

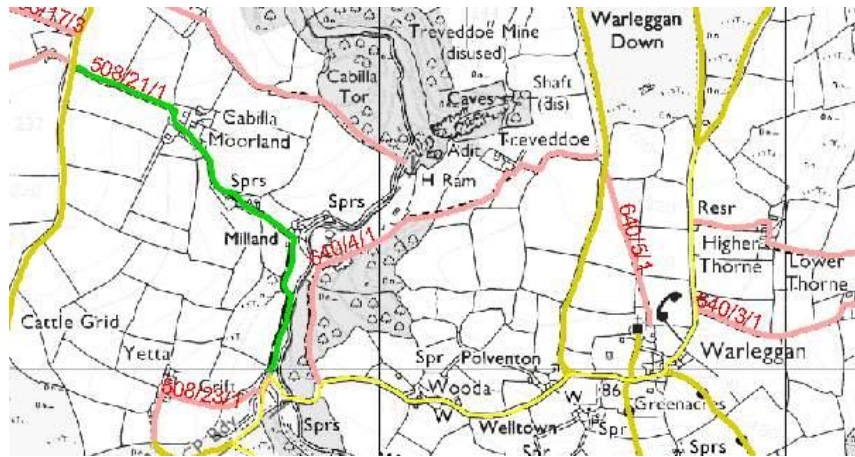
Access Cornwall

Report on a visit to Bridleway 21 in Cardinham—Cabilla Manor

This report has been prepared in light of our recent visit (September 2012) to inspect the bridleway after renovations done earlier in the year by Cornwall Council.

We had received complaints about the renovations done and despite reporting these concerns to Cornwall Council in April, no action has been taken.

The bridleway is shown in green on the map (right). Warleggan is to the East.



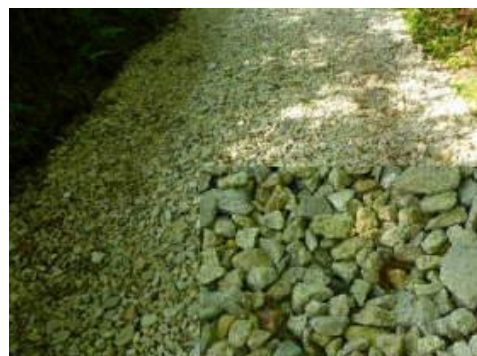
We started our visit at the southern end (pictured left) where it starts as an unmade vehicular track which serves a local property.

The track is in reasonable condition with compacted small gravel on firm base.

A short way along the track however we found a short section that had been “repaired” with large and sharp stone aggregate.

Summary of what we found

We then continued past the property where the bridleway proper starts. We soon found evidence of recent renovation work on substantial lengths of the bridleway. All renovated sections had been surfaced with a similar large and sharp aggregate that should only be used as foundation layer. We found a gate that slammed shut in two seconds with barbed wire adjacent to it. We found a “horse stile” installed in a sea of mud that is dangerous to use by horse. Full report follows:



Unsuitable Surface

All sections of the track that have been renovated are surfaced in a course and sharp aggregate that should only be used for foundation or drainage layers.

This type of surface is very nasty for horses' hooves as it easily cuts the frog. It is also not very nice to walk on.

We have instances where landowners have put down such a surface on a bridleway and Cornwall Council has taken enforcement action to remedy the surface.

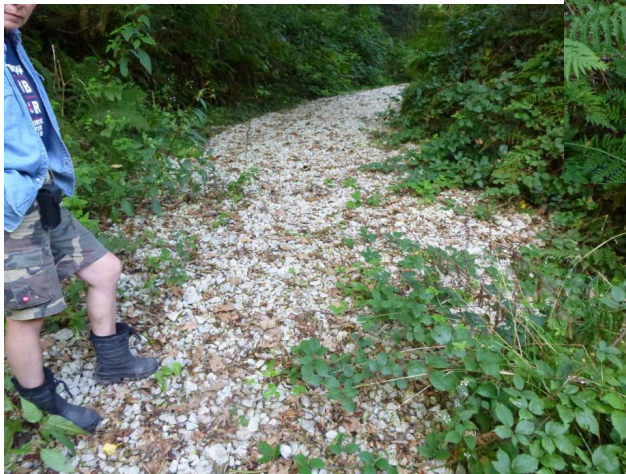
The work on this bridleway has been done by Cornwall Council and to date after nearly six months they have done nothing to correct the mistake they have made.



The sample pictures shown here attempts to show the scale of the problem but the real scale can only be appreciated by a visit. Substantial lengths of the bridleway have been resurfaced in this manner.

In the picture (left) the owner of a house whose garden is on the other side of the path has put down his own fine aggregate to provide a comfortable walking route to his garden.

More pictures show other sections of the path and a close up of the large stone aggregate.



Pictured right is another section of the renovated bridleway where a spring passes over the path before falling off the side. When we visited there had not been rain in the previous few days.

It is surprising that considering the work done on the path that a drainage pipe was not put in to take the water under the path and away. This has been normal practice on similar renovations that have been done in the West of Cornwall.



Further up the bridleway we encounter a newly hung gate with newly fitted bridleway handle.

However the gate slams to very quickly with gravity . It is on a narrow section of the track with barbed wire to the right as shown in the picture,

It would be very difficult to negotiate safely either on or off a horse.

At the top- of an incline we then found a new “Horse Stile” in a sea of deep mud.

The picture here do not show very well just how awful this is.

The intended height of the stile sleepers is greatly increased by the depth of mud and the slope,

It would be unsafe to attempt to negotiate by horse.

The whole installation raises a lot of questions - more pictures follow.



This picture attempts to show how deep and boggy the stile is. Horses are supposed to easily step over the sleepers over the sleepers

The sleepers should be no more than 8 inches deep.

The timbers on this stile are 10 inches deep and with the depth of mud below the effective height is over 16 inches.

This installation is unsafe for horses to use.



Authorisation of Horse Stiles

Gates and stiles on rights of way can only be authorised for the containment of stock unless they are historic features. A horse stile is a barrier to try and stop motor bikes using a way. A different type of authorisation is required for such barriers and they only can be authorised to prevent a proven threat not just at the whim of a landowner.

In this instance we are trying to determine if the barrier has been authorised and on what grounds. Current indications are that there has been no legitimate authorisation. We are trying to determine why such a need has been identified in such a remote place.

The current installation however is also an obstruction to the use of the bridleway by horses. These barriers also stop access by disabled users eg motorised buggies or wheel chairs, thus go against the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010.

Further up the bridleway a new gate has been installed. Considering it is a new installation the hanging has already dropped and is very difficult to open.

We did not proceed beyond this gate to go past Cabilla Manor itself as we could hear dogs barking and there have been reports of dogs running loose, which potentially discourage use of the RoW.

We are also informed that there is a cattle grid with a very narrow side gate where the bridleway meets the road at the other end - that is another issue!



New gate on the approach to Cabilla Manor