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Footpath 85
from Snelgate
Cottages to
Back Lane



Location		Public Footpath crossing Clandon Manor Farm from Old Epsom Road (Snelgate Cottages) to Back Lane
History	o	The 7-acre horse pasture was sold in 2000 to a property developer and has been unused since. Until 2008, this footpath was interrupted by several rows of redundant electric fencing used as Horse Paddock enclosures. It now crosses a largely open field. The field was once horse pasture and is expected to return to be the same in future when the property is finally purchased from the developer. The Footpath is used daily mainly by villagers and occasional hikers.
Habitats	✓	The field features short to tall grasses with large tracts of Spear and Creeping Thistles, Nettles and a large amount of Ragwort. Closeby the northern and southern hedges are tall featuring mature Hawthorn, Elm, Ash. The western boundary features mature Oaks and Ground Elder
Species Priority	✓	See attached Species list When horses used the field, bare earth patches offered mud used by swallows to build nests in the local barns and houses. The return of the horses one day should see the arrival and nesting of more Swallows and Martins. The Thistle patches have been seen to attract a flock of 30 - 40 Goldfinches in September and the Ragwort are the unique foodplant for the very attractive Cinnabar moth. The fallow field undoubtedly supports a large number of mice and voles which in turn attract Kestrels and Owls.
Current Management	o	The current property developer owner of the field occasionally 'tops' the field, but does no specific work to maintain easy and open access along the footpath.
	o	Occasional strimming by PC contractor of first 50 metres to allow access through the first thistle area. Local resident has occasionally introduced high set mower to keep footpath open through two dense areas of thistles.
	o	The current owner recently burnt a dead and fallen Chestnut tree that was a superb wildlife habitat in its own right.
Management and Policy Guidance	1	Current and future owners should be encouraged to re-align the Public Footpath with a direct line between the 2 styles at each end and clearly mark its line by maintaining a low cut grass path at least 1.5 metres wide along its length. This should be cut monthly between April and August.
	2	A clearly mowed grass footpath directs users to follow the correct footpath line without the need for signs and will discourage them erring from the designated route. The open field affords users pleasant views to the north.
	3	In the absence of the owners providing this level of Footpath maintenance, the PC should schedule its contractor to do so.
	4	While local landowners may have concerns of thistle seeds spreading to gardens in the village and Ragwort spreading to adjacent horse fields, both species support diverse insects and birds so properly 'managed' areas of these plants should be encouraged to be retained for wildlife value.