

Details of a Survey of the Stone Stiles of Cam in March 2007

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Introduction

Part of the Local Heritage Initiative Lottery Fund Grant covered the surveying and maintenance of Cam's historic stone stiles. The locations of the stone stiles have already been identified and they have been placed on a map of the Cam area.

Some of the stone stiles have been included in a stone stiles walk to encourage the public to view them and a Stone Stiles Walk leaflet has been published. A photographic record of the stone stiles walk has been created and presented to the public as a 'virtual' Stone Stiles Walk, benefiting those unable to walk on rough terrain.

This survey was carried out in the winter months, March 07, when the vegetation was light. It is intended that the results be used to assess the condition of the stiles and to identify where maintenance is necessary and beneficial.

Survey Results

All of Cam's recorded stone stiles were visited and photographed on the afternoon of the 18th March 2007 by four members of the Cam Wildlife Group. The information gathered is presented in this section. All map references are for OS Explorer Map 167, 1:25,000.

Stone Stile 1

This is a group of three stiles in the Upthorpe/Cam Green area of the parish. They have been identified as SS1, SS1A and SS1B. SS1 is at map reference 760000 and SS1A and SS1B are close together at 760001.



SS1 is on CCA63 and is in good condition. It is leaning slightly but is partially supported by the posts of the adjacent wooden stile. It could be raised to the vertical but it is probably not worth the effort.



SS1A is on CCA60 and is very low. It is probably a complete stile leaning forward from the wooden stile and sunk deep into the ground. It is worn where walkers step onto it after crossing the wooden stile. With considerable effort it could be excavated and raised to the vertical but the wooden stile would need to be rebuilt.



SS1B is on CCA64 by the wooden stile immediately to the west of SS1A. It is deep within the hedge and covered in moss and grass making it difficult to spot. The removal of the grass and other plants to make it more visible would be beneficial.

Stone Stile 2



SS2 is a single stile to the west of Field Lane at the start of paths CCA13 and CCA14 - map reference 738004 (near to the mobile phone mast). The stone is broken but the larger section is upright and supported and protected by the wooden stile. No work is required on this stile.

Stone Stile 3



SS3 is a single stile beyond an excavated area on CCA13, the same path as SS2. It is at map reference 734004. It is leaning slightly away from the wooden stile and is supported by a small earth bank covered in vegetation which grows across the stone in summer. The stone could be raised to the vertical and supported on the earth bank side by a protective wooden frame. The dense vegetation could be removed from the earth bank making it more visible.

Stone Stile 3A



This is not necessarily a stone stile but we felt that it probably was. It is at map reference 734003 next to a spring that feeds a trough and a few metres down hill from a wooden stile. It is in the same boundary hedge as SS3 but about a hundred metres to the south adjacent to a different footpath, CCA10. It is close to horizontal and broken and would require considerable effort to raise it in a suitable position.

Stone Stile 4



SS4 is a single stile on CCA13 at map reference 733004. It is leaning away from the wooden stile and appears to have a piece broken off and lying nearby. The stone could be raised to vertical, incorporating the broken bit if appropriate, and incorporated into the wooden stile. This would require considerable effort and the rebuilding of the wooden stile.

Stone Stile 5



SS5 is at the top of a bank on the east side of Field Lane on CCA20 at map reference 737007. It is upright, incorporated into a wooden stile and supported on each side by concrete steps. No work is required on this stile.

Stone Stile 6



SS6 is on CCA40, approximately at map reference 740004. It is broken in two with one half close to horizontal and the other half close to vertical. It has no supporting frame. It could be put together in a vertical position and covered by a wooden stile.

Stone Stile 7

This stile on CCA43 at map reference 742004 was destroyed in 2001 by workmen installing a kissing gate.

Stone Stile 8



SS8 is near to the Jubilee Field at Draycott on CCA22 at map reference 745010. It lies horizontal next to a wooden stile and appears to be complete although it isn't obvious which edge it originally stood on. With considerable effort it could be raised and incorporated into the wooden stile.

Stone Stile 9



SS9 is a fragment of what could have been a stone stile lying next to a wooden stile on CCA24 at map reference 744015. It is not obvious how it relates to an original stone stile. It could be secured within the existing wooden stile to protect it.

Stone Stile 10



SS10 is close to SS9 on CCA24 at map reference 745015. It stands in the hedgerow next to a wooden stile and is close to vertical. The hedge could be cut back on one side to make it more visible.

Stone Stile 11



SS11 is in the same footpath as SS9 and SS10, CCA24, at map reference 746016. It stands vertically in between two wooden stiles and requires no work doing to it.

Stone Stile 12



SS12 is just around the corner from SS11, but on CCA25, and at the same map reference 746016. It looks damaged but is vertical and well supported in a wooden stile. No work is required on it.

Stone Stile 13



SS13 is the junction of Blind Lane, Elstub Lane and a footpath to Woodfield, CCA50. It is on the edge of the Bovis Estate at map reference 745002. The stone is in two halves and they have been positioned on either side of the start of the footpath to Woodfield. Given that the footpath has been converted to a 'snicket' or urban alley it is not clear how the stile could be replaced. It is probably best left where it is.

Stone Stile 14



SS14 is on the path between SS4 and SS5, CCA12. It stands next to a wooden stile at map reference 735005. It is close to vertical but is covered by brambles. The brambles could be cut back to make it more visible in summer.

Stone Stile 15



This is a recently discovered stile in Woodend Lane. It is not on an existing footpath but is fairly close to the start of CCA19 and CCA27 and is probably the original starting point of

CCA19. It is at map reference 744007. It is hidden deep in the hedge but appears to be in good condition.

Recommendations

It is recommended that permission is sought from landowners to cut back vegetation, where necessary, to make the stone stiles more visible. A plan should then be created to carry out the following work if sanctioned by the County Archaeologist:

1. Create labelled marker posts for each remaining stone stile to ensure that they are recognised as historical artefacts and don't get destroyed like SS7.
2. SS1A should be raised and set upright with a wooden framework to help support it and protect it from further damage.
3. SS3 should be raised to the vertical against the existing wooden fence.
4. SS4 should be raised and set upright with a wooden framework to help support it and protect it from further damage. The broken section could be incorporated.
5. The broken half of SS6 should be reset in its original position and the completed stile supported/protected by a wooden frame.

