

● New season, new projects – Discovering Britain and Walk the World

As featured in the Autumn 2011 Bulletin

2011 saw the Society develop two new projects: **Discovering Britain and Walk the World**. Both encourage people to get out and enjoy the UK: one focuses on its links to the 205 Olympic nations; the other concentrates on Britain's diverse landscapes.

Walk the World

As part of the Discovering Places Cultural Olympiad programme, the Society is leading a project to encourage everyone to explore and understand the links between the UK and the 205 Olympic nations. From street names to monuments and from architecture to plant species, there are a myriad of connections to be found in the UK's built and 'natural' landscapes. These will be showcased on the Walk the World website together with 20 walks that tell the stories behind the international links of some particular places.

Six walks are already in development. Two are in Liverpool: one explores UK international connections through trade and power while another explores links through immigration, cultural diversity and religion. Created in partnership with the Heritage Alliance, Walk the World is a great opportunity for Fellows and members to contribute to an Olympic project and help others to discover the international links in their area, as well as find out about links across the UK.

The Society invites Fellows and members to try one of the first few walks and add a link from their local area. If anyone would like to try their hand at creating a walk please get in touch.

Website: www.walktheworld.org.uk
Email: walktheworld@rgs.org

Discovering Britain

Whether out walking in towns, in the countryside or by the seaside, people often wonder how, when and why the landscape came to look the way it

does. Discovering Britain's website contains a series of free self-led geographical walks that will help explain the stories behind the UK's built and 'natural' landscapes. Piloted during the summer, the project will develop steadily over the next two years. Using expertise from Fellows, members and others, stories told through the walks are designed to reveal the wonders of the landscape and bring Britain's geographical and historical heritage alive for all who visit.

Director of the Society Dr Rita Gardner, who has overseen the project, says the walks are much more than a catalogue of just what is en route: "The walks are designed to be story-led and focus on one or two of ten themes. They offer rich, high-quality content and the interpretation provides a geographical insight for anyone interested in Britain. Think of it as field studies for enthusiasts!"

One of the first walks is called Neither land nor sea and explores mudflats and tidal creeks in the Thames Estuary. Another walk, Bees, berries and beans, in the London Borough of Hackney, discovers how dense urban areas are being used in innovative ways for food production.

A number of Fellows and members have helped to create the first batch of walks and the Discovering Britain team now welcomes suggestions of possible walk themes and locations and is looking for volunteers to go out and try the walks too, so please do get in touch.

Website: www.discoveringbritain.org
Email: discoveringbritain@rgs.org



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Text partially amended from that featured in the bulletin.