

The Waymarker

June 2017

Dover & Thanet Rights of Way Society

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We had a very interesting speaker at our AGM in March, Andy Roberts who was a senior Coast Guard. He spoke about his time in the service and also about the capsizing of the Herald of Free enterprise which was very moving. We enjoyed an American supper, many thanks to Kosrow who brought along some super Pizza.

We will be having a summer visit to Salmestone Grange in Margate on 11 July.

The White Cliffs Walking festival takes place on 24 to 30 August with many interesting walks such as Smugglers Walk, Forgotten Pits, or Deal Royal Marines Heritage Trail. Our walk on 27 August is a joint walk with the White Cliffs Walking Festival and I have been asked if possible if you could book in first www.whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk

Stella

Members are advised once again that the Society has joined the Walking Partnership, supported by Ramblers Worldwide Holidays. This partnership earns us money when any member who books a holiday with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays and quotes our Society's name. Contributions they give us are per person - £10 for UK Holidays, £20 short haul holidays and £30 on long haul holidays. Thank you to those members who have booked through Ramblers Holidays and have mentioned the Society's name.

May I also remind members that we are affiliated to HF Holidays. Our Society's membership number is OC030, and known as 'Dover and Thanet Club' in their records. HF Holidays provide our insurance free as the Society has 150 £1 shares in the firm. The shares as of 1st June 2016 were worth £160.08p.

VISIT TO SALMESTONE GRANGE.

Angela has kindly invited us to visit the grange for a tour, followed by a strawberry tea.

DATE: Tuesday 11th July TIME: 2 for 2.15pm

COST: £10 per person (subsidised by the club)

Not Included: Travel to and from Salmestone Grange, Nash Road, Margate, CT9 4BX

LOCAL RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS from Roger

General News from KCC

KCC's PROW Revenue budget for 17/18 has fortunately been set at approximately the same level as last year, and a reduction in the Capital Works Budget (gates, bridges etc.) amounts to only some 3%, so a vacant post can be filled. The Brabourne manager believes elected members appreciate that they took a big hit when austerity first came in, and generally "achieve a lot with a little". Figures for reported rights of way issues in the *whole* of 2016 are now available: in the eastern half of Kent 4,168 reports were received and 4,340 were resolved. Numbers seem to have levelled off in recent times, and for the first time the total number of issues outstanding has been reduced – to 3,580 in east Kent. Most reports concerned vegetation (889), followed by "enquiries" (776), fingerposts (605), obstructions (316), and crops (274).

Once again KCC confirm that it is always really important that we report any problems we find, online where possible, at <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/issues/default.aspx>. If you find this difficult, or need to make reports by another method, please do contact me for information or assistance.

Enforcement Action was also taken where necessary: in 2016 as a whole in east Kent, 50 enforcement notices were issued, involving 12 stiles, 9 re crops, 9 obstructions, 4 hedges, and 4 ploughing & disturbance issues. Direct Action (costly to the landowner) to solve the problem was taken in 5 of these cases.

Vegetation Clearance – volunteers always welcome

With the return of the growing season, the RA White Cliffs clearance group are gearing themselves for action after winter work in Swingfield – where they have also installed a number of new gates. If you would like to join them, and I'm sure you would be most welcome, please contact Averil Brice on 01303 892252. Meanwhile the KCC manager is planning a small extension of the core clearance contract, and accepts that two clearances are just not enough for many paths, so is seeking some tenders for three cuts.

Ramblers' Campaigns

The RA in Kent are working in conjunction with KCC to increase the number gates to replace awkward stiles (like the one at Bridge on 30 April!) They are also pressing ahead with Recording Lost Ways (see Dec 16 Waymarker) to ensure that all such routes are claimed as rights of way by the 2026 cut off. And although not (as yet) affecting our area, they are gearing up for a possible fight with Network Rail over the closure of foot crossings. RA members might like to consider signing the online petition.

Coastal Access Route (official title: “England Coast Path”)

Ramsgate to Whitstable – with the route now approved, establishment works are in progress and new access rights will be finalised in time for a formal opening in late 2017.

Capel Battery Access Land

Having assumed all was now well here, walkers were dismayed to find the eastern gate to the site blocked in the New Year.

This means it is no longer possible to walk *through* the site, as an alternative to the NDW. KCC have stated that action will be taken, especially as the previous Court judgement is likely still to be valid. (*Stop press: the obstruction was removed on 9 May*)

Path changes

(1) Confirmed :

Sholden EE388 - official confirmation of a 2012 agreement that this footpath in the village centre, between The Street

and Sholden New Road (by the cricket ground) be upgraded to a bridleway.

(2) Ongoing : -

Shepherdswell ER80/81 – an order was finally made (as members were advised) to divert the paths out of the large field to the SW of the Village Hall, near the village centre, and reroute them along the field edges by the Hall and adjoining Coxhill Road (behind a hedge). A number of objections were made, so the ball is now in KCC's court. If the order is not withdrawn, then hopefully some compromise can be found, but if not, we are looking at a Public Enquiry.