

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate Release 18th October 2025

The Leicestershire Footpath Association Warns of Dangers at Rural Footpath Crossings over Major Roads.

The Leicestershire Footpath Association is today urging both motorists and pedestrians to exercise extreme caution at rural footpaths crossings that intersect with major roads, highlighting significant safety concerns in the Leicestershire area. The warning comes as part of a new campaign aimed at preventing serious collisions on high-speed county roads.

A Growing Concern:

Rural footpaths often cross busy A-roads and other major routes where vehicle speeds are high. Unlike urban areas, the rural crossings frequently lack clear signage if any at all, traffic lights, hazard warning light alerts, pedestrian islands, a dropped curve, a level kerbside or adequate vegetation management, creating a high-risk situation for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

The Leicestershire Footpath Association is one of the oldest walking groups in the world (established 1887) and is a focal point for member's feedback. We have therefore decided to react to our members' concerns by the launching this safety campaign for rural crossings today.

Simon Constantinou Chairman of the LFA said, "These crossings are often invisible hazards, especially for drivers who are not expecting pedestrians to be crossing some of our busiest roads". Our campaign is about raising awareness, and we are pushing for practical, effective solutions to protect vulnerable road users".

One elderly member of the public said trying to cross the busy A511 near Ashby De La Zouch, explained 'that trying to cross the road here is like waiting for the Dead Sea to part'. Steve Charlsh said that crossing the A46 at Ratcliffe on the Wreake, "one moment of hesitation could prove to be fatal".

Key Issues Highlighted by the Campaign:

- **High Speeds:** The rural setting can lead to motorists travelling at high speeds, leading to very limited reaction time by pedestrians.
- We have provided Leicestershire County Council with a list of what the LFA perceive as the most dangerous footpath crossings.
- **Poor visibility:** Many crossings have poor sight lines due to vegetation, road bends or hills, obscuring the view for both drivers and pedestrians.

- **Inadequate Signage:** Existing signage is often insufficient, faded or missing entirely, failing to adequately warn drivers of an upcoming footpath crossing.
- **Increased Footfall:** the growing popularity of rural walks and outdoor activities has led to an increase in footpath usage, elevating the risk of a serious incident.
- **Pedestrian fatalities:** 407 pedestrians were killed in 2023, a 6% increase according to STATS19 Data

Call for Action:

Today The Leicestershire Footpath Association are calling up on the relevant parties, i.e. The Highways Authorities, Leicestershire County Council Highways Department and The National Highways of England) to take on board our concerns and initiate a review of some of the most dangerous rural footpath crossings in Leicestershire.

to take immediate action to improve safety at these locations. Our proposed measures include:

- Upgrade signage to be clearer and more prominent.
- Implementing traffic-calming measure where appropriate.
- Improving visibility by clearing vegetation and improving sight lines.
- Conducting a full review of all footpath crossings over major roads in Leicestershire.
- Implement a Best Practice Minimum of Safety Measures for some of our fastest roads.

How the public can help:

- **Pedestrians:** be vigilant and do not assume drivers have seen you. Wear high visibility strips or clothing. Cross quickly and only when you are certain it is safe.
- **Drivers:** Reduce your speed in areas with footpath crossings and be alert of signage indicating potential crossings.
- Help to us to identify rural footpath crossings on Leicestershire's Road network.

At the Leicestershire Footpath Association, we are lobbying for a minimum 'gold standard' a best practice for some of our fastest roads.

This includes flashing warning signage Pedestrian Instigated Warning Flashing Light Alerts (PIWFLA), pedestrian crossing distance signs and better kerbside and vegetation management for footpath crossings to be applied to some of our busiest and most dangerous roads in Leicestershire. Steve Charlish LFA Committee Member

at the Leicestershire Footpath Association said. “Together we can ensure that our beautiful rural landscape remains safe and accessible for everyone”. Join the LFA and help to lobby the authorities and participate in walking some of our organised walks on the magnificent Leicestershire footpaths.

Notes to Editors:

Leicestershire Footpath Association is a registered charity promoting the preservation of footpaths and Walking in Leicestershire established in 1887.

We arrange up to five walks a week of various lengths by our pool of walk leaders throughout Leicestershire and we walk all year round.

We can arrange a media interview adjacent to one of our ‘identified crossings’.

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