

Footpaths

The footpaths in and around Knowstone Parish continue to be well used and enjoyed by many local residents, visiting walkers and holiday makers, most especially the Two Moors Way. Throughout the year, when I come across footpath users, I ask their opinion of the footpaths through Knowstone Parish. Invariably, they are very happy with conditions of the paths, stiles/gates and signage, and always compliment us on our beautiful countryside. Inevitably, conditions vary throughout the year, and we will continue to get boggy areas and running water off Knowstone outer moor, especially during the wetter winter and spring months; however, this does not deter walkers, and people continue to use and enjoy the footpaths.

Very much in the news at the moment is the control of dogs while walking in the countryside. Everyone should bear in mind that many footpaths cross, or come near, fields where livestock are kept – some with young stock– so dogs **must** be kept on a lead and under control. Please remember, dog excrement should **always** be bagged and taken home and disposed of correctly. Not only is it very unpleasant for fellow walkers, but also can be highly infectious for livestock.

It is important to remember that these footpaths are a **public right of way**. Landowners can add signs to the rights of way, but they should be polite and informative (e.g imminent crop spraying). Otherwise, displaying handwritten notices which deter walkers from using the footpath must be sanctioned by DCC to ensure it is legal and not inflammatory.

The annual trim of some footpaths, as usual, will take place when we reach the top of the DCC rota. In the past, information about the footpaths has been posted on the Knowstone website, and this should continue in future. Hopefully, we will have another beautiful summer, and more residents will take advantage of our amazing, scenic footpaths.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to Ros Davies and Stuart Howell, of Devon County Council Rights of Way Service, who are great friends of this parish and have offered much knowledge, help and advice over the years. Somehow they have managed to stretch their budget, and we have benefitted with many projects in many ways.

Timothy Browse, May 2019