

Report on the state of Worlingworth Footpaths by Worlingworth Parish Council as a result of the Village Footpath Walking Day 15/10/17

Our footpaths are generally in good order!

All the paths have been walked during the month of October and have been found to be passable and generally in good order. Several walkers reported that the paths were in a much better state than last year. We are very grateful for the efforts made by Mid Suffolk County Council to replace the rotten bridges and fallen signs identified after the 2016 Footpath Walk. Most landowners have made efforts to cut the paths for which they are responsible and to reinstate paths across fields after ploughing and planting.

Everyone playing their part

The joy of walking in the lovely countryside around Worlingworth depends on a special collaboration between walkers keeping to the paths and reporting problems, dog owners picking up dog mess, farmers reinstating paths after farming activities and Mid Suffolk County Council maintaining the cutting schedule and footpath and sign repairs. This collaboration has worked well this year.

Remaining concerns

In spite of the generally high level of satisfaction there are still some areas of concern and some longstanding problems that are becoming more urgent. (The attached map is marked with the relevant numbers)

1. The bridges on either side of New Road still lack handrails and netting under foot and become very slippery in winter. These bridges are dangerous and at least one fall has been recorded. This is the top priority for action.
2. A bridge into the wood East of New Road and another in those woods needs netting.
3. A bridge on the path from Cole Street towards Wilby also needs netting.
4. The pathways across the large field between Cole Street and the woods and the stream running parallel to New Road have disappeared since they have not been reinstated for many months after the planting of sugar beet. We hope these will be reinstated after the beet harvest especially since the signs indicating these paths are clearly in place.
5. The bridge from Shop Street going South is sloping and slippery and needs repair.
6. The stiles on entry and exit from New Road towards Worlingworth Hall are impossible for dog walkers with larger dogs and even for older members of the public to use. We need a different design solution that protects the stock in the field and allows people and dogs access.
7. The stile at Paradise Farm represents a similar challenge.
8. There are wobbly or fallen signposts in a number of locations marked on the footpath map.
9. A sign is needed half way along the Easy-West path just South of Town Farm.
10. The path running North from Shop Street near Southolt is being encroached by ploughing.
11. There are three gates which need attention as shown on the map.
12. Some areas shown on the map need tackling with secateurs.

Next steps

This report will be sent to Debbie Adams at Mid Suffolk CC for action. Where the remedies we seek cannot be provided by Mid Suffolk we will ask the Parish Council to review whether they have funds to put the necessary changes in place.

A big thank you

The Parish Council on behalf of the village would like to say a big thank you to all who helped with the Walking Day or who walked paths before or after the day. These include: Julie, Colin and

Maggie, Rita and John, Carol and Derek, Cathy and Jamie, Rosemary, Christine and Adrian, Debbie and Peter and Debbie's mother and brothers and sister in law, Peggy, Barbara and David. The walkers on the Day were well rewarded by a delicious ploughman's lunch courtesy of the Parish Council and prepared and served by Judith, Margaret, Christine and Brian, with a special pickle provided by Chris Goddard.

We would also like to thank Debbie Adams, the Footpath Officer at Mid Suffolk CC for her prompt response to problems during the last year.