



YOUR COUNTRYSIDE:

NOW OPEN!

August 2009

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FEATURING WEST SUSSEX!

(BUT EAST SUSSEX INFORMATION TOO!)

Here is the latest issue of "Now Open"- a new initiative from the Sussex Area of the Ramblers. Its a bumper issue because your editor has injured his leg and can't go walking, so has extra time on his hands. Its also a little early because I am on holiday next week. The aim of this newsletter is to publicise footpaths and other places to walk in Sussex that have recently become open and easy to use and to encourage walk leaders and other walkers to plan walks using these ways.

The newsletter is now being received by nearly a hundred people active in the Ramblers in Sussex, as well as people and groups outside the Ramblers who are interested in receiving it. They include councillors, walking groups, parish councils and others. If you have received it via someone else and you want to get the newsletter in future then you need to email me at chris.smith@hbhelp.co.uk. (If you want to be taken off of the list then email me at the same address). Your email will not be given to anyone else or used for any other purpose. Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

A special welcome to West Sussex Parish Councils that have signed up for the newsletter. This is an updated version of the newsletter I sent you inviting you to sign up.

NEWLY OPEN

Please send details of any path or other walking area in Sussex that has recently been opened up. There are no clear rules about what "recently" means. Tell us about any path that has been closed for some time and now reopened and that walkers from outside the immediate area might not know about. Don't forget brand new paths and access areas too! Please give grid references and a general idea of where the path is. It is helpful if you can give some idea of good walks that can be done using the path.

Maresfield /Uckfield

Some four years ago as part of a strategy to promote walking the Maresfield Parish Conservation Group took on the task of improving the existing public footpath from St Bartholomew's Church in Maresfield (TQ135 467240 to Uckfield Parish Church 472215. The aim was to restore it not just as a recreational footpath but as an attractive and useful walking route between two centres.

The ESCC RoW group, High Weald Walkers, and other Ramblers have been involved and the much improved footpath is now open for use.

East Sussex crop issues dealt with

Perhaps because of Ramblers press releases and articles in Now Open, or perhaps because of the time of year, resolving high profile and persistent cropping problems are a major focus for the Team at the moment. The team reports:

“Public Footpath Etchingam 11a (TQ682/275)

Notice was served on the landowner of this path as a crop of cereal had not been cleared. Following notice that ESCC would carry out the work itself and reclaim costs, the landowner quickly cleared the crops as requested. The footpath is now again available for public use.

Public Footpath Arlington 13b, 25, 28 and Bridleway 24 (Near TQ540/081)

These routes have suffered from persistent cropping over the years. As an ESCC notice was ignored, our



maintenance team has recently cleared the paths to remove any obstructing crops. The cost of this work will be reclaimed from the landowner. (Before and after photos are above.)”

Enforcement work was previously done at Broad Farm, Hellingly. Lets hope that Mays Farm, Selmeaton gets similar treatment. Here the Vanguard Way and other paths have been cropped over for years.

Other East Sussex gains

The ROW team say:

“Arlington FP19 – (TQ576/093)

Path was reported by a RA rep due to a broken bridge & stile, the legal line was unclear and potentially the path was obstructed by a fence. Through ESCC liaison with the landowner there is now: a one replaced bridge, a new stile, the old fence that was obstructing the path has been removed and overgrowth and a fallen tree branch cleared. The landowner has also agreed to a minor diversion of the official path line which meant that the path can run through an adjacent gate – meaning that ESCC did not have to replace a 6m bridge.

Forest Row FP13b (TQ420/377) - new stiles

Following serving of a notice, a landowner on this route replaced three poorly constructed stiles. (Photo below.)



Barcombe FP24 – a very well used 19 metre bridge has just been refurbished by the council's Capital Bridge Team (TQ439/152.) .

PERMISSIVE PATHS

Let us know of any permissive paths you think could do with some publicity. Here is one on my doorstep.

This is a two mile stroll, especially suitable for a summer evening when you can watch the sun go down over the Ouse, starting just north-east of Lewes from the main Uckfield/Ringmer road at Earwig corner, going down to the Ouse and along the banks, returning to Lower Stoneham Farm. This is a permissive path opened under the countryside stewardship scheme. Details [here](#) You need to use this walk by the end of September 2010 because the money runs out and the walk will probably be closed. The walk starts at a gate which guards a little lane. Follow the map round to emerge at the entrance to Lower Stoneham farm, from where you can walk back into town or get the 29 bus. Or simply retrace your steps when the path leaves the Ouse, as the final part is not so interesting.

Other countryside stewardship walks can be found at <http://cwr.naturalengland.org.uk/>

WALKS ON NEWLY OPENED ROUTES

Are you organising a walk that takes in a recently opened path? Send us the details. Please say what new path(s) you are using, a brief description of the walk, the time date and meeting point, mileage and how to contact the organiser if people want to come. We also welcome short accounts of walks you have done. Bear in mind that the newsletter goes out at the beginning of each month with a deadline of 24th of the month before.

Maresfield to Uckfield 13th September

This walk on the newly improved path (see above) is being organised by the Friends of Maresfield Church. It will start at 2.30pm on 13th September 2009 . It will go from St Bartholomew's Church at the centre of Maresfield to Uckfield Parish Church and then return along the same path. The walk is about 2 miles in each direction. Parking is available in the car park opposite the church and at other points in the village.

STILL CLOSED

Sadly, there are still a lot of paths that have been closed for some time.

West Sussex

Itchingfield

Dave Bangs reports on a walk in June "At TQ 126 257 we came to a hedge and a stile through it. This is loosely marked as Courtlands Farm on the Sheet 134 Explorer Map, but is, in fact, the boundary to Carvers Farm, to the south - evidently a smallholding with livery paddocks. The stile has a notice screwed to it saying WARNING DOGS AND HORSES LOOSE. We hesitated, with some nervousness, but crossed the stile. Immediately four young Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs (as I'm pretty sure they were) started bounding towards us from across the far side of the paddock, barking loudly as they came. There was stabling on the far side of the paddock. The dogs snapped repeatedly at us and lunged repeatedly inches from us, barking loudly. Jane's rucksack was bitten on her back.

I shouted at a teenage girl across at the stables (who had been with the dogs) to call them off, and after a short space of time she did call them. They only returned to her after much calling from her. We were both very shaken and frightened - and very angry - at the incident."

The issue has been reported to West Sussex Council, but from the signs this situation has been going on for some time. Do you know any of the history?

Fittleworth

Erica Bentley writes about a path by attractive Fittleworth Wood " The last section of the path between Springs Farm (TQ025213) to Brinkwells (TQ022211) is lethally overgrown, mainly brambles and nettles. I

am covered in scratches as in the end I decided I'd just have to go for it. Only a short distance, about the last 20 metres." Sounds like this one has been going on for some time too.

Unavailable paths in West Sussex

You can see a list of these for West Sussex at: www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/leisure-and-tourism/public-rights-of-way/4--unavailable-routes On this page there are links to paths that are temporarily closed and those that are long term unavailable for other reasons.

Obviously there will always be problems and not every single path will be open and easy to use all the time. There will be some paths that do not justify the time and effort that would be necessary to get them open. Below we publish the current list put out by West Sussex County Council of paths that are not available for use. You still have a legal right to use these paths but you will find it very difficult or impossible to carry out this right. Some of the paths have been on the list for a very long time. Do you think the council is being reasonable or should action be taken? Except where the path is obstructed by buildings it would be possible to serve a statutory notice on the council if they have unreasonably failed to act, but it would be wrong to do so if they are acting reasonably.

Aldwick

Footpath number **140/2** Obstructed from Trinity Way (SZ 916 995) to Cambridge Drive (SZ916995) Due to the legal line having been built over.

Billingshurst

Footpath number **1321** Obstructed from Marringdean Road (TQ 089 241) to west of Kingslea Farm (TQ 087 242) Due to the legal line being obstructed by caravans, vehicles and outbuildings

Footpath number **1466/2** Obstructed from West Chiltington Lane (TQ 115 272) to west of The Wedges (TQ 115 281) Due to obstructing fences and a missing bridge

Footpath number **1913** Obstructed from the northern side of the railway (TQ 117 258) to Pratts Farm (TQ 118 257) Due to a missing railway crossing point

Footpath number **1919** Obstructed along Wooddale Lane TQ 099 262 to TQ 100 263
Due to obstructing fences and an anomaly at Lower Eastlands

Footpath number **1920** Obstructed from the New Road (TQ 107 268) to the southern end of Priors Farm (TQ 104 265) Due to obstructing wall, building and fences

Footpath number **1925** Obstructed from the southern end of the railway (TQ 105 252) to Kettlesbridge Farm (TQ 106 245) Due to the legal line being unclear through a recent development

Footpath number **1925/1** Obstructed from West Chiltington Lane (TQ 109 249) to Palmers Farm (TQ 108 249)
Due to the legal line being unclear on the ground. Needs 1925 to be opened.

Bolney

Footpath number **17Bo** Obstructed from Stairbridge Lane (TQ 273 208) to Jobs Lane (TQ 278 204) Due to the legal line being obstructed by a recent development

Burpham

Footpath number **2222** Obstructed from the cricket ground (TQ 039 088) to Jacobs Ladder (TQ 039 085)
Due to obstructing fences

Footpath number **2230** Obstructed from Burpham Road (TQ 043 084) to the southern end of Splash Farm (TQ 041 084) Due to obstructing fences

Colgate

Bridleway number **1590** Obstructed from the A264 (TQ 212 337) to the southern edge of the railway (TQ 210 338) Due to a missing bridge and surfacing prone to flooding

Footpath number **1698/1** Obstructed from junction with footpath number 2822/1 (TQ 219 312) to junction with footpath number 2814 (TQ 220 312) Due to obstructing hedges

Crawley

Footpath number **350/1Sy** Obstructed from Poles Lane (TQ 264 392) to south of 'Grove Cottage' (TQ 264 390)

Ferring

Footpath number **2136** Obstructed from the A280 (TQ 088 053) to Pot Lane (TQ 092 049) Due to obstructing fence and buildings

Ford

Footpath number **200/4** Obstructed from Ford Road (SU 000 036) to south of 'Conifers' (SU 998 035) This path is a continuation of a previously extinguished path and runs to the middle of a field

Fulking

Bridleway number **11F**

Obstructed from Unitary Authority Boundary (TQ 249 101) to the Parish Boundary (TQ 252 105) Due to obstructing fences

Henfield & Steyning

Footpath number **2563** Obstructed from junction with bridleway number 3511 (TQ 195 132) to TQ 205 144 Due to obstructing fence and missing bridge

Heyshott

Footpath number **970** Obstructed from Heyshott Green (SU 897 187) to Hoyle (SU 906 186) Due to missing bridges, felled trees and uncertainty as to the legal line on the ground

Horsham

Footpath number **3690** Obstructed from north of St Leonards Park (TQ 201 311) south to junction with bridleway 1697/2 (TQ 200 307) Due to the legal line running through a private garden

Lindfield Rural

Footpath number **35LR** Obstructed from junction with public footpath 29CU (TQ 350 237) to Lyoth Lane (TQ 350 238)

Milland

Bridleway number **1181** Obstructed at the northern end (SU 823 296) Due to obstruction of the route

Patching

Footpath number **2180** Obstructed in Barnstake Copse from TQ 080 070 to TQ 076 075 Due to obstruction by standing trees

Footpath number **2211/1** Obstructed in Michelgrove Park from TQ 075 081 to TQ 079 080 Due to obstruction by standing trees

Footpath number **2260/1** Obstructed from Myrtle Grove Farm (TQ 089 086) to north of Michelgrove Cottages (TQ 085 089) Due to obstructing fences

Plaistow

Footpath number **3236** Obstructed between junctions with bridleway number 635 (TQ 024 316) and bridleway number 809 (TQ 028 319) Due to obstruction by fences and hedges

Footpath number **629** Obstructed between junctions with footpath number 638/1 (TQ 025 292) and bridleway number 2850 (TQ 029 291) Due to obstruction by hedge and missing bridge

Poynings

Footpath number **22B** Obstructed from the Parish boundary (TQ 252 105) to the south-west of Devils Dyke (TQ 054 189) Due to obstructing fences

Pulborough

Footpath number **2331** Obstructed from New Place Road (TQ 053 190) to north of Spinney North (TQ 054 189)

Shipleigh

Footpath number **1905/1** Obstructed from Emms Lane (TQ 129 259) to Trout Lane (TQ 131 258) Due to the legal line being blocked by buildings

Footpath number **1948** Obstructed from Coolham Road (TQ 128 248) to junction with footpath 2801 (TQ 131 246) Due to obstructing fence and buildings

Footpath number **1967** Obstructed from Saucelands Lane (TQ 121 215) to the eastern end of Juniper Farm (TQ 128 215) Due to obstructing buildings and a pond through which the legal line runs

Footpath number **2801** Obstructed from Coolham Road (TQ 127 246) to junction with footpath 1907 (TQ 122 247) Due to kennels obstructing the legal line

Slinfold

Footpath number **1369** Obstructed from public bridleway number 3569 (TQ 106 313) to Stane Street (TQ 110 314) Due to the legal line of the route being blocked on the ground

South Stoke

Footpath number **2266/1** Obstructed from Swanbourne Lake (TQ 018 079) to the Black Rabbit pub (TQ 024 084) Due to path being blocked by fallen trees

Stedham

Footpath number **916** Obstructed from School Lane (SU 856 221) to Iping Lane (SU 853 222) Due to a missing bridge

Steyning & Henfield

Footpath number **2563** Obstructed from junction with bridleway number 3511 (TQ 195 132) to TQ 205 144 Due to obstructing fence and missing bridge

Sutton

Bridleway number **413** Obstructed from Stane Street (SU 967 126) to southern end of West Wood (SU 951 126) Due to obstructing standing trees

West Grinstead

Footpath number **1847** From Hookshile Wood (TQ 174 191) to west of Furzevale Wood (TQ 180 194) Due to obstructing fences and a missing bridge

West Hoathly

Footpath number 3 Newcombe Farm Due to obstruction by fencelines

Westbourne

Footpath number **247** Obstructed from the northern side of the A27 (SU 774 071) to the southern side of the A27 (SU 774 070) Due to the legal line being crossed by the A27

Worth

Footpath number **41W** Obstructed from Snow Hill (TQ 343 398) to west of Prevetts (TQ 341 397)
Due to the legal line being obstructed by two domestic buildings

Footpath number **42W** Obstructed from Copthorne Road (TQ 346 398) to Lake View Road (TQ 351 397)
Due to obstruction by a car compound and domestic gardens

Footpath number **45bW**

Obstructed from north of Kenwards Farm (TQ 345 396) to Furnace Pond (TQ 348 392) Due to obstruction by eight domestic buildings.

Yapton

Footpath number **326** A section is obstructed to the west of Clays Farm between SU 976 039 and SU 977 038 e to obstruction by fences and a missing bridge

EAST SUSSEX

East Sussex currently only has available a list of paths temporarily obstructed for maintenance. This list is at

<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/rightsofway/pathclosures.htm>

This list is updated on a fortnightly basis. They hope to have a list of long term unavailable paths on their site in the autumn.

OTHER NEWS FROM EAST SUSSEX

East Sussex Rights of Way team report the following developments

Enforcement work:

Since the start of July, the Rights of Way Team now has a dedicated Enforcement Officer to help keep public footpaths, bridleways and byways open and easy to use. Making sure that landowners carry out their duties is one of the Rights of Way Team's main priorities and, since the appointment of the Enforcement Officer in June, the number of legal notices served by the Team has doubled. The majority of these notices will run out in August – meaning that ESCC will be able to carry out enforcement work at the cost of landowners if necessary.

Network Survey:

The 'walking' phase of the Rights of Way network survey, which has been running since autumn 2008, is now complete. Work to develop improved priority, planning, work tracking and reporting systems has now started. These systems will be used to help the RoW Team work more responsively and efficiently.

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Please let us know of any paths that have been unavailable for at least a year which are not on these lists. Please let us know the grid reference of the problem(s), what the problem is and the footpath number if you know it.

OTHER NEWS

PATH NUMBERS AND GRID REFERENCES

In this newsletter paths are identified by grid references. In some cases path numbers are used. There is no easy way to find out the path number in East Sussex but in West Sussex you can find a map of paths with numbers at www.westsussex.gov.uk/imap . The map can also provide a quick way of checking grid references as if you put the cursor over the spot you want the grid reference appears in the bottom left corner.

COULD YOU BE (MORE) ACTIVE IN THE RAMBLERS?

Throughout Sussex Ramblers volunteers are active, checking paths, reporting problems, lobbying for more access, organising walks and putting out information like this. We always need more members and, in the current financial situation your support is particularly valuable. If you are not yet a member why not join now? It's easy. [Click here](#) for further information. Walking groups can affiliate to the Ramblers.

If you are already a member but are not yet active could you do something practical? Sussex area is always looking for people to help by checking paths, lobbying for open access, leading walks, helping with publicity, monitoring the press, to name just a few things. If you are interested email chris.smith@hbhelp.co.uk, saying what you might be interested in and I will point you in the right direction.

Reporting Path Problems

Footpath problems can be reported to West Sussex County Council [here](#) and to East Sussex County Council [here](#) . If you know that the problem is inside the South Downs area of outstanding national beauty(AONB) it may be quicker to report the problem to the South Downs Board [here](#) . The board will also deal with problems over problems with access areas on the downs.

This information was compiled from usually reliable sources, but mistakes get made and things do change. Please let us know about any mistakes or changes.

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Ramblers - at the heart of walking

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Find your local Ramblers group [here](#)