

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

NEWLY OPEN

NEWS FROM WEST SUSSEX

West Sussex Rights of Way tell us:

“This time of year is generally quiet in preparation for the surfacing and bridge projects that will be delivered. The regular work of our inspection and maintenance cycle is ongoing and we continuously liaise with landowners to address issues that come to our attention, improving access wherever possible. The budget for delivering projects remains largely unchanged this year. We are currently in the process of receiving quotes and will be looking to deliver a programme of works over the summer months.”

Path back on legal line



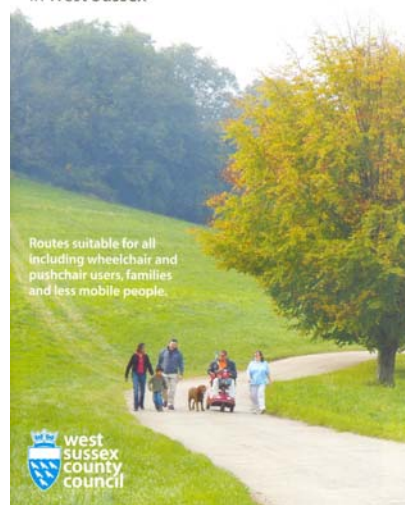
Working with two adjacent landowners, the northern section of public footpath number 38dEG in East Grinstead has recently been reopened on its definitive line. This means that it now passes through a section of woodland before heading south across an open field towards another woodland.

Access to the countryside

West Sussex County Council has recently published its ‘Easy Countryside Trails in West Sussex’ booklet, which replaces the previously named ‘Wheelchair Walks’ leaflet. Fourteen routes are described of varying lengths and including information about car parking and terrain. The booklet will shortly be available on-line.

In 2009-2010 we replaced 124 stiles with a gap, gate or kissing gate. This was achieved through close cooperation between us and landowners. Improving the accessibility of the public rights of way network in West Sussex is an ongoing project. Local land management, especially where stock is involved and public safety need to be taken into account, and sometimes structures are retained to ward off anti-social/illegal behaviour. “

Easy Countryside Trails in West Sussex



Routes suitable for all
including wheelchair and
pushchair users, families
and less mobile people.

BILLINGSHURST ADVENTURES

George Tribe reports the following excitements from Billingshurst on Billingshurst footpath 1466/2
“This right of way, leading off Bashurst Hill, Itchingfield and passing through Long Copse, was lost to general public use in 1996, being obstructed by 2 different landowners. Local residents regularly urged the council to clear the obstructions but nothing was done until February 2008 when restoration was achieved at the Eastlands end. Shortly afterwards a new footbridge was destroyed and not restored until late 2009 when the whole route was re-opened. Within a week another bridge was destroyed and strenuous efforts were made to secure police involvement to discover who was responsible, all to no avail, The bridge was replaced within a few days and remains intact. Nevertheless negotiations at the highest level are taking place to ensure a rapid police response in the event of further acts of criminal damage. In the meantime the footpath is seeing very heavy use.”

OUR ACCESSIBLE RAMBLES GUIDE.

Huge numbers of people like to get away from the roads and out into the countryside in the beautiful Sussex countryside. But if you are not as fit and agile as you would like to be, or you have children in a pram, there was very little information available about where you could go- even though statistics show that the average person will spend 20% of their life with a health condition or disability that significantly affects their life- and many people have children! Yet there is little information about where you can go

The Ramblers guide sets out to change all that. It sets out to list as many country rambles in Sussex as possible that are accessible and over 4 km long. No rambles have stiles or really rough ground and as much detail as possible is given about surfaces, gates, height gain, toilets and refreshments and how to get there. Rambles in the new South Downs National Park figure prominently.

The guide can be found on the web site of Sussex Ramblers at <http://www.sussex-ramblers.org.uk/> Organisations and individuals are encouraged to print off copies to give to individuals who do not have internet access.

We would like you to:

- Put in links on any web site you have to the guide. The link should be to www.sussex-ramblers.org.uk.
- Download copies of the guide to give to people who do not have internet access
- Publicise the Rambles. You can use the material in the guide providing that it is not for profit and you give us a credit and a link.
- Send in details of rambles and suggestions for rambles which fit our criteria.
- Tell people who might be interested about the guide.

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 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.

WE PLOUGH THE FIELD AND SCATTER THE RAMBLERS FROM THE LAND.



When April with its showers sweet the drought of March has pierced to the root then landowners long to plough up paths across fields, without reinstating them afterwards as the law requires. (Chaucer)

Even well used paths are not immune. The Wealdway was ploughed out in April between TQ 516192 (B 2192) and TQ 508195, reports Godfrey Howard

Do report any ploughed over paths you come across. On our web site we have a list of paths that are regularly ploughed over. <http://www.sussex-ramblers.org.uk/footpaths.php>

We encourage you not only to report problems but also to go and walk out these paths so that others who come after you can find the way. If you are in a group walk in single file so that the route is clearer.

The picture on the left shows what it will look like later!

OTHER THINGS

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

<https://secure.westsussex.gov.uk/formbuilder/showForm.do?title=Public%20Rights%20of%20Way%20Feedback%20Form>

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 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.)

Published by the Sussex Area of the Ramblers

Ramblers - at the heart of walking

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Visit our websites at www.sussex-ramblers.org.uk and www.ramblers.org.uk

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