

FP Officers Report July 24

I remain frustrated at not receiving word from HC in respect of our bid for PROW improvement funding. You will recall that I bid for a substantial amount, based on the poor state of many of our stiles and gates in June, having waited for information on how to do so since the announcement of the scheme commencing in April. Having met the 1st of July deadline we can only hope the funding will materialize soon.

The strimmer I was authorised to purchase at our last meeting was delivered within a couple of days. While I should reiterate that I can only attack those footpaths closer to the village centre as and when I have the time, I have made considerable progress since then. Initially it was arduous going given that in most places the growth of nettles and brambles were extensive. I have now cleared the main paths a couple of times, and path KL28, Obviously, subsequent strims have been easier than the first.

My aim in obtaining the strimmer was that these more used paths could be done ‘little and often’, which is far easier to accomplish and better for walkers, rather than our hard-pressed contractor being tasked to do the work intermittently after they have become impassable; on this basis the strimmer has already proven to be very cost effective. I still intend to employ our contractor for footpath works as and when needed.

The circular walk I organised this month was joined by a few new walkers and was about 4.5 miles across the fields to Lucton and back. In addition to the dodgy stiles our main obstacle was a very friendly horse who wanted to keep us in his field!

Last meeting I mentioned that I intended to install a small leaflet holder in the telephone box, along with the books, which I would fill with maps of our footpaths for those who wish to take one. The leaflet holder and initial stock of 35 copies of our PROW map, both provided at my own expense, has proven to be a success and I have had to refill already. I printed the maps at home and, while readable, were of fairly poor quality and contained no additional information such as ‘Provided by the Parish Council’, the FPO contact details or notes on the Countryside Code for example.

To that end I approached a number of different printers for a price to produce an initial run of 100 tri-fold copies. Quotes ranged from £140 to iro £200. Two printers would only do a minimum of 250 copies, one for £190 which included a ‘design fee’, and the other for £120 with two hours free design time included but a cost would be incurred should it take longer to produce than expected.

On that basis I request the Parish Council authorise expenditure of £160, (£120 to print with an additional £40 available should a design fee be required on top of the two free hours) for the production of 250 PROW tri-fold leaflets for public use.