



YOUR COUNTRYSIDE:

NOW OPEN!

December 2009

See back issues and get more information about Sussex Ramblers at www.sussex-ramblers.org.uk

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 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. You can choose 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).

NEWLY OPEN

The changes in this section are all reported by East Sussex County Council Rights of way team (ESCC), who also provided the pictures. Well done them.

FP30b Arlington – TQ546/079

Previously obstructed by gates & hurdles that would not open. 3 new kissing gates to shortly be installed by the landowner following contact by ESCC.

FP2 Westham/FP16 Pevensey – TQ624/069

New 10m bridge installed by ESCC and muck heap cleared off the line of the path by the landowner.

Polegate FP9b - TQ582/063

Part of the Summerhill Paths to Prosperity Walk. Replaced 3 bridges (with handrails) and repaired 2 stiles.

Westham FP6b – TQ640/047

Following contact by ESCC, a locked gate on the 1066 route has been bypassed by the installation of a new adjacent kissing gate. This locked gate had been a longstanding obstruction which is now resolved.

Peasmarsh FP2 – TQ878/248

Stiles installed by landowner on request from ESCC to reopen public access

Ewhurst footpath 45 (TQ805215)

Following an approach by ESCC, stiles were removed from Ewhurst footpath 45 (TQ805215) and steps were provided to improve public access.

Brede FP27 and FP13 - TQ843/205 & TQ835/203

Footpath cleared through crops by landowner following contact by ESCC

Battle Bridleway 72 – TQ 776/147

Gate repaired and 2 gates removed by landowners on request.

Surface repairs to Burwash Bridleway 58b and 58c (TQ670/234) have been carried out by ESCC. (Before and after pictures below.)



Surface improvements have also been carried out to the following paths Salehurst Footpath 16 (TQ733/241) Brightling Bridleway 3 (TQ661/213) Salehurst Bridleway 50b (TQ746/228)

Burwash Footpath 16 – TQ674/253 –bridge replacement.

Salehurst Footpath 46 – TQ739/235 – ditch bridge replacement.

Playden and Beckley Route 'Paths to Prosperity' improvements

A total of 5 stiles have been removed from the Playden and Beckley 'Paths to Prosperity' routes and replaced with kissing gates. The 3 mile Playden Walk can now be enjoyed without need to negotiate any stiles and the Beckley improvements have provided a stile free section of path between the village and the popular Flatopers Wood.

More information on Paths to Prosperity circular walks is available here:

<http://frs.accesseastsussex.org/pathstoprosperity/>

PERMISSIVE PATHS

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

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.

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.

Dallington Debacles

Things are not going well in the East Sussex parish of Dallington. Here are some issues that have been going on for at least 3 and a half years and that concern Ramblers East Sussex area footpath secretary Malcolm McDonnell.

Footpath 8, between 662196 and 663197 the path is completely obstructed between hedges, between 662198 and 666199 it has been over cropped and not reinstated, at 664202 a bridge is rotten and partially collapsed

Footpath 11c at 662209 has a stile with sloping slippery steps and barbed wire on a top rail

Footpath 20, 663194-664195 is completely obstructed where it leaves footpath 21 and no indication of where it enters the field at 664194

Footpath 21 at 663194 has no sign where the path leaves the B2096 and an awful double stile festooned with barbed wire. In the picture above walkers are trying to navigate this without ripping themselves on the barbed wire along the top of the stile.



Malcolm has reported all this to ESCC who say that the maintenance issues will be dealt with in the next 3 months and then the enforcement issues will be dealt with.

Dallington is an example of what can happen where the Ramblers Association does not have a local footpath secretary and the local council appears inactive on footpath issues. If you would like to be a footpath secretary for Dallington or the other parishes where we have vacancies get in touch and I will forward your details to the appropriate area footpath secretary.

In nearby Burwash on footpath 14a at 664202 there is a rotten and partially collapsed plank bridge

OTHER NEWS- Who does path maintenance in the national park?

Currently both East and West Sussex councils delegate maintenance of rights of way in the south downs area of natural beauty to the board administering the area. With the new national park both counties are apparently considering taking back responsibility for maintenance. In East Sussex, at least, this is likely to mean a considerable reduction in the standard of maintenance, as the county does not put enough money into rights of way work. Ramblers Sussex area council is calling for the new national park authority to have responsibility for rights of way in the park.

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. [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 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, like this stile at Dallington in East Sussex which is broken and has barbed wire across it, should always be reported to the council covering the area.

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](#)