



P4C News

Winter 2014

The Paths for Communities e-newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the final edition of the Paths for Communities (P4C) newsletter, the culmination of a 2 year scheme funded by the European Rural Development Programme for England. It's fitting that the projects featured in this newsletter show how P4C has enabled local community groups to develop projects that facilitate increased access to the countryside by more people for leisure, health, wellbeing and tourism; and how rural economies have benefited from these new routes.

We offer our thanks to all those wonderful, creative, energetic individuals and groups that have made P4C both a local and national success, and we hope that our End of Project Report (see later) will be an inspiration and trigger to other groups with a desire to improve and enhance their local rights of way network .

Martin Shaw, P4C Project Manager

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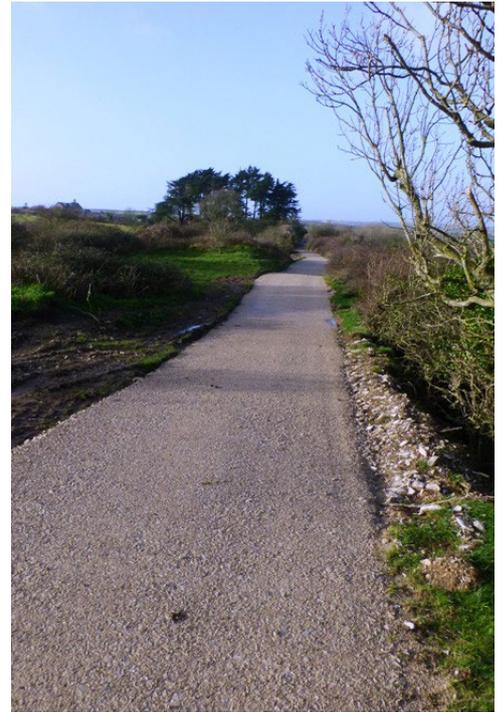
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Project News

Priest's Way, Swanage, Dorset

Paths for Communities funding helped to improve an historic track to link three communities and enable more people – locals and visitors - to enjoy travelling along it all year round.

The Priest's Way is an ancient track once used by the clergy in the 15th Century to travel between the communities of Swanage, Langton Matravers and Worth Matravers. Today it is an important and valued route that local people wanted to see improved to a standard that reflected and celebrated its historic value and made it easier and more enjoyable to use by a wider range of people.



Over time the Priest's Way suffered from our changing weather/climatic conditions, increases in rainfall and varied land use and land management. This resulted in water run-off from adjacent fields that caused erosion in certain locations and seasonal flooding. At its worse it was difficult to travel along or totally unusable during the "rainy season" due to large expanses of water, deep gullies and mud. This made the route very unpleasant to use and often prevented people from using it.

Representatives from each of the adjacent communities – Ian Vaughan-Arbuckle, Ian

MacKenzie and Sandra Brown – sought advice from Tara Hansford, Countryside Access Development Officer, Dorset County Council. She highlighted the P4C funding opportunity and helped them to prepare a successful bid. Dorset County Council also agreed to bank roll funding and help them implement the work on the ground. Without such support the project could not have gone ahead.



The National Trust (the major landowner) and its farm tenants gave their support to dedicate a Public Right of Way. Match funding to finance additional aspects of the project were received from Worth and Langton

Matravers Parish Councils, Swanage Town Council and the Ramblers Holiday Charitable Trust.

The funding improved the Priest's Way to a higher standard than the basic statutory requirement for a Public Right of Way whilst taking care to protect and enhance the stunning landscape in which it sits. Work included:

- Drainage (land drains, silt traps, ditch restoration);
- Surfacing (using locally sourced material, sensitive to the local environment);
- Fences and gates for livestock control;
- Fingerposts;
- Priest's Way logo and waymarker;
- Production of a Priest's Way website and promotional leaflet;
- Employment of an ecologist to monitor and protect resident Great Crested Newts;
- Dedication of bridleways to increase provision and connectivity;
- Opening ceremony.



The new route is just over three miles long and with a gentle, undulating gradient it now provides a perfect, safe, off road route for both local people and visitors, of all ages and abilities. Walkers, horse riders, cyclists, older/younger people, families and people who use mobility vehicles can all use the route to get to the local facilities in each of the three communities, to keep fit or simply to get out, relax and enjoy the stunning coastal scenery.

Work started in autumn 2013 and culminated in a January 2014 opening ceremony which involved local school children marking the occasion in a fancy dress procession and the unveiling of a commemorative stone.

Its first winter was one of the wettest recorded and certainly tested the improvement works on the Priest's Way. But it coped brilliantly and now the route is easier to maintain and can be used and enjoyed all year round.

Tara S Hansford
Countryside Access Development Officer

Royal visitor opens The Countess of Chester Country Park



The Duchess of Cornwall and Euan Hall Chief executive of the Land Trust

On Friday 12th September The Duchess of Cornwall officially opened the Countess of Chester Country Park by unveiling an artwork by the award winning wood sculptor Simon O'Rourke. The Country Park, adjacent to the Countess of Chester Hospital, which is managed by the Land Trust, was opened to the public in June 2014 and is already well used by members of the public. Working in close partnership the Land Trust, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership, NHS Property Services and Groundwork Cheshire, have transformed an area of disused land into an attractive green space within a busy urban area.

Natural England contributed £146,000 through its Paths for Communities scheme towards the creation of the footpath and cycling tracks that circle the park and connect it to the existing Public Rights of Way network. It is hoped that the park will be used increasingly by both patients and staff of the hospital as a tranquil place

for exercise and recuperation. The Duchess, on a stroll around the park, met local school children enthusiastically engaged in building bird boxes and feeders. She was entertained by the choir of the Queens School and presented with a bouquet. The Duchess chatted with partners in the project and declared the new park “was fantastic and a lovely thing”.

The plaque unveiled



Inauguration of New Coton Bridge

In June more than sixty people attended the ribbon-cutting and guided walk to inaugurate the new bridge connecting Coton village and the Coton Countryside Reserve.

In 2013, Cambridge Past Present and Future (CPPF) raised over £36,000 to repair the old farm bridge across Bin Brook – a tributary of the River Cam. Using money from Natural England’s Paths for Communities grant scheme; the Veolia Environmental Trust through the Landfill Communities Fund; the Co-operative Membership Community Fund; private trusts; and many supporters and local donations, they replaced the dilapidated stone bridge with a new timber crossing to provide a fantastic gateway into the site. Lattenbury Services Limited of Godmanchester built the bridge working closely with the CPPF Ranger team. As well as replacing the bridge, P4C funded the creation of a 500-metre footpath linking the village to a network of walking routes within the reserve and beyond. This new route will benefit local residents and local wildlife, and the project will support the careful management of nearby meadows and hedgerows. The bridge was officially opened by Beryl Smart, long-term Coton resident and a dedicated volunteer in the Parish Paths Partnership. The event was timed to coincide with the annual Coton Cream Tea enabling guests to enjoy this annual event.

CPPF has owned land at Coton since the 1930s. The Reserve is part of the city’s Green Belt and is a working farm welcoming visitors. Come and enjoy the Reserve either on your own or on one of our guided walks – [dates and further details are on the website, www.cambridgeppf.org.](#)



Beryl Smart cuts the ribbon!

Kingfisher Way enhancement project

The Kingfisher Way is part of the ambitious “Biggleswade Green Wheel”, which aims to “create a wildlife rich setting through attractive landscape corridors...[to] provide walking and ultimately cycling access both around the urban fringe and into and out of the town”, the new route secures a path parallel to the River Ivel and re-joins a community split by the A1(M).

It is now being used by commuters, students at Shuttleworth College, visitors to local attractions (such as Jordans Mill Heritage Centre, the Shuttleworth Estate’s aircraft collection and Swiss Garden) and it starts just a short walk from Biggleswade train station.



The project was conceived by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) stepped in to act as applicants to deal with the retrospective payment element of the P4C scheme. CBC’s experience of handling external funding became vital as the project worked to overcome a number of challenges. Having confirmed the project met P4C eligibility criteria, CBC had to safeguard the needs and wishes of their community, ensure their

generous landowner was happy with the specifications chosen - and then there was the small matter of the weather...

The winter of 2013/14 saw extreme levels of rainfall resulting in large sections of the project area being submerged for weeks on end. But eventually the sun shone, the ground dried out, and volunteers got to work clearing vegetation. The result is over 600 metres of hard core base, topped with recycled planings and blinded with granite dust – perfect for walkers and cyclists and offering strategic links into the existing Public Rights of Way network beyond.



New link across Nomansland Common

A partnership led by the St Albans Access Forum (SAAF) worked together to upgrade a 1 km footpath to bridleway between the villages of Sandridge and Wheathampstead in Hertfordshire. Thanks to the generosity of landowner, the Woodland Trust, the new bridleway is five metres wide and has been designed to accommodate the needs of different user types. Three metres of hard surface suitable for cycles, wheel chairs and push chairs; two metres planted as grass for those who prefer a softer surface, such as horse riders. The bridleway links with other footpaths and bridleways, as well as to Nomansland Common.



The project was supported by the many livery stables nearby and the route enables retirement home, Tara's Retreat, to take less mobile residents to see their local countryside. At the other end it links to a bus stop and the Wicked Lady pub.

The route realises the ambition of the SAAF and was identified as an improvement needed in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the area. It was supported by St Albans Cycling Campaign and co-ordinated by Lynn Myland, a keen equestrian, livery stable owner and member of SAAF. "The Rights of Way officer [at Hertfordshire County Council] was excellent!" says Lynn who gained huge support for the project from volunteers, locals and councillors.



Main contact, Lynn Myland and applicant Mike Hartley (on right) on the new bridleway.

Increased numbers using long distance bridleway

A new section of the Humphrey Kynaston Way long distance bridleway was put forward by Zia Robins, with support from the Nesscliffe Hills and District Bridleway Association Parish Paths Partnership Group. The route has featured on ITV's 'Off the Beaten Track' and BBC Radio Shropshire.

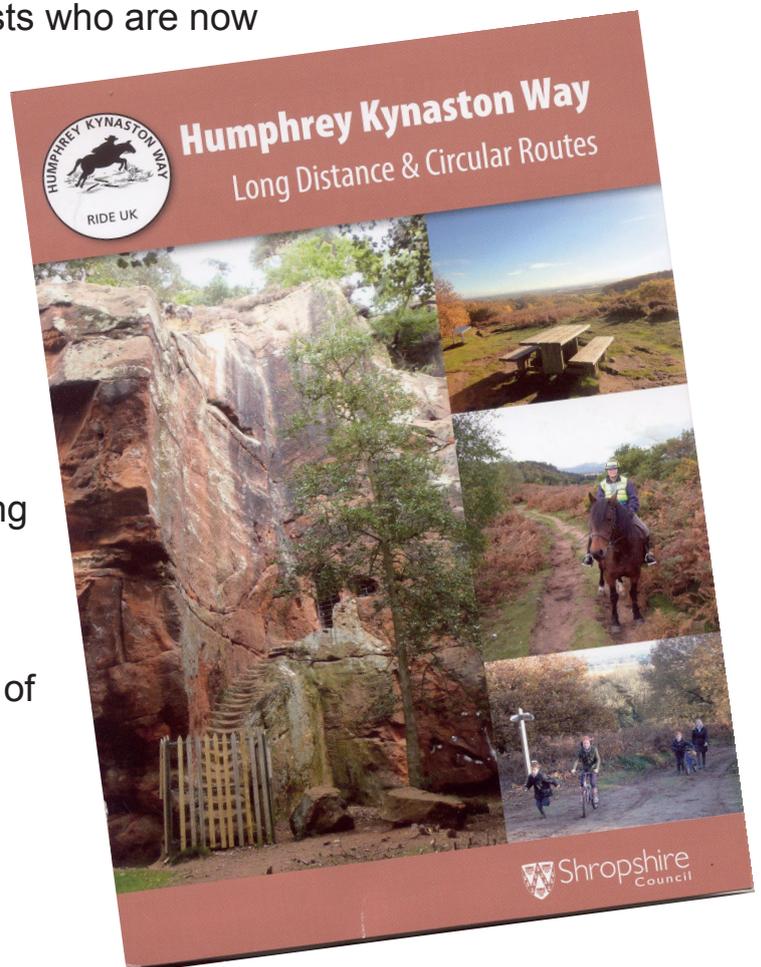
The 46 mile linear route with circular routes off, was designed with local businesses in mind, and it was hoped it would bring benefit to many local hostelries, equestrian centres, and other businesses along the routes. Increased usage has already been noted and an equestrian riding holiday business has recently started to use the route. It also appears on the Long Distance Walkers Association website and the improvements along the routes have brought great benefit to local horse riders, supporting the rural economy. The important new 800m section of bridleway from Preston Montford to Montford Bridge, passing under the A5, was funded by the P4C scheme and as well as improving the overall route, has helped to reconnect communities.

Zia said 'It is lovely to see young horse riders able to ride out with confidence now they can connect safely to off road routes. The A5 rest area café, which the new route passes, has provided tie ups and water for horses! A new bridleway gate in Ford Parish now gives locals a circular route and a connection from the route to the local pub.' In addition she states 'Shropshire Council's support of the route has been fantastic, and since the launch they have carried out even more improvements.

The new low handle bridleway gates, and better surfaces benefit disabled users as well as the many walkers, riders and cyclists who are now using the routes. The printed leaflets, with

local history, route maps and directions are proving very popular. [They can be downloaded from www.shropshireriding.co.uk](http://www.shropshireriding.co.uk)

Zia's hard work has been recognised when she was presented with an Access Achievement award by the British Horse Society, as well as a Volunteer of the Year Award by Shropshire Council for her dedicated and outstanding effort in ensuring this project was completed. Shropshire Council's Access Development Officer, Jim Stabler, said 'It could not have been undertaken without her hundreds of hours of research, writing and practical work on the route, and for this we are very grateful'.

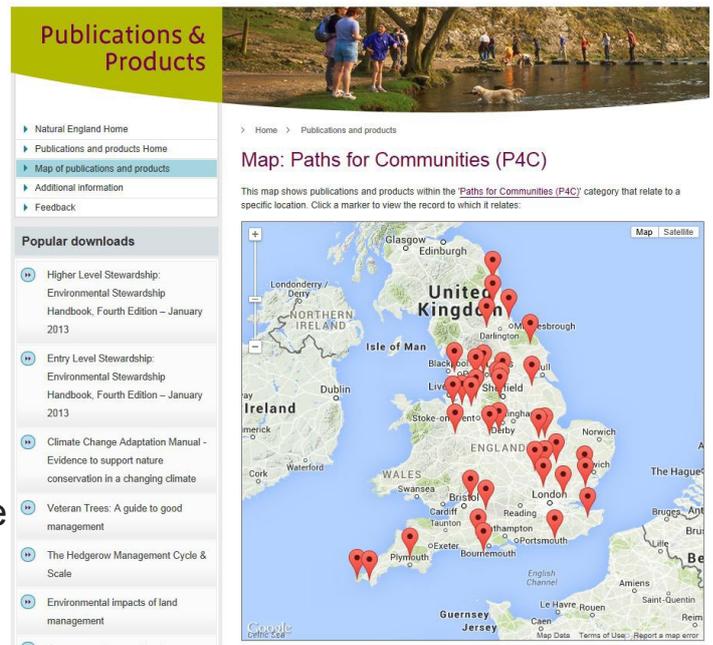


A map of P4C projects

The whole experience gained from the Paths for Communities scheme has been very rich and insightful and we wanted to share this more widely. We also wanted to promote the results of the hard work which the communities, local authorities and partners put into the new paths and bridleways. In order to do this we have created a brief two sided case summary for each project. The summaries include a brief description of each project and some useful links for you to discover more about those who made these project happen. We have included a map of the route in each case summary too.

On two sides of A4 we could never convey the depth of work which was completed, but we hope it may inspire others to look at similar solution to the creation of new access in their local areas.

What becomes apparent when reading through the summaries is the variation in types of project. The scale of the projects varies widely from projects with budgets of £3,500 at the Kilmersdon Link to £203,000 at the new Countess of Chester County Park. Regardless of cost involved each project plays a vital role in improving the rights of way network and creating much needed links for local communities. We hope you find the summaries interesting and inspiring. Enjoy a browse through the [39 P4C projects](#) and maybe plan to visit one?



P4C End of Project Report

This final newsletter coincides with the publication of the Paths for Communities End of Project Report. The report looks into the impact of how and where the £2 million was used and to share lessons learned. Ian Fugler, Natural England's Director for Access and Engagement said; "Paths for Communities was the first scheme of its kind and proved incredibly popular. Communities are best placed to identify where rights of way improvements are needed and they've worked hard with landowners and a variety of organisations on a significant number of projects around the country. Local businesses have also been supported by the work needed to create and improve new routes – and from more people enjoying them. There is a wealth of evidence in this final report and we hope it will help and inspire funding bodies organisations and groups to support communities to develop similar projects in the future." [Copies of the report can be seen here](#)

Finding funds for paths projects elsewhere....

The steely eyed amongst you will realise that a very similar article to this appeared in our Autumn 2013 newsletter, but we thought it would be helpful to revise it at the close of the project. For those of you who didn't manage to secure P4C funding, or for those keen to develop more new projects, we have compiled a document with information for funding sources. There is currently a lot of competition for funding so it's more important than ever to put together a good quality application. We hope that our end of scheme report will provide advice, examples and inspiration for the sort of projects that are possible. There is plenty of advice online about finding funds and putting together a good application. The main things to remember are:

- Do your research to ensure you target the right funds. Look at what has been funded in the past? How much? Is the fund happy to fund capital works? Does it want to see social benefits? Will it only fund charities? How much match funding does the fund expect? Does it fund projects in your location? Think about who else might be applying at the same time.
- Read the guidance carefully and follow it to the letter. If there is an opportunity to talk to the funder first or submit an expression of interest use it, it may save you both time.
- Use plain English and avoid jargon.
- Demonstrate the need for your project and the problem that you are planning to address.
- Explain how any grant will be spent with a focus on outcomes and value for money.
- Be realistic - make sure your figures add up, and don't necessarily apply for the largest grant available. Equally, don't forget to include admin costs or other reasonable overheads if the grant will fund them.
- Describe how you intend to measure the success of your project. Explain the difference it will make.
- Describe the long term sustainability of your project – who will maintain any capital items in the future?

Funding sources and places to find them

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) encourages and enables Landfill Operators (LOs) to support a wide range of environmental projects by giving them a 90 per cent tax credit against their donations to Environmental Bodies (EBs). This may sound complicated but the distributors are very helpful! The larger funds include:

- The Veolia Environmental Trust
- Sita Trust
- Biffa Award
- Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN)

You can find out whether there is a Distributing Environmental Body for LCF in your area via [Entrust \(the regulator of the LCFs\) website](#) Many of the funds will only support projects within a given radius of their sites. [The Environment Agency's website](#) includes a facility for searching for your nearest landfill site.

National Lottery funds support £35m worth of good causes every week. They have a funding finder which will signpost you to relevant schemes. [BIG also has a useful search facility for its particular funds on its website.](#)

People's Post Code Lottery offers funding for projects of up to 6 months in length ranging from £500 up to £10,000: [find the website here.](#)

Co-operative Group – Community Fund is particularly interested in local groups that demonstrate self-help, equality, democracy and concern for the community. Charitable organisations and community groups can apply for grants of between £100 and £2,000.

Community foundations manage funds from individuals, businesses and other donors who want to support causes in their local area. They are a good source of funding for small community organisations. There are around 60 community foundations in the UK: [find the website here.](#)

Funding Central is a free resource for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. It lists thousands of funding and finance opportunities, plus a wealth of tools and information supporting you to develop a sustainable income strategy: [find the website here.](#)

GRANTnet a straightforward free-to-use service from GRANTfinder, can help small businesses, charitable and community groups in some areas to find suitable funding. [The website includes](#) useful guides on business plan writing, writing a fundraising strategy etc.

Other grant search sites such as [Funding Information](#) will provide detailed news and information about new sources of funding for all those involved in raising money for not-for-profit organisations throughout the UK. They may charge a subscription fee but often offer free trial memberships.

The Charity Commission has an [advanced search function](#) which means you can search for charitable trusts under a variety of headings. It can be a good place to look for local trusts that want to spend money in a specific location.

Environment Agency website contains advice notes to help organisations, individuals and Environment Agency staff to apply for funding for river catchment projects. This can include access improvements where those improvements contribute to the river catchment objectives.



Department
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The European Agricultural
Fund for Rural Development:
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