

# FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Dear Sir/Madam

Forton Parish Councillors met on 29<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the county councils right of way consultation.

Whilst I have endeavoured to complete the attached questionnaire capturing the views shared at the meeting it was also felt that we needed to submit a letter raising the following.

Whilst our priority pathways for upgrading to blue are:

- Forton to Sutton - Footpath 16
- Sutton to Weston Jones bridleway - Footpath 13
- Forton - Footpath 12

It was agreed that the route from Sutton to Oulton which starts as a pathway and turns into a bridleway should also be upgraded. Councillors agreed that the purpose of these walks for many is, in addition to linking the villages, to facilitate off road circular walks. The original purpose of these pathways was for connecting services, and are, in parts needed to avoid walking along unsafe roads, in particular the pavement from Forton to Sutton which we have been endeavouring secure safety improvements to for several years. In addition, at a time when the nearest town is rapidly expanding recreational walkers from outside the community will also increase and should be encouraged.

We are fortunate to have the Aqualate national nature reserve in our parish, it was agreed that this area needed a high classification. Whilst crossing the council border, it was felt it was important to highlight the fact that the route from Meretown to Newport has an existing official route which is actually deviated from by walkers however, this access needs to be maintained. Significant work has also been undertaken by the Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust to restore a section of the canal in our parish which again attracts more walkers along this pathway.

It was felt that because our parish communities are so small, with generally elderly residents and large areas of pathways, it was agreed that it is not realistic for councillors to be able to facilitate anything other than being eyes and ears and liaising with landowners. However, some Councillors did express that they did personally maintain the area in the vicinity of their own homes and would continue to do so. Councillors also do an annual litter pick to support the work of the council.

In conclusion, whilst acknowledging the difficult financial decisions the council has to make, it is hoped that the views here will be taken into account, we have recently lost bus services here and sincerely hope we can maintain our pathways.

Yours faithfully

Carol Little  
Forton Clerk