

Donations towards footbridges and footpath improvements

Policy

1. The Society may offer a donation to a Highway Authority (HA), landowner, or other relevant organisation¹ (the Recipient) towards the cost of making improvements² to an open space or public access right, including definitive rights of way, or erecting footbridges along such a way, within the PNFS area.
2. The Society will not itself own, install, or maintain any structures that may form part of any agreed improvement, unless expressly authorised by the Managing Committee.
3. Proposed improvements must meet the following criteria as determined and approved by the Managing Committee:
 - 3.1. Must be of sufficient importance to users of the open space or public access right as determined by the Trustees
 - 3.2. Must be feasible to carry out the proposed improvements
 - 3.3. Must have clear public benefit which justifies the expenditure
4. Final approval of the amount of the donation rests with the Managing Committee. The donation may come from the Society's funds, from a member of the Society, or from a legacy left to the Society.
5. The Recipient must agree in writing to take responsibility for the design, installation, and maintenance of any agreed structures.
6. The Recipient may be asked to demonstrate that they have considered their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of the installed structures. Where existing stiles are replaced with gates, compliance with the current BS 5709 or a locally adopted standard must be demonstrated. If new stiles or steps are to be installed, the HA should ensure that there is no reasonable alternative.

¹ A relevant organisation is one with an appropriate public access remit. Final decision on whether or not an organisation qualifies under this criteria rests with the Society's Managing Committee.

² The Society has agreed that 'improvement' may be defined as 'anything that makes the footpath/right of way/open space better/safer/more accessible/more convenient/more enjoyable than when it was first dedicated'. It excludes clearing obstacles that prevent passage or cutting back overgrown vegetation etc.



7. The Society will be able to attach small plaques to any installed structures which publicise the Society and its contribution towards the funding of the structure.
 - 7.1. Where no suitable structure exists, the Recipient will, at their own cost, install a suitable post to a design approved by the Society³, upon which a plaque may be affixed.
8. The Society must approve the cost and details of the works before they are carried out. These details may include plans showing the construction, elevation, and cross-section of any proposed structure and its location.
9. The offer of a donation is valid for a period of twelve months from the date of the letter formally offering the donation. If the improvement works to the open space or public access right are not completed to the Society's reasonable satisfaction within this time, the Society reserves the right to withdraw its offer of a donation.
 - 9.1. Where it is not possible to complete the approved works within this time, the Recipient may apply in writing to the Society to extend the period for no more than twelve additional months.
10. The Society's donation will be paid to the Recipient when the Society is reasonably satisfied that all the agreed improvement works have been completed.
11. A "handing-over" event will normally be arranged by the Recipient and the Society to publicise the Society's involvement.
12. In relation to footbridges only, the following conditions apply:
 - 12.1. The Society may contribute all the costs associated with the installation of the footbridge, including signing and waymarking. The Society may ask the HA to share the cost of the project if significant repairs or improvements to the path are needed. This is so that the path is safe and convenient for walkers.
 - 12.2. A suitable anti-slip surface should be provided on the footbridge.

³ Currently, the Society requires a post of minimum 100×100mm rising to at least 1200mm above ground level.

Version History

Version	Summary of changes	Effective from:	Effective to:
1.0	First version	2021-05-28	2021-11-26
1.1	Minor revisions	2021-11-26	2024-01-23
2.0	Add requirement to provide post for PNFS plaque	2024-01-23	2024-05-24
2.1	Minor revisions to simplify language, grammatical corrections	2024-05-24	2024-11-29
3.0	Combined with Footbridges Policy	2024-11-29	