



CROWS

Community Rights Of Way Service

All about CROWS

What we do

We work on public footpaths and bridleways – usually referred to as Rights of Way. We may be repairing the routes or in some cases improving them to widen access. Here are some examples of our work.

Cutting back vegetation



In spring and summer, paths can just disappear – becoming overgrown with brambles, nettles, hedges and trees. Sometimes we use a strimmer (like in the photo of a path above Todmorden) or more often we use shears and hand tools.

To clear a 100 metre path would cost about £30.

Drainage and scraping



Over time, particularly in woodland, the mulch builds up, the path becomes a quagmire and needs scraping off (like the photo of the track in Hardcastle Crag). To keep water off paths we put in drains alongside and across the surface.

To deal with mulch on 100 metres of path would cost around £70.

Building and repairing steps



Paths can become eroded and slopes very slippery, making for tricky walking. We deal with the problem by putting in wooden steps. The new set of steps in the photo (in Luddenden Valley) cost about £40. Over time, steps get covered in grass and earth making them narrow and causing the wood to rot.

Clearing and widening a set of steps like this costs about £40.

Building and repairing bridges and boardwalks



We construct new boardwalks over wet ground, but often we have to replace rotten timber on existing bridges and boardwalks. Repairing the bridge in Cragg Vale cost about £45.

A new 10 foot length of boardwalk would costs about £140.

Repairing stiles



Some stiles are very difficult to get over, some have become wobbly and others have uprights and tread-boards that have rotted off. We mostly are able to repair stiles but occasionally have to replace the whole thing.

To rebuild a stile like the one in the photo costs about £65.

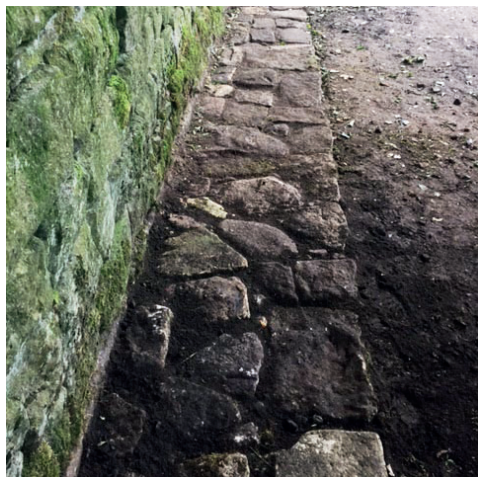
Waymarking



We try and make sure that each path is clearly signed so walkers know they are on a right of way. Sometimes there is a convenient post to attach the waymark to, but we quite often need to put in new marker posts.

Posts cost about £15 each.

Building and clearing stone causeways



One solution to a drainage problem is to build a stone causeway. These may be rough and ready or more substantial like the one at Hippins, Blackshawhead. We frequently uncover paved paths where the grass has buried them, like this section on the Pennine Way at Colden.

To clear 100 metres of paved path would cost about £50.

Widening, stabilising and making new paths



A very narrow and steeply sloping path like this one in Brearley Woods is very difficult to walk on. Widening and levelling paths is a common task we carry out.

To widen a 100 metre path would cost about £40.

Occasionally we are asked to make a new path such as this one to the top of the Crag in Hardcastle Crag.

Trees and Trig points



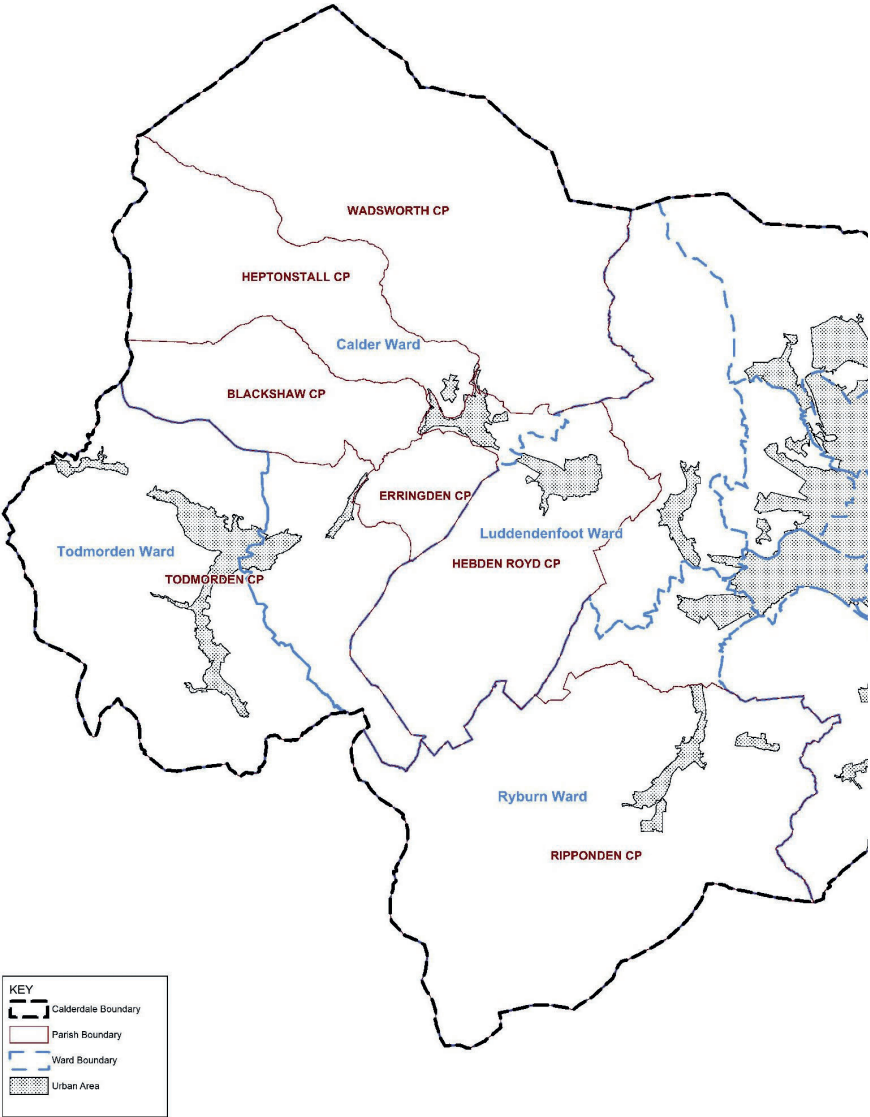
Sometimes we clear fallen trees by hand but occasionally we call on the generous help of a local tree surgeon to deal with it. Trig points like this one at Blackstone Edge need painting on a regular basis so they can be seen at a distance.

Each one costs about £20 to paint.

Our organisation

Where we work

We work all over the Western end of Calderdale– Todmorden (including Cornholme and Walsden), Blackshaw, Heptonstall, Erringden, Hebden Royd (including Mytholmroyd and Craqq Vale), Luddenden and Ripponden.



The boundaries are not precise, so we liaise with Calderdale Countryside Service who look after the path network in the Eastern end of Calderdale.

Where the work comes from

Walkers and hikers report problems to us by using our contact form or emailing us. Local walking groups will often report problems and some will ask us to survey and upgrade a route if it is to be published.

We get requests from Calderdale Highways and Town and Parish Councils. Most CROWS volunteers are walkers, so we spot work that needs doing ourselves.

Our funding

We receive no regular grants. Nearly all of our funds come from payments for the work we do. Our work is mostly funded by Calderdale Council, Town and Parish Councils, local trusts and walking groups.

Because we are a charity registered with HMRC, we also get some individual donations through Just Giving (details on our website).

The volunteers

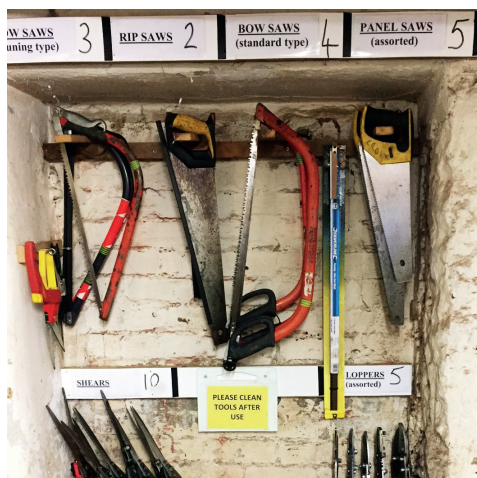
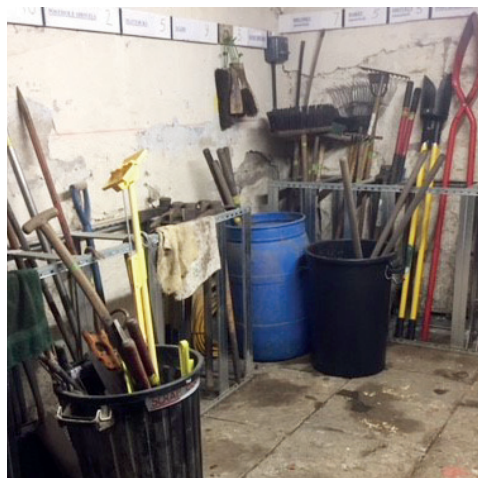
We have no paid staff; all roles are carried out by volunteers. We are a mixed team of women and men from all parts of the area. Each volunteer brings different abilities with some having many years' experience of this kind of work and others wanting a new experience.



Some of the CROWS in Hardcastle Crag and CROW in action

Our depot

We work from a basement in the centre of Mytholmroyd which provides a good space for the storage of timber, equipment and tools. It has a well-kitted-out workshop for construction. We also have mini depots at Todmorden and Ripponden.



Parts of our well-organised workshop in Mytholmroyd.

More information about CROWS

For more information about our work look at our blog

www.communityrightsofwayservice.blogspot.co.uk/

For more detailed information about how CROWS work, our funding and organisation and to make a donation, look at our website

www.crows-coop.co.uk

Details of how to report a problem with a path are on the contact section of our website.

If you want to follow us on Facebook, look for crowspaths.