

## East Budleigh with Bicton footpath / cycleway improvements

### Introduction

There has been a nationwide campaign for some time now to encourage more cycling and walking in order to improve health, reduce carbon emissions from transport and avoid traffic congestion. This has become even more important now that there is a need to save energy usage and fuel costs. We now also hear that GPs are to prescribe cycling and walking for improved health.

Consequently, it is timely to revisit the footpath and cycle way proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) together with any new proposals. The NP recommendations were followed up by a Councillor, who was one of the NP authors, about 3 years ago. There were blocking problems throughout, however, as solutions were not straightforward and potentially expensive. This may still be the case, but with the renewed national impetus, the subject is too important to ignore and further attempts at solutions must be made.

In a conversation with the CDE surveyor a while ago, it was stated that the Estate had never received any written proposals or request from the Parish Council. This report now seeks to remedy this. It may also be appropriate to lodge a request with County Highways.

### Neighbourhood Plan proposals

Appendix A provides an extraction of section 10.10 from the Neighbourhood Plan illustrating an improvement plan for the East Budleigh with Bicton footpath network. Also included in the appendix is section 10.15 which illustrates an improved cycleway. This could also be used as a shared footpath in the same manner as the cycleway from Bear Lane to Exmouth.

The footpath map in the Appendix is extracted from section 10.13 of the NP.

The improvements listed mainly comprise a number of short linking sections connecting existing footpaths in order to improve safety and complete circular routes. Some would require permissive paths to be made available on private land whilst others would require footpaths alongside highways as follows:

a) Avoiding B3178 section at Tidwell	Private land
b) Church to Sandy Cross / Yettington	Private land
c) Avoiding Brick Cross to Sandy Cross road section	Private land / highway pavement
d) Avoiding B3178 section at Bicton	Private land
e) Avoiding Frogmore Rd section	Private land
f) B3178 section between Brick Cross and Rolle Arms	Highway pavement
Disused railway line from Budleigh to Otterton (old East Budleigh station) and beyond	Private land

With regard to item d), which describes the most dangerous section of footpath currently, a path into Bicton Gardens would clearly present issues regarding unauthorised access to the Gardens. Consequently, the more pragmatic solution is probably to cross the B3178 directly at B128 bridleway exit onto the B3178, progressing into the field opposite and connect with footpath EB2 along the edge of the field.

Item f) involves quite a long stretch of highway, so pavements between County Road track 313 (between Brick Cross and Vicarage Rd) and Vicarage Rd and / or between the EB14 / EB15 junction on the B3178 and Rolle Arms would be partial solutions.

Item e) could incorporate use of the disused railway line to link with EB1 to the River Otter.

#### Additional footpath improvements

- 1) The Parish P3 officer has identified the following improvement:

*Following up on a suggestion from Alison Smith, the P3 officer has recently sent a request to Bicton College asking them to consider dedicating as a public right-of-way the permissive path that runs for about 100m alongside the B3178 from the entrance to Home Farm until it joins the footpath from Otterton. This path ensures that walkers from Otterton to the Bicton estate do not have to walk along the main road where there is no protected footway. It is also safer for walkers from East Budleigh, even though they have to cross the main road twice. This would remove the right of the College to close the path and lead to more regular maintenance.*

- 2) An old path between Russell Drive and Oak Hill may be the subject of a claim for full access following the Devon County definitive map review exercise for East Budleigh with Bicton parish.
- 3) There are various County Road tracks in the parish which are also used by walkers. Whilst some of these are validly used for agricultural purposes, many are used by motorbike joy riders. The wheel rut left in the centre of the track makes walking difficult and potentially hazardous. Examples are the track from Kersbrook to East Budleigh, including the Nature Trail, and the track from the North end of Frogmore Rd to the B3178. Any improvement to make walking easier and more pleasant would be welcome as many would be put off by the obstacle courses currently.

#### Recommendation

That written requests for footpath and cycle way improvements be lodged with relevant landowners and County Highways.

If supportive, the Parish Council may be minded to prioritise and / or limit the 'wish list' to be forwarded.

DW 22/08/2022

## Appendix A

10.10 Devon County Council has produced a Rights of Way Improvement Plan available at [www.devon.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.devon.gov.uk/rowip) and a 10-step Guide to improving public rights of way in the Community [www.devon.gov.uk/communitypaths.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/communitypaths.pdf). These set out appropriate agenda for possible future developments. Of particular relevance to our Parish are the recommendations for:

- Creation of a new permissive path running to the north and east of Tidwell Barton and Tidwell House to enable walkers on footpath EB4 to join the B3178 opposite Kersbrook Lane, thus bypassing the very narrow and pathless S-bend section of this busy road. An alternative solution would be to establish a permissive pathway running parallel with the road on its south side (i.e. along the northern edge of the field).
  - [This is part of Tidwell Farm \(P Wastenage\) and falls within the working yard areas and grazing platform for the dairy unit. Issues of dogs, ground height and H&S.](#)
- Creation of a new permissive path running along the edge of the fields to the SE of the road that links Sandy Cross (near the entrance to Bicton Arena) with All Saints Church, thus providing a much safer route than along the narrow winding stretch of road. It would also offer beautiful views over the Budleigh Brook valley, scenery which is not visible from the roadway.
  - [This is part of Kerslake Farm \(P Wastenage\) and part of the arable rotation with minimal grazing. Issues of dogs would be an issue.](#)
- Creation of a new permissive path running along the edge of the field between the northern end of EB13 and the access to B1 to remove the need to walk along the short but narrow section of road which is quite busy.
  - [Not CDE land](#)
- Creation of a permissive pathway from bridleway B1 into Bicton Gardens to avoid the B3178.
  - [CDE land, but it would be difficult in terms of Bicton Park as they would need to control access.](#)
- Where EB15 reaches Frogmore Road, creation of a new footpath eastwards across the fields to the River Otter, thus removing the need to walk along the narrow Frogmore Road to join EB1 to access the River Otter.
  - [Part of Pulhayes Farm, and would lead to the Old Railway line, which we would not wish to open up to access, there would be no link to the main footpath along the river.](#)
- Creation of a path on the east side of B3178 between Rolle Arms and Brick Cross to avoid walking alongside the main road.
  - [Pulhayes Farm and non CDE land.](#)

10.15 The lack of dedicated cycle routes and lanes is a major factor in deterring parishioners from using bicycles to reduce the pollution generated by car use. There is only one short 1km section of designated cycleway or cycle lane within the Parish, although this route continues to Exmouth through neighbouring parishes. It is part of the national Sustrans network of cycle routes. The B3178 is a popular route with serious cyclists and was part of the route for the Devon Stage Tour of Britain Cycle Race in 2014.

### Community Action 21

The Parish Council will support the creation of a cycleway along the old railway line that runs through the Parish from Budleigh Salterton to the former East Budleigh Station.



### Key

Dedicated Cycle Way

Proposed Permissive Pathway

Country Road

Footpath

Bridleway