

WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Survey of Condition of Public Rights of Way - Wolston

In mid 2009 Wolston PC requested that a condition survey of the public Rights of Way (RoW) in the Parish be undertaken. To achieve this two members of the small workforce retained by the Parish Council were tasked to check the condition of the various paths around the village, with particular reference to crops impeding passage along the RoW. They were also requested to check way markers and take any necessary corrective action where vegetation obstructed the kissing gates and stiles.

At least twice so far in the current season they have already strimmed that part of R144, the Coventry Way, which runs around the perimeter fence of our Leisure and Community Centre. They have also strimmed the length of footpath R144 from the Severn Trent Water Treatment plant back to the Leisure Centre site.

When they surveyed footpath R137, near the point where it reaches the Fosse Way, the kissing gate was badly overgrown so they strimmed this thoroughly.

Almost opposite this, footpath R135 was checked and the kissing gate nearest the Fosse Way needed strimming, which was also done.

They were surprised to find a new pedestrian gate inside the field not far from the entrance gate, and commented on the small ditch presenting a trip hazard in front of the next pedestrian gate as you continue along R135.

The next pedestrian gate is blocked but there is access at the side of this and the footbridge linking the two areas was clear and easy to get across. However, once on the other side of the footbridge there was a problem determining the next stage of the route and a way marker post would help here.

The path is on the right hand side of the hedge (which Mr Reay has applied to remove) which runs virtually parallel with the A428 Rugby Road, and when you get to the end of this hedge, again it is difficult to determine the route, which is

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down the length of the hedge almost to the field boundary, then parallel with the field hedge to the far corner of the field where the new footbridge is located.

This footbridge was very badly overgrown when surveyed and the access to it from the A428 Rugby Road was difficult to see so the workforce strimmed a wide-strip outside the field on the verge so the entrance could be clearly seen.

Footpath R133 – the workforce checked the gap in the hedge near where the path crosses the Fosse Way and found this was overgrown. They used loppers, secateurs and trimmers to check the vegetation.

The top step of the stile was a bit loose so they took remedial action to tackle this. On the other side of the Fosse Way again the access to the field stile was a bit overgrown and the way marker post itself was loose. Remedial action was taken to make this more secure.

Footpath R132b from the Fosse, which is usually very overgrown was, on this occasion, not too bad. At the bottom of the first stretch the stile is in a state of disrepair and the workforce reported that the farmer had indicated he would like to remove the fence that runs parallel to the hedge that marks the edge of the footpath. However, he would need a way marker post at the start of the hedge to advise walkers of their route.

At the footbridge over the stream the workforce was concerned about the handrail, which they felt was a little loose. This will be noted for future action.

Heading up to Mickle Hill Farm the footpath hugs the edge of the field but when you get to the top the way markers are confusing. One diverts you left to skirt the ruined building and then there is a gap in the vegetation and what appears to be another random way marker, which doesn't seem to guide you anywhere.

The junction of footpaths R132b and R132c is quite clear and obvious and vegetation by the bridge across the ditch a little further up R132b was

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trimmed back. It is still difficult to see where you are heading to from this point and a yellow-topped way marker post would probably help.

When you reach the stile in the middle of the hedge and look for clues as to which direction to take it is impossible to see where Bridle path R132 can be picked up. There is no way marker post to identify where the gap in the hedge is and the pedestrian gate that was there has now been removed.

Footpaths R132 and R132b converge at a field gate and R132 continues on to cross R121 before continuing across Coalpit Lane.

The first pedestrian gate on R121 was overgrown and the workforce took action to clear this. When they reached the 7th field on this route they were confronted by very poor conditions, which looked like a lake of slurry probably from Manor Farm. To complicate matters further the gatepost with the way marker on it is leaning at an angle and the gap between a barbed wire fence and electric fence is difficult to negotiate. (The slurry has been a problem in the past, but the cost of tackling it was too prohibitive).

Footpath R279 had one or two parts where the workforce cut some vegetation back. They also reported a problem with the stile at the Knightlow Hill entrance, where the Wroth Silver ceremony takes place.

Footpath R141 is maintained as part of the workforce's grass cutting and strimming in the centre of the village, as is Footpath R139.

This survey was undertaken by Wolston Parish Council as part of their commitment to preserving the natural environment and ensuring that the Rights of Way within the parish are accessible and safe to use. Minor repairs and upgrades were undertaken as the survey progressed, and other defects outside the scope of the village workforce to undertake were referred to the Rights of Way officer at Warwickshire County Council.

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Footpath R132b – damaged stile.
Landowner would like a way marker post next to the hedge pointing where the walkers should use.



Footpath R132b – another view of the stile.
The landowner would like to take out the fence.



Footpath R132 – footbridge - rails reported as loose.

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Footpath R133 - far side of Fosse - top step nailed.



Footpath R133 – loose way marker post - repaired.



Footpath R137 at River Bend, vegetation cleared

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Footpath R135 - the new pedestrian gate looking back towards the Fosse Way and existing kissing gate



Footpath R135 – the rut that could be trip hazard



Footpath R135 - the blocked pedestrian gate

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Footpath R135 - when you cross the footbridge it is difficult to see which direction to follow.



Footpath R135 – difficult to follow route.



Footpath R135 the new footbridge and cleared area, so it is visible from A428.

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Bridleway R132x junction with
footpath R132c



Footpath/Bridleway R132x very
waterlogged



R132x Bridleway

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R132x Bridleway – Wooden gate now missing.



R132x Bridleway – same gateway different view.



R132x Bridleway - which way next to Footpath?

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Footpath/Bridleway R132x from Fosse Way



Footpath R121 – before vegetation clearance



Footpath R121 – “lake” near Manor Farm

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Footpath R121 – not easy to reach the stile.



Footpath R121 – difficult to get through gap between barbed wire, mud, and electric fence.