



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 3rd November 2010
Title: LAF Members' Report
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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.