

# DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

26<sup>th</sup> April 2022

At a virtual meeting of the **Heritage & Open Spaces Committee** held on **Tuesday 26th April 2022** at 7.00pm

**Present:** Councillors P Duigan (Chairman), A Brooks, K Cogman, L Monument and P Morton.

**Also in attendance:** Councillors H Clarke, A Greenwood and H King, Town Clerk Tony Needham, Deputy Town Clerk Jillian Barron, Rhona Fleming (Jeremy Stacey Architects) and Ken Hawkins (Footpath Warden)

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**  
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Bunting.
2. **Declaration of Interest.**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To receive Footpaths Warden's report and discuss any matters arising from the report.**

The Footpath Warden Mr K Hawkins presented his report to the committee and after much discussion the following actions were proposed, but would be subject to meeting with NCC on the 29<sup>th</sup> April where some of these matters would be discussed:

**FP2** This path is half field edge and half cross field. A long-standing problem has been the planting of crops right up to the field edge, leaving no space for the footpath, and leaving an inadequate path on the cross-field section.

The committee recommended that for FP2 the Town Council request Norfolk County Council contact the landowner again to say (1) the field edge section is much better, thank you; (2) the ends of the cross-field section are still far too narrow; and (3) the middle part of the cross-field section needs to be widened soon to allow walkers through as the crops grow.
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**RB3** This byway has been unlawfully ploughed out for years.

The committee recommended for RB3 <u>Either</u> (1) If Norfolk County Council proposes to require the landowner to reinstate the restricted byway, it should set a specific timescale within no more than 3 months by which time the RB is established and subsequently maintained, <u>or</u> (2) if Norfolk County Council is willing to consider a diversion, consultation with all relevant parties should be started within 2 months; such a diversion must be of similar length and form a right of way not a permissive route (there seems to be an obvious route available)
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**FP14a** The boardwalk on this path is in need of substantial repair; collapsed boards and a missing section of the culvert bridge, present a tripping hazard to walkers, and rather greater danger to cyclist (who are not legally entitled to use the path, but clearly do).

The committee recommended that for FP14a the Town Council support the proposal from Norfolk County Council that the boardwalk be replaced with an aggregate path but monitor progress to ensure there are no undue delays.

**RB30** A short section of this byway, immediately north of Swanton Road, runs between a tall (and prickly) hedge to the west and a steep and deep ditch to the east. It is not known whether the hedge has been allowed to grow well beyond its original width, or whether the ditch has been dug from the surface of the restricted byway, but the remaining path is not only very narrow, but slopes sideways towards the ditch; to complete the hazard, vegetation growing on the sides of the ditch can mask its existence to the unwary walker.

The committee recommended that for RB30 the Town Council request Norfolk County Council to determine action, depending on land ownership, either (1) to significantly cut back the hedge, or (2) to fill in the ditch, or (3) to take some other action which enables the establishment of safe path usable by all legitimate users of a restricted byway.

**RB32 (Shillings Lane)** The path has been subject to substantial flooding, to which surface drainage from the new houses built by the football ground has no doubt contributed – and more houses are now being built. Funding has been set aside for some improvements, but the cost quoted by Norse seems excessive.

The committee recommended that for RB32, the Town Council have discussions with NCC regarding the cost and whether contractors other than Norse could be used.

**FP34** The boardwalk section of this path is in need of substantial repair, presenting tripping hazards to walkers.

The committee recommended that for FP34, the Town Council request Norfolk County Council determine action and set a reasonable timescale for implementation.

**RB37** This relatively recently recognised restricted byway (following a claim by Dereham Town Council) is still unusable by all those legally entitled to use it. There are significant obstacles which need removing, as well as considerable vegetation growth which arguably should have been cleared when the restricted byway was added to the Definitive Map.

The committee recommended that for FP37, the Town Council lead negotiations between Norfolk County Council, Breckland District Council and National Highways to remove all existing rubbish and take steps to prevent any more being deposited. Due note should be taken to set a reasonable timescale for this long-standing problem.

**Chairman**