

Parish Council Footpaths Report

July 2022



Introduction

As I have been away on holiday for the last month I'm a bit out of the loop. However progress continues to be made. See below.

T10/15 - Charlton Road to Worthy Lane via the old golf course

Sarah Cresswell, continues to excel in her role. As promised she met with myself and Helen Sloman of Charlton Coach House who was unhappy with various abuses of the footpath across her land. There seems to have been three or four incidents over about the last 18 months. We gently explained that the number of signs put up and barriers to access because of V shaped stiles making access for some a bit difficult might be the cause of some of the frustration. I understand that Mr and Mrs Sloman have agreed to new access gates with a separate pedestrian access.

Sadly there is one final overgrown wooden stile further along this path that another landowner seems reluctant to replace with a gate. It would be the last barrier to a completely access free route taking in the canal path and then the route of this path back to Worthy Lane. I don't understand what the objection is to this potential replacement because it separates the Sloman's land by the old golf course from what appears to be either fallow or arable land where i have never seen livestock. Anyway Sarah is pursuing.

T10/13 - Charlton Road to Worthy Cottage

This footpath goes to Strimming Lane as well but is much further along Charlton Road from the canal. Again there is a single very old stile that is a barrier to some but Sarah has persuaded the landowner to have it replaced with a gate.

Given that a number of stiles have recently been replaced along the route of T10/9 from Creechwood Terrace this, combined with the above, represents more progress this year than the last five combined.

Strimming

As reported last month we now have someone to potentially carry out vegetation clearance within the Parish, a much need job during the summer months. This

person, Will Redwood, lives in Taunton and has been put up by SCC. Under health and safety rules no one can officially clear footpaths using a strimmer unless they have completed a SCC run H/S course. Will has done the initial induction but still has to be the course. He will need somewhere to store kit and I understand the PC has agreed to storage in one of the buildings on the recreation ground. Sadly however the PC insurance policy would not cover this kit and I am told that is also the situation with SCC insurance cover. One solution would be for the Parish to purchase its own strimmer then insurance would be covered. SCC has offered to pay half of the H/S course fee for Will and requests that the PC pay the other half; this is currently £78. This course fee was originally agreed to pay for Nigel Cridge to go on the course about 18 months ago but that never happened!

And finally ... two points

1. Notice board at North End

I understand there used to be a notice board that disappeared long ago. I and a number of other residents think it an excellent idea to reintroduce one. The area in front of the funeral director building is currently undergoing redevelopment with the introduction of a Platinum Jubilee tree and landscaping particularly successful. So that side of the mini roundabout is already quite crowded. By comparison the other side is mainly open grass and quite sparse. There is a bench on that side too and a notice board next to it facing the pavement rather than the grassed area would, in my and others opinions, be the best location even though some residents on that side are protective of the open aspect of the area.

If the issue of a licence for the board is a barrier to the above suggested location then surely a new licence can be obtained.

2. Working groups

The Clerk mentioned that one idea for improving participation and greater involvement with the Parish Council would be to have small working parties. I assume, these groups would work on the detail and development of particular projects under the direction of the PC. This would allow more people to get involved

without the time commitment of being a full time councillor. Personally I think this is an excellent idea as long as the groups are small - three, four or five individuals, preferably with one or two who have experience and expertise of the subject under discussion and development.