

Footpath Warden report for the Heritage and Open Spaces Committee meeting 27 July 2021



Many of the activities described in this report have drawn extensively on the support of colleagues within Dereham Walkers are Welcome. The following abbreviations are used: FP - Footpath; BR - Bridleway; RB - Restricted Byway; NCC - Norfolk County Council; DTC - Dereham Town Council; PRoW - Public Rights of Way; WaW - Walkers are Welcome

1 General report - led walks [note at end](#)

Since the last meeting, we have held walks on 31 May (Tud Valley) and 2 July (Hoe), with short walks additionally on 4 June and 2 July (combined with the Hoe walk). Our emailing list continues to grow slowly, now at 118 (plus 4 on the phone).

2 Path issues

Current issues of concern are listed. Town Council support is requested on items 1, 2, 5 and 6.

- 1 **FP2** - the repeated failure to establish the path along the headland of the northern part of this field edge path **remains**, but I have had correspondence recently with the Countryside Access Officer for our area, who has promised to write to the landowner.
- 2 **RB3** - the long standing unavailability of this route, which was ploughed out many years ago **continues** with no change. I am interested to hear of any result from the last meeting (5: [The Town Council will write to Norfolk County Council. Councillor P Duigan also agreed to set up a meeting with the Countryside Access Officer and Councillor W Richmond so these issues could be raised.](#))
- 3 **FP14a** - the boardwalk is damaged and dangerous; NCC is aware and says it plans to repair it. It also says it is considering my request that the boardwalk be extended a few metres south to cover a patch that gets very muddy in wet weather. There has been **no progress** on either of these. [Promised later this year.](#)
- 4 **FP34** - NCC's **closure notices** remain at the sewage works, and at the junction with the unregistered path that runs along below the edge of the Humbletoft estate. It is nevertheless still possible to walk the closed route - the boardwalk can be navigated with care. There is an alternative informal route turning up the hill and along the unregistered path. [Promised later this year.](#)
- 5 **RB37** - previously reported: the issues are the heavy littering (see below) and the need to widen and clear this path to Restricted Byway dimensions; there has been **no change**. Again, I am interested to hear of any result from the last meeting (5: [Councillor P Duigan agreed to raise these issues during his meeting with the Countryside Access Officer.](#))
- 6 **New path** to be dedicated to link RB39 with Hurn Road - I have not checked this recently, but note that at the last meeting, it was agreed that the Town Council would write to Breckland Planning regarding the path and push for it to be added to the definitive map and to a maintenance schedule. The Town Clerk had added that in the interim the Town Council could arrange for it to be cut back over the summer. [Tony - The strip along the container storage place should have been trimmed last week.](#)

3 Specific work

- 3.1 **Litter by FP12/13** On walking past here on 12 July, it appears that there has been some clearance, though more material had already been dumped. There has been no fencing or other step taken to prevent access to the patch of land concerned; we did try to drag a fallen tree into the gap to deter access, but it would not take too much effort to bypass.

Update

- 3.2 **Litter by FP24 (Safari Way)** I would be interested to hear of any progress made by the Town Council on this. DTC still awaiting update.

3.3 Maintenance

Since the last meeting, clearance has been made along FPs 1, 1a, 14, 18 and 34 and RBs 28, 30 and 31. Growth has been prolific, especially along FP14, not previously subject to quite such an amount. Photos attached.

In addition, and with the help of The Ramblers from Norfolk, the steps each side of the A47 linking FP1 to FP1a were rebuilt in June. This work has gained mention in the EDP and Dereham Times. Photos attached.

Cumulative time spent in monitoring and clearance is summarised below. The conversion to monetary value is based on Norfolk County Council's rate of £20 per hour value of volunteer time.

year	hours				£value			
	work	monitoring	total	cum	work	monitoring	total	cum
2016-17	81.30	31.45	113.15	113.15	1630.00	635.00	2265.00	2265.00
2017-18	111.55	43.40	155.35	268.50	2238.33	873.33	3111.67	5376.67
2018-19	74.15	45.30	119.45	388.35	1485.00	910.00	2395.00	7771.67
2019-20	17.50	12.45	30.35	419.10	356.67	255.00	611.67	8383.33
2020-21	3.30	48.45	52.15	471.25	70.00	975.00	1045.00	9428.33
2021-22	88.30	21.50	110.20	581.45	1770.00	436.67	2206.67	11635.00
total	377.30	204.15			7550.00	4085.00		

4 Walk packs

A laminated set of the pack of 14 walks has been given to the Library, to enable their visitors (especially those without internet access) to take photocopies.

The Short Walks booklets are also in the Library, and we have plenty to supply the Assembly Rooms as soon as it is again open.

5 Job title

Discussion in the Norfolk Local Access Forum has taken place about a thought that the title 'Footpath Warden' might seem to overlook other rights of way (such as bridleways and byways), as well as other areas of public access, such as commons or Open Land. Alternatives are being suggested, such as Community Access Warden. Does the Town Council have view on this?

Ken Hawkins, Footpath Warden, Dereham Town Council

14 July 2021

Explosive store – should be fine for September I assume Breckland will be ok with it. Issue is access past the testing station.

Explosives store: as well as our contract with you, we have currently advertised that we will have the store open during HODs week in September; although this is a couple of months away, we need to plan, and if necessary, advise that it won't after all be open. Is the Council willing to press for reasonable public access so that we can make it available as planned? Retain focus