

Parish Footpath Audit

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Dear Parish / Town Clerk

Please forward this correspondence to your Chairman and Councillors

As Chairman of Norfolk Ramblers I am writing to you concerning Rights of Way and Footpaths in your Parish. You may know that Ramblers endeavour not only to lead walks but help to keep the Rights of Way and footpaths open and in an accessible condition for all to enjoy. Responsibility for maintaining these is shared between the landowner and Norfolk Highways but more and more paths are becoming difficult to walk, which then results in further decline and use. The Norfolk Highways budget for maintain paths is also diminishing. Ramblers do sterling work with their volunteers who undertaking smaller maintenance issues.

It is well documented that walking is a good, easy to access, and inexpensive way of maintaining fitness and good physical and mental health for all age groups and Norfolk Ramblers are proposing that each Parish has a documented audit of their paths and Rights of Way, which can be accessed by any member of the public from the minutes published on the Parish website. Each Parish Council should have either an appointed footpath warden or a Councillor who is responsible for this facility. It would be helpful to both residents and those planning walks from further afield if a detailed audit of the state of the paths could be published as a Report at the Annual Parish Meeting, or more frequently if you wish. Attached is a copy of part of a report from a local Parish Council, prepared for an Annual Parish Meeting which shows 'best practice'. An annual audit enables any defects or problems to be reported to Norfolk Highways, or to the landowner, and hopefully resolved before paths become overgrown or inaccessible through neglect, wilful obstruction, lack of signage etc.

If you are unsure of how the footpaths are numbered on the Rights of Way Definitive Map for your Parish, or how to report defects to Norfolk Highways, or who is responsible for what, please get in touch. I will be pleased to help.

Your co operation with this suggestion will hopefully benefit your residents, as well as visitors to your Parish, and will add to the enjoyment of the Norfolk countryside for all.

If you are already completing and publishing a comprehensive footpath audit on your Parish website similar to the one attached, please ignore this correspondence, and thank you.

Thank you

Kind regards

Richard May

Area chair, Norfolk Area Ramblers

Parish Footpath and Rights of Way Annual Report Audit Exemplar

Footpath No. 9 (Kemp's Corner to Footpath No. 13). **Checked.** **Kemps Rd End, Drainage ditch bridge rotted. Footpath blocked by paddock fencing. Finger Post, Way marker discs and additional posts required. NCC ENQ90020****** **Two new bridges in place 200m from Kemps Rd. Also two new Bridges in place 200m before FP13.**

Footpath No. 13 (Road leading to Old Hall farm to Parish Boundary/ FP9). **Checked OK.**

Footpath No. 14 (Footpath No. 13 to Parish Boundary). **Checked OK.**

Footpath No. 15 (Village Street to Kemp's Road). **Checked OK.** **No access to Kemps Rd, follow FP16 to Kemps Rd.**

Footpath No. 16 (Kemp's Road to Footpath No. 15). **Checked OK.** **Kemps road post loose. Now fixed level, cemented in**

Footpath No. 17 (Station Road to Parish Boundary) **Checked OK.** **Stile too high, new kissing gate requested. New Kissing gate installed.**

Footpath No. 18 (Station Road to Semere Lane. **Checked,** **Finger Post knocked out laying on floor. Reported to NCC, ENQ90027****** **Now fixed, re-fitted Semere lane end. Station road end post cemented back in.**

Footpath No. 19 (The Beeches to Doctor's Lane).**Checked.** **New post beeches road end now missing ??**

Footpath No. 20 (Norwich - Harleston Road to Doctor's Lane). **Post Loose.** **Post cemented back in.**

Footpath No. 21 (South Green to Parish Boundary). **Checked OK.** **Post loose. Will need replacing. Reported to NCC, ENQ90027******

Footpath No. 22 (South Green to Parish Boundary). **Post Loose.** **Post cemented back in.**

Footpath No. 23 (Garlic Street to road leading to South Green). **Checked OK.**

Footpath No. 24 (Garlic Street to Parish Boundary). **Checked,** **New post required, Reported to NCC, ENQ90027****.** **New post at start, and way marker post fitted.**

Footpath No. 25 (Footpath No. 17 to Semere Lane) **Post leaning over.** **Post re-fitted.**