

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JULY 2018 AT 5 PM FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD

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**PRESENT:** Cllr Woof, Chair. Cllr Cornish, Vice Chair.  
Cllr Jukes OBE, Cllr May and Cllr Mrs McDonald.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.

#### **278/2018 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Weeks and Mr Alexander, Footpath Warden.

#### **279/2018 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present.

#### **280/2018 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018 were signed as a true record.

#### **281/2018 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

Cllr Woof advised that a risk assessment covering rights of way activities has been drafted. A number of points have arisen relating to the work of the Footpath Warden, voluntary work undertaken by Cllrs and the circular walks promoted by the Council. The Clerk and Cllr Woof will follow this up.

#### **282/2018 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2018/19**

A report was circulated. It was noted that the FBC Centre and Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) have made contributions to two projects, the Gorse Ride path and the drawing up of proposals for FP33 respectively.

#### **283/2018 FOOTPATH WARDENS' REPORT**

Mr Alexander had advised the Clerk that routine maintenance was in hand and there are no major issues at present.

#### **284/2018 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.

Paths requiring more major improvements are covered under item **285/2018 Improvements to the Rights of Way Network**.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Date reported</b>	<b>Current position / actions</b>	<b>Date completed</b>
BP4 - drainage issues btw Park Lane & Whitehorse Lane	Jan 14	Meetings held with owner of Thatch Cottage, WBC Rights of Way and WBC Drainage, and BBOWT. WBC cleared ditch along BP4 November 16 and checked culverts on White Horse Lane. BBOWT cleared some ditches January 2018. WBC Rights of	Move to 'improvements to row network'

		Way laid planings November 2017. Some improvement, will need more major work to resolve issue.	
FP5	May 18	Fences down over path. WBC confirmed path is passable. WBC will write to landowner again.	
FP8	July 17	Hedges near Lower Cottage should be monitored. RW has visited and there are no issues at present.	July 18
FP8	July 17	Narrow path width due to planting. WBC agreed to write to Primrose Cottage landowner Sept 17. The hedge has recently been cut although the path remains narrow.	July 18
FP13 east of Longwater Road	April 17	Path very wet spring 2017– possibly water leak or a natural spring. Monitor.	
FP16	Nov 17	Issue with cycling – WBC has installed a ‘no cycling’ sign at the top end of FP16. It is unlikely that cyclists will be riding up the path from Dell Road, and it is also difficult to find a location for a sign at this end of the path.	July 18
BW24	July 17	Section leading to Wellingtonia Avenue very wet in winter. Raised with WBC September 17 – WBC to assess what works are required. FPC offered to contribute. April 2018 WBC agreed to lay planings – KD will check timescale.	
Wick Hill / Heath Ride – junction FP 24 and 25. Restricted byway	May 2017	Condition of surface. WBC repaired with road planings in the normal way for byways but advised this will deteriorate again. Any further improvements would be up to residents. Work completed summer 17. March 2018 – potholes , tree stump issue, ruts at side of track. Further complaints June 2018. <b>RW to visit and assess.</b>	
Nashgrove Lane byway	Jan 18	Large potholes. Reported to WBC. April 2018 WBC agreed to lay planings – KD to check timescale. Note this is lower priority than some other byways.	
BP26 ? Byway	Jan 18	Section of Wick Hill Lane that runs downhill from near Warren Crest Farm toward Heath Ride. On the more northerly side, just after Keeper's Cottage, a new fence has been installed – significantly reducing the path width. Reported to WBC Jan 18 as encroachment issue. Same stretch of Byway, there is considerable plant/shrub growth further down which makes the space for pedestrians and equestrians very restricted. Also reported to WBC. <b>RW/DC to visit and assess.</b>	
FP33	Nov 17 / Jan 18	Sign at FP33/FP54 needs replacing. Reported to WBC.	
FP33	Nov 17 / Jan 18	WBC has installed a no horse riding sign at the north end of FP33. Kissing gates prohibit horse access at the FP33/FP29 junction and where FP33 meets the restored Fleet Hill Farm site.	July 18
FP33	May 18	Metal fingerpost uprooted and propped against bridge on Blackwater Valley path. WBC will be reinstalling this by the end of July.	

FP41?	June 18	Footpath by Sandmartins golf course very overgrown. Reported to WBC. <b>DC to check.</b> Note there may be potential for use as a cycle route.	
FP51	Jan 18	WBC to write to owners confirming status of paths. WBC to replace missing signpost – in hand to be completed by end July.	
FP52 drainage issues	March 16	WBC completed surfacing improvements along FP52 from Waverley Way to the Golf Course July 17. Apparently now as bad as ever in wet conditions. Significant work may be needed to improve. WBC advised that improvements to Wokingham FP27 are with the WBC Countryside Service.	Move to 'improvements to row network'

Surrey and Hampshire Councils apparently have a footpath reporting system – the Clerk will look in to this.

Committee members undertook a detailed survey of the rights of way network in 2011/12. It was agreed that this would be reviewed at the next meeting to establish if a further survey is required. It may be helpful to categorise paths according to their type and / or level of use, for example whether the paths are very rural and a level of mud is acceptable, or are used as routes to schools or for cycling where a better surface is ideally required.

## **285/2018 IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK**

### **FP20: Potential re-designation as a bridleway**

- It was agreed at the previous meeting that this project would be put on hold while other priorities are addressed.

### **FP33: Condition and potential re-designation as a bridleway**

- A Landscape Consultant has drafted proposals for improvements to the section of FP33 running from where it meets FP29 to Longwater Lane. The cost estimate is approximately £35,000 but the actual cost when put out to tender may be lower. WBC has suggested it may contribute £3000 to improvement work. The Clerk will circulate the proposals.

WBC has suggested that the Parish Council contacts the relevant landowners to establish their views on the potential re-designation of the path either as a permissive bridleway route, or ideally as a permanent route through a formal creation order. WBC has sent through landowner details. Cllrs Weeks and Woof will progress this.

An issue has arisen with the paths on the new reserve at Fleet Hill Farm which were intended to link with the above section of FP33. This is outlined below and needs to be resolved before a decision is made on whether to progress with the improvements to FP33.

### **New reserves and rights of way at Manor Farm and Fleet Hill Farm**

- There is no further news on when the agreement between Cemex UK Ltd and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) will be finalised. Dates for the completion of restoration at Manor Farm and the opening of the sites has not been confirmed.
- The agreed restoration plans included improvements to the stretch of FP33 leading from the restored site to the junction with FP29, with the stretch becoming a designated bridleway. This work has not been completed – the path has not been improved and a

small kissing gate has been installed where FP33 meets the restored site. It appears that a path may have been constructed following an alternative route and there are also concerns that some other paths on the site have not been implemented in accordance with the approved plans. This has been reported to WBC, the Clerk will follow this up.

- WBC has to inspect and certify the paths on the restored sites before adopting these and progressing their official designation as rights of way. The poor condition of some of the paths was raised with WBC at a meeting in April 2018 and the WBC Rights of Way Officer planned to visit the site to assess the paths. There has not been any feedback to date, the Clerk will follow this up.

#### **BP26: Condition**

- The drainage report on FP26 was passed to WBC in July 2016 and has been discussed with the WBC Rights of Way Officer. This is not a priority for WBC but WBC may contribute to the cost of drawing up proposals for the improvements. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask the Landscape Consultant for a quotation for drawing up proposals and an estimated cost for the required works.

#### **Greenways**

- California Greenway  
Lighting will be installed by September 2018. The link to Heather Close and the link to the lakeside path in the California Country Park will be surfaced this summer.

There is no information on when the planned signage will be installed.

WBC has no plans to surface the short link from Carolina Place to the Greenway but the Clerk has again asked that this is considered.

WBC has no plans to improve the informal path running behind Vermont Woods. This is a desire line with no official status.

WBC also has no plans to improve the path (in the California Country Park) linking Briarwood to the FBC Centre playing fields – the Clerk has again requested that this should be improved as it is a well used route to the Gorse Ride Schools.

WBC has made some improvements to access on the Greenway following comments about lack of accessibility for cyclists. This includes the removal of one gate on a trial basis.

- The proposed Greenway linking the California Country Park to Nine Mile Ride will be constructed this summer.
- It is understood that the next Greenway will link Finchampstead to Barkham to Woosehill and that construction is planned for 2019. The Clerk will request further information on this.
- WBC has advised that an overall plan of the proposed network is not available yet pending negotiations with various landowners. The Clerk will continue to follow this up.

#### **Link between The Village and Nine Mile Ride**

- At the previous meeting Cllr Pittock advised that he had met the WBC Rights of Way Officer to discuss a potential route between The Village and Nine Mile Ride, possibly using FP5 and FP6. An update will be requested for the next meeting of the Committee.

### **Proposal for a new path linking the new paths on the Hogwood Farm site to the existing network**

- A resident has contacted Cllr Weeks with a proposal for a new path running from Park Lane along FP28 and using BP4, linking the existing network with the new paths to be created on the Hogwood Farm development site. This will be looked in to for discussion at the next meeting.

### **Circular walks**

- There are no new initiatives at present.
- As noted above the wording of the published walks needs review to ensure that all risks are adequately covered.

### **286/2018 CYCLING ON RIGHTS OF WAY**

Cllrs Cornish and Woof plan to meet Cllr Bromley to ensure that any work on cycle routes is co-ordinated with the work of the Roads & Road Safety Committee.

A meeting will also be arranged with the WBC Officer responsible for shared access initiatives, the Local Transport Plan and the My Journey scheme.

Cllr Cornish will continue work on potential circular cycle routes using existing paths.

### **287/2018 CORRESPONDENCE**

- There was no correspondence to report.

### **288/2018 FORUM**

- A stretch of path at Rooks Nest Country Park can be very wet depending on weather conditions. The Clerk has reported this to WBC and Cllr Cornish advised that some work appears to be taking place in this area.

### **289/2018 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- The next meeting will be held on 21 November 2018.

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