

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.30 PM
CALIFORNIA RATEPAYERS HALL, FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, FINCHAMPSTEAD**

PRESENT: Cllr Woof, Chair. Cllr Weeks, Vice Chair.
Cllrs Cornish & Cundy.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.
Mr Alexander, Footpath Warden.

433/2016 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Hartwell and Pittock.

434/2016 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

435/2016 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2016 were signed as a true record.

436/2016 – MATTERS ARISING

309/2016 Waymarkers

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has provided some 'public right of way' and bridleway markers. These are available from the Parish Office.

311/2016 Footpath Warden – payment card

Following withdrawal of the Alto Card an alternative card has been provided for the Warden.

437/2016 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	Current position / actions	Date completed
FP3 overgrown (Reading Rd end)	July 16	WBC to do hedge cutting in August. JA has completed work. JA confirmed there is a gate at the A327 end.	Nov 16
BP4 Blocked ditches btw Park Lane & Whitehorse Lane – path very wet	Jan 14	Two meetings held with owner of Thatch Cottage, WBC Rights of Way and WBC Drainage, and BBOWT. WBC agreed to clear ditch along BP4 by end November 16 and to look at culverts on White Horse Lane. BBOWT agreed to check ditch in Copse for obstructions. WBC Rights of Way will supply planings to build up path once ditches are clear. JA can	

		help spread material.	
BP4 & FP5 fences leaning over paths	July 16	WBC to tidy up and to speak to Industrial estate owner. Also potential hedge encroachment issue - SW to speak to landowner.	
FP8 gates	May 15	Stile replaced with gate Sept 16, adding to 2 gates installed May 16.	Sept 16
FP8 overgrown	July 16	Dealt with by Ramblers, WBC may do more work later in the year. JA also plans work. Potential assistance from Landowner – Rectory Farm.	
FP9 tree limbs over path	Nov 16	Reported to WBC and clearance work completed.	Nov 16
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. RW to contact Mr Bishop to discuss.	
FP13 gate damaged	Aug 16	WBC removed remains of gate Sept 16 leaving a gap. Neighbours would like gate reinstated – with WBC Nov 2016 but may be some delay. RW/KD will check where gate is – may be intact. If so JA could supply post and 2 rails and install gate. SW to forward details of van causing damage – RW/KD to pass to WBC.	
FP13 holly overgrowing path	Nov 16	JA to action.	
BP26 Surface condition/ severe drainage issues.	Ongoing	Advice from Drainage Engineer obtained and source of problem identified. To be discussed with WBC. Raised with WBC July 16 - awaiting response. RW/KD to chase up. <i>'Missing link' between BP26 and BP34 covered separately.</i>	
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. Raised with WBC July 16 - awaiting response. RW/KD to chase up. <i>Potential redesignation linked to Cemex restoration plans covered separately.</i> Gap adjacent to (new) kissing gate to be fenced – Mrs Newman granted permission March 2016. Fence in place Nov 16.	
FP33 Tree down	Sept 16	Removed by WBC.	Sept 16
FP52 wet / muddy	March 16	RW has contacted Sandmartins Golf Course – blocked drains on Evendons Lane may be contributing factor – WBC Drainage Engineer agreed to check Sept 16. Path is at bottom of a slope in a low lying wooded area so always likely to be damp. WBC could supply materials to build up path – Sandmartins may provide labour.	
FP54 Flooding	Ongoing	Periodic flooding of path from Longwater Road	

		<p>past Thames Water pumping station to Blackwater River. WBC jetted 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 but remains a long term issue – consider building up path.</p>	
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438/2016 FOOTPATH WARDENS' REPORT

Mr Alexander advised that maintenance is generally in hand with no further issues to add to those covered above.

The two strimmers will be serviced shortly, and the hedge cutter in Spring 2017.

439/2016 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

FP20 - Potential redesignation as a bridleway to Ambarrow Lane.

- Posts for waymarkers for Circular Walk 2 through Fishers Copse have now been installed along with some waymarkers.
- Cllr Weeks confirmed the landowner of the southern stretch running from Ambarrow Lane to Horseshoe Lake. The landowner has previously indicated support in principle for the redesignation of the footpath, subject to there being no legal costs. Cllr Woof and the Clerk will follow this up.

FP33/FP29 - condition and network improvements

- As noted in the condition report, the drainage report on FP29 was passed to WBC on 28 July 2016. WBC agreed to consider work to improve the path in the short term pending future improvement work and potential redesignation as a bridleway in connection with the Cemex Restoration work. Cllr Woof and the Clerk will follow this up.

BP26 and BP34 - condition and network improvements

- As noted in the condition report, the drainage report on FP29 was passed to WBC on 28 July 2016 for consideration. The Clerk and Cllr Woof will follow this up.
- The potential reinstatement of the missing link has been raised with WBC, and WBC has agreed that the Council can make an informal approach to the landowner. The Clerk will draft a letter.

FP6 and FP8 – Rectory Farm

- Cllr Woof, the Clerk and the WBC Rights of Way Officer met the owner of the Farm in September 2016. Various matters were discussed including maintenance responsibilities, path widths, surfaces and ways to facilitate maintenance. The landowner agreed to summarise proposals and forward these to WBC but these have not been received to date.
- It was noted that the landowner is working with BBOWT, the local Wildlife Trust, on a Farm Plan to encourage wildlife and nature conservation.

Ambarrow Trail

There is no further news on the project.

Greenways projects

- The WBC Greenways Plan has not apparently progressed significantly. Work has commenced on Greenway AR3, and work to BP14 running to the north of the California Country Park will be the next stage of this route. The Clerk is arranging a meeting with

the WBC Green Infrastructure Service Manager to discuss the route of the Greenway from BP14 through the Park.

- Cllr Weeks advised that you can now walk from BP14 to the new Hazebrook Park public open space, created as part of the Arborfield SDL.

Circular walks

- The second circular walk will be waymarked on 26 November 2016. Volunteers should contact Cllr Woof.
- Cllr Woof has forwarded information and images for the third circular walk to the Clerk, and this will be published on the website as soon as possible. This 2.5 mile walk starts from the California Country Park.
- Cllr Cornish suggested that a future circular walk in the north of the Parish could run through both Finchampstead Parish and Barkham Parish, incorporating Rooks Nest Wood Country Park and the Bull Public House at Barkham.

440/2016 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REVIEW

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

It was agreed that budget proposals for 2017/18 would be the same as for 2016/17.

It was noted that in subsequent years when the Cemex restoration of Manor Farm is complete funds may be required to support improvements to the rights of way network. The bridge from Manor Farm over the Blackwater River is to be retained, and 580m of footpaths and 850m of bridleways will be created south of the bridge in Hampshire. It will be important to ensure that routes north and south of the River are linked.

441/2016 CORRESPONDENCE

- Ray Sharp is standing down as the Loddon Valley Ramblers Group Footpath Secretary.
- The footpaths used for the WBC Health Walks have been confirmed.
- Cllr Woof had circulated information on a pilot project being run in Cornwall, encouraging landowners to provide and signpost alternative routes for walkers while livestock are in a field, while still retaining the definitive route.
- A new edition of Rambling for Pleasure in East Berkshire – 24 Country Walks around Maidenhead, Wokingham, Bracknell and Ascot – is due to be published this month or in December 2016. The Clerk will purchase a copy when it is available.

442/2016 FORUM

No items were raised.

443/2016 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5 April 2017 at the California Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

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