

ROTHERFIELD GREYS PARISH MEETING - 12 May 2025

CHILTERN SOCIETY PATH REP REPORT

I regularly walk all the footpaths of the Parish to ensure they are well signed, passable and free of obstacles like excessive vegetation, broken stiles or gates and any hazards such as fallen branches and trees. I clear nettles, brambles etc encroaching on paths and report bigger issues to the Chiltern Society. They contact the landowner and agree whether the landowner or the Chiltern Society Path Maintenance Volunteers will tackle the job. Oxford County Council ultimately has responsibility for keeping all public rights of way open but they have limited resources and tend to deal with major issues of a danger to the public. OCC no longer deal with issues on permissive paths (these are not rights of way but where the landowners let people walk or ride on their land).

The issues in my report of last year were all resolved but it tends to be in the same area where strong winds cause problems. Thus path 330/35 by Rocky Lane orchards was cleared last year but two or three more days were spent on it this year. Likewise the permissive paths on either side of the road from the war memorial down to Rocky Lane had been cleared but by November they were overgrown and half a dozen fallen trees on them. The CSPMV clear this in March 2025, but left one tree which has fallen across the electricity cable and the landowner, the National Trust, will have to deal with this.

In January, two massive beech trees came down near the junction of Paths 330/1 and 2 when a mini tornado swept through Shepherds Green. The National Trust, the councils and the owner whose land was affected managed to come to an agreement and these were cleared quickly.

An issue of interest to many residents is the closure of a well walked path from the end of Lambridge Wood Road up the hill to path 330/25. The Chiltern Society were asked to investigate but this is not a public footpath and all the correct protocols were followed. Some people are investigating whether it would be possible to have this deemed a public right of way but a similar action some 20 years ago was turned down. A WhatsApp action group has been formed and the land agent spoken to and I will report on progress on this in the future.

Anyone encountering an issue when they are out walking is encouraged to report it on the Oxfordshire County Council website under countryside access or to contact me through the Parish council.

G Franklin
May 2025