



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 6th July 2011
Title: LAF Members' Report
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The 2012 Olympics (Peter Challis)

1. Works have started along a number of cross-boundary connections into Buckinghamshire from the Royal Borough Windsor and Maidenhead and Berkshire. Peter Challis, member representing Sustrans, is project managing these walking and cycling improvements and an arts trail around the Eton Rowing Lake.

Recommendation: Members to note.

South East Local Access Forum - Regional Symposium (John Elfes).

2. The South East Local Access Forum Regional Symposium was held on 7th April 2011 at the Friends Meeting House, where Viv Lynch, John Elfes and David Briggs were among the 52 delegates. The keynote speaker was David Williamson (Forest Management Director SE, Forestry Commission), outlining the position on the 'Future of the Public Forest Estate' consultation. Other speakers included Simon Pratt (Regional Direct Sustrans SE) and Patrick Wallace (East Sussex LAF) on multi-user routes; Tom Lord (Natural England) on Coastal Access; Jenny Humphries (Walk England) on the 'Walk4Life' Project; and Dave Waterman (Defra) on the future of Local Access Forums. Topics for the afternoon discussion included the role of LAFs in responding to District Council Local Develop Frameworks and the future of Local Access Forums under the new government. The conference was organised by the Buckinghamshire Strategic Access Officer and the proceedings are attached in Appendix 4.

Recommendation: Members to note.

3. England Access Forum (John Elfes)

Defra and Natural England announced on 14th March 2011 their intension to withdraw funding for the England Access Forum from 31st March 2011 (Appendix 5). The body, intended to represent the LAF community at a national level has therefore ceased without further funding. Richard Benyon, Miniter for Natural Environment and Fisheries, has written to LAF Chairs seeking views to improve the information flow between LAFs and Government. A copy of the letter is enclosed in Appendix 6.

Recommendation: Members to arrange a reply to the Minister.

4. Ivinghoe Disabled Access (Gavin Caspersz)

A survey was undertaken in April 2011 of 8 kissing gates and 5 stiles, around Ivinghoe Beacon and Incombe Hole open access land, using a mobility scooter. All the land is owned by the National Trust. It was found that a new 4km long circular walk could be created for disabled users in mobility scooters, including access to the summit triangulation point, if a scooter has sufficient battery power and wheel grip. Since the survey the National Trust have kindly given permission for us to install 13 new British Standard wooden 'Aston' gates. The routes will be officially launched and a feature provided for the next edition off Chiltern News.

Recommendation: Members to note.

5. Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead LAF (John Coombe)

John Coombe attended the neighbouring LAF on 5th July 2011.

Recommendation: Members to note.