

FW: defra

Wed, Sep 6, 2006 11:43 AM

**From:** "Colin B. Bennett" <colin@bennett.uk.com>  
**To:** Eugene Suggett <EugeneS@london.ramblers.org.uk>  
**Cc:** Paulette Cowley <pcowley1@ukonline.co.uk>  
**Date:** Tue, Dec 9, 2003, 11:10 AM  
**Subject:** FW: defra

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Dear Eugene

I want to tell you that a friend of mine noticed this and I have got a printed copy of it. As far as St James' Place is concerned, the situation is that my objection to its stopping up continues and the matter is going to the Council's Environment Committee in January. If the matter is not resolved there it will go to DEFRA ie the PI at Bristol.

Best wishes

Colin Bennett

My telephone number is: +44 (0)1273 325311. Note my "back-up" email address:  
colinbbennett@onetel.com

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**From:** "Matt Holland" <mzholland@btopenworld.com>  
**To:** "Colin B. Bennett" <colin@bennett.uk.com>  
**Subject:** defra  
**Date:** Mon, Dec 1, 2003, 11:08 PM

Colin

**From the Ramblers' Association website**

### **DEFRA and public rights of way** [8 May 2003]

DEFRA has introduced new powers for local authorities to divert or close public rights of way to prevent crime. This legislation is contained within Section 6 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Highway authorities can apply to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to have an area designated for the purposes of crime prevention, so that they can divert or close rights of way that are demonstrable causes of a persistent crime problem, and only when realistic alternative options to tackle the causes of the problems have been examined.

The power to close paths for crime prevention reasons will only be available where local authorities have applied for special designation. The Ramblers' Association (RA) hopes that authorities will not make excessive use of the power as a way of absolving themselves of tackling the real issues of crime within communities.

This concern has already been heightened by the actions of certain authorities. Manchester City Council is currently applying for 25 separate areas of the city to be classified as high crime areas, which could see the closure on dozens of rights of way, including those leading to and crossing parks, common land and allotments. Designation is unlikely to be popular with householders - people won't want to see where they live designated as an area of high crime, which has an implication for house prices and insurance.

The RA doesn't think that crime and the fear of crime is a reason for taking away public rights of way. Closing paths will only mean that problems are moved elsewhere. Instead of this purely cosmetic way of tackling this issue, paths should be made safer and more inviting (remove rubbish, provide better lighting, additional policing for communities, etc.) for members of the public. Once lost, these public amenities will be lost forever.

Janet Davis, Head of Footpath Policy at the Ramblers' Association said, "For designation to happen, the authorities must satisfy the Secretary of State that "there are rights of way in the area that are demonstrable causes of a persistent crime problem and that realistic alternative options to tackle the causes of problems have been examined". Across the country we have very little evidence of either.

"These paths are of vital importance, not just historically, but also because they allow people to walk to local schools and shops, and make short cuts away from the danger of traffic. The answer is to ensure that the paths are well lit and welcoming, so that people are encouraged to use them and feel safe doing so. Legitimate users will deter criminals because they will act as 'eyes and ears' for the police."

This legislation also enables highway authorities in England to divert or close rights of way that cross school land to protect pupils and staff from violence or the threat of violence, harassment, alarm or distress, or any other risk to their health or safety which arises from the use of the right of way

From: "Mick" <mick@...>  
To: "John" <...>  
Subject: ...  
Date: Mon, 20 Aug 2006 11:43 AM

From the Ramblers' Association website  
DEPRFA and public rights of way...  
DEPRFA has introduced new powers to...  
Highway authorities generally have the power to...  
The power to close paths for...  
authorities have applied to...  
authorities will not make...  
towards the real issues of crime...