

TREAD SOFTLY

NEWS AND VIEWS ABOUT PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Have you read 'Who Owns England' by Guy Shrubsole? He explores not only who owns the land around us, but the implications this has for politics, housing, food, biodiversity and the climate. It's an easy and thought-provoking read. If you have ideas, news or brief articles for this newsletter, email me cllr.fagg@longashtonparishcouncil.gov.uk



Festival Way - Toucan Crossing

North Somerset Council will install a Toucan Crossing at the B3128 crossing, starting on 1st February and taking about 6 weeks. A Toucan crossing allows pedestrians and cyclists to use it together (two can)!

Do you like the new name? It's from a W.B. Yeats' poem that sums up what walking means to me.

Part of the Festival Way will be closed throughout the works, with a diversion along along Glebe Road, Long Ashton Road, and through Ashton Court. People - and cows - can take the paths that head southeast from the churchyard and farm towards the footbridge over the A370, and people can walk the Festival Way to Yanley Lane.

Flooding

The brook at Seven Springs, on the bridleway from Cambridge Batch up to Belmont Hill, is in full spate, cascading over the stone footbridge.

The flooding that affects the Festival Way and the linking path to the churchyard has subsided. Wraxall Piece is still very heavy going.

Felling

Bristol University are felling trees affected by ash dieback along the paths in the Ironwood.

Festival Way – Black Ice

On Sunday 24th January at least six cyclists came off on black ice on Perry Road. Please take care in wintry conditions.

Access to Peel Park

If you push a buggy or use a wheelchair or mobility vehicle, you might have noticed that the Keeds Lane entrance to Peel Park is trickier than the Kings Croft entrance. It turns out that the Keeds Lane entrance is not only slightly narrower, but the path has been eroded, exposing the metal bars at the base of the entrance. The Parish Council, North Somerset Council and LACA are working together

to widen the Keeds Lane entrance and smooth the ground at both entrances. The work is scheduled for March.

Lambing

Ewes are heavily pregnant at the moment - if you have a dog, please keep it on the lead near farm animals. Some farmers are using electric fencing as temporary protection for their flocks.

Improving the local network

The Parish Council's Environment Committee agreed with the proposal to set up a short-life planning group to identify ways of improving the local paths over the next 1-2 years. If you have ideas and/or want to join the meeting, email me on cllr.fagg@longashtonparishcouncil.gov.uk by 8th February and I'll send you an invite to the Doodle poll.

If you see this after that date or have ideas but don't fancy a meeting, email me anyway. I'll include the draft plan in a future edition of Tread Softly, as part of a consultation before the final draft goes to the Environment Committee.

Staying Local in Lockdown

Here are three of my favourite places, all within the Parish boundary. If you don't know them, exploring is half the fun.

The Golf Course Woods on the eastern slopes beneath The Folly get overgrown in the summer, but are fun to explore in winter.

Take the PROW that runs uphill from Folleigh Lane, through the kissing gate, ignoring the path that forks left behind houses. Go steeply uphill, looking for a well-trodden path on the right, at a break in the slope.

This path rises steadily until it crosses a shoulder then descends first steeply then gradually, always taking the right hand fork, until you rejoin the PROW that crosses the Golf Course from Folleigh Lane, near the stile to the B3128 and across to Ashton Court.

This is Long Ashton Golf Course Land - treat it with care and watch out for badger holes.

The Limestone Outcrop in Ashton Hill Woods is a beautiful spot where old yew trees cling to the rocks, indicating that this is precious ancient woodland. The best approach is from Keeds Lane, walking uphill to take the very muddy footpath signposted on the left, following it up the hill (at about 2 o'clock) to enter the woods at a pair of kissing gates.

After a couple of yards take the path left which quickly opens on to a broad stony track. Go uphill and look, at the first bend, for a small, contouring path to the left. If it's the correct path you will stay more or less on the level, to the base of the outcrop - a very still place with a timeless quality. The path carries on through the pine trees with opportunities to go up or down hill as you wish. The woods are open access land, owned by Forestry England.

The Top of Toboggan Hill just a few metres off the Monarch's Way, a national footpath running from Worcester, through Long Ashton, to Shoreham in West Sussex, using the route King Charles II took when he fled England in 1651.

Pick up the route at the link between Perry Road and Paulman Gardens. The concrete track heads uphill, narrows to a muddy path, then at a kissing gate climbs steeply through saplings to another kissing gate slightly to the left.

The Monarch's Way heads sharp left along the hedge line, but follow the footprints to your right for a 2-3 metres and enjoy the views of Long Ashton, Bristol, Lansdown and Kelston Hill in the Cotswolds, and across to Dundry and Barrow Hill. The hill is Bristol University Land, part of Fenswood Farm, with no right of access so please treat it with respect.