

Snettisham Parish Council

Norfolk County Council
Rights of Way consultation

By email

Dear Sir,

Rather than write in detail commenting on individual proposals, Council has asked me to summarise our main concerns relating to footpaths, and other rights of way, as priorities it believes should guide all policies in any future planning.

First, there is little point in extending the network if the maintenance of current PRowS is not given due consideration. It is one of the complaints we receive most frequently, and we would urge that this is not further reduced, and, indeed, should be improved over time, particularly when financial restraints are loosened, to go beyond statutory requirements.

Second, the first priority with new paths should be to join up existing routes to create a more coherent approach. This should include “branch lines” to give access from villages to the longer routes which are so important to the local economy.

Third, the completion of the Coastal Path is clearly important to us as a parish – we have yet to have our beach pathways included in the official CP designation, and we have one of the longest stretches of coastline locally; a route to King’s Lynn would make an enormous difference. Further, a point we have raised before, not all coastal parishes have the village itself on the coast, as is the case here. A link from the Coastal Path to the main body of such villages is also important. We are currently adding over a mile of TROD footway as part of our efforts to do this, but it would be nice to have more help with



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both the finance and the planning of routes in such cases. (I should add that NCC staff have been extremely helpful working with us on this provision to date.)

Finally - and this will actually make the biggest difference to the provision of PRowS in Norfolk - we strongly believe that NCC should work with parishes more to achieve these aims. We are all aware of the importance of official designation before the cut-off in 2026, but it seems increasingly difficult to register new paths. Our experience a few years back was that NCC was too even-handed between proposers and objectors to a path locally; the default position should be balanced more in favour of supporting pathways unless there are real problems involved, if County genuinely believes that this is an important issue.

We would urge priority be given to providing a designated and named officer to give advice, and encourage parishes to take up this considerable effort; it would make the task so much easier, and prevent 500+ parishes re-inventing the wheel on a daily basis.

As this is a general letter we are also copying as below.

With kind regards



Simon Bower
Parish Clerk
6/4/2018

CC:

Wendy Thomson (Managing Director, NCC)

Cllr Stuart Dark (Division Member, NCC)

David Mills (Country Access Manager, West Norfolk, NCC)

Sally Bettinson (Highway Engineer, NCC)

Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds (Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member: Culture, Heritage and Health, BCKLWN)

Cllr Ian Devereux (Ward Cllr; Cabinet Member: Environment, BCKLWN)

Cllr Avril Wright (Ward Cllr, BCKLWN)

Russell Reeve (County Officer, NorfolkALC)

