

## ROWLO

I act as the liaison between the DCC Ranger service and Stalbridge, in matters relating to public rights of way. STC has an SLA with DCC for certain paths in the town, keeping the surface vegetation under control, above the statutory requirements. We have 90 public rights of way in the parish, of which 7 are bridleways, and the remainder footpaths – we have no restricted byways, or byways open to all traffic. The total length of all of these paths is nearly 52 km (roughly 33 miles), spread over the area of the parish, which is 2,363 hectares or roughly 9 square miles.

If anyone encounters any problems on the public rights of way around Stalbridge, please let me know – my details are available. I must stress that this is not footways – pavements etc. – although some are on surfaced routes.

I help out with clearance as and when necessary/suitable. I help with the volunteers in the STARS group, when I can.

When time permits, I will be working on updating the Stalbridge Walk booklet, which Angela and Brian Scott have worked on tirelessly over many years – my thanks go to them for their patience.

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## WHITE HART LINK

I would like to devote more time to improving the public rights of way, and access, but in the past year or so, I have been fully involved with the White Hart Link, the volunteer-led project which some of you may have heard about. It is to develop a circular walking route using public rights of way, linking the five towns in North Dorset, and was launched here in Stalbridge, just over a year ago. Representatives from all the other towns attended and the event involved pupils from Stalbridge Primary School, waymarking a short section of the route.

I am now the secretary/project officer for the White Hart Link, which is planned to be not just a long-distance walking trail, but aims to involve local communities along the route, and to incorporate local walks, local heritage assets, crafts etc. and of course B&Bs, refreshment stops etc. It is early days, but work has progressed well, and we have opened up the Stalbridge to Gillingham section, and the Gillingham to Shaftesbury section will be completed on Monday. Then we will be working on the Stalbridge to Sturminster section, which we hope to launch in September/October this year.

We have completed a Business Plan, which has proved to be invaluable when applying for grants for funding for replacing stiles with gates for example and providing local information boards. We have had support from DCC, NDDC and the DCC Rangers, in various capacities, and also from across the border in Henstridge.

Our management group holds meetings in the Hub, which I would like to thank the Town Clerk for facilitating.

Jan Wardell

<http://www.litterfreedorset.co.uk/get-involved/>