreneurs as well.

With the new site, the Rambler not only has the possibility to plan his walk along the coast, pre-explore the area by photos, videos and points of interest or log and share their own information, but can also work out the loss of calories for each trail they walk. Because of the incorporation into a bigger social community, the statistics will be more significant and relevant to analyze. With this monitoring tool it will be easier to improve the promotion of the coastal area, improve the path itself and to draw conclusions. The planner will be ready in the summer of 2012. More information from mwerensteijn@wandelnet.nl



Children OUT II – A great success

Vest-Agder County Council, through their subpartner Lister Outdoor Activity Board, has supported a number of great initiatives particularly involving children in outdoor-activity. For a number of years, camps and hikes aiming to teach outdoor-activity have been organized by the diaconal service in the Lyngdal Church.

The challenge for the organizer has been that to deliver a wide and exiting range of activities, a good deal of equipment is required.

Normally such investment is recouped through an entrance-ticket for the participants; a result not desirable in this case as one of their main objectives has been to keep a low-threshold offer. As the number of participants has increased, this has become an increasingly bigger problem for the organizer. Our initiative was to help the organizer invest in more and better basic equipment for activities.



This initiative built on the previous event 'Children Out', which developed a basic outdoor-activity course for parents, except this time the activity was directed at children. The camp, held over a weekend in July was a great success with 80 children aged 8-15 participating. The funding has given the organiser a solid equipment base making it easier to hold events all year around, establishing a four-season outdoor-activity offer through the diaconal service in Lyngdal.

Was this a better initiative than the development of the parents-course? It is hard to conclude - both had great feedback and there is no doubt that there was less effort involved in supporting an established event compared to developing and implementing something new. The event in Lyngdal will be good for years to come.

Protecting our Heritage

Archaeological monuments are often threatened by agricultural use and development plans, but recreational use of the area can also be a threat. For that reason, de Archeologische Monumentenwacht (Archeological Monument Guard) in the Netherlands is producing a brochure on potential threats and the simple measures that can be taken to protect monuments like burial mounds, earthworks, farm or castle mounds. In the picture you can see a simple means of preventing cycling by blocking the entrance.

The brochure will be shared with owners, site managers, local councils and recreational businesses in vulnerable areas. The measures suggested are also adaptable for landscape heritage.



Join the North Sea Walk Challenge (NSWC)

On September 4, 2005 the path along the Dutch North Sea coast became part of the North Sea Trail (NST). Tocht om de Noord (TodN) is a walking event that was started in 2006 and annually promotes the North Sea Trail by organizing a walking festival in Groningen (subpartner of Coast Alive) on parts of the Dutch NST. On the 24 and 25 of September 2011 almost 5,500 walking enthusiasts took part in the two-day walking festival. The walking distances vary from 13 km (one day) to 80 km (in two days).

Last year, TodN took the first step towards setting up a new international walking challenge, the North Sea Walk Challenge. This international walking trail challenges participants to walk as many parts of the trail along the North Sea coast as possible.

The Objective

The objective is to have a walking event in all six countries along the North Sea Trail. Each international walking event along the North Sea Trail must meet the following requirements:

- The event must be held over two days (preferably a weekend), which will make travelling to that country worth the effort. This will also make it more likely that participants will schedule a short holiday for this.
- The event must cover a minimum walking distance between 60 and 80 kilometers over two days. Past experience has shown that participants will not travel as far for shorter, less challenging distances. The event should be a cultural exploration, during which the identity of the specific country is discovered.
- The participating countries will jointly offer a commemorative certificate or diploma to every participant who takes part in multiple or all North Sea Trail events.

The Current Situation

At the moment a number of organizations are involved in the development of the North Sea Walk Challenge. These are the Dutch National Walking Association KNBLO, the University of Groningen, the Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen, the Province of Groningen, the Groningen Chamber of Commerce and several (internationally operating) companies, including the tour operator OAD.

In 2013, the next (international) North Sea Trail event will be organized in Germany in collaboration with the University of Groningen. After this, the following North Sea Trail event takes place in Sweden, for which several promising relationships have already been established through a chain of hotels.

The Mission

The ultimate goal is to organise a walking event in every country along the North Sea Trail in the coming years. This will create a new international challenge that will entice many walking enthusiasts to travel beyond the borders of their own countries. This will most definitely be the case if all countries collaborate in developing a beautiful North Sea Certificate, which will be awarded to every participant who completes all events in the North Sea countries.

For more information or joining please contact the organizer Tocht om de Noord, Peter Velthuis +31 50 8509023 info@tochtomdeNoord.nl /



Explore More

Explore More is a Norfolk Coast Partnership project supported by a Sustainable Development Fund grant and Coast Alive. We know that visitors to the area enjoy the popular beauty spots in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), UK, that are easy to find and well promoted. However, with a bit of effort there are many quieter places away from the coast hidden in beautiful countryside just waiting to be discovered on foot.

Explore More has put together ten web walk guides to give inspiration for sustainable days out for visitors to the area. All the walks are accessible by public transport and give web links to public transport providers and timetables as well as to local businesses offering refreshments and tips on other places of interest to visit close to the walk.

Explore More guides are more than just walking Guides: they help visitors find and enjoy the many varied landscapes, views and heritage that lie inland and show there is more to the Norfolk Coast AONB than just the coastline. The effort needed to reach some hidden spots is rewarded by the peace and tranquillity experienced along the way.

The Explore More guides can be downloaded from the Norfolk Coast AONB website www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk.



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

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