

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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

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Buckinghamshire county council's Local Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund Bid to the Department for Transport – proposed major scheme: major maintenance and or renewal of C-class and unclassified roads.

This letter constitutes advice from the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum (LAF), the statutory body for the county under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. The Buckinghamshire LAF is an independent body which aims to give balanced advice on matters relating to countryside access, based on a wide range of views from members representing farmers, landowners, users groups (walkers, cyclists and equestrians), parish councils, elected county members and those with disabilities.

The Buckinghamshire LAF supports the county council's bid to the department for Transport in order to fund the renewal and maintenance of C-class, unclassified and unclassified unmetalled roads. These transport routes often link between and into footpaths, bridleways and byways and form integral parts of the sustainable transport route hierarchy. In the rural setting they form important links for walkers, cyclists and horse riders between villages and other public rights of way. Their improved condition will encourage greater confidence and convenience for vulnerable users and provide improved opportunities for the public seeking fresh air and exercise in the countryside. While there is an overall benefit, one member wished to strike a cautionary note to balance surface improvements with controlling vehicle size and speeds on rural roads. However, overall we consider a successful application is likely to increase sustainable travel options, improve health outcomes as well as reduce congestion and we therefore fully support the bid.

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