

LONG STRATTON FOOTPATH WARDEN'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2026

There is still no update to the interactive map on-line, making reporting faults on altered very difficult.

I have walked all the other paths, carrying out routine care work with my secateurs where necessary, if possible.

The problem with the curling chicken wire on the new plank bridge midway along FP18 that I mentioned in my September report was never fixed. It is now quite dangerous and I think it should be looked at soon and fixed properly (by us) as it is a man-made trip hazard.

FP1 (Hempnall Rd to A140) As always.

FP2 (North from Hempnall Rd) This path heads north before swinging round on grass to the right to cross a small bridge into the parish of Morningthorpe. The situation remains as reported in July 2025 i.e. gate off its hinges and laid to one side. I continue to monitor. It looks as if the Clay Pigeon shooting might be discontinued as have seen no fragments lately.

FP3 (between Church Lane and Hempnall Rd) The fingerpost at the Hempnall Road end is still holding firm but the hedge round it has grown immensely and should be cut back or the post soon moved. I trimmed back what I could reach to keep it visible but can now hardly reach. The fingerpost at Church Lane was also completely hidden by vegetation. It was moved from the far side of track a few years ago after being demolished by a farm vehicle! I notified Highways; it's maybe not a priority but it'll have to be done eventually. Job too big for me.

FP 4 (east from FP3) Nice well-used grassy path leading over plank bridge to field path to Morningthorpe. Plank bridge in reasonable condition..

FP5 (A short length between Church Lane and Norwich Road cutting off the corner). No problems

FP6 (from FP7 to St Michael's Church. The stile is far from ideal but negotiable.

FP7 (Now Churchfields estate to Church Lane crossing new footbridge). All good although the fingerpost from the estate has disappeared.

FP8 (A140 towards Picton Rd) Good grass path, well used. Someone beat me to the brambles at the plank bridge as the vegetation had been cut well back (Tom??) which was good to see..

FP12 Tarmac between A140 and St Michael's Rd past car park.

FP13 (Now runs from the bypass to Rhees Green) Path OK though still awkwardly bumpy from the surrounding tree planting – it was not rolled flat afterwards. The section through the field is pleasant. Fingerpost missing at Rhees Green.

FP14 (Rhees Green eastwards towards Morningthorpe) . Good path between two large fields with lots of use. It is very pleasing that the farmer never ploughs it up so it is always pleasant to use. It is appreciated.

FP15 (Star Lane to Hall Rd) This path has settled down quite nicely. The fingerpost when you come to the bypass points in the opposite direction to the actual exit. I have pointed this out.

FP16 (from Hall Rd by cottage to Mill Rd) This is from the old exit of FP15, with a new section through saplings before rejoining the old route to Mill Rd. An attempt has been made to make the stile easier by cutting back the hedge which is good but it is still too difficult for many and it needs a post to hold on to, especially as barbed wire is adjacent to it.

FP17 (from Mill Lane going east) Good path. One of the boards on the plank bridge has deteriorated; it is not a problem as it is an end one and there are 4 planks remaining which is better than most, but I have had to re-attach a direction roundel to FP18 as it was broken.

FP18 (right turn from FP17 to Mill Rd) Nice walking long grassy field edge path, then our new footbridge. The chicken wire is a real hazard; nothing has been done. The cross-piece of the stile beyond has continued to deteriorate and the whole stile has deteriorated so badly I put in an urgent report. The stile at the Mill Rd end has been removed as I had suggested and I'm surprised they did not remove this stile at the same time

FP19 (Hall Rd to Wood Green) The farmer has now cleared a path through the crop (sweetcorn).

FP20 (A140 opp. Parker's Lane to Haynton's Lane). Excellent wide path in good condition.

FP21 (Old Parker's Lane bypass roundabout to Wood Green) This is now in service although farmer has not reinstated path so rather laborious walking on that section.

FP22 (Mill Rd to RB23 at Wood Green) There are narrow tramlines in lieu of a path. Difficult to locate at Boudicca Way end as shortest crossing does not begin at fingerpost.

RB23 (Wood Green to Mill Road past Mayfields Farm). Good path

FP24 (Wood Green to join Morningthorpe FP28) At the moment this path is easily negotiable following harvesting and less tall weed growth because of drought. Where path turns diagonally across field towards Morningthorpe was not at all clear – I walked past it and I know the area. Highways can't put a repeater post up because historically the path zigzags across the field (presumably along hedges that have been uprooted) which would be nonsense now and the farmer replaces path diagonally. He usually puts in a little white stick, but not this time. I picked up a lot of flints from the field and built a small cairn to show the junction.

FP25 (part of Boudicca's Way from Parker's Lane through Tyrrel's Wood). All OK. Previous remarks hold.

FP 26 (Parker's Lane near Tyrrel's Wood, winding through fields and across bypass to old A140)

The fingerpost (reported in March) is still missing at Parker's Lane and the farmer has ploughed too close to the path so width is no more than 2 feet. At the turn to the right there is no reinstatement of path. I will address this in Spring.

I think an attempt was made to improve the surface at the A140 end as weedy but no tall weeds. However, there is a WIRE FENCE erected across the path just before it reaches the left turn to run alongside the bypass. Then when you reach the new roundabout structures, the new FP running to the fields is completely overgrown – I think

because the signage was so bad few people found it. I was coming from the other direction so walked through the trees.

FP27 (from A140 opposite the kennels to Haynton's Lane just short of Wacton Common). All good though first part ploughed up. The farmer may not have had time to replace the path. The plank bridge was being overgrown with brambles and I spent a long time cutting them away before they became a real hazard. The track to the corner was clearly visible and the last grass field edge path was very pleasant.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN

Reported to Highways

1. FP 3: fingerpost at both ends obscured by vegetation
2. FP 7: fingerpost from Churchfields estate missing.
3. FP13: fingerpost missing Rhees Green (first reported in March)
4. FP 15: misleading fingerpost
5. FP 18: dangerous stile
6. FP 26: section impassable with thick growth
7. FP 26: missing fingerpost Parker's Lane end. (first reported in March)
8. FP 26: fence across path (problem pointed out in March)
9. FP21: damaged fingerpost Wood Green end

Actions taken following my last report with thanks to the Highways Footpath division.

1. FP19: A clear path has been instated through the crop
2. FP21: Tree branch obstructing plank bridge cleared
3. FP18: Stile at Mill Lane removed

Bonnie Wade, Long Stratton Voluntary Footpath Warden

4 September 2026