

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORT

NAME: Cllr David Henderson

TOPIC: Footpaths

DATE: 22/08/25

UPDATE SINCE LAST REPORT

This inspection of the footpaths was carried out during w/c 18th August in line with the agreed six-monthly schedule, with the last inspection being conducted during March 2025.

The weather during this summer has been exceptionally dry, impacting the condition of all the unmade paths, with the ground breaking up in several areas resulting in extra care having to be taken when using these paths. Abbey Fields has suffered the most due to the dry conditions.

1. Jubilee Fields

The repairs to the top end of the path have now been completed and this has resulted in some really positive feedback from those who make use of it. I hope you agree and can see from the photos that it dramatically improves the ease of walking and appearance of the path when compared to its previous condition.

It's really good to be able to say we have a footpath that now runs from end to end in really good shape.



Category has now moved to category A.

1b. Abbey Fields

The March visit found the path to be in a poor condition due to heavy rain. As stated earlier we have been subject to a very long dry period which has changed its condition quite considerably. Many areas along the path have been subject to breaking up and extra care should now be taken if using it. Also, the area of footpath in the corner of the fields adjacent to the allotments has become extremely overgrown (see photos) and is currently difficult to access. I believe this will be dealt with several weeks from now when it is trimmed back. We are also seeing rubbish being left at times at the table in this corner also. Perhaps a notice attached to the table encouraging people to take their rubbish home would help.



Overall condition remains at Category B.

1c. Allotment Path

Fully dried out now as compared to March, however it remains very uneven and not that suitable to walking on. Fortunately, it is only a very short expanse of path.



Overall condition remains at Category C.

1d. Cemetery Path

Both the gate and the pavement at the entrance to the cemetery have still not been repaired and the cracking is gradually worsening (see below). The path through the cemetery was found to be in reasonable condition and shows an improvement over its condition when inspected in March.

Donation now in situ to accommodate repairs to the gate with survey due to be carried out to determine overall costs for all necessary repairs.

Overall condition remains at category B.



1e. Bleachfield Street Swing Park Access

Found to be in a similar condition to the last visit in March.

Overall condition remains at category B and no repairs required at this time.

Remains category B.

1f. Westbury Park

The overall condition of the paths has yet again found to be acceptable but we should consider the removal of some of the stones at the second entrance to make it easier for those with children to enter the park. The very dry weather has had no impact on the overall condition of the path. I would like however a second opinion on any potential risk to the public from the gap at the end of the wooden steps as you enter the park at the first entrance (nearest to the roundabout).



Remains at category B.

- 1. Visit to Westbury Park to conduct Risk Assessment on the wooden steps and consideration to removal of stones at second entrance.**
- 2. Awaiting output from planned survey required to determine repairs and cost of work to the Cemetery path around the gates.**
- 3. Formal inspection to all paths to be repeated in 6 months.**
- 4. Clarification is required on the ownership of the footbridge connecting Abbey Fields and the Nature Reserve as this area is now becoming overgrown.**

Appendix – note of category definitions

The footpaths inspected have each been assigned one of the following categories.

Category A - in good condition and safe for use

Category B - current condition requires monitoring but still deemed safe for use

Category C - in need of repair, however can still be used with care being applied

Category D - unsafe and not recommended for public use