



Bothenhampton & Walditch

Parish Council since 1886

Mr G Nicholson
Greenspace Manager
Dorset Council
South Walks House, South Walks Road
Dorchester,
Dorset DT1 1UZ

8th October 2019

Dear Mr Nicholson

RE: WALDITCH – BRIDLEWAYS W5/9 AND W5/10 AT BONSCOMBE / FOOTPATHS IN JELLYFIELDS NATURE RESERVE / DRAINAGE ISSUE AT BRIDLEWAY, OLD CHURCH ROAD, BOTHENHAMPTON

The parish council has several outstanding issues which we have tried to resolve over the last few months, we want to bring these to your attention in the hope that your intervention may result in their satisfactory resolution.

There are two issues that have been outstanding since early summer (Bridleways W5/9 and W5/10 at Bonscombe and Jellyfields Nature Reserve. On both of these matters the council has emailed Mr R Goff. Mr Goff did respond to one of our communications on the 4th July 2019 however we have heard nothing since despite emailing him.

JELLYFIELDS NATURE RESERVE

The problem is that the state of the footpaths in Jellyfields has been raised by several residents at Parish Council meetings. There has been growing discontent about the state of the Reserve for some years. Residents are particularly concerned that the circular path between the lower and upper gates has been narrowed by the growth of vegetation so that wheelchairs and buggies can no longer pass, one bench has been vandalised, and the wildflower meadow has been taken over by docks, etc. Rangers used to lead working-parties of volunteers.

In our letter of March 2019, we asked if Dorset Council could create a gravelled footpath from the middle entrance to Jellyfields Nature Reserve to the top entrance – to the same standard as the lower footpath – this request has, to date, not been answered.

BRIDLEWAYS W5/9 AND W5/10 AT BONSCOMBE

In our letter of March 2019 we also asked if Dorset Council could redefine the footpath from Bonscombe Lane, and the ancillary bridleway; channelling the stream that has eroded the path; and building stone steps, to provide easier access from the road for about 50m along the bridleway. (Dorset Explorer ref: footpath W15/9 and W15/10 Grove Lane x348709.676 y93070.488, DT6 4LQ) – this request has, to date, not been answered.

There are also issues generally with the Bridleways and again, we have a long history of complaints about these from members of the public, in some places the bridleways are impassable.

DRAINAGE ISSUE AT BRIDLEWAY, OLD CHURCH ROAD, BOTHENHAMPTON

In early September we were contacted by residents living at the bottom of the bridleway in Old Church Road, Bothenhampton (Mr and Mrs Fitzjohn), who have concerns regarding the flood risk to their house. There is a drain at the end of the bridleway (outside their house) which, during period of heavy rainfall the volume of water is so great it washes down debris that covers the drain and it is persistently blocked. Mr & Mrs Fitzjohn believe that the water flowing down the bridleway is exacerbated due to a pipe taking excess water from the farm and discharging it onto the bridleway.

We immediately contacted Dorset Council about this issue (Mr B Turner), who responded straight away with a very helpful response stating that the section of Old Church Road and Green Lane are not on the 'D' class network and that it appears they are classified as footpaths. Mr Turner helpfully passed the enquiry over to his colleague in the Countryside Team, Mr R Goff, and, because there is a strong land drainage element, Mr Turner also copied in Becky from Land Drainage. Unfortunately, neither the Parish Council nor Mr & Mrs Fitzjohn have heard from either Mr Goff or Becky regarding this, now urgent issue.

I hope that you are able to help us to deal with these issues, the latter of which is the most urgent and is affecting the property located at the bottom of the bridleway.

Yours sincerely,



A J Basker
Chairman
Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council

pp: Cllrs Williams, Clayton, Bolwell