

Boxford Parish Footpaths: Annual update 10.05.24.

Footpaths.

In spite of a very wet winter which meant a lot the paths required good waterproof foot ware, Richard and I have walked the footpaths numerous times this year and in the main they are in a good state of repair. Suffolk County Council (SCC) have replaced 2 finger posts and updated 2-way posts. Richard and I also cleared vegetation from a number of signs to improve visibility and a number of styles to improve access. We also cleared overhanging branches on the A1071 to stop walkers stepping into the busy road when walking between Boxford and White Street Green. The first cut of the grass was erratically completed by the SCC contractor by the end of June, as it was completed by a new contractor, the previous contractor having retired. The second cut was even less acceptable, so following complaints from us and a consequent visit from Kevin Verlander, the Area Rights of Way officer for SCC, it was recut to our satisfaction. We are hoping for an improved performance this year as the same contractor is used. First cut is normally completed by 19th June.

For information SCC contracts for grass cutting for about 40% of Suffolks footpaths (mainly bridleways and the well-used footpaths), 20% often don't need cutting and 40% are not cut as they are less used by walkers and are not deemed a priority for cutting.

We also dealt with complaints about overgrown hedge rows on footpaths B23 (Roylands Lane) and B18 (above the sewage works). Kevin was involved to identify landowners or their land agents, who initially resisted action during the bird nesting season but finally complied during Feb / March.

'Discover Suffolk' 3 parish leaflet Project.

As reported last year, Richard, Jeremy Morgan, Lisa Wortley, Tristan Wood, and I worked together to develop 3 routes for Groton, Edwardstone and Boxford Parishes and this was forwarded to SCC and the Discover Suffolk team. Due to a change in personnel, progress was delayed, but the final leaflet has now been published and is currently going through the process of being approved by the 3 parish councils. So, we are hoping that the leaflets will be available for this summer. Meanwhile coloured markers have now appeared on finger posts and waymarks denoting the routes around the parishes. Blue for Boxford, Red for Groton and Green for Edwardstone.

Finally, there is a new route through the village, 'The Wool Town Walks'. This is a walk designed by Sudbury and Clare walkers, going from Sudbury to Hadleigh via Boxford, then up to Bildeston, Lavenham, Clare and back to Sudbury. The route comes across to the village from Hagmore Green, (B1 footpath), and then out towards Bower House Tye and Hadleigh, (B10 footpath). The markers are red with white print.

Richard Gates, Jeremy Morgan, Jono West
Boxford Footpath Wardens