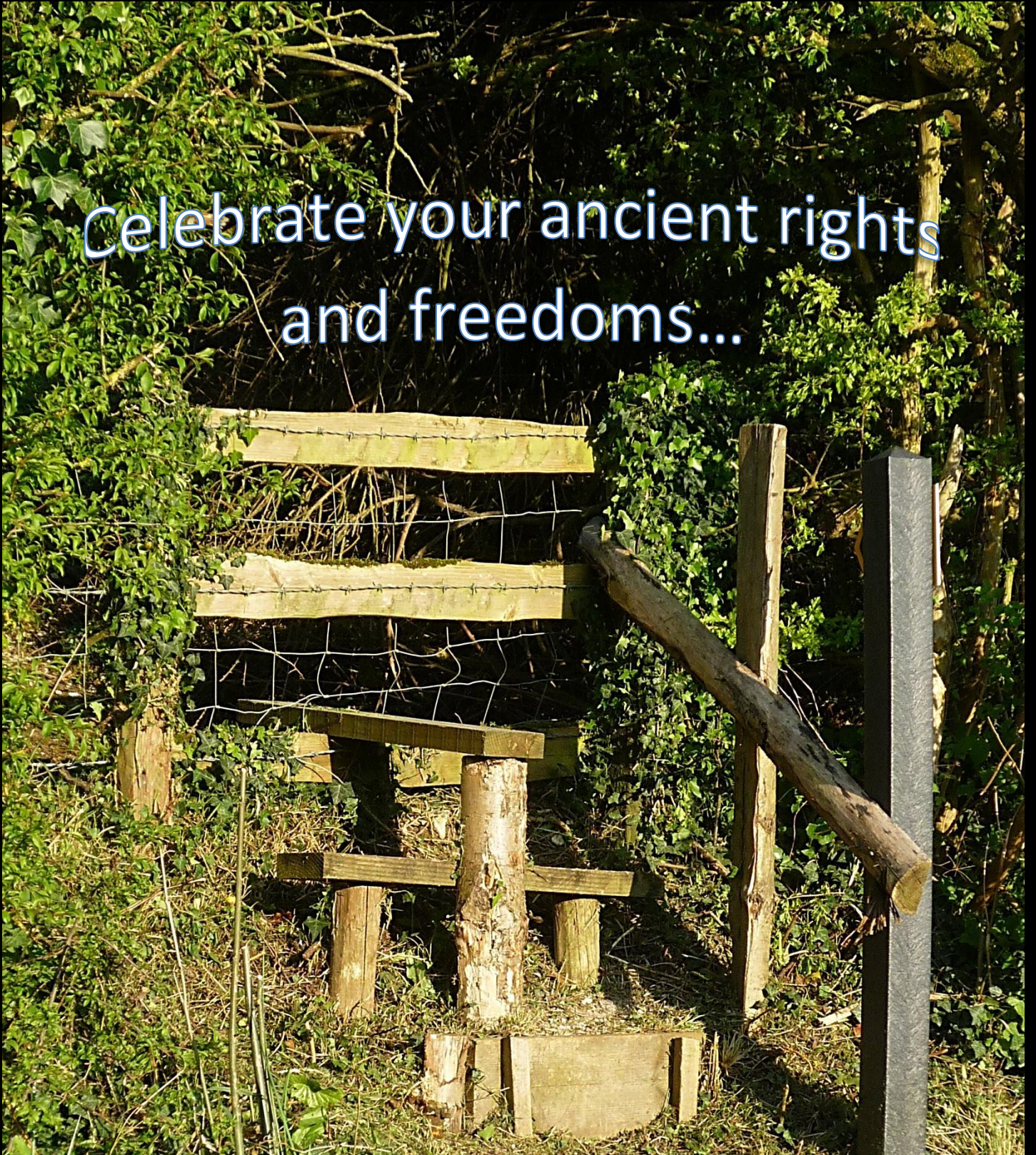


Celebrate your ancient rights
and freedoms...





Celebrate your ancient rights and freedoms and be your own 'detective of the local landscape' by walking all of Ansty's wonderful footpaths and byways.

Did you know that most of our 'public rights of way' are very ancient indeed? Some have their roots stretching back to Bronze Age times some 4,000 years ago. Most go back Saxon and Medieval times – when Ansty villagers of long ago used the footpaths to walk to and from their places of work in the large open fields nearby and drove their cattle to market along the 'drove' lanes or byways.

Later came the periods of land enclosure, when the commoners' rights were surrendered to landowner's profits and the ensuing agricultural revolution saw even more changes to the rural landscape. Fortunately for us, the rights of common way and most public footpaths and byways continued to be maintained through all the changes. A very few of us are still maintaining them today! We are so lucky to have nearly 6 miles of footpaths and byways covering a variety of landscapes in our own parish.

Any one of our footpaths has a long story to tell. If you look carefully you might be able to identify some of the many clues that can be put together like a jig saw puzzle. Watch out for ancient burial mounds or bumps in the ground that might once have been an Iron Age village. See if you can pick out paths close to a water supply. Observe the relationship between our metalled roads, byways, bridleways and footpaths. Locate our one and only 'milestone' (although there is another to be found very close to our parish boundary. Spot our 'cross dykes' on the chalk downs. Note the gentle sloped upland areas on greensand rock that were once home to huge open fields where peasants laboured hard on their strips of land to gather in the crops. View the remnants of old forests and small pasture fields which were once deemed common lands and climb the steep chalk slopes where cattle and sheep roamed (and still do).

Our footpaths and byways pass former farms and other smallholdings; they still link the 'new' enclosures of over 200 years ago and remind us of our once close relationship with the nearby Wardour Estate and the Arundell family.

This summer why not try and walk all of our footpaths and byways just the once and see the historical landscape of Ansty unfold before your very eyes and keep fit at the same time!