

The Waymarker

December 2019

Dover & Thanet Rights of Way Society

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In August some of us attended a history walk with lots of characters in costume at St Peters Thanet followed by a cream tea. We all agreed we had an excellent time

We have all enjoyed a super summer with good weather but we are now thinking of cold wet winter walks.

On a sad note we attended a walk in September in memory of our friend Keith after which we raised a glass at the Smugglers to his memory.

Best Wishes to all

Stella

TREASURER'S REPORT

The time of the year has arrived when subscriptions are due [as from 1st January]. We are holding the subscription at £5 per family membership. I ask that members pay their subscriptions promptly so as to negate the need to send out reminders.

Postage is expensive, and members are asked when paying money to the Society by cheque if they could remember to make cheques out to DATROW Society, i.e no final 'S' on DATROW. With new technology where cheques are image cleared we have had problems when paying in a few cheques made out to The Dover & Thanet Rights of Way Society, where the machines have thrown the cheques out and refused payment because of the length of our Society's title. They call this progress!

Mike

WALKS SECRETARY'S REPORT

The second half of 2019 has seen the group go on some lovely walks. We have walked through beautiful countryside and along coastal paths, stopping to admire the best of east Kent villages. The leisure walks have proved to be very popular and we have increased (slightly) the number of Saturday walks which have been greatly enjoyed by all who have gone on them. Steve and Barbara designed a Saturday walk along parts of the Miners' Trail which was greatly enjoyed and thanks to both of them for their historical information and anecdotes about the local area.

The Keith Memorial Walk, led by Roger attracted 28 walkers, and more met us at the pub to raise a glass to Keith. The legacy left by experienced walks leaders such as Keith is so valuable, and Steve will be working towards saving this material online so that it can be enjoyed by walkers today and in the future.

Once again, many thanks to all our walk leaders and to all of you who turn out in all weathers to enjoy the countryside and good company.

Jan & Steve

LOCAL RIGHTS OF WAY NEWS

General News from KCC

Firstly, the perennial commercial to encourage everyone to make use of KCC's *fault reporting website*, which generally works well these days, and provides automatic updates. It can be found at

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/standardmap.aspx>

- *Cropping Campaign summer 2019*: 204 path sections were targeted in east Kent this year as they were considered "at risk" of not being reinstated through crops. Encouragingly, only

about 30% of these higher-risk paths had not been cleared, compared with approximately 40% last year and considerably more than that 10 years ago. 19 official notices were issued, instructing the farmer to take immediate action (which means that they did not respond initially), but no direct action by KCC to cut crops themselves was needed this year.

- *Budgets*: the news sounds really quite positive with more money to “keep abreast” of work backlogs. The KCC manager at Brabourne feels that PROW’s work is “appreciated” by members. -- *Signposts*: a move back to metal posts has “evolved” recently, as the wooden ones are more prone to damage and less viable or durable long-term.

Vegetation Clearance etc.

Once again there were initial problems with KCC’s contractors in our area in early summer, with almost 10% of paths missing their first cut. But the backlog was dealt with (albeit in part by sub-contractors) and the second cuts took place in September. KCC will however be seeking yet more new contractors for 2020.

Meanwhile the White Cliffs volunteers have been busy again in a number of locations, including several which featured in the August White Cliffs Walking Festival. Then in September they removed a fallen tree and other vegetation from Langdon footpath ER45 just ahead of my Keith Gawn memorial walk. Well done them!

England Coast Path

Still no more news. Things seem to have gone very quiet indeed on the route still to be opened in our territory - from Ramsgate to Whitstable and beyond - and it looks quite likely that the target of having the whole Kent coast open in 2020 will now be missed.

New “Kearsney Loop” path open – thanks to the Ramblers, Dover DC and the MOD

This new route opened, with due ceremony and publicity, on 2 July. Everyone involved in bringing about this hugely valuable off-road alternative to walking the Alkham Valley Road between Russell Gardens/Bushey Ruff and the routes onward to Ewell Minnis, and St Radigunds via Chilton Farm, is to be congratulated.

Path change news –

– (1) Confirmed orders

- *Sandgate HF69* – a new 350-yard footpath has now been created from Sandgate High Street to Undercliff, then on north past Bybrook House (east of the Martello tower) to Military Road. –

Hougham ER 218A – this bridleway at Poulton Farm (at the western end of Coombe Valley by the banger racing track) has now been diverted around farm buildings which have planning permission for conversion. This diversion establishes (at last) a definitive legal link with footpath ER189, giving ongoing connections to Alkham village and St Radigund's Abbey.

- (2) New diversions proposed

– *Kingsdown ER273* - A minor diversion of this footpath would move its definitive line from the field (usually occupied by horses) immediately south-west of the bend in Bayview Road (GR 375 475), and close to East Bottom Farm, to an adjacent enclosed path which has already been used by the public for many years.

– *Tilmanstone EE400/EE400A* - Two paths cross busy Barville Road N to S within 70 yards of each other (approx. GR 301 504). Proposal: that EE400 heading southwards should be diverted SE to meet parallel path EE401 and use *its* crossing point. This would render EE400A (S of Barville Road) redundant, since EE401A (a hard-track southward continuation of EE401) runs just to the east.

Roger