

New footpath registration

Most existing footpaths in Kirkstall haven't been properly registered, and some haven't even been claimed. We are trying to speed up registration, but we need your help. One method is to show that footpaths have been freely used for the last 20 years. There is an interactive map on the Council website which shows the current position. If you have ever walked on unregistered or unclaimed footpaths, even if it was a long time ago, please send your evidence to Leeds Footpath Officers, who can use it as part of the registration process. One person's evidence will not be sufficient on its own, but if 20 people provide written evidence, collectively covering 20 years use, then registration is very likely. Here is the way to do it:

First: Visit Public Rights of Way (<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Public-rights-of-way.aspx>) on the Leeds City Council website. There is a lot to read here, and many other links for visitors to follow. Click the link near the middle of the screen marked "[Definitive map and statement](#)".

Second: Once you are on the Definitive map page, open the Council's interactive footpath map by clicking the link to the [Leeds public right of way map](#) near the top of the page. (Alternatively, you can click the link in this paragraph which should take you to the same place.) Click the checkbox on the legal agreement to accept the Council's terms and conditions, then click "OK". This right of way map is very similar to Google maps. You can drag it across the screen with a mouse, shrink and zoom to view your area of interest. Black routes are definitive, and green routes are claims.

Third: Locate the Microsoft **Snipping Tool** or its equivalent in other operating systems, such as Mac or Android. The Council insists that every witness statement includes a map, so we can all be certain that we are discussing the same stretch of path. We need an easy way to paste extracts from the footpath map into our statements. Fortunately, Microsoft has already provided the ideal tool as part of Windows, and it is free. We must discover where they have hidden it, because it isn't always stored in the same place.



On a reasonably modern Windows laptop or desktop, just type "Snipping Tool" into the Search box near the start button. The computer will find it and pop an icon on the taskbar. You can pin it there, or move it to your desktop, or put it where convenient. You can download a very similar App for mobile phones and Macs. On older computers the program is still there, but it takes more finding. Look in "Accessories" or hunt in C:\Windows\System32 for a program file called SnippingTool.exe

Snipping tool allows users to draw rectangles or freehand curves anywhere on their computer screen, copy whatever is enclosed by their drawing, then save it as an image file or paste it directly into a document. In our case we can copy extracts from the Council's footpath map and pop them into our witness statements. This is a lot easier than drawing your own map.

Fourth: Send an email to the LCC Public Rights of Way Manager, Bob.Buckenham@leeds.gov.uk saying where you walked and when you did it. You can also phone the team on 0113 395 7400. You must confirm that there was no significant barrier to human access, you didn't need to ask permission, and nobody tried to stop you. Paste in the relevant map extract and ask for this area of land to be added to the definitive map. Encourage others to do the same.

If your route is completely missing from the Council website, then you must tell the footpath officers that this is a new claim. You will need to mark it on your map snippet, using another free Windows program, such as Microsoft Paint. There are many such unclaimed routes, including one obvious path through the Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve, along the south bank of the river. It has been in existence to our knowledge since 1993, when the Nature Reserve was established. Thousands of people have used it. It has had well over 20 years use, so time is up. Why not be the first person to register it as a new public footpath?