



THE TRAILS TRUST

The Charity that creates access to the countryside for all
- on foot, bicycle or by horse

www.thetrailstrust.org.uk

Please reply to: Rachel Thompson, TTT Project & Development Officer, Townsend Cottage, Townsend, Priddy, Wells, Somerset, BA5 3BP. Tel: 01749 870340 Email: rachel.thompson@mbzonline.net

Notes

- Guide launch - The Trails Trust (TTT) launched its Guide for Local Groups 'Creating Multi – User Public Rights of Way' by presenting a copy to Richard Benyon MP, Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs at the Royal Bath & West Show.
- About the Guide - The Guide explains The Trails Trust's unique approach to securing permanent public rights of way through voluntary dedications by landowners, with the offer of an upfront capital incentive payment. The Guide has been produced to assist local voluntary groups around the country who want to emulate TTT's success. TTT hopes this Guide will inspire, inform and enable other volunteers to create an expanding cohesive network of multi user routes, created in partnership with landowners and others, for the benefit of all people, whatever their ability and location. TTT has provided a step by step approach to designing linear and community networks, surveying potential routes, identifying and approaching landowners and others and working with them to address their concerns, assessing highway exit safety, planning works schedules and budgets, identifying and accessing funding, the physical creation of the route and opening to the public. Useful information on other mechanisms for route creation such as permissive paths and the use of powers to bring unowned green lanes and droves into public use is also included along with a number of case studies.
- The Guide has been produced in co-operation with Defra and Natural England (NE) with NE providing financial assistance, for which TTT is very grateful.
- The problem: throughout England & Wales, it is widely acknowledged that the multi user network (quiet lanes, bridleways, byways and other MU paths) is disconnected, inadequate for modern needs and often unavailable due to the increasingly heavily trafficked roads that need to be used to reach these routes. In many areas it is difficult for people to benefit from exploring the local countryside around their communities or to travel further afield without using motorised transport.
- TTT route creation experience – TTT has over ten years of experience of creating new routes, mostly in the Mendip Hills. The concept of Big Society Britain means that more power and decision making will be devolved from the State to the people. This Guide is one of the tools which it is hoped will re-enthuse and empower the voluntary sector by helping other volunteers, to succeed like TTT, to plan and create both local and wider access networks within a reasonable timescale and to raise funds to achieve this aim.
- The solution: TTT's Express Dedication Method (at Common Law) offers landowners, land managers, voluntary groups, individuals, local access forums and local highway authorities, significant advantages over more commonly used statutory methods. It enables fast track creation (or upgrading) of permanent public rights of way (whether footpaths, bridleways or restricted byways)

Patrons : The Lord Hylton, The Rt Hon the Lord Waldegrave of North Hill PC

President : Angela Yeoman OBE DL

Registered Company Address

Windrush House, Plummers Lane, Priddy, Wells, BA5 3DA

The Trails Trust is a Company limited by Guarantee registered in England and Wales No 3637593

Registered Charity No. 1094139



to improve the local path network. Under this approach the written Express Dedication Agreement, signed by the landowner, provides a clear statement of intent which cannot be disputed. The route on the ground is then physically created as agreed between the landowner, others with an interest in the land and the voluntary body. Public acceptance of the route (by using it) completes the process of bringing the new right into effect. The date of public acceptance (and therefore of final dedication) can be clearly recorded by holding an opening ceremony.

- The benefits of a strategic network of local rights of way for human and animal health, particularly for the young and for the less able, as well as for economic growth, regeneration and community sustainability are clearly explained in the Guide.
- Partnership working: wherever possible TTT advocates working in partnership with local highway authorities, however, it is not necessary to make use of local highway authority statutory powers since routes created by this type of express dedication works at common law. This in turn means that routes can be installed relatively quickly. Funding, which might not be available if the highway authority led the project, can be sought. Yet because the coming into effect of a public right of way through express dedication is a 'legal event' for the purposes of the relevant legislation, the authority must record the route as such on the definitive map and statement.
- Guide immediate success: in the last six months, The Trails Trust methodology, as outlined in the Guide, has been trialled successfully in the Forest of Dean Greenway project led by the Forest of Dean Carriage Drivers and Horse Riders Association and supported by Gloucestershire County Council's Rights of Way and Legal Department officers. A number of private landowners, including the Forestry Commission, have generously consented to the creation of permanent and permissive PROWs across their land to create the longest Greenway network in the UK . When created it is believed that this will bring substantial economic benefit to the region and will promote the Forest of Dean as a national centre for outdoor recreation, adventure tourism and equestrianism.

The Guide is available from the Trails Trust Administration Officer, Mudgley Elms, Mudgley, Wedmore, Somerset BS28 4TH, email: membership@thetrailstrust.org.uk

Patrons : The Lord Hylton, The Rt Hon the Lord Waldegrave of North Hill PC

President : Angela Yeoman OBE DL

Registered Company Address

Windrush House, Plummers Lane, Priddy, Wells, BA5 3DA

The Trails Trust is a Company limited by Guarantee registered in England and Wales No 3637593

Registered Charity No. 1094139