

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL
LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORT

NAME: Cllr David Henderson

TOPIC: Footpaths

DATE: 27/03/26

UPDATE SINCE LAST REPORT

This inspection of the footpaths was carried out during w/c 9th March in line with the agreed six-monthly schedule, with the last inspection being conducted during August 2025.

Following the very dry summer and autumn the early part of 2026 has been extremely wet. Inspection was delayed until the worst of the wet weather had passed.

1. Jubilee Fields

The repairs to the top end of the path have held well and overall, the footpath from the orchard to the end of the grassy area heading for the Greig Hall is in good condition. Unfortunately, the footpath between this point and the marker is now showing signs of being undermined and breaking up – see picture below.



Category A, but the part of the path mentioned above needs to be kept under review.

2. Abbey Fields

The recent visit found the footpath to be in a poor condition due to the period of wet weather. Many areas along the path were found to be extremely difficult to negotiate with extreme care being required. I am sure as the weather improves it will start to dry out and become less difficult to use.



Start of path into nature reserve is very uneven (not ATC responsibility)

Overall condition remains at Category B.

3. Allotment Path (between School Road and Abbey Fields)

This continues to be very uneven and difficult to walk on. Fortunately, it is only a very short expanse of path.



Overall condition remains at Category C.

4. Cemetery Path

As the pictures below show repairs to the roof of the lychgate have been completed and the result is excellent. The replacement of the gates is planned to commence soon. The path under the lychgate is in a poor condition, however investigation has now commenced into how and when the path is repaired. The path through the cemetery is in a good condition benefiting from the use of wood chippings as required.



Overall condition remains at category B.

5. Bleachfield Street Swing Park Access

Since the last inspection in August there has been some deterioration to the condition of the surface of the path. It is recommended that it is assessed periodically and considered for future repairs.



Remains category B.

6. Westbury Park

The informal access to the park (nearest the Birmingham roundabout) is uneven and quite difficult to negotiate (left picture). The middle entrance from the Arden Road appears to be intended to be accessible however the condition of the surface is such that inspection for repair is required (middle picture).

The path through the park is 'lumpy' and consideration should be given to levelling areas where this is particularly noticeable (eg right hand picture).



Condition has worsened to category C.

Recommendations

1. Visit to Westbury Park to conduct Risk Assessment on the informal entrance, accessible entrance and uneven areas along the path by the river.
2. Progress survey currently underway to determine repairs and cost of work to the Cemetery path around the gates.
3. Inspect path beside river at Greig Hall end of Jubilee Fields.
4. Inspect path running from end of Bleachfield Road alongside Bleachfield Park.
5. Formal inspection to all paths to be repeated in 6 months.

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