

Bridleway 86

The surface problem on the Abbey bridleway looks potentially to be a combination of factors. Water from a spring emerging from above the cricket ground path, surface run-off from the lane and also the flow from the Abbey. Although the flow from the Abbey was evidently redirected when the car park was extended and emerges further down the track. So the primary cause of the scouring of the top of the track looks on the face of it to be a combination of the spring and the flow from the lane.

The condition of the bridleway isn't any kind of priority for us currently and I would suggest the problem is primarily a drainage issue for the field access. The solution might be to excavate ditch alongside the track on the field side, which would require a culvert to provide access to the field. But I have agreed to make an inspection with a colleague over the winter to try and fully understand the issues. I will aim to provide further advice once we have made that inspection.

Access to Footpath 32b from Mount Street Car Park

Although the exit from the Town Council car park isn't a recorded footpath, we need to bear in mind that it has been in use for such a period that a public right of way almost certainly has been established. So simply closing off the access isn't the solution to the uneven surface and is only bound to result in complaints and rightly for calls for the path to be reinstated.

The difficulty I have in offering assistance to improve the surface is that it isn't a publicly maintainable path. I think the best suggestion I can offer is that we provide stone to be laid over the uneven surface. I think it is probably in the Town Council's and ESCC's interests to limit the improvements. The only real alternative would be to create a formal path, with edging and a sealed surface. I would suggest it doesn't warrant that and I couldn't realistically offer assistance with improvements of that kind.