

Community Access Warden report for the Heritage and Open Spaces Committee meeting on 27 June 2023



Many of the activities described in this report have drawn extensively on the support of colleagues within Dereham Walkers are Welcome. The following abbreviations are used:
 FP - Footpath; BR - Bridleway; RB - Restricted Byway; NCC - Norfolk County Council; BDC - Breckland District Council
 DTC - Dereham Town Council; PRoW - Public Rights of Way; WaW - Walkers are Welcome

Requested action

- 1 General report - led walks

Since January, WaW short walks have continued on the first Friday of every month and are planned to do so through 2023. In addition, to meet an emerging demand, WaW 'Easy Tuesday' walks have started - no more than 2 miles and on even surfaces. We have also held one walk linked to our Annual Public Meeting, where we invite all interested to contribute to our future plans. Our longer walk on 29 May was to the Badley Moor area, while by the time this report is considered, we will have had a group visit a Suffolk Walkers are Welcome town, Eye, for a walk there.

to note
- 2 Path issues
 - 1 **FP2** - No change and none expected without further pressure. The response from the Countryside Access Officer was raised through Norfolk Local Access Forum as it seemed to indicate a lack of intention to address the problem on the path, but there has been no further response from a higher level of management. I understand that a meeting was arranged between local councillors and NCC staff, but who was involved and what discussed and agreed is not known to me.

DTC to press NCC for action
 - 2 **RB3** - No change and none expected without further pressure. The response from the CAO was raised through Norfolk Local Access Forum as it seemed to indicate a lack of intention to address the problem on the path, but there has been no further response from a higher level of management. I understand that a meeting was arranged between local councillors and NCC staff, but who was involved and what discussed and agreed is not known to me.

DTC to press NCC for action
 - 3 **FP14** - Further clearance was undertaken, but progress halted by a tree fallen across the path and over the fence into the school grounds. This was reported on 19 April, but no indication has yet been given that it has been investigated, let alone addressed.

to note
 - 4 **FP14a** - I await progress on this by NCC to repair/replace the damaged boardwalk.

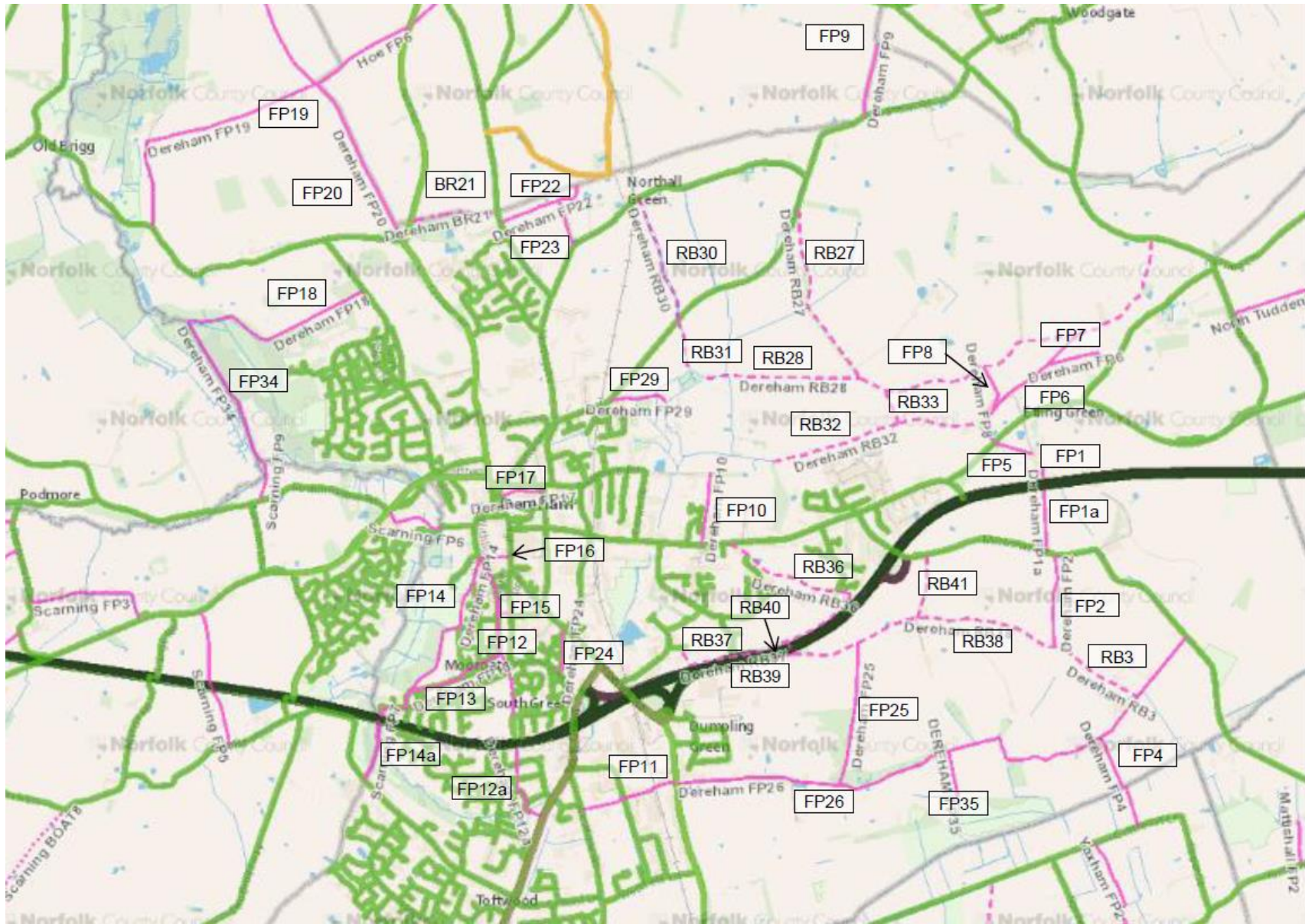
await NCC
 - 5 **FP19, 20** - These paths were upgraded and reopened as part of a Jubilee Trail (also being promoted for cycling). I attended a launch event at Gressenhall (for all 5 Jubilee Trails) on 11 May, when

to note

Requested action

leaflets about the Trails were shown, but I have been unable to obtain any since. I remain disappointed that the improvements do not extend along the whole length of the promoted route and that there are some errors on the leaflet and the boards erected in Dereham and at Gressenhall.

- 6 **RB32 (Shillings Lane)** - Is there any update on getting the surface of the remainder of this byway improved, and extended to crossing The Neatherd? *to note*
- 7 **RB36, 37** - The closure of these restricted byways was extended, but has now ended and the routes fully reopened. *to note*
- 8 **New path to be dedicated to link RB39 with Hurn Road** - No change since last meeting. At the Town Clerk's suggestion, I have submitted a request for enforcement action by Breckland District Council in regard to the lack of a means of ensuring maintenance of the path. The condition concerned is: "The pedestrian footpath to the eastern and southern perimeter of the site shall be permanently made available for all members of the public upon the development first being brought into use and retained as such in perpetuity. Reason for condition: In the interests of retaining pedestrian links within the vicinity. This condition is imposed in accordance with the requirements of Policy". My complaint is: *In practice, although a walking route is available outside the boundary fence of the property, it is unsatisfactory for two reasons: (1) there is no guarantee (such as dedication as a public right of way) of it being available 'in perpetuity'; (2) no one is identified as having responsibility for preventing vegetation growth from the adjacent property which partially obstructs the path, nor for improving the uneven nature of the surface of the path, which currently constitutes a tripping hazard for users.* *DTC to consider any action it can take*
- 3 Other work
- 3.1 Thanks to the provision of a £500 grant from Dereham Town Council, we plan to reprint a further 5000 copies of our booklet of short walks, which are also being revised to bring them up to date. *to note*
- 3.2 Thanks to the approval of use of Dereham Town Council's OS licence, we are updating the pack of 14 longer walks (online only). *to note*
- 3.3 I have arranged with the Library to present a public talk about Dereham's rights of way on 24 July. *to note*



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- 20, 21, 22
- 23, 30, 27
- 18
- 31, 28, 8, 7
- 34, 29
- 33, 6
- 32
- 17, 5, 1
- 10, 1a
- 16, 36
- 41
- 14, 15, 40, 2
- 12, 24, 37, 38
- 39, 3
- 13, 25
- 14a, 11, 4
- 12a, 26, 35