


Footpath Number	Location and Description of Reported Problem/Resolved Problem/ Items of Interest	Ref. No.
	All the footpaths in the Parish and beyond have been subject to heavy, unprecedented use due to more people taking outdoor exercise during the COVID pandemic. Combined with the current wet winter weather, many paths have been extremely muddy, sometimes underwater and in a few cases, impassable.	
<b>Parish Paths Partnership Scheme (P3)</b>	<p>On 23<sup>rd</sup> February the Parish Clerk and the Councillor for PRoW had a virtual meeting with Shirley Anglin. PRoW and Localism Officer for ECC. She suggested that the Parish Council tries to identify the owner of land next to BWY 25 (Butlers Farm) to discuss the possibility of a permissive path in the adjacent field to avoid the persistent flooding which renders the bridleway impassable to walkers.</p> <p>She explained that the Town and Country Planning Act will allow the owners of Butlers Farm to apply for a diversion to FP16 to progress their planning application.</p> <p>Shirley Anglin expects COVID easing will enable volunteer working parties to be active again from 17<sup>th</sup> May. Friends of the Flitch Way is a team of volunteers which Nic Leeson may well deploy to deal with FP25 clearance.</p> <p>Under the P3 Scheme volunteers are trained to clear vegetation, replace waymarkers, even repair small footbridges. Tools and materials are provided to be stored within the Parish. The cost of any additional items purchased by the volunteers, including safety boots, can be claimed back by the Parish Clerk. Shirley Anglin provides generic risk assessments.</p> <p>Through a volunteers' survey, a works proposal is compiled of works to be undertaken over the year. There is no obligation to complete the list but it does require approval before any work is undertaken.</p> <p>ECC also offers a Service Level Agreement. This funds one cut a year of any given footpath. The Parish identifies which paths needing cutting, Shirley Anglin calculates the total length and the charge by the metre. The Parish Council carries out the cutting using their contractor as usual and ECC reimburses them.</p>	

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<b>FP1,3 &amp;4</b>	These three truncated footpaths lead into Ferrier's Pits but have never been extinguished in the hope that at least one of the paths might be re-opened with a diversion order. Nik Leeson (PRoW Essex County Council) started investigations prior to COVID-19 as to whether there would be funding to create a safe path around the Pits. Funding from Essex Highways is highly unlikely. COVID-19 has hampered any progress on this matter but there is the concern that the Parish might 'lose' these PROWs altogether when all historic footpaths are relinquished on 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2026 because of a clause in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000(Labour Government).	
<b>FP1</b>	<b>The surviving section of FP1 leads off Bombose Lane around the perimeter of Bombose Farm onto Cooks Green.</b> The entrance to the footpath is marked by an old concrete fingerpost which is set deep in a roadside hedge. Permission has been sought to re-site the post in a more visible position on the verge. <b>Awaiting a decision via the Devolution Scheme.</b>	
<b>FP5</b>	<b>From Ferrier's Farm to Horne's Green (a field margin path, leading to a cross-field path through some scrub and into a wood, then onto a well-kept grassed lane to the road)</b> NIK Leeson (ECC Access Team) is not prepared to proceed with the proposed diversion because of objections from Alphamstone and Lamarsh residents. Walkers continue to use the unauthorised lower woodland walk but this became increasingly boggy as the winter weather set in. Some walkers are clearly using the alternative headland path (which is the proposed diversion) to skirt around the edge of the woodland. Neither route is an actual PROW. This unofficial situation cannot now continue indefinitely. Some clearance of the woodland has been carried out recently, coincidentally along the Definitive Line of the official PROW. The ECC Access Team are still 'stood down' so presumably this has been initiated by the landowner. Mr. Ritchings of the Definitive Maps Team has been in contact with the Parish Clerk. He is waiting to process the Diversion Order or withdraw it once the Parish Council has clarified the situation with Nic Leeson. The current field-edge footpath from Ferriers Lane which then becomes a cross-field path before reaching the wood will remain unaltered if the Diversion Order is withdrawn.	

Footpath Number	Location and Description of Reported Problem/Resolved Problem/ Items of Interest	Ref. No
FP8	<b>From Colne Road opposite White Dragon Archery Bakers Hall to Ferriers Cottage</b> A small tree fell across the footpath just before the path reaches the ploughed field. The Parish Clerk was able to locate the landowner who very promptly cleared the tree. A very satisfactory outcome!	
FP13	<b>Footpath off Fishpits Lane opposite Polstead Farm leading along Lamarsh Park</b> A fingerpost has been requested under the Devolution Scheme. <b>Awaiting permission to proceed.</b> ECC is working hard to clear a growing backlog of maintenance issues around the county.	2652997 02/03/2020
FP14	<b>Footpath from Ravensfield Farm to Polstead Farm</b> Damaged old-style concrete fingerpost. <b>Awaiting permission to replace under the Devolution Scheme.</b>	2652994 02/03/2020
FP17	<b>From Colne Road west of Lower Jennies to Balls Road</b> A misleading notice had been erected by the landowner at the Colne Road entrance to the track leading to Lower Jennies, stating that it was a 'private road with strictly no through way'. Initially ECC Highways did not feel any action was necessary. A fingerpost was requested to clarify that this is a PRow but was declined. A Bures Hamlet resident added his concern by letter and a finger post has since been installed. Another satisfactory outcome!	
BWY 25	<b>Track leading from Balls Road to Broad Oaks Colne Road opposite Pricketts Hall Farm</b> This has been impassable due to prolonged flooding, exacerbated by recent snow and rain. Based on the experience of previous years, the route may remain unusable by pedestrians for the rest of the winter. It may be possible to negotiate an alternative permissive route with the owner of the adjacent field.	

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FP30	<div data-bbox="436 327 976 735" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><b>From Colne Road next to Parsonage Grove crossing the railway to The Paddocks.</b></p> <p>The Parish Council is still awaiting the outcome of the Network Rail Public Inquiry for Level Crossings Reduction in Essex regarding the fate of the above 'passive crossing'.</p> <p>The Tenterfield developer has completed work on the footpath. Nik Leeson (EEC) was in earlier contact with the developer following complaints about the perceived narrowing of the path. It continues to be a rough soil surface, uneven as before, with a short gravelled entrance off the Colne Road. The Parish Council received a complaint about the gravelled surface and this was referred to the developer. The Parish Council is not aware of any further action taken to date regarding the concerns raised by residents.</p> <p>A very rough alleyway has been created between the boundary fence and the railway line to the end of the estate. Management of this is not the responsibility of the Parish Council.</p> <p><b>No further developments as to the extinguishment of the passive crossing. This crossing and others along the Gainsborough Line have all been upgraded with new stiles and access paths which seems to imply that there has been a stay of execution.</b></p>	Crossing E54
FP16	<p><b>From Colne Road north-east of Pricketts Hall Farm, south to Butlers Farm , then east to meet Balls Road</b></p> <p>A meeting took place with the owner of Butlers Farm on 06/03/2021 to discuss the need for a Diversion Order to FP16 for the planning application 20/02131/FUL. The digital Definitive Map plots FP16 along the eastern boundary of the building to be refurbished. In reality, the footpath follows the drive, some distance from the building and has done so for many years. The application for a Diversion Order should be supported by the Parish Council.</p>	

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<b>FP33</b>	<p><b>Phillips Path. Colchester Road to Mount Bures level crossing</b> Essex County Council finger posts have been erected at both ends of the footpath.</p> <div data-bbox="647 408 882 719" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1099 413 1335 727" data-label="Image"> </div>	
<b>FP4 Mount Bures Parish</b>	<div data-bbox="423 788 822 1321" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="831 798 1238 1278" data-label="Text"> <p>This is a Mount Bures footpath which joins up with the Bures Hamlet FP 11 running from Bures Mill across the flood meadows towards Wormingford. (Stour Valley Walk) At Long Gardens there was a plank footbridge across a stream which had been steadily deteriorating with recent heavy usage. It has now been repaired.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1261 788 1666 1331" data-label="Image"> </div>	<p>2685714 21/12/2020</p>

Bures Hamlet PROW report (March 2021)

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<b>FYI</b>	<b>Quiet Lanes Suffolk.</b> The scheme, funded by Suffolk County Council, is designed to encourage considerate behaviour by all road users, to 'expect and respect' others, and in particular, for motorists to adjust their speed when using rural roads. Three lanes in Bures St Mary have been validated for inclusion in the scheme; Hollow Lane, Arger Fen and St Edmunds Lane. A £600 grant will cover most of the signage costs and the Parish Council may have top this up with a further £190. A leaflet drop has been carried out to properties along the designated routes. There have been some initial objections raised but formal public consultation will take place later in the year.	
<b>FYI</b>	A local tree surgeon generously offered a supply of wood chippings to treat some of the footpaths in the centre of the village. A team of volunteers applied these wood chippings to FP7 ( by Beautiful You), and to other paths/pinch points in Bures St Mary. Many members of the community expressed their gratitude for this effort. It might be appropriate to plan for wood chippings as a budget item for the coming year so that next autumn, this 'mud-mitigation' project can be repeated. Not only do the wood chippings make the paths safer on which to walk but the treated surfaces also enable walkers to remain on the central path and not use the verges to escape the mud, which can cause a widening of the footpaths and destroy path-side vegetation and natural habitat.	

Jan Aries March 2021