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4.2.5. Southampton Research

Southampton City Council (SCC) and Portsmouth City Council (PCC) are unitary authorities and do not fall under the governance of HCC. SCC and PCC are similarly responsible for the rights of way in their area. However, the rights of way departments in both unitary authorities were approached to see if they wished to be included in the PATHH project.

SCC's rights of way department was keen to be involved in the project and had recently carried out a rights of way review in one of its wards. The review had identified numerous paths, alleys and lanes that were not on the rights of way map and many of these have subsequently been added to the rights of way map. SCC felt that a review of the available historical evidence in the remaining wards would be beneficial to taking DMMOs forward in the future.

The project manager worked with SCC to determine the best way of assessing historical evidence. It was felt that tithe and enclosure maps would be of limited use in a city that had changed so radically since they were produced and it was decided that only Ordnance Survey maps would be
needed for the research. Copies of all the Ordnance Survey County Series and early National Grid maps for Southampton are stored in Southampton Archives in the city civic centre.

The research was broken down by city ward. Southampton has 16 such wards, but one ward had already been fully reviewed and researched by SCC. This left 15 wards to research, and maps of each ward and the routes to be researched were duly printed by SCC to be issued to the volunteers. The opportunity to volunteer for Southampton research was offered to all PATHH volunteers, stressing that the research would need to be carried out in Southampton instead of Winchester. Several volunteers expressed an interest, of which three eventually took part. One new volunteer from the Southampton area was recruited for the research.

Southampton Archives was closed for much of 2011 whilst building work took place at the civic centre, so research commenced in January 2012. The project manager met all three volunteers at the archives and explained the nature of the research, how to find the historic OS maps and issued the Southampton CAP maps.

The volunteers carried out their research between January and July 2012, periodically checking progress with the project manager. Once all of the research was completed, the results were handed back to SCC to further inform their reviews. All together, the volunteers researched 155 routes across the city.

Extract taken from Pages 18 and 19 of Final Report