

Humber Parish

Footpaths Officer Annual Report

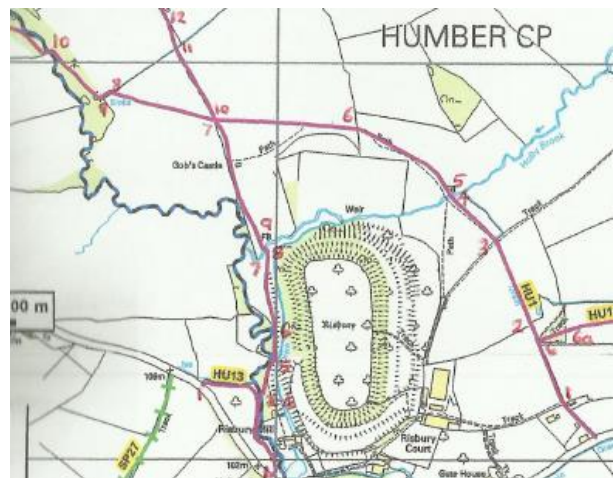
May 2024

Very wet weather has meant inspection of the footpaths is not complete, but most paths have been walked in the last week. Generally, the condition of footpaths has improved slightly, but some long-standing problems are still present after many years.

HU1 (The Old School House, Risbury to Humber Brook east of The Heath)

PASSABLE - NO DEFECTS

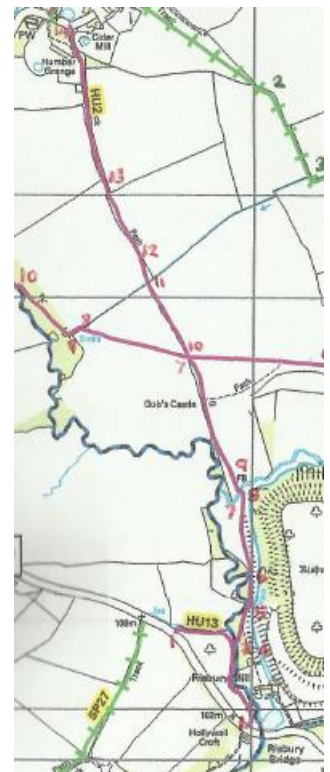
There are no defects on this path. Again, the landowner is to be congratulated on making constant improvements to the accessibility of this route, including an integrated pedestrian gate (9) at the entrance to the woodland near Humber Brook .



HU2 (Risbury Bridge to Humber)

PASSABLE - NO DEFECTS

The gate (1) onto the road has been replaced and the waymarker post here re-erected. There are no defects on this path, and the landowners are congratulated on keeping this path clear and maintained. Gate 12 (below) is an example of an easily accessible but secure pedestrian gate integrated into a farm gate.



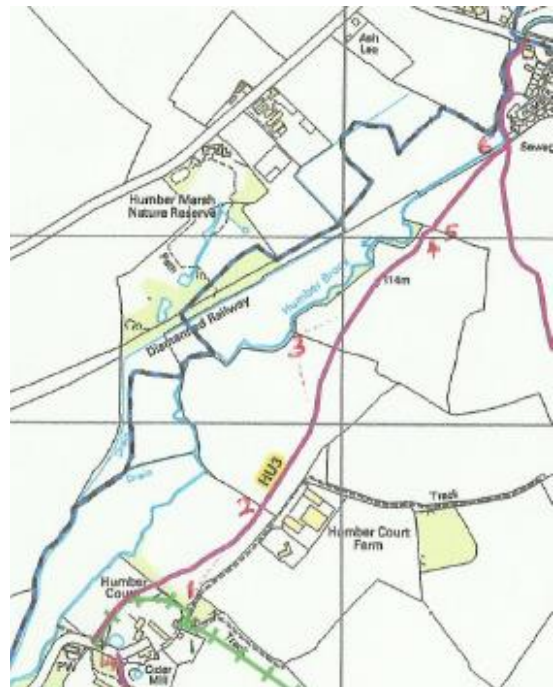
HU13 (HU13 (footpath across orchard from C1110 west of Risbury Bridge)

PASSABLE - NO DEFECTS

HU3 (Humber to Humber Close, Steens Bridge)

PASSABLE WITH DEFECTS – ACTION REQUIRED

The route from near Humber Court is now much easier, thanks to prompt remedial work by the landowner, which means that there is a clear tractor path through crops, and also the previously obstructed gate (3) has been replaced with two stiles (photo), meaning the correct route is now followed here.



However, Bridge (2) has a rotten and partially missing plank (photo left) which is potentially dangerous. Bridges are maintained by the footpaths authority, not the landowner, so this should be mended urgently by the Lengthsman.

Where the path reaches Humber Close, the **dangerous** state of the path and the completely broken stile (6) has still not been addressed, despite this having been identified and reported in 2021. There is a safe alternative route around the water treatment plant, and an application was made by the Clerk in 2022 for a diversion order, but there appears to be no progress on this. I would recommend that on safety grounds, the Parish Council erect warning signs.

HU5 (Poplands Lane to Holly Brook near Stirbridge Farm)

PASSABLE WITH DEFECT - ACTION REQUIRED

The stile (2) leading to steps into the field is very overgrown and in need of minor repairs.

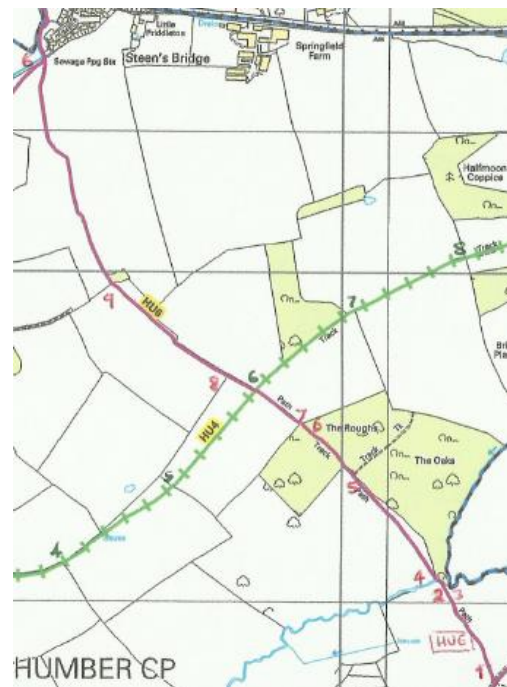


HU6 (Stirbridge Farm to Humber Close, Steens Bridge)

PASSABLE WITH DIFFICULTY – ACTION REQUIRED

This path still has some defects, outstanding with the landowner since 2018.

Stile (1) off HU5 is still badly broken and requires repairs or replacement; Stile (6) has broken completely, and the old metal gate alongside can only be opened with some difficulty:



The route north of here is slightly improved since 2023, with field margins adequate; although the route from Stile 9 to Humber Close is still overcropped, there is now an easier tractor path following the field edges, and evidence of some users trying to follow the marked path through the field (photo).

HU7 (C1110 Risbury - Turning Ways near Hollydene to Holly Brook near Stirbridge Farm)

PASSABLE – FURTHER INSPECTION REQUIRED

This path is well maintained to the north and easy to follow to the south. The difficulty in past years has been that the route between Gate 2 and Gate 4 is overcropped, and the field margins passable with difficulty when crops are mature. A further inspection of this will be made later in the summer.



HU12 (Poplands Lane to HU1 north of the Old School House)

PASSABLE – NO DEFECTS

The path is clear, well-maintained and has no defects.



PG11A (From Marston across Holly Brook towards Docklow)

PASSABLE – NO SIGNIFICANT DEFECTS

The gate, footbridge and stiles are in reasonable repair.

However, north of Stile (3) the route becomes DH6 in Docklow Parish and although it can be used to access DH7 bridleway to Buckland (which joins to HU4 bridleway) DH6 is not easily passable north to Docklow, because of poorly maintained stiles, an unclear route and overgrowth.

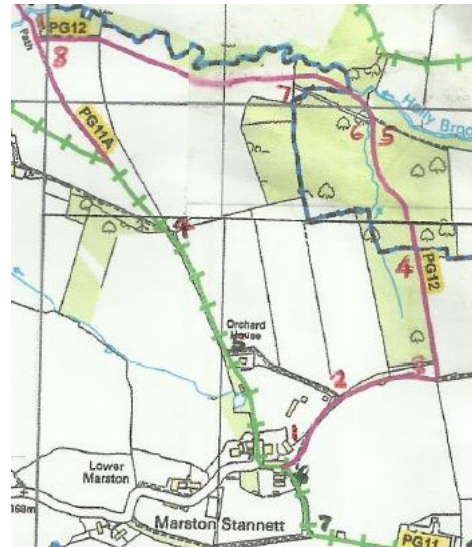


PG12 (Marston to Holly Brook)

PASSABLE WITH DIFFICULTY – ACTION REQUIRED

As noted since 2021 the route into and through the woodland between Stile (4) and Stile (5) is undefined and hazardous and requires clearance of undergrowth and some saplings, and ideally some waymarker posts.

The earth bank near Stile (5) has now been removed by the landowner, removing one of the obstacles on this path (photos 2023 and 2024):



The official route between Stile 5 and Gate 7 into the field (through woodland) is completely impassable and obstructed by wire fencing. There is an easy alternative along the lane, but as this is not a PROW it cannot legally be waymarked (and waymarkers have been removed).

Philip Brown

Footpaths Officer, Humber Parish

12 May 2024

Appendix 1: Current list of defects. Humber Parish footpaths, May 2024

PROW	Location	Date of defect	Work needed	Landowner	Progress
HU3	Bridge 2	May 2021	Plank on bridge rotten.	Humber Court Farm	
HU3	Stile 6	May 2021	Stile completely broken but by-passable.	Buckland Farm	
HU3	Stile 6 to Stile 7 along bank of Humber Brook at Humber Close.	May 2021	Path obstructed by fallen trees and vegetation: DANGER to users by brook.	Stonewater Housing	Diversion requested 2022 – no progress since.
HU5	Stile 2	May 2023	Minor repairs to stile and remove vegetation.	Buckland Farm	
HU6	Stile 1	May 2023	Stile broken	Buckland/Stirbridge Farms	Lengthsman to replace?
HU6	Stile 4	May 2023	Stile overgrown but gate available.	Buckland Farm	
HU6	Stile 6	Aug 2018	Stile fallen May 2021. By-passable with difficulty though old gate.	Buckland Farm	Emailed Landowner 2018, 2019, 2022
HU6	Between Stile 9 and Humber Close	May 2021	Route overcropped.	Buckland Farm	
HU7	Gate 2	Pre 2018	Gate doesn't open fully and overgrown	Hennerwood	Open access available nearby
HU7	Route from Gate 2 to Gate 4	May 2021	Route often overcropped	Hennerwood	Monitor
PG12	Stile 4 to Stile 5	Pre 2007	Route obstructed by woodland	Great Marston Farm	Landowner agreed to work, 2018 and 2023.