

Walking for Christian Aid

During Christian Aid week in May my brother and I will be making our third attempt to walk the Viking Way, having twice failed to get to the starting line due to illness and injury. Perhaps it will be 'third time lucky' but there is no substitute for proper preparation. 'Ballast' has gradually been added to my rucksack on local walks to get my knees used to the additional weight. I use several bottles filled with water; they can always be emptied if it gets too much. There are no baggage-handling operators on this Trail so we will have to carry everything we need on our backs - my brother always does (he is younger than me)!

Accommodation has been booked and maps printed. Although the use of smart-phones is becoming more popular we prefer map and compass. You can see the 'bigger picture' and are not reliant upon a mobile telephone signal (apart from which neither of us has a smart-phone). A simple satellite navigation device is always carried in case we need to know exactly where we are.

I wrote about the walk in some detail a year ago so will only give a brief description. It starts from the Humber Bridge and travels south through the length of Lincolnshire to finish at Oakham, near Rutland Water. This is the direction we will take although it is generally better to go north and have the wind and rain at your back rather than in your face. We shall be walking for eleven days averaging 14 miles a day except for the last, when we plan to finish by lunchtime. Although we have journeyed along several National Trails the Viking Way, at 147 miles, will be the longest we have managed since 2011. It will be interesting to see what effect the passage of time has had, if any, as walking is an activity that can be carried on well into old age.

St. Mary's Church members have always been generous in supporting this fund-raising event for Christian Aid and sponsorship forms will soon be in church. (All donations given in advance of the walk last year were returned, apart from one which I still hold.) With house to house collections having fallen out of favour our Church organisers are looking for other opportunities to provide money for the good work carried out by Christian Aid. If you have any ideas then please speak to them.

Richard Kirby