

HWG REPORT - 16th March 2020

General Update

Redgates to Winforton - Restricted Byway

You will all be aware that some while ago a modification order came into force changing the footpath from Redgates to Winforton into a restricted byway. Recently a number of new stiles have appeared on what was the footpath, presumably placed there by Hereford Council.

It seems that this work to upgrade the footpath, which would have been welcomed almost anywhere else, takes no account of the modification order upgrading it to a byway. They stiles clearly make the byway impassable to anyone other than walkers. It is **recommended** that representation be made to HC to remove the styles as soon as possible and, where required, complete any remedial works to ensure the route is a viable byway as it should now be.

Environment Agency Recommendation - Bridge/Stream behind Eardisley church

The HWG have previously reported issues relating to the stream and collapse bridge further up-stream running in the vicinity of Eardisley Church. The recommendation was that the Environmental Agency be approached and invited to take a closer interest. **This issue is now been passed to the EWG for action.**

Footpath - EE49

This ongoing issue has been reported on many times. As the deadline for representation is fast approaching Parish Councillor King has, via the electronic notice board in Winforton, sent out a request for respondents to correspond with the Planning Inspectorate as applicable.

Highway Maintenance Review

Recently forwarded to you all (on the 10th March) by your Clerk, the HMR makes interesting reading. Having all read it you will be aware that two particular points were of note: The first that one of the recommendations was that a designated local resident should be identified to scrutinise BB work carried out in their area and the second that there may be a possibility of bringing back limited funding for the Lengthsman scheme, on a fund match basis. Nothing has been decided on either point just yet.

You can see that an agenda point concerning the Lengthsman is coming up shortly. A one-page handout outlining the Lengthsman Scheme was distributed at the last HWG meeting. For those of you not part of the HWG, and who would like a copy it is on the PC website or please ask your Clerk to send it to you later.

PCC Road Safety Strategy Survey

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Office have recently distributed a Road Safety Strategy Survey. It is open to everybody and the HWG would encourage you all to take part. It only takes a few minutes to complete. The link to it has been sent out to Councillors and is on the various electronic noticeboards and can also be obtained from Alison. 20th March is the completion deadline.

Parish Drive Round

Another Parish drive round by our locality steward has been completed; in attendance in addition to the Chairman and Clerk, were various PCs and the Lengthsman. Most of the issues raised were to do with flooding and road conditions and were almost exclusively for BB to action. A comprehensive list of points is on the PC website and I would encourage you to take a look.

Road Name Plate at Courtlands

There has been an amount of misinformation and confusion about the previously discussed road naming sign that appeared at the Courtlands junction with the A438 in connection with Court Meadow. While the debate continues as to whether the wording or location is correct, the fact of the matter is that the responsibility for it lays firmly with HC Planning Department and not the Parish Council. Anyone who wishes to have their views known on this issue should approach the Planning Enforcement Officer directly via the HC website or published 'phone number.

Ramblers Way Brambles and Slippery Pavement between School House and The Forge

A resident has brought to the attention an issue with brambles on the pavement at Ramblers Way and a slippery pavement between School House and the Forge in Winforton. These points will be monitored and dealt with should the situation deteriorate.

TRO – Eardisley General Store

A couple of months ago the issue of an outstanding TRO in connection with marked parking bays adjacent to the shop in Eardisley was discussed. It was decided to wait until the new owners were in place to find out their view in the matter. Having now done so they told me they would be delighted to have dedicated parking bays outside their premises. I informed them they may not appear for some time.

Agenda Points

7.1 Purchase of SID peripheral equipment

I am pleased to say the quote for the new SIDs obtained some eight or nine months ago has been honoured and the new SIDs have now been ordered; delivery is estimated for the beginning of April.

While discussing the new SIDs at an earlier PC meeting it was mentioned that an android phone will be required to access the data collected and that it may be necessary to obtain back-up batteries and a charger. In light of this, and to offset any on-gong unforeseen maintenance issues, it is requested that some or all of the reclaimed VAT on this purchase be set aside for this purpose.

7.2 Delegation of approval for minor Works Orders to Footpath Officers

To cut down on unnecessary delays and, to avoid the monthly PC meeting getting bogged down in minutia, it is suggested that the PC delegate to your nominated Footpath Officers, all of whom are Parish Councillors, the ability to authorise minor works on footpaths in their respective areas in a sum to be decided and providing the work is agreed by the HWG as a whole.

7.3 Sign-off process – completed Works Orders

It would not have escaped your attention that the current Lengthsman is coming to the end of his present contract and has indicated that he does not wish to renew it. It seems an opportune time to review the terms of conditions and what checks and balances are required before engaging another. This could include an agreed timeframe to complete specific tasks and the requirement to take 'before and after' photographs of the work undertaken.

These simple measures would give the PC greater governance on how the precept is spent and implemented in conjunction with site visits by a nominated Parish Councillor who could feed back observations and recommendations, as required, before final payment is authorised.

It is therefore recommended that these simple changes to the Lengthsman's contract be incorporated before appointing someone to the role. Similar arrangements could be extended to the Footpaths Contractor if desired.

Additionally, it is recommended by the HWG that the PC adopt BS5709 – 2018, which is the recognised British Standard covering, among other things, pedestrian gates, bridle gates, kissing gates and step over and flat top stiles, and ensure that both contractors employ its recommendations when completing Works Orders.