

Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council 8 September, 2021

Saving Church Brow/Ruskin's View

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Council on developments that have taken place since the last Council meeting.
2. At the last meeting it was agreed that Marie Batty would head up the Working Group charged with fundraising for the project and that Mike Marczynski would lead the group dealing with technical matters. Any updates from these Groups will be reported verbally at the meeting.
3. In view of the technical advice being provided by the Council's advisors, Fairhurst, a priority task has been to try and identify an alternative route for pedestrians if the Brow footpath has to be closed. To this end a meeting was held on 24 August involving a number of councillors, representatives of St Mary's Church and the Big Vision and officers from Cumbria County Council (CCC) and the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP).
4. If the Brow footpath has to be closed then this is likely to be at a point adjacent to the Radical Steps and as far as the entrance to the Graveyard - a copy of a plan showing the likely extent of the closure is circulated with this report. It will be the County Council who decide as and when the footpath must be closed. On the basis of the latest report from Fairhurst this is likely to be at the first sign of adverse weather conditions (eg heavy rain, storm or snowfall). Once closed the footpath may remain closed for a considerable time.
5. The only possible alternative route is as shown on the plan circulated with this report. It would involve a route through the Graveyard parallel to the existing Brow wall, entering the Glebe field through a temporary break in the wall, across the Glebe to the base of Cockpit Hill (The Motte), around the edge of The Motte, through the existing hedge and joining the Brow footpath via the gates to the Graveyard. This would be a temporary permissive footpath, probably fenced to a low level ,and with an unbound surface mainly of grass and gravel.
6. The diverted footpath would be entirely on Church land and the District Church Council (DCC) for St Mary's will be considering this in advance of the Town Council's meeting. The outcome of the DCC meeting will be reported to the Town Council. In addition, consents may be required from the Diocese of Carlisle, Historic England and South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) - representatives from St Mary's and the Big Vision are investigating these aspects.
7. There will be costs associated with providing the diverted footpath and these will largely fall to the Town Council. A scheme of works will need to be drawn up and costed. An update on this aspect will be reported verbally to the Council.

8. Following on from a previous minute of the Council a meeting was held on site with Tim Farron MP on 31 August to seek his views and support for the Town Council's initiative. Tim was accompanied by Councillors Ian Mitchell and Suzie Pye. Tim agreed to fully support the Council's efforts and has been supplied with relevant background information. Tim will approach SLDC, YDNP and CCC for support, together with the Environment Agency, and will work with the Fundraising Group to approach charities, organisations and individuals to help raise the necessary funding.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the contents of this report be noted.