

# The Big Pathwatch

9 April 2015

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# What is the Big Pathwatch?

- A survey of all public rights of way in England and Wales (as shown on the OS map), to record problems and positive features
- Launching this summer (June for volunteers, July for public), closing in the late autumn (t.b.c.)
- Ramblers' biggest ever campaign, coinciding with our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary
- Steering group of advisers inc. former Countryside Agency director who led previous national survey
- Funded by the Ramblers Holidays Charitable Trust

# Why are we running this project?



- Currently no national picture of the path network
- We need evidence of the volume and nature of problems so that we can respond to path funding crisis
- A need for more people to feel responsibility for and pride in their paths

# Project outcomes

- 1. More people engaged with our work;** volunteers, members and new audiences (families, young people, and independent walkers).
- 2. Data on the entire path network;** problems and the positives, by local authority, Ramblers area and country.
- 3. Improved paths;** helping more problems to get fixed and identifying solutions to funding cuts





**ramblers**  
at the heart of walking

# How will it work?

Participants will.....

1. sign up online, and pick a 1km x 1km grid square to survey
2. print off map, guidance, and survey questions or download the free smartphone app
3. go out and walk every right of way in their chosen square(s)
4. upload their responses via the app while they walk, or via website when they get home
5. have option to upload pictures, and share via social media



# What are we recording?

- Problems and their effect, i.e. inconvenient or unusable
- Positive features and highlights of the walk
- The grid reference – this is automatic!
- Photograph (optional)
- NB participants will select from a list in either the problem or positive category –they will not be required to enter text



# Working with Volunteers

- At area level – helping to cascade information to groups, ensuring that sample grid squares (200 or fewer per authority) are surveyed as a priority, informing local PROW team
- At group level – encouraging group members to get involved, adding surveys to walks programmes, telling their family and friends

*Tell us how we can best work together on this!*

# Working with Authorities

- We're involving IPROW and ADEPT to communicate at a national level
- Ramblers areas and groups encouraged to inform authorities at a local level
- Collaborating to identify more effective means of keeping paths maintained and ensuring landowners meet their responsibilities
- Ensuring their support – this is not about criticising them!



# What happens after the survey?

We'll use survey findings to campaign on the issues and investigate solutions, eg:

- Alternative sources of funding?
- Increased uptake of volunteer schemes
- Education of and increased cooperation with landowners?
- Campaigning for increased powers of enforcement?

....or a combination of these?

# Thank you Questions?

