

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL 2020 AT 11.30 AM By Zoom video conference

PRESENT: Cllr R. Woof, Chair. Cllr D. Cornish, Vice Chair.
Cllr G. Jukes OBE, Cllr Mrs R. Margetts & Cllr S. Weeks.

Mrs K. Dagnall, Clerk.

147/2020 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr J. Alexander, Footpath Warden.

148/2020 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

149/2020 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 were agreed as a true record. These will be signed retrospectively as soon as circumstances allow.

150/2020 MATTERS ARISING

426/2019 Risk assessment

The only outstanding item for the Rights of Way risk assessment is a review of the instructions for two of the circular walks. This will be completed as soon as possible.

426/2019 National Trust Ridges Ramble

As reported at Main Council the new walk created by the Friends of the Ridges Group was opened by Cllr Woof on 11 March.

Other matters

There has been some debate over the actual length of rights of way in the Parish. It appears that the true figure is 21 miles or 34 km, not the 26 miles always quoted by the Parish Council. It was noted this will increase when the paths on the new nature reserves at Manor Farm / Fleet Hill Farm are designated as rights of way.

WBC has just published its Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the period from 2020-2030.

Cllr Woof confirmed that he will be standing down as Chair of the Committee at the Annual Meeting on 20 May, but will remain as a Committee member. Cllr Woof thanked Committee Members for their support during his period as the Chair.

151/2020 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2020/21

No expenditure has been incurred to date.

It was noted that the previous Ear Marked Reserve for path improvement works has been removed as it is expected that any works will be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

152/2020 CONDITION OF RIGHTS OF WAY

A summary of ongoing issues and additional issues raised since the previous meeting was circulated. The current position was discussed and issues closed or actions agreed as summarised below.

Paths requiring more significant improvements are covered under agenda item 153/2020 'Improvements to the Rights of Way Network' below.

Location	Date Reported	Current position / Actions	Date completed/rectified
FP3	Feb 19 and ongoing	Gatepost rotten. Odd size so JA could not replace. Gate disappeared. Agreed with WBC that gate would not be replaced. Closeboard fences adjacent to path leaning over path. Reported to WBC but repaired by resident.	Feb 20
FP3	Jan 20	Flooding reported to WBC by Loddon Valley Ramblers, and KD.	Closed Apr 20
FP4	Oct 19	Near Park Lane. Fence down, vehicles gaining access – reported by JA. KD has reported to WBC. RW stated not an issue.	Feb 20
FP5	May 18	Ongoing issue with fences down over path. WBC localities wrote to Greenacres March 2020. Path is passable at present.	
FP6	March 20	Section by the bench, before the descent to White Horse Lane very wet, muddy and slippery. It seems that a trench is forming in the path and holding the water in. Action Required KD will report to WBC.	
FP8	June 19	Overgrown btw Church and Tally Ho. Ongoing issue due to the hedge at Primrose Cottage being planted too close to the path. KD reported to WBC again April 2020 - waiting for response. SW to contact WBC, KD to draft letter to property owner.	
FP13	Feb 20	Allotment track west of Longwater Rd. WBC supplied planings – spread by allotment tenants.	March 20
FP17A	Oct 19	Nr Moor Green Lakes car park. Metal fingerpost corroded. Reported to WBC.	
Byway 24 Heath Ride	July 17	WBC arranged improvements Feb 2020. FPC contributed. WBC to carry out additional work to some areas when possible. Have the bollards been reinstalled? Section of BW24 Heath Ride from the junction with BW25 to Nine Mile Ride very wet – reported by DC and a resident. KD has reported to WBC. Can be avoided by using BW25 to Nine Mile Ride. Tree down near Heritage Club, obstructing horses and cyclists. KD to report to WBC.	
Byway 31/34 Roman Ride	Feb 19	Resident reported as in poor condition – bad potholes. KD explained situation with WBC byways. Comments reported to WBC – WBC advised 'scrape and roll' in hand Jan 2020. Unsure if implemented.	
Range Road Byway	June 19	WBC advised that pot holes being filled in. Complete.	Jan 20
FP33	Nov 17 / Jan 18	Sign at FP33/FP54 needs replacing. Reported to WBC. RW to check if complete.	

	Aug 19		
FP51	Jan 18	WBC to write to owners confirming status of paths and that walkers were allowed. Unsure if this was actioned - KD raised with WBC.	Closed Apr 20
California Greenway	April 20	Bridleway sign where greenway meets Commonfield Lane is in the ditch. KD to report.	

The increased level of use of the path network due to the current situation has been noted by Councillors and the Footpath Warden. The greater awareness of and interest in the network is likely to continue and may present opportunities for users' involvement through an 'adopt a path' scheme or similar. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

It was noted that signs have been erected on FP15 asking people to keep to the path and not to allow dogs to run through the crop. The Clerk will add information to the web site.

Illegal quad bikes have been seen at Hazebrouck Meadows, West Court SANG and on some byways.

153/2020 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

The current position with various improvement projects is summarised below.

	ROUTE	ISSUE	RoWIP	CURRENT POSITION	NEXT STAGE
1	FP18	Improve signage and access?		This path dissects the field off Church Lane and then enters woodland owned by some private houses off Jubilee Road. As you enter the wooded area the footpath is very poorly defined and its difficult to ascertain the correct route, there is a stile which needs renovation. This is a little used path- probably because it leads on to Jubilee Road where there is no footway and lots of traffic. Also poor sightlines.	Agreed not to progress because of safety issues at Jubilee Road, although must not lose the path. Potential to tie in with future plans for a route alongside Jubilee Road.
2	FP20	Improvement and redesignation as bridleway	Y	Have landowner details from WBC. On hold pending other priorities.	On hold.
3	FP33	Improvement and redesignation as bridleway	Y	Proposal drawn up for drainage and surfacing work. On hold - links to Fleet Hill nature reserve path network issues. Potential funding from WBC through Loddon Valley Way project. Landowner consultation required. Raised with WBC Rights of Way Officer October 2019.	On hold pending Cemex extension application
4	BP26	Drainage issue	N	2016 drainage report from D Hartwell passed to WBC. Raised with WBC October 19 – keen to support. Note blocked culvert at 'bottom' of path spring 2020 causing flooding. Reported to WBC - due to be sorted end January but not done mid Feb.. KD will follow up again.	Ask WBC for specification used for other similar paths. FPC to contact contractor when circumstances allow. Keep WBC informed.

5	BP34	Missing link with BP26	Y	BHS including this in DMMO reference 2026 deadline. FPC has made several attempts to contact the landowner over this with no success. DC reported path very well used spring 2020.	
6	FP51	Improve signage? Claim additional paths?		Path makes a loop off the Sandhurst Road without going anywhere and may have once crossed the railway line towards Gorrick Plantation and Wokingham Without. There are a number of tracks around this area shown on OS maps but FP51 is the only right of way now. The Land to the south of this track is Silverstock Bog (owned by Silverstock Manor and marked by signs and a wire fence for much of the length from Sandhurst Road). There is no sign or fence where an obvious path leaves the track and goes for several hundred yards through the woods towards the South West, it would be easy to take this route in error.	Low priority. No action at present.
7	Greenways			Link from California Country Park to NMR completed March 2020. Final links to California Greenway outstanding (Lakeside path / Carolina Place / Heather Close) but in hand with WBC March 2020 for completion summer 2020. Signage partly in March 2020, remainder in hand – delayed by coronavirus. Remains of redundant gates / refuges on California greenway to be removed. Greenway signage at Commonfield lane has an incorrect key. WBC may have this in hand – to be checked.	Maintain contact with WBC.
8	Greenway link to Bohunt School	Missing link from Biggs Lane to School		Kids use the greenway to Commonfield Lane and a small additional section of dual use path has been installed from Commonfield Lane to Biggs Lane. Need to extend the cycle route from there to Bohunt School. At present the kids get from there to School by cycling through Hazebrouck Meadows – in an open space and on paths never intended for cycling, and where the paths are very wet at certain times. Apparently the route is still to be constructed by Crest as part of the planning agreement.	Follow up when circumstances allow.
9	Fleet Hill Farm and	Ensure paths are of	N	March 2019: WBC Officers met Cemex - discussed the	No further news on timescales or recent

	Manor Farm reserves (Cemex sites)	appropriate construction, laid out as agreed plans and sites open to public		reinstatement and areas to be completed or needing modification. Cemex to provide plans to resolve issues – for completion in the summer. Includes proposal re the FP33/FP29 link. Oct 19 – WBC now working to resolve issues. Noted March 2020 that the sites are being well used even though they are not officially open. Feb 2020 – discussed and wrote to WBC about some paths on Manor Farm being opened up now while works continue on remainder of site. No response to date.	planning applications. Maintain contact with WBC.
10	Finchampstead Road nr Church Lane	Visibility for walkers crossing road	N	WBC cleared footway and landowner cut hedges autumn 2018. Still an issue. KD raised with Localities Officer.	
11	Briarwood path to FBC Playing Fields	Surface condition	N	WBC initially not interested but have now given approval.	Completed February 2020.
12	New route to Rooks Nest	From Booth drive or Gilbert Way	N	Existing informal route through unfenced woodland (when ditch is dry). KD liaising with WBC. Meeting due to take place 24 March deferred. Route from Gilbert Way looks feasible, subject to ecological survey. Consultation with residents will be required.	Follow up with WBC when circumstances allow.
13	Hogwood Farm Paths	New route along park lane btw FP28 and BP4 linking to existing paths and new paths on site	Y	Plans available with proposed paths on site. Monitor as Legal & General development progresses. Note potential diversion of FP28 as discussed at RoW October 2019.	
14	Status of paths on estates/ other areas	Potential designation as row before 2026 to protect for future	N	Including Gorse Ride estate, Fernlea Estate. 1 The alleyway from Finchampstead Rd (opposite the end of Pine Drive) to Jerry Moor Hill 2 From Mornington Ave to The Spinney 3 Barkham Ride to Tickenor Drive Commonfield Lane to BW18	Discuss with WBC RoW Manager
15	Route from The Village to California Crossroads	Off road route adjacent to jubilee road B3016 to join path to war	N	JM had initial meeting with local landowner ref potential permissive route. If War Memorial relocation progresses may be an opportunity	

		memorial to path at spring gardens – joint roads & road safety / row project		to develop part of route.	
16	Cycle route to Wokingham			<p>RJM/RW/DC/KD met 20 September. RJM and KD met WBC Rights of Way Manager Jan 2020. Identified two most feasible routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nashgrove Lane /Ewendons Lane to link with future greenway route D through to Wokingham town centre • Nine Mile Ride through Gorrick plantation using WokW 15 and 16 and to link with BW30 and 28 and South Wokingham SDL paths <p>Have done land searches of land north of Ewendons Lane – complex and signage on the ground indicates may not be popular. Gorrick Plantation land searches show owned by Forestry Commission. Wokingham Without PC very keen to work with FPC on this.</p> <p>WBC committed to look at junction of Nine Mile Ride / Sandhurst Road – a highway study is likely to come through as a potential CIL project. Ties with with LCWIP – WBC is piloting project to improve walking and cycling routes within 2 miles of Wokingham town centre.</p>	
17	Loddon Valley Ramblers	FP13/FP14 access improvements		<p>Loddon Valley Ramblers in contact – would like to replace some stiles with kissing gates. FPC could contribute. WBC contributes. KD did land search on FP3 and contacted residents on behalf of the Ramblers – no response to date. FP14 – need to contact Church Farm.</p>	Follow up when circumstance allow.

It was agreed that it was vital that the proposals in the newly approved WBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) are cross referenced with the Parish Council's plans and aligned as appropriate. Progress on the RoWIP should also be monitored. Cllr Woof agreed to review the RoWIP against the Parish Council's project list.

It was noted that proposals contained in the RoWIP are aspirational and there is no specific budget allocated to these.

154/2020 NEW FOOTPATH MAP

The new footpath map will replace the current map and will be available as a download from the website, with a small number of hard copies printed.

The base map is now largely complete apart from some minor amendments. WBC released the updated definitive map in March 2020 and the rights of way have now been added to the base map.

A marked up version indicating amendments identified by Cllrs Woof and Cornish was circulated, together with a draft of the information proposed for the reverse side of the map.

Further comments should be forwarded to the Clerk by close of play on 4 May 2020.

It was agreed that path numbers should be included and that an alternative means of indicating the Parish boundary should be looked at. The Clerk will follow this up.

When this map is complete the intention is to produce a larger version for printing at A3 and which will include the Parish circular walks and other circular walks or longer routes.

155/2020 CORRESPONDENCE

- A letter has been received from the owners of Church Farm in relation to a planning application and comments from a neighbouring landowner relating to the application and the rights of way network. The Clerk will respond.
- A representative from the Loddon Valley Ramblers is keen to meet with Council representatives. This will be arranged when circumstances allow, or by video conference if the lockdown is extended for a long period.

156/2020 FORUM

- Cllr Cornish suggested a new circular walk from Heath Ride to Crowthorne Station and linking back to the Parish, and will develop a proposal for this.

157/2020 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting will be held on 8 July 2020.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Committee.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
150/2020	Complete risk assessment - review text for circular walks	RW/Clerk
152/2020	Condition reports/checks to be followed up as per table included in minutes.	Clerk/all
152/2020	Adopt a path scheme to be on the next agenda	Clerk
152/2020	Add information to website about keeping to paths and not allowing dogs to run through crops	Clerk
153/2020	Progress improvement projects as per table included in minutes	
153/2020	Review the RoWIP and cross reference with FPC projects	RW
154/2020	Submit comments to the Clerk on the draft new rights of way map	ALL
154/2020	Progress new rights of way map	Clerk
155/2020	Respond to Church Farm	Clerk
155/2020	Arrange meeting with Loddon Valley Ramblers when circumstances allow	Clerk
156/2020	Develop proposal for a new circular walk from Heath Ride	DC

