

Parish Paths Seminar

Friday 28 February 2020

hosted by [Norfolk Local Access Forum](#) (supported by NCC)

Local Access Forums - about 80 over the country. LAFs are advisory bodies to County Councils, looking after the needs of volunteers, walkers, riders, 4x4 users and land owners. Norfolk LAF is the only one in the country with a charity attached to it: [Pathmakers](#) Across Norfolk there are 3 Countryside Access Officers (plus some Trails Officers).

Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019 – 2029

a detailed document trying to improve countryside access in Norfolk. Soon to be in all libraries across Norfolk and is available online.

[New Norfolk Access Improvement Plan](#)

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Definitive Map and Statement: held by Norfolk County Council. Need to make an appointment to view it. Updated when new developments change the route of paths etc. Also available online at NCC.

[NCC Definitive Map and Statements](#)

Reporting defects

using new **Highways Problem Report Form** on NCC website

There's a statutory duty for County to deal with defects though may have to wait a long time for eg missing fingerposts.

NCC prioritising uses a risk based approach – due to not enough funds to action all problems straightaway.

[NCC Report a Problem](#)

Don't go through FixMyStreet, it's slower, use: [roads&transport/road/report-a-problem](#) and click Public RoW (link above)

If making the report in situ, use 'find me' otherwise go with place name and click on map then 'next'.

Complete details on form, check and submit.

Your report goes to CRM (customer relationship management) then to Mayrise Highways, then to Project Worker's tablet and they then respond to you. When you want to see how the report is going, click on 'tickets'.

Permissive Access

Countryside Stewardship no longer funds permissive access, thus leading to the loss of permissive paths. Funding was cut in 2010 and now many land owners are halting access. Land owners can be resistant to new PRoWs so permissive paths are very good at offering provision of alternative safe off road routes. Norfolk has 2,400 miles of ProW plus an additional 1,200 miles of trails and circular walks. The county has/had the second biggest number of permissive paths.

[Natural England - permissive paths](#) gives you a map of currently funded permissive paths. Land owners may choose to keep them open once the Access End Date has passed but they won't be paid for them.

Agreements can be negotiated between owner and parish council, 5 year schemes. The government's rate differed according to type of path but land owners can be willing to accept smallish payment to cover keeping grass mown, public liability etc, eg £200-600/year, but may well cost £1.5K for legal agreement. Talk to Mike Edwards about starting those negotiations (mike@norfolkwag.co.uk). FWAG = farming and wildlife advisory group.

New environment scheme is coming on board in 2025 and it is anticipated that permissive paths will again be funded by government.

Registering unrecorded public rights of way

If you know of an unrecorded Right of Way you can make a Modification application to have it added to the Definitive Map. For a Modification Application Pack contact the Legal Orders and Registers Team at legalordersandregisters@norfolk.gov.uk

If a path can be proved to have been used for 20 years it can become a PRow and this can continue after 2026. What won't continue after 2026 is the ability to prove the existence of a path using historic evidence eg Faden's 1797 or Bryant's 1825 maps. To research historical maps go to [NRO - Historical Maps](#) then go to Map Explorer or Map View.

Norfolk Trails:

Norfolk has 1,200 miles of trails and circular walks. Russell Wilson is one of Norfolk's Trails Officers and spoke of his work running big projects with volunteers.

[Norfolk Trails](#)

Ken Hawkins of [Dereham Walkers Are Welcome](#), also the volunteer Footpath Warden for Dereham TC spoke of the small scale work he does with a small group of volunteers who help keep footpaths clear.

NCC has responsibility to look after surfaces with a duty to maintain.

Landowner has responsibility for what grows from the side.

Council don't have the funds to keep all paths clear so involves Ramblers and other groups.

Go to NCC website – Right of Way – follow link and scroll down to see breakdown of responsibilities: [About Public Rights of Way](#)

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