

Taunton Deane Ramblers
Annual General Meeting – 27th November 2020
Footpath Secretary's Report

This is my sixth – and for reasons that will be understood, the shortest – annual report as Footpath Secretary since taking over the role in January 2015.

The impact of Covid-19 has resulted in very few statutory consultations from Somerset County Council on changes to rights of way. Similarly, there have until been very few consultations from Somerset West and Taunton Council on planning applications.

The annual meeting of Group Footpath Secretaries in Somerset did not take place owing to Covid-19 restrictions.

Sadly, I have to report that Carl Earl, Area Footpath Secretary, died unexpectedly in July. This represents a great loss to Ramblers, as Carl had held the post for a number of years and had amassed wide experience of rights of way issues. At a personal level, Carl was also much liked and respected by those who knew him. In common with other Somerset Groups, your Committee has agreed to make a donation towards an appropriate memorial, details of which are being progressed by South Somerset Group. Les Stather has now taken over as Area Footpath Secretary.

During 'lockdown' over the summer, I was contacted on a number of occasions by people who had encountered issues with rights of way. I have taken up these where appropriate with Somerset County Council. At the time of writing, I am liaising with a local resident and other interested parties regarding an obstructed bridleway in Bickenhall parish, and am waiting to see what action the County Council takes in response.

Philip Bisatt
Footpath Secretary