



THE RIDGEWAY – NEXT STEPS FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Buckinghamshire LAF

Wed 5th July 2017

Sarah Wright

Ridgeway Project Officer

Working for The Ridgeway Partnership

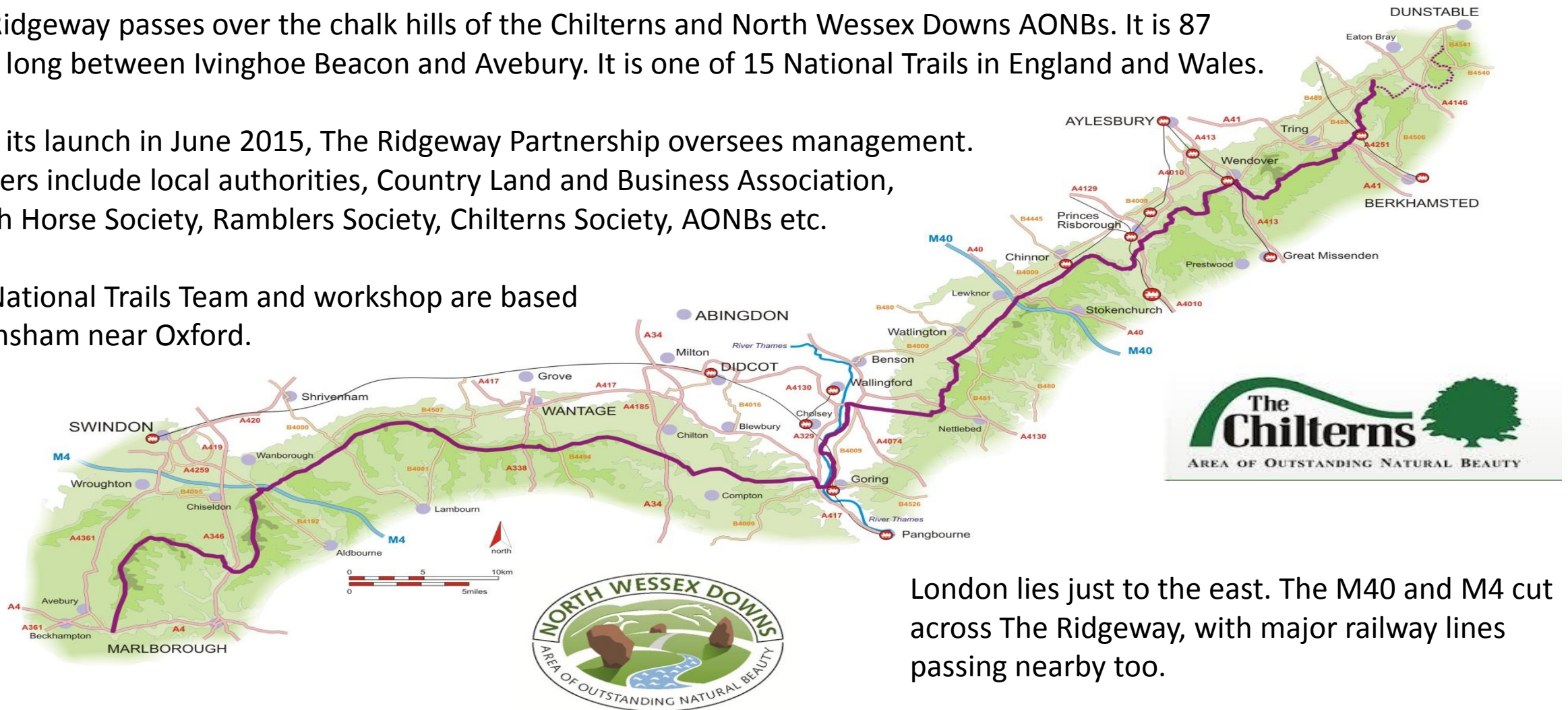
The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



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.



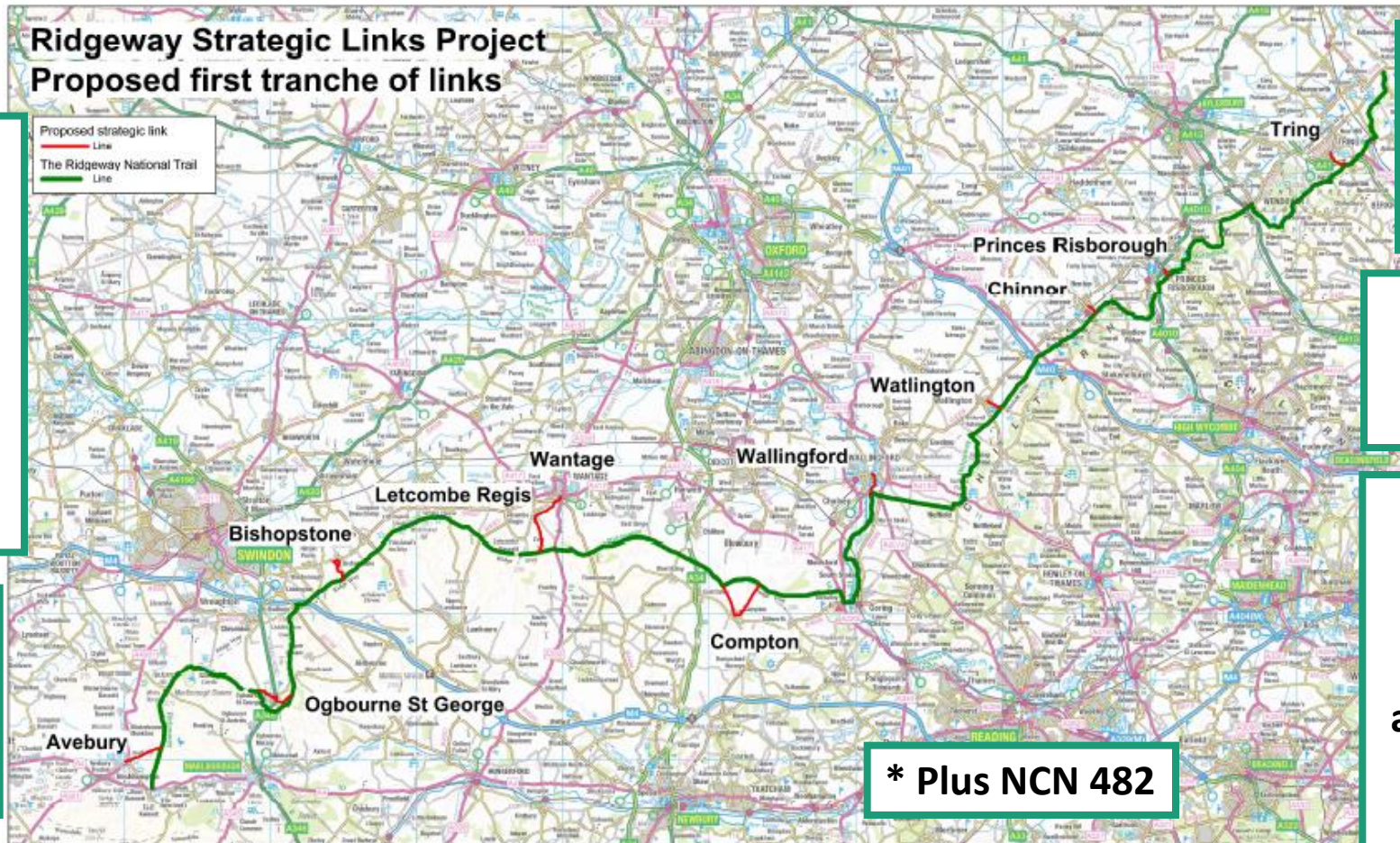
London lies just to the east. The M40 and M4 cut across The Ridgeway, with major railway lines passing nearby too.

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Ridgeway Strategic Links

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL 



2017 priorities

- Bishopstone
- Compton
- Ogbourne St George
- NCN 482
- Wantage
- Princes Risborough

Total population in these settlements:
51,524
(2011 Census data)

24 accommodation providers listed in Companion served by these links

Links serve stop-off points recommended in Arum guide

14 visitor attractions served by these links, including Tring Natural History Museum, Vale and Downland Museum, Chinnor Railway, Wallingford Castle

* Plus NCN 482



Ridgeway Strategic Links



What is the proposal? What are 'Ridgeway strategic links'?

The Ridgeway National Trail brings benefits to lots of people. Local residents and visitors can enjoy some of the best walking, cycling and horse riding experiences in the country. Businesses can draw customers from The Ridgeway and work together to develop 'packages' for visitors.

Such benefits would be better secured if it was made as easy as possible for people to walk or ride between settlements and The Ridgeway National Trail. The proposal is simple and we hope it will attract local support. The Ridgeway Partnership aims to –

- provide clear signage along the 'Ridgeway strategic link' so that people can confidently and responsibly find their way to and from nearby settlements and The Ridgeway. Integrate with existing signage as appropriate.
- where necessary and practicable, improve the surface, gates etc along the 'Ridgeway strategic link' so that legitimate users find it as accessible as possible.
- attract grants, sponsorship, donations and other help to resource capital items and longterm maintenance.

This project addresses the entire 87 mile length of The Ridgeway National Trail (see map on next page). The Ridgeway Strategic Links Project was launched in Spring 2016. Similar examples from elsewhere, including the South Downs Way National Trail, can offer inspiration and lessons.

The Ridgeway Partnership is now inviting landowners, parish/town councils, councillors, grant-giving bodies and other key stakeholders to provide local comment and support us in taking this proposal forward.

Ridgeway Strategic Links: South Downs Way case study

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



South Downs Way NATIONAL TRAIL 

Hassocks Link



Scan me for map and more info

<http://goo.gl/VqG4su>



You are at TQ 315 128

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK



The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Ridgeway Strategic Links

We will engage with stakeholders to integrate signage of a Ridgeway link with existing local signs in villages and towns. Elsewhere, rights of way along the links can be signed with standard Ridgeway signage to make it easy for the public to associate the route with The Ridgeway.



Local sign designs
Wantage (above)
Bishopstone (left)

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Location markers on Trails elsewhere

South Downs Way marker in Winchester unveiled in May 2017 (right)

North Downs Way terminal sculpture unveiled in Summer 2016 (below)



Viewpoint plinth along Cotswold Way points to places of interest in the distance (left)



The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



End/start of The Ridgeway at Ivinghoe Beacon

Plinth and trig point on the Beacon



Mapboard on the plinth



People recording/celebrating their visit to the Beacon...and wanting a place to sit too!



Note that the Avebury end/start is not any better!

HS2 and The Ridgeway



Current road crossing on Ellesborough road, with entrance to Bacombe Hill ahead.

To consider during construction

- Suitable temporary diversion during construction.
- Impact upon visitor experience during construction/diversion – noise, views.

To secure as part of HS2 changes

- Safe road crossing for walkers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Safe and accessible pavement (for walkers and also cyclists and horse riders?) through Wendover to Bacombe Hill.
- Visitor information in Wendover and at train station.
- Improved bridleway up Bacombe Hill for cyclists and horse riders.
- Improved entrance/parking area for Bacombe Hill to welcome visitors.

Note that The Ridgeway crosses the HS2 route at Wendover on the Ellesborough road.



Financing The Ridgeway



Please spread the word to gather support and resources for The Ridgeway and other National Trails. Together we can ensure The Ridgeway is here for everyone to enjoy now and for years to come.

Since its designation in 1972, The Ridgeway has benefitted from government grants. But the economic downturn and public sector cuts puts government financial support of National Trails at risk, and at the very least makes the future look uncertain. A new campaign pack is available to help people seek out support from their MPs and others.

Whatever the future of government funding, we need to attract more investors and build support from as many as people as possible so that The Ridgeway isn't at risk if one source of funding/support falls away.

The Ridgeway is fortunate in having a charity dedicated to its preservation – The Friends of The Ridgeway, established in 1983.

Other organisations are helping The Ridgeway Partnership by pooling resources to deliver mutually beneficial projects, e.g. Trail Running Association is funding new gates to replace less accessible old-style gates.

*It is estimated that around 400,000 people live within 5 miles of The Ridgeway.
Imagine if each person donated a £1!*



Friends of The Ridgeway

For as little as £8 per year for an individual, members know they are helping to preserve The Ridgeway year after year – go to www.ridgewayfriends.org.uk/join-us

The Ridgeway NATIONAL TRAIL



Ridgeway Project Officer - Sarah Wright

sarah.wright@oxfordshire.gov.uk

07825 314791

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

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

01865 810224

www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ridgeway

Twitter: @TheRidgeway1972