

# **Ansty Parish Footpath Report.**

**December 2017**

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**December 2017** compiled by RGW

This year, the small voluntary Ansty Footpath Maintenance duo managed to ensure that all 5.8 miles of our parish footpaths remained fully accessible at all times.

The most notable projects achieved this year included the installation of new footpath signs off the High Street for Footpath 1 (to Yule Hill) and Footpath 2 (to Swallowcliffe across the fields). The new wooden FP2 finger post sign was in keeping with the original sign it replaced and befitting for the conservation area of Ansty. FP2 was also fully gated, (making it easily accessible from Ansty to Swallowcliffe) with the help of the South Wilts Heavy Gang and Wiltshire Council. The maintenance crew from Ansty removed several low overhanging branches and cleared the steep sloping path of much debris. They thought this path would become well patronised during the summer as it is a beautiful walk from Ansty to the Royal Oak pub in Swallowcliffe but there did not seem to be an appreciable rise in the footfall of folk from Ansty despite initial interest. Other people from elsewhere have patronised it though!

The top stile on FP 4 (climbing the steep scarp slope to Alvediston) was replaced; FP 8 (from Ansty Coombe Lane to Squalls) was regularly cleared and became easily accessible for the first time in years and a couple of stiles were also repaired. Another stile was upgraded on FP 9 (Ansty Coombe Lane to Thatchers Cottage) and a mess of barbed wire was tidied up.

Another highlight was being able to clear the entire length of FP5 from the bottom of Shave Lane up to the edge of White Sheet Hill. It was fun removing hawthorn scrub and bramble in the teeth of 'storm' Doris in February! The wind blew the debris (and Tim Martin) all away down to the foot of the hills!

FP14 (Ansty Coombe) saw a small self-closing field gate with hoop installed at either end by the maintenance group.

Almost every footpath and stile/gateway area in the parish needed to be cleared of overgrown vegetation this year, often 2 or 3 times! Greenhouse conditions in the summer ensured phenomenal vegetation growth! As you might appreciate this took the voluntary maintenance crew quite a few number of hours.

The Ansty maintenance group is in the process of 're-booting' FP 6 across the land acquired by Mr Rob Beale south of the A30. The path is being cleared; waymarked and signposted from both ends: the footpath has been legally diverted to pass through the copse rather than through the open field strip. Next year in the spring you can tip-toe through the bluebells!

On Monday 18th December 2017, the Ansty Footpath Maintenance group, the South Wilts. 'Heavy Gang' volunteers under the leadership of Graham Read and Wiltshire Council footpath officers Nick Cowen and Alex Howson combined to install two hooped gates in the Ansty parish.

One gate replaced a very rickety stile on FP 7 with the landowner's permission, half way along the path between Ansty Coombe Lane and New Barn. The other hooped gate replaced a stile on the access to FP12 (off Ansty Coombe Lane just above 'The Hundred'), again with the landowner's permission. The former stile was difficult to climb by some walkers and the new gate makes this delightful walk to 'Twelve Acre Copse' accessible to all.

On behalf of the parish we extend our grateful thanks to Graham Read and the South Wilts. HG volunteers and to

Nick Cowen (senior footpath officer) and Alex for making this project possible.

Finally our parish is 'on the list' for some kind of walkway across the boggy section of FP8 (from Kings Lane to Ansty Coombe Lane). Here the parish will receive some help from the South Wiltshire Heavy Gang and Wiltshire Council.

Nothing to do with footpaths but our milestone (located opposite the entrance to Ansty PYO) was also cleared on 4 occasions. Brambles, nettles and bracken often completely obliterate this grade 2 listed milestone and when that happens it can get damaged by the annual verge cutting by the Wiltshire council contractor.

If, on your rambles along any of our parish footpaths you come across a problem such as a rickety stile or the access is blocked by vegetation or perhaps a fence or you lost your way because of inadequate signage please contact the Ansty FP Officer: [rgwilk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rgwilk@hotmail.co.uk) or [anneandtimmartin@gmail.com](mailto:anneandtimmartin@gmail.com)

You might even feel like helping us out occasionally – we would love to see you: just email one of us if you are interested.

# ANSTY FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE 2017

FP	PROBLEM	SOLUTION	DATE DONE/TIME TAKEN	
1 0.3km	Organise a FP sign for both ends of FP 1 (all within parish boundary) Otherwise it is open No way across crop field. Check with landowner	New footpath sign installed at the northern end of Ansty High Street pointing the way to Swallowcliffe along FP1. It has been located slightly further off the road to avoid being 'hacked' by hedge cutting and for safety reasons. Endeavoured to ensure that the post is 'secure'. Strimmed entrance clear of veg. Field Way cleared 07-2017 by Landowner. Also checked the Swallowcliffe boundary end and the post and access is all fine. Strimmed vegetation and cut back brambles/hedge etc. at entrance from road across boundary line Strimmed vegetation and cut back brambles/hedge etc. at entrance from road across boundary line	05/05/2017 R&T	6
	Entrance off High Street needs to be cleared around signpost		28-07-2017 R&T	0.5
	Entrance off High Street needs to be cleared around signpost		15-09-2017 R&T	0.5
2 0.5km	Replace 2 stiles with 2 gates on FP 2 section; (Access along this path from Ansty to Swallowcliffe will be fully gated. No stiles.	S. Wilts HG Input. Job Completed. Cleared steep section of FP2 at Ansty end. Minor tree work completed with some lopping and strimming. All debris raked off Fixed close gate signs and way marker disc on HG gates on top level More major tree work completed; removal of old wooden signpost – replaced with a newer version Section of FP 2 cleared and tidied.	20/03/2017 HG	
	Upgrade FP 2 by clearing and replace old wooden sign		31/03/2017 R&T	6
	Clear vegetation growth around FP 2 incline		21/03/2017 R&T Late July/Aug? T	7 1.5
3 0.5km	Clear vegetation at Gate; Check Waymark	Vegetation cleared from gate entrance and surrounds; Bridleway waymark OK.	15-09-2017 R&T	0.5
4 0.28km	FP Needs clearing from Alvediston Road Hill top and bottom end	Brambles and nettles cleared to enable access to grass slopes from lower end; bottom step repaired after tractor wheel had undercut verge; top stile also strimmed and cleared. Strimmed around bottom stile and access to scarp slope; strimmed around top stile Top stile FP4 replaced/ tidied	28/04/2017 R	2.5
	FP Needs clearing from Alvediston Road Hill top and bottom end		28-07-2017 R&T	4
	Top stile step over needs replacing		06-09-2017 R&T	4
5 1.02km	Clear bottom run from Shave Lane to 2 step over stiles up Ansty Slope	Strimmed around stiles from Shave Lane to Ansty Down Strimmed along path through entrance 'copse'; strimmed weedy bank to cut FP 'bench' to avoid muddy field/crop field Strimmed very long grass/nettles etc from Shave Lane almost to Scarp top. Cleared stiles & Strimmed very long grass/nettles etc from By Way to crest; revisited and cleared FP right to the stiles at foot of scarp on Ansty Down Strimmed along path through entrance 'copse'; strimmed weedy bank to cut FP 'bench' to avoid muddy field/crop field	14/04/2017 R	2.5
	Vegetation clearance maintenance needed along entire length of FP 5		15-06-2017 R&T	5
	Vegetation clearance maintenance along bottom run Shave Lane to 2 stile access up Ansty Down		06-07-2017 R&T	5
			15-09-2017 R&T	4
6 0.7km	Wait until diversion completed. Check with Rob Beale.	Assessed with Rob Beale. Agreed to put in posts. Ordered posts from Nick Cowen, County. Some initial clearance; 9 guide posts put in Plus each way way mark discs	01-09-2017 R	1
	Seen RB. Waymark posts needed to guide walkers.		16-11-2017 R&T	4
7 0.96km	Raise concern re gallivanting horses 'hassling' walkers!!	Asked Councillor Morwenna Brewer to intervene sometime in March. Morwenna is responsible for Squalls issues. To date no information. In any case the horses have now gone: perhaps she did make contact. First strim and prudent hedge trimming to expose FP sign/stile Second strim and prudent hedge trimming to expose FP sign/stile Third strim of stile Strimmed vegetation away from access to jockey field; cleared path of major debris/tidied Dangerous fallen tree kindly removed by Squalls estate; stile strengthened and repaired; step over repaired. <b>** Stile replaced by hooped gate by Ansty FPM; S.Wilts HG and Wilts Council</b>	03/2017 R	
	Stile on Ansty Coombe Lane (NewBarn) needs clearing and cut back hedge to allow signpost to be visible		<b>15-09-2017</b>	
	Ditto		28/04/2017 R	1
	And again!		01-07-2017 R	1
	Clear path up to field and stile from Ansty Coombe Lane A30		04-09-2017 R	0.5
	Horses back (End of August 2017)		28-07-2017 R&T	3.5
Repair stile across track between Keepers Cott and Polo Field	16-11-2017 R&T	4		
	<b>18-12-2017**</b>	<b>3</b>		

# ANSTY FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE 2017

FP	PROBLEM	SOLUTION	DATE DONE/TIME TAKEN	
8 0.52km	Vegetation clearance needed	Checked FP8 from Ansty Coombe Lane to Squalls Lane junction. Strimmed and cleared vegetation around 5 stiles and cleared a 'way' across 'boggy field'. Some kind parishioner had partially repaired original broken stile on hedge line.	05/05/2017 R&T	6
	Stile needs repairing on 'Maggie's field' boundary	Removed stump obstructions from 'Hillside' Field hedge line (above) and replaced narrow step.	11/05/2017 R&T	2.5
	Vegetation clearance needed	Strimmed and cleared vegetation around 5 stiles from Squalls to Ansty Coombe Lane and cleared a 'way' across 'boggy field'.	20-06-2017 R	1.5
	Vegetation clearance needed	Strimmed stile off Kings Lane	01-09-2017 R	0.25
	Vegetation clearance needed	Strimmed 3 stiles encountered via boggy field and marked way across stream	04-09-2017 R	1.5
	Stile access of Kings Lane needs repairing or strengthened	Put in new post and repaired the step. <b>Will probably need replacing next year.</b>	06-09-2017 R&T	4
9 0.09km	Check stile off Kings Lane and tidy up.	Cleared fallen branches and strim cleared vegetation. Tidied up dangerous barbed wire 'gate'.	11/5/2017 R&T	1.5
	Stile needs replacing/repairing	Repaired stile; put in two steps and renewed one main post and sorted out the barbed wire maze on fence line. Tidied up access area to the stile.	02/06/2017 R&T	5
	Vegetation clearance needed	Cleared veg from stile opposite Thatchers Cott. and also Stile on to Kings Lane	20/06/2017 R	0.75
	Vegetation clearance needed	Cleared veg from stile opposite Thatchers Cott. and also Stile on to Kings Lane	01-09-2017R	0.75
10 0.57km	Ongoing clearance	Partially cleared around stile into Turners Copse	01-09-2017 R	0.5
11 0.33km	Vegetation clearance needed	Cleared overgrown FP11 to stile on edge of wood above Thatchers Cott.	26/06/2017 R	1
	Vegetation clearance needed	Cleared overgrown FP11 to stile on edge of wood above Thatchers Cott.	01-09-2017	
12 0.35km	Vegetation clearance needed	Cleared vegetation from Stile access on Ansty Coombe Lane (nr The Hundred); cleared stile access and FP12 up to junction with TISB77;	26/06/2017 R	1
	Vegetation clearance needed Complaints re difficult access over stile	Ditto <b>** Stile replaced by hooped gate by Ansty FPM; S.Wilts. HG and Wilts Council</b>	01-09-2017 <b>18-12-2017**</b>	1 <b>3</b>
13 0.89km	Are there permissive way markers? Horwood <b>Need to put in permissive signs</b>	Cleared access stile from Ansty Coombe Lane and established FP 'way' in the grass towards 'permissive footpath' route.	26/06/2017 R	1

# ANSTY FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE 2017

FP	PROBLEM	SOLUTION	DATE DONE/TIME TAKEN	
14 0.43km	Renew stile with gate/tidy up Basils Cott. end.	<b>Replaced stile and Installed new self-close gate with wooden stock proof hoop. Applied 2 way marker discs.</b>	11/04/2017 R&T	7
	Collapsing tree over Stile near Keepers Cott. Partially blocked access area	<b>Quite a serious tree problem at access stile 2 to FP 14 across field (Gore Copse). One oak tree leaning and cracking; shedding branches across FP line. Removed much of the lower branch obstructions but tree needs professional tree surgeon work. Also cleared a path way away from danger.</b>	11/05/2017 R&T	4
	Stile needs replacing. Scheduled for Fri 30th June	<b>Cleared way using strimmer</b>	24/05/2017 R	1.5
	No clear 'way' across field from Basil's cott. to Keepers cott.. (long Grass)	<b>Old stile removed and self-closing gate and hoop installed</b>	30/06/2017 R&T	7.5
	Renew stile with gate/tidy up at Keepers Cott end/ pathway across small paddock and small step over stile on Keepers Cott drive needs clearing of vegetation	<b>Cleared small step over stile and pathway across paddock new gate</b>	04-09-2017 R	1
Small step over stile on Keepers Cott drive needs clearing of vegetation	<b>Cleared vegetation from step-over stile and cleared 'way' across paddock to gate</b>	04-09-2017 R	1	
Repair small step over stile on fence line	<b>Repaired wobbly step over and installed new upright and cleared veg from site</b>	16-11-2017 R&T	3	
15 0.11km	Thatchers Cott. (Gate) vegetation needs clearing	<b>Cleared vegetation from Self closing gate access to FP 15.</b>	20/06/2017 R	0.25
	'Wooden Hoop bar' needs repairing – original pushed off by cattle	<b>Original wooden bar re-seated and a new one put in to strengthen structure.</b>	21/06/2017 R	0.5
	Vegetation clearance	<b>Cleared vegetation from Self closing gate access to FP 15.</b>	01-09-2017 R	0.25
16 0.62km	(Top By Way) No Issues			
17 0.82km	(Shave Lane top) No Issues			
18 0.1km	(Byway above Swallowcliffe) No Issues			
	Milestone Clearance 1	<b>Vegetation Cleared</b>	28/04/2017 R	0.75
	Milestone Clearance 2	<b>Masses of vegetation cleared! As it happens County contract cleared verge 2 days later and avoided smashing into stone because they could see it!!</b>	01-07-2017 R	0.50
	Milestone Clearance 3	<b>Vegetation carefully cleared around milestone</b>	04-09-2017 R	0.50
			<b>Total Man Hours approx:</b>	<b>126</b>