

July 2020 - PROW issues for Amenities committee

1. It is important to balance the protection of nature and the amount of people accessing and enjoying green spaces and permissive pathways which increased noticeably during and since lockdown.
2. Access to permissive paths depend upon the responsibility of users to respect the countryside, take home their rubbish / use rubbish bins and to clear up after their dogs.
3. Government is stopping / has stopped payments to landowners for permissive paths. This may impact on the cost effectiveness of keeping them open if there are safety issues.
4. If PROWs are closed even for safety work to be carried out, there is a cost for this.
5. WSCC responsibility for PROWs are for the walking surface not for repair of stiles / gates or the making safe of overhanging trees.
6. Instead of an application for a Designated Map Modification Order (DMMO) on the Rifle Range – there may be room for a “lease” type of agreement with the Wiston Estate to keep the permissive paths open for a period of time e.g. 10 years before a review process is undertaken.

The Wiston Estate is exploring the idea of a gap year student to engage with local teenagers, who spend time in places like the Rifle Range, to encourage responsible use of green spaces. Thoughts include liaison with the Grammar School; SPC and SDS to further the project and apply for funding.

Permissive Pathways

Advantages for Community - Access to countryside with an obligation to treat the areas with respect and responsibility, including taking rubbish home and picking up after dogs.

Disadvantages – The landlord may close permissive paths at any time.

Public Rights of Way

Advantages for Community – The designated paths are accessible in perpetuity

Disadvantages for the Landowner – The landowner is responsible for the safety of adjacent trees and foliage together with fences and stiles and may only close the paths for necessary safety work to be carried out.