



PROTECTING FOOTPATHS SINCE 1887

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

# Leicestershire Footpath Association

## Presidents Remarks

A good barometer in measuring the strength of any Association, is the number of members on their register. When I became involved with our Association in 1976 there were 92 ordinary members and 66 parish councils. This year there were 340 ordinary members and 38 parish councils. This growth can in part be explained by walks being arranged on four days a week whereas in 1976 only Saturday walks were available and some evening walks in the summer. In addition the number of people walking are mainly retired. The Association always relies on members volunteering to take part in the affairs of the Association. If you consider you may be able to help in this way, please contact our secretary.

Our Association is a registered charity and I have agreed on our behalf to be the correspondent taking responsibility for our entry in the Charities Register. This requires me to update the register with trustee's names and addresses and also submitting details of our financial position.

I have attended three committee meetings and listened to the amount of work undertaken on behalf of our membership. In the following reports from officers you will be able to judge for yourself the variety of matters taken in hand. In particular the County Council have agreed for us to produce and distribute the new publication of the Leicestershire Round guide booklet.

Brexit, the most repeated word in the media this year, may have significant impact on monies available in future years for the maintenance of cross field paths. The Common Agricultural Policy has a payment scheme to reward farmers when they keep their paths open and accessible to the public. We may well ask will the UK government fund a similar scheme for farmers, thereby ensuring our cross field paths are kept clear of crop encroachment, following any exit from Europe?

Many of you will, I am sure agree, the National Forest has had a major impact on the scenery of North West Leicestershire. The scars left by mining have been transformed into woodland areas to walk and explore. This year celebrates twenty-five years following the governments support for its creation. 8.5 million trees have been planted.

In September, Ted Guy passed away. Ted was a committee member for a few years, 1985-87 and walked regularly on Saturdays. Some of you may recall his New Year day walks when before the start of the walk, members were treated to home cooked mince pies and mulled wine.

**Brian Jenkinson**

## Chairman's Remarks

At the last AGM I said there was a big change in the committee in numbers and especially years of experience. I am pleased to say that the year has gone very well with particular thanks to our temporary Secretary, Cindy and the other new committee members. I am not forgetting the contributions made by everyone else including our President who keeps us up to date with the Charity Commission. I am so pleased that Cindy has agreed to carry on for now as Secretary.

Longtime committee member and Tuesday Walk Organiser, Jenny Thompson, has stepped down after 10 years but will continue with LFA shirts. Rick Satchwell has been invited onto the Committee and takes her place as Tuesday Organiser. Val White is stepping down as she has increased commitment elsewhere. Val instigated the short Tuesday walks for those with a variety of constraints which have proved popular. Our thanks to all three. As ever we are looking for another committee member, and someone to take on the Spring and Autumn newsletters which Ken is relinquishing after years of organising it. See his report.

Apart from the usual routine there are two particular activities on the committee agenda. One is the updating of the route of Leicestershire Round and the publication of a new book to go with it. This we hope to publish in the Spring to coincide with our 130th year and the 30th Anniversary of the creation of The Round. Ken Brockway has taken this on almost single handed as L.C.C. , who published the first book, are unable to do so this time. We can't thank him enough.

The second is identifying and claiming Lost Ways. This is going on nationwide as after 2026 Lost Ways will be lost forever. LFA is co operating with other interested parties in Leicestershire to search maps , archives and local knowledge for evidence to claim the right of way. Stan Warren is leading on this for the LFA. Help on research will be required. On the walking front, membership and participation are still thriving I am glad to say. People are obviously enjoying being in our lovely countryside and part of a group. I find so many walkers are spurred on to recovery from ailments as their goal is reached when they can walk again with their group. You may have seen on the website that on one Tuesday walk we had 7 octogenarians. I think that speaks volumes.

One of the problems for leaders is the the closure and temporary closure of pubs at short notice, which necessitates a re-arrangement of venue. I think everyone now uses the website to broadcast the change as well as word of mouth. If you have a smart phone ( I think teenagers now have one retro fitted) or computer, why not sign up to receive an e mail of each new web site post. Many members already do.

Whilst on the subject of the website, you should enjoy reading Cindy's report of her impressive Coast to Coast to Coast charity walk. Congratulations Cindy.

Lastly, this being the 30th year of the round and updated book, the walk organisers will be encouraging leaders to incorporate a section of the round in their walk. We are hoping the whole round will be covered in this summer's programme. Happy walking.

**Neil Barker**

### **Secretary's Report**

This was my first year as secretary to our association and I must start with my sincere thanks to my fellow committee members for their support and particularly to Brian Jenkinson for his ongoing advice and mentorship as I get to grips with my new role.

The committee has met six times since the 2016 AGM to date with another planned for January 2017. Jenny Thompson has resigned from the committee and we welcomed Rick Satchwell as a new member and walk organiser for Tuesdays. We also welcomed Simon Constantinou as obstruction Secretary, which kindly released Stan Warren to concentrate on his very busy role of Diversion Secretary. Clive Fennel was given life membership of the Association in recognition of his many long years of service having fulfilled many of the officer roles on the committee. He remains an active and valued member of the committee. Jennifer MacGregor, our former minutes secretary for many years, was also given life membership.

Following discussion at the last AGM the committee agreed to progress the development and publishing of a new Leicestershire Round book and postpone any further action towards developing and erecting information boards due to the likely high cost of the project. The parish posters were however completed and sent to the relevant Parish Councils for display on appropriate notice boards.

### **Leicestershire Round Handbook**

Many thanks to Ken Brockway who has walked the whole of the Leicestershire Round this year in order to check and update the 100mile route and its description. Ken has identified a number of slight alterations for the route to ensure it takes account of new building, road and industrial developments and remains an interesting, safe and varied

walk that takes in splendid areas of Leicestershire. The proposed amendments to the route have been discussed with the Leicestershire County Council who are very supportive and have agreed that they will finance and provide any new signage and waymarking that may be required as part of their ongoing maintenance schedules and development. The target publication date is April 2017 to coincide with our 130 year anniversary and the copyright will be retained by the LFA. Something we can all be very proud of.

### Canal Access point project

We were invited to assist the Canal and Riverside Trust to identify towpath access points along Leicestershire's canals and describe how and where access was made. The project is now almost completed and we extend our thanks to those members who volunteered to walk and survey towpaths.

### Round and Hound

We were approached by Leicester Animal Aid association and PROSTaid charities to assist them in organising their charity event the Round and Hound Walk. The walk is to cover all the sections of the Leicestershire Round and the public is invited to sign up to walk their dogs around a section of their choice on Sunday 14th May 2017. Our thanks go to members of the LFA who have volunteered to lead sections of the walk. We still have some sections without leaders so if you would be willing to join us in this endeavour I would love to hear from you.

### Correspondence

Correspondence via the website has predominantly been queries with regard to membership, venue for Saturday walks and obstructions.

We have maintained correspondence with the LCC about Shackerstone station railway footbridge and they have indicated that they expect work by the Railway Society to commence in the spring of 2017. We highlighted problems with standing water on the Leicestershire Round between Leire and Frolesworth and near Thorpe Langton. They informed us that works have been carried out on W71 at Leire to stone between the stiles and a double sleeper put on the ground but the cost of erecting a boardwalk or stoning on the B29 would be prohibitive and problematic.

We have asked Leire Parish Council to advise us of the progress towards dedicating Station Lane to enable it to be placed on the definitive map.

### Funding for Lost Ways project

The committee have agreed to a donation of £300 for expenses incurred by this group which will be matched by The Ramblers Association and other donations from riding groups. The committee expressly stated that this funding would be for research into footpaths only and would be reviewed in subsequent years.

***Cindy West***

### Diversions and Closures

I offered to take over this role confident in the knowledge that Brian and I were generally of the same mind regarding what changes were acceptable and what were not, so I could provide continuity of approach for the Association.

This year seems to have been a relatively gentle lead-in for me, with no major controversial applications to deal with and no public inquiries to speak at, but with the pressure from major developments all over the county (with the possible exception of East Leicestershire) there will always be the need to get the best deal for the rights-of-way network. We have little or no chance of preventing any development going ahead on the issue of loss of paths and countryside alone.

I will start by giving you an update on some of the issues highlighted by Brian in the last annual report:

### Leicestershire Round

The three claims mentioned, at Thorpe Langton, Thorpe Satchville and Leire have not yet come to fruition – the wheels at County Hall grind exceedingly slowly, but no challenge to the continued use of the routes has arisen. There is also a gap on the revised route of the round at the Waterside Inn, Mountsorrel, but that seems even less threatened.

### Footpath U50 at Elmesthorpe

Together with the RA, I met Piers Lindley and Ellen Senior in an attempt to move this forward, and it was suggested that we should apply for a diversion to the route currently available to walkers. Such an application will hopefully be regarded by the landowners, none of whom want the route on their land, as a 'neutral' diversion. LCC will not charge for this application, as it is of public benefit, and it has been submitted but not yet sent out for consultation.

### Bridleway R67 at Crown Farm, Nailstone

While I have no sympathy with a landowner who blocks paths, details have emerged which do gain my sympathy. He is repeatedly threatened, involving firearms, by the local traveller community after refusing to sell them some land. LCC therefore feel that another attempt to open up the path would not be appropriate, and instead are looking to divert it away from the farm – it serves little purpose for walkers at the moment, and could be better linked with the Nailstone Wiggs development if diverted.

### Unrecorded Rights of Way

I now chair the LAF Sub-Committee attempting to co-ordinate action regarding these, and we are making slow progress. It looks as if the slowly growing band of volunteers will finally get trained this spring, and a priority list of routes has been agreed (yes I15 is on it!). Although the Deregulation Act effecting the 2026 cut-off date is now law, the Statutory Guidance, which importantly includes routes safe from the cut-off awaits parliamentary time for approval – another thing to blame on Brexit I understand. We are assured that any post-1949 routes, and any route on the Highways List of Streets and Publicly Maintained are exempt from the cut-off date. This should include all those mysterious ORPAs which appeared on Explorer maps as a line of green dots, although some conversations are necessary with our Highway Authority on this one.

I have brought 45 consultations to the committee since taking office, which also includes planning applications which may affect a right of way, and the only one which I have raised any objection to is a housing development at Stoney Stanton where the diverted route of U17 was not shown. Many have been very minor diversions to the route which is actually followed, or to avoid recent farm buildings. Those worthy of note are :

### H108 and H108A at Frisby Lakes

Part of the route covered by the successful MMO last year was never brought into use, as it crossed the part of the site being developed. The landowner applied for the extinguishment of this, to which we objected as it reduced the options available for circular walks considerably, and a revised route has been agreed. The order awaits confirmation.

### Magna Park, Lutterworth

Of the three planning applications currently approved here, one would significantly affect the path network south of Ullesthorpe. However, alternative routes have been proposed, which incorporate some of the routes currently available under Countryside Stewardship,

and are generally satisfactory. One issue which has not been addressed is crossing of the A5 to venture into Warwickshire.

### 'Dog-Walkers' Routes

Notable are several claims for routes in Kirby Muxloe and Fleckney, where there is the threat of development covering such informal paths around field edges adjacent to rights of way. It will be interesting to see how these fare, but they do demonstrate a need for such routes literally on people's doorsteps.

### A117 at Little Bowden

Network Rail have finally gained planning permission to build a stepped footbridge here. Not the ideal solution as many of the users will find it difficult to negotiate, but they were adamant that the level crossing could not be made safe – not that it wasn't already.

I also recorded 21 Orders as being confirmed, of which the following are worthy of note:

### Bardon Quarry extension

The promised temporary orders, including the addition of N110, but also the temporary loss of the direct route from Bardon Hill eastwards has come into effect. I feel we are now at the 'worst case scenario', and further Orders will start to rebuild the network. I have recently received plans for the proposed network at the end of each year up to 2020, and will examine and comment on these as appropriate.

### A32 at Foxton

This bridleway from Debdale Lane to Foxton has now been diverted to a field-edge route after the Planning Inspectorate considered written representations from a local resident. The Inspector upheld our decision not to object.

### V109 at Sharnford

This largely useless route through the lorry depot branching from the Leicestershire Round as it approaches Sharnford from the west has now been formally extinguished.

### J53 at Wanlip

This has now been diverted away from the wind turbine, and follows the northern edge of the field to reach J100 bridleway and the A6.

### B11/B14 at Tur Langton

This small diversion also resolved the issue of one of the paths passing through a silo.

### J110 at South Croxton

A DMMO added this short village path, linking J3A with School Lane.

### M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M24, M25, M28 and M35 on the

### Staunton Harold Estate between Breedon-on-the-Hill and Worthington

This extensive scheme was objected to by the Open Spaces Society and local residents, but the LFA, together with the RA, felt that there was not significant inconvenience or loss of enjoyment to warrant such action. After exchange of written representations with the objectors and landowner, the Planning Inspector has agreed with our opinion and confirmed the order.

So what else has been going on?

### Canal Access Project

We were encouraged by the Canals & Rivers Trust to add details of towpath access points for walkers to their on-line maps, and a team of members tackled our not inconsiderable canal network during the summer. Only one short section, north of

Kegworth, remains to be checked, and the results have also been picked up by the Access for All Countryside Project. Thanks to everyone who was involved.

### Watermead Country Park Regeneration

Charnwood Borough Council has engaged consultants to draw up plans to improve Watermead as a visitor experience. I represented the LFA at two Stakeholder meetings, where our views were explored and noted in detail. One of my points was the poor connectivity with the wider countryside, particularly with new developments such as Ashton Green, Broadnook and the Thurmaston SUE within striking distance.

### Working together with Leicestershire County Council

Jointly with the RA, we have been in discussions with LCC on how volunteers can best be used for rights-of-way work in these times of local authority cut-backs. It was agreed that, if suitable volunteers could be found, they should be trained to survey the network in advance of the rolling six-year maintenance programme, by identifying works required and drawing up the schedule for contractors. Incidentally, light maintenance, such as vegetation cut back and waymark arrow replacement would also be undertaken. Obviously it would need a commitment to check specific parishes within a defined time frame, but if anyone feels able to do this, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

### Working together with the Ramblers' Association

I meet regularly with their Area Footpath Secretary (Martin James, who is also an LFA member) at our 'office' in Thrusington, to ensure that we can work together on projects such as that mentioned above, and agree on any controversial proposals which may arise.

### Junction 19 of the M1

You may have noticed that the roadworks at Cathorpe are largely complete, but there does seem to be still some tidying up to do before we get our revised path network back in place. I will soon be asking questions, as I can barely remember what we finally agreed to.

So what else that I have not mentioned in detail which affects our paths. I can think of Sustainable Urban Extensions at Barwell, Lubbethorpe and Thurmaston; other major housing developments at Garendon, Market Harborough, all around Coalville, Broadnook (near Rothley); continuing business developments at Ellistown and Glenfield; The East Midlands Gateway near Junction 24; a by-pass for Melton Mowbray; and HS2.

I said it had been a relatively quiet year.

***Stan Warren***

### Treasurer's Report

2016 has proved to be another successful year from both the financial and membership points of view. With 39 new members in the year, 8 leaving for various reasons and 24 non-renewals, it gives us an overall membership of 340 paid-up and 5 life members. The number of parish councils has continued to fall, with 6 councils choosing to drop out and 1 rejoining, bringing the total to 38 now holding membership, plus 2 affiliated clubs.

The financial situation has continued to flourish, with total income of £3,760.74 and overall expenditure of £2,950.04 giving a surplus for the year of £810.70. This despite increases in printing and postal costs due to larger membership numbers and general inflation, and additional expenditure on the project to produce a new version of the Leicestershire Round guide book. As can be seen in the Financial Statement, we have closed the year with £8,892.05 in the NatWest current account and £5,202.15 in the NS&I savings account, giving us a total balance of £14,094.20.

The projection for 2017 shows a rather different picture. The cost of the re-issuing the Leicestershire Round guide book is estimated at £4,000 for the design and publication of an initial batch of 1,000 books, and along with existing agreements to make a donation to the Centre of Roman England project for a bench on The Round at High Cross, and to the Lost Paths project to help ensure that as many footpaths as possible are included onto the Definitive Map before the 2026 cut-off date, we can expect an overall deficit of approximately £5,000. But we need not be despondent: this will still leave us with an overall balance in the region of £9,000, and this is in line with our agreement at last year's AGM to find ways of spending our excessive level of funds.

During 2016 the Charities Commission issued revised guidelines for organisations such as ours on managing their financial affairs. As part of this, the guidelines remind us that charities with turnover of less than £25,000 are not required to have a full professional audit, but they are advised to maintain a detailed record of all items of income and expenditure, and to undertake an independent review of their financial accounts at the end of each year, by a member of the organisation who is conversant with basic bookkeeping procedures and has no connection with the officers or the management of the organisation.

I am pleased to advise that the LFA's accounts already comply with this method of record keeping (and have done for many years). It was agreed by committee earlier in the year that an independent review would be introduced for this year's accounts, to be conducted by an LFA member selected by the Treasurer and agreed by the committee. This review was duly undertaken by Mr Chris Bancroft, who has added his footnote to the Financial Statement.

In light of the Charities Commission's guidelines and the committee's decision to hold an independent review for the 2016 accounts, I am proposing that we amend our constitution to rewrite section 8, Finance, to remove the requirement to submit the accounts for audit, and replace with requirements for an independent review as described above. This can then become a matter of procedure for all forthcoming financial years.

As is now the custom, I am pleased to enclose the chart below to show the saleable assets of the Association.

<b>Assets of the Association</b>	<b>Sales Value</b>
In stock with Cordee (distributors):- 105 CPW books	335.58
In stock with Charnwood Museum:- 10 CPW books	30.00
In stock with LFA:- 64 Country Park Walks books	192.00
7 Leicestershire Round books	35.00
114 Leicestershire Round badges	285.00
<b>Total prospective sales value</b>	<b>£877.58</b>

Finally, I am pleased to remind members that the AGM last February agreed that the subscription charge for 2017, which falls due from 1st January, will remain at £5.00 per member.

**Dave Rogers**



**LEICESTERSHIRE FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2016**

<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>
<b><u>SUBSCRIPTION INCOME</u></b>		
Members' subscriptions	1,700.00	1,670.00
Members' additional donations	70.00	65.00
Parish councils' subscriptions	190.00	215.00
Parish councils' additional donations	5.00	10.00
Associated clubs' subscriptions	10.00	10.00
	<b><u>1,975.00</u></b>	<b><u>1,970.00</u></b>
<b><u>OTHER INCOME</u></b>		
Badges	72.50	112.50
Country Park Walks book sales	938.15	639.56
Leicestershire Round book sales	5.00	-
Ramblers Travel - Walking Partnership donations	140.00	100.00
Surplus from club shirt sales in 2014 & 2015	75.84	-
Gift Aid - tax reclaimed for previous year's subs	294.25	275.28
AGM meal receipts	260.00	351.00
	<b><u>1,785.74</u></b>	<b><u>1,478.34</u></b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>3,760.74</u></b>	<b><u>3,448.34</u></b>
Less Total Expenditure	2,950.04	2,618.84
Net Gain / Loss	<b><u>810.70</u></b>	<b><u>829.50</u></b>
<b><u>SUMMARY OF FUNDS</u></b>		
NatWest Current Accounts opening balance	8,081.35	7,251.85
Net income / deficit for the year	810.70	829.50
<b>Closing Balance at 31st December</b>	<b><u>8,892.05</u></b>	<b><u>8,081.35</u></b>
NS&I Savings Account opening balance	5,163.42	5,124.98
Net income / deficit for the year	38.73	38.44
<b>Closing Balance at 31st December</b>	<b><u>5,202.15</u></b>	<b><u>5,163.42</u></b>
<b>Total Funds at end of year</b>	<b><u>14,094.20</u></b>	<b><u>13,244.77</u></b>

**LEICESTERSHIRE FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2016**

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>
<b><u>AFFILIATION FEES &amp; DONATIONS</u></b>		
Ramblers annual subscription	60.00	55.00
Open Spaces Society annual subscription	45.00	45.00
Open Spaces Society '150 Year Anniversary' appeal	-	150.00
Woodland Trust annual subscription	33.00	33.00
Nottinghamshire Footpath Society affiliation	5.00	5.00
 <b><u>ADMINISTRATION COSTS &amp; OTHER EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Printing & Stationery	108.88	159.41
Postage	547.19	572.28
Computer costs (ink cartridges, etc)	37.00	63.65
Travel expenses	48.00	72.40
Leicestershire CC diversions notifications	-	34.00
Land Registry enquiries	-	9.00
Insurance annual premium	267.00	258.00
AGM hall hire	90.00	100.00
AGM meals	260.00	351.00
AGM guests' meals	6.50	6.50
Gifts for retiring officers	75.99	-
Annual Report, Newsletters & Walk Programmes	838.00	610.00
Royalties on Country Park Walks book sales	63.96	94.60
Redesign of LFA logo	50.00	-
Leicestershire Round book rewrite project	237.52	-
Leicestershire Round badges	177.00	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>2,950.04</u></b>	<b><u>2,618.84</u></b>

*I declare that this is a full account of the Association's financial activities in 2016 and confirm that the closing balances shown above concur with the respective NatWest and NS&I statements as at 31/12/2016.     **Dave Rogers, Treasurer***

*I have examined the detailed accounts of the Association and confirm that this is a full and accurate presentation of the income and expenditure amounts for the headings shown, and that the closing balances agree with the bsnk statements as at 31/12/2016.     **Chris Bancroft, LFA member***

## **Webmaster's Report**

Users to our website continue to grow. In 2015 I reported over 25,000 views this year is 42,000 an increase of 60 %. Partly due to changes at the LCC website and the removal of information about the Leicestershire Round which is now only available on our site.

The walks programme remains the top page visited but the Round is catching up and new posts such as Cindy's Coast to Coast report get a good viewing on each release. Don't forget you can register to 'Follow' and get an email each time a new post appears.

During the year I discovered how to organise your comments so that the most recent appears at the top of the page. I don't know why this wasn't the default.

I do appreciate postings from others and if the site is to remain current we do need more contributors. I will be stepping back in 2017 and would be happy to pass on the post of webmaster should anyone wish to take it on. If I remain in post then it will be to oversee the site rather than contribute. Even if LFA had the site professionally managed members would still need to provide the material.

I haven't in the past said much about the newsletter which goes out with the walks programme twice a year. I suspect we still have some members who rely on this while others still appreciate paper. The production of this has been streamlined. It is now typed at home and the copy emailed to our printer. The Treasurer then goes around the corner pays the bill and picks up the completed newsletters to stuff in the envelopes. I will be standing down from this job and invite a volunteer to take it on.

### ***Ken Brockway***

## **Obstruction Secretary's Report**

I 'held the fort' as Obstructions Secretary between March and August, to allow Cindy to concentrate on the Secretary's job, and to allow Simon and Barbara to become embedded in the Committee before taking on the role. I was assured by the previous incumbent that 'you do not get many reports', but I think the membership rose to the challenge when the walking season really started.

In all, I logged 93 reports with Leicestershire County Council, of which 33 were on the Leicestershire Round. I was also pleased to record that 29 issues had been dealt with, and others added to the maintenance schedule if they were of a minor nature.

The highway Inspectors welcome accurate and timely reports of problems found, and I believe those logged through the LFA are treated more seriously than if they were reported by individuals. I also believe that the responses are normally proportionate to the urgency of the problem, within the resource constraints which the ROW section is operating under, and all walkers can do their bit by carrying secateurs, and, above all, by walking paths regularly and showing the effect of boots on the ground (and vegetation).

### ***Stan Warren***

We took on this responsibility in August of this year and submitted our first obstruction report to LCC on the 24th of that month.

Since then, and up to the end of 2016, we have logged **46** reports on the LFA obstructions template. **36** of these we have submitted to LCC via their online form and **10** have been submitted directly to LCC by individual LFA members. At least **12** of the total were on the Leicestershire Round.

The breakdown of problems reported are as follows:

Stiles	16	Gates	5
Waymarks and Finger Posts	13	Fallen branches	1
Crops and overgrown vegetation	10	Handrails on steps	1

In the box below are some examples of the sort of issues that members raise.

Foot tread on stile held with binder twine	No waymark posts at any field boundaries
Stile step rotten and discarded	Branch of tree lies across and blocks path
Waymark post removed and is now in hedge	No arrow and no LR sticker on waymark post
Path needs reinstating in crop field	Waymark post broken and lying on the ground
Waymark has no directional arrow	

The responses we receive from the County's Highways team and from individual Rights of Way inspectors are always polite and helpful. However, the County's system moves very slowly and it can take several weeks before we get confirmation that appropriate action has been taken. In some cases, other than the initial acknowledgement of receiving our report, we hear nothing. During this period the rate of inspection and repair is approximately 30%.

For those members who wish to contact us for additional information, to raise concerns or to request an obstructions submission to LCC, our LFA email address is: [lfa.obstructions@gmail.com](mailto:lfa.obstructions@gmail.com)

***Simon and Barbara Constantinou***

### **Leicestershire Round Volunteer Scheme**

The Leicestershire Round Volunteer Scheme was re-introduced four years ago with both LFA members and non-members adopting part or all of a section, covering the whole one hundred miles of the Leicestershire Round

Apart from their normal duties this year, checking and reporting problems along the route, the wardens were also asked to help Ken Brockway's endeavours in producing the new Leicestershire Round handbook by amending the narrative of the outgoing handbook. I am grateful for their support with this initiative.

Again this year, most of the problems encountered by the wardens on their respective sections were of a minor nature, including accumulation of water, deep mud, broken stiles and missing or broken way mark posts and finger boards. Several suggestions were also made where additional way mark posts could be sited to help fellow walkers identify the route. It has been pleasing to see that County Hall have acted on the information.

A small number of warden vacancies arose this year due to a re-allocation of sections and other commitments but I am pleased to report that those vacancies have been filled. I'd like to warmly welcome those that have filled the posts and thank those that have stepped down for their past support.

I sincerely hope that current wardens will continue in their roles but respectfully appeal for members to consider adding their names to the reserve list of volunteer wardens in the event of a vacancy arising. I can be contacted on the telephone number attributed to me on the LFA Walks Programme.

Unfortunately, it seems that the financial cutbacks have prevented the continued update of information concerning the Leicestershire Round on the County Council's website and therefore the only available information currently is on the LFA's website. The new handbook, will of course, cover the amendments.

Next year is the LFA's 130th Anniversary and the Leicestershire Rounds 30th. To help celebrate the occasion, it is intended next years Walks programme will concentrate on walks encompassing parts of the Leicestershire Round.

Last but by no means least, on behalf of the Chairman and Members of the LFA Committee, I would like to sincerely thank all the volunteer wardens for their help and support throughout the year.

**David Williams**

### **Monday Evening Walks**

In 2016 we started back on the alphabet for our start points - back to A, B, C, or Anstey, Burton Overy, Cropston, etc. The numbers walking varied (as usual); the weather varied, but perhaps even more than usual with the wettest and hottest evening walks I can remember.

For 2017, we move to D, E, F and G, including bits of the Round when we can. All are welcome, whatever day you usually walk. Come for one or several. We shall start on Monday 8th May.

**Chris Merrill**

### **Tuesday Walks**

It's hard to believe but I have been organising the Tuesday walking group for the last ten years. I feel the time has come to hang up my organisers boots. I would like to thank them all for their loyal support over the years but most of all for the friendship and fun.

Richard Satchwell has volunteered to take over, I know he will do a great job and wish him all the best. Keep walking

**Jenny Thompson**

We have again had an excellent year with usually between 30 - 40 walkers each week. We had a 5-6 mile walk, and a short 3-4 mile walk, starting & finishing at the same time and venue, and we happily progressed throughout the year with no rainfall! Many thanks to all leaders for their varied and interesting routes.

The Tuesday walkers would like to say a big thank you to Jenny Thompson for her 10 Years Service as Organiser & also arranging our excellent Christmas Lunch held at the Shires Inn, Peatling Parva on the 13th December. A good time was had by all and Neil Barker presented Jenny with a floral arrangement & gift voucher in appreciation from the group.

**Rick Satchwell**

### **Wednesday Walks**

When I received the e-mail asking me to write this report I thought, what can I write that's different from the previous years, well not a lot, we are still averaging 22 walkers on the short walks, the weather pretty rubbish although after a wet start we had several weeks during the summer when we had dry boots.

The Blue Bell at Desford attracted the largest number of walkers totalling 35, the lowest was at the Angel at Coleorton, this was due to the heavy snow which after discussions with the 5 that turned up, the walk was cancelled. Better luck on your next attempt from there in February Brian & Glenyss.

I usually mention walks which I found to be especially interesting, the first walk was from Barrow on Soar led by Owen and Anne, the walk took us along by the river soar towards Mountsorrell and up to the Quarry which has been landscaped and offers great views from the top, we then returned back via Quorn, there was so much to see of interest on the way round and being a warm sunny day made it even better.

The second walk was from Tugby led by Linda and Althea, again the weather was fine and the walk took us across the A47 then swinging east to Skeffington then South to Rolleston and back to Tugby a lovely country walk with excellent views over the rolling countryside.

Once again on behalf of the Wednesday walkers, a big thank you to Ann Constable and friends for the wonderful Christmas Buffet.

***D.R. Whittle***

### **Thursday Walks**

I took on the role of Thursday walks organiser from Kate who had done a great job over several years. A hard act to follow. It is a nice friendly group with approx 20 regular walkers. So far this walk year we have walked from the Bulls Head at Clipston where we had to trespass over farmer's fields because the stretch of footpath alongside the A14 was virtually impassable. This has been reported to Northants council and some work has been done. Heather fell into a ditch on the pre-walk.

On a Countesthorpe walk it was noted that on the large fields between Countesthorpe and Foston there was a covering of small pieces of plastic and miscellaneous rubbish. One of the walkers has been in touch with the Environment Agency who are investigating. We had two walks from the Black Horse at Foxton on consecutive weeks due to the Market Harborough U3a having already booked the pub at Lubenham. However we did two entirely different walks one via Lubenham and the other via Gumley. The Shackerston walk started from the Rising Sun pub which had just reopened its restaurant after refurbishment. The food was highly recommended especially the fish and chips. We all look forward to completing the winter walks programme.

***Di Tailby***

### **Saturday Walks**

Another very enjoyable year walking Leicestershire's wonderfully waymarked, scenic footpaths. Up to 18 members attended lots of great walks from 8 to 12 miles countywide. Worthy of special mention is Lynda Briggs's superb Bulwick walk with Red Kites always in attendance. Also David Williams's Asfordby walk with rustling leaves under boots and tidy, undulating fields of winter wheat rising up to meet a crystal clear blue sky – sheer bliss ! .

A big thank you to our ever willing leaders and also to our Committee and Officers for their hard work and commitment.

***Bob Stokoe***

### **LFA August Walking Weekend**

Our weekend this year was spent just north of Scarborough in Yorkshire and so some of our 18 strong party chose to stay for 4 days. Our accommodation at Cober Hill, met our needs perfectly with good accommodation and excellent food including packed lunches. This lovely Victorian Mansion with it's beautiful grounds at Cloughton was purchased by the chocolate family of Rowntree for educational purposes and remains part of the Rowntree Foundation.

We had several walks planned from a leisurely 3.5 miles to a more challenging 12 miles and each evening the group met up to decide the next days route.

Despite the poor weather forecast our planned walk for Saturday enabled all of us, short walkers and long, to start out together along the Coastal path to Ravenscar some 6 or so miles away. The rain started as we set off but didn't suppress our determination to walk this part of the Cleveland Way. The sun came out later to dry us off and we soon forgot how wet we had been. The lovely coastal path gave us magnificent views and some challenging ups and downs. We arrived at Ravenscar in the sunshine and lunched at the site of the old railway station which sadly never really met it's expectations for the Victorians as a holiday destination. 1965 saw it completely closed and the line was taken up. This has been great for walkers and cyclists as it is now an excellent path all the way

down to Scarborough. Some of our party took the bus back to Cober Hill whilst the rest took the flat railway route back, a nice change from the way up even though we had to dodge cyclists, a round trip of about 11.5 miles.

Sunday morning's walk of about 6 miles was shorter as some were leaving for home that day. We took the railway path south to Burniston and headed inland over fields and a few lanes to do a circular path back to Cloughton. We found our way despite the poor signposting and changes in field layout compared to those on our map and returned to Cober Hill to eat our lunch in the lovely grounds. We made the most of the afternoon by taking the bus to Whitby or Robin Hoods Bay for a bit of sightseeing.

Our last walk on Monday again took us along the coastal path, south this time to Scarborough a distance of about 7 miles. We got extremely wet and lost our lovely views in the mist for part of our journey but Mr Sun came out to dry us and raise our spirits by the time we reached journeys end at Scarborough. The path was not quite so undulating as our northern route and had a few longer stretches of flatter walking along the coastline.

Many thanks to Brian Hargreaves for planning and leading walks. I may not be able to arrange next years trip so would welcome a willing volunteer.

**Cindy West**

## **LEICESTERSHIRE FOOTPATHS ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 27th February 2016, at the Evangelical Baptist Church, Woodhouse Eaves, at 10.15 a.m.**

**Sixty-three members attended the meeting and there were 28 apologies.**

1. Chairman Neil Barker welcomed members to the meeting and explained that following lunch, there would be two walks: a short one led by Tony White, which would leave from the church entrance, and a longer one, led by Geoff Smith, which would leave from the car park. He thanked all the lady members for preparing the lunches, and asked that members would keep questions and comments short as there was a lot of business to get through. He also welcomed the speaker, Edwin McWilliam, from Leicestershire County Council who will speak on "The Future Management of Public Rights of Way".
2. The Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting had been sent to all members in the Annual Report. Ken Brockway proposed their acceptance, seconded by Geoff Smith and passed by the meeting.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes.** Projects to spend LFA funds on.
  - (1) Cindy West spoke about the feasibility of purchasing High-Vis vests to be worn by back-markers. She felt that the difficulty of transferring these from one week to the next would be problematical, but that it would be a good idea for walkers to use their own.
  - (2) O.S. mapping licence. This would not be possible for the LFA as one licence would be required for each computer. Guidance for using mapping services is on the LFA website.
  - (3) Lost Rights of Way. Work on this is on-going, in conjunction with the Ramblers and the Local Access Forum. Members may be asked to help with this research and should check the website.
  - (4) Display Boards on the Round. The plan was to place these near sites of interest. The LCC have given advice and support with regard to contacting landowners. Three estimates have been obtained for art- work and display stands. The lowest quote per board was over £800 per board. If thirteen were ordered the cost would be something over £10,000. The Committee had decided to leave this in abeyance.  
Bob Stokoe suggested that a better option would be to replace stiles (which cost £50- £60) with gates at about £500 each. We could replace them and have a plaque stating that we had done so. This will be kept under review.

- (5) Ken Brockway then presented the work he and Cindy have done on the information sheets for Parish Council notice boards. These will be individual to a local part of each parish and will direct walkers to a short circular walk using part of the Round. Information on any further sites would be welcome. Extra information will be displayed at High Cross and we will provide a bench.

Supplies of the Round guide are expected to run out soon and the target for publishing the new book is 2017, which will be the 130th anniversary of the LFA and the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Round. The new books will cost around £5,000, covering both design and printing. Ken hopes to walk the entire Round this summer and asked that Walks Organisers put on some walks to cover parts of the Round in order to promote the Round and the LFA. The Chairman thanked Cindy and Ken for their presentations.

David Williams, Wardens organiser, said that a new Warden is needed for the Rearsby to Frisby section of the Round.

- 4. Acceptance of Officers' Reports.** The Chairman pointed out that on page 2 under Chairman's remarks, 2nd para. line 4, the words "which is hard to" had been omitted after the word 'service' and that we go into our 130th year and not 129th as stated in the last para. on the page. In the Secretary's report, under Unrecorded Rights of Way 'The Ramblers' should be replaced with 'The Open Access Forum.'

Stan Warren stated that the LFA was excellent value for money.

Tony White proposed, seconded by Chris Hearnden, the acceptance of the reports. This was carried unanimously.

Brian Jenkinson then spoke on changes to the Constitution. Every member present had a copy of the current wording and the proposed changes. Dave Rogers proposed acceptance of the first amendment, seconded by Andy Thomson, and the proposal was carried unanimously. After some discussion of the need for a minimum number of Committee members, the second amendment was agreed, having been proposed by Dave Rogers and seconded by David Williams. These changes are appended.

- 5. Election of Officers.** The Chairman, Minutes Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary are all willing to continue in office. Barbara Constantinou proposed, seconded by Clive Fennell that they should continue in office. This was carried.

Brian Jenkinson is standing down as Secretary, and Cindy West has agreed to stand in for one year only. It was proposed by Les Parris, seconded by Dave Rogers, that Cindy be appointed Secretary. This was carried.

Diversion and Closures Secretary and Obstructions Secretary. Cindy West will relinquish her role of Obstructions Secretary, and Brian will no longer be covering Diversions and Closures, so we are lucky to have Stan Warren, formerly of the Ramblers, willing to take on these two roles. It was proposed by Bob Stokoe, seconded by Les Parris, that Stan should take on these roles. This was carried.

- 6. Election of Committee Members.** The following committee members were all willing to serve again. They are Ken Brockway, Clive Fennell, Angela Hall, Chris Hearnden, Jenny Thomson, and Val White. Alan Donkin proposed, seconded by Margaret Fennell, that all the above should continue on the Committee. This was carried.

Two new potential committee members have come forward, Barbara and Simon Constantinou. Dave Rogers proposed, seconded by Tony White, that they be voted on to the Committee. This was carried.

- 7. Financial Matters.** Dave Rogers presented his Treasurer's Report. There was a surplus over the year of between £500 and £600. The posters for the Parish Notice Boards would cost just £1.00 each, and he re-iterated that the notice boards for the Round would be too expensive. (a) He proposed that the Membership Subscription for 2017 be held at £5.00. This was seconded by Brian Hargreaves and carried by the meeting. (b) He then asked that the accounts for 2015-2016 be approved. Proposed by Ken Brockway and seconded by Chril Merrall. The proposal was carried. (c) He then proposed that we continue subscribing to our affiliated organisations; The Ramblers. Open Spaces, the Woodland



Trust and Nottinghamshire Footpath Preservation Society. This was seconded by Andy Thomson and carried by the meeting. It was pointed out that affiliation to the Ramblers greatly reduces our Public Liability Insurance premium.

Presentations. As announced previously. Heather MacDermid is stepping down as President. Brian Jenkinson, as the new President, presented her with a basket of flowers and said that she had been an inspiration to all walkers. She had served in many roles on the Committee since 1977, including as Secretary and Chairman. She has been our President since 2003. she has written many books on walking in the County, including the history of the LFA.

This was followed by the Chairman presenting Brian with a gift token and a book of comments and good wishes from members. He praised Brian for his highly valued work for the LFA during his 40 years on the Committee. In response, Brian said that he'd enjoyed every minute of it. Bob Stokoe then presented Brian with a book from the Saturday walkers.

8. **Speaker.** The Chairman then introduced our guest speaker, Edwin McWilliam of LCC. his talk was titled "The Future Management of the Public Rights of Way Network." His talk was very informative giving details of the work involved in the maintenance of footpaths cared for by the LCC. Some 1900 miles of paths, 15,000 waymarkers and 7000 fingerposts. The council also do 100,000 miles of strimming. He explained that the Council have to find a further £200 million of savings and that other services are more critical than footpaths. However, as a walker himself, he recognised the value of walking, in terms of health and social contact and hoped they would be able to maintain an effective service. He also explained that the cost of providing railway crossings runs into millions. With regard to the Definitive map, first drawn up in the early fifties, we have until 2026 to make sure it shows all current rights of way.

Jackie Barker thanked Edwin for his interesting talk.

AOB. Roger Cook explained that the summer Walks Programme had to go to the printers at the end of the week and he had yet to receive the details of Thursday walks from the Rambles leader, Kate Potter.

Roy Shakespeare had previously asked if we could have the Facebook logo printed on the walks programme. Roger objected strongly to this on the grounds of opening the website up to abuse. Roy explained that it was already available on Facebook and he'd not had any abuse. Andy Thomson pointed out that Facebook is merely a tool and that the younger generation were more likely to use it. After further discussion, although Roy withdrew his proposal, it was decided to put it to the vote. Ellie Webster proposed, seconded by Margaret Fennel, the the Facebook logo should NOT appear on the programme. This was carried by a majority.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.00

### ***Appendix Agreed changes to the Constitution:***

#### **2. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE**

- (A) (1) The following Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting:-  
Chairman (Who may not serve for not more than four consecutive years),  
Secretary, Treasurer/Membership Secretary, Diversions and Modifications  
Secretary, Obstructions Secretary, and any additional officers as may from time to time be agreed upon.
- (2) A minutes secretary shall be appointed annually by the committee and may or may not serve as a voting committee member.
- (3) A walks co-ordinator and Rambles organisers shall be appointed by the committee who may or may not serve as a voting committee member.
- (B) The committee shall consist of up to ten members in addition to the officers.  
The minimum number of committee members will be nine

# OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2016

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*Position Vacant*

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**Wednesday Rambles Organiser**

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**Committee Members**

Clive Fennell, Christopher Hearnden, Angela Hall, Val White  
and Rick Satchwell

**Subscriptions due 1st January, 2017 – £5.00**