

Parish Paths Partnership Newsletter

Summer 2016

August is passing but the summer weather is here! Despite the lack of prolonged sun earlier in season the vegetation continues to flourish. Our contractors are continuing to tackle the growth that seems to be particularly prevalent this year.

With autumn looming round the corner it will be time to consider surface projects; steps and rights of way furniture 'bed in' nicely when the ground is easier to dig!



Do get in touch if you would like a bit of helpful advice either from me or your local warden.

With P3 there are so many different ways of getting work done – there are parish volunteers, organisations like the Community Payback or British Trust for

Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) and there are of course a plethora of rights of way contractors who are willing to take the strain out of structural work, improving surfaces or just simply cutting back the

vegetation. If you are struggling with getting work done on the ground we can provide you with information on a number of experienced, insured contractors who are able to provide solutions for all your rights of way work. Just get in touch and we will be able to help you get projects moving in your area.



Summer Vegetation Cutting

Devon County Council contractors are out and about finishing their first cuts of vegetation in parishes across the county. If some of your paths need a second cut do think about our free Strimmer training courses for parish volunteers. Several P3 Parishes organise and undertake all the planned cutting in their area after attending one of our courses.

For the wardens it is a tricky balance between keeping paths clear and not using precious budgets by cutting too early in the season. From our perspective, trimming round signs/gates and replacing waymarkers/stick on signs is one of the most simple but important things that can be done through the P3 scheme.

Naturally we encourage parish volunteers to cut and clear paths during the growing season when time and weather allow. However, **please be mindful of working in**

hot weather and the risks of too much physical exertion. Do keep plenty of water with you and avoid working in the heat of the day.



Musbury Summer Walk and Charity success

In the last P3 newsletter we featured Musbury and the rights of way project that added ceramic path numbers to each of the local routes. Since the numbers were added to the rights of way P3 Co-ordinator, Janet Albano, has organised a parish path walk. The event was combined with a programme of open gardens in the parish as a way of raising funds for the Breast Cancer Department in the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. The walk and garden visits were a tremendous success and raised an amazing £1263.

Congratulations to Janet and those who attended the walk and visited the gardens to help generate valuable funds for a very worthwhile cause.

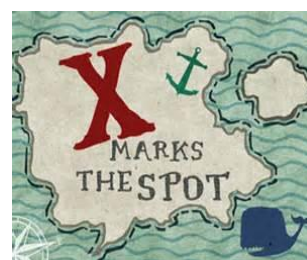


Walkers from Membury gather today on the annual parish walk



Location, Location, Location – assisting with inspections

Thank you to everyone who has reported a problem that you feel is worthy of inspection by the team either on maintenance or safety grounds. P3 is a partnership and we are always on hand to give advice and offer support when you feel it is required. One thing that really assists the team is accurate reporting of where your problem is located on the network. If you are able to provide a grid reference or scan of a section of your parish map with an 'X' marks the



spot then all ambiguity is removed and we can easily find the concern and report back to you without wasting time on the ground. You can also contact us on the Devon County Council website - find the 'Report a pothole' feature, which includes public rights of way, on this link

https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/map/map_src/prow then follow the on-screen instructions.

Redvers Route to Success

Following our workshops last autumn Heather Sansom from Crediton Town Council has worked hard to create a walking route round Crediton that benefits the health of local people by encouraging them to get active. The Self-Guided trail has few stiles, but there are some hills! To help encourage participation the Town Council have commissioned special waymarkers and are hosting a map and leaflet that will be downloadable from their Website <http://www.crediton.gov.uk/News-Events/News-article-details/ArticleId/48/Redvers-Ramble-Official-Launch-Ceremony>. The 4km mostly off road walk, features some lovely views towards Dartmoor whilst leading walkers across fields close to the river Yeo. Students attending Queen Elizabeth II secondary school shall benefit from the programmed surface improvements when walking to school or participating in Cross Country runs. Thank you to Heather and the Town Council for all their input and liaison locally to make this project such a success.

Strimmer Courses

What a year it has been for Strimmer courses! This year we have trained a further 30 strimmer volunteers to help clear rights of way in Devon. It was a real pleasure to welcome attendees from Dartmoor National Park; we have an agency agreement with the Authority to look after footpaths and bridleways on our behalf. The Trail Riders Federation (TRF) were also represented and continue to do great work across the county to improve the byway and unsurfaced unclassified road network – do get in touch if you think you have a lane that would benefit from their input. If you have volunteers wanting to undertake a course in strimming please do get in touch. We currently have a waiting list for next year but if we have sufficient people we may consider running an extra course in the autumn. Please send an email to ros.davies@devon.gov.uk to express an interest.



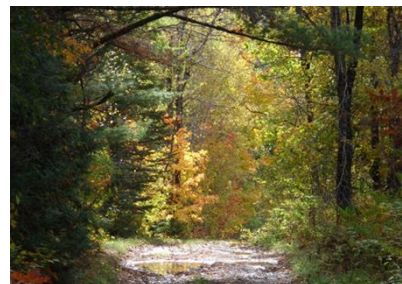
Autumn Workshops/walks

As you might have guessed the rights of way team is extremely busy at the moment keeping up with seasonal vegetation, planning maintenance programmes and writing funding bids to hopefully secure funding for rights of way improvements in the future. All this work is necessary to help secure a positive future for rights of way in Devon but it is incredibly time consuming and places pressure on day to day responsibilities and event organisation such as our annual workshops.

Last autumn we held a series of drop in sessions for P3 co-ordinators to allow them to touch base with the team and talk through any questions or queries parishes might have.

This year we shall be organising a series of ‘walk and talk’ sessions to allow volunteers to get together and discuss rights of way matters whilst enjoying a stroll, there will be tea and cake awaiting our return from each of the walk.

These autumn walks are likely to be in October and naturally all are welcome! - Details to be circulated soon. Next year we promise to return to holding our larger P3 workshops.



Ploughing and Cropping

At this time of year the farming community are busy finishing baling hay/silage and starting to combine the cereals. From a rights of way perspective the summer season spells a period of challenge as we try to prevent

the obstruction of paths. If you discover any cropped routes in your parish we would be really grateful if the parish clerk could send a letter, in the first instance, to the landowner to encourage the clearance of the route. If your parish clerk needs a letter template we have these available and they can be emailed at your request. Should the problem persist, please do get in touch and we can take enforcement action to resolve the matter.



Please note that paths should be cleared to the following widths:

	Cross field route	Headland route
Footpaths	1 metre	1.5 metres
Bridleways	2 metres	3 metres

Landowners/tenants have 14 days to reinstate a path after ploughing and reseeding.



Thank you as always for all your help and support with rights of way – we really appreciate all your time and energy keeping them in great order. Please remember that it is not all about hard work, do send in photos of celebrations or walking events you might hold in your parish – we would love to feature them in our up and coming newsletters.

Look forward to seeing you in the autumn on one of the P3 walks.

Best wishes

Ros and all in Public Rights of Way