

May 2022 Footpath Report

Over the last few months all footpaths have been walked by Huw Lovesey, myself and others. Problems raised have been listed and will be prioritised into those that should be done first and those that could be done as ongoing maintenance.

Worth noting though is that some of the problems reported recently had already been reported in October 2020.

Additionally, as reported by Huw, today, many of the stiles in Upper Chute do not reach the recommended standards and because of that, restrict access to only those with a good level of fitness and agility.

Where footpaths have restricted access because they are only accessible via stiles then it would be good to see these being replaced with gates.

Initially I would propose putting in gates for footpaths that are closest to the centre of Upper Chute. The following have been identified as prime candidates for changing to gates. **E.g.**

Three Stiles across **Chut 18** from the Cross keys going North East in the direction of the Church. One stile leading onto **CHUT8** across the field north of Chrystal Palace and linking CHUT7 up to CHUT9; **CHUT9** going south over **CHUT10** to where it crosses a fence into Ladies Lawn needs a gate.

1. Invite landowners to meet with other interested parties to identify problems encountered by walkers and those encountered by landowners and find solutions.
2. Obtain agreement from landowners for relacing proposed stiles with gates.
3. Obtain funding for gates and purchase.
4. Erect proposed gates.
5. List missing way markers and signs.
6. Produce list of stiles that need to be repaired.
7. Set up a working party to help with permitted maintenance when and where needed
8. Put in place missing signs.
9. Remove obstacles that restrict or deny use of a footpath, or bridleway.
10. Ensure that maintenance is carried out regularly on footpaths throughout the summer where the growth of brambles and nettles makes walking dangerous.

Example cost of gates from Jackson Fencing.

Plain wooden gate £136.62 inc VAT or (£75.54 inc VAT, Mole Country Stores)

Kissing Gate £298 exc VAT

Mobility Kissing Gate £387 exc VAT

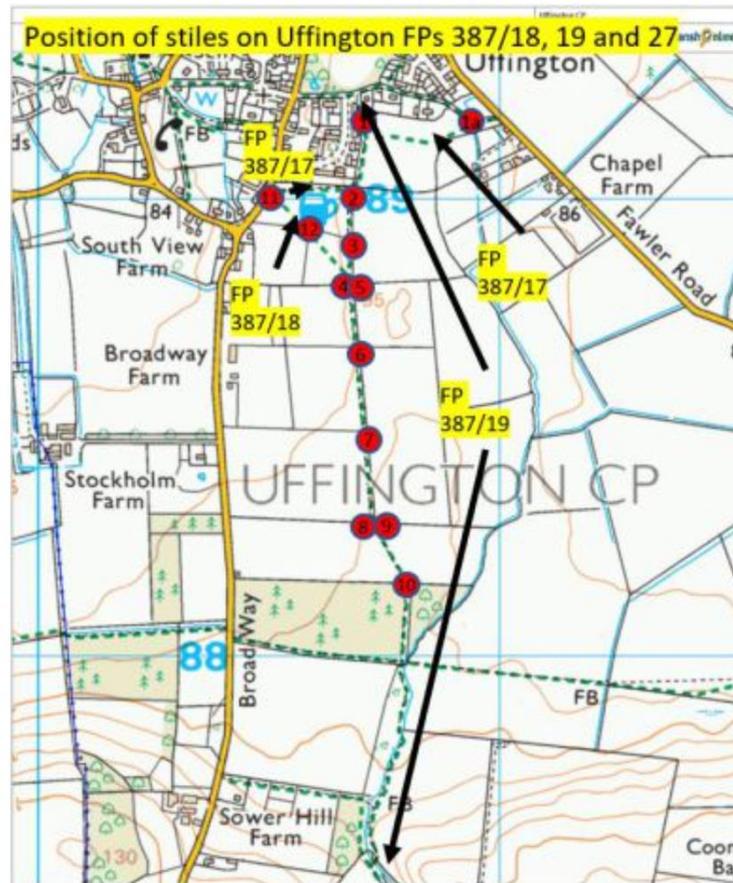
[Public rights of way: landowner responsibilities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) Where a stile needs replacing, always consider with the highway authority whether to do this with a gate or preferably a gap, so that it will be less of an impediment to people with mobility problems.

You must seek the local highway authority's permission before installing any new structure on a public right of way. Unauthorised structures are obstructions and may be removed by the highway authority at the landowner's expense.

Stiles to Kissing Gates

Introduction

The project to install thirteen kissing gates was completed by Uffington Parish Council in August 2021. The project replaced stiles on Uffington Footpaths (FP) 387 / 17, 18, 19 and 27 as shown on the map below.



Description

These footpaths are used by many local people and visiting walkers to get from the village of Uffington to the Uffington White Horse, Uffington Castle, The Ridgeway and Waylands Smithy, and for circular walks on public rights of way via Woolstone, Fawler and Kingston Lisle. FP18 is a short spur from FP19 leading to the Fox and Hounds pub in Uffington. FP27 is a short natural extension from FP19 eastwards to join FP16 and the Fawler Road.

Villagers and visitors can now much more easily walk to and from these world-famous sites, to which Uffington is very fortunate to be so close. The newly gated section of FP19 links to an [Oxfordshire County Council Ridgeway Circular Walk](#), which means that there are now no stiles on the path between the village and the Ridgeway and White Horse Hill.

These routes are now easy to access and walkable by people of all ages. Starting close to the centre of the village, near the village shop, this is excellent for community involvement and therefore beneficial for the health and well-being of our residents.

The project was funded by a number of donors, to all of whom Uffington Parish Council is very grateful; they are (with the amounts):

Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE) with funds from Grundon Waste Management Ltd, from their own funds and through the Landfill Communities Fund	£,4000.00
White Horse Show Trust	£2,000.00
Oxfordshire County Council – Countryside Access Team	£1,000.00
Uffington Parish Council (S106 funds, from the Jacksmeadow estate)	£5,000.00
Uffington Parish Council (Reserves)	£1,000.00

Uffington Parish Council is also extremely grateful to all the landowners upon whose land the kissing gates have been installed and who supported the project from the start. They are: Mr and Mrs D Coxhead, Mr and Mrs T Parrott, Mr J Mildenhall and Mrs J Darling. We are also grateful to Pepler Fine Fencing Ltd (of Goosey) who did a very professional job for us in the installation of all thirteen kissing gates.

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Please note that it was necessary to install two kissing gates very close to each other at locations 4/5 and 8/9 for reasons of bio-security; these are both on inter-farm boundaries where stock should not come in direct contact with animals from another farm.

Below is a pictorial record showing 'before and after' photos of the stiles which have been replaced by kissing gates using the numbering on the map above.