

P3 report May 2022

DCC continues to provide support for the maintenance of footpaths through the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme with funds available to provide equipment and materials for the volunteers who do some very valuable work. However, with a reduced number of volunteers we are increasingly dependent on contractors to keep on top of everything that needs to be done.

With large numbers of visitors to the area, the section of Coastal Path through Hope Cove needs regular attention and DCC has accepted that this is more than can be managed by the volunteers and have therefore increased our grant so that the path can be kept in good order by contractors. They are also providing funds to keep the unmetalled roads, such as Aunt Betsy's Lane, in a better condition than they have been for many years.

Last year the expenditure on contracted work was just over £1100. Along with strimmer servicing and other volunteer costs the total expenditure on footpath maintenance was £1290. Income amounted to £1124 (£324 carried over from the previous year plus a grant of £800), this means that there was an overspend of £166. This year the grant has been increased to £1500. This is encouraging, but with the fees charged by the contractor increasing and with more work being carried out by them it still might not cover the full cost.

During the last two years there has been a large increase in the number of people using our footpaths, particularly the section of Coastal Path between Hope Cove and Thurlestone and this has caused some deterioration and erosion. The County Council is responsible for major work on the coastal path and has recently undertaken some large scale repairs to path at the South Milton Sands end. At the Hope Cove end, the steep grass above the steps leading from the square is badly worn and gullies are forming when the rain is heavy. DCC should be repairing this section in due course. No other major works are required on our footpaths at the moment.

Richard Pollard

Footpath Officer