



## **20x20 Vision for walking in 2040 from Nick Hayes - Transcript**

Hello I'm **Nick Hayes** the author of the '*Book of Trespass*': a book that looks into the social, historical and political reasons why the English are currently banned from 92% of the land and 97% of the rivers.

Alongside that I work with my good friend Guy Shrubsole who wrote the book "*Who owns England?*": an investigation into who owns it and the implications of what that means.

Together we are working on a campaign to free up more of the land and waterways in England to public access. It can be found at [righttoroam.org.uk](http://righttoroam.org.uk) This campaign is seeking to extend the Countryside and Rights-of-Way Act (2000) which was 20 years old this year, which initially gave us the free right to roam and ramble across 8% of English countryside.

The problem is of course is that for the mental and physical health of the nation, the land that we need to have access to, to connect with nature, needs to be a lot closer than and less remote than the land that is available currently. So our campaign is looking to open it up to greenbelt, rivers and woodland, because for that reason, people wouldn't have to just reserve nature as a kind of holiday destination but they would in fact be able to access it on their doorstep.

### **A Vision of the world of walking in 2040**

So by 2040, we hope that, in a nutshell, that our campaign will have worked. We want rivers to be free access to the public. We want Woodlands to be actively accessible and we want people to be able to walk the sides and verges of fields and farmland in the greenbelt.

But we also want people to be able to wild camp. We want people to wild swim and mountain bike. Basically we want to see the health of the nation improved as a direct result of this greater access to nature.

But the thing is with this greater connection with nature, the science has already... it's kind of a closed case on how good this is for our mental and physical health, but also recent science is suggesting that the greater connection we have to nature, the better it is for nature itself. People start to care more. People start to recycle, take fewer flights and they start to feel a bit more concerned about the wider issue of climate change.



But obviously every step we take towards greater access to the countryside has to come with greater responsibilities to it, so we want to see a toughening up of the Countryside Code. We want to see it taught in schools. We want children to be educated in nature: why isn't biology taught in woodlands or by the sides of rivers? In doing so people will grow up with a greater personal connection with nature and be less inclined to treat it as the way arguably some people seem inclined to do at the moment.

But we also want to see people taking a greater personal responsibility for the health of the countryside. We want to see the numerous volunteer groups that meet every Sunday or Saturday to go and collect litter; we want to see those subsidised by the government. We want to see a large network of people who take care of their area and in so doing effectively pay the responsibilities that we owe to the countryside. So that all of us can have the right to enjoy nature in a way that we enjoy doing whether it be paddle boarding, swimming, kayaking, roaming, rambling, foraging. All of these things in 2040 will be actively encouraged by the laws of England.