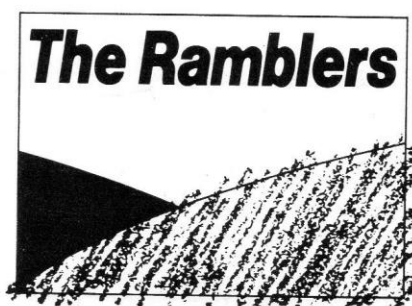


**The Ramblers' Association
60 years working for walkers**

“YOU’RE EITHER QUICK OR DEAD”

**A dossier of locations where ramblers
need safe and convenient crossings.**

Second edition : May 1995



INTRODUCTION

In 1938, soon after the formation of the Ramblers' Association, there was a famous court case (Jones -v- Bates) in which Lord Justice Scott commented that *"to the real lover of the country, who knows that to see it properly he must go on foot, but who is driven off all main roads and a good many others by the din and bustle of motor traffic, the footpath is everything"*.

Today the footpath and other rights of way remain of prime importance to the millions who regularly participate in Britain's most popular outdoor recreation - walking in the countryside. However, even though 140,000 miles of rights of way in England and Wales have been legally protected by inclusion on definitive maps (the official record of rights of way), ramblers still have to cross or follow lengths of road in order to link one path to another. Those connections ought to be safe and convenient, but all too often they are not.

The concerns of ramblers are not limited to new proposals from the Highways Agency, the Scottish and Welsh Offices and local highway authorities for the construction or "improvement" of roads: as this dossier shows only too clearly, there are hundreds of locations where walkers out for the quiet enjoyment of a country walk face the hazards of dense and fast-moving traffic. In many locations the road has been built or made wider or faster in recent years: today's ramblers are paying the price of yesterday's bad planning and lack of foresight.

This dossier has been compiled from information supplied by the RA's local workers, all of them volunteers. The extra information they have supplied for this second edition means that it is twice the size of its predecessor - an illustration of the scale of the problem.

For this edition we have sought to distinguish for each road where responsibility lies - whether with the local highway authority or with the central government department or agency.

The three problems highlighted in the first edition remain of particular concern:

- 1) The Highways Agency and the Scottish and Welsh Offices have a policy of installing crash barriers in the centre of dual carriageway trunk roads. In many locations these have been installed with complete disregard for the needs of walkers, who thereby need to train for hurdling as well as running. However, the installation of barriers does serve to underline how dangerous these roads are: money should also be spent on making them safe for walkers.
- 2) At several locations, a safe and convenient crossing could be provided by making use of a nearby accommodation bridge or underpass provided, at public expense, for local farmers or other users. Yet efforts by the RA to have these opened to the public are met with resistance. The RA will, if necessary, seek the use by government ministers of their reserve powers to create footpaths if local negotiation fails to secure a solution.
- 3) When busy and popular paths meet busy roads, their respective users are not always kept apart by the provision of a safe and convenient crossing for the walkers. The following long-distance paths, popular with tourists and local residents alike, all feature in the dossier: Greensand Ridge Walk (Bedfordshire), Sussex Border Path (East Sussex), South Downs Way (East and West Sussex), Wealdway (East Sussex), Wayfarers Walk (Hampshire), Test Way (Hampshire), North Downs Way (Kent), Grafton Way (Northamptonshire), Nene Way (Northamptonshire), Oxfordshire Way (Oxfordshire), Shropshire Way (Shropshire).

Road A37

Safe crossings are needed at the following locations:

BR 17 Sydling St Nicholas (GR 617989); FP 7 to FP 12 Melbury Bubb (GR 593049); BR 8 to BR 9 Melbury Sampford (GR 589058).

Road A338

There are warning signs for traffic where Christchurch bridleway 7 (GR 137967) crosses this road on a bend, but a bridge is needed to enable walkers and riders to cross safely.

Road A353

Safe crossing points needed at BR 5 to FP 4 Poxwell (GR 743835) and BR 1 to BR 2 Poxwell (GR 743843). Visibility poor; crossing can be chancy at busy times.

Road A354

Bincomber BR 47 to Weymouth FP 45 (Inland Coast Path) crosses on dangerous bend on Ridgeway Hill (GR 671856): a bridge is needed.

Road B3157

Safe crossing points needed on this coastal road which is very busy at holiday time: FP 21 to FP 30 Abbotsbury (Inland Coastal Path) (GR 551866); and FP 15 to FP 18 Puncknowle (GR 547867).

Highways Agency

Road A31

Ferndown FP 28 (GR 054013) crosses the Ferndown bypass (single carriageway) in a slight cutting. No ramp or steps have been provided between changes in level: a bridge is needed.

Road A35

On the Bere Regis bypass (single carriageway), Butts Lane, (BR 1 Bere Regis), crosses on the level (GR 845952). It is ramped down into the cutting where a bridge is needed.

BR 10 Bere Regis (GR 821947) crosses road to west of village where a bridge is needed to provide a safe crossing.

Near Higher Kingston Farm a safe crossing is required at (GR 718927) between BR 3 and FP 9 Stinsford.

FPs 6 (GR 670903) and 33 (GR 704895) Dorchester require bridges at these crossings of Dorchester bypass.

Safe crossing required at (GR 558917). Dual carriageway; central barriers have recently been erected obstructing a cross from BR 37 West Compton to BR 41 Litton Cheney, a valuable link from coast to Maiden Newton and Wynford Eagle. At least a gap needs to be formed in barriers.

Quarr Lane, byway which links FPs 7 and 10 Chideock with BR 39 Symondsburry (GR 436928) crossed by road at dangerous bend and summit of steep hill. Safe crossing essential.