

FOOTPATH SECRETARYS REPORT 2023.

Broadview Farm proposed Bridleway diversion.

Despite West Berks Council saying that they were going to publish the order for this diversion in April of this year they have not done so. They say that they want to investigate the British Horse society concerns about horse accessibility on gates on the proposed new route and one section prone to boggiess before proceeding.

To reiterate when the order is published it will be objected to.

Footpath 11 Kintbury.

This footpath is at Radley bottom and heads North to Radley cottages. The definitive line goes through the curtilage of a property known as Gateway House. Several years ago, the public footpath sign was moved approximately 16 meters East of the property so that walkers are encouraged to walk in the field adjacent, innocently assuming that this must be the correct route.

I have asked Stuart Higgins the Definitive map officer at West Berkshire council to write to the present owners to ask what their intentions are to resolve the matter i.e., to open the definitive line or apply for a diversion.

Footpath 15/1 Kintbury.

This footpath starts at Kintbury High Street and goes South to Titcomb Manor via Kintbury 15/2. The first definitive 50 meters of this footpath is through the garden area of the property known as Fortune house.

I would be very surprised if anyone has walked the definitive start of the path for a generation as the adjacent tarmacadam road known as Titcombe way has always been used and even at one time a West Berkshire council sign was pointing in the road's direction.

Recently the owner of the property has been asked to reinstate the route through the garden area by the council. I have met the owner's son in law on site to discuss the situation.

The owner has several options, open the definitive line, and watch while everyone still uses Titcombe way, claim part of Titcombe way as a Right of way through usage (the owner of the road will object) and then apply for an extinguishment of the path through the garden area.

I for once do not have a solution.

Lambourn valley way Footpath 16 Elton Farm (near Great Shefford).

I recently received a complaint from a member of the public regarding a footpath at Elton farm which is part of the Lambourn Valley Way. His complaint being that the that the occupier of a newly built property had enclosed the Right of way into their garden by erecting fences and gates.

In 2018 there was a planning application to convert the existing farm buildings into domestic dwellings. I objected to the application as there appeared to very little information as to what would happen to the Right of way.

The application was approved but with conditions regarding the footpath saying that a 4.2 m minimum width track should remain throughout the site and that the surface of tack should not be changed without the permission of the council. Hedge planting should also have taken place.

I have visited the site and concur with the member of the public and have asked the council to enforce the approved conditions.

This in my opinion is typical of what can happen if planning conditions are not acted upon. We now have a situation where the owner of the property would like a diversion for child safeguarding as a priority and user groups who are opposed to a diversion.

Avington Manor re Kintbury footpath 14.

I am very pleased to say that the “missing” link between Kintbury 14 and the public highway at Avington Manor has been confirmed as a footpath. Many thanks to those who filled in witness statements.