

Rights of Way

I initially contacted James Stringer the Asset Information Definitive Map Officer at the council to get help. He gave lots of useful advice, directed me to the National Library of Scotland for some maps, gave advice on how to register the routes and best of all told me to contact the British Horse Riding Society who it turns out have people employed to help volunteers to register routes.

The BHS know their stuff! Apparently there is a point system, ways of wording and presenting the information, scales you have to use for the routes/maps, tithe maps they have access to etc.

We decided on 5 paths/routes-

Over Haven (through Mannings Orchard, has a section 31-6 applied which basically is like a block on future Rights of Way registration, so we needed even older user evidence but this was one of the most commonly used routes, so not an issue)

Stanton Mere Way (crosses over Station Road from end of Over Haven)

Rampton Haven (at the bottom of Stanton Mere Way)

Black Pit (off Stanton Mere Way)

And lastly a path that incorporates Mill Lane (a path the BHS keen on which only partly exists now)

As a result of advertising in the Willingham News I was given some old maps, reports, papers that were useful in adding to evidence of routes. Unfortunately despite advertising and even directly approaching older residents there were few people willing to fill out the very easy forms. We needed residents who had walked routes for 20+years.

However this was not a total disaster, it just meant that the historical evidence (which is strong for most routes) is more important. I sifted through old maps and the BHS are very used to getting access to Tithe maps and putting together the evidence.

The initial paperwork has now been submitted under the BHS banner but I have been told that this is a very long process and that it could take 3y.

In the meantime I asked repeatedly if there were any other paths people would want registered as Rights of Way but other than Flat Bridge being reinstated (which would allow a circular river walk) I did not get much response. I have enquired about Flat Bridge but (as it was destroyed years ago on private property) I gather it would be very difficult to get replaced.

I was given a grant to help with costs, most of which will now be returned, some was used for printing, envelopes and postage.

Thank you,
Steph Thomas