

April, Footpath Report. 2025.

They weren't wrong, April showers. No problem, the garden needs it.

Mortimer Trail, Steps.

Once again moving wood nearer to the work site on the steps. I also checked the Footpath leading south towards Lucton to see if access was possible in a vehicle. Unfortunately three large Cherry trees have fallen across the path and denied access. I'm left with little choice but to ferry all tools and wood required from the nearest road head at Yatton Court.

Currently, myself and two assistants plan on beginning work on the steps on Wednesday afternoon. There was a tree obstruction across the Path near the top steep section which meant a crawl underneath. This has now been cleared.

No further reports of problems have been received around the Parish.

I believe the work being carried out below Mere Wood by Forestry England, between Lyepole Bridge and Ballsgate has now been completed and I shall check on Wednesday morning, to see if this part of the Mortimer Trail is clear.

Hereford Council FPO Training.

A Training for FPO's throughout Hereford was arranged at Orleton Village Hall on Monday the 14th/April at 1400 hrs.

Both Myself and the Clerk attended.

This was arranged by Herefordshire Council. An initial Training, setting out their intended style of administration. Not surprisingly, Health and Safety, Risk Assessments and Responsibilities of FPO's was the main theme. I trust further Training will be provided to upgrade the level of physical work required to maintain a PROW. Rather than HR Office based theory and ticking the box practice. A Footpath has never been maintained by someone sitting at a desk, dictating procedure.

An FPO needs training in practical work, safe use of tools that are an essential physical part of keeping Paths open. Whether they be using Strimmers, Scrub Cutters and Chainsaws.

It was rather evident that the use of these tools was very much frowned upon. During the afternoon each FPO was issued with the tools of his trade. A pair of Secateurs, a Folding saw, a First aid Kit and Safety Glasses. With a direction, that if a problem was found on the PROW, that should be reported. Otherwise FPO's

should, armed with their Secateurs and Folding saw keep the paths open. I look forward to the day armed with my issued tools, I have to tackle a 30 foot Ash, Oak, Conifer or any other tree that has had the temerity to fall across and block my PROW.

Hopefully common sense will prevail and the use of Strimmers and Chain saws will be considered an option. If this is not the case, the PROWs of this County will suffer. Unless the new Team have a large working Team to attend to problems, obstructions will be well reported but remain obstructions.

Receipts and Expenses

The Chainsaw has received its annual service and due to be picked up. I will obtain the receipt and tender it at the meeting.

As I will be installing Gates or Styles as well as Hand rails on steeper sections throughout the Parish paths, I have purchased a drill Auger which is used for making the Post holes in the ground. The cost is £34.95. Should you consider the reimbursement of the cost of the tool, it can then become part of the things that are given to an FPO to carry out their work. Then passed on to successors as they retire.

I also tender a receipt for Printing. Four copies of a set of five Maps that cover the Aymestrey Parish. To be used for Council Members to identify PROW abbreviations, ie AY 1, etc.. The cost being £6.00. I can obtain further copies if required.

That concludes the Monthly Report for April.

Recently an organised Group of Walkers met at the Village Hall and walked about four miles around the Parish paths before returning to the Hall and having Tea and hot cross buns.

Their advert for the event said, "**Walk into Spring " and so we will.**

D L Dunn.

FPO, Aymestrey Parish.