

Bere Ferrers Parish Council

At a meeting of the Footpaths and Environment Committee held in the Council Chambers at Bere Alston on Tuesday 9th July 2019.

Present

Cllr. S. Hanson	Chairman
Cllr. B. Lamb	Chairman of Council
Cllr. M. Flicker	Cllr. H. Rogers
Cllr. H. Peace	
Cllr. H. Rogers	

In attendance. Cllr. Wager

120. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Cllr. Dennis and Cllr. Reed due to holidays.

Cllr. Hanson felt we should spend five minutes for the benefit of our two new councillors explaining our terms of reference and that we are a part of Devon County Councils P3 scheme (Parish Paths Partnership). We have an agreement with Devon County to help maintain the footpaths in the parish, for which we receive a small grant.

Members of the Committee should develop an awareness of the state of the footpaths and should do their best to walk them on a regular basis.

The Committee will monitor the environment within its Parish boundaries. This may include such things as waste bins, dog fouling, winter weather provision and any other topic relevant to the environment.

121. Notification of items for information at the discretion of the Chairman. No actions can be taken on these matters.

- 1) Cllr. Flicker – Is interested in establishing access to the footpaths in Maristow Estate which used to be open to the public, before they started using the woodland for pheasant breeding. Is there any process in which we can talk with Devon County on this? Cllr. Lamb stated that they have a Lost Ways section under which you have until 2026 to try and establish the paths. Discussions took place.
Cllr. Hanson and Cllr. Flicker to look into this.

- 2) Cllr. Wager – Firstly I have not received notification of the last two meetings. The Clerk apologised and agreed to make sure this did not happen again.
The person who has bought the bungalow at Weir Quay has stripped the top of the Quay off; also when he is there he obstructs Bridleway 69, so can we inform the Footpath Warden?
Cllr. Lamb – When this planning application went through Peter Guy stipulated that this path must be kept clear at all times.

- 3) Cllr. Lamb – Sarah Park play area - we would welcome any assistance to help finish the area. We now have the stone delivered once that is down it will only need the terram laying and the rubber chip spreading.

122. Minutes of the meeting held on the 26th February and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Matters Arising

Minute 3123 Cleaning the area. The Clerk has spoken with the Locality Officer today and she has put in a request for the road sweeper to come out and clean the gutters etc. before Friday.

Minute 3126 Footpath Problems – Footpath 47 narrow kissing gate, Peter Guy has promised to look at this.

Minute 3127 Footpath inspection reports. – FP 35 steps rotten, sign ambiguous. Peter Guy – I have checked the definitive line of footpath 35. It appears that the steps are not on the correct line of the footpath, so we should not be maintaining them. The legal line runs diagonally up through the triangle of trees. This route is a bit gullied out but still ok to use at present.

Footpath 51 Peter Guy – We are undertaking a project of work as we speak to prevent further damage to footpath 51. And the section of footpath 77 on the slope beside the sewerage works - this involves fencing to keep livestock off the footpath on the steep slopes. New gates will be installed. This should be completed by next week. I hope that the surface will then consolidate. If we need to put steps in I will do this in the new financial year but I am hoping we will not have to. Cllr. Hanson looks forward to steps going in next year on FP 51, which will be difficult to negotiate/slippery in wet conditions.

The diversion on footpath 93 at Mr. Derrick's residence is now completed and in use.

Minute 3128 Britain in Bloom - who is responsible for cutting the hedge on Down View? The Clerk has been informed that the Housing Association responsible for this area has gone bankrupt.

123. Financial Statements.

Cllr. Hanson asked if the Clerk had an update on the financial statement as none had been circulated.

The Clerk explained that at the end of the last financial year there was some money left over which needs to be allocated to all relevant committees. The Clerk presented paperwork and explained that Footpaths have never set a precept as their money came from a P3 grant. The Clerk had set out a sheet for the new accounting systems for cost centres. This committee has £1,068.84p left in its budget, £200 to be entered in as cost centres and the balance of £868.84 to be earmarked for footpaths. Also £371.86 to be earmarked for Snow Warden and Environment expenditure.

After discussions Cllr. Hanson proposed that committee accept these earmarked reserves and cost centre figures, seconded by Cllr. Flicker.

124. Footpath Problems.

Cllr. Hanson – The farmer has ploughed the footpath on 63, this was reported to County. Cllr. Crozier stated that as long as there is a tyre mark left where the footpath is then this is ok.

It should be pointed out that any footpath problems should be reported to the Clerk.

125. Allocation of Footpath inspection forms.

- a) Cllr. Hanson. – 48, 51, 52, 53, 75, 76, 77.
- b) Cllr. Flicker. – 35, 36, 39, 42, 93.
- c) Cllr. Peace. – 11, 20, 24, 27, 28, 91, 95.
- d) Cllr. Reed. – 59, 69, 74.
- e) Cllr. Rogers. – 23.

- f) Cllr. Chapman. – 4, 10, 71.
- g) Cllr. Boot-Handford. – 38, 39.
- h) Cllr. Musgrave. – 1, 2, 6, 7, 54, 55/56, 83, 85, 87, 97, 94.
- i) Dr. Harmsworth. – 26, 37, 43, 47, 49, 60, 63, 65, 96.

The Clerk was asked to clarify the status of the two restricted Byways 98 and 99 with Devon County.

126. To investigate numbering footpaths with number markers on the fingerposts.

Cllr. Reed at the last meeting felt that all footpaths needed to have their number on the fingerpost to identify them, he obtained a price for 2" tags to be hung on the post, at that meeting Cllr. Page-Bailey stated that he would put in a price for a corresponding marker. Discussions took place, it was felt that a disc would not look as nice as stencilling the number on. Cllr. Hanson asked for views on stencilling on a number or a metal disc. Discussions took place and it was agreed that a majority were in favour of stencilling.

127. Environmental Issues.

Cllr. Peace explained that she attended the Natural Devon Local Nature Partnership conference at the weekend, there were two issues she felt this Council might like to take up. One is a Wild Life Warden in the Parish, it was suggested that this should be a volunteer not a member of the Parish Council. The other is called Gods Acre whereby areas of church yards are turned over to meadowland. Cllr. Peace to obtain more information and bring these items back to the next Footpaths meeting.

128. Correspondence.

(a) Valerie Darwall Project Officer Tamar Valley AONB.

I have a couple of questions regarding the Discovery Trail footpath in the Bere Ferrers area, both as a result of queries from the public and I wondered if the Parish Council office may be able to help?

1. There first query was received last week and is copied below with photos. We think the lady must have gone onto the foreshore near Thorn point and then, thinking she was on the trail, tried to travel north on the edge of the foreshore. We have had walking groups using this section of the trail in the past and they have never mentioned the path being impassable, as described below. Would someone in the PC who knows the area near Thorn point well perhaps be able to confirm where the lady ended up?

The Clerk replied to Valerie Darwall Tamar Valley Discovery Trail, by reading your description and comparing it with the footpath guide for 83/85, we believe that the lady missed the boardwalk that goes through the marsh.

2. The second query came following the experience of a walking group again on the Discovery Trail between Bere Ferrers and Thorn Point several weeks ago. They reported that one of the pedestrian gates as they walked across the fields had been made impassable (locked in some way- perhaps secured with wire) and the walkers had to climb over the gate. I'm afraid I don't know the exact gate in question but wondered if this is something that has been brought to your attention by others before? It may be that it was a once off occurrence, perhaps due to the movement of livestock in the fields. We would like to be able to confirm that that section of the trail is passable for other walking groups.

With regards to the second query, we have not been informed of any locked gates but will investigate.

(b) Diana Mitchell – Problem on Footpath 6

This is to let you know that on Saturday afternoon as a couple of us were about to walk along the footpath from our recreation field towards Hallowell with our dogs, five young motor cyclists came along the path. I spoke to them and pointed out that it is a footpath for walkers not cyclists, and they said it was on their map of green lanes. I disagreed and said that the muddy road below is the one they should have used. They responded that they would have stopped for us had they met us in the path! Obviously there would have been no room for us to pass, besides which their motor bikes churn up the path. This isn't the first time this has happened.

Peter Guy replied;

“Hmm, I am sure they were pushing their luck there is a signpost at each end saying it is a footpath. There are a number of old stiles along the route also. It is very obvious it is not the unclassified County Road. I will have a look on my next inspection if anything further is required”.

129. Proposals for next meeting.

- 1. Cllr. Peace to bring forward a paper on a Wild Life Warden and Gods Acre.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm

Dated this 30th of July 2019.

Signed by the Chairman.....