

Ramblers put their best feet forward

By DAVID HORNE
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AN INNOVATIVE get-together of landowners and local councils has resulted in a new circular walk for Eynsham.

The newly-established public footpath has taken seven years to set up and was officially opened amid celebration dancing from the village's Morris men.



Follow me ... Sue Chapman leads the Morris Men along the new footpath

Mrs Jo Bird, from the Ramblers Association, was among the guests and reported that it was the first time she has attended the opening of a footpath which has been sorted out amicably.

The circular walk, described as a "leisurely half hour stroll", starts at the Oxford Instruments car park, off Station Road, and follows the westerly route of the old GWR railway line.



It runs alongside two fields and comes back via Chilbridge Road to rejoin the village.

Eynsham Parish Council, the Eynsham Society and Oxfordshire County Council were the three funding bodies involved and they launched the new public walk with an open invitation to everyone in the village to bring their scissors and cut the ribbon.

Mrs Janet Holland, parish council chairman, thanked everyone who had helped set up the scheme, especially Mrs Sue Chapman who acted as a go-between on the project.

It has taken a lot of compromise between three landowners, the GR Blake Partnership, Oxford Instruments and the local authorities to achieve the walk, says Mrs Chapman. "Usually you have to go to litigation to achieve this sort of thing, but everyone is satisfied. Landowners have not had their privacy disturbed and the footpath is now ready to go on to the Ordnance Survey Maps," she adds.

Previously there was a permissive path, but it was blocked because of the damage and noise inflicted by people on motor bikes.

Now the circular walk has proper fences and stiles put up by a work party from the county council's countryside services.



In stile! . . . Paul O'Hagan and Matt Ball put up stiles along the walk