

Paths into the countryside around the town or village where you live could provide a boost for the local economy through tourism, provide more opportunities for a healthy lifestyle, make your community a better place to live and above all give enjoyment to everyone.

Many community based groups have recognised these potential benefits and are taking forward their own path networks.

This booklet:

- Helps you through the process of setting up your own network project
- Provides advice and guidance on each stage of the process
- Advises on sources of further information
- Suggests sources of financial and technical assistance.



You can contact the Paths for all Partnership at:

Inglewood House  
Tullibody Road, ALLOA FK10 2HU  
Phone: 01259 218888 Fax: 01259 218488  
E-Mail: [info@pathsforall.org.uk](mailto:info@pathsforall.org.uk)

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# Creating a path network - a guide to local action



WALKING • CYCLING • HORSE RIDING • WALKING • CYCLING • HORSE RIDING

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## The Paths For All Partnership

### Creating a path network - a guide to local action

#### Introduction

The Paths For All Partnership has received many requests from a wide range of groups and individuals who wish to improve access in their area but are unsure how to go about it. This guide provides information and guidance that we hope will encourage more local action for paths.



Question:

What is the most popular recreational facility among people who live in Scotland and visit our country?



Answer:

**Paths.** Every week in Scotland more than 2 million walks are taken in the countryside. 65,000 people go horseriding each week and off-road cycling is increasing in popularity at a tremendous rate.

However, it is not uncommon for communities to have fine countryside on their doorstep with little or no access to that countryside. In some cases there will be a network of paths but because they are not signposted or waymarked few people will use them. Certainly visitors are unlikely to find them or have the confidence to use them. Too often people must resort to using the car in order to see anything of the countryside.

A community with a good network of welcoming paths has many benefits:

- Enjoyment of the outdoors!!
- Healthier lifestyle
- More visitors (which can benefit the economy)
- Better links and a better understanding between those who work the land and those living in the town or village
- A better quality of life.

There are many different ways of taking a path network forward. In writing this guide we are aware of this and therefore encourage you to adapt the information and advice for your area rather than treat it as a blueprint. Also, the information in this guide is designed to lead you in the right direction rather than provide all the information you might possibly need. We have therefore suggested other publications for further reading throughout this guide.

*Scottish adults take 34.6 million walks in the countryside in any one year and one third of adults walk at least once a month.*

*Source: SNH walking survey 1995*

## Why have a path network?

Research has shown a mixed picture of outdoor access in lowland Scotland:

- **There is a severe shortage of paths and tracks which can be used by the public with confidence**
- **Path networks are fragmented**
- **Most paths are unsigned and there is little information about where people can go**
- **Roads have become busy and less safe to use**
- **There are limited or non-existent opportunities for cycling or horse-riding off-road.**

There is no formula for the perfect path provision and ultimately it is about trying to meet the demand within the practical constraints of geography, funding, landowner cooperation, etc. However, any contribution that provides an improvement to the enjoyment of the outdoors is worthwhile whether it be a single route or a complete network.

Our aim is to have networks of paths around towns and villages that provide a range of routes (ideally circular) of varying lengths and where appropriate provide walking, running, jogging, cycling and horseriding opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

- **Paths should be planned with the involvement of the people who will use them to ensure that their needs are met and with landowners because without their co-operation you will not get very far**
- **The paths should be promoted, welcoming (through use of signs and waymarking) and be well maintained**
- **Ideally the paths should be accessible without the use of a car and if necessary be serviced by public transport.**

*"I live in a small village set in mainly arable farmland where there is nowhere to walk except on public roads"*

*A.E. Woodward  
Newmachar,  
Aberdeenshire*

*"What I really want is somewhere safe to cycle with my children"*

*resident of Rutherford*



Safe off-road cycling

## Getting Started

### Do some background research

Before starting to make plans for your local area, try and find out if anything is happening already and whether there have been past attempts that you may be able to learn from.

- Contact your local authority and ask to talk to the Access Officer. Find out if the local authority has any plans to develop paths in your area now or in the future
- The community council in your area may also be able to help with knowledge of past, present or future plans
- There may also be other local individuals or groups in your area who are working on their own plans for paths.

This initial task will often provide you with useful background information and will also establish useful contacts.

*"It is surprising how high paths and access often feature in community group agendas"*

*Community Development Worker*



Doing some background

## Forming a Path Group

### Why form a path group?

- Spreading the workload and responsibilities
- Gathering experience and expertise
- Group voice is much louder than the individual
- Bring together common interest
- Having fun and socialising!

In Newburgh (Aberdeenshire) the local youth club took forward the planning and completion of several paths.

*"By involving other community groups in the project from the beginning they have created an interest in the local community and a willingness to ensure that the project is developed and maintained by various groups."*  
(Carolyn Smith - Youth Club Leader)

Any community group can initiate the action, such as the community council, the local youth club or a local walking group. However, whichever group leads the action it is important to involve all those with relevant interests. For example, if there are no horse-riders in the group but there is a demand for horse-riding, there is a risk that their interests will be overlooked or misunderstood. The same applies to the involvement of other groups such as landowners, cyclists, and those with disabilities, etc. As well as **ensuring that all interests are represented** it is important that everyone agrees to carry out specific tasks.



Group working

What can be achieved will depend on your group's resources and its ability to commit time. Of great importance will be the ability of your group to harness help both in terms of advice and finance from organisations such as Scottish Natural Heritage and the local authority. Also local companies, such as building contractors and sawmills, may provide assistance. You should contact all relevant organisations at an early stage. They may even have a representative who can join your group.

Genuine partnership projects with all of the interest groups on-board are much more likely to be successful in funding applications.

**Remember that there may be many people who do not relish the thought of being on a steering group but would be enthusiastic about doing work on the ground.**

### What do you want to achieve?

- Signing and waymarking
- Path construction
- Missing links
- Maps and leaflets
- Upgrade of paths
- Maintenance

Every local area will have a different set of issues (i.e. don't be constrained by the above list). For example, one area may have a good range of paths but an added link would provide a much more useful network. In another area you may only require to sign and waymark the paths, or you may have no access to paths in your area and need to start from scratch.

**It is important that the objectives you choose are realistic for your group to achieve. It is always better to begin with smaller projects and build up as your group gains confidence in its abilities. If you do decide on a very ambitious project, try and phase it so you can see the results at each individual phase.**

Realistic targets are discussed in more detail on page 22.

### Access for all...

It is vital that you try to minimise the use of any 'barriers' when planning your works. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (known as the DDA) introduced new laws to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities. The act applies to the provision of the path on the ground, any promotional literature or guided walks.

Further information on the DDA can be obtained from the Disability Rights Commission.

Your local council may have a Community Development Worker - contact them for advice on forming a community group.

### Further Reading

The Disability Rights Commission  
[www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

BT Countryside for All; Accessibility Standards and Guidelines  
[www.fieldfare.org.uk](http://www.fieldfare.org.uk)

SNH Access Design Guide

It is important that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. Elderly people, parents with children in pushchairs and people with disabilities, all want access to the outdoors. Sometimes it is simply not practical to provide for everyone, but there are often simple measures that can be taken to open up paths to more people:

- It is amazing just how many people cannot manage a stile but are very able to walk. Replacing a stile with a gate can open up a path to these people
- Barriers designed to prevent motorcycles are rarely effective but are very effective at stopping pushchairs and wheelchairs.

Research by the US National Park Service shows that an 'access for all' approach, which seeks to provide a barrier-free environment, benefits around 42% of the visiting public.

## What is your starting point?

Finding out what's already there - the access audit

- Are there paths already?
- What routes do people use?
- Where would people like to go?
- What is the response from landowners?

Once you know what is there you will be able to make plans for improvement.

Your local authority should be able to tell you if there are any recorded rights of way or other designated paths in the area. Many other routes may be used by local people although they may not be mapped or promoted in any way. Are there places people would like to go but can't find a route?

## How will you find out?

As well as using your own knowledge it is useful to ask as broad a range of people as possible. This can be done by word of mouth in a small area or you may wish to ask people to mark the routes they use on a map. Landowners may also be willing to suggest routes on their land.

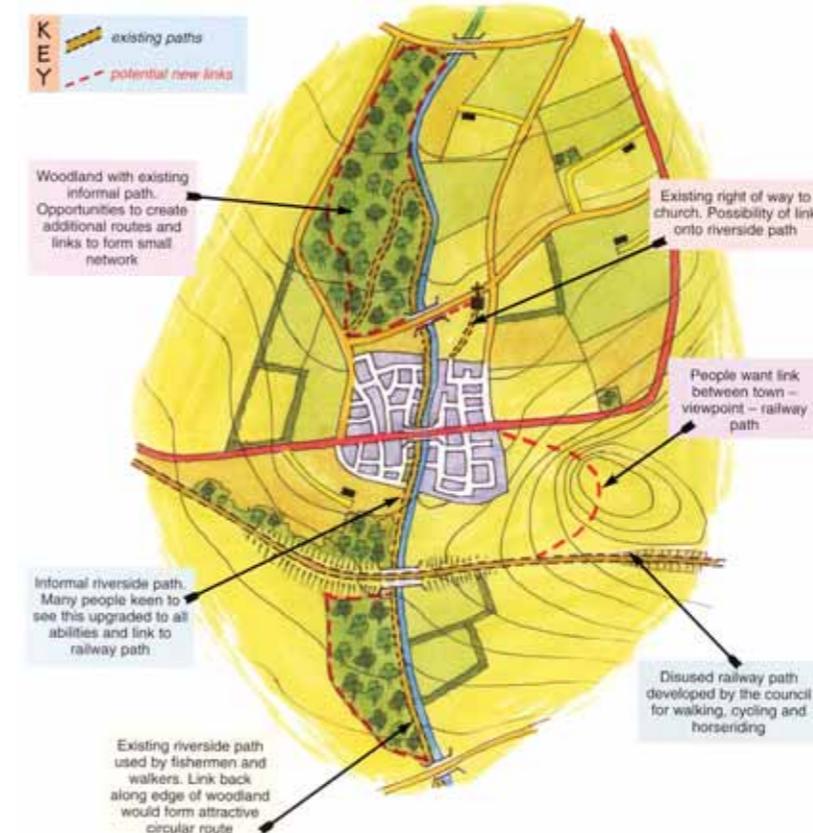
In Inverness a survey of where people walked was carried out at the entrance to supermarkets. What better way to survey a broad range of people!

Always have a map handy - a line on a map is much easier to interpret than someone's description of a route! You may also wish to hold a public meeting to hear people's thoughts on the general proposal and also to get them to draw possible routes on a large map.

Contact any landowners/managers as early as possible. Present the general principle of what you would like to achieve and explore solutions that could benefit all parties. Involve them in the planning of routes as they will know the land, any possible problems with drainage, vegetation and gradients. They will also need to be involved when thinking about how the route fits with present or future land management plans. You are much more likely to find success if these considerations are thought through in the early planning stages.

The map below shows an example of what you may end up with:

By marking on a map where people already walk, cycle or ride and asking what further developments they would value - you start to build up a picture of the potential path network.



## An Action Plan

- What needs doing?
- Who does what?
- When will it get done?

### CHECKLIST

- ✓ Contact funding/advisory bodies
- ✓ Contact landowners/managers and agree works
- ✓ Identify work to be carried out
- ✓ Identify priorities
- ✓ Practical tasks (construction, vegetation clearance, sign installation, etc.)
- ✓ Leaflet design and distribution
- ✓ Maintenance plan
- ✓ Opening day!

It is important that you draw up your own checklist and assign tasks at an early stage to ensure that you are clear how each task will be achieved and on what timescale.

When you list all the tasks that need to be carried out it can become very daunting. However, it is important to recognise what needs to be done from the outset so that jobs can be assigned to everyone in the group and others who you may be able to recruit for specific tasks. If you have a good group and can spread the jobs reasonably widely the list becomes far less daunting and starts to look achievable. Asking people to do jobs to which they are best suited is vital in any team building situation.

Try to involve as many people as possible, even if they don't want to be part of the formal group.

It is important to plan tasks and give them a timescale for completion to ensure that the project keeps moving forward. The chart below gives some examples of how to plan tasks.

TASK	DETAIL	WHO?	TIMESCALE
Contact potential funding/advisory bodies	Write a letter detailing aims of the group and asking what assistance may be available	Jimmy Smith	By end June
Contact landowners	Discuss in principle the aims of the group. Assess willingness to co-operate. How might they help i.e. maintenance.	Jo Bloggs	End July
Survey all potential routes	Report back on work needing carried out on each route	Mary Smith	End August



Planning a path network

## What you need to know

- **A background to paths**  
*A summary of the current legal status of paths*
- **Group organisation**  
*Constitutions  
Health & Safety*
- **Making the case**  
*The arguments for funding and resources*
- **Carrying out a survey**  
*How to assess what work will be required*
- **Feasibility**  
*Deciding which paths to develop first*
- **Agreeing access routes with landowners**
- **Signposting and waymarking**  
*Making the paths welcoming*
- **Advertising the paths**  
*Producing a local paths publication*
- **Getting the work done**  
*Costing the work  
Deciding who does the work*
- **Maintenance**  
*Who will look after the paths?*
- **Funding**  
*How to apply for funding  
Who are the funders?*
- **Marking your achievements**  
*Organising events to promote your work and promote the paths*
- **Getting help**  
*A list of useful contacts*

## A Background to Paths

Paths can be anything from a faint route across a field to an engineered surface along a riverside. Whatever the route, someone will manage the land over which the path crosses.

Part 1 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 once it comes into effect, probably late 2004, gives everyone statutory access rights to most land and inland water. People only have these rights if they exercise them responsibly by respecting people's privacy, safety and livelihoods, and Scotland's environment. Equally, land managers have to manage their land and water responsibly in relation to access rights.

Research has shown that the majority of people wishing to access the outdoors are seeking well signposted, well-managed and welcoming paths (System Three Scotland 1996). The Scottish Outdoor Access Code, introduced within the new Act, provides detailed guidance on the responsibilities of those exercising access rights and of those managing land and water. The code has 3 key principles 1) Respect the interests of other people 2) Care for the environment and 3) Take responsibility for your own actions. In any area close to where you live there may be a range of paths with varying histories and status:

### Public Right of Way

A public right of way is a route which links one public place to another and has been used continuously for a period of at least 20 years, as well as meeting several other criteria. Your local authority should be able to advise you of any recorded Public Rights of Way in your area, as should ScotWays.

**Core Paths** (introduced within Part 1, Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003)  
Core paths will be key paths that will offer assured and welcoming access.

### Permissive paths

This is where the landowner gives permission for a route to be used but there are no legal rights attached to it (*applicable to land outwith access rights*).

**The development and promotion of any path should involve the landowner and other key stakeholders from the earliest opportunity.**

### Further Reading:

*Rights of Way - A Guide to the Law in Scotland.*  
*The Scottish Rights of Way Society* 1996  
ISBN 0950281166

Available from:  
Scotways  
24 Annandale Street,  
Edinburgh EH7 4AN

*Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Stationary Office Ltd*  
ISBN 0105900443

*The Scottish Outdoor Access Code.*  
*Scottish Natural Heritage*  
2004

## Group organisation

Group organisation and structure may not be the most exciting topics but are essential if the group is to succeed. A well-organised group will be able to attract funding and support because it will inspire confidence. Also, if public bodies are offering financial support they need to see that proper records are kept and that funding offered will be spent in a given timescale.

Although everyone involved in the group should have an equal say, proceedings will run more smoothly if different individuals are given responsibility for different functions. As a minimum it is worth having the following positions:

**Chairperson:** Helps to keep the group focussed on realistic and achievable objectives and keeps participants from digressing

**Secretary:** To take minutes, keep records and deal with correspondence

**Treasurer:** To keep records of financial situation.

### Constitutions

Voluntary groups are not legally required to be formally constituted but it is advisable to do so for several reasons:

- Enhances your group's identity and credibility
- Many funding bodies will only give financial assistance to constituted groups
- Helps ensure everyone is clear of the group's objectives
- Provides rules to ensure the group is run properly.

### Health and Safety

Where volunteers are involved in path work, whether it be surveying, clearing or construction, it is important that individuals and groups carry out the work as safely as possible and carry insurance.

The following are the main points to remember:

#### Clothing

Wear suitable clothing and footwear for the task.

#### First aid

A first aid kit should be carried especially if using tools or lifting heavy objects.

#### Lone working

Individuals carrying out work on their own should ensure that someone knows where they are and when they are expected back.

#### Weather

Beware of extremes of temperature, eg. the possibility of suffering from hypothermia and exposure in cold weather, and sunburn and dehydration in hot weather.

#### Tetanus

Anyone involved in physical work outside should be covered against tetanus.

#### Safety first

If in doubt - don't do it! Seek advice.

#### Tools

Know how to store, carry and use all tools and equipment safely.

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV-Scotland) can offer valuable advice on simple and straightforward Health and Safety precautions which will ensure that your group carries out its work safely and legally.

#### Insurance

It is advisable for your group to be covered by public liability and personal injury insurance. Public liability is a complex issue and in relation to any paths you work on the responsibility may lie with the landowner, the local authority, your group or a combination of all three. Rather than delve into the complexity of liability law it is best to ensure that your group has appropriate insurance. One way of doing this is to become an Associated CLAN member with BTCV-Scotland. All these groups have access to BTCV public liability and personal accident insurance.

Further details and an application form are available from:

BTCV Scotland  
Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, Stirling FK8 2QG.  
Tel. 01786 479697

## Making the case

- Campaigning for support

**No matter the scale of project, you will need to convince others to help, either financially or in kind. You may also wish to lobby your local authority to take a greater interest in paths. The facts and figures below can help make your case.**

### Demand

Research clearly shows the need for more outdoor access close to where people live:

- **Of those seeking to walk in the countryside only 8% wish to walk in upland areas- 92% are seeking access to lowland areas.** [System 3 Scotland (1991) A survey of walking in the countryside. SNH Survey and Monitoring Report No. 3]
- **Of visitors to the Highlands of Scotland, 46% are looking for low level walking (2-8 miles) as their main activity** (Visitor Survey, Highlands of Scotland 2002)
- **The majority of people wishing to access the countryside are seeking well signposted, well managed and welcoming paths** (System 3 Scotland 1996)
- **6 out of 10 people are concerned about where they can go in the countryside.** [System 3 Scotland (1991) A survey of public attitudes to walking and access issues]
- **Physical activity can help protect against heart disease, strokes, obesity and a number of other health problems.** For all age groups regular and moderate activity helps both physical and mental health
- **40% of households in Scotland do not have access to a car. This further emphasises the need for access close to where people live.**

### The benefits

The creation of a path network around your community will have far reaching benefits beyond that of recreation.

### Economic

Well managed and signposted paths will attract visitors from neighbouring areas and further afield. By spending in local shops, hotels and B&Bs, pubs and cafes and using other local services these visitors can contribute to local economies.

In 1998 it was estimated that the overall walking market in Scotland generated around 1.1 million trips. 9.6 million bednights and at least £438 million expenditure (UK Tourism Survey 1998).

Walking is the most popular recreational activity for people coming to Scotland on holiday. Over 30% of Scotland's population walk in the countryside at least on a monthly basis [System 3 Scotland (1991) A survey of walking in the countryside].

### Recent example

Straiton in Ayrshire improved and waymarked walks around the village. In the first summer after development, surveys were carried out. It was found that:

- All visitors stated they had spent money locally
- The local pub and shop reported an increase in visitor activity and a direct benefit of increased trade
- The local castle (which opens to the public in summer) reported their busiest year ever and the owner attributed it to visitors attracted to the area by Straiton walks.

### Health

Scotland has an extremely poor health record, much of which is related to a lack of exercise. Not everyone wants to or can afford to visit the local sports centre or swimming pool on a regular basis, but a brisk walk in the countryside may appeal and will cost nothing. Two thirds of people in Scotland are not active enough to benefit their health. Did you know that walking for just 30 minutes a day is described as the nearest thing to perfect exercise for most people.

The Paths for All Partnership manages the Paths to Health Project which has a specific aim of encouraging more people to walk. The project trains volunteers to lead walks and provides materials to support local promotion of walking, such as the 'Walk More Feel the Difference' leaflet pictured on page 26. For more information on the Paths to Health Project and how you can help support walking for health in your community, visit our website ([www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)) or telephone the office on 01259 218855.

### Community Development

A path network will obviously provide a resource for the community to enjoy. However, the development of the network can be a focus for community involvement. Not everyone will want to be closely involved, but by organising community events to help with particular aspects such as vegetation clearance, surfacing, maintenance, etc. you will raise awareness and encourage a sense of ownership in the paths. This local ownership is likely to encourage more responsible use and behaviour and can play a role in the generation of local pride. Also, have you ever noticed how people always acknowledge each other on a path which is becoming rare in the urban environment? This leads to the creation of more 'community spirit' and a friendly place to live and to visit.

### Further Reading:

*Making the Case for Local Path Networks. The Paths for all Partnership, 1997 Tel. 01259 218888*

[www.pathsforall.org](http://www.pathsforall.org)

*The Spending (per day) of day visitors to paths.*

*West Highland Way  
£4.73*

*Southern Upland Way  
£7.23*

*Dunkeld and Birmam  
Local Path Network  
£12.40*

*all data expressed in  
1997 prices.*

*Highlands Visitor Survey  
2002/03 shows spending  
breakdown and purpose  
of visits.  
[www.hie.co.uk/visitor-survey-full-year-2002.htm](http://www.hie.co.uk/visitor-survey-full-year-2002.htm)*

### Education

Access to the outdoors is becoming more and more important in the school curriculum not just for environmental education but also for the teaching of local history and geography. For many schools this can mean an expensive trip involving the hiring of buses, because the immediate countryside is not very accessible or welcoming. The result is that such trips are few and far between or don't happen at all.

### Local History and Heritage

Many communities have historic sites that are important to the community identity. Improving access to these sites can lead to a greater sense of local identity and pride.

### Community Planning

Local Authorities now have a duty to produce a Community Plan across their area that addresses a wide range of issues. Proposals for access needs in and around communities are likely to be included. Speak to the Community Planning Officer as early as possible to make them aware of your ideas. There could also be linkages to other projects in the area.



Making the case

## Carrying out a Survey

A path survey will be required to plan which routes to include in the network and to identify the work that will be required. It could also provide valuable information to include in promotional material.

Advice and information on types and methods of survey that can be used for different purposes can be found in the references shown. These also give details on methods of construction and design considerations. Some of these may help with your survey or provide you with the next steps once the survey has been completed.

The following is a checklist of information that your survey should give you:

- Length
- Description of terrain, i.e. hilly, rocky, flat, boggy
- Physical improvements needed, i.e. gates, drainage, vegetation clearance, surfacing
- Points of interest, i.e. landscape, historical features
- Potential uses, i.e. suitable for horses, cyclists, multi-use
- Need for signposting and waymarking.

When surveying, always consider those who may be less agile, taller or smaller, etc. than yourself to ensure that their needs are considered. Often it is better to survey in pairs to get someone else's opinion. It is essential also to consult cyclists and horse-riders if they will be using the route. It would be easy for a walker to overlook something that would cause a problem for a horse-rider or cyclist.

You can survey at any time of the year but try to consider seasonal variability i.e. wetter in winter, growth of vegetation in summer. When you carry out the survey take a note of the existing weather and the weather over the last few days.

When surveying, you may come across problems with the path. If you do not know the solution, simply note the problem and that you need to request advice.

Leaflets on copyright of Ordnance Survey maps are available from:

Ordnance Survey  
Romsey Road  
Southampton  
SO16 4GU  
Tel: 08456 05 05 05

e-mail;  
customerservices@ordnancesurvey.co.uk

For more detail on methods of survey:

Upland Path  
Management: Standards for delivering path projects in Scotland's Mountains, Upland Path Advisory Group

Paths for All Partnership: Lowland Path Construction - A Guide to Good Practice

PFAP Fact Sheet: Path Survey and Construction - the basics

SURVEY REPORT	
TITLE: <b>BIG WOOD PATH</b>	DATE: <b>17 MARCH 2003</b>
NAME OF ROUTE <b>BIG WOOD PATH</b>	
NAME OF SURVEYOR <b>JOE BLOGGS</b>	
LAND OWNERSHIP <b>MR &amp; MRS SMITH BOGTON FARM. Tel: 0113 752 541</b>	
ROUTE STATUS <b>NO STATUS - but owners are willing to enter into informal agreement with community</b>	
GENERAL DESCRIPTION <b>Narrow beaten earth path which winds through mature woodland. Overhanging and encroaching vegetation makes access difficult in parts. Some areas quite muddy with short section (20 m) of very boggy ground. The route is circular and in total about 3 miles (5 Km) long. Gradients are level or gentle. No signposting or waymarking present.</b>	
PATH USERS <b>Route receives moderate level of local use from walkers</b>	
FEATURES OF INTEREST <b>The wood has considerable aesthetic appeal being a mature broad leaf wood land</b>	

The table below shows a method of splitting up sections of path to make detailed notes and accurately show you where work is required. Alternatively, you may simply want to annotate directly onto a map of the route.

**BIG WOOD WALK** Sheet 1 of 4  
17 March 2003  
Weather: dry & bright, heavy rain yesterday

2,000 m	Path slopes gently up	Path surface in good condition	Install wooden way marker post halfway along to reassure people that they are still on correct route
740 m	Planks of wood have been laid in the past, but now sinking	Very boggy section.	Seek advice on how to construct path over this area.
720 m		Muddy path surface.	Requires drainage to remove water from path.
700 m		Path crosses track to farm.	Install waymark at farm track to keep people on path.
135 m	Path slopes gently down	Bramble clumps encroaching on path.	Cut back brambles, - requires one person / day.
50 m	Level gradient	Overhanging branches obstructing path Path surface in good condition.	Cut back overhanging branches - requires 1/2 person / day.
Start 0 m	Level gradient	Well drained bare earth path	Signpost start of route
Length	CURRENT PATH CONDITION		RECOMMENDED WORKS

## Feasibility

By this stage you should have a good idea of what already exists and what could be done to improve the situation. Start with your ideal plan and then work out what is feasible and what is not.

### Criteria that will affect feasibility include:

#### Landowner agreement

Contact any landowners/managers as early as possible. Present the general principle of what you would like to achieve and explore solutions that could benefit both parties. Plan to work first on those improvements/routes that appear to have least obstacles to overcome. Some routes may be seen as a pilot by landowners/managers. If these are a success and problem free, from their perspective, this may open up other possibilities.

Involve them in the planning of routes as they will know the land, any possible problems with drainage, vegetation and gradients. They will also need to be involved when thinking about how the route fits with present or future land management plans. You are much more likely to find success if these considerations are thought through in the early planning stages.

#### Cost

It is better to start with paths where much can be achieved at low cost rather than tackling an expensive project that opens up relatively little access. For example, there may be paths that simply need signs and waymarkers. Conversely there may be a short route that requires a bridge and surfacing.

#### Future maintenance

Paths that have high ongoing maintenance costs may be difficult to up keep. Prioritise those routes that will have few ongoing maintenance requirements.

#### Demand

There is no point developing a route that nobody is likely to use even if it does fit with the above criteria.

#### Features of interest

The more interesting the route the more it will be used and valued. Features of interest may relate to varied landscape, wildlife, a historic building or a spectacular view. Also if a path can be used to walk to school or the shops it is likely to prove popular.

#### Planning permission

Most local authorities will regard pathworks as 'de minimus' and too minor to require planning permission. Check with your local authority Access officer that this is the case, particularly if more substantial structures like bridges are involved.

## Agreeing works with landowners

Before carrying out work on a path, or including a path in any publicity material, you will require the agreement of the landowner and/or manager. Even where a path is a Right of Way it is only courtesy to do so.

The simplest of all agreements is an informal agreement between the landowner and your group. This need be no more than a simple exchange of letters (see example). The disadvantage of this approach is that the agreement is with the owner and not the land. If the owner were to sell there would be no compulsion on the new owner to respect the agreement. However, in practice as long as the financial investment in the path is not too high it is usually a risk worth taking.

Other mechanisms for agreeing access include formal agreements between the local authority and the landowner, woodland/forestry grant schemes and agricultural/crofting support schemes. If you wish to know more about these options we would recommend that you contact your local authority, local Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) office or The Paths for all Partnership.

The following gives an example of the main points to include in an agreement between a local group and a landowner. However there may be other issues that need to be included at the request of the landowner or to suit the local circumstance. As noted on page 15, the agreement should confirm the position agreed over insurance and liability.



Dear [owner]

[Name of route]

With regard to our recent discussions about the above route I am writing on behalf of [name of group] to seek your agreement to work progressing and to clarify the nature of our agreement. If there is anything below which you wish to change or if there is anything you wish to add please do not hesitate to discuss this with me.

**The route:** The route in your ownership is shown in red (or other colour) on the attached plan/map.

**Other interested Parties:** Any other interested parties (if appropriate) such as Farm Tenant, Sporting Tenant or other have been notified and agree to the route.

**Work Schedule:** The following schedule of work will be carried out on the route by [name of group] and our contractors (if appropriate) beginning on [date you intend commencing work].

*[List detail of all works to be carried out]*

*For example:*

1. *Wooden signs, post waymarkers will be installed at locations detailed on attached map.*
2. *Overhanging vegetation will be cut back to allow easy passage.*
3. *.....*

**Promotion:** As well as signposting, the route may appear in a leaflet informing people about paths around [name of area]. Information encouraging responsible behaviour will appear on all promotional leaflets.

**Maintenance:** *[Detail how maintenance will be carried out]. This may be the sole responsibility of your group or a combination of the landowner, local authority, etc. This will depend on what arrangements you have made locally.*

**Insurance:** The group will have public liability and personal injury insurance for the duration of the works. On agreed completion of the works, the path will be included into your property insurance cover (or other as agreed).

**Use of the route:** The route will be promoted for [walking/ cycling/ horseriding] (as appropriate)

If you are in agreement with [name of group] commencing work on the route under the terms detailed above, please sign below and return.

Yours sincerely

Name of owner .....

Signature of owner .....

(On behalf of [name of group])

Date .....

## Promotion and Marketing

The majority of people in Scotland are unsure where they can go out of doors and in the countryside. Many paths and routes, even in towns, are under-used. Encouraging people to use paths is the most important aspect of path development.

Developing paths is about delivering benefits. Whether those benefits are economic, health, community, environmental or purely recreational, you need people on the paths to deliver these benefits.

Paths are no different from other facilities. Unless they feel welcoming and encourage people to use them they are unlikely to meet their full potential. However, paths have the added disadvantage of not always being very obvious. Even if the start of the path is obvious, who's to know where it goes?

A **signpost** at the start of the path is the most obvious tool to advertise the existence of the path and provide information to help people find their way with confidence.

**Waymarkers** are required where there is a choice of route. They can also provide confirmation that people are still on the correct route even if there have been no choices along the way. This may seem very unnecessary to someone who uses the route regularly but will make the newcomer or visitor feel reassured and therefore add to their enjoyment of the route. If they enjoy the experience they will tell others! Word of mouth promotion is the best promotional tool.

Rather than go into the detail of signpost planning and design here, you are strongly recommended to read 'Signpost Guidance' The Paths for All Partnership 2000.

Signposting is just one tool in the kit for promoting path use. Appropriate use of leaflets, map boards, articles in the local press, led walks and events are all important tools in promoting paths to various target groups.

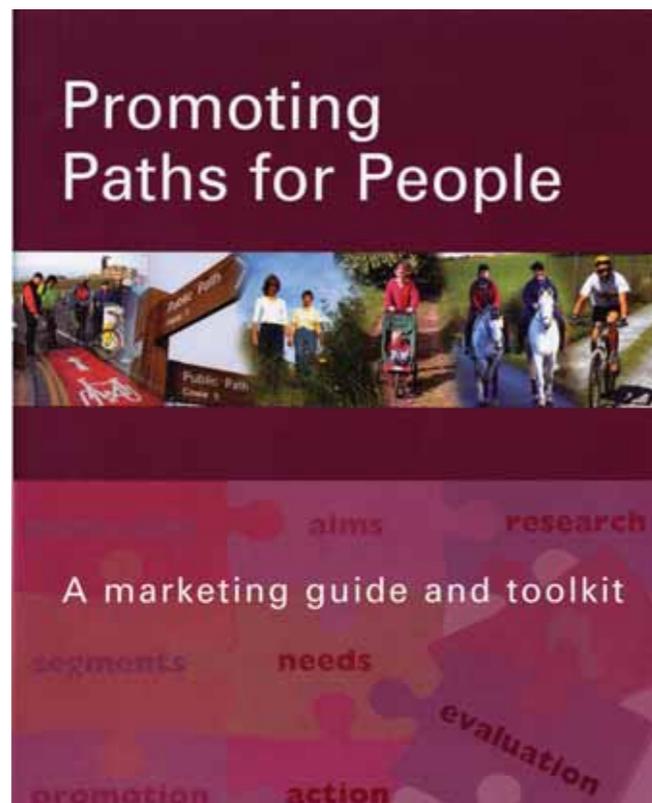
The Paths for All Partnership has produced a very comprehensive guide to help plan the promotion and marketing of paths to maximise impact from your resources which is also strongly recommended reading.

The Paths for All Partnership also manages the Paths to Health Project to encourage people to walk more for health. For information and advice on promoting paths for health, visit [www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk) or telephone the office on 01259 218855.

#### Further Reading:

'Promoting Paths for People- a marketing guide and toolkit', Paths for All Partnership 2003

'Signpost Guidance', Paths for All Partnership 2000



## Getting the work done

From your survey you will have identified what work is required. Now you need to decide how to get it done and how much it will cost.

Getting professional support at this stage will be invaluable. See the "getting help" section (page 34). If you have any problems finding professional help in your area please contact The Paths For All Partnership and we will do our best to help.

How you actually get the work done on the ground will depend on the type of work needing done, the enthusiasm of volunteers and the money available.

Listed below are some of the ways of carrying out the work:

#### Contractors

For some types of work there may be no option but to hire specialist contractors eg. for creating new paths and repairing difficult sections.

It is worth finding out about any contractors that have carried out work on paths before and whether the work was satisfactory. Your local authority or SNH will be a good starting point for this.

#### Landowners

Rather than paying an outside contractor there may be jobs that the landowner or their employees could carry out for the same price or for less than a contractor. In this way the landowner may view the path more positively. Some landowners may even be prepared to carry out the work for nothing.

**Whichever method you use for carrying out the work it is important that the landowner is involved and knows who will be working on his/her land.**

#### Volunteers

An enthusiastic group of volunteers can achieve a tremendous amount and this creates a sense of ownership and care for the path which may extend to the volunteers continuing with a maintenance role.

Some tasks can be carried out without any special training, such as vegetation clearance - although see note on Health and Safety (page 14).

Other tasks such as drainage, simple construction, etc. require specialist experience and you may wish to invest in training for volunteers. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (Scotland) can run training for their affiliated groups (page 36).

## Maintenance

### Think about maintenance of the paths from the outset.

It is important to note likely maintenance requirements when carrying out the initial survey of the paths. Maintenance planning and inspection is covered in more detail in the Lowland Path Construction Guide produced by the Paths for All Partnership.

Many paths do not require a great deal of maintenance, especially if the route is used regularly to trample down vegetation. However, from time to time tasks such as sign refurbishment/replacement, repairing gates and strimming, etc. will need to be carried out if the route is not to fall into disrepair.

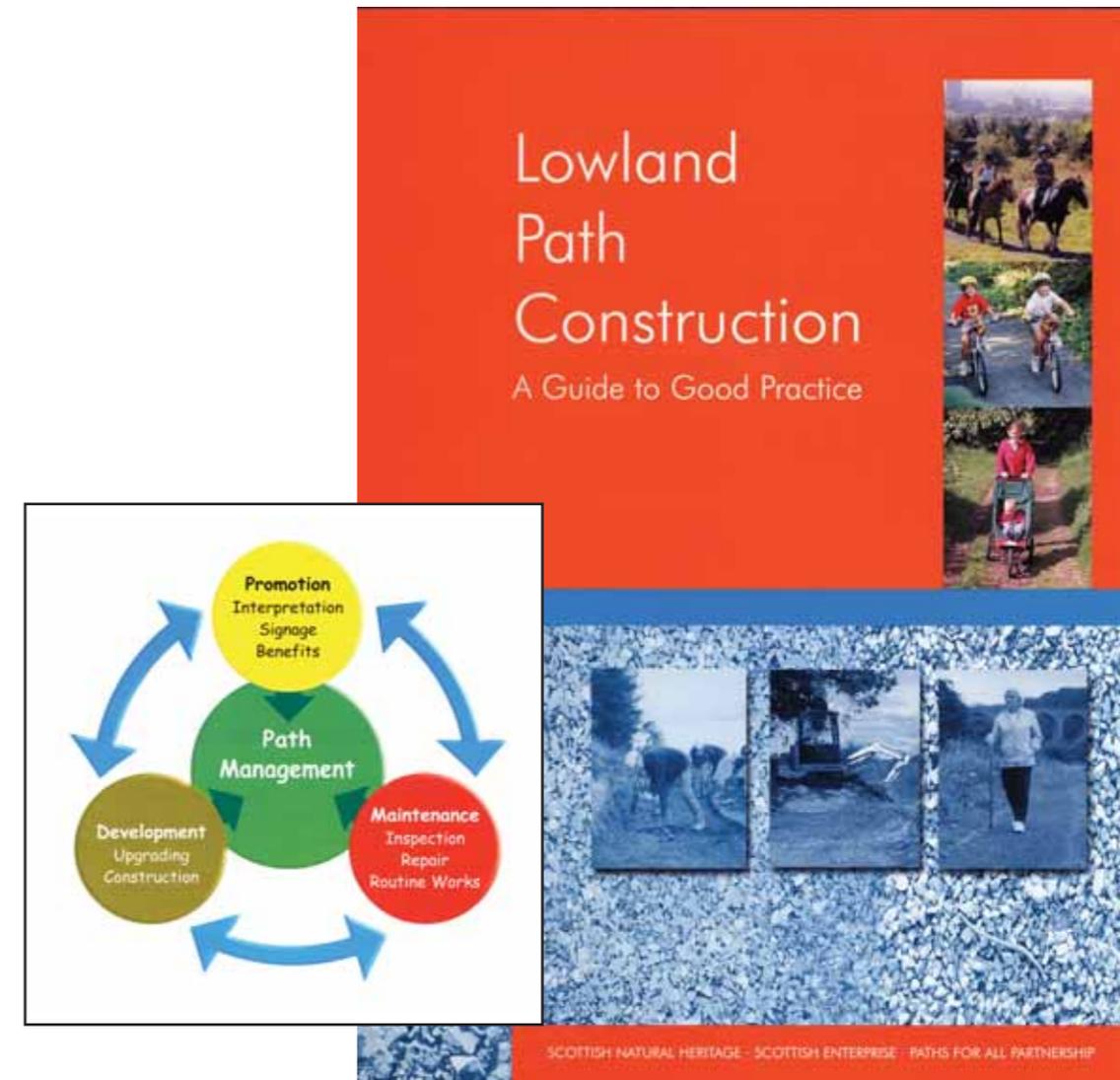
**The important thing is that everyone is clear what the likely maintenance requirements will be and that there is agreement on who will carry it out before any work begins.**

There are a range of options that may be available:

- Many minor tasks can be carried out by people on their regular walk
- Other tasks may need a work party
- Landowners may be willing to carry out maintenance on paths through their land
- The local authority may assist with some maintenance tasks
- Perhaps you could have an annual fund raising event to ensure there is always money to help with maintenance
- Local groups might "adopt a path"
- You may be able to receive grant aid from SNH for the purchase of tools to help with maintenance.

How you manage the maintenance will depend on the local situation - but remember having a mechanism for maintenance will be as important to the long term success of the project as the initial development. Maintenance agreements should be written down so that if the personnel on the group changes there is no doubt about what has been agreed with whom.

Culross Community Council ensure regular maintenance of their local paths through a combination of agreements with landowners, Fife Council and local action. The Community Council received a grant from SNH to enable them to purchase tools for maintenance.



**Further Reading:**

*Environmental Funding Guide (3rd edition - 1998) - a guide to grants for the environment from government, companies and charitable trusts. A bit out of date but comprehensive.*

*The Scottish Trust Guide - trusts give out large sums of money every year and there are several hundred in Scotland.*

*Both available from Directory of Social Change.*

*<http://www.dsc.org.uk/acatalog/Fundraising.html>*

## Funding

Now that you have an idea how much funding is required, you can begin looking for assistance. We have listed below some of the organisations that may be able to assist. We would emphasise the benefit of having discussed your proposals with potential funders at an earlier stage so that they are expecting the application and know the background to it and your group.

Most grants are made available for specific types of group or project. Before you apply, make sure that your project 'fits'. Remember that by emphasising different parts of your project you can make it 'fit' with many different organisations. For example, emphasise the health and fitness benefits if that is what the funder is interested in. Alternatively emphasise the local economic benefits if this is important to the funder.

The contact addresses and telephone numbers for the organisations below are given in the "Getting help" section.

### Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

SNH can fund up to 50% of project costs. However, if voluntary labour is supplied they can fund up to 100% of material costs. Points to emphasise: Enjoyment of the countryside by local people and environmental education benefits.

### Local Enterprise Company

Local Enterprise Companies may be willing to provide up to 50% funding. Emphasise the economic benefits that may accrue to the community. They will be particularly interested in how you will promote the paths. They may also be able to advise you of other appropriate funding sources.

### Local Authority

Local Authorities often have discretionary funding available for community projects. Your local councillor may be able to investigate this for you.

### Local companies

Local companies such as sawmills may be willing to contribute material at no cost. Others may help with designing the leaflet. Larger companies may be willing to sponsor a route.

### National companies

Most big national companies have budgets for sponsorship or public relations. Some also have specific schemes that you can apply to.

### Scottish Executive

Scottish Executive Voluntary Sector direct grant  
Mostly not suitable but the Rural Challenge Fund and transport grants may be helpful.  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/>

### Lottery

The National Lottery raises over £1 billion per year for 'good causes'. There are different lottery funds with different criteria for funding.

Heritage Lottery Fund: Supports access to the "natural" heritage and has a programme called Your Heritage that gives up to £50k that is particularly suitable for local community groups. For more information: <http://www.hlf.org.uk/>

Community Fund: Change themes each year and is currently merging with the New Opportunities Fund (2004). You do not have to be a registered charity to apply. For more information: <http://www.community-fund.org.uk/>

The New Opportunities Fund has supported several programmes that support access and in Scotland are administered by Forward Scotland. For more information: <http://www.forward-scotland.org.uk/>

Sports Lottery Fund: An application has to be about active participation in sport (paths provided for walking, cycling and horseriding have been funded) - for public good, wide community benefit and preferably attracting new people. For more information: <http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/>

Awards for All is a small grant lottery programme that is funded by all five lottery bodies. Grants of between £500 - £5000 are available for small community groups. For more information: <http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/>

### Landfill Tax Levy and Aggregates Levy

Landfill operators must pay a tax for every tonne of rubbish dumped. However, 90% of this tax can be reclaimed if the landfill operator supports an environmental project such as the provision of paths. The project must be within a 10 mile radius of a landfill site and the money can only be given to an approved environmental body. Your group may be able to register as an environmental body or alternatively you could get a registered environmental body to apply for funds on your behalf. The Paths For All Partnership is registered as an environmental body. ENTRUST is the body that administers the landfill tax. It supports environmental bodies and has a good web site. For more information <http://www.ltcs.org.uk/>

Aggregates Levy is on a similar basis to the Landfill levy and is administered by Forward Scotland. For the latest information: <http://www.forward-scotland.org.uk/>

**Coalfield Rejuvenation Trust**

Only for ex-coalfield areas. For more information: <http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk>

**Scottish Community Fund**

Variety of modest grants. For more information:

<http://www.scottishcommunityfoundation.com/>

This list of funding sources is by no means comprehensive but covers the main sources common to all areas of Scotland. You may also have sources of funding available locally through European funding, other area specific sources or charitable trusts.

**Tips**

- The current success rate of well-prepared grant applications is 1 in 5 so do not be discouraged if your first application is unsuccessful. It is also becoming increasingly common to require a funding package - smaller grants from two or three sources rather than one large grant covering the whole project.
- Remember that Charitable Trusts, companies and the Lottery will need a one to two page outline of your project. Lay it out using the following paragraphs:
  1. Introduction - Who, what, where, why and when should be included.
  2. Endorsement - name drop if possible and mention who else is supporting you.
  3. Problem - an outline of what their money will solve.
  4. Solution - Your project.
  5. Costs - an outline of the budget you will need.
  6. Monitoring and Evaluation - How you will show them that you have done the work.
- When seeking funding from public bodies such as SNH you may be required to supply more than one quote for the work to be carried out.
- Some grants are only paid after you have completed the work. If this is the case, make sure you can pay for the work up front while waiting for your grant to come in.

**Marking your achievements**

Using the path network and continuing to encourage others to use it will ensure that interest in the paths is maintained. You may wish to consider running guided walks or using the paths for events.

Celebrate whenever you complete a phase of work. Let the local press know what has been achieved. As well as for your own satisfaction this type of publicity will help in sourcing future funding.

Dunnotar Woodland Park Association celebrated their achievements by holding an Open Day. They had people stationed at points on paths around the wood who were able to interpret historic features, paths construction, wildlife, local stories etc.

Other ideas for organised events include:

- Sponsored walk, ride or cycle
- Treasure hunt
- Fun run

Make sure you invite all interested parties and especially those who have contributed in any way. eg.

- Landowners, farmers
- Sponsors
- Local businesses
- Local councillor
- Local schools

Invite the local press to cover any events you hold. Publicity will help to inform people about the paths and will also impress the funders.



## Getting Help

In Nethybridge the local community group obtained substantial amounts of help from the Highland Council Ranger Service - but the project still remained firmly community led.

### Who Does What?

#### British Horse Society

Advice on horse related access and local contacts.

Contact: Pat Somerville, The Loaning, Auchengate, Irvine, North Ayrshire KA11 5BH  
01835 863020 pat@somerville23.fsnet.co.uk

#### Cyclists Touring Club

Will be able to put you in contact with local groups who may wish to assist.

Contact: John Taylor, 01556 670395. johnwtaylor@care4free.net.

#### CSV Environment

Advice for communities undertaking environmental projects.

Contact: 236 Clyde Street, Glasgow G1 4JH. 0141 204 1681.

#### Fieldfare Trust

Advice on provision of facilities for people with disabilities in the countryside.

Contact: 7 Volunteer House, 69 Crossgate, Cupar, Fife KY15 5AS. 01334 657708.  
scotland@fieldfare.org.uk.

#### Forestry Commission Scotland

Forestry Commission Scotland give advice and grants for the provision of recreation in existing and new woodland. They also own large areas of forest that may link with your proposals.

Contact: 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT. 0131 334 0303.

#### Health Board

Your local Health Board will have a Health Promotions Department. They may be able to assist with the promotion of paths to encourage healthier living.

Contact: See telephone directory.

#### Local Authority

If your local authority has an Access Officer they should be able to assist you with all the information you need or at least point you in the right direction. The Countryside Ranger service may be able to assist in a similar way.

#### Planning Department

They should be able to provide you with information on Rights of Way and other formal agreements.

#### Roads/Transportation Department

Most local authorities have someone responsible for cycling development. They may have or know about plans to improve cycling in your area that might fit with your own groups proposals.

#### Local Enterprise Company

Possibility of funding and advice on promotion/marketing and links to local business.

Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise are the umbrella bodies for the Local Enterprise Companies, so they are the first contact if you are unsure which Company covers your area.

Contact: **Scottish Enterprise**, (for southern and central Scotland), 120 Bothwell Street, O2 7JP. 0141 248 2700.

**Highlands & Islands Enterprise**, Cowan House, Inverness Retail and Business Park, Inverness IV2 7GF. 01463 244441.

#### NFU Scotland

The Union represents approximately 15,000 farmers in Scotland. There are 28 local areas and 131 branches throughout Scotland.

Contact: The Rural Centre, West Mains, Ingliston, Newbridge, Midlothian, EH28 8LT.  
0131 335 3111.

#### Paths For All Partnership

We can provide advice on all aspects of path development. We are not a funding body but we can help with advice on raising funds. Check the website for area contact information.

Contact: Inglewood House, Tullibody Road, Alloa, FK10 2HU. 01259 218888.

info@pathsforall.org.uk or

The Greenhouse, Beechwood Business Park North, Inverness, IV2 3BL. 01463 667 232/228.

**Greenspace Scotland**

Contact: Suite 3, The Commercial Centre, Stirling Enterprise Park, Stirling FK7 7RP  
01786 465934

**Ramblers Association**

Local groups may be keen to assist with voluntary work or in running guided walks.  
Contact: Crusader House, Haig Business Park, Markinch, Fife, KY7 6AQ. 01592 611177.

**British Trust for Conservation Volunteers**

BTCV has been working with local conservation groups since 1984. Through CLAN (Conservation Local Action Networks) it supports community organisations carrying out practical environmental action. CLAN advisers can offer help, advice and training. Groups can become affiliated to CLAN, offering access to benefits such as insurance cover, tool loan, vehicle hire and networking events.

Contact: The CLAN Officer, Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, Stirling FK8 2QG. 01786 479697.

**Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)**

SCVO is the umbrella body for voluntary organisations and can provide advice on many aspects of group organisation and funding.

Contact: 0131 556 3882; 0141 332 5660; 01463 235633.

**Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA) formerly the Scottish Landowners Federation**

The Association represents the interests of rural property owners and land-based businesses in Scotland. The Association supports the principle of encouraging responsible countryside recreation.

Contact: Access Officer, Stuart House, Eskmills Business Park, Musselburgh EH21 7PB  
Tel: 0131 653 5400.

**Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)**

SNH is the government agency with responsibility for advising on and promoting the enjoyment, understanding and care of our natural heritage.

They are able to offer practical advice on path design and construction as well as ways of minimising the environmental impact of paths. They also have grants available for path work. Grants are usually to a maximum of 50% but where voluntary groups are involved they can fund up to 100%

Contact: 12 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh, EH9 2AS. 0131 447 4784.

This central contact will be able to direct you to your local office.

**SCOTWAYS**

Advice and help with protecting and signposting Rights of Way.  
Contact: 24 Annandale Street, Edinburgh EH7 4AN. Tel: 0131 558 1222.

**SUSTRANS**

Responsible for The National Cycle Network and all aspects of promoting sustainable transport and active travel.

Contact: 3 Coates Place, Edinburgh EH3 7AA. 0131 623 7600.

## A Final Word

We hope this short guide has helped with ideas of how to take some action in your local area. As a final word we would again remind you that this is a guide to action and does not provide you with all the information you require. Make the most of the expertise and support that other organisations are able to give you and together you can succeed.

If there are any difficult issues and you cannot get help locally please do not hesitate to contact The Paths For All Partnership. Our Development Officers will do their best to help.

Good luck!

