

Mike Chislett – Areas of Responsibility – Lacock Parish Council – March 2021

Grit Bins – nothing to report

Responsible Finance Officer – nothing to report

Flood Warden – nothing to report

Rights of Way / Footpaths

The damaged fencing at the top of Lovers' Walk was cleared up on 12th February (by 'Tony', who works under Paul Millard, Wiltshire Footpaths Officer). A spring closure was fitted at the same time and the post-hole filled in. This was less than a week after being reported.



Other paths

The ploughed **LACO23** (Bowden Hill) has been reported again (by a different parishioner). I have no update from Carter Jonas at the time of writing - & have sent a chaser-email to their agent.

LACO2's stone stile onto the road beside the cemetery is obstructed by a firmly screwed length of wood – this makes the stile very difficult for anyone with impaired agility and renders it very challenging to manoeuvre & lift any dog larger than a small breed. I have reported it on My Wiltshire.

Colleagues are encourage to report any obstructions or wonky stiles on any of our footpaths. Please let me know if you do so - and feel free to ask if you are not sure what constitutes an obstruction.

Stoggy Lane LACO24 – continuing this saga – is shown on the Definitive Map as a by-way open to all traffic. As such, it should be cleared to allow vehicles to run its length, but whether that is what locals wish, I am unsure. I am aware that at least one parishioner has recorded it as obstructed on

'My Wiltshire'. Ownership and therefore responsibility for clearance appears to be National Trust. (with thanks to colleagues for ownership references).

Lacock RoW history

Ann Newnes (thank you, Ann) recently passed on a collection of papers and maps relating to our parish RoWs and these document considerable local efforts to protect and maintain footpaths and RoWs during the 1980s. Some of these papers will be passed to Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre in due course. One missing document is a log book (there are extracts, so we know it existed) in which parish councillors and others wrote a record of every RoW walked. If anyone has any clues, it could be useful to retrieve and preserve this.

It is interesting that some paths suffer from issues which have been long-running, particularly ploughing and reluctant or completely-absent reinstatement. Overall, a reading of the old material indicates that our stiles and signage are in a better state now than they were in 1980s. Of course, things can still be much improved across our RoW network as a whole. We have a lower proportion of gates v stiles, for example, than I observe in other parishes – and a higher proportion of wired-stiles, requiring dogs to be lifted over.

Ramblers' *Don't Lose Your Way*

'*Don't Lose Your Way*' is a Ramblers Association project to secure 'lost RoWs' onto the Definitive map before the deadline runs out in 2024. In essence, this is a continuation of parish work in the early 1980s which saw most (but perhaps not all) existing paths properly recorded.

The project has an interactive web-site which colleagues and anyone else can check, in order to reveal paths shown on older maps and for which a legal case may be mounted for protection. The Ramblers Association will only be taking on a proportion of such 'lost paths' and priority will go to the strongest legal cases and those most likely to result in best amenity for the public. There is no action required for the parish council at this stage, but I thought councillors might appreciate sight of an example section of the map. Blue-dotted line are identified 'lost paths' for which a case might be made to have them included on the Definitive Map as fully-legal RoWs.



Mike Chislett
28 February 2021