

The Waymarker

June 2018

Dover & Thanet Rights of Way Society

1,000th Walk – April 2018

DATROWS celebrated its 1,000th walk with a Ploughman's lunch at Chairman Stella's home. The Society was formed in 1974 to keep the footpaths and Rights of Way open by walking them regularly. We now have Leisurely and Standard walks on alternate Sundays, with some longer all-day walks. The numbering of walks began in 1980 and these big round numbers remain a good reason to celebrate.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As I am writing this it is a very cold Sunday morning, a big change from a couple of weeks ago when we thought Summer had arrived early.

At our AGM in March we had a very good speaker from the Lifeboat Institution who told us some very interesting facts, he also answered some question. All the present committee agreed to stand again next year, so a big thank you to them. We have a nice programme of walks, thanks to our walks Secretaries Jan and Steve. The short walks are popular, so if you haven't walked for a time and would like to join us for either a longer walk or a short walk please do. Don't forget the White Cliffs Walking festival 23rd to 29th August, there will be walks to suit everyone.

Best Wishes to you all

Stella
Chairperson

Treasurer's report

Members are advised once again that the Society belongs to 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. Good news, Ramblers World Wide Holidays have put £20 into our account for holidays taken by our members between 20th October last year and 4th April this year. 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. This entitles you to 10% off bar bills etc. at the HF Holiday hotels.

Mike Treasurer



LOCAL RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS from Roger

General News from KCC

At long last, the fault reporting website seems to have stabilised, and works 99% of the time. We are also promised a proper User's Guide, which may already be available by the time you read this. All the more reason then to let KCC know if things are not right. And the more reports made about an issue, the more chance it has of being dealt with, or targeted in the future. Use the website at <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/standardmap.aspx> although if you find this difficult, or need to make reports by another method, please do contact me for information or assistance.

Happily this year's budgets are little changed from 17/18, although a little less is available for capital items like gates and resurfacing. Certainly there is plenty to do, with 3,744 new issues reported in east Kent during 2017, although 3,897 items previously reported were resolved. Headlines in our area: direct action was taken on Nonington EE311 where the landowner had failed to rectify the problem of a new fence restricting the path's width. And on Temple Ewell restricted byway ER129, a brand-new surface was provided.

Vegetation Clearance – volunteers still welcome

With 720 reports of vegetation problems in east Kent last year, KCC are once again this summer funding a little extra clearance work based on such reports (which is why it is so important to make them!). Something like 10% of all East Kent routes are now cleared, receiving up to 3 cuts during the season. New contracts have also been signed for the next 5 years, giving greater continuity both to KCC and their contractors. Meanwhile the White Cliffs Ramblers team, having worked this winter near Wingham Wildlife Park

(EE167) and behind the Coach & Horses on the Deal-Sandwich road (EE365), is gearing up for the new growing season, and would welcome any newcomers. So if you feel like lending a hand, do please contact local co-ordinator Averil Brice on 01303 892252.

KCC Countryside Access Wardens – a few more needed

Last autumn's review of the Wardens appointed since 2009 led to a considerable reduction in numbers, leaving a much more active group of some 120 people. As a result, there are also some 35 vacancies, although these will essentially be in areas currently without much cover. So if you live, or are happy to work in, the areas shown on the map (see web link), and fancy the chance of some light but vital work maintaining footpaths, now is your chance to apply.

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/79821/Country-Access-Warden-volunteering-opportunity-map.pdf

English Coast Path

- *Ramsgate to Whitstable* – still no definite date for the opening of this section, but we are absolutely promised that it will be “this summer”.

New Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps

You may have seen them already, but early this year the OS published new editions of their 1: 25,000 maps for both Dover & Folkestone (sheet 138) and Canterbury & Thanet (sheet 150). Public rights of way information has been updated to mid-2017.

Path changes: ongoing issues

- *Etchinghill creation refused* – the proposal for a route from Teddars Leas Road, SW to the path following the Elham Valley railway track, was turned down by KCC due to lack of evidence.

- *Bridge Down rerouting rejected* – also turned down, a proposal to effectively join the footpath running up from Bridge with the one (now fenced) which drops down towards Bishopsbourne across the meadow, without the need to reach the road opposite Higham Park.

- *Shepherdswell ER80/81* – we oppose the proposal to divert these 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). Matters are coming to a head, and an Inspector will soon be appointed to decide the issue during the second half of this year.