



Paths for Communities - Project summary sheet:

Marston Vale Access Enhancement and Interpretation Project

Project Location:	Bedfordshire
Right of Way Created:	Bridleway 2.9 km
	Footpath
Improved existing rights:	n/a

Supporting local businesses:	3
Volunteer hours contributed:	40
Cost of project:	£24,542
Grant rate:	93%

The Marston Vale Trust was set up to deliver sustainable, environmentally-led regeneration of land formerly part of the brick making industry of Bedford and Milton Keynes. The Green Flag

awarded Millennium Country Park forms part of this vision with 225 hectares of woodland, grassland and wetland habitats.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



The European Agricultural
Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



The Forest Centre's Lakeside café and bar forms a hub for visitors. Staff received constant requests from visitors for information about local walks, rides and other access in and around the Country Park and the wider Forest of Marston Vale.

A strong partnership with the thriving Friends of Marston Vale volunteers, Marston Vale Trust, Central Bedfordshire Council and user groups was set up with the aim of applying for P4C funds to create an 'access hub' at the Forest Centre.

The P4C grant has supported the creation of 2.8 km of bridleway- some of which is new routes and some upgraded footpaths - to enable as wide a variety of users as possible to enjoy the Country Park. The new bridleway links to a network of permissive bridleway routes taking the user a further 2 km to the neighbouring village of Lidlington. It also forms part of National Cycle Network 51. This was supported with re-surfacing sections and installing waymarkers, signs and gates and horse stiles where needed.



The café and bar now provides pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians with details of access routes within a 10-mile radius of the Forest Centre and visitors can download or print leaflets of new circular routes via the LetsGo website where local services are also advertised.

"It's great that our rights are protected legally – I love coming to this country park!"

Interpretation boards have been designed and located both inside and outside the Forest Centre to show all

available access routes. Visitors can also enjoy two new listening posts giving an oral history of the site and several geocache trails are available to discover.

The Trust and its volunteers are currently working hard to support Defra's evaluation of P4C with visitor surveys. The results are due to be published in May 2015.

Links

[the Forest of Marston Vale](#)

[Paths for Communities](#)

[Welcome to Millennium Country Park](#)

[Forest Volunteers in action](#)

[The Forest Centre](#)

[Lets Go](#)

[Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

[Rights of Way](#)

