

Parish Footpath Offices Report

May 2024

- I'm pleased to report that we have a new self-closing gate and repaired stile near Rowleston's Barn in the south of the parish. The stile was repaired by the Ramblers Association and the gate was installed by the council these two things have been on my list for over a year so great to be able to cross them off.
- In the last month I've been out and trying to improve our footpaths, I have adjusted the gate on the Herefordshire Trail LB18 to make it open and close properly, cutting fallen trees back on Chapple Pitch and Athelstans Wood and installing marker posts on LB 22 near Ruff Lane where the large fallen tree has now been moved by the landowner. I've also met with three of the volunteers who have offered to give me some assistance. William Heap has agreed to keep an eye on the footpaths near the centre of the village LB 10,11,12,13. Another volunteer John Rymill has agreed to do some longer walks along the Herefordshire Trail and around Athelstans, then let me know if he finds any problems and Paul Savage has been very valuable in helping to install a way marker post and cutting back some of the fallen trees.
- I've emailed the Duchy Head Forrester to ask about installing new way marker post on the path LB 16.
- As you will have seen Neil has had a reply from Ed Bradford stating that he has made a note of our expression of interest in any money available for PROW. In anticipation of him coming back to us and saying what would our priorities be? I will come up with some ideas of how we could use any available funding.
- I've spoken to Kate Dillon about three of the styles on Castle Nobel land that I have concerns about, she is aware of these and there is a plan to repair them when weather permits.
- The next parish walk will be on June 16th this will be a Wildlife Flora and Fauna Walk led by Andrew Nixon who has had a long career working in conservation.
- I've spoken to Linda Madden regarding putting a map permanently on the notice on the village hall noticeboard. She is happy to do this but wonders if there is room for it on the Parish Council noticeboard. What do you think? It is likely to be size A3.
- At the last meeting we discussed the sunken path LB 21 and whether we should encourage people to use it or whether it is unsafe and we should suggest that they walk down the side of the field. I put this question to Ceri Belli the Councils Footpath Inspector. Who said this path should not be lost, and walking off the legal line is technically trespassing. About 50m down the path on the left hand side there is a 30cm concrete pipe that drains water onto the path. Water flowing from this pipe has been responsible for a lot of the erosion on the footpath which in some places has created big steps and negotiating the flowing water has been difficult. The Flow of water at times must have been considerable as in places there are piles of twigs that have been washed down the path. Ceri was quite concerned about this and has contacted the landowner asking if he can suggest a mutually beneficial solution.
- Finally I'm always a bit unsure of whether my reports to you should include the work that I am doing in Aconbury as well as Little Birch. I realise that you are only responsible for LB but the two parishes are very closely linked so unsure whether you would like me to include Aconbury as I have done in the past.

Chris Fowler

Little Birch Footpath Officer