

Problems with paths.

We all from time-to-time encounter problems on the footpaths and bridleways we walk, some people accept it as something which happens, while others attempt to do something about it.

Hopefully you are in the latter camp, and we thought it would be useful to remind you of the ways that you can report rights of way issues. Problems have to be reported to the relevant local authority, so it is preferable for you to write direct to them rather than reporting them through the Ramblers Association (for reasons given later).

Here are the links to the two authorities in our area and advice on how to use their systems:

1. For path network problems in the Bedford Borough area use this link -

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-travel/public-rights-of-way/>

The link will open a page headed “Public Rights of Way”, scroll down to a purple box “Report a Problem”, this will then lead you through the reporting process. On completion you will receive a case number for you report but you will not receive any update on the action taken.

2. For problems in the Central Bedfordshire Council area use this link -

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/82/countryside/431/rights_of_way

The link opens a page headed “Public Rights of Way”, scroll down to a heading “Report a Problem”, open the page and there is a questionnaire. You will need a grid reference, For the path details open the “Online Map” find your path, click on it and the path number and parish will be displayed. Complete as much as you can of the questionnaire and submit it to the Council. You will receive an acknowledgement.

If you find either of the above daunting, you can email the IVW Footpaths Officer at:

footpathsivw@gmail.com

John and Barry will look at it and submit a report if necessary to the appropriate authority.

* * * * *

Ramblers currently have a centralised system called “Pathwatch” for reporting problems, and they are meant to forward them to the appropriate authority. The Pathwatch reporting link is on the homepage of the Ramblers website. Based on feedback the Pathwatch system has been considered cumbersome, and Ramblers say they will shortly be suspending it. They go on to say that Pathwatch will eventually be replaced with something more sustainable. (If you have the Pathwatch App on your phone be aware it is being discontinued on 23rd August).

The Ramblers also have national scheme for dealing with rights of way problems known as (RIPPLE). We have a very active local group who work closely with the local authorities, voluntarily augmenting their resources by clearing overgrown paths and replacing way markers etc. Their efforts make a considerable contribution to maintaining the rights of way

locally. If you would be interested in joining this sociable and active group please contact Barry Ingram, (barry.ingram74@btinternet.com) who can provide more information.

We hope that you find this note helpful and if you have any further footpath specific queries, please contact John Clark at footpathsivw@gmail.com