



## **RIDGEWAY UPDATE TO BUCKS LAF**

## **THE PARTNERSHIP AND THE BENEFIT CORRIDOR**

Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

***Sarah Wright***

***Ridgeway Project Officer***

***Working for The Ridgeway Partnership***

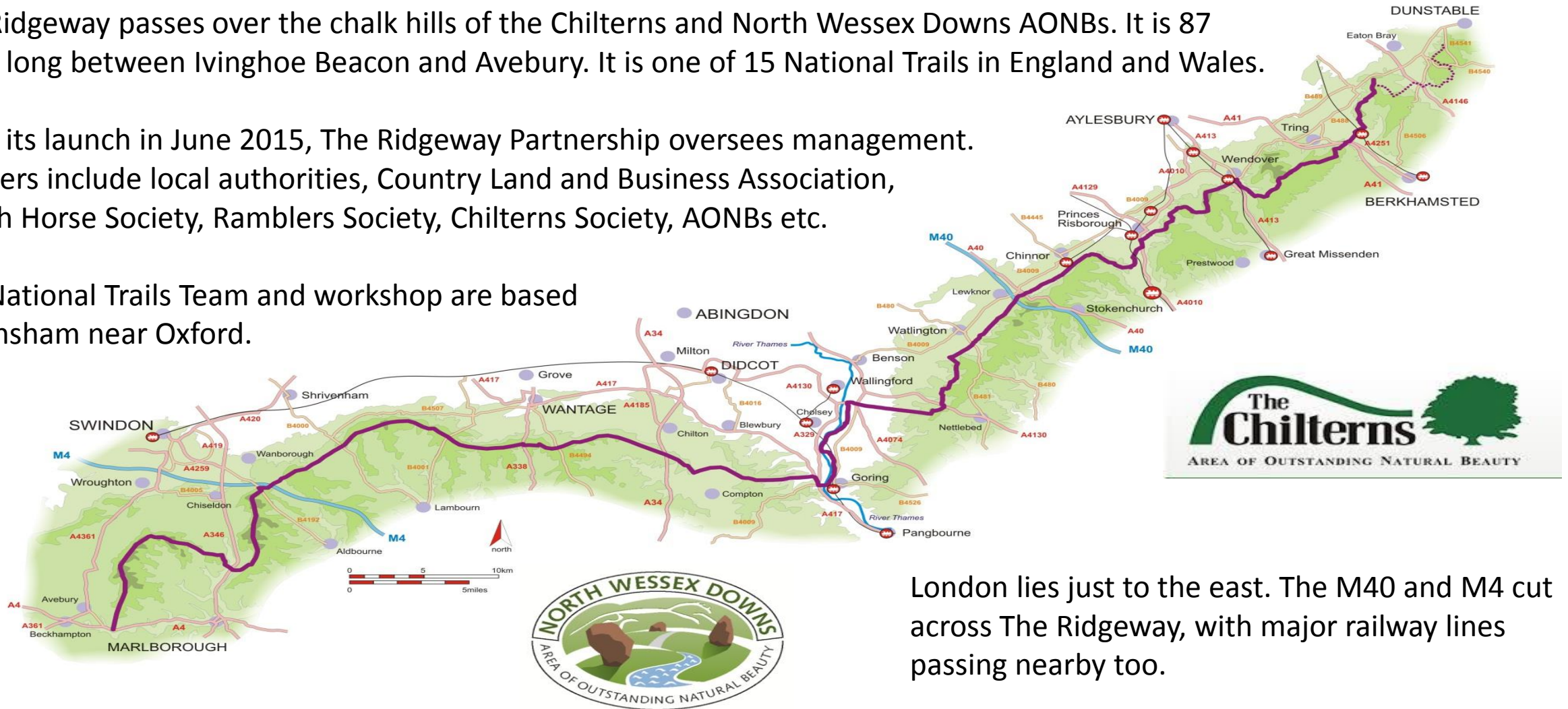
# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



The Ridgeway passes over the chalk hills of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs. It is 87 miles long between Ivinghoe Beacon and Avebury. It is one of 15 National Trails in England and Wales.

Since its launch in June 2015, The Ridgeway Partnership oversees management. Partners include local authorities, Country Land and Business Association, British Horse Society, Ramblers Society, Chilterns Society, AONBs etc.

The National Trails Team and workshop are based at Eynsham near Oxford.



London lies just to the east. The M40 and M4 cut across The Ridgeway, with major railway lines passing nearby too.

# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



## National Trail Standards (New Deal 2013)

High expectations for walkers, cyclists and horseriders using The Ridgeway

Natural England's vision for National Trails is that they are a family of the highest quality recreational routes connecting our finest landscapes for extensive off road journeys.

- Structures are always safe, comfortable, easy and convenient to use.
- Consistent high quality design, style and appropriate to landscape and historic character.
- Route is easy to follow with consistent, accurate, unobtrusive way marking and destination signage.
- Surfaces in good condition and appropriate to the geology and soils over which the trail passes.
- Readily passable routes free from undergrowth and overhanging vegetation.
- Safe road and rail crossings.

(Note: Sarah Wright has underlined aspects which she thinks differentiates the requirements for The Ridgeway from those of the wider ROW network.)



# *The Ridgeway* NATIONAL TRAIL



## Natural England's 4 Es (New Deal 2013)

### **EXPERIENCE**

Enable as many people as possible to enjoy a variety of walking and riding experiences along National Trails and through the English landscape.

### **ENHANCEMENT**

Make constant improvement to the Trail and its associated routes. Contribute to the enhancement of the landscape, nature and historic features within the Trail corridor.

### **ENGAGEMENT**

Build and sustain a community of interest in caring for the Trail and the landscape through which it passes.

### **ECONOMY**

Creates opportunities for local businesses to benefit from the use of Trails.

# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



## Practical maintenance and enhancements

- Condition monitoring and visitor feedback.
- Infrastructure: waymarking, map boards, gates, water taps.
- Surface repairs/enhancements.
- Vegetation clearance.

## Public engagement

- Information and interpretation to promote and enrich visitor experience – virtual, paper and on the Trail.
- Encouraging sustainable events.
- Working with interest groups including landowners, tourism and recreation industry, local businesses and communities.
- Attracting volunteers and donors/sponsors.

## Securing a sustainable future

- Conservation of natural, historic and landscape features.
- Facilitating sustainable use and management.
- Developing income streams to support ongoing work.
- Improving linking routes to communities and businesses.

# *The Ridgeway* NATIONAL TRAIL



## Who does the work?

### National Trail Team

- Sarah Wright – Ridgeway Project Officer (5 days a week, 30 hours)
- Sara Piggott – Volunteer Task Team and Project Co-ordinator (1.5 days a week)
- Andy Mawer – Volunteer Task Assistant (1 day a week)
- Elaine Townson – Visitor Information and Admin Assistant (1 day a week)

**Volunteers managed by NT Team and others**  
**Partners**

**Contractors**

# *The Ridgeway* NATIONAL TRAIL



**5 Ridgeway themes for  
Partnership projects and  
public engagement**

**Natural  
Ancient  
Sporting  
Living  
Creative**



## STRATEGIC LINKS

**Connecting The Ridgeway  
to visitor services**





*Strategic links are good quality routes or accessible areas linking the Ridgeway to settlements and key visitor services/attractions for the benefit of as many Ridgeway users as possible.*

*The Ridgeway Partnership selects and maintains these routes at their discretion.*

# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL

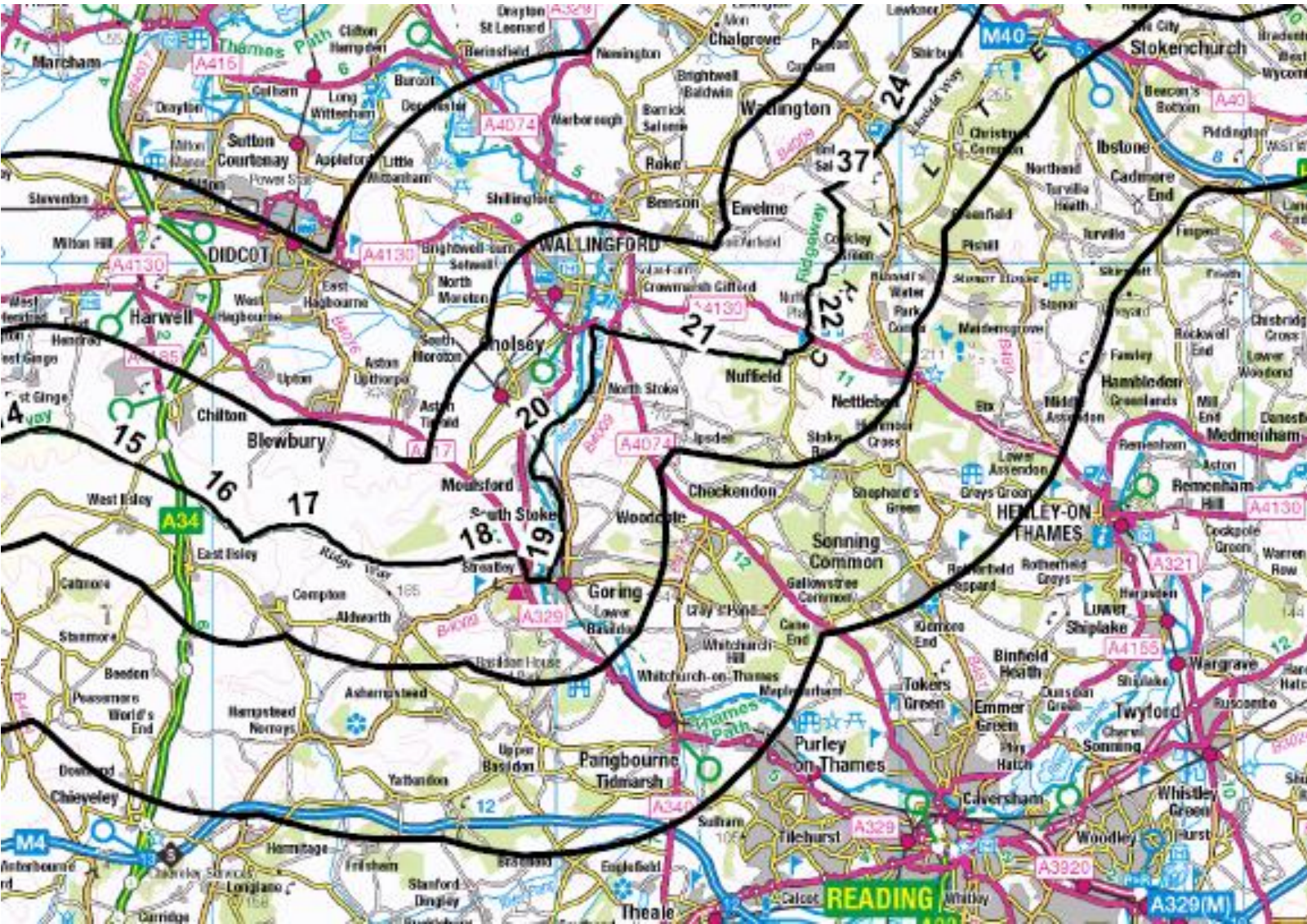


- visitor attractions (nature reserves, museum, art gallery, theatre, country park, playground, viewpoint, ancient monument);
- transport services (train stations, bus stations, key bus stops, car parks).
- accommodation providers (campsites, farm stays, B&Bs, inns, self catering, stables);



- places to eat and drink (café, restaurant, pub);
- places to obtain essential items, services, gifts and information (post office, bank, tourist information office, supermarket, cycle hire/repair shops, farriers etc or town/village centre);
- public toilets;

# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



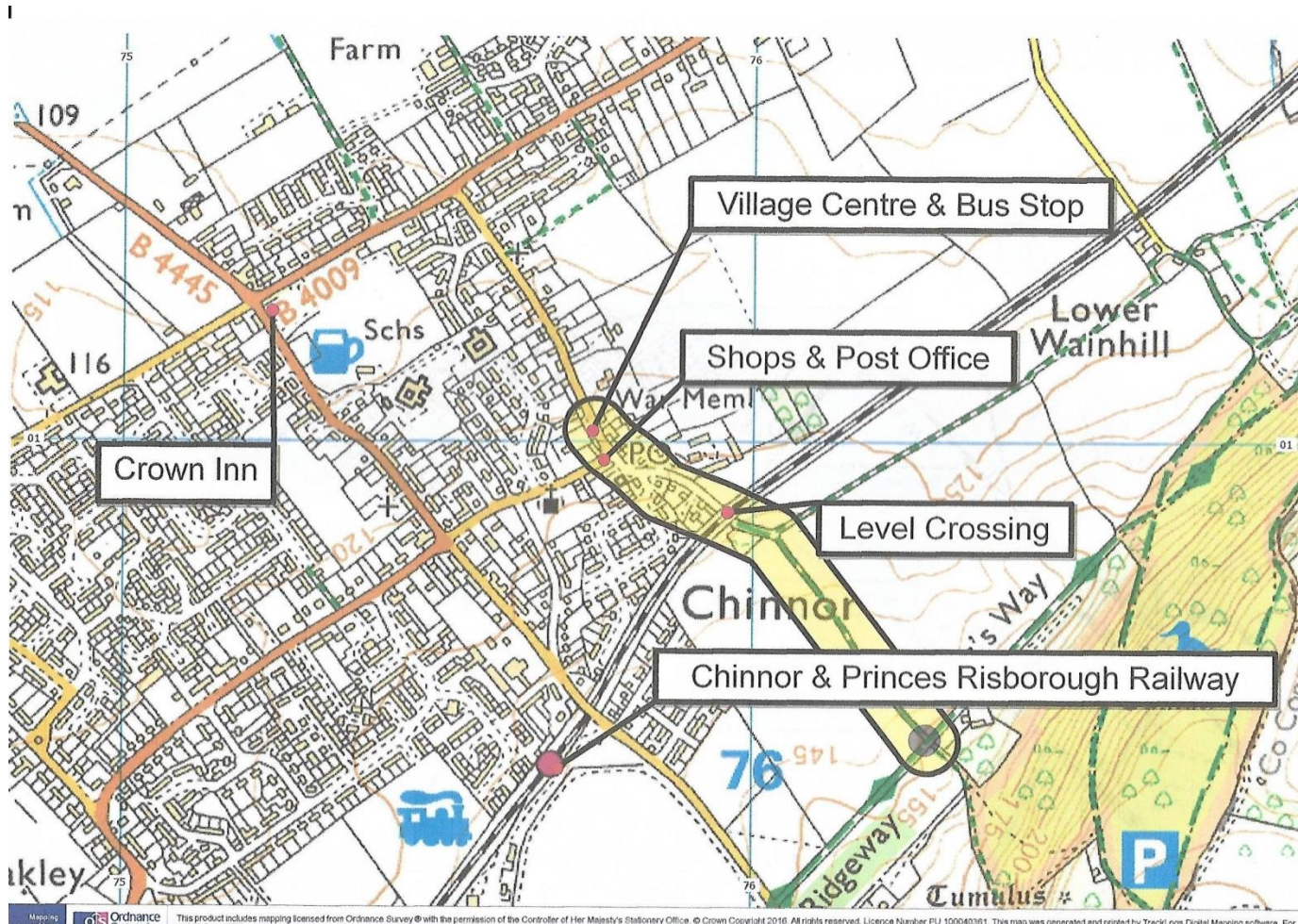
3km distance for walkers

5km distance for cyclists and horseriders

Higher priority– settlements with large population; already popular linking routes; existing reports of link ‘needed’, popular stop off points listed in Trail guides; settlement providing numerous visitor services/attractions; popular visitor attractions.

Medium priority – settlement providing a few visitor services/attractions; key visitor service in a remote area, e.g. village shop, campsite.

# The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Mike Fox's example

Bridleway Chinnor/45  
Keen's Lane  
High Street





## How can the Bucks LAF and The Ridgeway Partnership work together?

- Share expertise and learning, e.g. feedback on informal and formal consultation documents.
- Propose priorities and target areas for work/resources, e.g. planning for 2016-17.
- Joint promotion, e.g. share each other's newsletters, Twitter.
- Pool resources including people's time and money to deliver joint projects, e.g. annual visitor survey.
- Bid for money to deliver joint projects, e.g. strategic links upgrades.
- Other?

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**Ridgeway Project Officer - Sarah Wright**

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**07825 314791**

**To report a problem on The Ridgeway, tell the National Trail Team and/or the local highway authority -**

**[ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

**01865 810224**

**If urgent, call 07825 314791**

**If you see a crime in progress on The Ridgeway, call 999. Otherwise, call 101.**

**For visitor info and other enquiries:**

**[ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ridgeway@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

**01865 810224**

**[www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway)**

**Twitter: @TheRidgeway1972**