

Otterton Footpath and Rights of Way Report for Mid Winter 2019 / 2020

General

1. As can be expected during the winter, most of the footpaths and rights of way are rather muddy.
2. However, the state of some of these paths is worse than normal following the autumn maize harvest. The large plant used and the excessive run off have caused some paths to be impassable. I believe some residents have complained to the Environment Agency (incident hotline 0800 80 70 60) who are taking action. I doubt if this will run to insisting on reinstating the condition of the rights of way.
3. The easiest rights of way to walk at present are the coastal path which is relatively free of mud, and the loop Park Lane / Cullivers Cross/ Stantyway Road / Behind Hayes which is mainly tarmac (one wet area).

Major Issues

4. Footpaths and rights of way that are almost impassable without wellingtons and even then are slippery and not recommended
 - a. County Road 310 – Lea Lane is flooded on the northern arm, the rest of the road is very muddy. Run off from adjacent field.
 - b. Country Road 305 – Chockenhole Lane is flooded on the bend just south of the turn to Little Chockenhole Lane, I am not aware of this happening before. I have not been able to access it to find out why it is flooding.
 - c. County Road 306 – Little Chockenhole Lane is ponding and very muddy in 2 locations.
 - d. County Road 312 – Lower Ladram Lane is very muddy at the bottom section where water from Ladram Bay (grips from Bay Road and from internal land drainage).
 - e. County Road 309 – Piscoombe Lane is muddy at south end, can be walked with care.
5. New Footpath posts. Roughly half the new posts have been in place for some time. Hopefully, the rest will be positioned once the weather improves.

Minor Issues

6. The beavers continue with their landscaping projects to fell some of the trees along the river.
7. Despite the recent windy weather there is only one tree blocking the paths. That is along Passaford Lane and I have removed sufficient to get past.
8. I think some regular walkers have also done some clearing when necessary – many thanks.
9. Brambles are starting to bud. I have been trimming them where they are starting to intrude the footpaths – it would help if regular walkers could arm themselves with a pair of secateurs and trim any growth which is annoying them.

Iain Ure

23rd January 2020