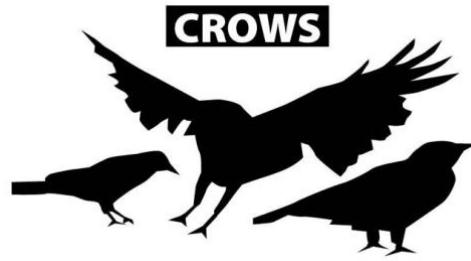


Community Rights of Way Service



2022/2023 review

Who are CROWS?

We are a group of volunteers, based in Mytholmroyd who, for nearly ten years, have helped maintain and repair the footpath and bridleway network in the Upper Calder and Ryburn Valleys.

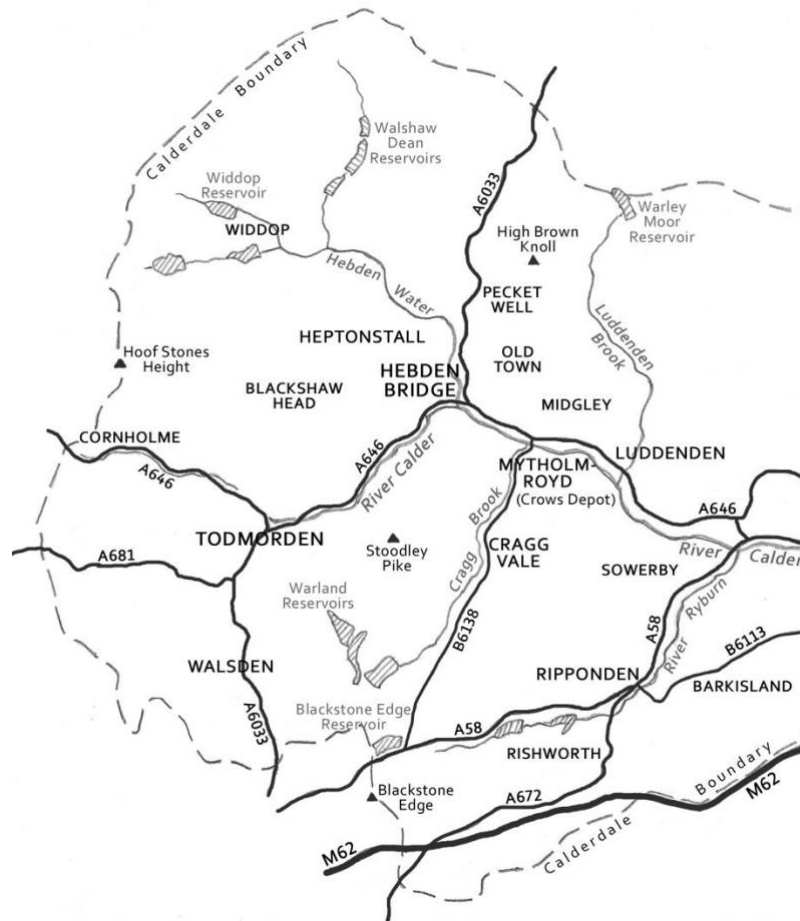
We currently have nearly 30 volunteers (one third of whom are women). We have no paid staff, so as well as taking part in work parties, volunteers also contribute to the running of the organisation.

This review outlines the range of jobs we have done this year and the places where we worked.



Some of the current CROWS volunteer team

Where we work



Some highlights of the year

Most of our work involved small jobs that had been reported by the general public, but we also completed some larger projects.

- We refurbished the paths in the new "*Three Pecket Well Walks*" leaflet which will be published shortly.
- We made several improvements on the Pennine Way that were identified by Natural England.
- We built boardwalks across Erringden Moor to prevent further damage to the fragile ecology of the moor. The work involved the "*Big Carry*" that enlisted the help of groups of people and individuals to transport 700 pieces of timber across the moor.
- The route of the Coiners Walk was repaired and improved to cope with the expected increase in use after the TV drama, "*The Gallows Pole*", has been screened.
- We have continued working three days a week (in nearly all weathers), and, during the year, we ran about 270 work parties with over 700 days worked by volunteers.



Stile repair - Goose Nest, Luddenden valley



Painting waymark posts at the depot



Scraping a path at Krumlin



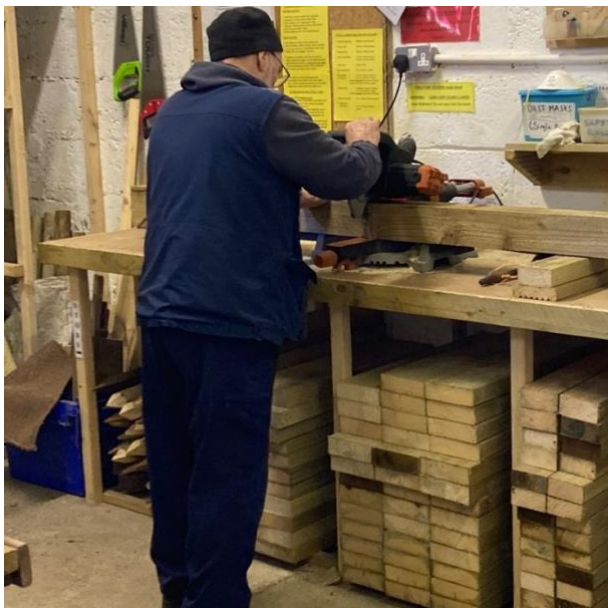
Brush cutter in action on Bird Lane



Clearing stone steps at Colden



Ian Clarkson clearing a tree at Brearley



Cutting waymark posts at the depot



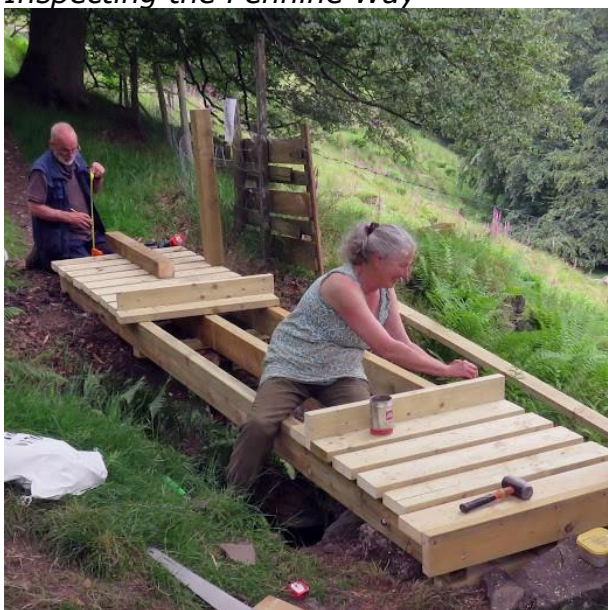
End of session at Paper Mill, Cragg Vale



Inspecting the Pennine Way



Bell House & Erringden Moor boardwalks

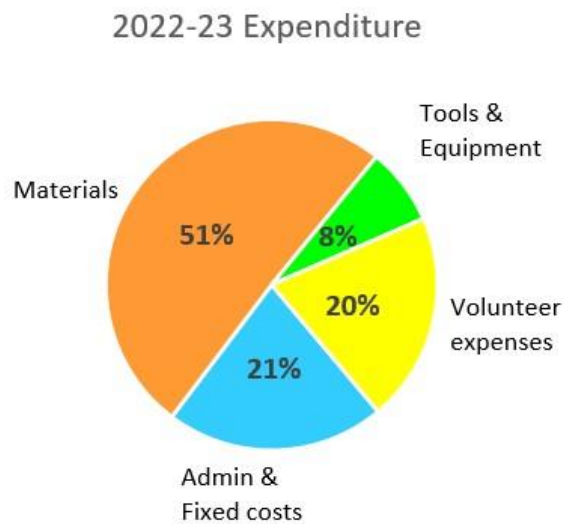
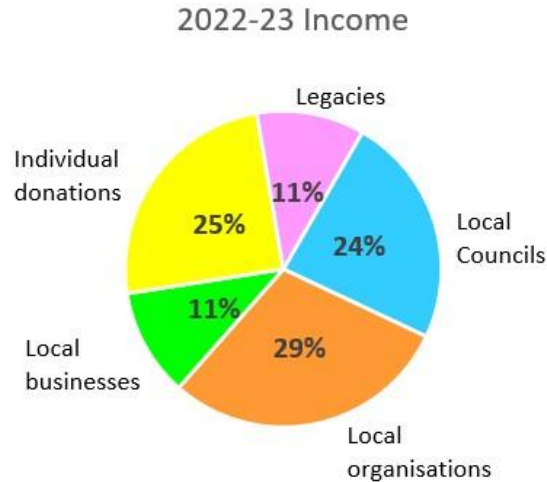


Robin Wood area footbridge



Waymark post above Todmorden

Funding and Finance



Our funding group (including expertise from Derek Kettlewell) developed our funding policy which aims not to be over reliant on public funds and last year we achieved a good balance.

- Local councils again generously supported our work.
- Individual donations increased, with significant numbers using "*Just Giving*".
- We had more donations from local community groups and from other organisations using Calderdale's right-of-way network.
- Contributions from local businesses have increased.
- Legacies from the wills of individuals who enjoyed the countryside.

Thanks

We try to respond to donations as best we can, but would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their financial support last year:

Blackshaw Parish Council

Blackshaw Head Fell race

Blue Pig, Midgehole

Calder Valley Fell Runners

Calderdale Council Highways

Calderdale Long Distance Walkers

Calderdale Ramblers

Cornholme Wreath Makers

Fox and Goose customers

Friends of Calderdale Countryside

Hebden Royd Tangent Club

Hebden Royd Town Council

HEC contractors (Mytholmroyd)

Heptonstall Parish Council

Legacies from:

Robert Harker

Julia Gray

Gerald Hardwick

Little Box Consulting (Luddenden)

Luddendenfoot Ward Forum

Midgley Community Forum

Natural England (Pennine Way)

Ripponden Parish Council

Saddleworth Pedestrians Walking Club

Slack Fest

Southall Trust

Sowerby Residents

Todmorden Town Council

Todwalkers

Upper Stoodley Residents Association

Wadsworth Parish Council

Wadsworth Walking Market

Wadsworth Village shop collecting tin

West Yorkshire Resilience Fund

Thanks for in-kind help

We rely on local businesses and individuals to sustain our work, especially:

- Mountain Wild for flying the CROWS flag and donating Tech-Wash so we stay a bit clean!
- CALVAG for always delivering wherever and whenever we need them.
- Totally Screwed for instant tools and hardware and generous help with cutting awkward timbers.
- Ian Clarkson for dealing with fallen trees, often at short notice.
- Calderdale Council Highways for advice and guidance.
- Ian Whitehead at Calder Computers who keeps our IT systems going and helps us when something goes wrong.
- The Dusty Miller, Mytholmroyd for hosting our meetings.
- Patricia Skeet, John Harris and Jane Thompson for helping us with our charity registration.
- Everyone who took the time to make [reports to our website](#).
- All the landowners who have allowed us to work on their land and provided advice, practical help and funding.

Publicity

- [Our website](#) has been upgraded and is now updated regularly. About 5000 users visited the site during the year.
- [Our Blog](#) forms a unique public record of our work and was visited 12,000 times during the year.
- [Our Facebook page](#) had a reach of about 2,000 people a month with many regular followers.

Improving the organisation

We all joined CROWS to improve rights-of-way, but to do that, we need an infrastructure to support the work. To be sustainable, we have continued to share the organisational workload. Significant developments this year were:

- We updated our constitution and now have a registration with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (1201645).
- With the help of Ian Whitehead at Calder Computers, we redesigned our online system for reporting problems - making it much easier to use.
- We improved the web page for Just Giving donations, making it much simpler for people to donate.
- We developed guidance and training so that CROWS volunteers know how to build stiles that are safe and easy to use.



Some of the boardwalk put in to protect Erringden moor

Plans for 2023/24

- We have agreed an exciting 5-year partnership with Weir Minerals Europe (based in Todmorden) to repair and improve the Todmorden Centenary Way.
- We have identified substantial work from surveys of paths around Fallingroyd and Mayroyd, the riverside path in Cragg Vale, and the published routes "*Three Walks around Ripponden*".
- We will carry out work in the Todmorden area (from Portsmouth to Walsden) using funds received from the Todmorden Wind Farm, through the Community Foundation for Calderdale (CFFC).
- We hope that funding will become available for further work on the Pennine Way.
- We will celebrate our 10th anniversary.

Contacting CROWS

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Facebook	www.facebook.com/crowspaths