

ECR Projects Team works since December 2017 to November 2021.

Reported by Brian Richardson

Following completion of opening a new Concessionary Path negotiated by Alan Catherall at Back Dane near Wincle, in December 2017, ECR's Projects Team had a break from project works in our area in 2018.

One project was carried out in June 2019 at Clock House Wood, a remote part of the Alderley Edge National Trust Land. This achieved the restoration of a 'lost' public footpath, Over Alderley FP 2.

Both of these projects have been reported on East Cheshire Ramblers website (at tab >Articles>Footpath Projects). No tasks were carried out in 2020 due to COVID regulations.

2021 Works:-

The Projects Team took up tools again in earnest in March of this year, when the initial task was removing a collapsed tree blocking Wilmslow FP 129 near Total Fitness sports hall, Handforth Dean. Later, in July, another fallen tree was cleared from blocking Wilmslow FP 75 at Dean Row.

Subsequently works have taken place in the parishes of Pott Shrigley (FPs 6, 9, 20, 24), Poynton-with-Worth (FP 27), Rainow (FPs 22, 38, 57, 59) and Wilmslow (FPs 75, 102, 127, 134).

Several flights of steps were refurbished on Rainow FP 38 between Savio House driveway and Ingersley Vale, Bollington. A new flight of 22 steps was constructed with a double-height handrail on a very steep bank on Pott Shrigley FP 9 at Gausie Brow, by Harrop Wood.

A galvanised kissing gate was erected at the north end of Poynton-with-Worth FP 27, as part of the rejuvenation of this path in memory and commemoration of Alan Catherall's considerable contribution to the success of ECR's activities.

A 250 mm diameter piped culvert was installed under Pott Shrigley FP 9, down from the new steps, to control a stream crossing that path.

Finger Posts and Way-marker Posts have been introduced, replaced and re-set.

Rainow FPs 57, 59 (Gin Clough – 4 No.), FPs 22 & 22/96 Harrop Wood – 2No.) FP 9 (Gausie Brow – 4No.).

Pott Shrigley FP 20 (Bakestonedale Moor – 2No.) FP 6 (Andrews Knob – 2No.)

Poynton-w-Worth FP 27 (2No.)

As a newly introduced protective measure at the request of our FP committee, most of the newly erected posts (finger posts, way-marker posts, and stair handrail posts) have had a protective band of bituthene (bitumen coated polythene) heat-'welded' to each post. The band, about 400mm wide is buried but located with 100mm projecting above ground. Without this protective measure, this zone is more vulnerable to wet-rot in contrast to the post's deeper buried base. Posts snap mostly in this zone.

Gravel was infilled to a flooding kissing gate and nearby path, hollowed out by frequent footfall on the Gritstone Trail (Rainow FP 28 off Hedge Row, Sowcar).

Incidentally, for expected use on Rainow FP 38 steps (see above), the Project Team took delivery of 3.5 tonnes of limestone gravel delivered in bulk 0.9 tonne bags onto Savio House private driveway. The contents were dug out and re-bagged into approximately 15~20 kgm packs for handling purposes with wheelbarrows for transporting them across fields to the works site. At least half of these bags and another tonne, purchased in similar weight packs subsequently, were re-located (some twice), by car and then wheelbarrow along paths, as spare stone from completed tasks. This is recognised as very demanding work for our team, who are virtually all senior citizens.

A very important part of most projects has been clearance of vegetation to restore paths to a walkable condition and to improve intervisibility of waymarkers. Especially by the canal on Poynton- w-Worth FP 27, Wilmslow FP 102 (by Airport Inn), majorly at Gausie Brow new steps on Pott Shrigley FP 9, and Rainow FP 38 steps restoration at Ingersley Vale.

All of the timber (pressure-treated with chemicals for protection against rot), and the bulk-bagged gravel was supplied by CEC PROW. The timber, and kissing gate were collected from CEC PROWs' depot at Winsford on several occasions by myself. Subsequent bags of gravel were purchased at The Ramblers expense and collected by myself.

100mm square Blue Disks have been affixed to finger posts at significant 'permanent' worked locations acknowledging ECR's maintenance work and inviting new members to join ECR.

The active members of the Projects Team totalled 15 men and women. Between us we attended on 76 days and carried out 490 hours of labour (not including lunchbreaks).

Most of these projects are described on ECR's website tabs: >Articles>Footpath Projects.

Brian Richardson

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