



Help us build a wheelchair-accessible path on Heal Somerset land

We want to build a wheelchair and buggy-accessible path across the wild land of Heal Somerset.

“Accessibility has always been a big focus for the team at Heal, even long before Heal Somerset became a reality, and is an issue very close to my heart as a wheelchair user. Being able to throw on a pair of wellies and go for a walk is a simple pleasure that can become a real challenge for people with limited mobility and is something that I sorely miss. Connecting to nature by being surrounded by nature is not something that is easily achieved with photos and videos, and I am really looking forward to being able to experience the full benefit of traversing Heal Somerset with my family and colleagues. I may even challenge them to an all-terrain wheelchair race (with the loser having to clean the wheels!).” – Alice, Heal team member

The ground at Heal Somerset is not wheelchair friendly. It is very wet in the winter and bumpy and steep in the summer. For people who wish to use their own wheelchair when exploring the site, it frankly isn't possible. Accessible paths are also a top priority for our neighbouring village, Witham Friary. There are wheelchair users in the village and in the mornings, local people walk in high vis jackets along a 60mph road. We want to build a safe and year-round accessible path for locals and visitors to enjoy nature at Heal Somerset.

A major part of this project will involve bringing in the people who will benefit. We are already connected with the Witham Friary Walking Group and national Disabled Ramblers, who know the need for access better than any of us. Conversations have begun and potential routes scoped and calculated. Together, we will work out the best route for this wheelchair accessible path.

“Despite the very rural and lovely landscape in and around Witham Friary walking options are limited. The public footpaths, especially across fields, are very difficult to traverse but are more challenging than ever in the winter months and virtually impossible all year round for people with limited mobility or who use a wheelchair. An accessible path would be a real asset for villagers and visitors with the potential for improving health and access to nature.” - Maddy from Witham Friary Walking Groups

Impact

Safe, year-round, access to nature for local community and visitors including children and wheelchair users.

Legacy

This path will be maintained for the use of all future communities and visitors of Heal Somerset ensuring safe and accessible routes to nature in the area.