



# Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Bridleways

Annual Report - 2024

Iain Cholerton

1st May 2024

## SUMMARY

This report updates my previous annual reports. For reference I will only report where improvements have been made during the year or where there are new or worsening deficiencies to keep this report short. Some deficiencies remain unresolved since my first report of 2017. I have replaced a number of markers that had faded or disappeared and would welcome another handful at the Parish Meeting to replace a few more.

Routes are designated as per the Herefordshire Council PROW and Highways map (e.g. FD 3, SP 28). Gates are numbered with the PROW number and the Parish Clerk's designation. (e.g. SP 28.1 for gate 1 on PROW SP 28)

## BRIDLEWAYS

FD 3/SP 28 – Ford to Briery Mere to Witsetts.

Issues remain with gates SP 28.1, SP 28.2, SP 28.3 and SP 28.4 as reported for a number of years. In addition, last summer the field between Wickton Lane and the Witsetts (Ken Bemand's) was ploughed for potatoes far too close to the PROW (Photo 1) forcing riders to pass dangerously close to a derelict metal shed. Horses often shy at this shed. Ideally it should be removed, and the required headland left each year for the PROW.



Photo 1. SP 28.1-2 (June 2023)

There is now a tree down across the route between SP 28.1 and SP 28.2. I would be grateful if the lengthsman could be tasked to clear it. (Photo 2)



Photo 2. SP 28.1-2. (April 2024)

The route as it approaches the road at the Witsetts from SP 28.1 has been swamped for much of the winter and was largely unusable. Photo 3.



Photo 3. SP 28.1 to the road (April 2024)

## SP 12 – Briery Mere to Norman’s Farm.

No significant changes. As in previous years the track from SP 12.2 to SP 12.3 has again been deeply rutted by farm traffic making it difficult to use in the winter months. (Photo 4)



Photo 4. SP 12.2 – SP 12.3 (April 2024)

Similarly, the gate SP 12.3 remains very difficult to use during wet periods. (Photo 5)



Photo 5. SP 12.3 (April 2024)

SP 17 – Witsetts to Trap Cottage.

Nothing significant to report. All well-maintained by Pete L-H. Many thanks.



Photo 6. SP 17 (April 2024)

SP 27 – Wickton Lane to Sunnybank/Bowley Lane.

Nothing significant to report. All clear.

## HU 4 – Humber to Buckland (Parish Boundary).

Since last year the chains on gates HU 4.5, HU 4.6, HU 4.7 and HU 4.8 have been removed and gates are now secured over the gate post with a binder twine loop which makes opening the gates much easier.

## HU 10 - Risbury to PG 11 and Marston.

The very wet winter and spring has again made this route difficult between HU 10.2 and HU 10.3 (Photo 7).



Photo 7. HU 10.2-3 (April 2024)

HU 10.3 has deteriorated further this year. The gate is rotten (Photo 8) as is the post at the base which now moves when the gate swings open. It is in need of replacement. (Photo 9).



Photo 8. HU 10.3 (April 2024)



Photo 9. HU 10.3 (April 2024). Wobbly post.

## PG 11 from Marston to Parish Boundary.

The courts judged that the PROW did indeed pass through the large double gates at PG 11.2 and these can now be opened from the mounted position. Regrettably it is still chained (see Photo 13). The small gate has been secured by wire and is no longer used. The large open ditch has now been filled and the stream passes through and over the bridge – not ideal but a good deal safer than previously now that the double gates are used. (Photos 10,11,12). So NFA required.



Photo 10. PG 11.2 (May 2022)



Photo 11. PG 11.2 (May 2023)



Photo 12. PG 11.2 (April 2024)



Photo 13. PG 11.2 (April 2024)

The gate at PG 11.6 (Photo 13) is still chained and requires a dismount and two hands to open and close.



Photo 14. PG 11.6 (March 2021)

The route exits the wood through PG 11.11 and continues to Hegdon Hill outside the Parish Boundary. The gate was replaced in 2022 (Photo 15) and the drainage seemed much improved that year, but it is now flooded again and there is little rider traffic as a result. (Photo 16).



Photo 15. PG 11.11 (May 2022)



Photo 16. PG 11.11 (April 2024)