

The Ramblers' Association
The charity working for walkers



Mr Stavros Dimas
Commissioner for the Environment
European Commission
B-1049 BRUXELLES
BELGIUM

5th January 2007

Dear Commissioner Dimas

As the UK's biggest walking charity, the Ramblers' Association has a strong interest in the issues surrounding climate change and its impacts on the natural environment. Our countryside and its landscapes are not only important in themselves, but have proven benefits for the health and well-being of those able to experience it through outdoor recreation.

Walking is the most sustainable and environmentally friendly form of travel possible. Encouraging more people to walk instead of using motorised transport, especially for short journeys, could have a major impact on the efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Associated benefits, in addition to improved health and wellbeing, include opportunities for social inclusion and community building.

We would therefore be grateful if you could advise what opportunities exist to develop these ideas and increase the priority and profile of walking within the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP). We believe that clear guidance on promoting zero-emission modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, could provide significant encouragement to national governments, including the UK, to support initiatives in this area.

The Ramblers' Association already works closely with agencies throughout Great Britain to encourage walking and protect the environment. We would be pleased to support any efforts by your department and the wider Commission to integrate walking into the ECCP.

Yours sincerely



Kate Ashbrook,
Chairman