

Footpath Report AGM November 2024

There has been little in the way of consultation to respond to at the moment so I have been concentrating on the possibility of having the riverside path by the old Pound Stretchers reinstated and opened. After many representations to Taunton Town Council, Acorn Developments and the land owner, there is general agreement that the path did exist and it does need to be opened. I had an email today (11.11.24) from Acorn saying they have requested the landowners to open the path now and not wait until the planning permission is granted. Let's hope it works out. The path is clearly marked on the development plans as a 'path for improvement'.

Up Date, since writing this, the path is open!!!! Well done to all who have been involved. A good result. It will be closed temporarily when work eventually takes place on the Pound Stretchers site. But for now people can use it.

There is still a need for a modification application to Rights of Way and Taunton Town Council have agreed to ask County Hall to have the path added to the Definitive Map. I think there is enough evidence but the landowner has now opened the path. That's a much quicker option. I think with the opening of the path, that now makes this a 'permissive' which means it can be closed at any time if the landowner wishes. So we need to continue with the application.

I understand the wait is now 30 years for Rights of Way to deal with modifications unless it is deemed to be of 'high priority'.

As for the Bradford on Tone Bridge, I was told in February the consultation is ready to go out to the public. So far nothing has happened. I will now consult with Les Stather and see where we can go from here.

It would be an interesting exercise to find how many footbridges and bridleway bridges have issues in Taunton Deane and what the general waiting time is to have them repaired or replaced. Money is short in County Hall, but perhaps a re-distribution might help to get some of these long standing problems dealt with.

It does seem to me that the introduction of the Explore Somerset 'interactive map' has not improved communication with Rights of Way. Now we can fill in a concern/issue and, apart from an automatic acknowledgement, nothing much appears to happen! Unless you know something different!

Best wishes and happy walking,

Brenda

TDR Footpath Officer