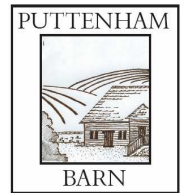


# PUTTENHAM CAMPING BARN (Project Oasis North Downs)

## Newsletter – Spring 2009



*During National Bike Week in June the Godalming Cycle Campaign organised a well-attended evening ride to the barn.*

*Photo: Jenny Powell*

**Welcome** to this Spring 2009 newsletter. We are pleased to report that 2008 has been our best year to date, with many improvements made to the barn and record overnights recorded.



**Again, thank you to all supporters and volunteers – and to our many and varied guests – for your continuing invaluable support and encouragement.**

Enclosed is the Surrey County Council pamphlet `Cycle routes, Farnham to Guildford`, which we hope you will find of interest. If your newsletter is being sent by e-mail, the map can be downloaded from the local attractions page on our web site.

### 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

- Prior to opening the barn at Easter, we were delighted to accept the kind offer of a weekend working party by a team from the **Croydon YHA group**. Despite the atrocious weather several important tasks were completed, and members from the group have since returned to carry out more improvements and repairs.
- The extremely cold weather over **Easter** did not deter a party of intrepid campers from using the barn as a base for local walking. We ensured plenty of extra bedding was available for our guests and for the wardens!
- In spite of ongoing cold weather – and even a blizzard - approximately 75 enthusiastic visitors inspected the barn during the weekend of the **Puttenham Flower Festival**.
- In early Spring we were pleased to take **two large bookings** – sole use for a group of geography teachers attending a course at Surrey University, followed by cyclists from Sustrans who were participating in a first aid course in the area. The latter group benefited from the newly-introduced 'green rate' for visitors not arriving by car.
- Several walkers stayed with us in June following mention of the barn in an article on the North Downs Way in the **Weekend Guardian**.
- During 2008, with Sue Hall's guidance we focused on producing a **plan for the grounds**. Amongst the changes is the addition of a hurdle fence and a level outdoor area in which guests can relax.
- Several **new volunteers** have joined our Committee and new helpers have given much-appreciated assistance at the work parties held during the year. We are also delighted to announce that **Cherry Allan**, who works for the CTC, has joined the Board of Trustees.
- On a sunny evening during **National Bike Week** in June a large and enthusiastic group of cyclists from the Godalming Cycle Campaign was greeted at the barn, with refreshments kindly provided by Betty Moxon.
- The **AGM** evening held at the end of June concluded with an interesting **talk by Tony Gowers**, North Downs Way National Trail Officer.
- Due to high demand **two successful training days** for potential wardens were held during the 2008 season.
- Thanks to our volunteer web site expert Alec McCalden, with support from Chris Meeks, our **web site** is now updated and provides comprehensive information for our guests.



Keith Rix from Croydon YHA returned to Puttenham in the Autumn and together with volunteer (and warden) Janet Torlot gave up an entire weekend to weatherproof the cycle shed – it now looks like new!

Photo supplied by Janet Torlot

Visitors can now enjoy breakfast or an evening meal in the barnyard thanks to the arrival of two new picnic benches during the year – the first donated by supporter John Summers and the second carefully refurbished and delivered by members of the Croydon YHA group.

We also thank Quita King, who has generously donated a sofa which has proved to be a popular and cosy addition in the kitchen/rest area, and all other friends of the barn who during the year have contributed various items.

## LOOKING FORWARD TO THE 2009 SEASON...

- The start of season work party will take place on Saturday, 21 March.
- We will re-open the barn to campers on Saturday, 4 April.
- For 2009 our overnight charge will be £12 per adult and £10 per child, but with a £2 'green' discount for guests arriving by public transport/on foot/by bike, horse etc.
- In this our fifth season of opening we hope to hold one or two social events for supporters past and present – more information to follow with the AGM notification.

### YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

If you are happy to receive future newsletters and mailings by e-mail, please advise the newsletter editor, Hilary Mills, at

hilary.mills@mypostoffice.co.uk

~ This will help to save costs ~

## POND AND VOLUNTEERING

We are always delighted to hear from anyone who is considering becoming a volunteer. Please let us know if you are interested in helping in any of the following ways:

- At least three work parties are held each year. Tasks include cleaning and tidying as well as more specific repair jobs around the barn. These are social events with a communal meal and any help - whether all day or just for an hour or two - is most welcome.
- A one-day training course for potential volunteer wardens, led by Sarah Hart of Tanners Hatch YH, is arranged for Saturday, 28 March. To discuss what is involved in volunteer wardening please contact Chris Meeks (details below).

*July 19<sup>th</sup>: A fantastic place in a really lovely village. Perfect for our cycle tour – thank you!*  
- Ben & Ben  
(London)

*May 11<sup>th</sup>: A great stop on my pilgrimage journey from Winchester to Canterbury (140 miles). 'Treat the earth gently; live your life humbly.'*  
Blessings - Mike

### THREE OF MANY COMPLIMENTARY COMMENTS FROM THE VISITORS' BOOK DURING 2008

*June 19<sup>th</sup>: Congratulations on an amazing project completed with a tremendous amount of thought, hard work, enthusiasm and goodwill. I am most impressed. With all good wishes*  
- Mark Mathews

- Any offers to co-ordinate publicity matters would be appreciated. In addition, we would like to hear from anyone who is interested in putting themselves forward to become a trustee.
- Finally, any offers of suitable items for the barn would be welcome. These could be garden tools; a boot rack; a multi-storey steamer pan (stainless steel, hob-top variety); cycle repair items; books about Pilgrims Way/North Downs Way; or a financial contribution towards the new *Maintenance or Emergency Fund*, which will provide for essential maintenance products, eg woodstain.

Web site: [www.puttenhamcampingbarn.co.uk](http://www.puttenhamcampingbarn.co.uk)

Contact: Chris Meeks, tel 01483 422774 or e-mail [chrismeeks@care4free.net](mailto:chrismeeks@care4free.net)