

## WALKING FOR CHRISTIAN AID

It is two years since the planned sponsored walk along the Viking Way had to be cancelled due to my brother's enforced rest with soft tissue damage in his ankle. Now fully recovered we thought that we would attempt the walk this May during Christian Aid week (although it will take longer than that).

The trail travels the length of Lincolnshire from the Humber Bridge to just across the border into Rutland and a finish in Oakham. It gets its name in recognition of the occupation by the Vikings of the Danelaw; that part of England where Danish law held sway over that of the Anglo-Saxons. Many village names end in 'by', meaning a farm or settlement in the Danish language spoken at that time. The symbol chosen for the way markers is a horned Viking helmet, although whether Vikings actually wore them is another matter. 'Vikings' came from Scandinavia and 'going viking' is what they did, not who they were. It means 'pirate raids' and these Norse seafarers were active in Northern Europe during the ninth to eleventh centuries.

That is enough about the Vikings, what about the walk?

It is 147 miles in length but we will have to walk further than that as some accommodation is, of necessity, off the route. The trail soon leaves the Humber estuary and heads generally in a southerly direction through the Lincolnshire Wolds, appointed an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) in 1973.

This will be the most demanding part of the walk as we will be carrying all we need for eleven days of walking on our backs. (Some will now have calculated the daily mileage but it is usually more, as two day's walks are comparatively short.) Upon reaching the River Witham the route turns back north and follows the river to enter Lincoln before heading south again through flat farming country. The trail then becomes a procession of field paths with constant changes of direction. We shall have to pay attention to our maps. It is seven years since we last walked a trail of this length so it should be interesting to see how much the effect of ageing has added to the challenge. This is likely to be a difficult year for Christian Aid with the fall-out from the Oxfam scandal spreading to the rest of the charitable sector. As a Church we will not be holding as many fund raising activities as in previous years. If you feel able to donate it will help raise valuable funds for the good work that Christian Aid does. A sponsor form is in church.

Richard Kirby

