

FOOTPATH WORK FROM JUNE 8TH 2015

There are numerous groups of up to 40 using the paths around The Parish including: The Ramblers, Dickie Tickers, Church Groups, Wednesday and Thursday Walking Groups, U3A, local schools, etc. There are many groups of 2 – 10 and also individuals. Vernon Lane and Coffin Lane are used by cycling groups of up to 20ish in number.

- 1) Stephenson's Countryside Service cleared Quarry Lane Alton (footpath 23) as part of their contract work for Ashover Parish Council, in early June. Other clearance has been done mainly by the feet of walkers.
- 2) The official opening of the Local Nature Reserve on The Fabric took place on June 10th. Councillor Allen from D.C.C., who cycled from Belper, officiated. Also present, from Ashover Parish Councillor, was Councillor William Armitage. There was also representation from Natural England and the Countryside Service. Just as important, there were eight local volunteers, who have put much work into the process.
- 3) A further two days' work was spent with volunteers and rangers on Bridleway 67 on White Hillocks. It is now a clear route for walkers but will need further work to attract horse riders.
- 4) Two gates have been fitted on 52 (Amber crossing at west of The Butts) and further up towards Slack Hill and one on 54 below Goss Hall. All are to help farmers keep sheep in their fields! A further gate is by Hatchley's Farm (56).
- 5) The Tuesday Night Marauders found themselves dropped off in Higham and walking back to Ashover. All 40+ made it, as far as we know.....The walkers covered over 160 km (100 miles) of paths between April and August, helping to define the correct routes as they went. They walked more than 90 different Ashover paths.
- 6) Thanks to a local landowner, a concessionary bridleway will soon link Eaton Lane and Vernon Lane across a large field. There is also a short link nearer Kelstedge. Both paths have been walked by the Tuesday walking group.
- 7) A request to clear a footpath (32, Littlemoor) prior to the visit of school children from Holmgate brought an immediate response from the landowner.

The 11 year olds walked from Sharley Park to Ashover and back to Holmgate prior to camping out for the night.

8) Bracken up to 7 feet high made walking 97/98 behind Shooters Lee Farm near Uppertown interesting. Pushing down the bracken with a mark one spade made approx. 150 metres of flattening relatively easy. Further lengths of bracken have been dealt with in a similar fashion (e.g. parts of 133/4 towards Ravensnest, 68/145 by White Hillocks).

9) A Tree Group is being formed in the Parish with the possibility of conservation and management work linking in with footpath work.

10) Thanks to the local Tree Warden, a tree has been removed from across Back Lane Overton.

11) Thanks to the landowner, the southern section of 19 (to Hilltop Farm) was given a good cut back.

12) The gradual process of looking at the hundreds of stiles/gates across footpaths is taking place. The process includes cutting back bramble and nettles etc. In some areas (e.g. Ashover Hay), locals have helped by doing cut backs.