



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

**WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2013 AT 10.00 AM
MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY**

AGENDA

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Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2012, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.03 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 11.50 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr J Elfes, in the Chair

Mr D Briggs, Mr P Challis, Mr N Harris, Mr C Hurworth, Mr A T A Lambourne, Mrs V Lynch, Mr R Pushman, Mr J Coombe, Mr Caspersz, Mr G Thomas and Ms J Hanwell

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr J Clark, Ms J Taylor and Mr M Walker

GUESTS PRESENT

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Sandy Kidd.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2012 were confirmed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Glyn Thomas referred to the fact that Tring was mentioned under Gateway towns in Buckinghamshire.

David Briggs asked for an update on the Chilterns Sustainable Gateways project, particularly with regard to electric bikes, and it was noted that there was nothing further to update. Richard Pushman said the intention of the project was that in the future, various organisations, including shops, would provide bikes for hire, including electric bikes to encourage more people to use cycle paths. Glyn Thomas said he hoped that secure racks would be considered for tethering the bikes, particularly electric bikes.

With regard to the Paths for Communities Grants, Jennifer Hanwell said there were no further updates on the application from the Aylesbury and District Ramblers.

5. RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP REPORT

Definitive Map Update

Mike Walker updated members.

Mike Walker informed members that with the exception of item 3, items 1 – 6 were all outstanding byway applications. These had been placed with the Secretary of State and Mike was currently following these up. It was hoped they would be settled within the next 12 months.

The Stowe and Lillingstone Dayrell application had gone to the Secretary of State and it was possible there may be a Public Inquiry.

With regard to the Whitchurch application the Inspector had confirmed the Order and there were now three footpaths running through the gardens of two houses.

David Briggs said he thought the time limit had run out in relation to BOAT applications but it was noted that as long as an application had been submitted before May 2006 it would be dealt with.

Chris Hurworth asked about the implementation of the BOAT at Kimble. Mike Walker informed the LAF that signs indicating the route should now be in place. Joanne Taylor was monitoring the surface for any damage that might be caused by motor vehicles and there was no sign of this at present. It had been suggested that a TRO could be made, but this would be costly and difficult to enforce.

Mike Walker informed members that items 17 – 28 in the report were going through the process for presentation to the Rights of Way Committee. With regard to Public Path Orders (items 29-52) 20 of the 24 items were being dealt with.

In connection with item 17 West Wycombe/Downley, Richard Pushman stated that it had always been the former Area Highways Manager's opinion that Huntshill Wood and Cookshall Lane could be tarmaced throughout but this had never happened and he hoped it would not be raised again. English Heritage and the National Trust were against this because they considered it would destroy what is a tranquil part of the countryside.

With regard to Public Path Creation Agreements, Mike Walker informed members of the following:

- 53 – Brill. This was County Council owned land which was about to be sold and a path was being created to protect public access.
- 54 – Edgcott. This was part of a bigger project to create access and officers were currently in discussion with WRG regarding the land and access.

There had been some repeat applications in relation to Village Greens and advice was being sought on whether repeat applications can be made.

Richard Pushman congratulated officers on the tremendous piece of work contained in this report and the comprehensive survey list was very helpful.

Strategic Access Update

Jonathan Clark updated members.

With regard to items 64 and 65 Jonathan said there would be a further update on

HS2 later in the meeting. With regard to the consultation in September on a draft construction Code of Practice, the response by the County Council to HS2 had been circulated. Jonathan said they had been asked by HS2 not to give the document to partners and Richard Pushman asked why HS2 had sought to suppress the document. Jonathan stated he did not know the reason for the request. However, he would ask Rosie Brake for further information. Richard said members should be aware if any information was withheld. Mike Walker said there was no decision on when HS2 was going ahead but the County Council would be engaging with them in relation to mitigation. It was not in the public domain because no decision had been made to take this forward. The County Council was doing its utmost to get the best out of the situation.

With regard to the Environmental Impact Assessment the full assessment was due in the Spring of 2012. However, ecologists were concerned this would miss crucial survey seasons, especially for bats. The impact of the HS2 footprint on the rights of way network (para 66) showed the number of path networks affected by the railway and by the new roads that would be built.

A project outline has been prepared for the East-West Rail Consortium, identifying the personnel, timescales and work needed to identify the 'at grade' crossings and reach agreement in principle about which might be closed, diverted or have alternative crossings provided. It was noted this was not a new line, but the re-opening of the old line, which will run from Oxford, through Bletchley and Bicester with a new station at Winslow.

The Table in para 68 compared the number of ROW that will be affected by East West Rail with other lines across Buckinghamshire. It was noted that Network Rail had contacted the County Council with a view to discussing the possible closure of 29 crossings. Whilst there were no formal proposals at present, the Forum will need to consider a response to any that do come forward. The Chairman suggested that alternatives should be looked at, such as bridges. However, Jonathan said there was a need to know how much money had been put aside for path diversions before any proposals could be made. Chris Hurworth stated the Forum should oppose any closures.

In answer to a question about whether the closures were due to health and safety issues, Jonathan Clark stated that whilst most footpaths pre-dated the railways, this was part of a national campaign by Network Rail to reduce the number of 'at grade' crossing wherever it could. Viv Lynch suggested using these discussions as an opportunity to look at network improvements And officers agreed this would be the case.

With regard to paragraph 70 John Elfes asked whether the donate-a-gate work received match-funding and it was noted this work was still being done on an informal basis.

Alan Lambourne said there was no reference to the outer Aylesbury Ring in the report and it was noted that there was an application for funding from Paths for Communities. John Elfes said they have funding from Aylesbury Vale District Council but none from the County Council at present. Joanne Taylor said they had received a request from Roy Johnson for support for way marking.

Jonathan Clark thanked the Forum for its support in relation to the proposed new footpath through the Lane End Industrial Estate, which has been put on hold, pending the submission of a planning application. It was agreed that the Local Access Forum would draft a letter in support of the application.

Action: Chairman/JC

Glyn Thomas referred to the difficulties in trying to meet the criteria for Paths for Communities funding when making applications, particularly in relation to disability. It was noted that Natural England had only completed 6 applications for Paths for Communities. He thanked Jonathan Clark and the team for their hard work in relation to this.

Rights of Way Operations Update

Joanne Taylor updated members on the staffing levels within the team and it was noted that the reported vacancy had now been filled.

There were a number of outstanding maintenance issues due to the extreme weather conditions and because of the cuts to the maintenance budget, Further money was sought to deal with the amount of clearance work needed. This had affected the surfacing programme because teams were not able to get on site and the programme has now been rolled over into next year. Extra teams had been put in place for structure works and the clearance period had been extended from September to November.

The team has not been active on enforcement issues because they had been called to do other work. Therefore the figures were down on resolving issues. Improvements to the network were about the same level as last year. It was noted that the Chiltern Society had put in a lot of the new structures, and the Ramblers Association had put in 945 hours of work. The BVPI outcome was similar to last year. The second stage of this year's BVPI survey was being undertaken, with the Chiltern Society and the Ramblers Association doing much of the work. Joanne said this would be reported at the next meeting of the Forum and it will be interesting to see whether the figures will be further impacted because of the weather.

Alan Lambourne suggested it would be helpful to have direct telephone numbers for officers. It was noted that all complaints must be recorded through the Contact Centre and concern was expressed that whilst the LAF members could have direct lines, this information was not generally given to the public. Rights of Way Officers were often on site and it may be that most callers would receive voice mail. If people wished to contact officers direct they could do so via their email address which is always printed on the letterhead. Richard Pushman stated that officers' work could be interrupted by having to deal with a large amount of telephone calls and email correspondence. Joanne Taylor informed members that the Contact Centre was set up to stream information and record the number of calls across the whole of the County Council. In the Rights of Way Team they have 10 days to acknowledge a report and 28 days to provide a complete response to a customer, which is challenging considering the thousands of hits they get. Alan Lambourne considered this was a retrograde step in meeting targets rather than helping the public.

John Coombe asked how many walks were involved in the 'Simply Walk' programme. In this connection, members were asked to contact Fiona Broadbent.

John Elfes asked whether it was the same people involved in ploughing and cropping breaches each year. Joanne said it probably was. She stated that letters reminding farmers of their obligations were regularly sent which also reminded them of their other responsibilities such as hedge cutting and stile and gate repairs.

Joanne Taylor also presented the Ramblers' report on the impact of funding reductions for rights of way in England as at October 2012. The Ramblers' had obtained financial information under the Freedom of Information requests from all Highways Authorities. Unfortunately there was an error in reporting cuts for Buckinghamshire and the Ramblers' have agreed to amend the figures on their website. The budget reduction figure for Buckinghamshire was approximately 40%,

not 56% as reported.

Joanne confirmed the County Council had identified approximately £40,000 to pump prime Parish works and were putting together a scheme with other partners. However, the price of this funding is a further cut in the maintenance budget. The intention was that the County Council would develop closer working with Parish Councils and local communities, although match funding by parishes may be needed in order to tap into this money.

Glyn Thomas suggested the table of cuts was irrelevant because it only showed cuts, not what staff actually do, and it belittled their work. Mike Walker said that the Ramblers' were simply doing their best to highlight the situation, nationally. Joanne Taylor said the RA report did highlight the amount of work done and the expertise required to ensure its efficient operation and she urged members to look at the report.

6. LAF MEMBERS REPORT

HS2

John Elfes referred to the poor turnout at the HS2 Forums that he had attended, with very few local people present. Various societies had sent representatives but they were not necessarily local to the area. At the Wendover meeting, there were only four local people out of 25 attendees. He felt that the consultation exercises just resulted in people becoming irate and HS2 stonewalling. Viv Lynch said that she had attended two meetings at Stoke Mandeville and also reported on the low numbers of local people. She remained unconvinced that the meetings were informative and that HS2 was just paying lip service.

John Coombe referred to difficulties in attending meetings due to lack of information on dates. John Elfes suggested that he needed to ensure he was registered on the list of recipients for information because virtually all the meetings were by invitation only. Alan Lambourne reported he had attended the Waddesden & Quainton Forum at which there was a lot of local interest. It was noted that because Waddesden and Quainton are within the AONB there would be more interest in that area. Alan also reported that HS2 were not prepared to share information.

John Elfes said the Forum should take up the offer from HS2 for a bilateral meeting but David Briggs stated they should insist that any discussions were made public. It was suggested that whilst HS2 will not publish information, they could not stop others from doing so.

The Forum agreed that it should meet with HS2 to discuss suggestions for mitigation. It was noted that HS2 was offering to meet in December and members were asked to indicate their willingness to attend. Alan Lambourne asked whether there was any benefit in doing so because HS2 has opened a dialogue with the County Council and more information would be forthcoming through them on any proposals. John Elfes expressed the need for the Forum to meet with HS2 even though the County Council was doing the same in the hope that they could influence the Bill. It was suggested that John Elfes, Viv Lynch, Alan Lambourne, Neil Harris and David Briggs should attend the meeting. Viv Lynch suggested this could be used as an opportunity for the Forum to work with HS2 and David Briggs suggested that some of the new roads constructed for works traffic might be retained for public access afterwards. Neil Harris also suggested it could be an ideal opportunity to have nearby routes surfaced as well.

Action: It was agreed that a meeting be set up in December/January to meet with HS2. The following members would attend: Neil Harris, Viv Lynch, David Briggs, John Coombe, Alan Lambourne, John Elfes.

Members considered the AONB in relation to HS2 and whether it deserved a greater influence. The following was noted:

- The AONB would be more significantly harmed economically than other businesses.
- The design of the AONB is similar to National Parks but remains the poor relation. Its scenic value is classified as having greater value than some of North Bucks.
- Buckinghamshire is fighting its corner along with other counties and when details of the extension are published other counties will come on board.
- The Route is also being fought on financial grounds and the accuracy of the business case of passenger use, as was the case with HS1.
- There are 11 paths affected in the AONB, but this equated to only one fifth of the total number of paths affected in the County.
- The impact of HS2 will be noise, visual impact and damage to the countryside.
- Whilst recognising the importance of the AONB there was a need to consider the rest of Buckinghamshire.
- How important is the network of footpaths? Should the whole network be protected? Should we accept any loss of the network?
- This could be an opportunity to link routes, resolve some issues of fragmentation and improve what is already in place. The situation must be used to our advantage. Jonathan Clark asked whether it would add weight to the argument if Gavin Caspersz attended the meeting and Gavin agreed he would attend if it would be helpful. He agreed that the Forum should negotiate better outcomes for rights of way. As an example, David Briggs referred to the reduction in the slope of the embankment on the branch line to Chesham and, that if the Forum had been consulted by Network Rail, path improvements could have been secured as a result.

Agreed: Gary Caspersz also to attend the HS2 meeting

John Elfes agreed to contact the group regarding the date of the meeting and the content of the discussion to be had with HS2.

Action: John Elfes

LAF Conference

One place was available at the National Conference in Sheffield on 27 February 2013 and John Elfes agreed to attend. It was noted that Jonathan Clark would be attending as South East LAF Co-ordinator.

Turville Open Access

Kate Ashbrook of the Open Spaces Society had requested new structures to aid walkers on open access land at Turville. The Wormsley Estate said they would not accept this unless they were legally obliged to do so. Although it is classified as open access land, an old fence on the land has been replaced and, therefore, needs a gate to provide access across the whole area. A plan of the area was included in the report.

Neil Harris asked if there was a way out of the land enclosed in red and it was noted that there was an exit where the path came in from Turville. Jonathan Clark agreed to look into whether the land could also be accessed from the footpath. Neil suggested that local pressure through the Parish Council may be the best way forward and Jonathan Clark agreed to contact them.

Action: Jonathan Clark

Annual Report

The draft annual report attached to the papers covered the period January 2012 to March 2012 and therefore would only report on three months work, because all the data up to the end of 2011 had already been loaded on Huddle. Members were asked to make comments to Jonathan Clark in the next two weeks. Mike Walker suggested including the three months work in next year's report because of the submission had already been made. Jennifer Hanwell agreed it was confusing, but asked whether information on the rest of the year to date could be added. Jonathan Clark said they only needed to report to March 2012. It was decided to include the three months to March 2012 in next years report as the 3-month report was thought too thin.

Correspondence

The response from Anne James regarding the future role of volunteers in relation to the new contract with Ringway Jacobs was attached to the report. It was noted that having volunteers was an advantage and without them much work would not get done.

Joanne Taylor said they were going through the business planning process to show how they will test the service and what will be paid for. Much of it will be target driven and the business plan will need to include what the County Council expects to get for its money. If they miss the target the funding will be reduced, but RJ was not directly getting money in respect of volunteers, they were only helping RJ meet their targets.

Membership

Members discussed a replacement for Diana Bird on the Forum. Mike Walker suggested that the LAF should write to the NFU explaining that the dynamic of the Forum is affected by not having NFU representation. David Briggs suggested contacting Jane Jennings and it was agreed this would be pursued by Jonathan Clark.

Action: Jonathan Clark

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Neil Harris referred to plans the National Trust was drawing up regarding proposals to HS2 for a road bridge at Hartwell and Waddesdon. The plans were available on the National Trust website.

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 2013

20 November 2013

Chairman



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Report

Date: 27th March 2013
Title: Outer Aylesbury Ring promoted route
Author: Jonathan Clark
Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

Roy Johnson will give an update to the Forum on the progress the Aylesbury & District Ramblers are making in establishing a newly promoted route around Aylesbury. The 'OAR', as it will be signposted, will have an official launch on 18th May 2013 at Wendover Woods. Some attempt has been made to contact landowners along the route via Parish Councils. The main owners are The Waddesdon Estate, The National Trust, Canals & Rivers Trust and Forestry Commission.

Roy will outline the official guide on overheads and the proposed route.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 27th March 2013

Title: Rights of Way Team Update

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

Contact Officer: Katy MacDonald (01296 383604)

A. DEFINITIVE MAP UPDATE (MIKE WALKER)

A1 DEFINITIVE MAP APPLICATIONS DETERMINED BY COMMITTEE / ORDERS MADE

1. **Great Missenden** – upgrading of Public Bridleways Nos. 52 and 55 (part) to Public Byways Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected by the Committee on 14 July 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and the Council was directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order for Byway status. An Order has been made and advertised. Objections to the Order have been received and the matter referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is now fixed for 1 and 2 October 2013.**
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 by the Committee on 14 July 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and the Council was directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order for Byway status. An Order has been made and advertised. Objections to the Order have been received and the matter referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is now fixed for 1 and 2 October 2013.**
3. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway No. 24 (Featherbed Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected by the Committee on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and the Council was directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order for Byway status. An Order was made and advertised on 20 September 2011. Objections have been received and the matter referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is now fixed for 6 – 8 August 2013.**
4. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway No. 25 (Kingstreet Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected by the Committee on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and we were directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order for Byway status. An Order was made and advertised on 20 September 2011. Objections have been received and the matter

referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is now fixed for 6 – 8 August 2013.**

5. **Little Missenden** – upgrading Public Bridleway Nos. 29/42 (Mop End Lane) to Public Byway Open to All Traffic. The application was rejected by the Committee on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and the Council was directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order for Byway status. An Order was made on 21 June 2011. Objections have been received and the matter referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is now fixed for 6 – 8 August 2013.**
6. **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 by the Committee on 2 March 2006. The applicant appealed the decision and the Council was directed by the Secretary of State to make an Order. An Order was made on 10 May 2011. Objections have been received and the matter referred back to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is to be held on 14 and 15 May 2013.**
7. **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 and the matter has been referred to the Secretary of State for determination. **A public Inquiry is to be held on 16 April 2013.**
8. **Taplow** – application to record the route from River Road to Amerden Lane as Public Bridleway. The application was accepted by the 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 for determination, possibly by public inquiry.**
9. **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 one objection received. **The matter will be referred to the Secretary of State for determination, possibly by public inquiry.**
10. **West Wycombe / Downley** – application to record Cookshall Lane as part Public Bridleway, part Restricted Byway. This application was rejected by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013, although public footpath rights were accepted. **A meeting has been held with the landowner, Sir Edward Dashwood, with a view to completing the matter by Public Path Creation Agreement, which has been drafted.**
11. **Lower Winchendon** – application to record the route from Public Footpath No 10b to Public Footpath No. 3, Cuddington as Public Footpath. This application was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013. **The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has been instructed to make and advertise an Order.**
12. **Wendover & Halton** – application to record the route from Public Footpath No. 24, Wendover to Public Footpath No. 13, Halton as Public Footpath. **This application was rejected by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013.**
13. **High Wycombe** – application to record the route from Burnham Close to Whitelands Road, High Wycombe as Public Footpath. This application was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013. **The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has been instructed to make and advertise an Order.**

14. **Princes Risborough** – application to record the route from Elm Road to Bell Street, Princes Risborough as Public Footpath. **This application was rejected by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013.**
15. **Lane End – drafting error of Public Footpath No 25.** This matter was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 21 January 2013. **The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has been instructed to make and advertise an Order.**

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

16. **Beaconsfield** – application to record the route from Minerva Way to the junction with Public Footpath No. 15 and No. 16 as a Public Footpath. **This matter is to be determined by the Committee today.**
17. **Westbury (Route 1)** – application to record the route from Footpath No 14, Westbury (at the Oxfordshire county boundary) to Public Footpath No 11, Westbury as Public Footpath. The route is 90% in Oxfordshire. Investigation not started. **Discussions have been held with Oxfordshire County Council with a view to their entering into an Agency Agreement with us in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and to pay us, pro-rata, to undertake and complete the necessary investigations. It is likely, therefore, that we would be looking to bring this claim – and the others in Westbury / Mixbury (Oxfordshire) – to a meeting of the RoW Committee later this year.**
18. **Westbury (Route 2)** – application to record the route from Footpath No 14, Westbury (at the Oxfordshire county boundary) to the route referred to in (19) below as Public Footpath. This route is entirely in Oxfordshire. Investigation not started. **Discussions have been held with Oxfordshire County Council with a view to their entering into an Agency Agreement with us in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and to pay us to undertake and complete the necessary investigations. It is likely, therefore, that we would be looking to bring this claim – and the others in Westbury / Mixbury (Oxfordshire) – to a meeting of the RoW Committee later this year.**
19. **Westbury (Route 3)** – application to record the route from the junctions of Footpath No 303, Mixbury, Oxfordshire to Fulwell Road, Westbury as Public Footpath. Investigation not started. **Discussions have been held with Oxfordshire County Council with a view to their entering into an Agency Agreement with us in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and to pay us, pro-rata, to undertake and complete the necessary investigations. It is likely, therefore, that we would be looking to bring this claim – and the others in Westbury / Mixbury (Oxfordshire) – to a meeting of the RoW Committee later this year.**
20. **Iver** – application to record various routes across The Fields and The Clump, Iver as Public Footpaths. **Investigation not yet started.**
21. **Chepping Wycombe** – application to record the route from Elmshott Close to King's Wood as Public Footpath. **Investigation not started.**
22. **Bledlow** – application to record the route from Footpath No 49 to Bridleway No 55 as public footpath. **Investigation not started.**

A3 PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

23. **Bradenham** – Application to divert Footpath No 7. **Not started.**
24. **Coleshill** – Application to divert Footpath No 11(F) part. **Order made and advertised and within its objection period.**
25. **Gerrards Cross** – Application to temporarily divert Footpath No 11. **Order made and advertised and within its objection period.**
26. **Grendon Underwood** – Application to divert Footpath No 19 (part). **Order made and advertised and confirmed as unopposed.**
27. **Hambleden** – Application to divert Footpath No 24 (part). **Order made and advertised. No objections received. Awaiting landowner works before confirming Order.**
28. **Hedgerley** – Application to divert Footpath No 8. **Order made and advertised and confirmed as unopposed.**
29. **High Wycombe** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 27. Wycombe District Council planning matter. **Order made by WDC and within its objection period.**
30. **Hughenden** – Application to divert Footpath No 54 / 54A. **Order made and advertised. No objections received. Awaiting landowner works before confirming Order.**
31. **Latimer** – Application to divert Footpath No 1. Order made and one objection received. **Order confirmed by Secretary of State following written reps procedure.**
32. **Leckhampstead** – Application to divert Footpath No 34. **Order made and advertised. No objections received. Awaiting landowner works before confirming Order.**
33. **Marsworth** – Application to divert Footpath No 3. **Order made and advertised on behalf of Aylesbury Vale District Council. No objections received. Awaiting landowner works before confirming Order.**
34. **Pitchcott** – Application to divert Footpath No 4 (part). Order made and one objection received. **Referred to the Secretary of State for determination.**
35. **Quainton** – Application to divert Bridleway Nos 17 & 17a. **Order made and through it objection period – no objections received.**
36. **Quainton** – Application to divert Bridleway No 21. **Not started.**
37. **Quarrendon** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 2. **Order made and advertised and within its objection period.**
38. **Thornborough** – Proposal to divert Public Footpath No 9. **Order made and advertised and within its objection period.**
39. **Tingewick** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos 10, 11 and Bridleway No 13. Order made and objections received. **Referred to Secretary of State to determine.**

40. **Westbury** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 14 (Special Schools). Order made. Objections received. **To be referred to the Secretary of State to consider the Stage 2 process. Committee to consider its position at today’s meeting.**
41. **Winslow** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 5. **Order made and advertised and within its objection period.**

A4 PUBLIC PATH CREATION AGREEMENTS

42. **Edgcott** – Bridleway Creation (BCC Land). **Head of Legal and Democratic Services instructed to complete.**
43. **Edgcott** – Bridleway Creation (WRG Land). **Awaiting go ahead from FCC to proceed.**
44. **Westcott** - Footpath Creation. **Head of Legal and Democratic Services instructed to complete.**

A5 VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATIONS

45. **Gerrards Cross** – land at Lower Road. **Public Inquiry to be held 3 – 4 April 2013.**
46. **Iver** – land at The Fields and The Clump. **The application is being investigated.**
47. **Great Missenden** – land at The Field, Bryants Bottom. **Application advertised and an objection received. Likely to need public inquiry before referral to Committee.**
48. **Beaconsfield** – voluntary registration of the land at Hampden Hill. **Awaiting ownership confirmation from Town Council.**
49. **Penn** – land at Coppice Farm Road, Tylers Green, Penn. **Waiting investigation.**
50. **High Wycombe** – land at Meadow Close, Wycombe Marsh. **Waiting investigation.**
51. **Wooburn** – land off Cherwell Road, Bourne End. **Waiting investigation.**

B. STRATEGIC ACCESS UPDATE (JONATHAN CLARK)

52. A total of 48 planning applications have been commented upon by the Strategic Access Officer since the last meeting, distributed between authorities as follows: Wycombe 8; Aylesbury Vale, 21; South Bucks 7; Chiltern 5; and Bucks County Council 7, taking the total for 2012/13 to 193 applications.
53. The Strategic Access Officer met with HS2 consultants on 20th December 2012 and 21st February 2013 and the meetings were largely positive and constructive. Their plans indicate an attempt to accommodate most paths across the HS2 footprint by bridge, underpass or diverting under viaducts. There were several themes running through each meeting. 1. Some extra attempt was needed to take pedestrians off country roads onto ‘footways’ where paths are diverted along the nearest roads. 2. Longer diversions, taking paths along more direct routes to crossing points rather than diverting paths that run parallel, and next to, the HS2 line, were more favourable. 3. The balance between maintaining access across the line and the

impact that bridges might have on the landscape. There were three areas of uncertainty as to the right solution and site meetings were undertaken on 16th January 2013 at Mantles Wood, Great Missenden; the area around the ruins of St. Mary's Church, Stoke Mandeville; and the area east of Twyford. One positive outcome was the potential to create an off-road cycling link between Aylesbury and Wendover, through new tracks created to the south of the HS2 line. More recently, the Conservation Board have pulled together the access stakeholders, dealing mainly with the route between Little Missenden and Wendover. One meeting has taken place and a further meeting, to be attended by HS2, is planned shortly. This will enable a collective approach between stakeholders proposing solutions as one body rather than individually. The Council also produced a 'Bucks Blue Print' Document outlining its collective approach to what is required along the line.

54. There have been 9 new Donate-a-gate donors since July 2012, taking the total number of donors to 261.
55. The Council has agreed to proceed with the establishment of a Local Nature Partnership (LNP), which in Bucks will be called a 'Natural Environment Partnership'. This follows the Natural Environment White Paper, '*The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature*' which set out the government's strategy for the environment over the next 50 years. Recommended within the Paper was the formation of LNPs, to provide a strategic partnership able to deliver ambitions at a local level. In Bucks, a shadow Board has been established which will sit for the first time around April 2013. A Co-ordinator post will be established, employed by 'Bucks Business First' to manage and oversee the partnership. The Board is likely to be made up of individuals from local authorities, Chilterns Conservation Board, Bucks Business First and possibly The Wildlife Trust. The Local Access Forum will be able to advise the Board on access issues relating to and interacting with local environmental issues.

C. RIGHTS OF WAY OPERATIONS UPDATE (JOANNE TAYLOR)

56. The Rights of Way Operations team has 6 members: a Team Leader, 3 Rights of Way Officers, and 2 FTE Assistant Rights of Way Officers. At the last meeting it was reported that there had been a staff vacancy for 4 months from September 2012 which was due to a temporary position becoming available in the Definitive Map Team being filled by an Area Officer – Claire Tranter and the Assistant officer Rosie Taylor had taken on Claire's role, which of course left Rosie's Assistant post vacant. Fortunately in December the team welcomed a new Assistant, Paul Hudson. Paul had only been in post for a few weeks when a slip on an icy road resulted in a broken femur which will leave him immobile for several months, and the team having extra difficulties carrying out all the necessary site inspections. In the next few weeks it will be necessary to recruit a further temporary Assistant to cover for maternity leave for Rebecca McNaught who will be on leave from the end of March 2013.
57. The wet weather over the summer curtailed our usual summer surface works programme, and there was concern that the capital money allocated for surface works would be substantially under-spent. However the team worked hard to identify jobs that were less weather dependant and thankfully, although there will be a slight under-spend of capital money at the year end, the majority of budget is spent or allocated. The Operations team has received some very positive feedback from users where surface works have been carried out, particularly notable was the work at Pavis Wood, along Public Bridleway No. 22A Buckland.
58. It was reported at the last meeting of the Group that it was likely that money would be allocated for this coming financial year to fund path clearance works in Parishes, and possibly other improvement works identified by Parish Councils. It is now possible to confirm that this fund will be available from April 2013. It will be targeted

particularly at path clearance for the first year of the fund and in the next week or so the County Council will be contacting individual Parish Councils to request expressions of interest from those Parishes keen to take on clearance works which will be paid for out of the fund.

59. The 'Summary of Works' (Appendix 1) is attached to this report. This outlines the work carried out by the Rights of Way Operations Team since 1st April 2012. There are some dips in performance, but this is due to weather conditions and staff resource issues over the year.

Buckinghamshire County Council
Summary of Rights of Way Maintenance Carried Out
Between 1/04/12 and 15/03/13, planning consultations, 5% 2012 survey
and 'issues outstanding'

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	Oct-12	Mar-13
Alignment	Path Off Line - resolved issue	9	15
Clearance *	Clearance - summary jobs/km*	703/236km	655/290km
Bridge	Installed or repaired	20	40
Finger/post	Installed or repaired	120	259
Fly Tipping	Fly Tipping - removed	2	8
Gate	Gate repaired or installed	47	96
Intimidation + animal	Intimidation - resolved	5	10
Intimidating sign	Misleading Sign - removed	3	3
Obstruction - resolved	Barbed wire	5	6
Obstruction - resolved	Barrier - Fencing, wall or other	43	74
Obstruction - resolved	Electric fence	6	8
Obstruction - removed	Fallen Tree	116	192
Obstruction - resolved	Ploughing and Cropping	37	56
Other	Delivery of materials	29	46
Other	Miscellaneous issues resolved	28	45
Stile	Installed or repaired	62	139
Stile	Stile To Gap	6	14
Stile	Stile To KG	19	53
Stile	Stile To PG	24	59
Terrain	Path Erosion - resolved	4	7
Terrain	Bank Steps	7	11
Terrain	Path Surface problem resolved	27	47
Waymark Post	Installed/Repaired	77	159
Consultations	All Planning Applications Assessed	131	
Volunteer Hours	RA, Chiltern Society - interim	945 hrs	945
Improvements	To aid mobility access	96	222
5% Survey Results	Paths Rated easy to use	86% - 2.5%	79%
5% Survey Results	Structures rated easy to use	98% - 2.5%	97%
5% Survey Results	Routes with Roadside Signs	95% - 2.5%	94%
No. on Database	No. of Job Sheets issued	1121	1631
No. on Database	Av. time to comp. order(exc A.Clear)	33 days	38 days
No. on Database	No. of issues os 31/03/11	907	
No. on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/12	799	
No. on Database	No. of Issues os 1/10/12	1088	
No. on Database	No. of Issues os 15/03/2013		1149

*Clearance figure for Oct 12 Interim -
Data revised.

Buckinghamshire County Council
Summary of Rights of Way Maintenance Carried Out
Between 1/04/12 and 15/03/13, planning consultations, 5% 2012 survey
and 'issues outstanding'



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 27th March 2013

Title: LAF Members' Report

Author: Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access

Contact Officer: Katy Macdonald (01296 383604)

HS2

- 1 The Buckinghamshire LAF has now firmly established itself within the engagement framework for HS2. Two bilateral meetings have taken place, the first on 15th January 2013, the second on 7th March 2013. It is expected there will be a further meeting following the publication of the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 2 At the first meeting, general introductions were made. HS2 were represented by Mark Bailey, Deputy Head of Environment; Charlotte Brewster and Louise Portelly, part of the Community Engagement Team; and Steve Katesmark, from Atkins. A Draft Environmental Statement will be published in the spring of 2013 and the Hybrid Bill is due in the autumn of 2013; construction is due to start in 2017. Examples were provided of how Warwickshire LAF have already engaged with HS2. A general discussion was had, which resulted in a number of strategic requests from the LAF. These included a request that all road bridges have footways/cycleways/bridleways constructed alongside the carriageway to enable safe passage of users where rights of way have been diverted onto road bridges. A request was also made that disabled access was designed into all crossing points, to ensure future disabled access improvements would not hit a barrier at HS2 because this hadn't been taken into consideration. A discussion also took place over the methodology of construction, illustrating how bridges are built first and how this could compliment the maintenance of access. The Hybrid Bill will deliver the rights of way diversions - HS2 are trying to avoid these being greater than 500m in length.
- 3 The second meeting focussed on individual crossing points throughout the whole line from the border with Hertfordshire to the border with Brackley, Northamptonshire. The crossing solution for each path was discussed, including diversion routes and some additional crossing points. These had to be considered in the light of their impact on the landscape, particularly in the Chilterns where most of the line will be in a cutting. Information was provided by HS2 summarising the proposals for each diversion as it was presented to the Community Forums. It was also confirmed that the construction specification for all bridleway bridges had been agreed with the British Horse Society. A

comprehensive information programme would be provided during construction to advise the public of open and closed paths.

- 4 The LAF Chairman now sits on the Chiltern's Conservation Board HS2 Access Group, the first meeting of which took place on 1st March 2013.
- 5 A summary of LAF attendance at the HS2 Community Forums can be confirmed at the meeting. Meetings were held as follows: Wendover 12th February 2013; Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury 13th February 2013; Colne Valley 21st February 2013; Central Chilterns 26th February 2013; Chalfonts and Amersham; Newton Purceval and Brackley 20th February 2013; Calvert 5th February 2013; and Waddesdon 4th February 2013.
- 6 The next meeting with HS2 has not yet been arranged. The next thing to prepare for will be the Draft Environmental Statement, due out in the spring. The Hybrid Bill process will follow in autumn 2013.

Conferences

- 7 There will be a South East LAF Conference on 21st May 2013 in London. The keynote speaker will be Sarah Slade, National Access Advisor for the CLA, addressing the main themes from '*The Right Way Forward: The CLA's common Sense approach to accessing the countryside 2012*'. Other topics being covered include, 'Engaging with Local Nature Partnerships'; 'LAF involvement with the planning process'; the MOD's Access Strategy; 'Disabled Access' and a discussion on 'Management of LAFs against a background of cut-backs'.
- 8 The annual Chilterns Access Conference took place at Hastoe Village Hall on Friday 15th March 2013.
- 9 The National LAF Conference took place in Sheffield on 27th February 2013, the papers for which are being compiled by Natural England and will be out shortly.

Turville Open Access

- 10 Kate Ashbrook, Open Spaces Society, has asked if one new kissing gate can be installed to aid walkers on open access land above Turville village. It is an iconic parcel of Open 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. John Elfes wrote to Wormsley Estate on (Appendix 1) and received a reply on 13th February 2013 (Appendix 2). Their reply suggests they would be open to having a new gate installed providing it is self-funded and the existing fence construction is not compromised.

Cycling and Walking Project

- 11 Peter Challis, LAF Member from Sustrans, is heading a project to improve facilities for walking and cycling to a number of train stations in Buckinghamshire. He is currently working on a station travel plan for Beaconsfield, alongside the Beaconsfield Cycle Path Action Group. Around £5K has been made available from the Local Area Forum and £10K from the Sustainability Team in Bucks CC

Correspondence

12 Natural England undertook an online Local Access Forum survey, the closing date for which is 31st March 2013. This is for both the LAF Secretary and Chairman to complete.

LAF dates for 2013

13 The next meetings are due to take place on 17th July and 20th November 2013.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Wormsley Estate
Estate Office
Wellground
Stokenchurch
High Wycombe
HP14 3YG

25th January 2013

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is the statutory advisory body on all matters relating to access to the countryside

Dear Sirs,

Open Access land on Cobstone Hill, Turville (Ibstone Parish)

I understand that, until recently, it was possible to walk to or from Turville Windmill along the top of the access land on Cobstone Hill, off the road but parallel to it, with some minor inconvenience in negotiating a low fence. It was reported to a recent meeting of the Bucks Local Access Forum that this is no longer possible since the fence has been replaced with a stronger structure incorporating barbed wire.

Cobstone Hill is popular area for public access, and naturally people want to walk from the windmill along the top of the hill, on open country rather than on the road, and take their choice of ways down. At present they are restricted to crossing the fence at the gate on the footpath halfway up, or the stile further down. Some people, particularly those with limited mobility, would find it difficult to negotiate the steep slopes that this involves. It is extremely pleasant to be able to walk along the top of the hill, off the road, enjoying the extensive views and the sense of freedom.

The works needed are relatively minor: the insertion of another gate into the new fence at the top of the hill, and we hope that the estate would be prepared to do this as a gesture of goodwill to the public.

Yours Sincerely,

John Elfes,
Chairman, Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum
143, White Hill, Chesham, HP5 1AT.

cc. Ibstone and Turville Parish Council C/O The Clerk, Mrs. Deirdre Hansen, Riva, Naphill Common, Naphill, High Wycombe, HP14 4SZ

The Estate Office
Wormsley
Stockenchurch
Bucks HP143YE

John Elfes
Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum
143 White Hill
Chesham
Bucks HP5 1 AT

Wednesday 13 February 2012

Dear Mr Elfes

Cobstone Hill, Turville

Thank you for your letter dated 25 January.

There are four points of public access into the Cobstone Hill Open access land and we have no plans to create any new ones. Your point about the public climbing over a boundary fence is very valid – the fences in that field were no longer fit for purpose. The field needs to be grazed hence the new stock proof fencing.

We will be happy to consider allowing some other party to install some stock proof access in that location (most probably a stile or kissing gate) – but subject to our consent as to design, location and to quality of installation – I am sure you are aware that to make any break in a fencing can result in a reduction of tension of the wire and integrity of the fence.

Please do let me know if you find any such a benefactor.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Kate Edwards

Dear Local Access Forum,

I am writing to you regarding an issue with a gap in the footpath system in Great Missenden that is causing problems for walkers and for the owners of the land. The problem occurs because of a 200m (approximately) stretch of farm land, belonging to Sedges Farm, which is not a public right of way, essentially creating a 'no mans land' between the footpath system from Little Kingshill and the wider footpath system which joins the path up to Sedges Farm in one direction and Great Missenden in another, running alongside the railway at the back of the Misbourne School. This path has been used by a great deal of people 'unofficially' for many years, but recently very thick barbed wire was put up, barring this 200m (approx.) of pathway. Recently, we noticed it had been vandalised badly with wire cutters, which is obviously a criminal offence and one which is not going to dispose the landowner favourably to walkers.

To stop this situation between walkers and the landowners escalating, and to allow a happy resolution for both sides, we hoped it would be possible to approach the land owner at Sedges Farm in an official way, asking permission for people coming from the Little Kingshill footpath system to access the Sedges Farm footpath system. The 'unofficial' path runs alongside a fenced field, and is next to the railway, so causes absolutely no issues for the landowner and is not of any value of use to them as such. Their blocking of the pathway is purely because the landowner is asserting their rights over the land, and not because of any concern over livestock. In any case, there have been no animals in the field running next to the unofficial path for months if not years, and the fences are all broken. The land owner may assert that walkers can go round to get from the Little Kingshill path system to the other paths, but this detour is an unpleasant one alongside roads and adds approximately ten minutes to the walk, when within a couple of hundred metres one can be back on the official path.

We were hoping that we could appeal to the land owner's better nature and ask for a magnanimous gesture which would make so many walkers' lives more pleasant every day, whilst not affecting them adversely. We understand that after the vandalism to their property they are going to be angry and unfavourably disposed to walkers, but we are hoping that they realise that this was the actions of one, not all of the walkers in the area and is not condoned by us. We would be happy to discuss a donation towards the farm or a charity for the privilege of accessing the footpath system through their land.

We have also contacted the local parish council, but thought it worth getting in touch with the Forum directly since it seems to have exactly these types of issues in mind.

