

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Footpaths Committee** held on 23rd February 2015 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs J Cole, Ms L A Gifford, R A Payne, P S Potts, Mrs J A Tavener, G C M Willis and Mrs A R Wyatt

Mr D L Crane.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs M P Bucknell, Mrs M H Harlock and J A Parker and Mr J Edwards

01/14 CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The Committee noted that the Council had co-opted Messrs D L Crane and J Edwards to the Committee, both of whom were members of the Warboys Walking Group.

Mr Crane thanked Members for having co-opted him to the Committee since his decision not to stand for re-election to the Parish Council in 2008 but explained that he did not intend to continue as a member of the Committee in the forthcoming municipal year.

02/14 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Cole and seconded by Councillor Mrs Tavener, it was

RESOLVED

that Mr D L Crane be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Mr D L Crane, Chairman, in the Chair

03/14 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Wyatt and seconded by Councillor Mrs Cole, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor Ms L A Gifford be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

04/14 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27th January 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

05/14 MEMBERS INTERESTS

No interests were declared in respect of items appearing on the agenda, although Councillor Mrs Cole reminded the Committee that footpath 4 crossed land in her ownership. Mr Crane also pointed out that he was a member of the Warboys Walking Group.

06/14 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee considered the following matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 27th January 2014:-

(a) Use of Footpaths by Dog Walkers

Further to Minute No. 06/13(b), the Clerk reported that the Council had installed a dog bin at the commencement of footpath 5 in Church Road which was used frequently by dog walkers. The bin had contained a bag disposal unit but the Clerk reminded Members that as soon as the dispenser unit had been filled, the bags had been removed by someone. The Council had therefore decided not to keep replenishing the dispenser and the Clerk also reported that the bin was not being well used by owners who walked their dogs on the footpath. As a result, the Council was unlikely to instal dog bins at the start of other footpaths.

Members commented on the proliferation of dog faeces on public footpaths near the village and also on the footways in the village itself. In reply to a question, Councillor Mrs Tavener advised that she had not pursued the idea of a ‘dog interest day’ that had been mentioned at the previous meeting. While an offence was created if a person did not clear up after their dog on a footway adjoining a carriageway and suitable signs had been displayed by the Parish Council to this effect, the Clerk pointed out that this was not the case on public footpaths in the countryside. It was suggested by Councillor Ms Gifford that it might be worth investing in signs with quirky messages asking owners to clear up after their pets and the Clerk was requested to investigate the cost of obtaining half a dozen signs to be placed in suitable locations in the village.

(b) Use of Bridleways by Horseriders

Arising from Minute No. 06/13(c), the Clerk advised that he was only aware of one complaint during the past year from horse riders who used the bridleways off Fenside Road. The damage to the drove that had been the cause of the complaint had been due to burrowing by rabbits and action had been taken by a local farmer to repair the surface.

With regard to the dumping of horse waste on one of the bridleways, it was reported that the owner of a local riding centre off Fenside Road had been reprimanded by the Environment Agency and this had not occurred again.

(c) Creation of a Bridleway off Fenside Road

Further to Minute No. 06/13(d), the Clerk reported that no progress appeared to have been made by the County Council with regard to the registration as a public bridleway of footpath 8 from Fenside Road to the top of the hill and then following a private track around Woolvey Farm to Heath Road (A141).

The Clerk informed the Committee that the footpaths section at the County Council had been reduced in number in recent years as a result of the cuts in Government grants and that there were now few officers remaining to cover the whole of Cambridgeshire.

(d) Permissive Path

Further to Minute No. 6/13(e), the Committee was informed that the signs erected by the Handymen indicating that the land in the Parish Council's ownership off Fenton Road adjacent to the Hallgate Allotments was private were still in situ. However people were continuing to cross the land as a means of gaining access to the footpath network.

(e) Permissive Bridleway at New Barn Drove

Further to Minute No. 08/13, Councillor Potts reported that he had been involved in several discussions and meetings with the County Council and the local landowner to resolve the difficulty presented to horse riders using the permissive bridleway in New Barn Drove after a gate had been erected by the County Farms estate. Members were informed that the matter had now been settled amicably to all parties' satisfaction.

07/14 ANNUAL PATHFINDER MARCH

Members were informed that notification had been received that the annual Pathfinder March would take place on 20th June 2015. The 46 mile route linking the four historic Pathfinder airfields of Wyton, Graveley, Oakington and Warboys was expected to attract up to 400 participants, with two checkpoints located in Warboys at the Royal Oak and the airfield. While the Joint Forces Command who were organising the event would ensure that the event was suitably waymarked, the Clerk reported that the Walking Group usually also checked the route and the Handymen would clear any overhanging vegetation on the footpaths used by the March through the Parish.

Councillor Willis reported that discussions were taking place about the possibility of an organised walk on the same day using the 43 mile Rothschild Way long distance route that also incorporated footpaths in the Parish. He indicated that he understood that a grant had been obtained to install suitable waymarks on the route.

08/14 MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS

The Committee proceeded to review maintenance requirements to the footpaths network in the Parish in the ensuing year.

Footpath No. 1

Other than litter picking and strimming, the Committee was informed that no work was required to this metalled footpath which now followed the line of Humberdale Way.

Footpath No. 2

The route followed George Lane, crossing Humberdale Way and then open countryside to join Station Road near Humbrills Farm. However the Chairman pointed out that few people crossed diagonally over the field adjoining Humbrills Farm, preferring instead to follow footpath 12 at the rear of the farm or alternatively to follow the field edge to Coronation Avenue which was not a public footpath.

The Chairman referred to attempts that had been made by himself and the Clerk to persuade the County Council and the landowner to agree to the diversion of footpath 2 to follow the routes used by the public but this had not been pursued as the landowner was not prepared to meet the cost of the diversion order and the County Council had claimed that there was no public benefit to the proposal.

Footpath No. 3

No action required.

The Committee noted that the footpath from Station Road did not link to the footpath network or a metalled street elsewhere but was used by members of the public and dog owners who walked around the field edges and accessed footpath 4. The footpath crossed the land which had been granted planning permission for 120 dwellings and was likely to be diverted as part of the development which would continue to ensure public access.

Footpath No. 4

Councillor Mrs Cole reported that many people continued to disregard the official route of footpath 4 where it crossed land in her ownership between Flaxen Walk and Coronation Avenue.

The Committee noted that no maintenance was required.

Footpath No. 5

The Chairman also informed the Committee of efforts that he and the Clerk had made to persuade the landowner to agree to a diversion order so that footpath 5 across the airfield followed the route used by the public for many years rather than the official route which pre-dated the development of the airfield and was now unrecognisable. Although the County Council had been prepared to meet the cost of the order with a grant made available for the establishment of the long distance Pathfinder Way, the landowner had not been prepared to agree to the diversion.

The need for ongoing cutting back of vegetation near the bridge over Broughton Brook was noted.

Footpath No. 6

Some trimming back of vegetation would be undertaken by the Handymen.

Footpath No. 7

The Clerk reported that the Handymen would continue to monitor the condition of the steps and would carry out any necessary repairs. The Committee was informed that the footpath was well used following its diversion around Pingle Wood.

Footpath No. 8

The Committee was informed that a fallen tree had blocked the route of the footpath where it adjoined Woolvey Farm and had been cleared by the landowner. The Clerk reported that he had been informed by the Handymen that part of the bankside to the adjoining field was falling away which had reduced the width of the footpath between the hedge and fencing at Woolvey Farm. The Clerk indicated that it was his intention to investigate and report the matter to the County Council if necessary.

Footpath No. 9

It was noted that this footpath was little used and no work was required by the Parish Council.

Footpath No. 10

No action required as the footpath had a metalled surface.

Footpath No. 11

No action was required.

Footpath No. 12

The Chairman pointed out that the line of footpath 12 crossed the paddocks that had been erected at the rear of Humbrills Farm and that walkers now used a permissive path that had been signposted by the Walking Group around the perimeter of the paddock fencing. An effort had been made to persuade the landowner to agree to the diversion of the footpath in conjunction with footpaths 2 and 4 but the landowner had been adamant that the definitive map was incorrect and that the correct line of the footpath lay around the perimeter rather than diagonally across the paddocks.

It was reported the Walking Group would monitor the need for any further work to ensure that the path adjoining the paddocks did not become overgrown.

Footpath No. 13

No action required.

Bridleways

No action required.

09/14 WALKERS PROGRAMME

(The Chairman and Clerk pointed out that they were members of the Warboys Walking Group.)

A copy of the programme prepared by the Warboys Walking Group for 2015/16 was circulated for Members' information, containing over 40 walks on Saturdays, Sundays and Friday evenings in the summer months.

Having regard to the efforts of the Walking Group in helping to maintain and waymark the footpaths in the Parish and in organising the programme of walks, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to make a grant of £150 to the Warboys Walking Group in 2015/16.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman.