

Members are requested to NOTE the following report from the Footpaths Working Party and CONSIDER the recommendations

Report

Since the last LMPC meeting much progress has been made. The Footpath Coordinator Amelia Claydon-Smith has made an excellent start, and already organised the clearance of a number of ROWs. This work is especially important at this time of year, because of the rapid growth of nettles and brambles which quickly makes footpaths impassable if left untended.

The first path to be cleared was LMIL100 (part of route from Stone Lane to Washpool) which was cleared on 09/07/22. Amelia made cakes for volunteers for the occasion, and has written an article describing the event for the Lydiard magazine which will appear next month. In the article she also asks for any interested parties to contact her for future projects.

Paths cleared to date:

LMIL100/123, Stoney Lane to Nine Elms

LMIL80, Meadow Springs to Holborn

Additional general clearing around stiles and gates within the area of the village.

Work planned

LMIL38 Lydiard Green to Greatfield.

LMIL50 The Butts and stile opposite Lydiard House.

LMIL70 Forge Fields onwards SSE.

LMIL37 clear stiles at Lydiard Green and Greatfield ends.

Volunteer Group Organisation

The Lydiard Millicent Volunteers Group is and will remain an independent, autonomous group dedicated to the upkeep and improvement of ROWs in the parish. They will continue to manage their own work load and decide what to do and when. They remain responsible for their own safety, training where necessary and generic risk assessments. Certain other essential features are already in place, eg contact sheet and emergency numbers for volunteers, first aid kits. In addition, a training session on stile construction and repair is being arranged with Stephen Leonard (North Wilts Rights of Way Officer) and LM volunteers. This will ensure that future repairs and replacements will conform to relevant national standards.

Contact has also now been established with the volunteer coordinator in Great Bedwyn, where a group has been established for some years. Our own co-ordinator proposes to liaise with them to selectively introduce any best practice elements that may be appropriate as time progresses.

Amelia and all the volunteers deserve our thanks for the time and hard work they have put in to get this project up and running.

Recommendations from the Working Party

The working party would like the Council to consider the following:

1/ in order to show to parishioners the good work currently being done by the volunteer group, could a relevant page be created on the Lydiard Millicent website? This could show work already done, work planned and also ask parishioners to let us know of any problems needing attention.

2/ In order to approach the relevant landowner to request permission to carry out significant work, volunteers need to know who the landowners are. I don't believe that we are currently able to supply that information, but can we find out?

Such a record would also be useful when and if we get to the stage of planning installation of kissing gates, to facilitate access for less nimble parishioners.

Councilor Cole

Footpaths Working Party