To Oxford Mail, letters page

From Dr Hazel Dawe, Cowley Area Transport Group, 53 Bulan Road, Oxford OX3 7HU - 079444 71083

26th February 2021

Dear Editor,

When is a footpath not a footpath? When the County Council suddenly decides that it doesn’t want to maintain it. The Council has decided to delete a public footpath from the definitive County map of Public Rights of Way, meaning that they would no longer be responsible for its regular upkeep and maintenance.

The Oxford footpath in question runs from Beresford Close (off Crescent road) to William Morris Close, where the Tyndale Community School has been built along with a new development of 86 flats under construction. It links the school to the wider community and forms a traffic free alternative to the congested and unpleasant Hollow Way. As such it is an ideal right of way to help promote Active Travel to school.

The footpath was entered into the definitive map, presumably when Beresford Close was first built. This makes it County responsibility, but they did not formally adopt it as a Public Right of Way when this is normal practice for most new developments. Their action now directly contradicts the County council’s alleged commitment to promoting Active Travel - by providing and maintaining a pleasant walking and cycling environment. Perhaps the County Council would like to explain why it’s commitment to Active Travel suddenly ceases to exist if it sees a means of avoiding expense?

Yours faithfully

Hazel Dawe, Cowley Area Transport Group.