Gloucestershire's Stone Stiles: An Update

This is an update on last September's post about a *project* to record all the stone stiles in Gloucestershire. Peter Wilson reports a "fantastic" response. More about that below and keep reading to find out about a special role for Stinchcombe.

Surprises

Three things have surprised Peter:

- the enthusiastic support (over 120 contributors)
- the extraordinary number of stone stiles already reported (over 400)
- the discovery of many stiles tossed aside or where there is no longer a path

Types of Stile Reported

So far there are few step stiles, more squeeze stiles than anticipated, but an abundance of slab stiles. This ties in with findings in Stinchcombe where we've found one squeeze stile, five slab stiles and no step stiles at all. Peter reasons that slab stiles were the best at preventing those Cotswold sheep from roaming. They are also a tricky or even impossible obstacle for some walkers! As a result, alternative access through boundary walls and hedges exists in many places. It would be a great shame if that led to these historical landscape features being abandoned.



An example of a step stile (not in Stinchcombe)



A step stile on Park Lane, Stancombe Park, Stinchcombe



A disused slab stile in Stinchcombe parish, near Snitend Bridge

Getting Recognition for Stone Stiles

Like it or loathe it, Brexit is changing farming support. In future, public money will support farmers who deliver public benefits. This is the perfect time to emphasise the historic landscape value of stiles. Stone stiles, along with stone walls, also provide an important wildlife habitat. Furthermore, learning about them can stimulate an interest in the countryside.

But … this integral part of the landscape is unprotected and barely mentioned in the ***Countryside Stewardship Scheme***. Peter has secured the support of ***Siobhan Baillie MP***, who is taking up the matter with ***Defra***. Others involved in the project are contacting their own MPs. The aim is to get stone stiles recognised in Defra's planning processes and ideally within the stewardship schemes.

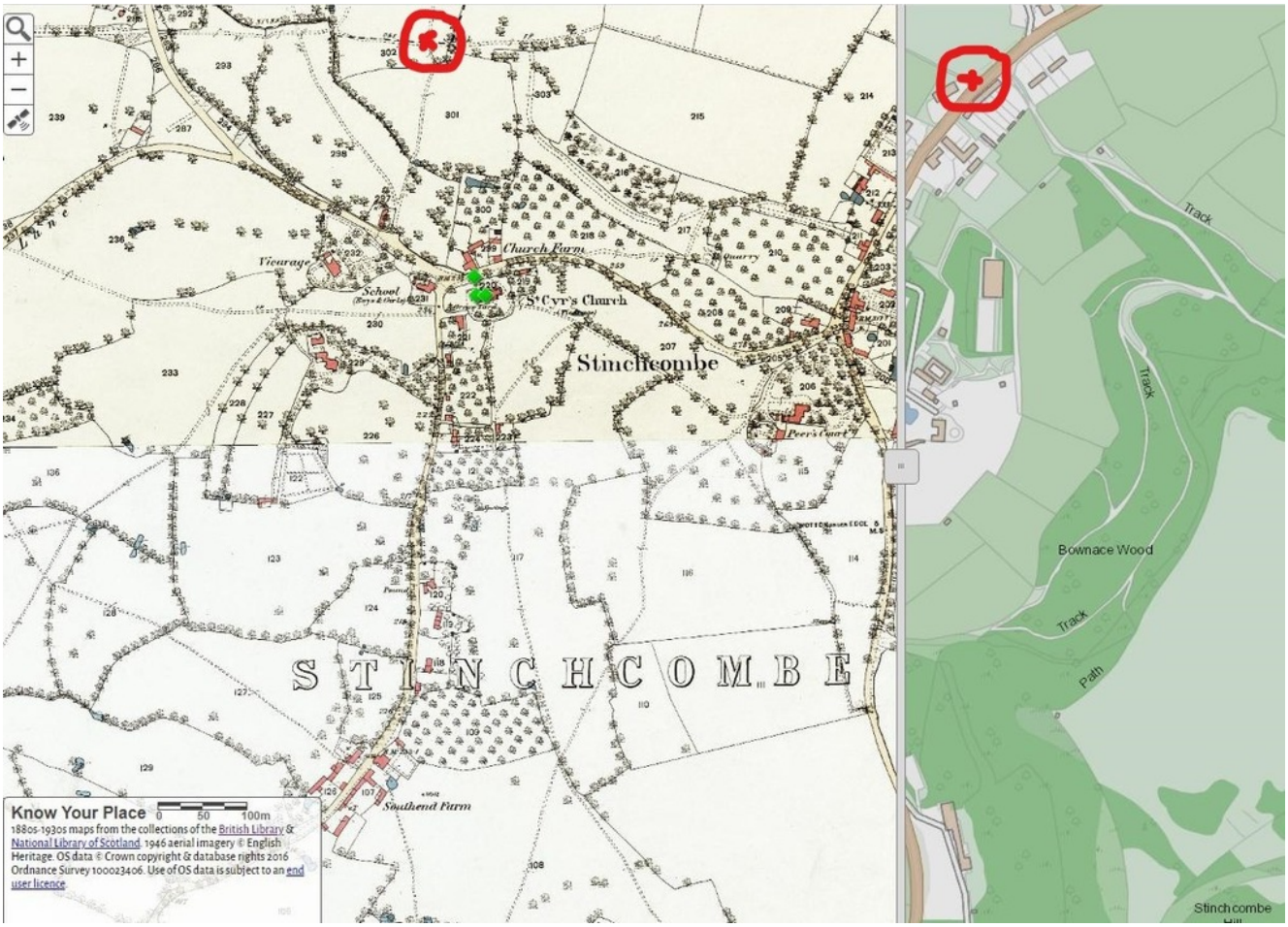
Stinchcombe's Stone Stiles

There could be more to find – are you still looking?

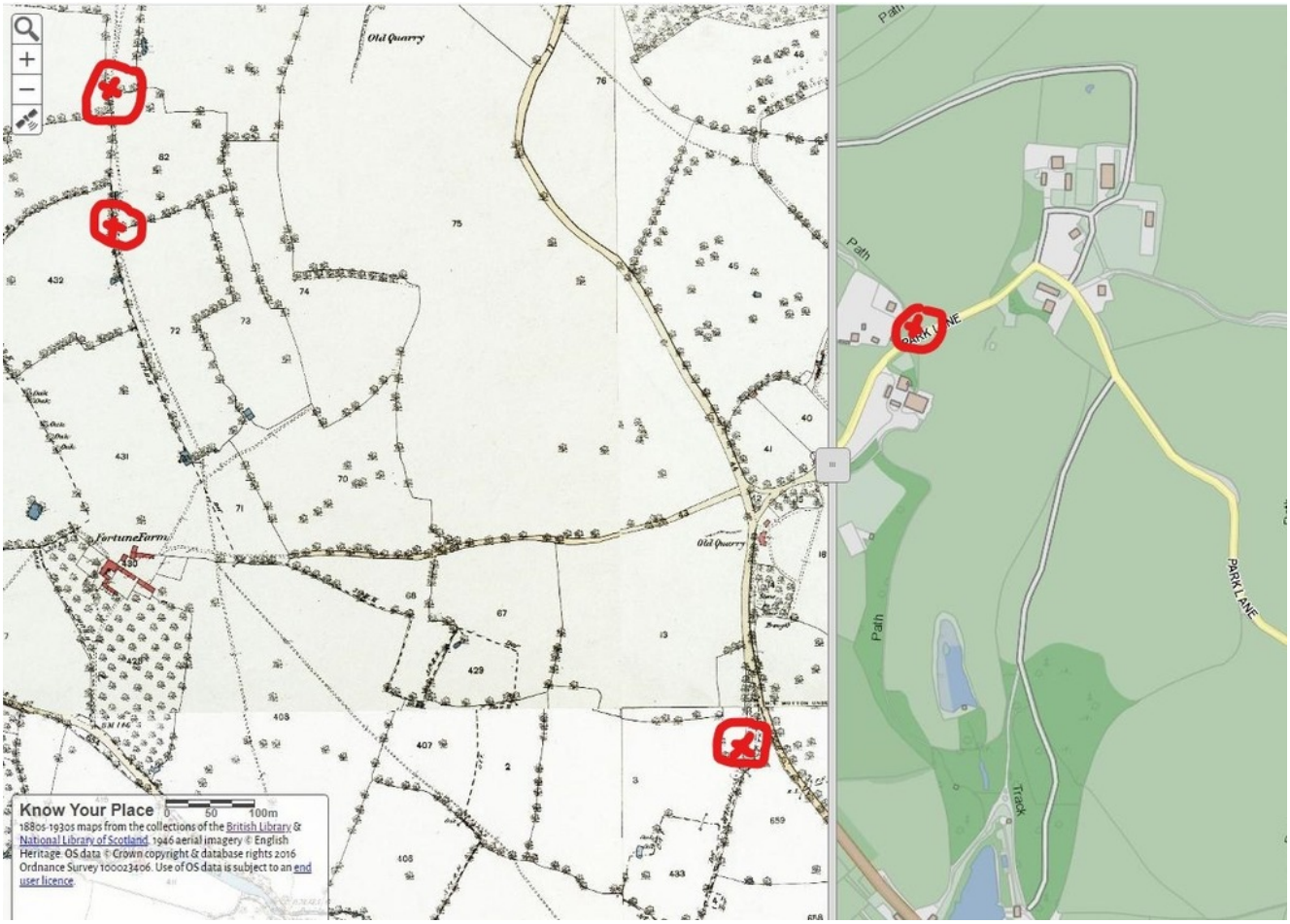
Peter is especially keen that people keep an eye out for disused stone stiles. They may highlight lost rights of way that it is not too late to restore. Two Gloucestershire rambling clubs are now publicising the project.

Remember, disused stone stiles are usually near the modern path rather than actually on it. No need to stray from the path though – all those found have been visible from a public right of way.

The two maps show the locations of the six stiles already identified in our parish. I am most grateful to ***Gloucestershire Archives*** and ***Know Your Place*** for permission to use screenshots from the Know Your Place digitial mapping project. If you haven't explored the maps at ***Know Your Place Gloucestershire*** you have a treat in store.



Know Your Place screenshot of north Stinchcombe – stone stiles marked with red crosses
(with the kind permission of Gloucestershire Archives and Know Your Place)



Know Your Place screenshot of south Stinchcombe – stone stiles marked with red crosses
(With the kind permission of Gloucestershire Archives and Know Your Place)

A Special Role for Stinchcombe

Stinchcombe History Society has been asked to pilot the next phase of the project – collection of information for the proposed interactive App. The App will combine OS map recording with a detailed record for each stile. The plan is for the pilot to take place in only one parish in the whole of Gloucestershire. We are honoured and very excited to be chosen.

What is more, as you can see from the brief below, the pilot has the potential to be a real community effort. If you're a keen photographer, walker, map reader, local historian, archaeologist or geologist **WE WANT YOU**!

The Brief for the Pilot

1. Add up to four photographs of each stile and its landscape in an agreed format.
2. Identify the type of stone in any adjacent stone wall, possible source, any signs of re-use, and age since quarried/sited
3. Identify type of stile, type and source of stile stone used and any signs of reuse.
4. Relate the site to the nearest known ancient burial site(s) and considering whether this is the source of the stone.
5. Try to determine the date of the stile and adjacent wall (often after a Land Enclosure Act).
6. Note and investigate any changes made to the stile.
7. Verify the OS co-ordinates.
8. Note the right of way, if applicable, on which the stile is located.
9. Describe the condition of stile and pathway and how it used or bypassed, including suitability for people with disabilities.
10. For disused stiles, seek out any knowledge of the former pathway.
11. Create in partnership with others succinct, informative notes in a format suitable for addition to the App, together with appropriate photographs.

Contact

If you would like to get involved with the pilot, please contact Kath.

Any further stone stiles you find in the parish can be reported to Peter using the form you can download ***here***. If you prefer, I can fill the form in, crediting you as the finder.

Kath Hudson



Clingre Lane a stone step stile standing in front of a wire fence with the roots of a tree to its right

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New Multi-Storey Hotel

New Multi-Storey Hotel built on the outskirts of Stinchcombe

A new Multi-Storey has been unveiled, without planning permission, at Leaf & Ground. A popular venue on the village outskirts. The builder, Mr J. Pinch has been quoted as saying it was built from, snail shells, corks, twigs and cones.

No Planning Permission or Building Control

It is understood that the Hotel has been built without Planning Permission or Building Control and that SDC is unaware of the effect a new Multi Storey Hotel will have on the local skyline

New Tenants

Mr Pinch was hoping the the new Tenants would soon be arriving in the area and that the Hotel would soon be fully occupied.

Further advice

If you would like to complain please see the following helpful links

- Citizens Advice
- Neighbour Disputes GOV.UK
- Shelter

NHS COVID app release date

And the date is…

The date for the release of the new NHS COVID-19 contact-tracing app is **THURSDAY 24th September**. It will then be launched across England and Wales according to the UK Gov.

Businesses are getting ready

Businesses across England and Wales like pubs, restaurants,

hairdressers and cinemas are at present being urged to ensure they have NHS QR code posters visible on entry. This will enable customers who have downloaded the new NHS COVID-19 app to use the NHS smartphone app to easily check-in.

The government are also asking businesses and venues to display the new QR codes, which can be downloaded via a website to display as posters, in premises.

With coronavirus cases rising in the UK over the last few weeks it is essential businesses capitalise on the benefits QR codes which bring to protect both themselves and their customers.

Businesses who are already using their own QR system are being encouraged to switch to the NHS Test and Trace QR code. An alternative check-in method must also be maintained to collect the contact details of those customers who don't have the app.

After Thursday 24th September

Following the launch of the new NHS COVID-19 app, customers and visitors in England and Wales will be able to check-in on entry with their phone instead of filling out a check-in book or tool specific to a business. This will allow NHS Test and Trace to easily contact customers with public health advice should there be a COVID-19 outbreak.

What the app does regarding Check-in

1. When someone enters a venue and scans an official QR poster, the venue information will be logged on the user's phone.
2. Each venue has its own Location Identity.
3. The location information scanned on entry will stay on a user's phone for 21 days.
4. **NO INFORMATION** at any time is send from your phone to the government.

5. If in the next 21 days a coronavirus outbreak is identified at that location, the venue ID in question will be sent to ALL devices.
6. The App will check if users have been at that location and if so, users may get an alert with advice on what to do based on the level of risk.

What else does the app do?

The full details can be seen the the app website. However it can help with the following:

- Tracing (using a risk-scoring algorithm it works out how likely you are to infect or be infected by contacts)
- Alerts (What is you Postcode risk level)
- Check-in (see above)
- Symptoms (you can report your symptoms onto the app)
- Testing (it will advise you how to book a test if needed)
- Isolating (it provides a self isolating countdown)

"World Beating app"

Now that the app is here on Thursday, it will of course need for the large percentage of the population to download, install and carry their phone around at all times. People will need also to switch their phones on! I am happy that no information is now stored in a central database and I do hope that it proves to be world beating. It however, very similar to app other countries have been using for quite some time.

COVID Testing returns to Rugby Club

Covid Testing Unit

The mobile testing unit will be back at the Stinchcombe Rugby Club according to the Gloucestershire County Council website next week. Wed 23rd until Fri 25th September.

Anyone **with symptoms of Covid-19** can have a test. You must book a test in advance. Please do not turn up to one of the locations without booking anyone without a booking risks being turned away.

To book a test

To book a test or for more information on testing, go to the NHS website or call 119.

Phone Box Vandal Confesses

Phone Box Update by Nola

I confess – I am the phone box vandal! After much delay, the Parish Council has finally got round to replacing Telephone with “Stinchcombe” in the upper panels.

I took all the original “Telephone” panels out in case they could be reused, however unfortunately they can’t. I did put three of them back loosely in place to try to keep the rain

out but they've obviously fallen out, so if any tall person happens to be passing with some duct tape….

I've no idea when the new panels will be ready (Dave who's making them has a lot in common with the mills of God) but they will need to be sealed in place, so if you're handy with a mastic gun your expertise would be much appreciated.

Please email me if you can help.

Tyndale Arts Week 2020

Tyndale Arts Week 2020

Tyndale Arts Week is over the weekend of 3-4 October 2020. The works in the exhibition will be exhibited at Kingshill House, Dursley Tabernacle, the Methodist and St James's churches.

A full online brochure with details of all artists and venues can be seen and downloaded at the Tyndale website.

History

Founded in 2017, Tyndale Arts Week showcases the best work from local artists and makers from the Dursley area. It includes several from Stinchcombe. These include painters, photographers, sculptors and those who work in textiles, ceramics, glass, mosaics and much more.

COVID

All venues have been risk assessed and COVID-19 precautions will be taken to ensure visitor safety.
Visitors will be asked to:

- Sanitize hands before entry
- To wear masks inside the venues
- To provide contact details for Track and Trace.

Matthew Tyndall Educational Foundation 2020

Educational Grants Available

This is the time of year when Grants are once again available from the Matthew Tyndall Educational Foundation. Grants are available for any Students in the Parish of Stinchcombe who are in any of the following:

- Adult Education
- University
- College
- Apprenticeships

N.B. To receive a grant you must be aged 18.

Anyone who lives in the Parish of Stinchcombe can apply for a grants from:

Matthew Tyndall Educational Foundation
(Charity number: 272353)
For help with the purchase of Books etc.

How to Apply to the Matthew Tyndall

Foundation

Apply in writing to:

Matthew Tyndall Educational Foundation
Mrs C Cooke c/o
3 Coombe Gardens,
Stinchcombe
GL11 6AP

Apply by email:

email the Clerk

Cut off Date for Grant Applications

31st October 2020