

Kingston Parish Council Appendix 9.

Footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths in Kingston: a review and proposals for improvement

1. Introduction and summary

1.1 This review was prompted by the adoption of the Environmental Policy which included: *Support initiatives that encourage sustainable transport including improving cycle paths and footpaths.* The subsequent Action Plan (adopted May 2021) tasked KPC with the Action Group to *Draw up an action plan for the development of footpaths and cycleways.*

1.2 This paper provides a snapshot of the state of footpaths and bridleways in the parish in January 2022. Appendix A summarises the information for each path. Overall the paths in the parish are in good condition and are well-used.

- The first section assesses most of the rights of way in and around Kingston Village. Where there are problems possible solutions are proposed. The reference numbers for the paths are those used on the ESCC Rights of Way Map <https://row.eastsussex.gov.uk/standard-map.aspx> (Appendix B).
- The second section considers cycle paths. Access from the village to the main cycle routes into Lewes and Brighton is poor. There are no safe dedicated cycle routes from the village.
- The third section is concerned with the possibility of establishing new rights of way.

2. Access land

2.1 The concept of Access Land was introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which normally gives the public right of access to land mapped as open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. This is known as 'open access land'. Access land is defined on online maps and, sometimes but far from always, by signs on the ground.

2.2 The Access Land in Kingston includes Kingston Hill and Iford escarpment Castle Hill and land to west of Juggs Way, see map of access land Appendix C. In the absence of any signs it is likely that most walkers are unaware of their right of access to all of this land. This failing could be simply remedied by a series of well-placed signs and perhaps a feature in The Kingston News.

3. Signage

3.1 The quality of the signage of the rights of way in the parish is variable. Some paths are signed at one end; others are not signed at all. Few give both a destination and a distance, many provide neither. None are labelled with the reference number. There is no sign in the village providing a map of the footpath network in the parish.

3.2 Overall responsibility for signage lies with ESCC Rights of Way. SDNPA oversees signage on the South Downs Way and some connecting paths. Funding may be available for improving signage through CIL. KPC could consider funding the development of a village / parish map of rights of way which could be included on the KPC website.

4. Conclusion

4.1 KPC is asked to note this review and confirm support for the development of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways in the parish. We suggest that in the first instance a meeting should be set up with ESCC RoW to discuss the support they could offer in improving and extending paths and in improving signage. We suggest a working group of councillors and Action Group members takes this work forward.

Christine Moulder - Vice Chair KPC
Steve Berry & Barrie Lambert - Kingston Action Group