OpenStreetMap - Rutland Mapping Party – 14/15 Oct

A group of volunteers from a worldwide mapping project is descending on Rutland - and **the OpenStreetMap co-ordinators are appealing for local cyclists or walkers to come and join in the fun!**

These 'citizen cartographers' will pedal, walk or drive along every rural road, cul-de-sac and cycle track in the county, recording their path as they go. From this, they will build up a detailed map of the county free of copyright restrictions, so that anyone can use it without paying a royalty. For example, their maps are already in use in Wikipedia, the free Internet encyclopaedia.

Q. When and where is it happening?

A. The OpenStreetMap mapping weekend runs on **Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th of October**. The base camp for participation is the Study Room at Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, LE15 6HW. They will be holding introduction talks at 10:30am and 2:00pm on Saturday and 2:00pm on Sunday.

Q. What is OpenStreetMap?

A. OpenStreetMap (OSM) is a voluntary not-for-profit Foundation that anyone, anywhere can join. The goal of OSM is to provide free geographical data that can be used by anyone. All of OSM's data and maps are freely available on the internet at www.openstreetmap.org

Q. Why would anyone want to do that? Aren't there lots of free maps out there?

A. Most of the maps that you come across on the internet or in your home are protected by stringent copyright laws and licensing rules. These stop most traditional maps from being used in unique and unexpected ways, stifling people's creativity and imagination.

Q. Why did OSM come to Rutland?

A. Rutland is a beautiful rural county and OSM wanted to demonstrate that it is possible for quite a small team of volunteers to achieve a lot in a small period of time. Over the weekend it is hoped to map all of Rutland's roads and many of the other public ways, including all the streets in the towns and villages.

Q. So how does it work?

A. Anyone with a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver can start mapping straight away. You need to set your GPS to record tracks and then go for a walk or for a bike ride or a drive. When you get home, plug your GPS into your computer and upload the tracks that you recorded onto the OSM website. You can then use online or offline editing tools to create a new map over the top of your collected GPS traces that anyone in the world will be able to see.

Q. Who can be involved?

A. The OSM project and the Rutland mapping weekend are open to anyone. No prior experience is required and you don't need to own a GPS receiver to take part in the mapping weekend. A number of handheld GPS units will be available to participants on loan.

Q. Where can I find out more?

A. The project website is at

http://wiki.openstreetmap.org

A link to the Rutland Mapping Party page can be found on the Events Calendar there.