

## Ebury Way News

March 2023

The Ebury Way was established on the route of the Watford & Rickmansworth Railway, closely linked with Lord Ebury, a prominent enthusiast for the new railways, whose house at Moor Park was close to the new Rickmansworth Station. The route is now a part of the Sustrans network (NCR 6/61) linking Slough to St.Albans and beyond. Sustrans does not own the land but has agreements with the landowner which is often a local authority. The Ebury Way is well used by walkers, runners and cyclists.

Most of the maintenance on Sustrans routes is carried out by volunteers, but larger projects are often planned, managed and funded by local government.

A lot of good work has been done: In March this year, a large section of the Ebury Way was cleared of vegetation and a new surface covering provided. I believe the work was organised and funded by Three Rivers District Council.

Also in March many SPOKES and Sustrans volunteers cleared a large amount of vegetation ingress on the route near to the Vicarage Road junction.



*Clearing the Ebury Way near Vicarage Road*

However, there are still ongoing problems as detailed on the next page.

## Issue at Rickmansworth end of Ebury Way

Around 20 years ago, in a project called “Access for All” funded through Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) the access to the Ebury Way from Church Road, Rickmansworth was improved by providing a hard surface and reducing the inclines on the route near the canal basin.

This part of the Ebury Way has become difficult to use, due to tree roots breaking up the surface and redevelopment on the adjacent site. The tree roots have raised the surface making it hazardous for people on wheels. The new tall building behind the high fence which was erected on part of the existing route, has made it hard to see or avoid obstructions on the surface.



*Ebury Way at the Rickmansworth end by the Travis Perkins development*

The current condition of the route has made it less attractive deterring many people from using it. Whilst there are alternative routes around this area, none are safe or satisfactory at present.

## How can this problem be remedied?

It is believed that the freehold of land is held by the “Canal & River Trust”, however I have been advised that the “Canal & River Trust” are unlikely to put any money into resolving the issue.

The lack of light and safety issues were made worse by the recent development.

Proposals were made in 2021 to Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) on how to overcome the issue. One of the options was to divert the route onto TRDC land, while another was to cut back the trees, remove the roots and build up the surface of the path.

The current position of Three Rivers District Council is that the route is not on their land and probably not their issue.

**The HCC - Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW)** service is about to begin engagement with stakeholders including SPOKES as they prepare a plan for improving the Ebury Way.

SPOKES and other stakeholders will continue to encourage local officialdom to make the safe and easy to use.

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