

Hebden Bridge Walkers Action - adopt a path info

ADOPT A PATH TAKING PART IN THE ADOPT-A-PATH INITIATIVE

What's the basic idea?

We've been looking for people who like walking in the beautiful countryside around Hebden Bridge and who want to take a particular interest in some of our footpaths and bridleways, checking to make sure that they are easy to follow.

What paths are being 'adopted'?

We've divided the rights of way network up into the 1km grid squares which are shown (in light blue) on Ordnance Survey maps.

There are twenty-five such grid squares in the area directly

around Hebden Bridge, all of which have now got its own 'adopter'. In due course (see below), we hope to extend Adopt-a-Path to include other neighbouring areas.

How much work is involved?

Adopters are asked to walk the path or paths in their chosen grid square twice a year (suggested times are winter and summer), and to send in a short report of their findings.

Can people sign up for more than one square?

Yes. Although we have in our area (Old Town hillside) the grid square with the greatest density of paths in England (about 12kms of paths), other squares have fewer paths. Some adopters have felt able to make the commitment to sign up for two grid squares.

Must people do this alone?

No. We've been happy to encourage people if they wish to sign up with friends, and a number have done so.

What about organisations adopting paths?

We have also welcomed community organisations taking responsibility for particular areas of countryside, and a walking group and a local Rotary group now have taken on a number of grid squares.

What do people look out for?

The primary aim of Adopt-a-Path is to check that rights of way are easy to walk. Adopters are also encouraged to report problems to Calderdale council, which has the legal duty of maintaining rights of way.

Can people try to clear obstructions myself?

For insurance reasons, the Adopt-a-Path project is not able to advise its volunteers to clear obstructions. But many walkers do already informally wield secateurs on brambles or chop down nettles whilst out walking, whilst out walking. We also welcome all walkers participating in Calder Future's on-going campaign to uproot the invasive Himalayan Balsam plant, which is now very widespread and which is destroying the natural flora of the area.

What else is reported?

Because volunteers get to know their area well, they are asked to share that information with others thinking of walking there, by describing the distinctive characteristics of the landscape in one or two sentences. Adopters, if they wish, can also submit a digital photo, showing a typical scene in their grid square.

What happens if footpaths in their square continue into other squares?

Grid squares are an arbitrary way of dividing up the countryside, and most paths will run through two or more squares. Adopters are responsible just for those sections of paths in their own adopted square(s).

How do people file their reports?

Electronically, by completing a form on this website. Since HB Walkers Action is a voluntary organisation without paid staff, we can't unfortunately deal with paper reports.

What do the forms look like?

[They look like this.](#)

What if volunteers want to stop their involvement?

By joining the scheme as a volunteer, adopters commit – all other things being equal – to undertaking at least the first two site visits. If and when they wish to step down as a volunteer, there is the facility to do this on the website. We then advertise that the grid square is in need of a new adopter.

How do you work out a grid square number?

Each grid square has its own distinctive four digit number. Look first for the number (top or bottom of map) for the left-hand side of the square, then for the number associated with the bottom line of the square. For example, Hebden Bridge station is in grid square 9926.

When will the scheme be extended?

We are operating Adopt-a-Path currently on a pilot basis and will assess progress early in 2008, prior to a possible roll-out of the project to other areas in the upper Calder valley. If you are likely to be interested, email us on adoptapath@googlemail.com (stating, if appropriate, which area you might want to cover). We

will then email you back if and when the scheme is ready for expansion.

NOTE: If you signed up as an Adopter at the Stepping Out exhibition but have yet to return the registration form, please do so now: [Click here.](#)

This is a pioneering initiative, and we're very grateful for the involvement and commitment of the first group of volunteers. Although most of the day-to-day transactions are done electronically, we hope to stage some special events on an occasional basis, to which all Adopt-a-Path volunteers will be invited.