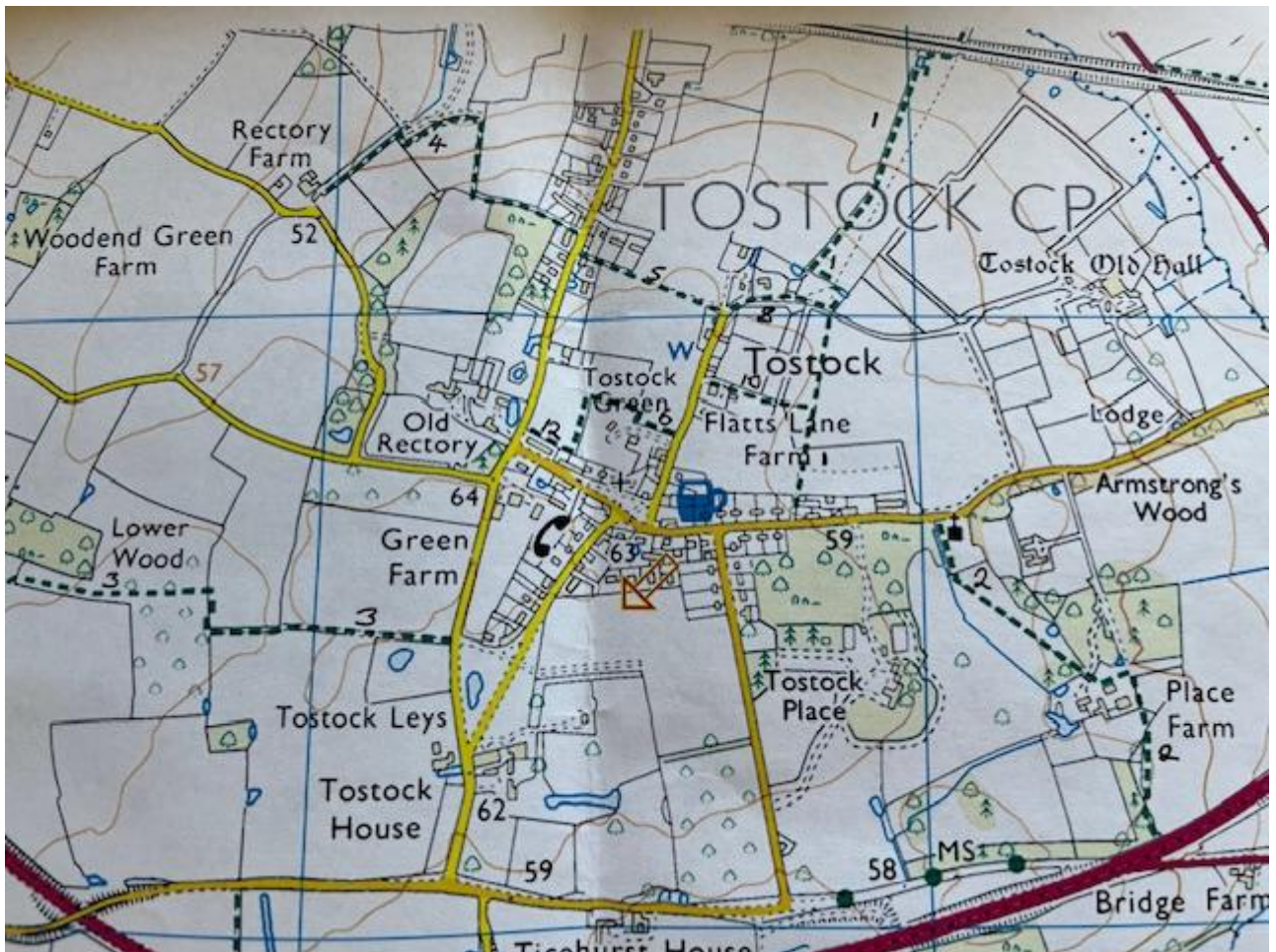


## Report on the State of the Tostock Village Footpaths – 01/03/2025

### **Introduction**

Over the last month or so I have managed (between the bouts of poor weather) to walk all the footpaths within the village limits as per the current Footpath Map which is on the Suffolk County Council Public Right of Ways website – see below.

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I also checked the Suffolk County Council byways reporting tool and we have three issues regarding our footpaths on there all relating to signage damage and put on the reporting tool in September 2024.

### **Findings / Issues**

All the footpaths listed on the map were in my opinion passable and in decent condition albeit some of the signage is lacking in some areas especially:

- A. Footpath 1 where it goes out over the fields towards the railway and Arch Farm.
- B. Footpath 3 that goes out towards Beyton.

There are also the issues logged on the byway's website regarding the signage (Footpaths 5 and 8)

Also, and this always disappoints me, there are clearly dog owners who don't pick up after their dogs and this is mainly on the paths close into the village and is present on all of them. As a dog owner I really don't understand this.

However, the main issue is regarding the footpath which goes out from Church Road down the side of the Church (Footpath 2) which was also highlighted in the report which was produced in June 2020 which was sent to the West Suffolk Council in July 2020.

Having read that report I would say that the issues highlighted there are still there (so no action taken) and in fact I would say that it has just deteriorated further.

In terms of what I saw, the footpath down the side of the church is passable until you get close to the first stile (which is signed as a footpath) basically there is a patch of land leading to the stile which has not been cleared and is full of nettles which because of the time of year have all died back.

That first stile leads directly into a horse field which is bordered by an electric fence – hence no way through for walkers.



It is possible to go round the edges of the horse fields (avoiding the electric fencing) as there is a series of tracks but obviously you are not on the footpath. However, when you get round to the end of the fields where the footpath should lead to a stile to go through Farm Place/GL Cars you are faced with a very boggy and totally overgrown area.



### **Summary**

I did contact the byways office to find out what the suggested way to proceed with the footpath (No 2) from the Church and I was told to log it all on their Byways portal which I am happy to do but the lady I spoke too did give me the impression that the process for resolving this would be very lengthy.

I didn't go through the boggy overgrown area mainly as I didn't have the footwear to cope with the conditions and, I had my dog with me but can do that in the near future as the area dries out.

Obviously, I have no experience of this kind of thing, so I am open to any suggestions prior to logging the issues on the portal.

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