



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

**WEDNESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2010 AT 10.00 AM
MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY**

AGENDA

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9 Any Other Business	
10 Date of Next and Future Meetings The next meeting is to be held on 9 March 2011, 10am, Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.	



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 JULY 2010, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.04 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 11.55 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr J Elfes, in the Chair

Mr C Hurworth, Mr A T A Lambourne, Ms D Bird, Mr J Coombe and Mr Caspersz

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr M Walker, Mr J Clark, Mr M Bailey, Ms S Burchell and Ms J Wesley

GUESTS PRESENT

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies of absence were received from Viv Lynch, Richard Pushman and Brenda Jennings.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 2010 TO BE CONFIRMED

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2010 were confirmed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

A Member commented that the minutes of meetings did not include Members or Officers' names and asked if names could be minuted against actions and comments. The Democratic Services Officer advised that it was standard practice not to include names. Members had a discussion and the majority of Members present expressed a desire for names to be recorded in the minutes. As not all Members were present the Democratic Services Officer suggested that advice on the issue be obtained and for the issue to be raised at a future meeting of the LAF.

Action: Democratic Services Officer

5. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LANDSCAPE INFORMATION SYSTEM & HIGH SPEED TWO (HS2)

Mark Bailey, Natural Environment Team Manager gave a presentation on the Buckinghamshire Information Landscape System (BLIS).

The key points of the presentation were as follows:

- The system brings together environmental and landscape data which can be analysed and utilised collectively.
- It is a 'one stop shop' of data allowing fast and detailed assessment at local and strategic scales.
- Offers great value to spatial planning, development control, master planning, informing local policy and design, mitigation and opportunity assessment.
- It can improve the design and sustainability of future development proposals and projects.
- Provides a cost saving in terms of staff time.
- The Historic Environment map can show how villages can change over time and mapping can be down to field level.
- Aylesbury Vale district has a fine grain Landscape Character Assessment in place but these have been absent for other county districts. However, the remaining three districts have agreed to a fine grain characteristic assessment which will commence shortly.
- BLIS will support Achieving Outstanding Performance by:
 - Short/Medium Term
 - Looking at local growth
 - Shape the design of new developments internally and in relation to surroundings.
 - Produce Green Infrastructure plans and other assessments.
 - Aid Biodiversity action plans
 - Be an educational resource
 - Getting closer to communities
 - Long Term
 - Monitor landuse and habitats
 - Monitor climate change
 - Aid Transport planning

The Officer then updated the Forum on proposals for High Speed Rail (HS2) and demonstrated how BLIS is being used by the County Council to undertake Baseline Environmental Impact Assessments for each of the three proposed rail routes within Buckinghamshire.

The Officer made the following points:

- The overall estimated cost of HS2 is £34.012 billion.
- The maximum speed of the trains is to be 225-250mph
- Wider and taller trains with suitable lower platforms which could include double decker trains are being considered
- Trains could be 200 metres in length but possibly joined to reach lengths of 400metres and carry 1000 people.
- The HS2 Baseline Environmental Impact Assessment look at the potential environmental, landscape and landuse impacts as a result of the three HS2 routes.
- The three routes affecting Buckinghamshire are Route 2,5,3 and 4. Route 3 is the preferred route.
- A 1km corridor with a 500 metre buffer is used to identify the direct and indirect impact potentials. 1km was used as that was the area used for

HS1.

- The assessment includes statutory and non statutory sites and species, archaeology, rights of way and access land, biodiversity action plan priority habitats and areas of attractive landscapes.

Following the presentation Members then asked questions. A summary of the questions and answers follows:

The Officer was asked if the public could access the system online and he advised that it was on the Buckinghamshire County Council website. The Officer was then asked if the data will be renewed as data is updated. In response the Officer said that in terms of BLIS and HS2 details will be updated on an ongoing basis. A Member asked if the updates would be made on a 6 monthly basis or as changes happen. He was advised that the system would be updated as changes happen and that this would show how development could affect BLIS. The Officer commented that whilst the system will be public there are discussions regarding whether there should be some control of the level of data which developers would be interested in and possibly introducing a charge for accessing this more detailed level of data.

One of the short term advantages is listed as 'Getting Closer to Communities'. What will the benefits of this be other than the general public awareness? The Officer said that it would break down boundaries and it works beyond the County Council and links to other systems. The Member asked if there would be any direct link to Parishes and the Officer said only in terms of the data available. The Officer informed the Committee that the system will be available online shortly but that IT is currently working on the system.

6. RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP REPORT

A Definitive Map update

Rights of Way Applications

1. A public inquiry was held in August 2009 into an Order to upgrade Public Bridleways Nos. 40 and 40A Great and Little Kimble and No. 62 Ellesborough to Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). A decision is still awaited and, following further representations about the alignment of the route, the Inspector has called a second inquiry, to deal with issues of alignment only. This has been arranged for 19 October 2010.
2. The Secretary of State directed the Council to make Orders upgrading to BOAT status routes at Little Missenden and Stowe/Lillingstone Dayrell. The Council wrote to Defra as it considered that the applications were not duly made, asking that the decisions be reassessed with this in mind. A reply from the Secretary of State was received in April 2010, stating that the decisions could not be rescinded and that the Orders should be made as directed.
3. The Secretary of State has also directed the Council to make Orders for BOATs in Great Missenden and Wendover.
4. Orders have been made for public footpaths in Amersham and

Ellesborough and objections have been received. A public inquiry into the Amersham routes is to be held on 29 September 2010. The Ellesborough route is being dealt with by written representations and a decision from the Secretary of State is awaited.

5. Applications for a claimed footpath in Shabbington and a claimed bridleway in Great and Little Hampden have been rejected and the applicants have appealed against these decisions. Directions from the Secretary of State are awaited.
6. Applications for claimed rights of way are currently in progress and some of the applications will be discussed at the next Rights of Way meeting. The applications are as follows:
 - claimed footpaths in Fawley, High Wycombe, Lacey Green, Marlow and Whitchurch;
 - claimed bridleways in High Wycombe, West Wycombe and Downley;
 - downgrading of a bridleway to a footpath in Ashley Green;
 - claimed restricted byway in Gerrards Cross. Members were informed that this has now been withdrawn as Officers has negotiated with the landowner/tenant to have a side gate put in for walkers and cyclists to use the route by permission; and
 - claimed BOATs in Iver.

Village Green Applications

7. There are currently six village green applications in progress – Daly Way, Aylesbury; Pinewood Fields, Iver Heath; Station Road, Marsh Gibbon; Coppice Farm Road, Tylers Green; part of the former railway line, Quainton; and Lower Road, Gerrards Cross.
8. A public inquiry was held into the Marsh Gibbon case in June 2010 and the Inspector's recommended the application be rejected. A public inquiry into the Daly Way case has been arranged for 5 to 7 October 2010.

New paths and achievements

9. Creation Agreements have been completed for Public Footpaths at Church Farm, Haddenham, and Great Gap, Ivinghoe. Members were informed that the Great Gap, Ivinghoe was an item on the agenda and would be discussed in detail later on in the meeting.

B. Rights of Way Operations update

10. The Operations team has outsourced half of the summer mowing contract to Aylesbury-based firm, Richard Ashford Ltd. There are 4 gangs (2 in the south and 2 in the north) working until the end of August 2010. In addition, an 'Atasia' ride-on brushcutter has been hired, to complement the two tractor mowers used by Ringway Jacobs.
11. In order to work more efficiently, it has been decided to merge the north and south Rights of Way Liaison Group meetings. Many of the agenda items were similar, so it was thought a better use of resources to combine the two

meetings.

12. The Operations Team is developing its programme of surfacing works to be carried out during the summer. One recent scheme on the Thames Path in Dorney also saw the installation of coir logs to repair the eroded banks.
13. Since the last meeting an additional 9 Parish Councils have responded positively to the 'Walk Your Local Paths' initiative and requested survey forms. This makes a total of 44 Parishes signed-up for the project. The aim is to get more people interested in walking and, at the same time, surveying paths in their parish to provide the County Council with up-to-date information in order that maintenance or improvements on paths can be identified and local people can become more familiar with their network. The Forum was advised that Mr Lambourne had completed a report on this issue and that it had been included in the Local Access Annual Review.
14. Despite the P3 scheme coming to an end, Area Office staff in Wycombe and Winslow will continue to work in partnership with Parish Councils wherever possible. If positive value for money can be obtained using local workers or volunteers then funding may be available. The Team has also been discussing possible new ways of working if budget cuts are realised.

C. Strategic Access Update

Creating new links

15. Members were informed that Jackie Wesley will discuss the new footpath link between Ivinghoe and the Grand Union Canal under the next agenda item for the meeting.
16. A new permissive path has been negotiated with landowners to the east of the A404 Marlow bypass. The path links Public Footpath No 29, Little Marlow with Footpath No. 1, Marlow and the Thames Path National Trail. The land is owned by Harleyford Holdings Ltd and Messrs A. & R. Mash. (Members were advised that there was an error in the original agenda papers which listed the footpath as No 20 when this should have read No 29).
17. A meeting has been held with local horse riders in Ashenden and Nether Winchenden to identify possible links with existing bridleways in the area. The Officer said that discussions with landowners were required.
18. Correspondence continues with the Highways Agency to secure use of a strip of land next to the M40, Junction 1, to provide a walking, cycling and horse riding link between Southlands Road and Field Road, Denham. The Officer said he was trying to arrange a site meeting.
19. A meeting was held with representatives from Edlesborough Parish Council, a local cycling group and landowners along Footpath No 3 Edlesborough to negotiate a possible new bridleway or permissive cycling track. The Officer advised that issues regarding crime have been addressed and that hopefully there will be agreement for a permissive cycle path.

Strategic developments

20. Officers from the Operations and Strategic Access Teams attended a Parish Clerks Forum at the Winslow Centre in April 2010, in conjunction with Transport for Buckinghamshire, to outline the work undertaken in rights of way and how parishes can work more effectively with the Rights of Way Teams.
21. AVDC had planned a workshop to look at possible Green Infrastructure opportunities for developer contributions in the Aylesbury Growth Areas. Improvements to the 'Grand Union Triangle' – Aylesbury to Marsworth, Marsworth to Wendover and back to Aylesbury formed the basis of the Rights of Way improvements. The Forum was advised that the meeting was postponed pending announcements about the growth arc options. It was highlighted that there may be reduction of the housing growth in Aylesbury which could reduce Section 106 contributions.
22. Discussions are ongoing with Oxfordshire County Council regarding the Haddenham to Thame bridleway. The online Haddenham to Thame bridleway consultation, undertaken by Lee Stevens in the Cycling Team, resulted in 251 responses, 196 of which (78%) were in favour of the Scotsgrove Mill route.
23. The Chilterns Cycleway was launched on the 18th June 2010 at the Bridgewater Monument, Ashridge.
24. A meeting was held with Transport for Buckinghamshire and the Cycling Team to discuss how rights of way improvements could contribute to the Wycombe Transport Strategy. The Officer asked if Members had any suggestions to contact him.

Open Access

25. On behalf of the Ramblers' Association John Esslemont has completed his survey of all 157 areas of access land in the county (except some very small commons). The main finding illustrated the lack of on-site signing to let the public know when they were entering open access land. The results were available in Appendix 5 of the March 2010 minutes.

Simply Walk

26. Simply Walk now has 52 walks throughout Buckinghamshire, attracting over 500 walkers each week. The walks are led by trained volunteers and are free.
27. Simply Walk and Community Police Officers have joined forces to start another new walk in Waddesdon, following the success of a similar walk in Hambleden. In partnership with PCSO Sarah Turner from Marlow, a second walk was set up with PCSO Antony Hurd, in Waddesdon on 21st April 2010. Anyone wishing to take part should phone Fiona Broadbent on 01494 465367.
28. One of the first tasks for Wycombe's new Conservative MP, Steve Baker, was to launch the 'Walk Wycombe' event on Saturday 8th May 2010; a scheme aimed at encouraging residents of Wycombe to leave their cars at home and walk more often. Simply Walk had a stand in the Eden Centre, supported by many Simply Walk volunteers, who led a walk featuring a new pocket-sized map. High Wycombe Town Mayor, Julie Pritchard and Val Letheren, Cabinet member for Transport, were also present to support the launch. Pocket maps

are available from Tanveer Ghani on 01296 387119.

29. The Simply Walk scheme needs more funding in order to continue as current funding finishes in April 2011. Fiona Broadbent, Health Walks Co-ordinator is currently looking at how this can be achieved. One idea being considered is to request voluntary donations from participants. Members were invited to contact Fiona Broadbent (01494 475367 fbroadbent@buckscc.gov.uk) with any ideas for any additional sources of funding.

Donate-a-gate

30. There have been 14 new donors since the March 2010 Local Access Forum, taking the total to 182. A two-page spread on 'Donate-a-Gate' and the 200th gate was published in the summer edition of the Chiltern Society's magazine, 'Chiltern News', Issue 196, pages 12 & 13. 'Gift Aid' gates – funded by money received as a tax rebate – are now being ear-marked for the target of replacing or removing 127 stiles on the Chiltern Way through Buckinghamshire.

Parish newsletter

31. The fourth edition of the online Rights of Way Parish Council Newsletter will be available next week. The distribution list includes Local Access Forum members, Buckinghamshire Parish Councils, The Chiltern Society, Ramblers' Association, County Councillors, Local Area Co-ordinators and other individuals on request.
32. Alan Lambourne, on behalf of Westcott Parish Council and the Local Access Forum, has written an article on his Parish Council's 'Walk your Local Paths' event. The Member was thanked on behalf of the Committee.

Members then had a discussion. A Member asked if, in relation to point 22, the Haddenham to Thame bridleway, whether it would be useful if the LAF wrote to Oxfordshire County Council to express support for the scheme. The Chairman said he would be happy to write on behalf of the LAF.

Action: John Elfres

An Officer said it would be a good idea if a Member of the LAF would be willing to go on a joint site visit with the Oxfordshire Local Access Forum.

Action: Strategic Access Officer

Officers were asked if in relation to point 25 they agreed with the main finding which illustrated a lack of on-site signing to let the public know when they were entering open access land. The Member asked if Officer had resources to carry out the signage. In response the Officer advised that staff resources were tight, but that it was proposed to ask the Ramblers member who undertook the survey to also undertake a managed project to sign open access areas.

A Member raised concern that landowners didn't cut back overgrowth across paths and that the County Council usually ends up carrying out the work. He asked if the County Council could write formally to landowners. The Officer said that if a large hedge did require cutting back the County Council would

contact a landowner and this was normally acted upon after the summer bird nesting season. It was highlighted that this is an issue which Officers revisit regularly. A Member said that there are greater environmental issues and that there is a scheme for cutting back farm hedges every three years. An Officer reminded the Member it was a legal requirement to cut back overgrowth. A Member also highlighted that many small farms now contract the work out. A Member offered to put forward and discuss any issues with the National Farmers Union any issues Members may have.

7. GREAT GAP, IVINGHOE

Jackie Wesley, Locality Services Area Co-ordinator attended the meeting to discuss the new footpath link at Great Gap, Ivinghoe.

The Officer advised that the scheme which was to provide a new footpath from Ivinghoe village to the hamlet of Great Gap. The scheme had originally been put forward for the Great Brickhill, Wing and Ivinghoe Local Area Forum delegated budget but advised that the bid had not been successful. Members of the Local Area Forum had asked what other options there was to enable the scheme to proceed. To realise the full potential of this footpath, it was decided to extend the footpath to link up with other footpaths in the network to create a circular walk, with the aim of further linking to the Grand Union Canal (Aylesbury Arm) at a later stage.

The Officer said that funding was obtained from various organisations including Buckinghamshire County Council, Ivinghoe Parish Council, AVDCs Community Chest, the Big Lottery Fund and WREN. Ivinghoe Parish Council received £3k funding from the Local Area Forum's local priorities budget which they match funded. It was highlighted that as there was a demonstrated community need for the footpath the scheme had been included on the Local Area Forum's local area plan. The community supported the application with letters from residents, local businesses and community groups supporting the grant applications.

She said that the Council was able to create a new legally defined footpath by agreement with the landowners. A new bridge had been constructed over the Whistle Brook, fencing erected to separate the path from surrounding farmland and a short link is currently being provided on the highway verge to connect with the pavement network of Ivinghoe village. The new footpath is now a public footpath and is expected to be formally opened mid September 2010.

The Forum was advised that the second phase of the work would be to secure the final 200 metres to the canal towpath, which will create an additional 2km circular walk suitable for all users. She said that it would also assist local businesses by enabling canal users and other visitors to walk to amenities in Ivinghoe. The Community Chest has agreed to fund this further phase by contributing £7k towards this work. The Officer also said that they are also looking at lock accessible gates.

A Member asked the Officer how many people lived in Great Gap and she advised that there were approximately 40 residents.

8. LAF MEMBERS' REPORT

Transformation

1. An officer outlined the new structure of the Environment Group. The Forum was advised that there were three different portfolios to report to:
 - Planning and Environment (which includes the Strategic Access Officer);
 - Transport (which includes the Rights of Way Team, Operations and Definitive Map Teams); and
 - Sustainability

A Member asked that the structure chart be included in the minutes.

Action: An Officer

Members NOTED the information

Membership

2. The Chairman welcomed Gavin Caspersz the new member for disabled users. Gavin Caspersz provided a brief introduction of his background and informed the Forum that he was disabled as the result of a horse riding accident. He advised Members that his main interest was access to countryside for people with disabilities. He commented that he appreciated he had a big learning curve but welcomed the challenge and hoped he could bring a fresh approach to the Forum.

The Chairman advised the Member that he should feel free to raise any access issues to the Forum.

Members NOTED the information

Community Impact Bucks

3. An Officer has been in contact with Community Impact Bucks regarding sitting on the Forum. The Officer will report back to a future meeting with any updates.

Members NOTED the information.

Forestry Commission proposal to charge for horse riding in its woods

4. A meeting was held in December 2009 to discuss reports that charges are to be introduced for horse riding in Forestry Commission woodlands. Viv Lynch had written to object to this proposal.

Members NOTED the information.

5. Alan Marlow, LAF representative for the South East Region, has established a LAF working group to try to make some progress towards resolving the issue of equestrian access to Forestry Commission land. The working group met for the first time in March 2010. They decided to request each LAF in the region contribute by identifying one case in its territory where it believes access (particularly equestrian access) could be significantly improved.

Members NOTED the information.

6. Viv Lynch has offered to write a report on access to Wendover Woods. It is hoped members' will support her proposals.

Members NOTED the information.

England Access Forum

7. The Chairman advised that he had attended a recent England Access Forum and referred Members to Appendix 2 and 3 of the Agenda. The correspondence received from Natural England requested LAFs views on the following:
- The links between England Access Forum and LAFs through the regional co-ordinators;
 - The effectiveness of the links between LAFs and Natural England at a national level through England Access Forum;
 - The added value that a national body representing LAFs can bring; and
 - The options for England Access Forums development.

The Chairman then made the following comments:

- He said that in his opinion the links between England Access Forum and Local Access Forums was non-existent. He commented that whilst these links appear to be improving, more could be done.
- The direct link to government was the added value which a national body representing LAFs could bring
- Options for England Access Forums development could include regular meetings supported by Natural England.

The Chairman requested that Members forward to him any views on the subject and said that he would write a response.

Action: Members NOTED the information and John Elfes AGREED to write a response to Natural England

LAF Annual Review

8. Members were advised that a draft has been prepared for review by the Chairman. It was commented that John Coombe had an article to add. Viv Lynch was also due to write an article. The Officer agreed to chase.

Action: An Officer

Hertfordshire Local Access Forum Conference.

9. The Chairman advised that the second Hertfordshire LAF Conference was due to take place in London Colney on 9th October 2010 and asked if a Member of the Forum would like to attend. John Coombe, John Elfes and Gavin Caspersz said they might be able to attend but would need to confirm.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

An Officer highlighted that attendance at the LAF meetings was dropping and that there had been 6 Members in attendance at the last meeting in March 2010 and only 6 at today's meeting. He said that the purpose of the LAF was to provide advice to the County Council on access strategy and policy. To achieve this, the County Council needs to hear back from LAF Members and attendance at the LAF meeting

to enable this to be achieved a stronger attendance was needed. The Officer said that if Members of the LAF are not able to commit to attending, the County Council and LAF would have to look at alternatives. The LAF Chairman said that the Forum needed new Members and highlighted that Members should send apologies if they were unable to attend the meeting. He commented that the LAF was presently low on membership and said that a wider membership was required. It was acknowledged that it was difficult to recruit new Members.

10. DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday 3 November 2010, 10am, Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

Chairman



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Report

Date: 3rd November 2010
Title: High Speed 2 Railway (HS2) update.
Author: Mark Bailey, Natural Environment Team Manager.
Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

Mark Bailey will provide an update on the work being undertaken by Planning and Environment Services and its partners. This will focus on the recently produced HS2 Rights of Way audit and assessment. He will also describe the work that has been commenced in order to produce Landscape Character Assessments for Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District areas. Of particular importance is the programme of work that will look at Landscape Sensitivity in relation to the proposals being forward by HS2 Ltd. Finally, he will provide a brief update on the recent HS2 Summit involving Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council and HS2 Ltd.

Recommendation: Members to consider comments.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 3rd November 2010

Title: Council Budget Cuts and Service Reductions: Impacts on the Rights of Way Service.

Author: Joanne Taylor, Rights of Way Operations Team Leader.

Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

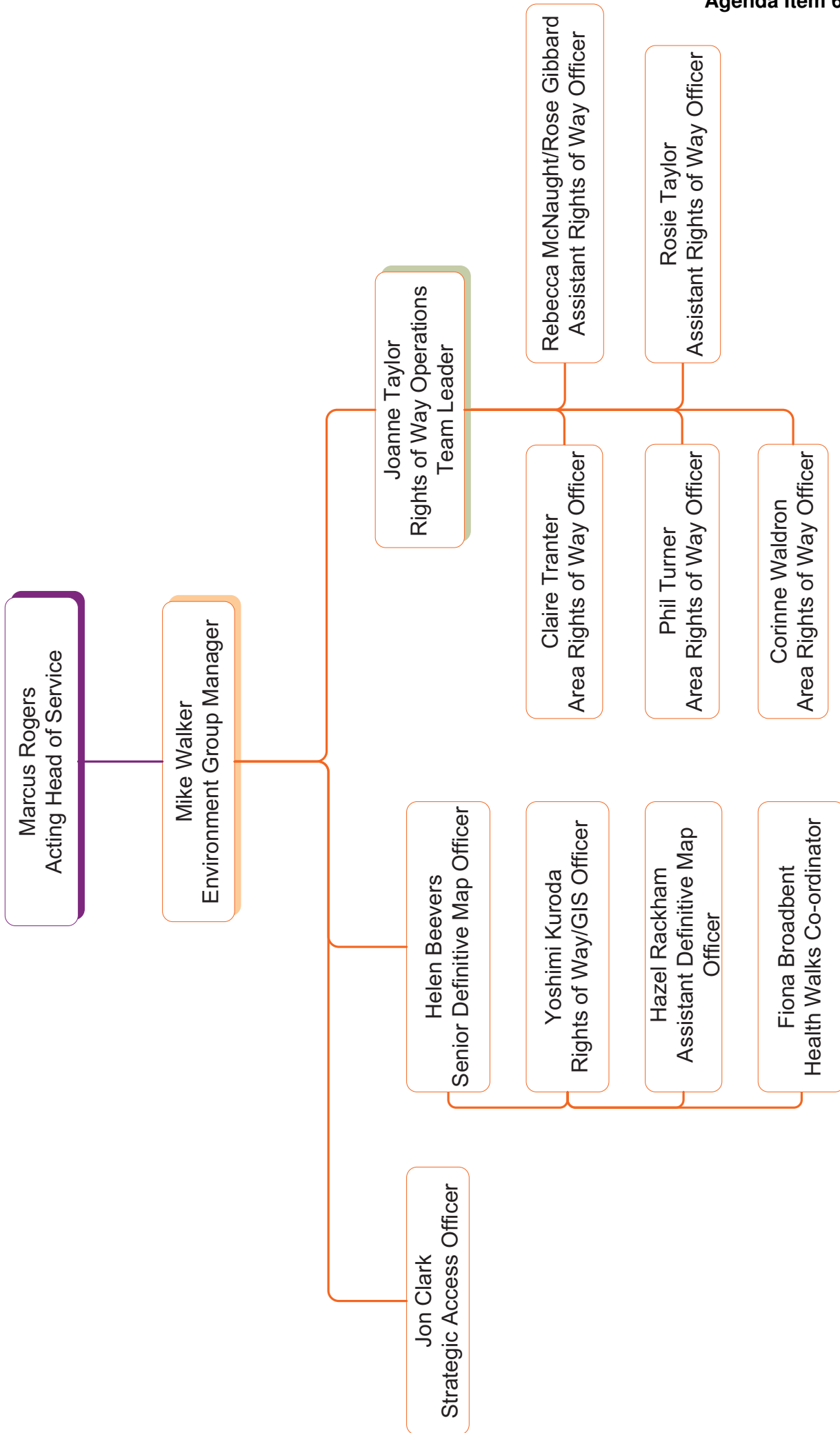
Joanne Taylor will outline the current impact of the budget cuts, the freeze on recruitment and how this is affecting the Rights of Way teams and delivery of the service.

A. Rights of Way Structure and Staff Resource

1. As a result of two recent resignations it has been necessary to re-organise both the Definitive Map Team, working out of Hampden Hall and the Rights of Way Operations Teams, working out of Wycombe and Winslow Area Offices. **See Appendix 1 – New Rights of Way Group Structure.**
2. Sue Burchell, Definitive Map Team Leader left the County Council's employment at the end of September 2010, to take up an appointment in the Oxford Diocese. Due to the current economic conditions it is not possible to recruit to this post and the duties and responsibilities are to be shared between the officers remaining in the Definitive Map Team, with Helen Beevers taking a more senior role as Definitive Map Officer.
3. James Mawson, Area Rights of Way Officer (Wycombe District Area) left the Council on the 8th October 2010. Again we are unable to recruit to fill this post and it has been necessary to re-organise and reallocate the 4 current divisions of the county to 3 divisions. **See Appendix 2 showing the redrawn Area Officer Map.**
4. The cut in staff numbers also means that some of the group's targets and aspirations will have to be realigned. Certainly it will be necessary to review the priorities we have set ourselves; particularly in aiming to reduce the number of issues outstanding on the network by 8% annually and also in managing the public expectations in terms of target times to resolve each particular type of problem, which may not be met to the extent they currently are. We expect to resolve a percentage of issues received within a certain time frame which could be up to one year for the lowest priority issues.

5. The reduction in personnel numbers is likely to lead to an increasing backlog of maintenance issues, something that we have tried very hard to reduce in the last few years by being more pro-active in terms of targeting, particularly with summer clearance and structure improvements. Inevitably we will become totally reactive by only carrying out certain types of work after receiving a problem report.
6. The same is true for the work of the Definitive Map Team. A backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders (public 'claims' for rights of way), Village Green applications and Diversion Orders has already built up.
7. Due to further cuts in the maintenance budget the Council will also need to review its current practice of offering 'free of charge' assistance to landowners when structures are repaired. For many years the County Council has carried out some maintenance to structures (such as stile or gate repairs) which should be the duty of the landowner. We have been particularly active with landowners when there are opportunities to improve accessibility, for example, by removing stiles and installing gates, and this has brought greater access to the network for less mobile users. However, we are fast approaching a point when this will no longer be affordable and, where a task is seen as being wholly the responsibility of the landowner, the Council will require the owner to do it or will carry out the repair and recover reasonable costs.
8. It will also be necessary to reduce the number of contractor teams for this financial year. We would normally have a requirement for 2 gangs (one each in the north and south). Budget shortfalls may mean that only very urgent works, where a risk is identified, will be carried out over the winter months.
9. Whilst we hope to continue to work with The Chiltern Society on the Donate-a-Gate Scheme and with individual Parishes who are part funding improvement works, projects with no alternative funding are unlikely to be achievable.

Recommendation: Members to consider comments.



RIGHTS OF WAY AREAS AND PARISHES

Group Manager
Mike Walker

Definitive Map Team

Team Leader:
Vacant

Senior Definitive Map Officer:
Helen Beevers

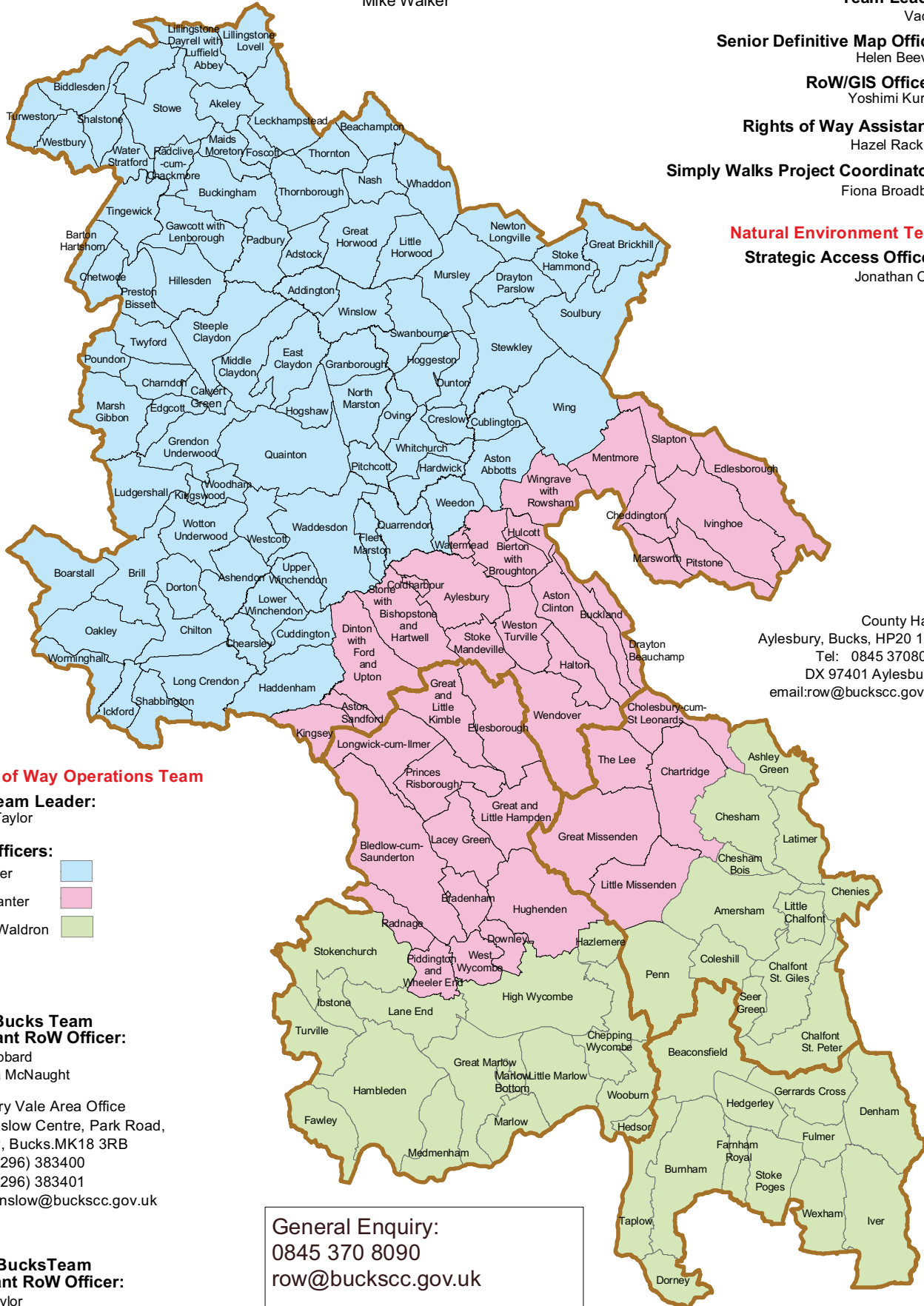
RoW/GIS Officers:
Yoshimi Kuroda

Rights of Way Assistants:
Hazel Rackham

Simply Walks Project Coordinator :
Fiona Broadbent

Natural Environment Team

Strategic Access Officer :
Jonathan Clark



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Tel: 0845 3708090
DX 97401 Aylesbury2
email:row@buckscc.gov.uk

Rights of Way Operations Team

Area Team Leader:
Joanne Taylor

Area Officers:

- Phil Turner
- Claire Tranter
- Corinne Waldron

North Bucks Team
Assistant RoW Officer:

Rose Gibbard
Rebecca McNaught

Aylesbury Vale Area Office
The Winslow Centre, Park Road,
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Tel: (01296) 383400
Fax: (01296) 383401
email:winslow@buckscc.gov.uk

South Bucks Team
Assistant RoW Officer:

Rosie Taylor

Wycombe Area Office, Easton Street
High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 1NH
Tel: (01494) 475315 Fax: (01494) 475066
email:wycombe@buckscc.gov.uk

General Enquiry:
0845 370 8090
row@buckscc.gov.uk

Rights of Way Problems:
Transport for Buckinghamshire
0845 230 2882
tfb@buckscc.gov.uk

As at 12 October 2010



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 3rd November 2010

Title: Rights of Way Group report

Author: Jonathan Clark Strategic Access.

Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

A) Definitive Map Update (Helen Beevers)

Rights of Way Applications

- 1 A public inquiry was held in August 2009 into an Order to upgrade Public Bridleways Nos. 40 and 40A Great and Little Kimble and No. 62 Ellesborough to Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). We are still awaiting a decision and, following further representations about the alignment of the route, the Inspector has called a second inquiry, to deal with issues of alignment only. This has been arranged for 19 October 2010.
- 2 A public inquiry was held on 29th September 2010 into an Order to add two footpaths at Amersham College to the Definitive Map and Statement. The second day of the inquiry has been arranged for the 26th October 2010.
- 3 The Secretary of State directed us to make Orders upgrading to BOAT status routes at Little Missenden and Stowe/Lillingstone Dayrell. We wrote to Defra as we considered that the applications were not duly made, asking that the decisions be reassessed with this in mind. A reply from the Secretary of State was received in April 2010, stating that the decisions could not be rescinded and that the Orders should be made as directed. These Orders are now in the process of being made.
- 4 The Secretary of State also directed us to make Orders for BOATs in Great Missenden and Wendover. These Orders are in the process of being made.
- 5 The Secretary of State confirmed an Order to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map and Statement at Dunsmore, Ellesborough.
- 6 We are in the process of making an Order to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map and Statement in Whitchurch. An Order has been made for a Public

Bridleway in High Wycombe and one objection has been received. The Order and objection will be sent to the Secretary of State for determination.

- 7 Applications for a claimed footpath in Shabbington, a claimed bridleway in Great and Little Hampden; and a downgrading of a bridleway to a footpath in Ashley Green have been rejected and the applicants have appealed against these decisions. We are awaiting directions from the Secretary of State.
- 8 Applications for claimed rights of way are currently in progress: claimed footpaths in Fawley, High Wycombe, Lacey Green, and Marlow; claimed bridleways in Taplow, West Wycombe and Downley; and a claimed Restricted Byway in Gerrards Cross.

Village Green Applications

- 9 There are currently five village green applications in progress – Pinewood Fields, Iver Heath; Daly Way, Aylesbury; Coppice Farm Road, Tylers Green; part of the former railway line, Quainton; and Lower Road, Gerrards Cross. Public Inquiries have been held for the applications at Pinewood Fields, Iver Heath and Daly Way, Aylesbury. We are currently awaiting a recommendation to accept or reject the applications from the Inspectors who held the inquiries.

B) Rights of Way Operations Update (Joanne Taylor)

- 10 Over the summer period extra surface clearance gangs were taken on from June to September. We ran only two gangs in total whereas in previous seasons we had been able to run up to 4 gangs. Clearly this has resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of clearance carried out. Between April and September 2009 we had completed 300km whereas this year, over the same period, it is about 200 km. However, we were targeted in selecting the paths to be cleared this summer, ensuring that only those, for example, on school routes or with recent complaints of surface growth, and we reduced the number of second cuts later in the season.
- 11 Structure maintenance works carried out so far during this financial year amount to 217 jobs/improvements which is down on the same period last year (274), although the number of structures improved for accessibility is almost the same at 143 structures replaced or improved, which includes kissing gates and donated gates.
- 12 'Walk Your Local Paths' – The aim of this initiative is to get more local people interested in walking and familiar with their network. It also provides the Operations Team with up-to-date information in order that maintenance or improvements can be identified. Since the last meeting an additional 19 parishes have signed up to take part increasing the number of parishes expected to survey to 63. There is some concern amongst staff of the extent to which we are raising expectations that we will now be unable to meet. With parishes identifying issues or improvements during their walks, they will justifiably feel that their issues could or should be dealt with more quickly than we are able.

C. Strategic Access Update (Jonathan Clark)

Creating new links

13. Until the financial situation improves, it is unlikely that any Highways Act 1980 s26 compulsory creation orders will be pursued unless funding can be sourced from outside the Council. These can be contentious and lead to a public inquiry and the Council can be liable to pay compensation in the event of a Creation Order being confirmed. One exception is the proposed new path through the Edmunds Road Industrial Estate in Lane End, where the Parish Council has set-aside funding for compensation.
14. The new footpath link between Ivinghoe and the Grand Union Canal, due to be covered by BBC local news, is awaiting the finishing touches to the Highways element of the project before being officially launched. The second phase is unlikely to be realised as British Waterways does not own the connection to Seabrooke Lock (GR: 935, 172) and the canal tow path.
15. An upgrade to bridleway of Footpath No 72 Hughenden was being pursued at Four Ashes, High Wycombe with the view to taking horse riders off the busy Kingshill Road and providing a link into the existing bridleway network. However, the owner was too concerned this would invite motorbikes onto his land and so the upgrade cannot be pursued.
16. A new 1.5m wide path has been created linking Lane End Public Footpaths Nos. 8 and 10 using 230m of previously inaccessible highway verge on Fingest Lane, east of Fingest village. This was completed with help from the Chiltern Society's Path Maintenance Volunteers, with Lane End Parish Council paying £100 towards the costs.
17. Progress is being made with the new Watermead bridleway, north of Aylesbury. A Dedication Agreement is being processed by the Definitive Map Team and a site survey has been done on the River Thames bridge crossing, detailing bank heights needed for approval by the Environment Agency. Following dedication a new 'Pegasus' crossing will be installed by Transport for Buckinghamshire, which will complete the link between Watermead and the new Weedon Hill development to provide a further link in the chain for a circular bridleway around the town.
18. A meeting has been convened to discuss issues around path links across the north of Aylesbury - between Berryfields, Quarrendon Leas and Weedon Hill. This is of concern to AVDC, BCC and The Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust which is now responsible for the Quarrendon Leas site. This will cover rights of way aspirations for access and Trust/Archaeology proposals for car parking and visitor facilities. Development in this area is still likely to be a few years away.
19. The 'Transport for Buckinghamshire' online public consultation to decide the route between Haddenham and Thame for a new cycleway/bridleway has finished and resulted in 251 responses. 196 people (78%) were in favour of the 'Scotsgrove Mill' route. Unfortunately, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Transportation has now decided he no longer wishes to pursue the upgrade. Val Letheren's letter in **Appendix 1** summarizes the issues Oxfordshire raised.

Strategic developments

- 20 Since reducing the Rights of Way Areas from 4 to 3, the Strategic Access Officer has taken on the role of replying to Rights of Way related planning applications for the county.
- 21 Proposals to widen Bridleway 30 Lacey Green have had to be shelved until the financial position improves or outside funding is available, as the necessary fencing and replacement hedge replanting proved to be prohibitively expensive.
- 22 The main strategic planning issues since July 2010 have been for two areas north of Aylesbury; a detailed application for 324 new houses at Berryfields and outline planning for new houses and schools further north west at Fleet Marston. Comments were made on the need for new bridleway links to provide sustainable transport links around and into Aylesbury and Waddesdon.
- 23 The Strategic Access Officer has taken on the role of Local Access Forum Co-ordinator for the South East Region, a position funded by Natural England until 31st March 2011. A South East LAF conference date has been organised and will be held on Tuesday 15th February 2011. It is hoped 4 LAF Members from Buckinghamshire will attend.

Open Access

- 23 It has been decided to take forward the open access signing project following John Esslemont's survey. Feedback from LAF members is required on those sites chosen from the website and any sites Members think need further promotion. A training session will be provided to volunteers, likely to involve John Esslemont and members of the Chiltern Society Area Secretaries.
- 24 Volunteer help to sign open access sites will be with 'Open Access' discs or clip frames outlining the mapped area and interesting features of chosen sites. Improving signing on Open Access land will help to meet Indicator 17 of the Chilterns AONB 'State of the Environment 2009' report, which highlights the need to increase awareness of Open Access in the Chilterns, its provision of information, signing and promotion.

'Simply Walk' (Fiona Broadbent)

- 25 Despite the great success of 'Simply Walk', affording numerous benefits to the health and well-being of residents throughout Buckinghamshire, the scheme needs more funding in order to continue and has been looking at how this can be achieved. Fiona has requested an opportunity to present the case for funding Simply Walk from all parish councils, particularly those where 'Simply Walk' operates so successfully. To date she has presented to Downley, Stokenchurch, Chalfont St Giles, Chalfont St Peter and Princes Risborough. A donation of £500 has been made by Downley and a decision is awaited from the other parishes.
- 26 Walkers will be asked for voluntary donations via the newsletter. Walk leaders are not happy to collect donations on the walks and handling cash between so many walks and walk leaders would make this unfeasible

- 27 Bucks Sport has donated £2,500 from its 'Fit for Life' programme in exchange for setting up 5 new walks, aimed specifically at those who cannot walk more than 30 minutes. Some of these are on 'walkers' (a zimmer frame with wheels) and live in sheltered housing. These walks have been set up in Marlow, Bedgrove, Walton Court, Burnham, Holmer Green and Great Missenden, alongside current walks in those areas.
- 28 Simply Walk organised a walk and picnic on August 5th 2010 in Amersham, with care providers and service users from 'Chesham Outreach', Chiltern & South Bucks Community Learning Disability Team and the 'Ridgeway Partnership' (Oxfordshire Learning Disability NHS Trust). Fiona and two volunteer leaders lead the walk, which was very well received.
- 29 Training of new volunteer walk leaders and development of the scheme continues.

Donate-a-gate

- 30 The council is no longer able to match-fund public gate donations, due to budgetary constraints. There is still a commitment to match gates up to the 188th donor but, in future, there will only be one gate installed for each £250 donation. In the New Year the amount of each donation will be reviewed with a view to increasing the donation to £300 as there have been three 6% rises in metal gates since the project started in 2007.
- 31 There have been 14 new donors since the July 2010 Local Access Forum, taking the total to 195 donors. The project to remove 127 stiles along the Chiltern Way in Buckinghamshire continues, using funding from 'Gift Aid': the tax rebate from the government.

Parish Newsletter

- 32 The 5th 'Autumn' edition of the online Rights of Way Parish Council Newsletter will be available soon. The distribution list includes Local Access Forum members, Buckinghamshire Parish Councils, The Chiltern Society, Ramblers' Association, County Councillors, Local Area Co-ordinators and other individuals on request.

Transport for Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire County Council**Cabinet Member for Transport**

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Telephone 0845 230 2882

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26 October 2010

Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
Address Line 4

Dear

Haddenham to Thame Community Path

Thank you for your input into the consultation process for the Haddenham to Thame Community path.

Following careful consideration of the proposed Haddenham to Thame community path Oxfordshire County Council Members have decided not to proceed with this route. The following statement was recently released by Oxfordshire County Councillor, Rodney Rose:

'The decision has been made in light of three key issues. Firstly, given the current financial climate, it is not the right time to be pursuing such a venture. Secondly, it is clear that there is substantial objection from the landowners both sides of the County boundary. The associated risks of pursuing creation orders, with unknown compensation costs, make this an unattractive option. Thirdly, this is an area of low lying meadows known to flood in wet winters and after heavy rain. To promote such a route without adequate investment to address safety issues or maintenance costs (which by their nature would be in conflict with the character of the route) would be building up future problems with path users and landowners.

A commuting and recreation route between the two settlements remains an aspiration through the Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Local Transport Plan. We will continue to try and seek this type of route to be put in place, but our preference would be for a constructed facility which is suitable for year round use, possibly in part alongside the A418. We will continue to work with your council if such a route becomes likely.'

In light of Oxfordshire's decision not to take forward a joint creation order to provide a route for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians over the line of the public footpath

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between Moorend Lane, Thame and Scotsgrove Mill, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire County Council are unable to proceed with this route. Given only a short section of the route is within Buckinghamshire's County boundary it is not practical to go through the necessary legal conversions for this section in isolation. Therefore, Buckinghamshire County Council is suspending work on this route at this time, pending a change in decision by Oxfordshire County Council.

Yours sincerely

Val Letheren
Cabinet Member for Transport

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Transport Local Authority of the Year
2008 Winners



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Report

Date: 3rd November 2010
Title: LAF Members' Report
Author: Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access
Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

Buckinghamshire County Council – Comprehensive Spending Review (Richard Pushman)

1. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review took place on 20th October 2010. County Councillor Richard Pushman will update the Forum on the likely financial impact this will have on the County Council. The government's idea of the Big Society should underline the importance of the Local Access Forum to the County Council.

Recommendation: Members to discuss the implications.

The Big Debate (all)

2. This was the process by which residents and organisations, with an interest in the services provided by the Buckinghamshire County Council, were given the opportunity to help the council in setting priorities against a background of 25% or more cuts in funding over the next four years. The debate closed on 30th September 2010.
3. The Chairman, The Chiltern Society Rights of Way Group and The Ramblers provided support for the Rights of Way Service.

Recommendation: Members to outline their contribution to the debate.

Coombe Hill Monument (Neil Harris)

4. Neil Harris has been working on a new 'Access for All' track from the Coombe Hill car park to the Monument. The National Trust has surfaced the old military brick track, now 800m long, to create an easily accessible, all year, route to one of the best views in the Chilterns. Gavin Caspersz trialed the new track and his article featured in this year's LAF annual Review. In addition, the County Council

organised the privately-funded refurbishment of the monument and this was launched at a public ceremony on 20th October 2010.

The 2012 Olympics (Peter Challis)

5. Peter Challis, member representing Sustrans, is project managing the walking and cycling improvements around the Eton Rowing Lake, Dorney, in preparation for the Olympics. It involves a number of cross-boundary routes connecting into Buckinghamshire from the Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead and Berkshire. A contractor has been appointed and will be undertaking the following improvements in Buckinghamshire before the end of 2010:
- Surfacing along the Thames Path from the Summerleaze Bridge (Dorney Footpath 18 - permissive cycleway) to the junction with Dorney Footpath 8(f).
 - Continuing surfacing along Footpath 8(f) to link with Marsh Lane, Dorney Reach, and into the Olympic site entrance.
 - Clearing back vegetation along Dorney Bridleway 2 linking into Boveney and the Olympic site from Eton.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) will undertake work in the immediate area of Dorney Lake to improve the Buckinghamshire section of the Thames Path for training purposes during the Games. At present only a temporary improvement is proposed, but Sustrans and Natural England are pushing for a higher quality surface, with legacy.

Recommendation: Members to note.

Bourne End to Wooburn Green walking and cycling route (Peter Challis)

6. Peter Challis has been negotiating with a local landowner in the Wooburn area to try and open up a walking and cycling route along the disused railway line from Bourne End to Wooburn Green. Funding is being made available by Wycombe District Council.

Recommendation: Members to note.

Grand Union Canal – Wendover Arm (Gavin Caspersz)

7. Gavin Caspersz has tested this route for use on mobility scooters for disabled users between Wendover and Halton Village and will report on his findings.

Recommendation: Members to note.

Chiltern Society Verges Project (John Coombe)

8. A member of the Chiltern Society has undertaken a report on 21 priority Rights of Way crossings and linear connections needing improvements in the Chilterns. The outcomes are summarised in **Appendix 1** and those marked in bold are the highest priority. Some of the verges simply need regular mowing while others need more scrub clearance. In a few cases, provision of an alternative path is suggested.

The Chiltern Society's ROW Area Secretaries have been talking with Parish Councils about these verges in order to progress.

Recommendation: Members to offer advice on next action.

Chiltern Way Extension (John Coombe)

9. The Chiltern Way is a circular walking route of around 125 miles and there are now 3 optional extensions taking the route to around 172 miles. It has its 10th anniversary this year. The Berkshire Loop, which starts in Penn and leaves Buckinghamshire over the Thames in Hedsor, had its official opening on 10th October 2010. Richard Booth has been organising on behalf of the Chiltern Society and the new route is outlined on the Chiltern Society website and in **Appendix 2**. John Coombe will give an update.

Recommendation: Members to note.

Chilterns' Conservation Board Annual Forum (all)

10. This takes place on Friday 19th November 2010 at The Clare Foundation, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, HP14 4HU, and provides an opportunity for members to network and hear about the work of the Conservation Board and our neighbouring authorities over the last year.

Recommendation: Members to organise LAF representation.

Review of the England Access Forum (Chairman)

11. The Chairman submitted comments on a review of the role, future working arrangements, effectiveness and function of the England Access Forum.

Recommendation: Members to note.

LAF 2009/10 Annual Review (all)

12. The Review was published on the County Council website in August 2010. http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/row/local_access_forum.page

Recommendation: Members to note.

Hertfordshire Local Access Forum Conference (all).

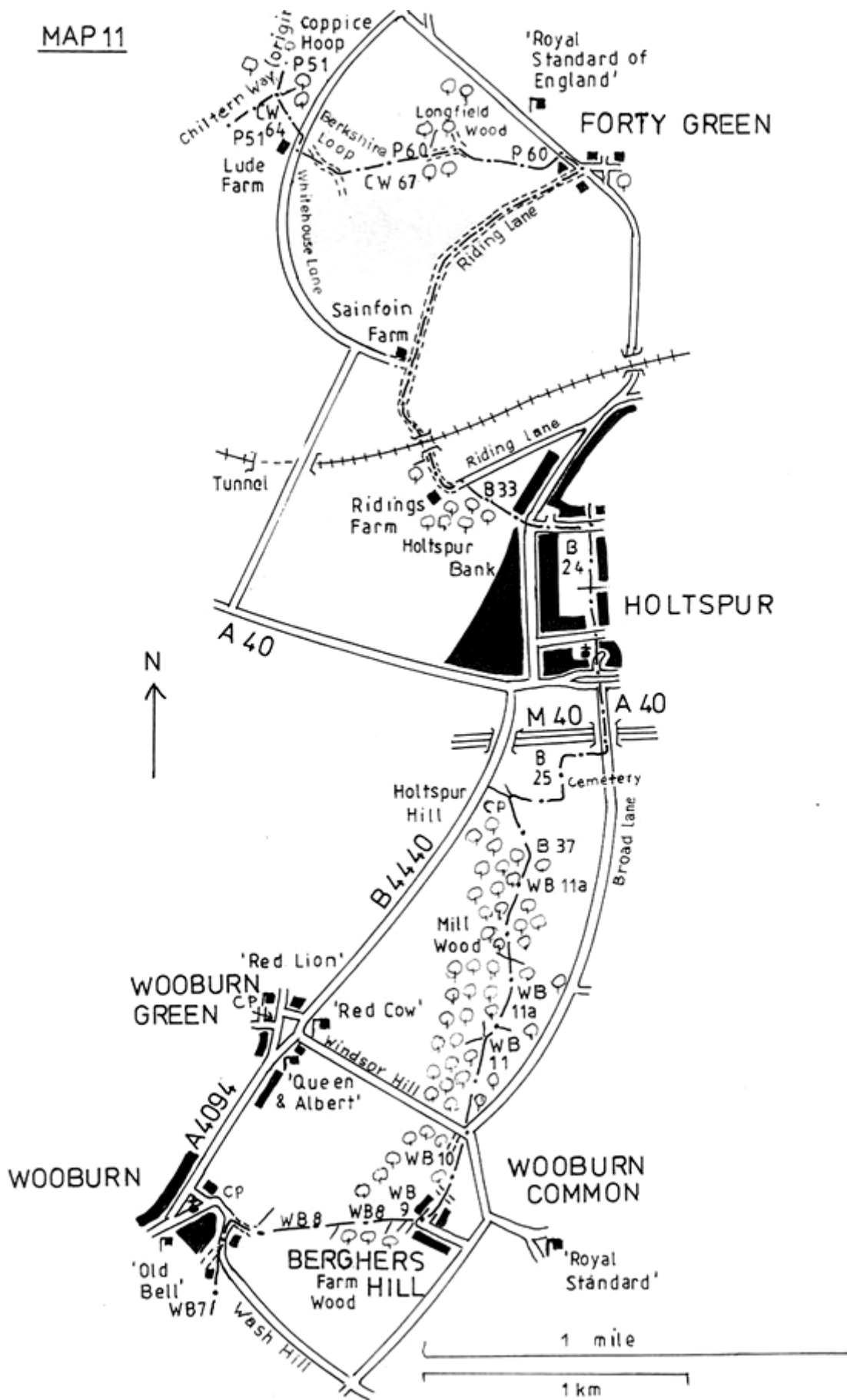
13. The second 'Herts LAF Conference', due to take place in London Colney on 9th October 2010, was unfortunately cancelled due to the small number of bookings. John Coombe, Joohn Elfes and Gavin Caspersz had offered to attend on behalf of the Buckinghamshire Forum.

Recommendation: Members to note.

Area	Location	Parish	Paths	Notes	
1	Bucks 3A	Amersham by Pass SU 944 984	Amersham	AMS 26/7(S) to AMS 38/39(N)	Fast road. Needs good sight lines and verge cut back from kerb with clear footpath signs.
2	Bucks 3A	Amersham by Pass SU 946981	Amersham	A413 to AMS 38/39	Verge needs to be better maintained for safety.
3	Bucks 3A	Amersham by Pass SU 955 968	Amersham	AMS 21 crossing	Fast road. Needs warning signs for walkers.
4	Bucks 3A	Chesham to Latimer road SU 977 000	Chesham	Chess Valley Walk Hollow Way Lane to Broadwater Bridge	Dangerous crossing under trees with no verge
5	Bucks 3C	Hyde End, B485 SP 926 013	Chartridge	CRT3A to Little Hundridge Lane	Verge to be kept mown
6	Bucks 3C	Chartridge	Chartridge	Proposed link from CRT17 to CRT23	Not a verge issue
7	Bucks 3C	Great Pednor	Chartridge	Change CRT 7A status	Not a verge issue
8	Bucks 3C	Great Missenden, Rignall Road SP 881 020	Great Missenden	GM 70 crossing	Verge between paths is wide and clear.
9	Bucks 3C	Hyde End, B485 SP 911 012	Great Missenden	GMI 33 to GMI 24	Busy road and care needed crossing but there is a path along much of the south side of B485
10	Bucks 3C	Little Kingshill, Watchet Lane SU 899 975	Little Missenden	LMI 6 to LMI 7	Busy road. Needs Parish commitment to involve land owners.
11	Bucks 3C	Lee Common SP 915 047	The Lee	TLE 24 to TLE 25	Poor line of sight at bend. Verge could be widened for safety.
12	Bucks 3C	Penn Bottom Lane SU 923 939	Penn	Chiltern Way between PEN 20, PEN 25 and PEN 11	Care needed crossing. Parish (Miles Green) believe Penn Estate agreed to take CW route behind hedge.
13	Bucks 3C	Penbury Farm SU 921 932	Penn	PEN 36 to PEN 40	Parish advise permissive path back from road on circular route is adequate.

14	Bucks 4B	Hedgerley, Parish Lane SU 959 865	Hedgerley / Farnham Royal	Hedgerley Circular Walk between FAR 3/1 and HDG 6/3	Route inspected with David Mitchell, HPC and disussed with Hilda Holder,FRPC. Unhappy with BucksCC re P3 decision.
15	Bucks 4B	Fulmer Common Road TQ 005 846	Fulmer	Beeches Way between Black Park Road junction and Downings drive.	Possible route on south side of road being investigated by Richard Marshal, Fulmer Conservation Volunteers HPC (Sharon Henson) recognise this issue-some work has been done.
16	Bucks 6B	Mill End, A4155 SU 786 850	Hambleden	Hambleden/Med menham Circular Walk between HAM 32 and HAM 59	HPC has had some discussion with WDC RoW about this section.
17	Bucks 6B	Hambleden SU 781 870	Hambleden	Shakespear's Way between HAM 35 and HAM 38	LE 22 to GMA 51
18	Bucks 6B	Lane End, B482, SU 819 908	Lane End	Footpath along road between Cadmore End and Bolter End wanted STC 74 to RDN 18	Busy road with poor visibility. Improvement may now be in the Lane End Village Plan LEPC in discussion with BucksCC Highways
19	Bucks 6B	Lane End, B482 SU794 924	Lane End	Footpath along road between Cadmore End and Bolter End wanted STC 74 to RDN 18	Verge needs to be better maintained for safety.
20	Bucks 7A	Waterend SU780961	Stokenchurc h	CH41, BCS 52 to CH 32	Not investigated.
21	Bucks 7A	Chinnor, Red Lane SU 764 997	Bledlow- cum - Saunderton		

MAP 11



MAP 12

