



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

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Title: Rights of Way Team Update

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A. Definitive Map Update (Helen Beevers)

Definitive Map Modification Orders

1. **Great Kimble/Ellesborough** – upgrading Public Bridleways Nos. 40 and 40A Great and Little Kimble and No. 62 Ellesborough to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. An Order was made on 23 January 2008. Three public inquiries have been held and the Order was confirmed by the Secretary of State on 22 March 2012.
2. **Great Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleways Nos. 52 and 55 (part) to Public Byways Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected on 14 July 2006. The applicant appealed this decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order has been made and advertised. Objections to the Order have been received; the matter is being referred to the Secretary of State.
3. **Great Missenden/Wendover** – upgrading Public Bridleways No. 1 Great Missenden and Nos. 45 and 61 Wendover to Public Byways Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected on 14 July 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order has been made and advertised. Objections to the Order have been received; the matter is being referred to the Secretary of State.
4. **High Wycombe** – claimed public bridleway from Daws Hill Lane to Keep Hill Lane. An Order was made on 23 June 2010. One objection has been received. The matter has been referred to the Secretary of State. The Order has now been confirmed with modifications.
5. **High Wycombe** – claimed public footpath between Sheraton Drive and Windsor Drive. The Committee accepted the application on 10 November 2010. An Order was made on 25 October 2011. Objections have been received; the matter is being referred to the Secretary of State.

6. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway No. 24 (Featherbed Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed this decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 20 September 2011. Objections have been received; the matter will be referred to the Secretary of State.
7. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway No. 25 (Kingstreet Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed this decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 20 September 2011. Objections have been received; the matter will be referred to the Secretary of State.
8. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway Nos. 29/42 (Mop End Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed this decision and we have now been directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 21 June 2011. Objections have been received; the matter will be referred to the Secretary of State.
9. **Marlow** – claimed public footpath along the Thames Towpath from Marlow Mill Pool to Public Footpath No.1. The Committee accepted the application on 14 July 2010. An Order was made on 22 November 2010. One objection was received and the matter was referred to the Secretary of State. A public inquiry was held on 22 May 2012. We await the decision from the Inspector.
10. **Stowe and Lillingstone Dayrell** – upgrading Public Bridleways No. 6 Stowe and Nos. 11 (part) and 12 Lillingstone Dayrell to Public Byways Open to All Traffic. The application was partly rejected on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed this decision and we have now been directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 10 May 2011. Objections have been received; the matter is being referred to the Secretary of State.
11. **Whitchurch** – claimed public footpath between Buckingham Road and Public Footpath No. 5. The Committee accepted the application on 14 July 2010. An Order was made on 17 May 2011 and objections have been received. A public inquiry will be held on 10 October 2012.
12. **Lacey Green** – claimed public footpath from Main Road to Public Footpath No. 20. The application was accepted by Committee at their meeting on 20 July 2011. An Order is in progress.
13. **Great and Little Hampden** – claimed public bridleway at Speen. The Committee rejected the application on 27 March 2009 on the grounds that there had not been uninterrupted use of the route for the full 20-year period. The applicant appealed against this decision and we have now been directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 5 April 2011 and one objection was received. The matter has been referred to the Secretary of State and is being dealt with by written representations.
14. **Taplow** – application to record the route from River Road to Amerden Lane as Public Bridleway. The application was accepted by Committee at their meeting on 7 December 2011. An Order is currently being advertised.
15. **Stowe** – application to record the route from High Street, Dadford to Public Footpath No.11 as Public Footpath. The application was accepted by Committee at their meeting on 7 December 2011. An Order is in progress.

16. **Chartridge** – drafting error of Public Footpath No. 47 and No. 49. The application was accepted by Committee at their meeting on 7 December 2011. An Order was made on 6 March 2012. No objections have been received. The Order will be confirmed.
17. **Gerrards Cross** - application to record the route from the A413 to Slade Oak Lane (Over the Misbourne) as Restricted Byway. The application was rejected by Committee at their meeting on 30 May 2012.
18. **Aston Clinton** - application to record the route from Weston Road to Public Footpath No. 28 as Public Footpath. The application was accepted by Committee at their meeting on 30 May 2012. An Order will be made.

b) Applications to be investigated and reported to the Committee

19. **West Wycombe/Downley** – application to record Cookshall Lane as part Public Bridleway, part Restricted Byway.
20. **Lower Winchendon** – application to record the route from the Old Mill to Public Footpath No. 3 as Public Footpath.
21. **Wendover & Halton** – application to record the route from Public Footpath No. 24, Wendover to Public Footpath No. 13, Halton as Public Footpath.
22. **Westbury** – application to record the route from the Oxfordshire county boundary (Public Footpath No. 303, Mixbury) to Fulwell Road, Westbury, as Public Footpath.
23. **Westbury** – application to record the route from Public Footpath No. 11 to the Oxfordshire county boundary as Public Footpath. The claimed route continues through Oxfordshire to join Public Footpath No. 14, Westbury.
24. **High Wycombe** – application to record the route from Burnham Close to Whitelands Road, High Wycombe as Public Footpath.
25. **Princes Risborough** – application to record the route from Elm Road to Bell Street, Princes Risborough as Public Footpath.
26. **Iver** – application to record various routes across the Fields and the Clump, Iver as Public Footpaths.
27. **Penn** – application to record the route from Elmshott Close to King's Wood as Public Footpath.
28. **Beaconsfield** – application to record the route from Minerva Way to the junction with Public Footpath No. 15 and No. 16 as a Public Footpath .

c) Village Green applications

29. **Gerrards Cross** – land at Lower Road. The application is under consideration.
30. **Iver** – land at The Fields and The Clump. The application is under consideration.
31. **Great Missenden** – land at The Field, Bryants Bottom. The application is under consideration.
32. **Beaconsfield** – voluntary registration of the land at Hampden Hill. The application is under consideration.

33. **Penn** – land at Coppice Farm Road, Tylers Green, Penn. The application is under consideration.
34. **High Wycombe** – land at Meadow Close, Wycombe Marsh. The application is under consideration.
35. **Wooburn** – land off Cherwell Road, Bourne End. The application is under consideration.

B. Rights of Way Operations Update (Joanne Taylor)

36. Members were made aware at the last meeting in February, that from the 1st April 2012, Rights of Way Operations came within the Ringway Jacobs (Transport for Buckinghamshire) overall Highways Contract, although all officers who worked for the previous Rights of Way Group are altogether under the umbrella of the Place Service, and of course will continue to work collaboratively.
37. One particular area of difficulty at the beginning of the financial year was the appointment of additional clearance teams – required to carry out our summer clearance schedule.
38. Under the new contract arrangement it was necessary to employ a different clearance contractor from previous years. The contractor commenced work at the beginning of June, a small delay from the last few years. Unfortunately this delay together with the ‘perfect’ growing conditions has caused severe difficulties and regrettably we have some considerable work to do over the next few weeks to try and alleviate the problems with the abundant surface growth on the rights of way network. We are currently running 4 teams on clearance and these crews will be available for the next 2 months for this work.
39. A summary of maintenance work carried out on paths between 1st April and July 2012 is attached to the report Appendix 8. The out turn for the first few months is similar to previous performance, given that the works gangs have been busy with summer clearance, and unable to do much work on structures etc. Members will note that for the first time included on the attachment for comparison are the out turn figures for the previous year.
40. The heavy rainfall over the last few months has also created additional difficulties, by delaying the surface works programme. Clearly the amount of surface water prevents us accessing those sites that have been indentified for improvement works with machinery due to our concern that heavy plant and equipment could do addition damage to already muddy path surfaces. Hopefully conditions will improve in the next few weeks and allow works to commence.
41. Whilst the overall revenue budget has been reduced by nearly £50,000 for the year, additional capital money has been provided for projects identified as Urgent Risk (a danger to the public or a risk of further deterioration to the Council’s infrastructure) and Accessibility Improvements (improvements to structures or routes to aid better access) these combined budgets amount to approximately £200,000 an increase from last financial year of an additional £25,000.

C. Strategic Access Update (Jonathan Clark)

42. 16 A total of 64 planning applications have been commented upon by the Strategic Access Officer since the last meeting, distributed between authorities as follows: Wycombe 22; Aylesbury Vale, 21; South Bucks 3; Chiltern 4; and Bucks County Council 14.
43. The Council made its main response to the draft HS2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report through the 51M Group, making up the Councils along the route opposed to the new railway. The scoping report essentially seeks information on what baseline information we would expect to see in a full EIA. The report asks if there are omissions and seeks out the key issues needing to be addressed.
44. A recent survey by the Strategic Access Officer shows the following numbers of ROW affected by the HS2 footprint. If two ROW cross the railway along a 'route', only one footpath has been counted. However, where one footpath number forms several routes (for example along Great Missenden Footpath 33 at Hyde End, which forms three routes), additional 'paths' have been counted. The number of ROW directly affected has been reduced due to the proposed 'green tunnels' in the Chilterns. The full list of paths impacted by HS2 and the associated roads is available in **Appendix 1**. The Ramblers have suggested 118 paths affected in Buckinghamshire, but this needs further investigation.

Buckinghamshire ROW	Footpath	Bridleway	Byway or Restricted Byway	TOTAL
Directly severed by the Railway	48	9	1	58
Directly severed by new roads	9	4	0	13

45. Rights of Way comments to HS2 on the draft Environmental Impact Assessment are available to view in **Appendix 2** and an ROW assessment for the 51m website is available in **Appendix 3**. The Strategic Access Officer has compiled a table of mitigation suggestions to inform LAF members, and local residents representing the 51m Group attending the Community Forums, who wish to raise questions to HS2 on ROW issues. This is shown in **Appendix 4** along with maps of the route to accompany this table.
46. The East West Rail project plans to connect Oxford and Cambridge by rail, with a planned opening in 2017. This line was closed to passengers in 1967 and to freight in 1992. The Buckinghamshire stretch is called the 'Western Section' and will run between Milton Keynes and Bicester, passing through Winslow. It will also connect with Chiltern Railways from Claydon Junction down to Aylesbury and on to High Wycombe and London via Princes Risborough. The railway has a very good business case, which the government supports and it is likely Justine Greening will announce the go-ahead next month. The structures along the line, such as bridges and embankments will be 'future-proofed' for electrification. The route will be double tracked in Bucks, for which the line has existing width capacity. There are 26 ROW crossings, many of them 'at grade', between Claydon Junction, Winslow and Milton Keynes. It may be that many paths will need to be diverted to the nearest road, footpath or railway junction.

47. There have been 17 new Donate-a-gate donors since February 2012, taking the total to 246 donors.
48. The project to remove all 127 stiles along the Chiltern Way continues, using the donate-a-gate tax rebate from the government (Gift Aid) with the route now having only 59 stiles through Buckinghamshire, with 10 landowner refusals.
49. The proposed new footpath creation through the Lane End Industrial Estate has progressed. The path aims to connect two halves of the village divided physically and socially and will link residents from each part of the village with the shops in their respective areas. A meeting was held between the Parish Council and the owners of the Industrial Estate Road on 2nd May 2012 and an agreement is being drawn up for a 6 month permissive route trial.
50. A new bridleway has been agreed with the waste operator, WRG, at Calvert, and the County Council's Property Services. The bridleway will provide a good strategic link south of the landfill site and across to Lawn Hill Farm (in the process of being sold). It will convert Edgcott 10, 12, Calvert Green 1, and Grendon Underwood 23 and 24 from footpath to bridleway. A County Council planning committee resolved to approve planning permission for an 'Energy from Waste' Plant at the site, subject to completion of a legal agreement and approval by the Secretary of State. The new link road from the A41 will impact on a number of ROW.
51. Further disabled access works on the Ridgeway are proposed at Brush Hill, Princes Risborough and Coombe Hill, Wendover. Where possible, work will convert steps into ramps.
52. The Officer has been in close contact with Watermead Parish Council in order to apply for the Government's new 'Paths for Communities' funding to finance a new bridge over the River Thames and create a new bridleway between Buckingham Park and Watermead. However, funding rules prohibit match-funding from the public purse which precludes any contribution from the County or Parish Council. This effectively prohibits any application on this project.
53. The latest edition was published in April 2012 and is available to download from the County Council's website via this link:
http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/row/parish_news.page

D. 'Simply Walk' (Fiona Broadbent)

54. 2012 marks the 10th Anniversary of Simply Walk. A leaders' walk and picnic has been organised at Hughenden on Friday July 13th 2012. LAF Members are warmly invited.
55. The new walks programme leaflet for April – September 2012 is now available on the website and gives information on all walks in the county. The full-colour programme is currently funded and produced by Reactivate Bucks:
http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/row/simply_walk.page?
56. Additional funding for Simply Walk from walkers' donations is being requested for the year 2012/13 via the newsletter and programmes. It is suggested that Fiona requests an audience with the parish councils again to request local funding. Downley Parish Council led the way last year. All current funding partners have agreed to fund this year (2012/13) at the same level as in previous years, but the income (c. £32k) remains less than costs (c. £44k).

57. The 4th Simply Walk Newsletter has been published and is available on the website.
58. The latest quarterly walking figures available for January, February and March 2012 are as follows:-
Total walkers 1, 370
Total new walkers 245
Total new volunteer leaders trained 13
Total volunteer walk leaders 195
Total 'footfall' 7, 213

Recommendation: Members to consider advice, comments, feedback and questions.