



Path Accessibility

Fund FAQs

Path Accessibility Fund 25/26: The key information

In the 2025/26 round of funding, we continue to welcome applications to fund projects that seek to remove barriers and open up paths for more people in England, Scotland, and Wales. This includes improving access for those people with reduced mobility, who may struggle to climb over stiles. Find out more about our research which revealed that there is at least a stile for every mile in England and Wales, see: [mile for every stile](#)

We strongly welcome applications that open up more paths for wheeled users, including those using aids like walkers, electric rollators, mobility scooters, and trampers. Projects to remove barriers will also make paths more family-friendly, to provide ease of access for pushchairs and buggies. With this in mind, we are also interested in innovative projects which replace stiles or barriers, such as chicanes or restrictive narrow kissing gates, with gaps or wider pedestrian gates. We will also consider smaller grants under £1000 to improve path surfaces that allow ease of access for everyone.

We also welcome applications for accessibility improvement projects in places where people already face greater barriers to enjoying the great outdoors, including places where less well-off communities live. **We will strongly rank these applications.** We are keen to hear about projects which connect urban areas to green spaces or make it easier for people to walk to local amenities, work, or school. To learn more about our strategy that aims to improve participation of communities that have the least access and most barriers to the outdoors please see here: [removing societal barriers](#).

We also continue to welcome accessible improvements in popular walking places that are well served by public transport.

We love funding projects where our own path maintenance teams can get involved but if there is no team in the area, we are happy to fund subcontracted work.

All projects must have received written permission from the landowner or their representative. We will ask to see email confirmation. In England and Wales, projects must take place on definitive public rights of way in England and Wales. You should discuss the project with the relevant rights of way officer in your local highway authority. If you are not sure which highway authority the project is taking place in, you can check the map [here](#). It is also worth noting that we also welcome projects that involve additional path creation or that will take place on paths recently added to the [Definitive Map](#).

In Scotland, where rights of way laws differ, we recommend that you apply for projects on paths that either appear on our [Scottish Paths Map](#), or on the [Scottish Core Paths Map](#). You should check with the [local access officer](#) to see that access rights apply and to discuss your proposed project.

Please submit your application by 14 March 2026. We aim to let you know the outcome of your application by 19 June 2025. The link to apply is here: [Path Accessibility Fund](#) If you have any further queries about the application form or the fund, please email paths@ramblers.org.uk

I don't yet have agreement from the landowner or the local authority for my intended project. Can I still apply for funding?

For an application to be successful, we will need agreement from the landowner and the highway authority for the project to go ahead. In Scotland, this may just be the landowner or land manager, but we encourage you to also discuss with the local access officer. Without this confirmation, we will struggle to complete the project, so don't apply for funding if you haven't started this process yet. If you'd like support or guidance on getting these permissions, do get in touch with us at paths@ramblers.org.uk.

There are a lot of path accessibility improvements needed in my local area. How do I prioritise which project to apply for funding for?

Successful applicants in England and Wales, that were granted funding in previous years had often approached their local rights of way officers and asked for suggestions that had landowner permission. Access officers in Scotland may also offer advice. The officers recommended projects based on the number of complaints received from the public about inaccessible features such as rickety stiles, coupled with how popular the path was, and where they knew the landowner was keen to see the improvements made.

How much money can I apply for?

To maximise our impact, we like to allocate funding to several projects, instead of just one large one. To date, our average award is c.£2,500 including VAT. However, we have funded larger amounts which represented good value for money and contained a strong element of match funding, or in-kind funding.

Does the fund only cover work that improves access for people using trampers or other mobility aids?

You can apply for funds that make paths accessible for users with varying levels of mobility. Our donor is particularly keen on funding projects that replace stiles with gaps or gates, knowing that many people struggle to climb over stiles. Ideally, it would be beneficial if stiles are replaced with gaps or fully accessible pedestrian gates but in some cases, it is not possible to reach agreement with the landowner on this. In such cases, we would consider funding kissing gates, but we will always prioritise projects that replace stiles with more accessible gates.

Can I apply for funds for work on private land with permissive paths in England and Wales?

Unfortunately, in England and Wales, we can only fund improvements on public rights of way, as permissive paths can be closed off and access lost. If you are unsure about whether a path is a public right of way, you can find out more public rights of way [here](#).

Can I apply to the Fund for path improvements in National Landscapes, National Parks, National Trust land or similar?

In places like this, money for accessible improvements is often available from other initiatives, so we would ask you to first to check with the local officers who are responsible for rights of way and access.

Can I apply for money to add or repair stiles?

No, we will only fund the removal of stiles to replace them with gaps or gates.

Can you only apply if you are a volunteer in a Ramblers group?

Anyone can submit an application. It is worth noting that we will highly rank projects undertaken by Ramblers path maintenance teams who are working in partnership with the

highway authority, as this drastically reduces costs. We also welcome applications from landowners, parish councils, community groups, and voluntary organisations, particularly if they are willing to have our volunteers help carry out the work.

I don't know who the landowner is? What can I do?

If you have not identified the landowner to agree permissions, we would recommend that you work on this and apply for the next available round of funding. Gaining permission can take several months – if not years – to be confirmed. Speaking to local rights of way officers or access officers can help identify landowners. For advice on how to gain permission, please email paths@ramblers.org.uk.

Would the Fund pay for display boards containing maps to help people discover paths?

No, the funds are to improve access for those with various degrees of mobility and is intended to be spent on removing barriers such as stiles or improving surfaces. Often county councils have funds to help with funding display boards and support may also be available from parish and town councils or other local charities.

Poor lighting is a problem on some of our paths. Would the Fund pay to improve lighting?

No, the Fund focuses on removing barriers such as stiles. You should approach the local council if you are concerned about lighting.

There is no Ramblers path maintenance team in my local area, can I still apply for funds?

Yes, we are happy to fund work which is subcontracted although project costs can be significantly higher.

I need to discuss an idea, where do I get further help?

Please send any enquiries to paths@ramblers.org.uk

How do I apply?

The link to apply is here, and will open on 1 January 2026: [Path Accessibility Fund](#)
