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NEWLY OPEN

East Sussex News- provided by ESCC rights of way team

Popular Plumpton Footpath Reopened – TQ569/113

A well-used Public Footpath in Plumpton, which had been closed for over a year due to dangerous erosion caused by a stream, has now been reopened to the public following work by the Rights of Way Team.

Around 900 sandbags were used to shore-up the eroding section of Plumpton Footpath 13a, which runs from East View Fields and links to several other popular walks in the area. This work was carried out by the Capital Team Rangers who also installed two 6-metre boardwalks and cleared heavy overgrowth to make the path safe and easy for public use.

Summer Clearance of Public Rights of Way

Summer vegetation growth makes this one of the busiest times of year for the Rights of Way Rangers. Around 80km of footpaths, bridleways and byways are cleared each year, and most of this work takes place in the months of June, July and August when brambles and nettles are growing at their fastest, while the number of people out walking, cycling and riding is at its highest. The work is a mixture of programmed clearance on paths which regularly grow over, and reactive work in response to complaints from members of the public. A mini-tractor and flail is used where there is enough width, but many paths have to be cleared using hand tools. Parish Rights of Way Volunteers also help out in some parts of the County.

Access improvements on circular walks in Lewes District

The Lewes Area Rights of Way Maintenance Team has been busy improving accessibility by replacing stiles with gates on the following routes:

Access Improvements around Barcombe Mills

<http://maps.eastsussex.gov.uk/pathstoprosperity/WalkDetail.aspx?walkid=51>

European funding has been used to create access improvements on and around the Barcombe Circular Walk

To make access easier an area of 25 square meters of hard-standing was created in the Barcombe Mills car-park which is prone to flooding in wet weather. Twenty-five metres of footpath surfacing from the car park was carried out and several restrictive gradients were addressed. A new easy open gate was installed to allow access into the site with an easy access ramp and handrail. The existing squeeze stile and steps were also replaced.



Ripe Walk:

<http://maps.eastsussex.gov.uk/pathstoprosperity/WalkDetail.aspx?walkid=83>

This is now a stile free route.

Wivelsfield Green Walk:

<http://maps.eastsussex.gov.uk/pathstoprosperity/WalkDetail.aspx?walkid=67>

The area around Ote Hall has recently had 8 stiles replaced with gates.

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Editor's comment. The improvements around Barcombe Mills contrast with the uproar that has occurred in the area when a landowner fenced a footpath through a field next to the river. The story made front page news in the local newspaper. The landowner was legally in the right, but people had become very used to picnicking and playing in the field and using it as defacto access land. As ramblers we tend to be interested in footpaths, but other members of the public are often more interested in open access. Perhaps we need to do more work highlighting the precarious nature of a lot of access, which in many areas is not supported by any legal rights and encouraging people to use the rights we do have.

PERMISSIVE PATHS

Let us know of any permissive paths you think could do with some publicity..

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 25th of the month before.

STILL CLOSED

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

WEST SUSSEX

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.

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 soon.

OTHER THINGS

POLEGATE PROPOSALS

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. Otherwise visit www.streetmap.co.uk and type in the grid reference you want to locate prefixed by TQ for most of Sussex or SU for western West Sussex. You will need to go to zoom level 3 or 4 in the zoom control on the right hand side.

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. For further information. Visit <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/membership/about/joinand-share-the-joy.htm> 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 me at 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 at <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/prowfeedback>

and to East Sussex County Council at

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus/emailus/email.aspx?n=Rights+of+Way&e=rightsofway&d=eastsussex.gov.uk>

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 Joint Committee

<http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/rte.asp?id=158>

The committee will also deal with problems over problems with access areas on the downs.

If you know who your Ramblers local footpath secretary is please also report it to them.

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.

This newsletter is now being received by 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 Chris Smith at chris.smith@hbhelp.co.uk. (If you want to be taken off of the list then email the same address). Your email will not be given to anyone else or used for any other purpose. You can chose to have your mailing with pictures (which makes a bigger file) or without (which may be better if you have a dial up connection- you can still see the pictures on the web site above.)

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Ramblers - at the heart of walking

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Find your local Ramblers group at <http://www.ramblers.co.uk/groups/groupInfo.php?group=SX>