

## Clerks report to the Plaistow and Ifold Full Council Meeting dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 26

### 6. PROW Matters:

#### **Wephurst**

A community working group was set up to explore the arrangement for diverting PROW from the immediate vicinity of Wephurst Park and the following communication was sent to the applicant:

Letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Richard

#### **Proposed Amendments to Public Rights of Way over The Wephurst Estate**

Following on from the meeting Carrie, Sara, Paul and I had with you in the Garage at Wephurst and subsequent emails, Carrie, Sara and I have met to discuss our response to you. Paul has since sold his house and moved away.

There are certain things that we need to recall, and in particular, the purpose of pulling together a group of neighbours to act as a forum to help plan your way forward with changes to the public rights of ways (PROW) that exist over Wephurst.

At the meeting held in the Village Hall at Plaistow, this group was formed following your presentation and the ensuing discussions in so far as you indicated your wish to increase your privacy and security, as well as to stop uncontrolled use of those routes which did not follow the existing public rights of way.

As we understand it, the focus group that was formed has no legal standing and any proposals agreed with us would have no legal bearing on your application to West Sussex County Council for any amendments to the existing rights of way that you will be seeking. The benefit of the focus group is that you will be seen to have consulted a section of the users of these PROWs who may then be able to help persuade other users of the merits of any changes proposed.

Having aired various proposals between us, we are now of the opinion that we should set out a clear framework which we, as a group, feel we could promote to other users in the area as a solution to provide all parties with some form of benefit. We reiterate that this has no legal standing and you will still need to satisfy WSCC that your proposals are acceptable alterations to the existing PROW network.

With these comments in mind, we would be willing to support the following:

#### **1 Objectives**

- You have stated that you wish to improve the privacy and security of the area around your private residence. We understand and accept this as a personal objective and our proposals below recognise and incorporate this.
- You have expressed a wish to enhance the privacy and security of your 3 neighbours who also have access over the Wephurst drive on the eastern side of the Estate leading to Skiff Lane. Whilst this is a very plausible objective, these properties no longer form part of the Wephurst Estate and were all bought with full knowledge available of the PROWs that existed. We do not consider this a valid request that would override the benefits of the existing PROWs that exist to local users.
- You have indicated a willingness to consider some form of controlled access over Wephurst Wood to replace the rights which may have built up in favour of certain local users over the period of the previous ownership. We have incorporated this in our proposals.

## 2 Proposals (with reference to Plan 2 attached)

- (i) Confirmation that the existing RoW A-D could be eradicated;
- (ii) Removal of any PROW between points A-B-C-D-E and C-G.

The effect of the proposals (i) and (ii) above is to provide you with an area surrounding your house, as shown hatched on Plan 3 attached, without interference from any Public Rights of Way.

In order to make this proposal sufficiently attractive to local residents and other users, we suggest that the following steps are taken by you in return:

- (iii) E-G-H: We understand from you that the relevant Electricity Authority has agreed with you that they will place underground the existing overhead cables, which run along this route. Once this work has been undertaken, a new footpath would be created along the route with a suitable surface installed (see below) to provide easy walking;
- (iv) H-J: As part of the new route under (iii) above, surfacing works would need to be undertaken along this link of the footpath back to point H;
- (v) L-K: A new public footpath to be created along a route to be agreed (the existing hardened drive might form part of this route), with any new ground made up to the standard set out below;
- (vi) K-E: This section could be formed by the existing hard based track;
- (vii) K-L or E-M: Access to the existing bridlepath on the north side will need to be linked to point K and could be either:

- along the existing track in front of Little Wephurst, as used by many people over a very long period, or, if you prefer
- over a new track on the edge of the field behind the existing hedge, or
- on the western boundary of the Little Wephurst curtilage between points E-M.

(viii) During earlier discussions, it has been pointed out and acknowledged by you, that the bridlepath that runs both north and south from point O is nearly impassable on foot in the winter. You have indicated that you would be willing to include this as part of a general improvement plan.

(ix) For the avoidance of doubt, we are aware that there would be very strong resistance to removing the public footpath status of section A-O on the plan and have not, therefore included this in these proposals.

### 3 Wephurst Wood

As you are fully aware, Wephurst Wood has been used for a very long time by various local residents for walking purposes, particularly, but not exclusively, from those who live on the north side of the Estate. Whilst putting to one side for the moment their right to pursue a long user of this area, we believe there is merit in exploring further an alternative, voluntary arrangement, which would satisfy both your and their needs and aspirations.

Such an arrangement could be undertaken by way of :

- a permissive access as controlled by the Local Authority, or
- a licensing arrangement with particular residents.

Proposals as to how this should be achieved will need to come from you because this does not relate to the general issue of varying existing public rights of way. However, a solution in whatever form should be regarded as part of the overall arrangements under discussion at this stage.

### 4 Footpath Surfaces

We have referred above to the standard of any new or improved paths that would be relevant under these arrangements. Clearly there will need to be legal input on this and other points, but in general terms we suggest that these paths are built with a hard core base with a Type 1 surface, similar to the original standard of the paths that were put in by the previous owner of the Estate.

We hope that this lays out sufficiently clearly a proposal that we, as the focus group, could promote to other users at whatever stage you decide to proceed with an application to change the footpath arrangements. We believe such an arrangement fulfils the advantages you seek, whilst providing users with a suitable alternative, which incorporates an element of improvement.



of a new, potentially, less experienced in countryside living, residency, the public rights of way at Wephurst can only be more challenging.

Darryl Hobden , our Highways Ranger, feels that things have now settled down and that this is an appropriate time to consider any submissions for change to our public rights of way.

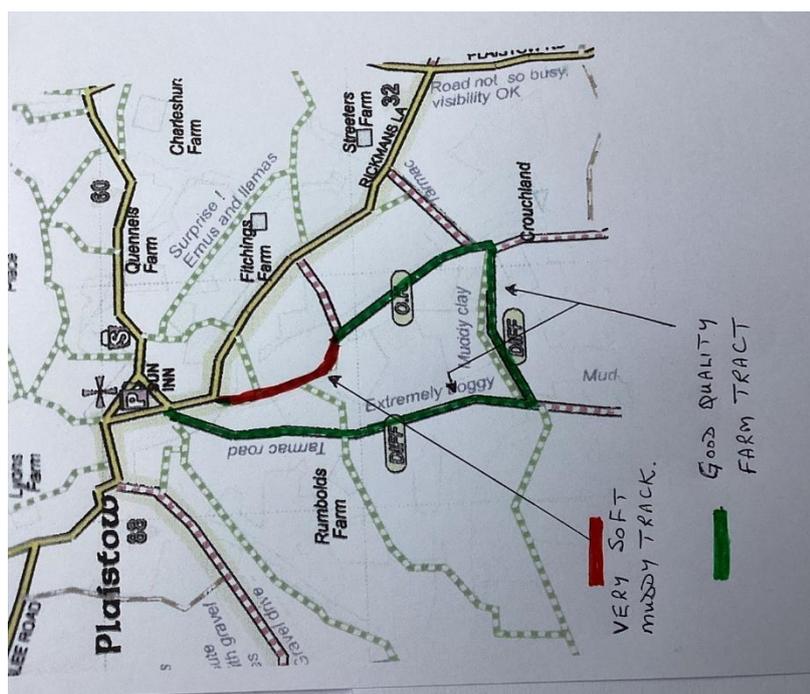
I am extremely grateful to the parish council for the efforts made, that time was not wasted, and the steering group were helpful and constructive. I would like to pick matters up where we left off, if possible? If members of the Parish council feel that they would be minded to get involved.

I still feel this is the best way to approach local rights of way as gaining the concerns and interests of the local community, is better than trying to create a fete accompli without prior input from interested parties.

I look forward to getting the views of the locals,

### **Rickmans Lane Circular Route.**

Correspondence has been received regarding the muddy stretch along the PLA/633 as indicated on the map below. This has been reported the WSCC PROW who have confirmed unless it is a safety hazard it will be sometime before any action is taken.



### 9. [Asset register at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026](#)- Update

The Asset Register has been updated since its review in February to remove the metal cupboard that was housed at Winterton Hall but became redundant and scrapped.

### 10. [Insurance Renewal Questionnaire](#).

The insurance values we have on our asset register are compared in the margin of this document and you can see indexed values are in all cases greater. The questionnaire should be reviewed for any other matters that might be required before authorising the Clerk to sign the document and return to Gallagher to obtain insurance quotes.

### 13. Correspondence

Email 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Jane

Firstly I am happy to help with this, if needed.

The layby between Plaistow and Ifold has become a very unpleasant area, strewn with litter and with the island of vegetation constantly reduced by vehicles driving over it.

It would be good to show that it is a valued part of our village and not an easy place to trash.

Would it be possible to request;

1. Some type of bollard at either end of the vegetation to stop vehicles driving across it
2. A rubbish bin to be placed near the hedge which would be emptied by the normal rubbish collectors. This could also be a good place for casual litter pickers to drop litter in.

If the island vegetation could be protected, then work could then be done on this area to improve it. Wildflower planting with natural dead hedges would be nice.

Please do feedback to me, so that I can understand the possibilities and problems involved.

Thank you!

