



# FOOTNOTES



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## Muddy Meanderings

Editorial by David Sutton

**T**here's been a lot in the news recently about Global Warming and carbon footprints (and how to reduce them). Environmental issues have been one of my concerns since the early 1970s, so I've been interested (and somewhat amused) at how weather forecasters, politicians, scientists and other sundry assorted folk have been ushered, kicking and screaming, into an acceptance that man's activities are a major cause of a rise in global temperatures.

So, I decided to see what my own personal carbon footprint is, and can smugly say that mine for 2006 is just over *half* the UK average of CO<sup>2</sup> per person. The calculation is done using kWh for both gas and electricity (figures from



the year's utility bills), car mileage and car's engine capacity, rail and coach journeys, including

local and long distance, and number of air travel journeys, short, medium or long haul.

Our household has a 1.5 litre capacity car, but during 2006 we took four trips to London by either coach or rail, rather than use the car. We took only one short haul flight last year.

You may be interested in how I made the calculations? Well, simple: log onto [www.carbonfootprint.com/index](http://www.carbonfootprint.com/index). The website has a carbon footprint calculator, which does the work for you once you have put in the figures. It includes fields to insert the number of people in the household

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## Social Scene 2007

From our Social Secretary, Derek Garfield

**F**riday 2<sup>nd</sup> March was the date of our **Group Annual Dinner** and a goodly number of members, friends and relations attended at Edgbaston

Golf Club and enjoyed the unique ambience of this celebrated Club and a fine meal. Our After Dinner Speaker regaled us with some amusing tales of her life as a Toastmaster and I think a good time was had by one and all.

Our next **Social Event** will be held on Friday evening 23<sup>rd</sup> March when we will be having a 'Birds of Prey' Evening. There will be a presentation and the birds will actually fly about; we will need to watch out to make sure that some of the smaller, lighter Ramblers aren't carried off. Anyway, it should be an interesting evening and all are cordially invited. Fly off is at 7.30pm at The Grimshaw Room at St Chad's and our usual fine buffet will be included.

Our first **Walk Day Out** of the year is on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April when will be heading up the M6 to Cheshire and the world famous Anderton Boat Lift (well, they think it is world



famous in Cheshire) Anyway, it is a pretty dramatic piece of engineering and we shall have the chance to go on it and have a short canal trip.

We will, as usual, have a short morning walk followed by a pub lunch. Booking Forms are now available.

Our **Quiz Night with The Birmingham Meerkats** (due on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April) has been cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control. Contact Steve Brittain for more information (749 1227).

And finally, a date for your diary. Our **Annual Day Out** this year is on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July when we will be visiting Cambridge. We will hopefully be doing a little light punting, so ladies, please sort out your flowing frocks and gents please dust down you boaters!

And finally, finally can I remind you that **Millets in Birmingham** are laying on another **20% off Day** on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May. This will be available all day but you must bring your RA card with you if visiting during the day. Hopefully, most of our Group will attend in the evening which will no doubt be rounded off in our usual sociable fashion! ■

“... we will be having a Birds of Prey Evening”

## Maps, Compasses, Walk Planning and Leading: Part 4—Starting to use the compass

Roger Gibbs

**W**hy use a compass? The primary use of the compass is direction finding. If you know exactly where you are but the line of your route is not clear on the ground, use of the compass together with the map will show the direction to follow.

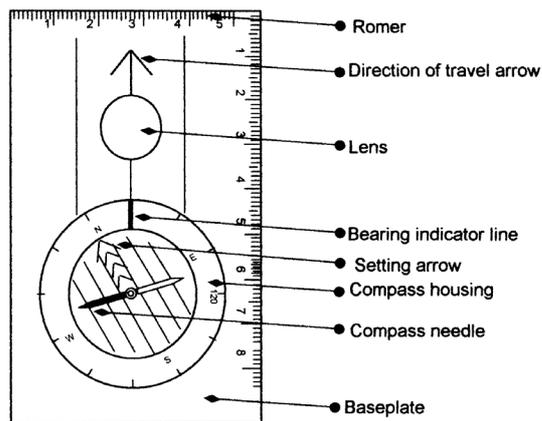
The best type for us is the “Silva” compass (illustrated right), which has other uses, including:

- confirming or finding a position relative to other landmarks
- identifying a visible feature (such as a mountain) from the map
- “setting the map”, i.e. aligning the map with the visible landscape
- measuring between gridlines to give accurate 6 figure grid references
- magnifying details with the inbuilt lens.

### Compass Features:

**Romer.** This is a rectangular scale marked on the compass *baseplate* in millimetres. It’s used to measure short

distances off the map and for reading accurate grid references. **Direction of travel arrow.** The arrow and parallel lines marked on the *baseplate* show the



required direction, as do the two edges of the *baseplate*.

**Lens.** The magnifying lens gives greater clarity of fine map detail as required.

**Bearing indicator line.** This marker aligns with the *direction of travel arrow* to allow the circular scale on the *compass housing* to be accurately read. This provides your “bearing”.

*Setting Arrow* – see “Compass Housing” below.

*Compass Housing.* The housing consists of a circular oil filled capsule which can be rotated about its centre. Marked on the transparent underside is the *setting arrow* and a number of parallel lines. Rotation of the housing aligns these lines to “set the compass”, as described below, which relates the map to the ground and vice versa.

*Compass Needle.* Within the housing, the compass needle rotates independently but about the same centre. It always points to magnetic north, indicated by the red end of the needle.

*Setting the compass from the map.* Maps are drawn so that north is at the top, south at the bottom, west to the left, and east to the right. The gridlines run north/south and east/west, so the map north is sometimes known as “grid north”. Grid north varies slightly from magnetic north, but the difference is small in our area and needn’t worry us at this stage.

To set the compass to show the direction of any path on the map, proceed as follows: Place the compass flat on the map, and align the *direction of travel arrow* with the footpath concerned. The *baseplate* edge (or parallel lines) can also be used if more convenient. The direction will be the same. Hold the compass firmly down

and rotate the *compass housing* until the *setting arrow* points to grid north. Use of the gridlines and parallel lines facilitates this operation. Once set, do not move the housing again.

Remove the compass from the map, keep it level, and turn round until the red end of the *compass needle* aligns with the *setting arrow*. The *direction of travel arrow* now shows the way to follow, and the *bearing indicator line* can be used to read off the bearing, which is the direction expressed as an angle in degrees from 0° (north) to 90° (east), 180° (south), 270° (west) and back to 360° (north again).

The angular bearing is shown by the circular scale around the edge of the *compass housing*. On the sketch only 120° is shown for clarity, but the compass will show the full 360°, typically in increments of 2° marked up every 20°. Read off the bearing shown by the *bearing indicator line*.

*Practice* until it becomes second nature. Once you’ve mastered this, other aspects of compass use can be explored. We’ll cover those in a later edition. Watch this space! ■



## Lifestyle Based Rambling...

By Derek Garfield

**A**t our last Committee Meeting, we were debating recruiting methods consistent with attracting new blood but not overloading the coach every week.

One or two ideas were run up the flagpole but the general feeling was that we needed to think out of the box a little more. We need to press the right buttons to get younger people on board but any sign of ageism would not be politically correct, and we are nothing if not PC. Therefore, in mounting a recruiting campaign, it is essential we are all singing from the same hymn sheet if the whole exercise is not to go pear shaped. We must tell it as it is and not resort to a lot of tired modern clichés.

Our approach must be lifestyle based if we want people to buy into rambling. We could indeed throw some pebbles in the pond and see what ripples they make. It was felt that as a ballpark figure, maybe a 10% increase would be about right to allow us to hit the ground running. We don't want to make a quantum leap and should not oversell the pleasures of rambling; we must not cherry pick



the most attractive features.

But at the same time, we must let people know what a window of opportunity we are laying on them. Rambling is not rocket science - most of us learned to walk at an early age and indeed we have many members where the lift does not go up to the top floor.

So we need some exciting new recruiting proposals. Will someone lift their head above the parapet? But remember, with the coach loading problem, we are really between a rock and a hard place so we don't start with a level playing field.

We must not put this issue on the back burner; we need something to run with (or preferably walk with), like now. ■

*"One or two ideas were run up the flagpole..."*

## Just another day out on Dartmoor

### Arthur Foden

Leaving the outskirts of Princetown in the centre of Dartmoor with a companion, (who in order to conceal his true identity, I shall simply refer to as “Fred”), we planned to explore the area south from here. Our first objective being the remote letterbox at Duck’s Pool, dedicated to William Crossing. Crossing is to Dartmoor what Wainwright is to the Lakes, a recognised authority. Originally there were just a handful of these letterboxes in the remotest parts of Dartmoor, but now it has become a cult thing, with hundreds springing up all over.

“This area is said to have inspired Conan Doyle...”

From our starting point, a high stone wall leads direct for some three miles to the ruins of Nun’s Cross Farm, on the edge of Fox Tor Mires, one of the most notorious areas on Dartmoor. This area is said to have inspired Conan Doyle when writing *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. We must cross this to reach Duck’s Pool.

The terrain now underwent a dramatic change, as we squelched our way forward, there being no solid ground underfoot, just floating vegetation. Later, approaching Duck’s Pool, we came to an area where the need for caution increased. Turning to Fred, I warned him of this, and



the need for greater care and vigilance, urging him to follow me and to watch where he was putting his feet. So saying, I turned, stepped forwards, and disappeared completely, over my head in a bog!

On surfacing, in a panic Fred grabbed me by the scruff of the neck and dragged me unceremoniously back onto terra firma, or what passed for such thereabouts. Fortunately for me, apart from being thoroughly soaked through, no harm was done. I knew that in the vicinity of Duck’s Pool there was a shallow dry valley, with a tiny stream lined by a number of small boulders running through it, which I had already chosen as our lunch spot.

Hurrying there, I sent Fred to look for the letterbox whilst I stripped off and put all

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## Heard on rambles...

**O**n one of our group rambles, a passing 'civilian' was heard to remark, "*Another load of asylum seekers!*" And we thought the Birmingham RA were in the forefront of walkers' haute couture... or maybe we just looked shifty?



**E**larice and Dave discussing the very large number of bees flying around several beehives in the middle of winter. Arthur turns and says, "*C'mon, beehive yourself!*" Groan! Watch out for more terrible quips next issue! ■

## Lake District Weekend 2007 at Derwent Water 9.00am Friday 26th to 10.15pm Sunday 28th October

This year we will be staying at **HF Derwent Bank**, an idyllically situated Country House Hotel, with extensive grounds sloping down to the shores of Derwent Water. The **cost** for full board accommodation in en-suite rooms, plus coach fare, tips and choice of easy to strenuous walks, is approximately £150.00. Booking on "first come, first served" basis. Forms available on the Sunday coach or phone Libby Hunt on 0121 681 2445.

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my clothing on the surrounding rocks to dry, then sat down to each my lunch. Such was the weather that by the time we were ready to resume our walk, my clothes were dry once more.

Setting out from the letterbox, we still had a lot of ground to cover to complete the walk. Consequently we were still

some way out on the moor when darkness overtook us. Luckily the Devonport Leat, a man-made watercourse was close at hand and following this I knew would bring us back to Nun's Cross Farm. It then only remained for us to rejoin the high stone wall and follow it back to our starting point, thus bringing to an end just another day out on Dartmoor! ■

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and also an option for personal or a household calculation. The website has pages on reducing and offsetting your footprint.

I have to say that in one respect I cheated... I did not include in the coach mileage the distances undertaken on our Sunday coach rambles! I think this will make a small difference to the total (the bulk will still come from air travel, car use and household energy) but it would be nice to include this in the calculation. However, I've no idea what the mileage might be for all the Sunday coach journeys! I wonder if there is some enterpris-

ing Rambler out there with more time on their hands than they know what to do with, who would be willing to look at last year's Sunday programme and work out an approximate mileage? Only joking...

Finally this issue, I must mention our Crossword Competition winner from last issue. First correct entry 'out of the hat' was member Jack Gunson, who has chosen a Birmingham Ramblers' Badge as his prize. Those returning their crossword entries think we should have more in the future and regarded the difficulty level of the last one about right! (If anyone would like to see the answers to the crossword, please contact me. ■

**Special Notice: The Quiz Night with the Birmingham Meerkats, due to take place on 28th April, has been cancelled.**  
For more information contact Steve Brittain on 749 1227.

**Footnotes:**

Articles, letters, 'Heard on rambles', poetry and other contributions are **most** welcome.  
Please write to  
David Sutton, 194 Station Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7TE.  
(Phone: 0121 444 6188).  
Email at: david.sutton986 @btinternet.com.

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