



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

**WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2012 AT 10.00 AM
MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY**

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Page No
1	Apologies for Absence/Changes in Membership Members are invited to note that Diana Bird is no longer a member of the Board and that there is a vacancy for a NFU representative.	
2	Declarations of Interest To disclose any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests.	
3	Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2012, to be confirmed	1 - 6
4	Matters Arising	
5	Rights of Way Group Report Mike Walker, Senior Definitive Map Officer; Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access Adviser; and Joanne Taylor, Operations Team Leader.	7 - 18
6	LAF Members Report Report from Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access Adviser	19 - 32
7	Any Other Business	
8	Date of Next and Future Meetings The next meeting of the Local Access Forum will be held on Wednesday 27 March 2013 at 10.00am in Mezzanine Room 1	
	Dates of future meetings 17 July 20 November	



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JULY 2012, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 11.53 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr J Elfes, in the Chair

Mr C Hurworth, Mrs V Lynch and Mr J Coombe

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr J Clark

GUESTS PRESENT

Ms J Hanwell

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Peter Challis, David Briggs, Neil Harris, Alan Lambourne and Gavin Caspersz.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 FEBRUARY 2012 TO BE CONFIRMED

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2012 were confirmed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman referred to page 3 of the agenda, Item 5, Place Service Restructure and said that he believed that there was cause for concern. He commented that if volunteers did not carry out the tasks, they were unlikely to be completed and was concerned that volunteers were contributing to the profits of Ringway Jacobs. He said he would be writing to Anne James to ask how the business planning process addressed this issue.

Action: John Elfes

Joanne Taylor said that from an operational perspective there was little or no change in the way the Council worked with path maintenance volunteers. She said the only

possible issue she could identify would be in relation to purchasing of stock, but this was a minor issue and meant doing things differently.

The Chairman advised that he had responded to the CROW Act consultation on behalf of the LAF.

5. NATURAL ENGLAND

Jenny Hanwell, People & Access Team was welcomed to the meeting.

Jenny advised that she split her working time equally between national outdoor learning projects and working at a local level in her local area which covers Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. She said she champions access in Natural England and works in partnership with officers in other parts of the organisation. Jenny said she is trying to promote the work of LAFs and that she would like to attend LAF meetings.

Members were advised that Natural England have a dedicated LAF advisor called Rob Leek (rob.leek@naturalengland.org.uk) and that he is the main point of contact at a national level for LAFs and Huddle.

Jenny said that Natural England is currently trying to coordinate the publication of the LAF annual reports so that NE and Defra can gain a good overall picture of what LAFs are doing across the country.

Members were informed that Natural England is promoting a grant scheme called Paths for Communities. This will operate over the 2 year period from May 2012 to March 2014, with a total fund of £2m. She said that there is an Applicant handbook available on the website – link below

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/rightsofway/p4c.aspx>

She advised that applicants are asked whether they have discussed the application with LAFs and that this point is weighted in the application. The Paths for Communities Project is funded by the Rural Development Project for England and each project must therefore deliver some of its benefit in a defined rural area. There is an online map also available on the website to assist applicants. Applicants are need to ensure they get landowners consent before submitting an application. Applicants also need to ensure that they demonstrate local economic or social benefits of any project and there is a strong emphasis that schemes must involve an upgrade or permanent rights of way, and bridleways are also looked on favourably. Details can be found on the Natural England website via the link above.

Viv Lynch said that she was also a Parish Councillor and said that the Parish Council were in the process of writing their development plan. She said that horse riders had to ride on main roads and that the only benefit she could see for the development of an alternative right of way was that it would get vulnerable road users off the road. Jennifer said that if a project showed strong social benefits it may be considered, although she commented that it was a competitive scheme.

Jenny commented that it was originally expected that schemes would be match funded with a 75% grant and 25% match funding subject to Defra restrictions which meant that the match funding could not be public money so match funding could not be from a Parish Council, Local Authority or lottery funds. Jenny said that volunteer time can now be used for match funding and that advice was in the applicant handbook. 100% funding can also be applied for if there are clear benefits shown and there is a strong partnership element. Jenny advised that Members could email her or the Grants Officer, Kevin Haugh with queries. (Kevin.haugh@naturalengland.org.uk)

Jenny informed the LAF that Natural England were continuing with the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey for a further three years. She advised that this had currently been going for three years. The survey monitors visits to the natural environment by asking residents which places they visit and their attitudes to the natural environment etc.

National highlights include:

- There has been a small increase in visits to the countryside and a small decrease in visits to green spaces in towns and cities
- There has been a small increase to people visiting outdoors. This equates to approximately half a million people with an increase from 90-92%
- There are strong results regarding how far people travel to the natural environment with a lot of people visiting locally
- There has been an increase in the usage of paths, cycle and bridleways
- Only 26% of visits to the countryside result in expenditure with an average spend of £28 per visit.

Jenny suggested the LAF might like to consider the information in relation to Buckinghamshire and that she would send this to Jonathan Clark when it is made available.

The Chairman said that he was disappointed with Huddle and that he did not feel that it achieved its original aim. He said that the original concept was that LAFs could register their decisions and put together national policy, although this assumed there would be an England Access Forum. He said that it appeared to be more of a general chat room and that it was not clear the status of views expressed. Jenny asked what he would like to get out of Huddle and the Chairman said that he would like to know the formal views of other LAFs about issues which may affect LAFs. He said he was also not clear about the avenue to put views to Ministers. She said that she would feedback the comments regarding Huddle.

6. RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP REPORT

Members had received the Rights of Way Group Report.

The following update was provided:

- The order referred to in point 9 has been confirmed.

Joanne Taylor then took Members through the Rights of Way Operations Update.

The following update was provided:

- The Council started the year with approximately 800 issues and ended with 850 issues. Whilst gangs are employed on maintenance work they are not doing the structural work.
- If anyone has any ideas for Accessibility Improvement projects please contact Joanne.

Viv Lynch enquired if the funding would be lost if it was not spent this financial year. Joanne advised that it was dependant on the funding source. She said that revenue had to be spent by 31 March but that it may be permissible to carry forward a certain amount of capital funding, providing there were good reasons for this.

Jonathan Clark then took Members through the Strategic Access Update.

Members were asked to what extent they wanted to be involved in the East West Rail Consortium and the Chairman said that the LAF should be involved and attend any community forums. The Chairman also raised an issue regarding possible claiming

rights and Jonathan said that this would have to be addressed should the event arise.

Chris Hurworth asked why the landowners had objected to the removal of stiles and installation of gates. Jonathan said that one landowner had said that they did not want to encourage cycling.

John Coombe asked if the normal closures for Rights of Ways would apply to HS2. Jonathan advised that HS2 would be subject to an Act of Parliament and that it would be a case of negotiation with HS2 Ltd.

7. LAF MEMBERS REPORT

Members had received the LAF Members Report.

The following updates were provided:

Viv said she went to the HS2 Community Forum and commented that she thought the meeting was conducted and chaired well. She said that HS2 representatives had commented that they were finding it difficult that there was no dialogue between the Council and HS2 Ltd and that they felt Viv understood the issues regarding Rights of Way and could discuss the issue.

Viv said that from the meeting two areas of concern were identified. These were where the line came close to properties and Rights of Way. Concern about noise was also raised and at the September meeting of the Forum details about noise will be presented.

Viv said that she was not able to discuss solutions such as bridges etc as the meeting was still in the early stages and talking about concerns and impacts as opposed to solutions at this point.

The Chairman asked if any other Members would get involved as more Members were needed to cover other Community Forums. The Chairman said that he would contact David Briggs and Neil Harris to see if either of them would consider attending the Community Forums. Viv said she could ask her counterpart if she would be able to attend any of the Community Forums if that would be acceptable to the LAF. The Chairman said that it was important that the Community Forums were attended and that if her counterpart was willing to attend that would be appreciated.

Action: John Elfes/Viv Lynch

Jonathan drew Members attention to the outcome of the CRoW 2000 open access land consultation review from Natural England and commented that the opinions of the LAF appear to have been acknowledged and reflected in the report. It was an example of how the LAF has a voice.

Jonathan then referred Members to points 6, 7 and 8 in the report and asked that if any Members had any observations or questions to contact him. The Chairman said that so long as the paths were temporarily diverted the LAF had no objection.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Jonathan informed the LAF about a project called 'Chilterns Sustainable Gateways Project'. He advised that there was £868k funding available over 3 years, which will also fund an officer based in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office and another office in Chinnor. Jonathan said that the project was a joint project between Chiltern District Council, Woking Borough Council and the Chiltern Conservation Board. Gateways towns in Buckinghamshire are:

- Amersham
- Chesham
- Princes Risborough
- Tring

The project aims to put in new cycleways, electric bikes, provide greater information on cycling, training, community work and cycle racks. The LAF was informed that London Midlands and Chiltern Railways are also involved. More information will be provided in due course.

Jennifer advised that she had received one expression of interest for a passbook from the Aylesbury and District Ramblers. The LAF was not aware of the expression of interest and Jennifer said she would find out more details.

9. DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 28th November 2012, 10am, Mezzanine Room 3, County Hall, Aylesbury

Chairman



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 28th November 2012

Title: Rights of Way Team Update

Author: Mike Walker, Jonathan Clark, Joanne Taylor & Fiona Broadbent

Contact Officer: Maureen Keyworth (01296 383603)

A. DEFINITIVE MAP UPDATE (MIKE WALKER)

A1 DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS MADE

1. **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 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 has been referred to the Secretary of State.
2. **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 has been referred to the Secretary of State.
3. **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 were received; the matter has been referred to the Secretary of State.
4. **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 the 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 has been referred to the Secretary of State.
5. **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 the 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 has been referred to the Secretary of State.

6. **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 the decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 21 June 2011. Objections have been received; the matter has been referred to the Secretary of State.
7. **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. The Inspector confirmed the Order.
8. **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 the decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 10 May 2011. Objections have been received; the matter has been referred to the Secretary of State.
9. **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 were received. A public inquiry was held on 10 October 2012. The Inspector confirmed the Order.
10. **Lacey Green** – claimed public footpath from Main Road to Public Footpath No. 20. The application was accepted by Committee at its meeting on 20 July 2011. An Order was made on 21 May 2012. No objections were received and the Order has been confirmed.
11. **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 the decision and we were 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 was referred to the Secretary of State and the Order not confirmed.
12. **Taplow** – application to record the route from River Road to Amerden Lane as Public Bridleway. The application was accepted by Committee at its meeting on 7 December 2011. An Order was made on 18 June 2012. Objections have been received and the matter will be referred to the Secretary of State.
13. **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 its meeting on 7 December 2011. An Order was made on 21 May 2012. No objections were received and the Order has been confirmed.
14. **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 were received and the Order has been confirmed.
15. **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 its meeting on 30 May 2012. An Order was made on 22 October 2012 and is currently within its objection period.

16. **High Wycombe** – application to record the route from Daws Hill Lane to the Junction of Public Bridleway No 67 and Public Footpath No 64 (Keep Hill Lane) as Public Bridleway. The application was accepted by Committee at its meeting on 25 March 2010. An Order was made on 23 June 2010. One objection was received concerning the width of the route. This is now resolved but requires the Secretary of State to confirm the Order subject to any modification with regard to width. A decision is awaited.

A2 DEFINITIVE MAP APPLICATIONS TO BE INVESTIGATED AND REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE

17. **West Wycombe/Downley** – application to record Cookshall Lane as part Public Bridleway, part Restricted Byway. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.
18. **Lower Winchendon** – application to record the route from the Old Mill to Public Footpath No. 3 as Public Footpath. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.
19. **Wendover & Halton** – application to record the route from Public Footpath No. 24, Wendover to Public Footpath No. 13, Halton as Public Footpath. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.
20. **Westbury** – application to record the route from the Oxfordshire county boundary (Public Footpath No. 303, Mixbury) to Fulwell Road, Westbury, as Public Footpath.
21. **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.
22. **High Wycombe** – application to record the route from Burnham Close to Whitelands Road, High Wycombe as Public Footpath. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.
23. **Princes Risborough** – application to record the route from Elm Road to Bell Street, Princes Risborough as Public Footpath. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.
24. **Iver** – application to record various routes across the Fields and the Clump, Iver as Public Footpaths. Investigation not yet started.
25. **Chepping Wycombe** – application to record the route from Elmshott Close to King's Wood as Public Footpath. Investigation not yet started.
26. **Beaconsfield** – application to record the route from Minerva Way to the junction with Public Footpath No. 15 and No. 16 as a Public Footpath. Investigation not yet started.
27. **Bledlow** – application to record the route from Footpath No 49 to Bridleway No 55 as public footpath. Investigation not yet started.
28. **Lane End** – drafting error of Public Footpath No 25. This is due to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in January.

A3 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

29. **Bledlow** – Application to divert Footpath No 8. Order confirmed.
30. **Coleshill** – Application to divert Bridleway No 11. Order confirmed.
31. **Coleshill** – Application to divert Footpath No 11. Within informal consultation period.
32. **Edgcott** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos. 6 and 7. Order Confirmed.
33. **Ellesborough** – Application to divert Footpath No 66 (part) – 1. Order confirmed.
34. **Ellesborough** – Application to divert Footpath No FP66 (part) – 2. Order confirmed.
35. **Gerrards Cross** – Application to temporarily divert Footpath No 11. Order to be made.
36. **Grendon Underwood** – Application to divert Footpath No 19 (part). Order to be made.
37. **Hambleden** – Application to divert Footpath No 24 (part). Order made and in objection period.
38. **Hedgerley** – Application to divert Footpath No 8. Order made and awaiting confirmation.
39. **High Wycombe** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 27. WDC planning matter awaiting formal consultation from them.
40. **Hughenden** – Application to divert Footpath No 54 / 54A. Order made and in objection period.
41. **Latimer** – Application to divert Footpath No 1. Order made and one objection received. Referred to Planning Inspectorate and written reps procedure underway.
42. **Latimer** – Application to temporarily divert Footpath No 1. Order confirmed.
43. **Leckhampstead** – Application to divert Footpath No 34. Order to be confirmed.
44. **Marsworth** – Application to divert Footpath No 3. Within informal consultation period.
45. **Pitchcott** – Application to divert Footpath No 4 (part). Order made and in objection period
46. **Quanton** – Application to divert Bridleway Nos. 17 & 17a. Within informal consultation period.
47. **Quarrendon** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 2. Order to be made.
48. **Thornborough** – Proposal to divert Public Footpath No 9. Within informal consultation period.
49. **Tingewick** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos. 10, 11 and Bridleway No 13. Order made and with Secretary of State to deal by written reps.
50. **Turville** – Application to divert Bridleway No 20A. Within informal consultation period.
51. **Westbury** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 14 (Special Schools). Order made. Objections received. Stage 2 process to be considered.
52. **Winslow** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 5. Within informal consultation period.

A4 PUBLIC PATH CREATION AGREEMENTS

53. **Brill** - The Walks. Footpath Creation Agreement. Completed.
54. **Edgcott** – Bridleway Creation. Awaiting instruction to make Agreement with WRG.
55. **Westcott** - Footpath Creation. Awaiting instruction to make Agreement.

A5 VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATIONS

56. **Gerrards Cross** – land at Lower Road. Awaiting public inquiry.
57. **Iver** – land at The Fields and The Clump. The application is under consideration.

- 58. **Great Missenden** – land at The Field, Bryants Bottom. The application is under consideration.
- 59. **Beaconsfield** – voluntary registration of the land at Hampden Hill. The application is under consideration.
- 60. **Penn** – land at Coppice Farm Road, Tylers Green, Penn. The application is under consideration.
- 61. **High Wycombe** – land at Meadow Close, Wycombe Marsh. Waiting investigation.
- 62. **Wooburn** – land off Cherwell Road, Bourne End. Waiting investigation.

B. STRATEGIC ACCESS UPDATE (JONATHAN CLARK)

- 63. A total of 63 planning applications have been commented upon by the Strategic Access Officer since the last meeting, distributed between authorities as follows: Wycombe 14; Aylesbury Vale, 22; South Bucks 9; Chiltern 4; and Bucks County Council 14.
- 64. HS2 consulted the County Council on a draft Construction Code of Practice on 9th September 2012 with a deadline for submissions on 19th October 2012. Rights of Way response outlined elements with regard to the maintenance and signposting of temporary diverted routes during the construction process and the mechanism through which to report problems. The legal mechanism for temporarily closing paths severed by the railway and construction sites was questioned, as well as the strategy for consulting the public and Local Access Forum and the need to outline timescales for closures. The accommodation for disabled access users on temporary routes was missing.
- 65. The Council made its main response to the draft HS2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report through the 51M Group, the body which consists of all 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.
- 66. The following table summarises the numbers of ROW affected by the HS2 footprint and proposed new roads:

	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

- 67. The East West Rail project plans to connect Oxford and Cambridge by rail, with a planned opening in 2017. The Buckinghamshire stretch between Blechley and Bicester, running through Winslow, line was closed to passengers in 1967 and to freight in 1992. It forms part of the 'Western Section' and will also connect with Chiltern Railways from Claydon Junction down to Aylesbury, then on to High Wycombe and London via Princes Risborough. A project outline has been prepared that identifies the personnel, timescales and work needed to be undertaken in order to identify the 'at grade' crossings and come to an agreement

in principle with Network Rail and the East West Rail Consortium of the methods by which the rights of way are taken off the line. The outcomes of the project can then form the basis for consultation with the LAF and partners. We are waiting to hear back from the EWR Consortium before proceeding.

68. The following table compares the numbers of ROW affected by the East West Rail Project (Row 1) with other lines across Buckinghamshire (several crossings were reduced in row 3 as part of the Evergreen 3 Project):

	Footpath	Bridleway	Byway or Restricted Byway	TOTAL
'At grade' railway crossings north of Aylesbury Vale Parkway Train Station.	28	3	0	31
'At grade' railway crossings south of Aylesbury Vale Parkway Train Station (Aylesbury – Great Missenden Chenies).	6	0	0	6
'At Grade' crossings (Luggershall – Haddenham – Princes Risborough – Denham).	9	0	0	9
At Grade crossings Aylesbury to Princes Risborough branch line.	14	0	0	14

69. Across all 4 routes we have been approached by Network Rail, who are undertaking a 'closure programme' to provide alternative routes that take the public off the railway line. We have been asked for initial thoughts on 29 crossings sites and if we would consider any for extinguishment, diversion or replacement footbridge.
70. There have been 7 new Donate-a-gate donors since July 2012, taking the total to 252 donors.
71. The project to remove 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 57 stiles through Buckinghamshire, with 10 landowner refusals.

72. The proposed new footpath creation through the Lane End Industrial Estate has been put on hold for 6 months. 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. The Parish Council are currently waiting for the owners of the Industrial Estate Road to submit a planning application which will hopefully deliver the footpath connection the Parish aims to achieve.
73. The Officer has been working with Watermead Parish Council in order to apply for the Government's 'Paths for Communities' funding (P4C) to finance a new bridge over the River Thames and create a new bridleway between Buckingham Park and Watermead. The application rules prohibit match-funding from the public purse, but the funding body has outlined they would welcome an application. The P4C Scheme was launched on 14th May 2012 by Natural England and has so far had around 120 expressions of interest, but only 6 completed applications.
74. The last edition of the Rights of Way and Environment Newsletter was published in July 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. The Newsletter planned for October 2012 was postponed due to other work pressures.

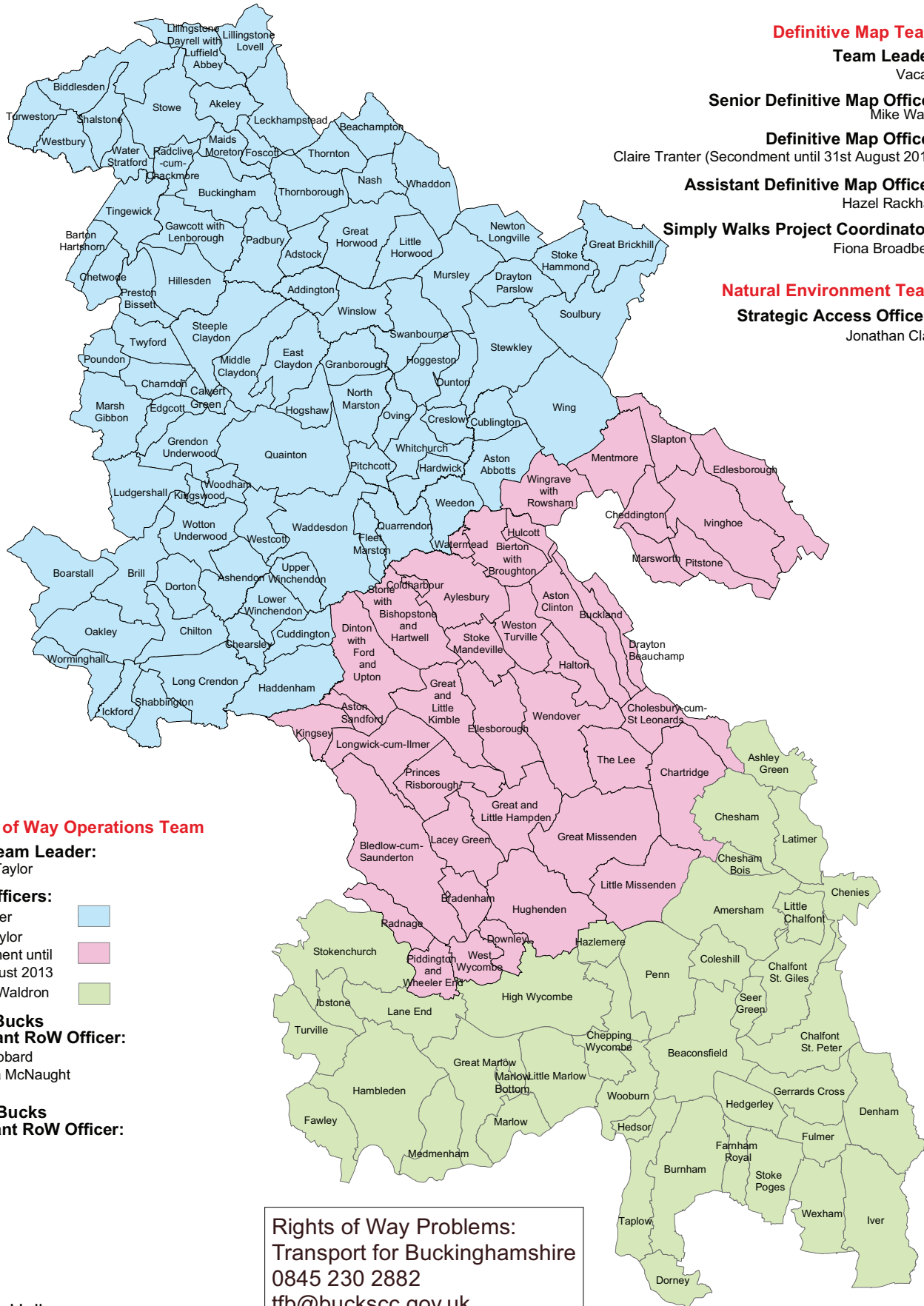
C. RIGHTS OF WAY OPERATIONS UPDATE (JOANNE TAYLOR)

75. The Rights of Way Operations team has 6 members: a Team Leader, 3 Rights of Way Officers (see area map Appendix 1) and 2 FTE Assistant Rights of Way Officers. Unfortunately, the team has had a staff vacancy since September 2012, due to a temporary position becoming available in the Definitive Map Team being filled by an Area Officer – Claire Tranter. Rosie Taylor, the Assistant Officer for the south, is now 'acting-up' in Claire's position, but Rosie's old post is vacant. It is hoped the vacancy will be filled in the next 2 – 3 weeks.
76. Weather conditions over the last 8 months have caused considerable difficulties. The wet and warm season provided excellent conditions for vegetation growth and this gave Bucks Customer Services high volumes of public complaints due to overgrowth problems, making it necessary, at quite an early stage of the summer, to issue a general statement that the conditions were affecting the amount of work being carried out. Commonly jobs were taking twice as long normal, purely due to the length of the material having to be cut. Eventually, additional funding was obtained allowing the Operations team to purchase extra contractor time and crews. Even so, the summer clearance schedule, which is normally completed in September, is only now drawing to a close.
77. Whilst the rights of way gangs were busy on clearance jobs, works on structures such as stiles and gates were curtailed, resulting in a steady build up of outstanding jobs through the summer. Thankfully, in the early autumn, it was also possible to employ teams to catch up on this type of work which has allowed the number of structure works, such as gates and stiles, to remain at similar levels to previous years. Regrettably, the number of issues resolved through negotiations with landowners, usually enforcement works, is lower than this time last year. Almost certainly, this is due to staff resource being drawn away to manage the problems with clearance, as well as a staff vacancy. See Appendix 2 Summary of Works.
78. Other weather dependant works such as surface and drainage works that are also carried out over the summer and autumn have also been postponed, with some removed completely for this financial year, but these will hopefully be added to next year's surfacing programme.

D. 'SIMPLY WALK' (FIONA BROADBENT)

79. A successful celebratory walk and picnic was held at Hughenden Manor on Friday 13th July 2012 with over 70 volunteer walk leaders attending.
80. The new walks programme covering 1st October 2012 to 31st March 2013 is available on the website. The full-colour programme will no longer be funded by Reactivate Bucks, but the NHS will provide some additional funding to cover the cost for next year publications.
http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/row/simply_walk.page?
81. A new walk was been launched in Stone (October 2012) and additional slower and shorter walks have been developed alongside the 'regular' walks. It is hoped a new walk will start in Winslow during the spring next year.
82. Additional funding from walkers' donations is significantly down on last year, currently at just over £1000. All current funding partners agreed contributions this year (2012/13) at the same level as previous years, but income (c. £32k) remains less than costs (c. £44k).
83. The latest quarterly walking figures available for July, August and September 2012 are as follows:-
 - Total walkers 1, 290
 - Total new walkers 177
 - Total new volunteer leaders trained 10
 - Total volunteer walk leaders 206
 - Total 'footfall' 6,211

RIGHTS OF WAY AREAS AND PARISHES



Definitive Map Team

Team Leader:
Vacant

Senior Definitive Map Officer:
Mike Walker

Definitive Map Officer:
Claire Tranter (Secondment until 31st August 2013)

Assistant Definitive Map Officer:
Hazel Rackham

Simply Walks Project Coordinator :
Fiona Broadbent

Natural Environment Team

Strategic Access Officer :
Jonathan Clark

Rights of Way Operations Team

Area Team Leader:

Joanne Taylor

Area Officers:

Phil Turner

Rosie Taylor

Secondment until
31st August 2013

Corinne Waldron



North Bucks

Assistant RoW Officer:

Rose Gibbard

Rebecca McNaught

South Bucks

Assistant RoW Officer:

Vacant

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

General Enquiry:
0845 370 8090
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As at 5 November 2012

Buckinghamshire County Council
Summary of Rights of Way Maintenance Carried Out
Between 1/04/12 and 31/10/12, planning consultations, 2.5% May 2012 survey and
'issues outstanding'

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	Oct-11	Oct-12
Alignment	Path Off Line - resolved issue	17	9
Clearance	Clearance - summary jobs/km	564/263km	795/265km
Bridge	Installed or repaired	27	20
Finger/post	Installed or repaired	60	120
Fly Tipping	Fly Tipping - removed	10	2
Gate	Gate repaired or installed	56	60
Intimidation + animal	Intimidation - resolved	16	5
Intimidating sign	Misleading Sign - removed	5	3
Obstruction - resolved	Barbed wire	16	5
Obstruction - resolved	Barrier - Fencing, wall or other	67	43
Obstruction - resolved	Electric fence	13	6
Obstruction - removed	Fallen Tree	50	116
Obstruction - resolved	Ploughing and Cropping	38	37
Other	Delivery of materials	21	29
Other	Miscellaneous issues resolved	29	28
Stile	Installed or repaired	75	62
Stile	Stile To Gap	10	9
Stile	Stile To KG	35	24
Stile	Stile To PG	27	38
Terrain	Path Erosion - resolved	4	4
Terrain	Bank Steps	9	7
Terrain	Path Surface problem resolved	57	27
Waymark Post	Installed/Repaired	44	77
Consultations	All Planning Applications	128	131
Volunteer Hours	RA, Chiltern Society	1200 hrs	945hrs
Improvements	To aid mobility access	110	131
2.5% Survey Results	Paths Rated easy to use	84%	86%
2.5% Survey Results	Structures rated easy to use	96%	98%
2.5% Survey Results	Routes with Roadside Signs	98.60%	95.00%
Number on Database	No. of Job Sheets issued	1351	1234
Number on Database	Average time to complete an	44 days	43
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/10	1019	
Number on Database	No. of issues os 31/03/11	907	
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/12		799
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 30/10/12		1076



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 28th November 2012

Title: LAF Members' Report

Author: Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access

Contact Officer: Maureen Keyworth (01296 383603)

HS2

- 1 Neil Harris attended the HS2 Chalfonts & Amersham Community Forum on 21st November 2012; John Elfes attended the Central Chilterns Forums on 25th September and 27th November 2012 and the Dunsmore, Wendover & Halton Forum on 10th September 2012; Viv Lynch attended the Stoke Mandeville & Aylesbury Forum on 11th September 2012 and 14th November 2012; and Alan Lambourne attended the Waddesden & Quainton Forum on 19th November 2012.
- 2 HS2 are unable to attend today's meeting, but the Chairman has received an invitation from HS2 for a bilateral meeting and wishes to set up a LAF working group. Rosie Brake, the lead officer for HS2 at Bucks CC, has suggested the LAF should have a place within the engagement framework, of which the Community Forums are a part. There will be a Buckinghamshire Mitigation Panel to which John Elfes will be invited and a Planning Forum every 2 months, into which the LAF can make representations.
- 3 HS2 commissioned 'Landscape Assessments' and 'Open Space Surveys' in Buckinghamshire, in some cases on rights of way that cross the proposed route, and these took place in September 2012 (see HS2 update to Community Forums in Appendix 1). The results of these surveys are currently unknown. They were conducted to assess the use of those rights of way potentially be severed by the railway both during construction and final operation. The surveys also focused on understanding the use and amenity value of open spaces accessed by PROW, near to or sometimes on the proposed route.

LAF Conferences

- 4 There is a National Conference in Sheffield on 27th February 2013. Generally, only one member from each LAF will be able to attend, but there will be a few additional spaces on request. Travel expenses and overnight accommodation will be reimbursed, but train tickets will need to be bought centrally at Natural England.

- 5 There will be a South East Conference in May 2013, the agenda for which has not yet been set, but if you have anything you wish to be raised, please make it known.

Turville Open Access

- 6 Kate Ashbrook, Open Spaces Society, has asked if one new stile or kissing gate, and one further kissing gate along the same fence line, can be installed to aid walkers on open access land above Turville village (see plan in Appendix 2). It is an iconic parcel of access land, with excellent views, owned by the Wormsley Estate. There are currently five entrances onto the land via public footpaths, but walkers are now prohibited from traversing the top ridge by the new fence, thus reducing public enjoyment, and elderly local residents cannot climb over an existing stile. An informal approach to the Wormsley Estate could not persuade them to take any action, unless they were legally obliged to do so. Advice and guidance is sought from the LAF, as it may be that a letter from the Forum may have better results.

Annual Report

- 7 LAF regulations require every LAF to produce an Annual Report and last year Natural England introduced a pro forma in order to regularize responses, enable monitoring of LAF activity to be more easily monitored by Natural England and so justify future LAF funding. The reporting year has been changed to reflect the financial year, and the deadline for submission of the pro forma is now 31st October 2012. Natural England wrote to every Forum in this regard (see Appendix 3). Comments are welcome from Forum members on the content.

Correspondence

- 8 John Elfes wrote to Anne James questioning the future role of volunteers with regard the new contract with a Ringway Jacobs. Forum members and volunteers have questioned the propriety of a volunteer effort being used to help deliver a commercial contract. Anne James suggested this problem was recognised and addressed through the business planning process. John asked for a detailed explanation as to how this is to be achieved, and what safeguards are in place to ensure that volunteer effort is not supporting the profits of a commercial concern. Anne James' reply is in Appendix 4.
- 9 Peter Challis wrote to Watermead Parish Council in support of their Paths for Communities bid (Appendix 5). Viv Lynch hopes to write on behalf of the British Horse Society. The LAF have already put forward support in the July 2012 meeting, but an official letter would greatly help Watermead Parish's bid.

Membership

- 10 The Officer wrote to the NFU Regional (Virginia Stollery) and National Office Office (John Archer) on 5th October 2012 inviting possible candidates to represent farming issues on the Forum, and we are awaiting a reply. Diana Bird's membership has been discontinued.

LAF dates for 2013

- 11 Meeting dates for 2013 are 27th March 2013, 17th July 2013 and 20th November 2013.

Progress update and work planned, including Rights of Way surveys and Property

Lee Fisher, Senior Engineer

Mark Bailey, Route Wide Environment Manager

Tim Healey, Design Director, Capita Symonds Ineco

Ruth Newsum, Stakeholder Manager

Design Progress

- Update for aerial mapping
- Review of alignment proposals (Community & others)
- Ongoing development of:
 - Structure designs
 - Flood modelling
 - Highway diversion (permanent & temporary)
 - Construction compound locations
 - Earthworks
- Data collection from Utility companies
- Initial traffic and Right of Way surveys complete

Environment

- Ongoing ecological surveys; agricultural interviews and agricultural soil sampling; and business and community facility surveys
- Baseline information from desk studies
- Input into design through iterative process
- Updating of baseline information against 14 environmental topic areas

Public Right of Way Methodology

- Locations taken from Local Authority 'Definitive Maps' supplied to HS2
- Supplemented by details of permissive RoW on OS and Private Rights of Way and details provide by The Ramblers and other organisations
- Engagement with Local Access Forum to understand:
 - What existing surveys and other usage data are available
 - Views on:
 - ▶ importance and usage of individual PROW locations
 - ▶ busiest time (day and time of year)
 - ▶ dominant trip purpose (recreational, commute/journey to school, shopping)
- Surveys will be undertaken to understand the use of PROWs potentially severed or affected by HS2, in construction or operational phase

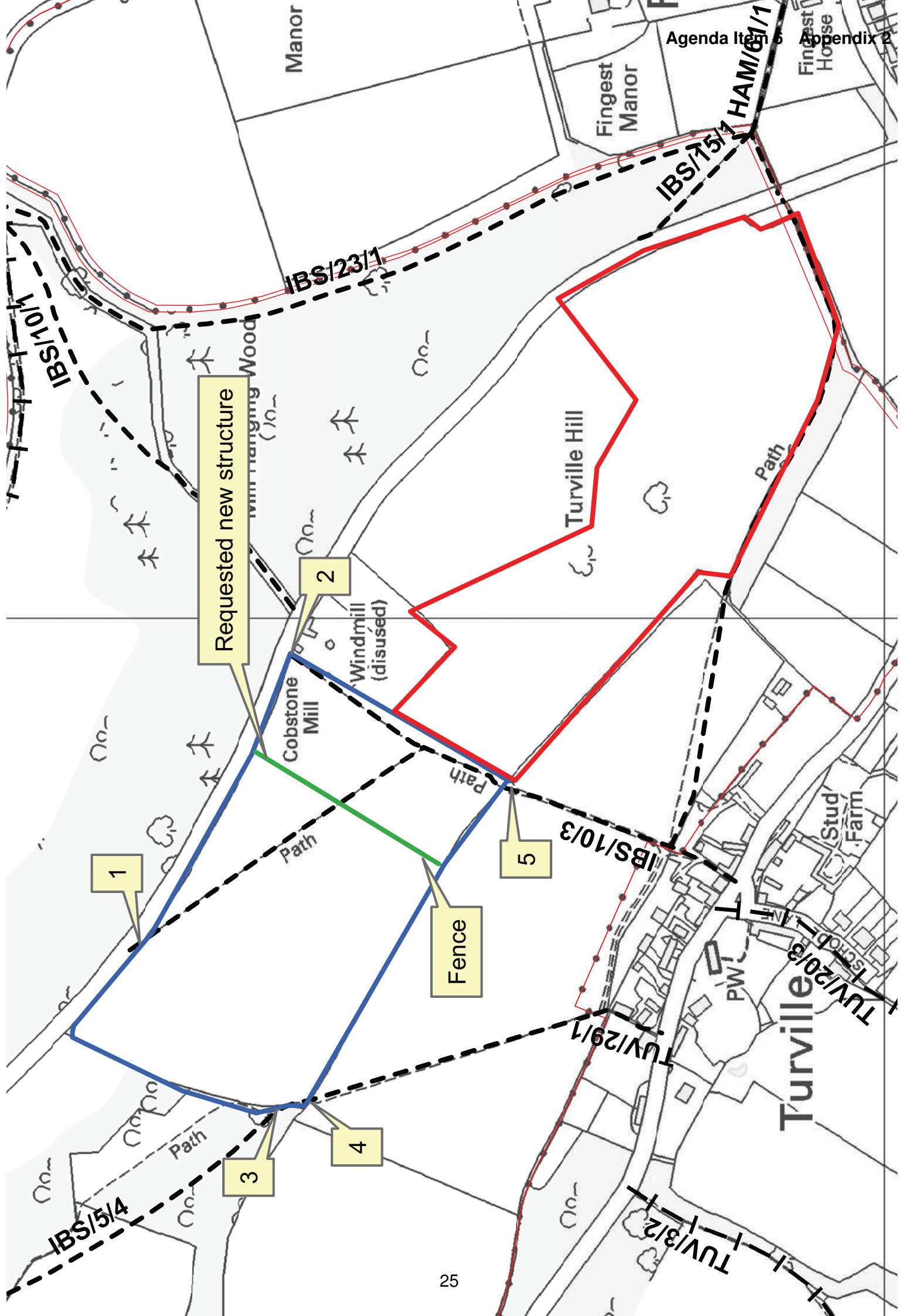
Public Right of Way Surveys (PRoWS)

Process

- Initial reconnaissance survey to determine survey location and take photographs
- Starting point will be to survey all used PRoWS (unless advised obviously not used)
- Proposed method is to carry out manual surveys throughout the day during the following times:
 - Saturdays/ Sundays in August/early Sept and
 - Tues, Weds or Thurs weekday in Sept for locations that have a non-recreational use
- Avoid days of significant inclement weather

Form of Survey

- Consistent across route
- Counts by time period by:
 - direction
 - person type (adult/child, gender)
 - mode - walk, cycle, equestrian, boat etc
- Sample brief interviews to determine origin, destination, purpose and frequency



Requested new structure

Fence

1

2

5

4

3

24/09/2012



LAF Annual Reporting Update

To Local Access Forums

As you know, LAFs are asked to complete an annual report proforma. To date these have been collected at the end of October, covering the previous 12 months. We've given this some thought and discussion and in consultation with the regional coordinators and Defra, have now amended the process so that we still receive your reports at the end of October, but now they cover the previous financial year. So in October this year, your reports will be covering the period April '11 to March '12. We hope this gives you more time to collate and compile your report.

This reporting process is vital to the task of understanding the work of LAFs and the issues you are facing. We use this information to help plan our engagement with LAFs and to compile an annual report which we pass to Defra, providing important feedback to Government and Ministers. The annual report is a valuable tool in maintaining interest and awareness of the work of LAFs within Government circles. We also think it provides helpful information to promote and support your work locally.

We are always looking for ways to improve this process. To that end we have begun a modification of the annual report proforma, based on ideas and suggestions from the LAFs themselves. We are currently drafting the new form and look forward to agreeing it's content in time for the 2012/13 reporting cycle. Your Regional Coordinator will be able to keep you posted on progress.

So please can I encourage you to contribute fully to this important process. Currently about 65% complete an annual report, but it would be great if we could get this closer to 100%.

Many thanks

Martin Shaw

From: James, Anne
Sent: 24 October 2012 10:14
To: JOHN ELFES
Cc: Taylor, Joanne
Subject: RE: Volunteers and Ringway Jacobs

John, I have been going through my admin and noticed that I have not got back to you on this one. I apologise for that.

I will try and explain the relationship between the County Council and Ringway Jacobs and the relationship with volunteers

The County Council is charged with making significant cost savings and as part of that it looked at the cost of delivering the whole transportation function. Since the mid 1990s the highway maintenance and the scheme designs had been contracted out separately while the County retained its in-house function. All three organisations had their individual hierarchy and managers. It was decided to combine this into one operational function and that this would be tendered in the open market.

In effect Ringway Jacobs has the contract for managing all the Transportation functions on behalf of the County Council. This is managed on a fixed fee basis so they do not make profit on work being done. The overall saving to the Council has been significant. The Council decides its budget allocation through its normal Member process. The TfB Alliance developed business plans identifying what the County Council will get for their budget allocations. This is formally agreed and forms the basis of the work that is undertaken in the following year. We are currently business planning for 2013/14.

As part of a separate County Council reorganisation last year Rights of Way were transferred into the Ringway Jacobs Alliance and they are now managed as part of my area of the Service. Their budget is the same as previous and they operate in the same way as before. The use of volunteers continues to be essential to the Team as it does not have the budget to carry out all the works on the right of way network that they would like.

Ringway Jacobs do not benefit in any way from this arrangement other than to enable it to deliver the programme of work as agreed by BCC as the Client.

I hope this explains the position satisfactorily

Regards

Anne James
Network Resilience Manager
BSc (Hons) FIRSO

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From: JOHN ELFES
Sent: Wednesday 29 August 2012 10:50
To: James, Anne
Subject: Volunteers and Ringway Jacobs

29th August 2012

From the Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is the Statutory Advisory Body for all matters relating to Access to the Countryside

Dear Anne,

At the March meeting of the Forum you explained the new relationship between the Rights of Way group and your contractor, Ringway Jacobs. In the ensuing discussion, some forum members questioned the propriety of volunteer effort being used to help deliver a commercial contract, and since then the question has also been raised by individual volunteers. You said that this problem was recognised and was addressed through the business planning process, and I would now ask you to explain in detail how this is to be achieved, and what safeguards are in place to ensure that volunteer effort is not supporting the profits of a commercial concern.

Yours Sincerely,

John Elfes.

Mr Glyn Thomas
Clerk to Watermead Parish Council
1 Newville
Weedon
Aylesbury
Bucks HP22 4NP

8th October, 2012

Dear Mr Thomas

Funding application for new bridge and path: Watermead Parish Council

I am writing in support of Watermead Parish Council's application to the Paths for Communities Fund.

The proposed path would provide part of an orbital link around the rural northern edge of Aylesbury, serving the several substantial recent housing developments in the area.

It would also link together the existing Gemstone (radial) cycle routes on the northern side of the town, and with proposed National Route 50 of the National Cycle Network between Aylesbury and Buckingham, as well as providing a cycle route between the various recent housing developments and Aylesbury Vale Parkway station.

I hope you are successful in your application to fund this important initiative, which will fill a significant gap in the local walking and cycling network.

Yours sincerely

Peter Challis
Area Manager (Thames Valley)
Sustrans

