

**FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY 25 JULY 2016 AT 7.30 PM  
CALIFORNIA RATEPAYERS HALL, FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, FINCHAMPSTEAD**

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**PRESENT:** Cllr Woof, Chair. Cllr Weeks, Vice Chair.  
Cllr Cornish.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.  
Mr Alexander, Footpath Warden.  
Mr Chapman.

**306/2016 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Cundy, Mrs Hartwell, May and Pittock.

**307/2016 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present.

**308/2016 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2016 were signed as a true record.

**309/2016 – MATTERS ARISING**

**109/2016**

**Naming of Wick Hill / Wick Hill Lane and Rectory Hill**

It was agreed that no further action was required on the road name issues.

**Cemex plans for Manor Farm and Fleet Hill Farm**

The planning applications have still not been determined, legal negotiations are continuing.

The Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership has confirmed that a 580m footpath and 850m bridleway will be created south of the bridge from Manor Farm over the Blackwater River. These will be dedicated rights of way.

**Waymarkers**

The Clerk will ask Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) for some 'public right of way' and bridleway markers.

**113/2016 National Trust event 'Live Local, Love Simon's Wood**

The Council attended the event on 28 May 2016. There were few visitors but it provided a good opportunity for networking with the National Trust staff and volunteers.

**310/2016 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REVIEW**

Reports were circulated showing the current position, no issues were raised.

### **311/2016 FOOTPATH WARDENS' REPORT**

Mr Alexander reported that he had been working on BP4 and FP5, and will follow on to FP6. Vegetation growth has been high due to the warm wet weather in June.

Encroachment onto the footpaths by the hedge at Primrose Cottage and potential for the same by more recently planted hedge on FP5 was noted and will be reported to WBC.

Fences are leaning over both BP4 and entry to FP5, the Clerk will report this to WBC.

Servicing of equipment is in hand.

The Unity Trust bank is withdrawing the prepaid Alto Cards from 1 September 2016 but an alternative card will be obtained for the Warden.

### **312/2016 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.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date Reported</b>	<b>Current position / Actions</b>	<b>Date completed</b>
FP1 width	Oct 2015	Ramblers reported to WBC with photograph. Follow up again with WBC.	July 16
FP3 overgrown (Reading Rd end)	July 16	JA has undertaken some work. WBC to do hedge cutting in August. Check if there is a gate at the A327 end – RW/JA.	
BP4 Blocked ditches btw Park Lane & Whitehorse Lane – path very wet	Jan 14	Contacted owner of Thatch Cottage – believes it to be a wider issue involving ditches on several areas including blocked culvert under BP. Contacted BBOWT - they do clear ditches on their site. Believe that ditch work to improve adjacent paddocks is a contributing factor, also water collects in ditches around layby off Park Lane – which are often blocked. Meeting to be arranged.	
BP4 & FP5 fences leaning over paths	July 16	Reported to WBC. Also potential hedge encroachment issue. SW to speak to landowner.	
FP8 - 2 gates damaged	May 15	Stile could be replaced - owner of Primrose Cottage has confirmed approval. KD confirming details with Ramblers. WBC has offered a gate.	2 gates installed May 16.
FP8 overgrown	July 16	Dealt with by Ramblers, WBC may do more work later in the year – to be confirmed.	
BP11 hedge encroachment at lower end	Dec 15	Mr Bishop plans to flail autumn 2016. If further work is needed JA will do this and liaise with Mr Bishop over removal of arisings.	
BP26 Surface condition/ severe drainage issues.	Ongoing	Advice from Drainage Engineer obtained and source of problem identified. To be discussed with WBC. <i>See separate notes re 'missing link' between BP26 and BP34.</i>	
BP26 tree down	June 16	WBC cleared.	June 2016

FP29/FP33 surface condition	Ongoing	Advice from Drainage Engineer obtained. Short term solution may be feasible pending possible future work to improve path linked to redesignation as BP. To be discussed with WBC. <i>See separate notes re potential redesignation.</i> Gap adjacent to (new) kissing gate to be fenced – Mrs Newman granted permission March 2016. RW and JA to visit and agree action.	
FP29/33 Fly grazing	May 16	Reported to WBC and RSPCA.	May 16
FP52 wet / muddy	March 16	Nr Waverley Way/Sandmartins. Reported as wet/muddy – RW to check. Sandmartins Golf Course drainage unlikely to be contributing factor. Building up of path may be an option.	
FP54 Flooding	Ongoing	Periodic flooding of path from Longwater Road past Thames Water pumping station to Blackwater River. WBC jettied Culvert under Longwater Rd March 2016. Condition OK for Walk the Path event at end of April 2016. Leakage from water main may have contributed to problem this time but remains a long term issue – consider building up path.	

### **313/2016 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK**

#### **FP20 - Potential redesignation as a bridleway to Ambarrow Lane.**

Cllrs Weeks and Woof are meeting the new owner of Fishers Copse and the WBC Rights of Way Officer on 28 July 2016 to discuss installation of additional waymarkers for Circular Walk 2.

WBC and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) agree in principle with the proposed re-designation of the path as a bridleway, the next stages and work required to upgrade some sections will be discussed with the Rights of Way Officer.

The Clerk will look into ownership of the land from Ambarrow Lane to Horseshoe Lake.

#### **FP33/FP29 - condition and network improvements**

As noted under 312/2016 above, advice from a Drainage Engineer indicates that there may be a relatively straightforward solution to the drainage issues involving creating a ditch or drain from the path to existing ponds on the Cemex owned land to the south. Work to the existing ditch running alongside the Copse would also be beneficial. This will be discussed with the WBC Rights of Way Officer.

Restoration plans for the Fleet Hill Farm site include a new bridleway across the Cemex Land to the junction with FP29, which will become a bridleway. WBC is supportive of re-designating the remainder of FP33 as a bridleway to create a route to Longwater Lane, and the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership has indicated support and potential funding for this. Improvements to the condition of FP29 and FP33 are essential if equestrian use is to be allowed in future.

#### **BP26 and BP34 - condition and network improvements**

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 agreed that the landowner would be approached for an informal discussion over the matter.

### **FP6 and FP8 – Rectory Farm**

The owner of the Farm has made improvements to paths crossing the Farm, and is keen to meet to exchange views on how the paths could be maintained in the long term to make the walks “safe and more enjoyable”. A meeting will be arranged with Cllrs Weeks, Woof and the WBC Rights of Way Officer.

### **Ambarrow Trail**

There is no further news on the project.

### **Greenways projects**

WBC Cllr Angus Ross has promised that a meeting will be arranged to discuss the Greenways plan. The Clerk will follow this up.

### **Circular walks**

Cllr Woof suggested way marking of the second Circular Walk could take place on 13 or 27 August 2016, volunteers should contact Cllr Woof direct. Way marking of the Fishers Copse section requires new posts and will follow later.

Cllr Woof advised that work is progressing on the production of the third Circular Walk from the California Country Park to St James’ Church, with an option to include Warren Wood.

### **314/2016 CORRESPONDENCE**

- The Reading branch of the Conservation Volunteers has been in contact offering help with practical work. The Clerk will circulate details.
- The Wokingham Borough Council Summer News reported that 68% of the 143 miles of rights of way in the Borough have been reported as being in good condition in the recent Ramblers’ Association national path survey. The national average was 45%.

### **315/2016 FORUM**

No items were raised.

### **316/2016 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 9 November 2016 at the California Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

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