

**Public Guided Walk  
“Fields, hedgerows, railways and byways”  
Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2006**



**Worthys  
Conservation  
Volunteers**

The public walk along the railway, originally organised by WCV with support from the Parish Council, was arranged to commence at about 2-30 pm from outside the Tesco store in Springvale Road. Despite the lack of publicity due to still-delayed publication of the Village Newsletter and a failure of the planned announcement in the Parish Magazine, some 10 walkers and 2 dogs, plus the leader and an assistant (his wife) turned up at the appointed time!! Several had been alerted to the walk through publicity at the Village Fete, the notices dotted around the village boards and some through contact with the WCV.

The next couple of hours passed quickly, and if any of the participants were truly bored by the experience, few showed overt signs! As in previous walks conducted in the Hookpit Farm/Didcot Railway loop, the commentary was heavy on history, particularly as it affected changes in the countryside over the past few hundred years and a little lighter on natural history. In particular attention was paid to farming methods over the centuries, railway history and to the remarkable reclamation of the abandoned railway by pioneer trees and shrubs.



Several of the party, who walk the railway and byway from time to time, expressed their gratitude for the Sleeper benches which had been installed by the WCV over the last year or so. Some welcome comments were also forthcoming concerning the general environmental improvement along the railway path. It is hoped that the participants who expressed an intention to join in future tasks found the experience rewarding and were not put off too much! Three of the group are certainly considering the possibility of joining future tasks.

The public walk experiment was found sufficiently successful that the leader might well consider repeating the walk next summer, with new “interesting facts” and anecdotes. It is of course hoped that the publicity machine might work a little more effectively next time round!!

**Leader: Michael Edwards.**