



This is a summary of activities carried out by KLTC Technical Team during APR/MAY 2024 in an effort to re-open The Brow footpath using a cost-effective approach that is low risk and safe for Public access.

Monthly Report No.5 – 07MAY24 was presented to Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council at the monthly Council meeting on 08MAY24.

The Technical Team continued to make progress through APR/MAY 2024, concentrating on Monitoring Surveys and contacting Westmorland & Furness Council (W&FC) Engineers to determine what criteria must be met in order to re-open The Brow.

Despite locked gates preventing Public access along The Brow, many pedestrians continue to climb over handrails at the top of Radical Steps and walk along a well-worn path next to the footpath railings.

- *The 'lost' section of iron railings reported last month has been located at the bottom of embankment, close to the river edge.*

During the recent Music & Beer Festival (3, 4, 5 MAY24) a lock on gates closest to the Rugby Club was forced open leaving gates open all weekend. Many visitors and families used The Brow footpath to walk to and from the town centre. Many continue to rest at the first viewing platform to enjoy Ruskins View in fine weather.

- *KLTC have placed signs at each gate showing the footpath is 'CLOSED' and not taking any responsibility for harm or injury to anyone choosing to use the path.*
- *KLTC have agreed not to install any further fencing for fear of vandalism and causing injury by further climbing over spiked iron railings.*

Stage 1a. – Tree Management and Vegetation Clearance:

We now have permission from Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) to carry out minor tree cropping along the footpath and embankment. Ivy that is choking mature trees will be cut at 1.0m above ground level and damaged / loose tree branches will be removed. Two or three trees showing no sign of life (ash die back) can now be cut down and removed from the embankment. Work will progress in JUN24.

Stage 1b – Survey Monitoring of The Brow:

Monthly survey No.5 of 6 will be completed this week – 08MAY24. Data will not be released until final results have been analysed, but early results remain positive.

Additional survey points from 1996 have been uncovered along the footpath. Malcolm Hughes Ltd, our accredited surveyors, have spent considerable time and effort 'tying-in' historical data with our new monitoring data. Results are again positive, showing no significant movement of the footpath over 28 years.

Tarmac is a flexible paving and will 'heave' under stress of tree root growth. Cracks in the footpath surface are apparent adjacent to dense trees to the North – Rugby Club end.

Further surveys will be required at the top of the embankment to check the condition of footpath support (existing gabions and concrete edge beams).

Drainage over the embankment:

A proposed drainage survey for last month was put 'ON HOLD' because it was considered not the best use of funds at £2040 + VAT. That money can be used instead for high pressure jetting - clearing 3No. drains at the top of the embankment and connecting new pvc pipelines to carry surface water directly to the river Lune below. All pipes will be covered with a woven geotextile blanket (or approved hessian) and laid with suitable grass seed to hide the pipelines.

Westmorland & Furness Council (WFC):

The Team is in contact with Senior Engineers at Westmorland & Furness Council (W&FC). We finally have a site meeting arranged for this month – 22MAY24. Items for discussion include, but are not limited to:-

- *Survey Monitoring results to date;*
- *Any movement of the footpath and embankment over the past 30 years;*
- *Qualitative v. Quantitative Assessment;*
- *Risk assessment of Public using the footpath – LOW risk;*
- *Remedial works to be carried out;*
- *Resurfacing the footpath.*
- *Can KLTC reassign The Brow footpath a Permissive Path...?*
- *Can KLTC restrict access along the footpath by locking gates during severe weather forecasts...?*
- *Can KLTC re-open part of The Brow – up to the first viewpoint (St Marys viewpoint).*

Discussions are ongoing to determine what criteria is required to satisfy the Council in order to re-open The Brow. Remedial construction work and future monitoring will be our main tasks with details presented to Council Engineers and Countryside Officers.

Kind regards
Malcolm

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 Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council

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