

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2016 AT 7.30 PM CALIFORNIA RATEPAYERS HALL, FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, FINCHAMPSTEAD

PRESENT: Cllr Woof, Chair. Cllr Chapman, Vice Chair.
Cllrs Cornish, Mrs Hartwell, Pearce, Pittock, Weeks.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.

106/2016 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr Alexander, Footpath Warden.

107/2016 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

108/2016 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2015 were signed as a true record.

109/2016 – MATTERS ARISING

444/2015

Naming of Wick Hill / Wick Hill Lane

The electoral roll has been checked and the addresses of properties are inconsistent, with adjacent properties having a different address. Cllr Weeks agreed to follow this up with Matt Davey at Wokingham Borough Council (WBC).

Cllr Weeks would also follow up the name of the B3348 between the War Memorial and the southern end of Church Lane, this may be Rectory Hill.

Cemex plans for Manor Farm and Fleet Hill Farm

The planning applications have still not been determined, legal negotiations are continuing. However, Hampshire County Council has agreed to take responsibility for the bridge from Manor Farm over the Blackwater River. This will become a right of way and additional paths are expected to be created on the Hampshire side of the River.

Cllr Weeks noted that there appear to have been some changes to the restoration plans, including additional bridle path sections to the north of the Manor Farm site, providing circular routes for horse riders and cyclists. New paths on the site will be high quality and suitable for dual use. All Cllrs were broadly supportive of the proposals but there was concern about the lack of consultation. Cllr Woof will review the original restoration plans and feed back to Cllr Weeks.

Circular walks/web hits

The circular walks are consistently receiving the highest number of web hits. There were 107 views during February 2016. The Parish footpaths map is also a popular document viewed on the website.

Waymarkers - Cllr Weeks agreed to obtain some 'public right of way' way

markers from WBC.

110/2016 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REVIEW

Reports were circulated showing the current position, no issues were raised. It was noted that payments for way markers and for kissing gates would be put forward to Main Council on 17 March 2016 for approval.

111/2016 FOOTPATH WARDENS' REPORT

Mr Alexander was not present at the meeting but had not reported any issues.

Cllr Woof advised that the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be reviewing staff salaries at its next meeting on 6 April 2016.

112/2016 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 actions agreed as summarised below.

Location	Date Reported	Action needed	Date completed
FP1 reduced width	Oct 2015	Ramblers reported to WBC with photograph. KD asked WBC for update Dec 15.	
BP4 Blocked ditches btw Park Lane & Whitehorse Lane – path very wet	Jan 14	No response from WBC. RW to check condition, then RW/KD to follow up with BBOWT.	
FP8 - 2 gates damaged	May 2015	New gates purchased, funded by FPC and landowner and to be installed by Ramblers in March / April 2016. WBC asked to undertake utility searches 3/12/15 – still not complete at 14/3/16.	
BP11 surface condition	Ongoing	Whitehorse Lane drainage work completed 14/8/15. WBC provided planings mid February 2016 – spread by Mr Bishop. Lower section of path reported as muddy early March 2016 – not a major problem.	February 2016
BP11 gate installation at lower end.	Nov 2015	Bridle gate installed by Mr Bishop December 2015. WBC looking into this – may not meet specification.	
BP11/FP35 sign	24 Nov 2015	Sign uprooted. Landowner removed sign to gain access for gate installation works at end BP11. Residents have re installed sign, not in location agreed with Mr Bishop/WBC.	
BP11 hedge encroachment at lower end	Dec 15	Discussed briefly with Mr Bishop - JA can undertake work if AB provides a trailer for arisings and disposes of material. RW to contact JA to take forward.	
FP13 broken kissing gate at eastern end	Feb 16	One of main supporting posts is rotten, fence needs major repair. Reported to WBC. SW noted some repair work has been completed – possibly by land owner.	
FP16 use by	Nov 16	Reported to WBC – considering signs. Public	

cyclists		footpath sign is present at Dell Road end of the path. Noted that cyclist use is an issue on a number of paths, including at night.	
BP26 Surface condition	Ongoing	Severe drainage issues - significant work needed to improve. RW/KD to raise with WBC, PH to follow up re expert advice.	
FP29/FP33 surface condition	Oct 14	Condition improved but still very wet in parts, likely to improve with continued restoration on Cemex land. Likely to be able to get Cemex to improve FP33 in the long term even though it is outside the immediate extraction/restoration area. Gap adjacent to (new) kissing gate to be fenced – Mrs Newman granted permission March 2016. RW to ask JA to action.	
FP52 wet / muddy	March 16	Nr Waverley Way/Sandmartins. Reported as wet/muddy – RW to check. Sandmartins Golf Course drainage may be contributing factor.	
FP54/FP33 Flooding	Feb/March 16	Path from Longwater Road past Thames Water pumping station to Blackwater River. Also FP33 on opposite side of Longwater Road. Reported to WBC. WBC to look at culvert under Longwater Rd to see if this is blocked. Temporary diversion to be put in place.	

The impact of the condition of some paths – including FP33 and FP54 – on the Blackwater Valley ‘Walk the Path’ event on 24 April was discussed. It was agreed that the paths would be looked at nearer the time and alternative routes could be identified if required, or the use of duckboards considered.

113/2016 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

FP20 - Potential re-designation as a bridleway to Ambarrow Lane.

WBC and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) agree with the proposal in principle. WBC has undertaken Land Registry searches and the land to Ambarrow Lane is owned by one owner who is known to be broadly supportive of the proposal as long as no costs are incurred.

It was noted that improvements will be needed to some sections, and in view of this the path should ideally be secured as a definitive right of way, rather than being a permissive route where use could be withdrawn at any point.

Cllr Woof / the Clerk will confirm ownership of the land from Ambarrow Lane to Horseshoe Lake, and will discuss the options and costs for re-designation with the WBC Rights of Way Officer. The WBC Rights of Way Officer will be asked to visit FP20 and assess the level of work required to upgrade it to a bridleway.

FP29 gate/gap at Fleethill Farm – Cllr Woof confirmed that the gap is now present as originally planned.

FP33/FP29 – Mrs Newman, owner of Fleet Hill Farm had raised a query over use of the paths by horses. Cllr Woof advised that while the paths are designated as footpaths, the owner of the Alpaca Farm has the right of access on a horse, but does not have the right to give permission for use by other horse riders. The Clerk will ask WBC for confirmation of this.

The Clerk will respond to Mrs Newman and will also advise that future plans for the restoration of this area by Cemex Ltd include significant new bridleways including a new right of way from the Blackwater River to the junction of FP29, and from the current FP29 to Fleet Hill Lane.

BP26 and BP34 – the potential for reinstatement of the missing link between the two paths was discussed. The link was formally extinguished some years ago, but there is now evidence of some use of the path by walkers and horses. Signs are present indicating that the land is private. It was noted that there are inconsistencies in how this and other paths in the area are shown on Ordnance Survey and other maps.

Cllr Weeks is meeting a local resident in the near future and will ask who owns this land. If unsuccessful it was agreed that Cllr Woof or the Clerk would ask WBC to undertake a Land Registry search to identify the ownership of the land.

Ambarrow Trail – this is going ahead, but is progressing very slowly. In January 2016 BFC advised that the designs for two trails within the jointly managed sites of Ambarrow Court and Ambarrow Hill are being developed. These include sections along steep slopes, and areas where the historic ditch and bank features need to be protected from further erosion, so some boardwalk sections will be involved to deal with localised features, dips and hollows. The proposals should go out to tender soon, and then the mapping of the exact routes will be confirmed on site, subject to National Trust approval.

Greenways projects

- **WBC Greenways plan**

The Clerk has again asked when the Council will have the opportunity to view and comment on the document, which has been described as being ‘exciting and ground breaking’.

- **Arborfield and Barkham Greenways project**

There has not been any further contact about the project. This may be as the proposals overlap with plans for the Arborfield SDL, the WBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and the WBC Greenways plan noted above.

Circular walks

The second circular walk was published on the Council’s website in December 2015. Additional way markers have been purchased, and Sandhurst Town Council, Bracknell Forest Council and the National Trust have given permission for way markers to be installed on their land.

A small number of additional posts will be required to way mark the route and the public right of way through Fishers Copse. Cllr Weeks agreed to seek permission from the land owner, with exact locations to be agreed with the landowner and the WBC Rights of Way Officer in due course.

Cllr Woof will arrange a date for installation of way markers on the remainder of the route, potentially 9 or 16 April 2016.

It was noted that the National Trust is planning to relocate the path that runs alongside the northern side of the Wellingtonia trees (i.e. not the pavement side) so that it is further away from the trees. Rhododendrons are currently being cleared to make this possible. The Clerk will amend the wording on the circular walk description.

The National Trust is holding an event at Simon’s Wood on 28 May 2016 and has asked the Council to be involved. It was agreed that the Council should attend with appropriate

information including copies of the circular walk.

It was noted that the National Trust is promoting a 'Simons Wood centenary walk at Runnymede' circular walk – north of Simons Wood car park. The walk is very well presented and can be followed on a mobile or tablet. The Clerk has commented on the misleading title.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/runnymede/trails/simons-wood-centenary-walk-at-runnymede>

It was agreed that the Clerk would invite the local National Trust representative to speak at a future Main Council meeting.

114/2016 CORRESPONDENCE

Cllr Woof noted the WBC press release circulated titled 'Hooked on better transport habits' which explains how a three-year travel and transport project run by Wokingham Borough Council focusing on the A329 corridor has made a real difference inspiring people to swap their cars for walking, cycling and public transport.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp2eBGqRqBo:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp2eBGqRqBo)
<http://www.mjwokinghamoutcomes.com>

115/2016 FORUM

Cllr Weeks noted the ongoing issue of horse riders using footpaths, and sometimes claiming that the riders had been given permission by various people.

Cllr Mrs Hartwell confirmed that she would like to join the Rights of Way Committee and was welcomed to the Committee.

Cllr Woof thanked Cllr Chapman for all that he has done for the Committee and for the local rights of way network during his years on the Council, and asked that he continue to support our activities after he stands down from the Council in May 2016.

116/2016 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 July 2016 at the California Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

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