

The Ramblers' Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods



If you are a councillor or resident in England or Wales, this campaign is for you! Our Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods is here to help councils across the country make their neighbourhoods better for walking.

Vision & rationale

Neighbourhoods that are green and walkable promote good physical health, mental health and wellbeing. They help combat poor air quality and encourage people to get outside and be active.

A walkable neighbourhood is a safe and welcoming place to be a pedestrian. Residents have easy access to streets with plantings and a variety of green spaces - from community gardens and allotments, to pocket parks and city farms. Networks of green walking routes connect people from their doorsteps to the places they want to go.

Our Charter sets out five things that councils can do to create walkable neighbourhoods:

1. Make neighbourhoods green

Target: Everyone has access to high-quality green space within 5 minutes' walk of their doorstep.

Action: All development and transport infrastructure schemes make a positive contribution to the overall local resource of high-quality, accessible green space. There is a clear plan for monitoring and addressing 'green poverty'.

2. Create a network of green walking routes

Target: A network of green walking routes connects people to the places they want to go.

Action: Pavements and public spaces are planned as a network for walkers. Council policies on planning, health, transport and economic growth directly contribute to the delivery of green infrastructure. All development schemes incorporate 'green infrastructure' as an integral design component at the pre-planning stages of development.

3. Prioritise pedestrians

Target: Walking is the easy way to travel around towns and cities.

Action: Transport and infrastructure developments put the needs of pedestrians first. Measures to address the issues that discourage people from walking are in place, including a default speed limit of 20mph, well-maintained and clutter-free pavements, convenient road crossings and a prohibition on pavement parking.

4. Promote walking

Target: People are encouraged and supported to get walking.

Action: Local government and partners from the health and voluntary sector have a plan to get more people walking. Partners work together to commission led-walks, develop promoted routes, ensure good signposting, host community walking festivals and other local events and activities.

5. Reclaim places for communities

Target: Green routes and spaces are designed with communities and open to all.

Action: Green spaces are public, inclusive and accessible to all. Voluntary groups, community groups and residents are involved in the design and maintenance of local green spaces. Residents are empowered to take ownership of public spaces, e.g. through support for new street plantings or temporary street closures for community events.

Are you a councillor? Will you sign-up to our Charter?

Our campaign will support and promote your work to build urban neighbourhoods which are safe and welcoming places to walk. Get in touch at campaign@ramblers.org.uk with your name and ward, and we will add your name to our list of pledges! If you know anyone from your local Ramblers group, you can also get in touch with them and ask if they can help.

You're not a councillor, but you'd like your Council to build more walking neighbourhoods?

Ask your local councillors to sign up to our Charter: we've written a template email for you, so you can do this in just three clicks! <https://e-activist.com/page/40945/action/1>