



### Countryside Recreation Network

CRN is a network which:

- covers the UK and the Republic of Ireland
- gives easy access to information on countryside and related recreation matters
- reaches organisations and individuals in the public, private and voluntary sectors networks thousands of interested people

The Network helps the work of agencies and individuals in three areas:

#### **Research:**

to encourage co-operation between members in identifying and promoting the need for research related to countryside recreation, to encourage joint ventures in undertaking research, and to disseminate information about members' recreation programmes.

#### **Liaison:**

to promote information exchange relating to countryside recreation, and to foster general debate about relevant trends and issues.

#### **Good Practice:**

to spread information to develop best practice through training and professional development in provision for and management of countryside recreation.

**Chair:** John Thomson, Scottish Natural Heritage

**Vice-chair:** Eileen McKeever, Environment Agency

**Countryside Recreation** is free and is published four times a year. We welcome articles and letters from all readers. The copy date for the next issue is **18th April 2001**.

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Visit CRN on the Internet! See our new home page on: [www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk](http://www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk)

## Editorial

This issue of Countryside Recreation focuses on the implications of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This Act is probably the most significant piece of countryside legislation for the last 50 years. Whilst much of the Press coverage has focused on the issue of access to open countryside (the so-called Right to Roam), the Act also includes provisions aimed at strengthening the protection and management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and new procedures with regard to Public Rights of Way.

In her articles Anne Ewins outlines the legislation on Open Access and Rights of Way and what the new right will mean for the Authorities charged with bringing it about.

Rachel Cook and John Holmes, in their article "Good News for England's Sites for Special Scientific Interest", examine the role of Part Three of the legislation as a tool for ensuring appropriate management of SSSIs. The article on "New Protection for Our Finest Countryside" by Andrew Gale, highlights the advantages from Part Four of the Act for countryside management in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and outlines the role of the proposed statutory Conservation Boards for certain AONBs.

Whilst England and Wales embark on this exciting time for access the Scottish Parliament has begun the process of designating the first two National Parks for Scotland; the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, and the Cairngorms. John Mackay explains the process leading to National Park designation.

Of course, access is not just about physical access, but also includes social, psychological and cultural factors. Jane Stoneham reports on the results of the 'Making Connections' project and the importance of identifying the hidden barriers that prevent people from enjoying access to greenspace and the countryside.

If you are connected to the web please visit our new website at: [www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk](http://www.CountrysideRecreation.org.uk). The site contains details about CRN events and publications. You can access current and past issues of 'Countryside Recreation' and there is a searchable database of research into countryside recreation which we will be updating regularly. Comments and suggestions for improvements are welcome.

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