

Improving local access

Countryside Access Plans

Whose role?

A role for Parish Councils?

Small Grants Scheme

Parish Path Poll



Improving Local Access

In chapter 3, 'Who's Responsible?', we saw how many powers various bodies have to manage public paths. Now we will look at how those powers can be put into practice by Parish Councils to improve local access. We suggest a simple set of steps to help Parishes take advantage of these powers. These will be explored in greater detail throughout this chapter.

- **Find out what local people want.** There is a significant amount of information available to Parishes through Countryside Access Plans, and Community led Plans. A parish path poll is another great way to find out who uses local paths and how they would like them improved. All this information will ensure you are meeting local needs and help as evidence to secure funding.
- **Develop ideas for improvements.** From talking with local people decide how to improve local access. For example this could be a project to replace stiles with kissing gates to improve access for those less mobile, or publishing a leaflet showing local paths. Both types of projects could be part funded through the Small Grants Scheme.
- **Plan how to progress these projects.** Now that you know about the powers your parish has available, plan how you would like to get more involved. Are there land owners that you can talk with that could help with improvements, or rectify local problems? Do you have volunteers in the parish that could help, or is there interest to start a group?

To start with, we must say a little bit about the policy and plans framework that should guide your work.

Countryside Access Plans (CAP)

CAP - what are they?

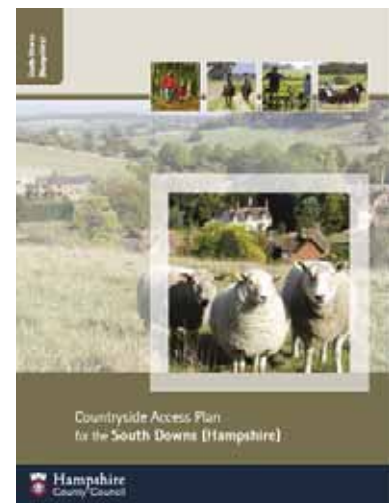
As a statutory duty the Government requires all Highway Authorities to prepare Rights of Way Improvement Plans. However, as we have seen already in this guide, Rights of Way are just one resource used for recreation, along with country parks, commons, conservation areas and access land. Therefore in Hampshire our plans explore the broader concept of access and Rights of Way, and are called Countryside Access Plans.

All of the plans are based on research carried out with local residents and landowners; asking about problems they have experienced and improvements they would like to see in the local countryside. The plans may include actions such as:

- Physical improvements – e.g. improving a path surface to provide easier access for everyone.
- Better information – e.g. ensuring that people know of the countryside access available to them locally and how to use it responsibly.
- Improving links – e.g. creating new paths to make circular walks and rides.

How do CAPs affect Parish Councils?

The plans identify the main countryside access issues affecting each area and include broad statements of action as to how we intend to address these issues.



The plans were developed by the County Council and reflect what parishes and others told us through the consultation process. They are intended as an action plan for all countryside access partners, including Parish Councils. Many of the statements of action focus on areas where parishes are either lead or partner bodies. While we are always happy to consider new initiatives, the plans have been developed to focus local action on the ground. It will be much easier for us to support actions that have been identified in the CAP than those which haven't.

We would suggest that, in planning any improvements, the CAP covering your area should be your starting point, concentrating on implementing works identified in the plan. To access the plans visit,
www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-countryside/countryside-development/access-plans

Community led Plans

Preparing and regularly reviewing the CAP is a statutory duty for the County Council. However, Rights of Way and countryside access should also be included in community led plans, where Parish or Town Councils will usually take the lead role. There are two main types of action plan that communities can develop to help steer improvements to their local environment; **Parish Plans** and **Market Town Healthchecks**. Both plans are similar, although the Healthchecks go into greater detail about particular economic issues that may not be relevant in most parishes.

Parish Plans

Parish Councils are encouraged to develop a Parish Plan - a document that sets out how a community sees itself developing over the next ten or more years, often described as a 'shared vision' for the future. The scope will be wide and varied, but should involve improving residents' access to local paths and countryside.

The very process of surveying the parish (perhaps carrying out a Parish Path Poll) and consulting with local people will throw up many ideas for improvements. Once checked against the County's targets, these can become the parish's interpretation of the CAP at the most local level.

A national Parish Plan Toolkit has been produced by ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) to help you draw up and get the most from your plan. The toolkit can be downloaded from ACRE's website at
www.acre.org.uk/communityengagement_parishplans.html

For more information and help with Parish Plans, please contact Community Action Hampshire, Beaconsfield House, Andover Road, Winchester, SO22 6AT, telephone 01962 854971.

Market Town Healthcheck

An alternative approach for larger communities is the Market Town Healthcheck. Again, access to the countryside is an important component in this wider plan. A Market Town Healthcheck Handbook is available to download from the South East Rural Towns Partnership website at
www.setowns.org.uk/filemaster/files/292-668-Healthcheck-Handbook-March-2005.pdf

For town councillors wanting more information about Market Town Healthchecks, please contact Hampshire Market Towns Project, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8ZB, telephone 01962 846558.

Below are some examples of Parish Plans, Action Plans and Market Town Healthchecks.



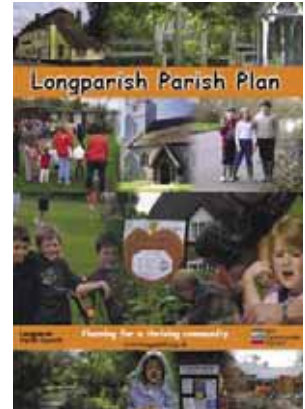
An Action Plan for **New Milton and Barton-on-Sea** highlights the importance of improving access for visitors and the local community. Potential projects include:

- To improve visitor information and signage.
- An environmental improvement scheme to improve access to the beach.
- Extend the Solent Way.
- Access improvements to the Ballard Water Meadows.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle access in and around New Milton.

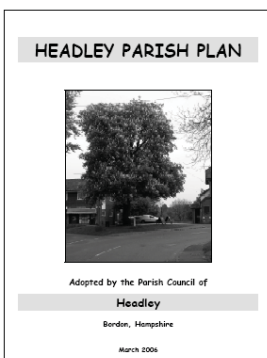
The **Longparish Parish Plan** includes:

- A commitment to promote and encourage greater use of local footpaths.
- An initiative to help improve the maintenance of the local Rights of Way network through an 'Adopt a Footpath' scheme.

The village website includes a footpath page with information on local walks, and a map of the local Rights of Way.



The **Headley Parish Plan** includes a commitment to:

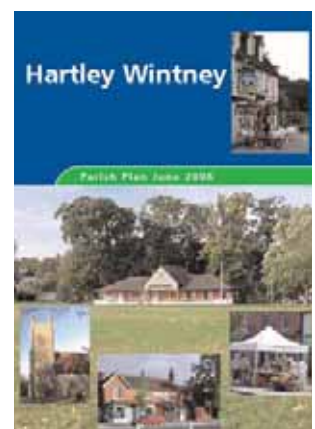


- Install signs for paths leading off adopted roads.
- To improve path maintenance.
- To create formal/informal bridleways and footpaths (including Wey riverbank adjacent to Frensham Lane).
- To produce a new walks guide to include other parishes and some circular routes.
- To improve parking at various points for cars and horse boxes
- To make gates more friendly for horse riders.

The parish also have a footpath walkers group that helps to monitor the condition of local routes.

The **Hartley Wintney Parish Plan** promises:

- To reinvigorate the footpath network with new booklets of local circular walks.
- To ensure that adequate access is allowed on Forestry Commission land in the east of the Parish.
- To produce, adopt and implement a management plan for Hazeley Heath leading to long-term protection of rare flora and fauna including good access for residents
- To provide local education and awareness programmes about local landscape, fauna and flora (for wider informed enjoyment, encouraging better protection).




Other parishes that have included countryside access improvements in their plans are Damerham, Langrish, Milford-on-Sea, Kings Somborne, North Waltham, Ashurst and Colbury, West Meon, and Kingsclere.

Parish Path Poll

We've talked about the importance of applications for grant aid being supported by good evidence from local people; if you don't have a Parish Plan, a Parish Path Poll may be just the tool for providing that evidence.

In June 2006 more than 30 parishes across the county took part in the first Parish Path Poll. This snapshot survey of path use, was carried out by volunteers organised by Parish and Town Councils, using materials and analysis provided by the County Council. The survey was carried out by 200 volunteers, who were asked to work in pairs, noting people seen and conducting interviews with path users. Some Parishes used the survey to test the validity of concerns (e.g. 'too many 4x4's driving on our paths') and others to assess path use prior to possible changes to the route; many were just interested to know more about usage of their paths.

PARISH PATH POLL – INTERVIEW FORM	
<i>"I'm doing a survey on behalf of the Parish Council about use of our local countryside – would you mind answering a few questions?"</i>	
Parish	Site Time
	
Which of the following are with your party? (please enter numbers , including interviewee)	Do you intend to visit any of the following as part of your journey today?
..... Children (under 16)	<input type="checkbox"/> Local pub, café or tea room
..... Adults 16-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Local shop or farm shop
..... Adults 25-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Other local venue
..... Adults 45-64	<input type="checkbox"/> No
..... Adults 65+	
..... Dogs	How often do you use local countryside paths?
..... Cycles	<input type="checkbox"/> More or less daily
..... Horses	<input type="checkbox"/> A few times a week
..... Children's Pushchairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a week
..... Wheelchairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a month
..... Cars/motorcycles <u>actually using the path</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a month
How far away do you live?	Are improvements needed to local paths? (eg awkward stile, very muddy, benches needed, dog bins needed, parking needed, information needed)
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-2 miles away	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 miles away	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (mark these on map!)
<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 miles away	
<input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 miles away	How important are countryside paths to you? (tick one)
<input type="checkbox"/> 21+ miles away	<input type="checkbox"/> I wouldn't mind if there weren't any
How did you get to the start of your walk, cycle or ride today? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> They are nice to have but not that important
<input type="checkbox"/> From front door (no transport needed)	<input type="checkbox"/> I strongly value access to countryside paths
<input type="checkbox"/> By car/motorcycle	<input type="checkbox"/> Using them is an essential part of my everyday life
<input type="checkbox"/> By bus	
<input type="checkbox"/> By train	Do you belong to any countryside organisations?
Why did you choose to come out today? (tick all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> For a purpose (shops, church, seeing friends, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> To exercise a pet	If so, which?
<input type="checkbox"/> To keep healthy/fit	<input type="checkbox"/> Ramblers Association
<input type="checkbox"/> For pleasure & relaxation	<input type="checkbox"/> CTC (Cyclists Touring Club)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> British Horse Society
	<input type="checkbox"/> British Driving Society (horse & carriages)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle clubs: LARA, AWDC, GLASS, TRF, ACU, HBRO or Wessex Hillrunners
	<input type="checkbox"/> A disability group.....
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLA or NFU (farming organisations)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hampshire Wildlife Trust
	<input type="checkbox"/> National Trust
	<input type="checkbox"/> CPRE (Council for Protection of Rural England)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Why did you chose <u>this</u> path? (tick all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> It goes where I want to go	
<input type="checkbox"/> For tranquillity and to see the wildlife	
<input type="checkbox"/> The path is well maintained and easy to use	
<input type="checkbox"/> It is easy to get to and/or parking is easy	
<input type="checkbox"/> My choice of paths is limited	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<i>"That's it - thank you for taking part!"</i>	

It was notable that none of the Parish and Town Councils had surveyed their paths before, and many commented that they were surprised at how well used their paths were. Nearly all Parishes reported that people were willing (even keen!) to be interviewed, although cyclists and horse riders were more difficult to stop, and therefore were under-represented in the interviews.

Two thirds of people were using local paths rather than getting in their car and so promotion of local walks at a parish scale through the Small Grants Scheme mapboards and leaflets could be a useful way to encourage more car free use of the local area. For individual parishes the results of such a survey are much more specific, giving local people the

opportunity to talk about their network and say what they would like improved. This information can be fed into a parish plan or used to support a bid for funding.

You can vary the questions, from the example questionnaire above, to suit your Parish. We can supply a spreadsheet to help analyse the answers.

Whose Role?

The CAP makes clear how many different agents can be involved in improving local access. While the duty for maintenance falls on the County Council's shoulders, the power to bring about improvements is more evenly spread. Users, landowners and all local authorities can make path improvements. Simple things like changing a stile for a gate or waymarking a meandering path can make big differences to the ability of people to use paths. Producing a map of local access within the parish can open up new opportunities for residents who may not know what paths are available for public use, and is especially useful for newcomers to the parish.

In a nutshell, you, the Parish Council, are best placed to decide what improvements are needed to your paths and we would like you, with our help, to take on the role of planning and, where possible, delivering those improvements.

A role for Parish Councils?

As we saw in chapter 3 (“**Who’s Responsible?**”), your Parish Council has lots of powers to maintain or make improvements to local paths; they also have powers to directly take enforcement action to deal with obstructions - if you so wish. But we see the Parish Councils’ most important roles as being:



- **To be the local voice, dealing with local issues for local people.** Any approach to a landowner from the highway authority is necessarily formal and can seem remote and ‘big brother-ish’. Conversely, many landowners will be known to Parish Councillors on an individual basis. An informal request from the Parish Council, perhaps just a quick phone call, to ask for overgrowth to be cleared from a path, or to mark out a path on a ploughed field, can be much more effective than a letter from the County Council. The landowner will know that it is local people who are concerned; people from their community - it’s not just the County Council nit-picking!
- **The source of local information.** No other organisation knows more about your parish and how it really works than you do. There are many occasions when we (and others) need to tap into that local knowledge, for example when we consult with you about applications for path changes, or for more strategic issues such as the Countryside Access Plans. We need your input.
- **Protecting local paths from development.** One particular area in which the vigilance of the Parish Council is very important is with respect to the effects of planning proposals on local paths. At the district and county levels it is difficult for us to fully appreciate what local changes might mean on the ground. We see your role as ensuring that local paths and open spaces are protected, or even improved, through the planning process.
- **Pro-active managers of the local network.** We would like to encourage you to work in partnership with us to use your powers to carry out those minor maintenance tasks that make such a difference to local users. The tasks that can be locally organised, perhaps using local contractors, volunteers or the parish’s own workforce, thereby avoiding the delays and additional bureaucracy of reporting to us.

- **The champion for ideas to improve the parish's access network.** Few parishes will have the perfect access network; accessible to all – including the less mobile - fully signed and waymarked, paths all clear and with good surfaces, with information available in the parish to show residents and visitors where they can walk or ride, and with all access properly recorded. The Countryside Access Plans (CAP) are our overarching guides to improvements needed throughout the county, but they need your local interpretation. We would like to see the Parish Council taking the lead in developing initiatives to help deliver the CAP and improving local access.
- **Gathering resources for local improvements.** Our funding is limited and likely to remain so. We try to allocate resources according to the most pressing need, but this doesn't mean that improvements in your parish should have to wait. Funds are available for practical works through our Small Grants Scheme. Help is also available from us through the Hampshire Paths Partnership and we will talk more about these below. But Parish Councils can themselves seek funding through several other sources and, again, we will run through the main ones below.

But there are two particular ways that the Parish Council can bring more resources for path improvements: Firstly, you have the right to allocate some of your council's income to expenditure on maintenance of public paths. You also have the right to spend money on general improvements to your area, which could also include public access.

Secondly, much can often be achieved by mobilising local resources, whether through volunteers, allocation of time from the council's own workforce, if it has one, and using a parish approach to enlist the help of local farmers with tasks for which they may have the right machines and be prepared to help. For example, you may wish to improve access by replacing stiles with gates. Getting gate kits to site across fields can be onerous if they have to be carried manually - if the landowner has agreed to the improvement they may help with transport and even labour.

- **Reporting problems.** There are lots of ways that your Parish Council can help improve local access; the notes below will help to show you how. But, whatever else you do, please ensure that you know how to report problems to us so that we can respond to them as soon as possible.

Reporting is simple; either call the contact centre (tel: 0845 603 5636), or report problems through the online mapping at, www.hants.gov.uk/maps/paths

Please try to give as much information about location and the nature of the problem as possible, and, if possible, the contact details of the person reporting the problem to you so that we can check details with them if needs be. This information will then be passed to our Area Teams.



Small Grants Scheme



In 2005 the 'Countryside Access Forum Small Grants Scheme' was established to offer grant funding and advice to Parish Councils and landowners.



The scheme was established as a direct result of demand expressed by Parish Council representatives, and it has grown year on year. Last year alone 20 Parishes received funding towards projects that included leaflets, mapboards, benches, kissing gates and path resurfacing. We hope the scheme will enable you to respond to local requests for improved access and information, for the benefit of all.

It is funded by Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service and is managed jointly by Hampshire Countryside Access Forum. The New Forest Access Forum and the New Forest National Park Authority help to support projects in their area.

We offer up to 50% funding (maximum £2500) to Parish Councils and landowners towards work to improve access to their local countryside. In other words, **you can achieve double the amount by working with us through the Small Grants Scheme!**

A wide range of improvements can be funded, but to help you get started, we have provided a list of the types projects that we presently fund:

- Replacing stiles with gates.
- Improving the surface of a path.
- Improving drainage.
- Providing benches.
- Producing Countryside Access Leaflets.
- Providing a Countryside Access Board.

An introduction to the scheme and full funding conditions can be found at www.countrysideaccessforum.hants.org.uk/sgs/

Applicants will need to supply evidence to prove that the project genuinely improves public access and is responding to local need. Applications will be judged on the detail and supporting evidence supplied, the type of project, the amount requested and whether matching funding has been secured. Priority will be given to work on Rights of Way and CROW Access Land, and to work which contributes towards the actions identified in the Countryside Access Plan. In addition, priority will be given to projects improving physical access (re-surfacing, replacing stiles with kissing gates, providing benches, etc). Closing dates are generally in March, June and October of each year.

One Parish which had produced a leaflet commented, "Excellent feedback. A number of local pubs have regularly asked for top-ups of the leaflet due to demand."

"If this funding wasn't available then I doubt if we could have gone ahead with any of the projects. Plus all the excellent advice we have received on way." (Burghclere Parish Clerk)

We recommend that at an early stage you call our Countryside Access Development Officers for an informal discussion and general pointers about your project proposal. They can be contacted on 01962 847221 or 01962 847181.

Examples of recent Small Grant Schemes

Burgclere Parish Council volunteers and the local farmer have worked together to provide 11 gates and kissing gates on local Rights of Way – these will keep livestock from straying and are much easier for the elderly and those with pushchairs to use than stiles.



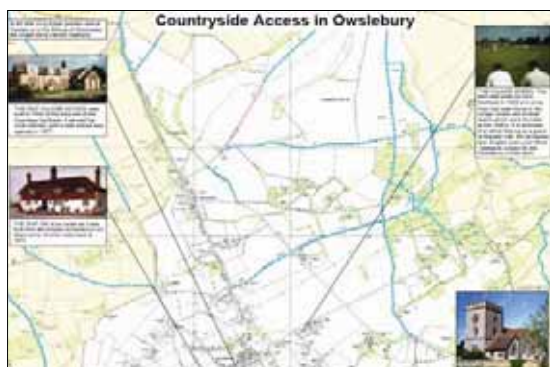
Working with Wickham Parish Council, Hants and West Sussex Borders Bridleway Group completed a project to widen and improve access for horse riders and walkers accessing the Meon Valley Trail.

New Alresford Town Council have successfully applied several times, to resurface and improve their Millennium Trail, a very popular circular route leading from this market town out into the countryside alongside the beautiful River Arle. The Wednesday Conservation Volunteers have organised and carried out this work for them.



Old Basing and Lychpit Parish Council, together with the Borough Council, wanted to provide easier and safer access to the common, an area used daily by commuters, walkers, runners and those using the Basingstoke Canal Heritage Footpath. A grant of £1000 was used to replace four stiles with kissing gates.

Alton Town Council has published a leaflet encouraging local people to leave their cars at home by showing how existing paths through the town lead straight out into the beautiful countryside on their doorstep.



Owslebury Parish Council and Community Association have provided a mapboard showing all of their Rights of Way, sited on land owned by the PC where walkers on the Pilgrims Way often stop to picnic. The Countryside Access Plan for their area states: “Many users would like to see more detailed information about the routes they are following”.

Small Grants Scheme - Volunteering

New for 2009, the Small Grants Scheme will be offering support and funding for Parish Councils interested in establishing volunteer groups in their area. The scheme will provide funding to train volunteers, purchase tools and insurance, as well as give guidance in setting up a volunteer group. For the latest details on this addition to the scheme please visit the website at www.countrysideaccessforum.hants.org.uk/sgs/

Why volunteering?

Volunteering has many benefits – both for the individual and the community. Its a chance to help improve a path that you use to walk your dog, get to work, go to school, visit friends, or ride your horse; and a chance to get to know your neighbours better and make new friends. As well as fostering a sense of ownership of the local area, it can be a chance to learn new skills; and at the end of the day there's a real sense of achievement from the work you've completed - a sense that will be repeated every time you use the path.

Establishing a volunteer group linked to the Parish

You can set up your own parish group to meet on a regular basis, or just occasionally to complete work on your local Rights of Way. You can work with established volunteer groups that already carry out work in various locations around the county (e.g. Hampshire Conservation Volunteers, Wednesday Conservation Volunteers). They will have lots of experience working with volunteers on a variety of tasks. We've included a list on the following pages of local volunteer bureaux and volunteer organisations that can provide information, advice and support about volunteering and establishing volunteer groups.



How can HCC help?

We can help you to establish a volunteer group for Rights of Way work by offering:

- Advice, training and support.
- Access to funds through the Small Grants Scheme - volunteer hours worked on site can be used to match any money funded through the scheme.
- The Small Grants Scheme will also help fund the establishment of your group.

Hints and Tips for organising a volunteer session (Courtesy of Worthys Conservation Volunteers) :

- Arrange a meeting to discuss ideas and opportunities, invite the landowner if necessary.
- Decide what tools will be needed. Assign a Task Leader and trained First Aid Officer for the session. Limit any task group to 12 volunteers – this will avoid any 'treading on toes' and is more manageable. For larger tasks organise multiple groups with separate task leaders.

- British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) can provide advice and even assist in setting up the group.
- Before starting work, whether on private or public land, gain permission from the landowner. If working for a private landowner it is worth seeking recompense by way of donations for tools, equipment, etc.
- Funding can be sought for specific projects or general work through various grant schemes such as Heritage Fund, BTCV, local authorities and private companies.
- Ensure that you have public liability and personal accident insurance – this can be purchased through BTCV – or check whether you can use cover provided by the local authority, Parish Council or landowner.
- Promote the group and publicise the event on local notice boards, at the local library, in local publications, email and online databases such as BBC Breathing Places and BTCV.
- Let volunteers know when and where to meet and what clothing/footwear to bring. Don't forget refreshments; Tea breaks are always a welcome rest!
- Tools and safety equipment, including first aid kit, should be purchased by the group and supplied to volunteers for the task. Ensure tools and equipment are in good order. If specialist tools are required then some organisations, such as BTCV, may loan equipment.
- Undertake a risk assessment before the working party and brief the group on the day. Maintain an 'accidents' book.
- Pace the working party with regular stops. Children under 14 must be supervised at all times – parents should normally take guardianship of children.
- Finally, have fun and try to keep a diary of the group's achievements (see below).

Path 502 Glade Clearance Sunday 17th February 2008

Eight people and two dogs met at the vet's near Worthy Down Camp.



**Worthy's
Conservation
Volunteers**

After the safety briefing and sign-in we walked along to the bridge and up on to Path 502 where we split into two groups.

The larger group set to work creating a new glade. We spent a happy couple of hours cutting down trees and scrub on one side of the path and making dead hedges at either end of the glade. Some members of the group used mattocks to dig up old stumps and produced some impressive sparks hitting flints in the ground. There should now be enough light and space for some other more fragile plants to grow.



In Bruce's absence, Nick (as youngest and task leader) became the butt of most of the jokes—especially after he fell over when a tough bit of ivy finally gave way!

The smaller group were strimming, raking and re-seeding previously cleared areas. We didn't see much of them, but we heard the strimmer from time to time, and could see the results of their work as we walked back along the path at the end of the afternoon.

Clare Eacott

List of Volunteer Bureau and Volunteer Organisations

The list of organisations below can all assist you to establish a volunteer group in your parish:

- **Hampshire Volunteers:** 0844 4994088
www.hampshirevolunteers.org.uk/index.htm
- **Basingstoke Voluntary Services:** 01256 423816
www.voluntaryservices.com
- **Community First East Hampshire:** 01730 710017
www.communityfirst-easthampshire.org.uk
- **Volunteer Centre Eastleigh:** 02380 902400
www.1community.org.uk
- **Volunteer Centre East Hampshire:** 01730 710017
www.ehvb.org.uk
- **Fareham Community Action:** 01329 231899
www.farehamaction.org.uk
- **Gosport Voluntary Action:** 02392 583836
www.volunteercentre.net/gosport
- **Hart Voluntary Action:** 01252 815652
www.hartvolaction.org.uk
- **Havant Volunteer Centre:** 02392 481845
www.volunteercentre.net/havant
- **New Forest Volunteer Centre:** 01425 482773
www.cfnf.org.uk
- **Portsmouth Council of Community Service:** 02392 827110
www.portsmouthccs.org.uk
- **Rushmoor Voluntary Service:** 01252 540162
www.rvs.org.uk
- **Southampton Voluntary Services:** 02380 228291
www.southamptonvs.org.uk
- **Test Valley Community Services:** 01264 362600 (Andover) 01794 519998 (Romsey) www.tvcs.org.uk
- **Volunteer Centre Winchester:** 01962 848030
www.volunteercentrewinchester.org.uk
- **Evolve:** the interactive website for Community and Voluntary sector organisations serving Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. www.e.volve.org.uk
- **British Trust for Conservation Volunteers:** 02380 769719
Advice and support to help establish a volunteer group. www2.btcv.org.uk

Hampshire Paths Partnership

Running in parallel to the Small Grants Scheme, the Hampshire Paths Partnership (HPP) supports a number of regular volunteer groups who carry out work on their local Rights of Way network. Work can include anything from clearing overgrown vegetation along a bridleway to improving the surface of muddy footpath. These groups receive support from HPP in the form of funding for tools and materials, loan of tools and provision of training. In return the groups provide a valuable service to Hampshire as a whole by helping to maintain and improve the Rights of Way network.



Unfortunately HPP is not currently taking on any new Member Groups, but we will be supporting new groups through the Small Grants Scheme. HPP currently has active volunteer groups in:

- Kingsclere
- Longparish
- South Warnborough
- Kings Worthy, Winchester
- Romsey
- Ellisfield
- Ringwood and Fordingbridge

If you are interested in setting up a volunteer group in your parish please visit the Small Grants Scheme website for details on funding and support to help you.



Other sources of funding

We've discussed how funding for countryside access improvements can come from the Small Grants Scheme, through our support for volunteers and through the parish's own right to spend money on improvements to its area. But there are several other sources of non-local authority grants that Parish Councils and local volunteer groups can tap into. Funding from a variety of sources can be used to help support a project in your local area. Overleaf and on the following pages are a list of potential funders and their present programmes. These schemes are often time restricted and so are liable to change.

Hampshire Association of Local Councils provide regular lists of potential funding sources.

There are also websites that provide free searches for potential funding, including Winchester 4 Community (www.open4community.info/winchester/), and J4B Community (www.j4bcommunity.co.uk).

Funder	Programme	Description	Who can apply?	How much?	Website
Natural England	Access to Nature	Access to Nature aims to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, particularly those who face social exclusion or those that currently have little or no contact with the natural environment.	Community groups, charities and trusts, schools, colleges, local authorities, town and Parish Councils, health organisations, social enterprises, mutual societies and faith groups	£50k - £500k	http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/leisure/grants-funding/guidance.htm
Big Lottery	Awards for All	Awards for All will support a wide range of voluntary and community projects.	Non-profit group, a parish or town council, school or health body	£300 - £10k	http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/docs/awardsforall_england_guide.pdf
SITA Trust	Greenprints	Funding and practical support for green space improvement projects carried out by young people aged 16-25.	Not for profit groups and organisations are eligible to apply. Projects must be within ten miles of an active landfill site in England, and must be led by volunteers aged 16-25 years	Up to £10k	http://www.sitatrust.co.uk/greenprints

Funder	Programme	Description	Who can apply?	How much?	Website
B&Q	Better Neighbour Grant Scheme	Provides B&Q materials to support local community projects and grants are available to help get community projects up and running.	Schools, community groups and registered charitable organisations	between £50 and £500 (at retail cost) worth of B&Q materials	http://www.diy.com/diy/jsp/bq/templates/content_lookup.jsp?content=/aboutbandq/social
Country Land and Business Association (CLA)	Charitable trust	The Trust aims to encourage education about the countryside for people who are disabled or disadvantaged, particularly youngsters from urban areas, to provide facilities for those with disabilities to have access to recreation in the countryside, and to promote education in agriculture, horticulture and conservation.	Not individuals	Up to £2k	http://www.clacharitabletrust.org.uk
Southern Co-operatives Foundation	Major Grants Programme	Projects will be supported which are charitable and which demonstrate and reinforce co-operation or mutuality.	All non profit organisations	Up to £10k	http://www.southern.coop/index.php?page=Foundation/major_grants
Groundwork (on behalf of the Big Lottery)	Community Spaces	To help groups in England to create or improve green and open spaces to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhood	Community groups (not Parish Councils)	£10k - £100k	http://www.community-spaces.org.uk

Funder	Programme	Description	Who can apply?	How much?	Website
The Heritage Lottery Fund	Your Heritage	The Your Heritage programme welcomes applications for original and exciting projects that help people to learn about, look after and celebrate the local, regional or national heritage of the UK in a fun and enjoyable way.	All non-profit organisations	£3k - £50k	http://www.hlf.org.uk
Kellogs	Active Living Community Fund	The Fund provides small grants to fund projects and activities within the UK that directly lead to people taking part in sustained physical activity, with particular emphasis on encouraging children, young people and their parents to participate together.	Small community based organisations	Up to £1k	http://www.kelloggs.co.uk/company/corporateresponsibility/activelivingfund/form/default.aspx
O2	It's Your Community	To enable people to make real improvements to where they live. Grants are available to support local environmental, urban renewal and conservation projects and the funding is available for both groups and individuals	Local amenity groups; Parish and village councils; Action groups; Schools; Youth clubs; Heritage groups; Environmental and conservation groups; and individuals	Up to £1k	http://www.itsyourcommunity.co.uk/criteria.aspx
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT)	Biffaward - Community	To provide and improve community facilities to act as mechanisms for recreation, sporting achievement, lifelong learning and community involvement.	All non-profit organisations, projects must be located within ten miles of a Biffa operation	£5k - £50K	http://www.biffaward.org

Funder	Programme	Description	Who can apply?	How much?	Website
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT)	Biffaward - Biodiversity	Funding under this category is specifically given to create, restore and manage areas to increase biodiversity.	All non-profit organisations, projects must be located within ten miles of a Biffa operation		http://www.biffaward.org
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT)	Biffaward - Small grants	Established to enable groups to quickly access lower levels of funding in order to improve the quality of life in their community	All non-profit organisations, projects must be located within ten miles of a Biffa operation	£250 - £5k	http://www.biffaward.org
Veolia	Environmental Trust	Funding for community and environmental projects	All non-profit organisations, projects must be located within five miles of a Veolia operation	up to £150K but unlikely to be over £50K	http://www.veoliatrust.org/index.php
Sponsored by the Environment Agency	Action Earth	Action Earth is a campaign coordinated by the national charity CSV (Community Service Volunteers) and provides grants to assist groups in carrying out environmental projects. Promotional material such as stickers, tabards and certificates may also be provided.	Charitable organisations/trusts, voluntary/community groups, schools, residents' groups and Parish Councils	Up to £50	http://www.actionearth.org.uk

Glossary

Abatement - The common law right to take action to remove a nuisance that is affecting the exercise of a right, e.g. removing just enough of an obstruction to squeeze past.

Access Land – Land designated under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 for access on foot for quiet recreation.

AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the highest landscape designation in the UK.

Area Team – The County Council’s Team responsible for looking after the paths in your area.

BOAT – Byway open to all traffic; a route used mainly by riders and walkers but that also carries motor-vehicle rights.

Bridleway – A route for horse riders, cyclists and walkers only.

CAP – Countryside Access Plan (Hampshire’s extended Rights of Way Improvement Plan)

Cross-compliance – The need for farmers to ensure that they meet good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAEC) in order to secure full subsidy through the SPS.

Defra – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DM (Definitive Map and Statement) – The legal record of public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and BOATs.

DMMO – Definitive Map Modification Orders; orders made by us following the discovery of evidence (from users or documentary) that the map should be amended.

Footpath – A route for walkers only.

GAEC - Good agricultural and environmental conditions; those needed to secure SPS subsidy, and including maintaining visible public Rights of Way.

HCAF – Hampshire Countryside Access Forum. The advisory body for countryside access in Hampshire.

List of Streets – The schedule of paths and roads that are maintainable at public expense (the DM records rights, the List of Streets records public responsibility for looking after them).

NPA – National Park Authority.

OS – Ordnance Survey, the Government’s map maker.

PINs – Planning Inspectorate; Defra’s agents for deciding contested path or modification orders.

PPO – Public path orders; orders made to change an existing Right of Way or to create a new one – diversions, extinguishments or creations.

Restricted byway – A highway over which the public is entitled to travel on foot, horseback and with non-mechanically propelled vehicles (such as pedal cycles and horse drawn vehicles). There may also be a right to drive animals along a restricted byway.

RPA- Rural Payments Agency; the body responsible for administering the SPS.

SPS – Single Payment Scheme; the means of delivering EU subsidies to agriculture.

SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest; a legally protected site of high conservation importance.

TRO – Traffic regulation order; used to restrict some or all types of traffic, even including pedestrians if necessary.

Further Reading

Agate, E. 2004. *Footpaths – a practical handbook*. BTCV, Doncaster.

British Standards Institution, 2006. *BS 5709:2006 Gaps, gates and stiles – specification*. BSI, London.

Defra, 2007. *Guidance on Local Access Forums in England - Issued by the Secretary of State*. www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/laf-guidance.pdf

Defra 2005. *Regulating the use of motor vehicles on public Rights of Way and off road – A guide for Local Authorities, Police and Community Safety Partnerships*. PB 11381. Defra, London.

Riddall, R. & Trevelyan, J., 2007. *Rights of Way; A guide to law and practice*. Ramblers' Association and Open Spaces Society, London.

Web Resources

Details of current grant-scheme access can be found on Defra's website at <http://countrywalks.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx>.

Access under Inheritance Tax Exemption schemes at www.hmrc.gov.uk/heritage/lbsearch.htm

'Maintaining the Map' - guidance on making changes to the Definitive Map and Statement - is available on our website at www3.hants.gov.uk/row/making-changes/claims-guidance.htm

Applications for DMMO are listed in the Register of Applications held on our web site at www3.hants.gov.uk/row/making-changes/claims-guidance/register-of-applications.htm.

You can check out the current availability of access land at www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/things_to_do/open_access/open_access_maps

'Ploughing crops & paths'. The leaflet can also be down-loaded from at www3.hants.gov.uk/ploughingleaflet.pdf.

Diversions and extinguishments - Detailed advice to landowners, including charges made, are on our web site at www3.hants.gov.uk/row/making-changes/diversions.htm

Countryside Access Plans

www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-countryside/countryside-development/access-plans

A national Parish Plan Toolkit has been produced by ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England). The toolkit can be downloaded from ACRE's website at www.acre.org.uk/communityengagement_parishplans.html

A Market Towns Healthcheck Handbook is available to download from the South East Rural Towns Partnership website at, www.setowns.org.uk/filemaster/files/292-668-Healthcheck-Handbook-March-2005.pdf

An introduction to the Small Grants Scheme and full funding conditions can be found at <http://www.countrysideaccessforum.hants.org.uk/sgs/>

National information on routes for wheelchair users and parents with buggies can also be found on www.walkswithwheelchairs.com and www.walkswithbuggies.com respectively.

Dogs on Rights of Way; <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-countryside/dogs.htm>

TROs: The County Council has adopted a policy on when it will use TROs; this can be viewed in full at www3.hants.gov.uk/row/making-changes/traffic-regulation-orders/tro-policy.htm

Hampshire County Council has a policy for managing motor vehicles in the countryside and this can be viewed at www3.hants.gov.uk/row/vehicles-row.htm

The best place to start your quest for lottery funding is on the search page at www.lotteryfunding.org.uk

Environment Agency site - www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Best of Both Worlds – Best of Both Worlds is a website resource that helps increase opportunities for outdoor sports and recreation, and, at the same time, to protect the sensitive environments in which they take place. Their website is www.bobw.co.uk

Hampshire County Councils webpage with regard to Commons Registration can be found at www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-countryside/countryside/commons-registration.htm

Further information on Commons can be found on Defra's website at www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/issues/common/index.htm

The Open Spaces Society website page with regard to town and village greens - www.oss.org.uk/village%20greens/villagegreens.htm

User Groups and Access Societies

The British Horse Society – www.bhs.org.uk – 0844 8481666

The BHS is a charity involved in promoting all matters relating to horse riding and the care of horses. With regard to countryside access they promote and secure the provision, protection and preservation of Rights of Way and of access for ridden and driven horses over public roads, highways, footpaths, bridleways, carriageways, public paths and other land. The local area website is www.area17-brc.fsnet.co.uk

The British Driving Society – www.britishdrivingsociety.co.uk – 01473 892001

The aim of the Society, which was formed in 1957, is to encourage and assist those interested in the driving of equine animals. There are a number of Hampshire area clubs affiliated with BHS. Hampshire area website is <http://hampshire.britishdrivingsociety.co.uk>

The Byways and Bridleways Trust - www.bbtrust.org.uk

The Byways & Bridleways Trust is a registered charity, formed to protect the public rights that exist over the many ancient lanes that form part the British landscape and, our traditional means of travel.

The CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club) – www.ctc.org.uk - 0870 8730060

CTC's mission is to make cycling enjoyable, safe and welcoming for all. Their work includes high-profile campaigning on behalf of all cyclists. There are local clubs in Alton, Farnborough, Fleet, North Hampshire, Portsmouth, Petersfield, South Hampshire, Southampton, Winchester.

The Land Access and Recreation Association – www.laragb.org

LARA is the motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association and acts as a national forum for the principal groups in countryside motor sport and recreation. LARA does not organise events or act as any sort of governing body, but it does assist its members in a wide range of land access issues: policy, practice and problems.

The Milestones Trust – www.milestone-society.co.uk

Founded in May 2001, the Society aims to identify, record, research and interpret for the public benefit the milestones and other waymarkers of the British Isles.

The Open Spaces Society - www.oss.org.uk

The Open Spaces Society's mission is to protect, increase, enhance and champion the common land, village greens, other open spaces and public Rights of Way of England and Wales, and the public's right to enjoy them.

The Ramblers Association – www.ramblers.org.uk – 0207 3398500

The RA is Britain's biggest walking charity with over 70 years promoting walking as well as assisting to improve conditions for everyone who walks in England, Scotland and Wales. There are many local groups throughout Hampshire. There are also RA parish representatives that help to monitor the local Rights of Way network.