

It would be helpful if the committee could consider ‘landowner public access advice’, and raise this with Farming Connect and the Minister. At present, Farming connect do not appear to offer courses or wider support to landowners in understanding public access and public rights of way; the societal benefits, and their rights, responsibilities or liabilities. It is our experience that there are often many misconceptions or misunderstandings of the statutory duties related to public access, and from the poor condition of many of our paths, it is apparent that access responsibilities are often left unfulfilled.

We hope that the inclusion of access as a public good is prompting a re-think and reinvigoration of how access and its requirements are presented to farmers, but at present, we are not aware of such a development. We believe this is a great opportunity to educate and bolster the status of farmers as enablers of such a valuable asset, but we fear it is an opportunity that may be lost if the advice services aren’t being refocused and reconfigured accordingly.

Organisations like ourselves are very willing to be part of providing advice, training and collaborative opportunities for learning, but as yet, we are not aware that it is on the Farming connect agenda.

Ramblers Cymru