

## **Clapton and Ston Easton Footpaths**

As many of you know we are incredibly lucky to have an extensive network of footpaths in the Parish and from my wanderings as the Parish Path Liaison Officers (PPLO) I have walked many, but not all of them, since taking up this voluntary role earlier this year. Parish Path Liaison Officer is the grand title for a voluntary role working in partnership with Somerset County Council Rights of Way team and liaising with the Parish Council - footpaths are now a regular agenda item at our Parish Council Meetings. As with most Council services nowadays, the budget is very limited and there is a heavy reliance on volunteers to keep the footpaths open and safe.

PPLOs are asked to regularly walk the footpaths reporting any defects or problems with paths and furniture, and if safe and practical, to carry out light clearance works such as cutting back vegetation from around gates, stiles and signposts. This role can be supported by other volunteers to help keep the network of paths open and reporting any issues found when walking the paths. There is no regular commitment to this, just when and where you can. It's a great way to keep fit and healthy and help the local community at the same time. So, if you would be interested in volunteering to support our footpaths please let me know. Other voluntary schemes that may be of interest are;

**Adopt-a-Path volunteers** by regularly walking an adopted path to keep them clear through regular light cutting back of vegetation from around gates, stiles, way mark posts and signposts.

**The Somerset Strimmer scheme** is where volunteers help cut back summer and winter vegetation along public footpaths and bridleways using strimmers. It is the most active of the roles because you must be capable of walking with and carrying machinery, including the kit that goes with it, and safety gear. After training we loan a strimmer (which might be shared with neighbouring parishes,) with the relevant equipment, for the volunteer to use during the spring and summer months. It is collected in the winter for servicing.

**If you are interested in volunteering** for any role in supporting the maintenance of our footpaths you can either contact me [amhuckle92@gmail.com](mailto:amhuckle92@gmail.com), or the Rights Of Way team at [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk).

**More information** whether you want to volunteer or just make use of our lovely footpath network the following links will be helpful;

### **The Interactive Map Explore**

**Somerset** <https://roam.somerset.gov.uk/roam/Map> is where you can plan a walk, ride, cycle, or simply check where public rights of way are - you view the entire public rights of way network in Somerset. You are also able to see what type of assets (for example, stiles, gates) are on the paths or view and report issues on the network. I have agreed that every quarter I will submit a report on our Parish footpaths to our Parish Council and the Somerset County Council Rights of Way Team. Successes so far have been the replacement of several stiles and signs and a commitment that the bridge and stile from Hay Street to the Farrington Gurney Golf course will soon be replaced, I am currently chasing for a start date.

The **Parish Path Liaison Officer Hand book** has lots of useful information  
[http://wwwold.somerset.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?  
AssetID=46359&type=full&servicetype=Attachment](http://wwwold.somerset.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=46359&type=full&servicetype=Attachment)

Finally, I have two A1 sized hard copies of maps of the Parish showing our Parish footpaths and the aim is to provide them for display in Clapton and Ston Easton Village Halls.

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