

Dear Mrs Dallaway,

Thank you for your email which has been passed onto me who represents the East Devon Ramblers, the group active in this area including your parish. We organise walks throughout the year within the local area and further afield and regularly use the rights of way within Beer parish.

Our brief as Ramblers is to promote and maximise the rights of way and walking opportunities within our area, and the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan may well be useful in improving or creating new walking routes within the parish.

Devon generally has fewer public paths than almost any other county in England. Our neighbouring counties of Dorset and Somerset have around the national average of 1.75 kilometres of paths in every square kilometre, but Devon has less than half that density at 0.75 kilometres per square kilometre.

Beer parish is fortunate in having a density of public paths close to the national average, and more than twice that of the density in Devon as a whole. The provision of paths in the village and around the coast is excellent, and the paths throughout the parish are generally well maintained. The overall network could perhaps be improved with additional links over the busy A3052 into Colyton and Southleigh parishes, but we see that both of those parishes support the deletion of public footpaths rather than adding paths to improve the local network.

It is very important to maintain and improve the rights of way network as a part of the 'Green Infrastructure' and for the importance for health and wellbeing of open spaces and exercise that a good path network affords.

Walking should be encouraged, and could be considered within the Neighbourhood Plan as an integral part of any proposals, including those for creating local work opportunities and additional tourism outlets.

Kind regards,

Ted Swan
Secretary East Devon Ramblers.

16 Sept 2014