

## **GSWW 306 Torridge District – South West Coast Path Footprint Signing Scheme in Appledore and Westward Ho!**



The project is an innovative, unobtrusive, yet surprisingly conspicuous method to sign the South West Coast Path National Trail through the towns and villages in the Torridge District of North Devon.

In order to make navigating through the towns easy for walkers and to engage with visitors and make them aware of the coast path, we have installed novel brass footprints into the pedestrian walkways. The footprints have the National Trail acorn cast into the heel along with the name of the town on the ball of the footprint. As well as signing the route, the idea is to generate a closer link between the towns and the coastal path, and reminding 'everyone' that the trail is not just the rural areas with spectacular views and rugged terrain, but also the urban areas steeped in culture, heritage and history.

Installing the footprints was not without its problems. In order to create a sense of continuity in an array of different surfacing and tarmac age/condition etc, we needed to make sure the footprints were all installed the same. Our plan had been to insert the prints directly into a pre-cut rebate filled with concrete, but this would not give sufficient depth to over top and seal with tarmac. This problem was over-come by setting the prints on a concrete base, then setting this into a concrete fix. By using this method, we had sufficient depth of concrete to hold the print secure, but also enough depth to infill with tarmac, which included a secure water tight base directly below the brass print.

Not only has the scheme made navigation through the towns easier, it has also raised the profile of the National Trail to new potential walkers. It will reduce the need for un-slightly urban way marking which so often gets lost amongst a sea of signing, or painted over or removed by other agents; creating a costly and 'on-going' maintenance problem. Once in situ the footprints will be maintenance free, should be self-cleaning (and

polishing) and should also eventually turn green (verdigris). It is hoped that the Footprints will continue to sign the Coast Path for many, many years and eventually become part of the overall cultural heritage of the towns where they have been located.

Westward Ho! during fitting



Casting the footprints prior to fitting



Footprints cast and ready for fitting

