

Dear

COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000  
CONSULTATION ON THE PRODUCTION OF A RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The County Council would welcome your comments and ideas on the assessment and production of the above plan.

The Government has announced a new duty for all highway authorities as part of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to carry out a full and complete assessment of countryside access within their respective areas, and to produce a Statement of Action within the next four years detailing how the countryside access network might be improved and developed. This process will involve wide consultation as it is intended to produce a long-term plan, with the proposals for access provision for the following 10 years.

Quite clearly it is necessary to seek the views of organisations and groups, such as yours, on how they feel the rights of way network in Buckinghamshire might be developed for future access needs.

Some of the issues the County Council will be considering whilst making the analysis are as follows:

- The condition and maintenance of the current network
- The extent to which the present network meets the current and future needs of users
- Attractive routes to support local tourism, economic regeneration or community-led initiatives
- Opportunities for cycling, harness-horse driving, horse riding and walking other than on roads used by motor vehicles, and links in the network to avoid such roads
- Access to attractive areas of countryside with few rights of way, or to a particular viewpoint, feature or attraction
- Routes from centres of population, and routes that can be used in conjunction with public transport
- Links which create circular routes
- Improvements to routes near watersides which may suffer from natural erosion
- Routes to help ameliorate the effect of a major road on people's enjoyment of the countryside
- Convenient and safe crossings over roads, railways, rivers and canals
- The current rights of way network, such as ways ending in cul-de-sacs or routes with different rights along their lengths
- Routes for local journeys to work, shops and local amenities.
- Routes through and around heavily developed areas

The information you provide to the County Council will be evaluated for inclusion in the final published plan. The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum will also be involved in

the evaluation process, under its duty to comment on opportunities for access, assist the authority in setting priorities for implementing plans and comment on the published draft plan. More information on the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum can be found on the web site [www.buckscc.gov.uk/rights\\_of\\_way/local\\_access\\_forum.htm](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/rights_of_way/local_access_forum.htm).

We have enclosed a summary report on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan that provides further information on the processes involved and a form. I would be very grateful if you could use and return the form with your comments. Ideally the assessment should be returned by the end of September 2004.

Regrettably it is not possible to provide maps to all those organisations and partners that are being consulted due to the amount of resources this would take. However the definitive map for the County of Buckinghamshire may be viewed free of charge, at County Hall in Aylesbury, and High Wycombe and Aylesbury Reference Libraries, and at the Transportation Service Area Offices in Winslow and High Wycombe. Additionally individual parishes are provided with map copies for the parish and each District Council keeps map copies for that District area. In addition maps of the rights of way network may be viewed and downloaded from the County Council's rights of way website ([www.buckscc.gov.uk/rights\\_of\\_way/network\\_maps.htm](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/rights_of_way/network_maps.htm)).

Your help with this matter is very much appreciated, and if you require further information or advice then please do not hesitate to contact the following officers: -

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Yours sincerely



Group Manager, Rights of Way and Access Group