

# **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

To:  
Mr. D. Shakespeare,  
Leader, Buckinghamshire County  
Council,  
Ms. Viv Letheren,  
Cabinet Member Transportation,

16<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Mr. R. Pushman,  
Chairman,  
Mr. C. Williams,  
Chief Executive.

## ***The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is the statutory advisory body on all matters relating to Access to the Countryside***

Dear Mr. Shakespeare, and colleagues,

### **Proposed Cuts to the Rights of Way Budget**

We understand that your current finance proposals will result in severe cuts to the Rights of Way Group budget; that both capital and revenue would be affected, and that staff reductions are a strong possibility. Indeed staffing is already effectively reduced by a freeze on the filling of vacant posts. The total effect, as it will be visible to the public, will be a reduction of some thirty five per cent in works carried out on Rights of Way.

We believe that cuts of this magnitude will permanently damage one of Buckinghamshire's most praiseworthy achievements: the high quality of its footpaths and bridleways. A few months neglect can take years to restore, and users, once deterred, take even longer to regain confidence. The value of those users to the local economy is well known to you.

Furthermore you risk impairing the various health and social programmes which involve walking and riding, and, indeed, failing in your statutory duty to maintain the network. There will be a slower response to enquiries and problems, which will not improve your relations with the public.

Our remit is to advise on and encourage access to the countryside, and we urge you to think again.

Yours Sincerely



John Elfes Chairman, Buckinghamshire Local Access  
Forum, 143, White Hill, Chesham, BUCKS HP5 1AT.