



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

Date: 1st July 2015

Title: Rights of Way group update

Authors: Claire Hudson, Jonathan Clark and Joanne Taylor

Contact Officer: Sharon Griffin (01296 383691)

A. DEFINITIVE MAP UPDATE (CLAIRE HUDSON)

The Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to appraise Buckinghamshire LAF members of the outstanding definitive map caseload undertaken by the Definitive Map Team and provide an update. Changes since the last meeting are shown in **bold**.

1. **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 12 February 2014. **Matter referred to the Secretary of State who has scheduled a Public Inquiry for 3 November 2015 to determine the matter.**
2. **Westbury (Route 2)** – application to record the route from the junctions of Footpath No 303, Mixbury, Oxfordshire to Fulwell Road, Westbury as Public Bridleway. Discussions were 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 to enable us to undertake investigations on their behalf. **Matter referred to the Secretary of State who has scheduled a Public Inquiry for 13 October 2015 to determine the matter.**
3. **Chepping Wycombe** – application to record the route from Elmshott Close to King's Wood as Public Footpath. This application was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 15 October 2014; Objections were received to the Order; case referred to the Secretary of State; **matter to be determined by written representations; timetable has been scheduled for the summer of 2015.**
4. **Great and Little Kimble** – Application to divert Footpath 29. Committee agreed that the matter should be referred to the Secretary of State for determination during the 4 March 2015 meeting; **matter likely to be determined by written representations.**
5. **Wooburn** – proposal to create a Public Bridleway by Order along the former railway. This application was accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 15 October 2014;

Objections were received to the Order; case referred to the Secretary of State;
Public Inquiry likely to be held late 2015 early 2016.

B. DEFINITIVE MAP APPLICATIONS TO BE INVESTIGATED AND REPORTED TO COMMITTEE.

6. **Iver** – application to record various routes across The Fields and The Clump, Iver as Public Footpaths. **Investigation continuing following landowner request for additional time.**
7. **Bledlow** – application to record the route from Footpath No 49 to Bridleway No 55 as public footpath. **Investigation started.**
8. **Edgcott** – application to record Lawn House Lane as a Public Footpath to Public Footpath 11 Edgcott. **Investigation not started.**
9. **Iver** – application to record route from Grange Way to Colne Orchard as a Public Footpath. **Investigation not started.**
10. **Hedgerley** – application to upgrade Public Footpath No. 14 to public bridleway status based on historical evidence. **Investigation not started.**
11. **Bledlow** – application to investigate the alignment of Public Footpath 52. **Investigation not started.**
12. **Great Missenden** – application to record route across Widmer Field. **Investigation not started.**
13. **Quinton** – application to upgrade public footpath 4 to bridleway status. **Investigation not started.**

C. PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

14. **Coleshill** – Application to divert Footpath No 11(F) part. Order made and no objection received. **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
15. **Great Marlow** - Application to divert FP2 Great Marlow. **Awaiting completion of works before confirming Order.**
16. **High Wycombe** – Application to extinguish Footpath No. 27. Wycombe District Council planning matter. Order made and confirmed by WDC. **Awaiting developer works before bringing Order into effect.**
17. **Maids Moreton** – Application to divert Footpath No. 3. Order made and objection received. **Under discussion with applicant and objector.**
18. **Marsworth** – Application to divert Footpath No. 3. Order made on behalf of Aylesbury Vale District Council and no objections received. **Awaiting developer works before bringing Order into effect.**
19. **Oakley** – Application to divert Footpath No. 9. **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
20. **Oakley** – Application to divert Footpath No. 30. **Matter with Legal Services to confirm Order.**
21. **Quinton** – Application to divert Bridleway No 21. **Awaiting completion of works before Order can be confirmed.**

22. **Steeple Claydon** – Application to divert Footpath No 6. **Order Made. ON HOLD until further notice.**
23. **Stokenchurch** – Application to divert Footpath No. 28. **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
24. **Swanbourne** – Application to divert Footpath No. 12/14. **Awaiting landowner works before Order can be confirmed.**
25. **Winslow** – Application to extinguish Footpath No 5. Order made and no objections received. **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
26. **Wingrave with Rowsham** – Application to Divert/ Extinguish Footpath No.1 (part). **Awaiting letters of approval from adjoining landowners then can begin process.**

D. PUBLIC PATH CREATION AGREEMENTS

27. **Chepping Wycombe** – Footpath Creation. **Head of Legal and Democratic Services instructed to complete.**
28. **Edgcott** – Bridleway Creation (BCC Land). **Creation Agreement completed – CASE CLOSED.**
29. **Edgcott** – Bridleway Creation (ERC Land). **Awaiting go ahead from ERC to proceed.**
30. **Penn** – Footpath Creation at Whilden Lane (BCC Land). **Matter with Legal Services to complete the Agreement.**
31. **Stewkley** – Footpath Creation at Kingsbridge (BCC Land). **Matter with Legal Services to complete the Agreement**
32. **Westcott** - Footpath Creation. **File now closed as the current owners of the land refused to dedicate the path. CASE CLOSED.**
33. **Wing** – Footpath Creation at Long Spinney (BCC Land). **Matter with Legal Services to complete the Agreement.**

E. VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATIONS

34. **Hughenden** – land at The Field, Bryants Bottom. Application advertised and objections received. **Committee accepted the application to register the land as a Town or Village Green – CASE CLOSED.**
35. **Beaconsfield** – voluntary registration of the land at Hampden Hill. **Voluntary Registration Complete – CASE CLOSED.**
36. **High Wycombe** – land at Meadow Close, Wycombe Marsh. **The application is currently being investigated.**
37. **Wooburn** – land off Cherwell Road, Bourne End. **Waiting investigation.**
38. **Brill** – voluntary registration of the land known as The Walks. **Voluntary Registration Complete – CASE CLOSED.**

For further information please contact: Claire Hudson 01296 383425

B. STRATEGIC ACCESS UPDATE (JONATHAN CLARK)

39. The HS2 parliamentary petitioning process has commenced and the Select Committee is currently hearing evidence for the Colne Valley. We are satisfied with the rights of way mitigation in this area and are therefore not petitioning on countryside access, but the county council appeared successfully on highways and ecology matters. The first Committee site visits took place in Wendover and Stoke Mandeville on 11th June 2015. Further site visits were due to take place in the Aylesbury, Buckingham (26th June 2015) and Amersham constituencies. The remaining rights of way issues in the county are ongoing. This year we have received some significant new paths, secured under an assurance, in Little Missenden (Mantles Wood) and Stoke Mandeville (St Mary's Church).
40. The East West Rail Project aims to re-establish rail passenger services between Oxford, Bletchley and Bicester, then south to Aylesbury, introducing a new station at Winslow. Services are planned to start in March 2019. Bridge crossings and the re-routing of footpaths/bridleways to these new points have largely been agreed in principle with Network Rail and the landowners. However, the detail of each crossing will not be available until the major infrastructure (for example, each bridge) has been designed for the location and work is on-going with the Network Rail EWR Project Team to finalise the preferred diversion options for each crossing and to obtain stakeholder consent for the proposals. Diversion maps will be drawn up and orders will be consulted upon in due course.
41. A Highways England consultation has been received on the M4 Smart Motorway programme (use of the hard shoulder and some widening), which affects two locations with rights of way interests: Old Slade Lane, Iver; Old Marsh Lane, Dorney. The former has a footpath bridge crossing, but we would hope this can be upgraded for equestrians and cyclists; and the latter has a cycleway crossing on Highways England land, which we hope to retain as a useful link to the Sustrans National Routes 4 and 61 along the jubilee River.
42. A Heathrow Rail link consultation has been received which aims to connect the West Coast Mainline with Heathrow Airport. Footpath 15 Iver, which became a dead-end following the removal of Dog Kennel Bridge due to Crossrail, is affected by the route and we hope to negotiate a new bridleway and cycleway between Slough and Richings Park along North Park road.
43. The number of planning applications affecting rights of way has increased from 174 in the year ending 31st March 2014, to 219 in the year ending 31st March 2015.
44. Aylesbury Vale and Chiltern District have identified up to 250 sites which they think may be appropriate for housing development and need input from a rights of way perspective. These sites have been commented upon in terms of mitigating impact and providing improvements to the strategic network
45. The number of new donors to the Donate-a-Gate scheme since the 18th March 2015 meeting is up 9 to 323 donors. The Chiltern Society is celebrating their 50th anniversary, so we are hoping to achieve as many stile removals as possible along the Chiltern Way.

C. RIGHTS OF WAY OPERATIONS UPDATE (JOANNE TAYLOR)

46. A 'Summary of Works' is attached to this report in Appendix 1, outlining work carried out by the Rights of Way Operations Team between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015.
49. At the last meeting the Forum were advised that the recruitment and interview process for two vacant posts had commenced. I am pleased to inform you that the positions have now been filled, with one new starter James Dixon (Assistant Rights of Way Officer) having started in May and Alastair McVale (Area Rights of Way Officer) due to start in August 2015.
50. It has been possible to secure additional revenue money through the business planning process for a Rights of Way Bridge Inspection Officer. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan acknowledged that no routine condition survey of rights of way bridge structures had been carried out for many years, and therefore a more proactive approach was required. Over the next 4 years every known bridge structure on the network in Buckinghamshire will be inspected and recorded and assessed for condition. The total structures to be inspected are 600 per annum.
51. The Business Plan also identified a budget for volunteer works and devolvement of clearance to parish councils. Funds have yet to be allocated for capital works, such as bridge structure replacement and emergency surface works, and it is envisaged that large structure works will require *ad hoc* capital bids.
52. Members of the Forum will recall that a Parish Paths Clearance Fund has been made available by the county council to enable parish councils to benefit from being able to undertake and manage path clearance work over the summer. The money was in the form of a grant to parish councils wishing to employ their contractors to undertake the work. Over 20 parishes took part in the scheme for last year which amounted to 80 kilometres of clearance being undertaken in those parishes. This year we have between 50 to 60 parish councils taking part in the devolvement project amounting to surface clearance on approximately 170 kilometres of public right of way.
53. Final Key Performance Outcomes for 2014/2015.

Footpaths etc easy to use by members of public	70%	84%
Structures on rights of way easy to use according to BVPI 178 criteria	88%	94%
Number of structures removed/alterd to improve mobility/accessibility	70	191
Public RoW signposted in accordance with CA 1968 s27	88%	96%
% of enforcement issues resolved within matrix targets	50%	77%
Volunteering Hours for Place Reporting		1750