

PRESS RELEASE  
PROTECT YOUR PATHS

If you do not use your paths you may lose them! The best way to protect them is to walk them. Footfall keeps vegetation down and if the status and right of passage is ever questioned evidence of use is invaluable.

Many organisations need your help to make sure your paths are usable and still there for the next generation to enjoy and the LLAF brings together all interests and is trying to coordinate their efforts.

The local authorities will find it increasingly difficult to monitor the condition of the routes and as always welcome reports from users. With an enviable over 3000k of rights of way in Leicestershire alone this is a big task and amongst the organisations involved, the Ramblers ask people walking their favourite paths to report back on what they find using a smartphone app. or via the web. The Ramblers' chief executive Benedict Southworth said: "As guardians of the path network we work hard to protect our paths, but we need a complete picture of the entire network. With the help of people everywhere, the Big Pathwatch aims to survey every right of way in England and Wales, giving us the comprehensive overview we need to then be able to solve any problems."

People are able to download the Big Pathwatch app and share their experiences. To find out more, or to register to take part in the Big Pathwatch, visit [www.Ramblers.org.uk/bigpathwatch](http://www.Ramblers.org.uk/bigpathwatch).

There are other ways you can help protect and enhance the rights of way network. The Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LLAF) is an independent statutory body, set up as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000, and exists to represent the interests of everyone concerned with access to the countryside and the public rights of way network. Most routes have a legal right of passage in one form or another but not all are fully protected and many are under threat with the wave of developments we are seeing.

It is important that local people who know their areas best keep a watch on all applications and consultations and make your views known to the Developers and the Planning Authorities. The LLAF get involved with all larger cases and any having an impact on the overall rights of way network but rely on local people and Parish Councils to bring the smaller ones to our attention where there is a potential problem or opportunity. Some local routes can be closed by the landowner if they are not registered and there have been recent cases of this happening.

Visit [http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/countryside/paths/maps\\_of\\_paths/pathsmap.htm](http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/countryside/paths/maps_of_paths/pathsmap.htm) and if you know of a path not shown there, let us know by emailing [information@leicslaf.org.uk](mailto:information@leicslaf.org.uk)

**Terry Kirby, LLAF Chairman**

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Editors note

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