



## Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum agenda

Date: Wednesday 2 March 2022

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: The Paralympic Room, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, HP19 8FF

### Membership:

Mr D Briggs (NFU, CLA, farming, Chairman of the Bucks CLA, Chairman of the Chilterns) (Vice-Chairman), Cllr S Broadbent, Mr G Casperz (Disabled Ramblers), Mr A Clark (Chiltern Society), Mr N Harris (National Trust), Ms A Heath (British Horse Society), Mr C Hurworth (Trail Riders' Fellowship and MPV users), Mr R Jennings (Cycling UK), Mr R Johnson (Ramblers Association), Mr A Lambourne (Parish Councils), Mr R Pushman (Bucks Conservation Trust & Bucks Heritage Champion) (Chairman), Mr G Thomas (Independent), Cllr A Turner and Mr B Worrell (British Driving Society Beds, Bucks and Herts)

Agenda Item	Page No
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*There will be a 10-minute break at 11am*

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for absence</b>   |                |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of interest</b>  |                |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Minutes of the previous meeting / matters arising</b><br>To confirm the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 3 November 2021  | <b>3 - 20</b>  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Natural Environment Partnership</b><br>To be presented by Nicola Thomas, Natural Environment Partnership Manager  | <b>21 - 22</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Local Transport Plan 5</b><br>To be presented by Hannah Joyce, Transport Strategy Lead Officer  | <b>23 - 24</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Rights of way group report</b><br>To be presented by Helen Francis, Interim Definitive Map and Highways Searches Team Leader; Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access Officer; and | <b>25 - 38</b> |

Joanne Taylor, Rights of Way Operations Team Leader

- 7 LAF members' report 39 - 54**
- 8 Any other business**
- 9 Dates of next meetings**  
Wednesday 13th July 2022 and Wednesday 2nd November 2022

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Rebecca Binstead by email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).



## Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum held on Wednesday 3 November 2021 in The Paralympic Room, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, HP19 8FF, commencing at 10.03 am and concluding at 12.00 pm.

### Members present

Mr D Briggs (Vice-Chairman), Mr G Casperz, Mr A Clark, Mr N Harris, Ms A Heath, Mr C Hurworth, Mr R Jennings, Mr A Lambourne, Cllr P Martin, Mr R Pushman (Chairman), Mr G Thomas, Cllr A Turner and Mr B Worrell

### Others in attendance

Mr J Clark, Ms R Binstead, Mr B Feeney-North, Mrs E Hackling and Mr R Johnson

### Apologies

Cllr S Broadbent and Mrs H Francis

### Agenda Item

#### 2 Declarations of interest

None.

#### 3 Minutes of the previous meeting / matters arising

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

#### 4 LAF site visit: Bridleway WEN/1/1, Bacombe Hill SSSI & Grangelands SSSI

Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access Officer, began by thanking members who attended the Local Access Forum site visit. Members' attention was drawn towards Appendix 1, displaying the resurfaced Ridgeway and Ridgeway Riding routes at Bacombe Hill, Wendover. The limestone surface was tested by a horse rider, walker, cyclist and user on a mobility scooter, and was found to be suitable for horse riding, cycling, and disabled use. A couple of issues included the downhill section causing cyclists to go too fast and horse riders unlikely to utilise the route as it leads out onto Ellesborough Road, which was too dangerous. Alternative routes were discussed and the possibility of links through to Bacombe Lane or a safer route into Wendover. To encourage good user etiquette, the Forum noted some examples of signage included in the report. Mr Clark welcomed any ideas or comments for signage that could be used on the Ridgeway.

The Forum were then informed of the site visit to the Grangelands SSSI, where a member of the British Horse Society gave feedback on two gates. It was agreed that these need to be replaced with Worcester Gates. These gates contain a closing mechanism that shuts the gate in fourteen seconds, to allow a horse to move through. It was also decided to relocate signage that horses were banging their heads on.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Mr Clark informed members that Mr Rod Black has been looking into the possibility of receiving funding and support from HS2. This would go towards creating a link alongside the Ellesborough Road. Cllr Peter Martin suggested organising a conversation outside of the meeting to take this up directly with HS2.
- The site visit was extended to review Bacombe Hill, which identified more work that needed doing to improve accessibility. It was suggested that Bacombe Hill to Ellesborough Road footpath link be upgraded to bridleway so it doesn't have to go through the town. Mr Clark explained that this would be taken up with HS2.

## **5 Buckinghamshire Cycleway**

This item was presented by Ben Feeney-North, Transport Strategy Officer for Planning Growth and Sustainability. The Forum noted the development of active travel routes in Buckinghamshire and the progress towards the Buckinghamshire Greenway. The latter relates to the development of a continuous walking and cycling route running the length of the county from the Colne Valley, connecting to routes in Hillingdon, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire. The aim was to achieve the same, if not similar, standard as the Waddesdon Greenway. The purpose of the Buckinghamshire Greenway was to improve connectivity between towns and villages, making it easier for people to make short trips as well as being an asset for leisure and tourism.

Mr Feeney-North referred to a presentation and the slides that would be appended to these minutes. Following the conclusion of the presentation, the following points were raised during the discussion:

- A new route from Winslow to Buckingham had been established. It had not yet been considered as part of the Buckinghamshire Greenway, but it was suggested that a route from Winslow to Aylesbury would be well used and sought after. Mr Feeney-North explained that the Greenway could be considered as a strategic spine that routes can be added to and they were keen to explore opportunities to incorporate other routes.
- It was mentioned that there was little consultation with horse riders in the development of the Waddesdon Greenway and it could be of great benefit to horse riders. It was emphasised to include horse riders in the development of

the Buckinghamshire Greenway. Mr Feeney-North explained that landowners generally only accept a permissive route and were sometimes not willing to allow riders to use it. It was noted that this was frustrating, but the aim was to have as much of the route as possible be a bridleway and accessible for all users. It was highlighted that a large section of the south route, such as the South Bucks Way, utilised existing rights of way. It was hoped that developing these southern sections will make it more accessible for horse riders.

- The Planning Growth and Sustainability team were working on links with Hertfordshire. One such being the Grand Union Canal Triangle. The Aylesbury Arm had received funding to upgrade sections up to the border with Hertfordshire. Mr Feeney-North stated that they were keen to engage with Hertfordshire to continue to improve the Aylesbury Arm. Regarding the Wendover Arm, Buckinghamshire was working with the Wendover Arm Trust to get the path upgraded.
- The issue was raised of heavy traffic deterring cyclists on the A4010, between Aylesbury and High Wycombe via Princes Risborough. Members were informed that the team were working on the county-wide local cycling and walking infrastructure plan. This would be developed at a strategic level, with the Buckinghamshire Greenway at the heart of it. It was hoped that problems would be captured and highlighted for future development.
- Regarding the consultation process, Mr Feeney-North explained that the route between Wendover and Missenden was led by Sustrans. The main consultation had been completed through them, working with the Chiltern Society. To develop routes moving forward, it was stated that the Council were looking to develop more detailed consultation. A Regional Access Field Officer for the British Horse Society was present and offered their help in the consultation process, as they could provide more of a national perspective building from their experiences working with other authorities. In particular, their experience with advising on controlled crossings was highlighted.
- The timescale of the Buckinghamshire Greenway was reliant on factors, including financial support from the government and developers, landowner consent, and HS2. There were locations of the Greenway which intersect with HS2. It had been agreed with HS2 and the Department of Transport that at those locations, the HS2 design would incorporate the Greenway. However, this would be reliant on the timescales of HS2.
- A forum had been established to help develop the northern routes with two Northamptonshire authorities, Oxfordshire, and England's Economic Heartland. This is to ensure that the routes were connecting outside of Buckinghamshire. England's Economic Heartland were looking at what interventions could be made to the Varsity Way from Oxford to Cambridge.

## **6 ROWIP Action Plan Year-1 Report (Themes 3 – 6)**

The Forum were informed by Mr Clark that the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Action Plan Year-1 Report would be available for March 2022.

## **7 Rights of way group report**

Mr Clark presented the Rights of Way Group Report, to summarise progress on the Gardenway. A final report, expected in December 2021, would give a design specification and detail of the route. The team were beginning to parcel up the routes around Aylesbury and had put in funding bids to deliver a new bridleway. It was expected to be completed in 2030.

A planning application had been submitted to the Aylesbury Area Planning Team for the Quarrendon Path through Berryfields and Buckingham Park. Mr Clark informed the Forum that the application was live and available for comments. The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum would be consulted on the High Wycombe Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Ms Taylor updated members on the Rights of Way (RoW) operations over the previous six months. The team was comprised of one RoW Team Leader, two RoW Officers, 1.6 Assistant RoW Officers, and 1.5 Bridge Structure Inspectors.

The BVPI Condition Survey was carried out largely using volunteer effort during February / March 2021. The results were that 75% of paths were easy to use. The RoW Team were looking to carry out the 5% survey later in the year, due to the additional workload from COVID restrictions. Ms Taylor explained the importance of the condition survey, as it provides a benchmark on the state of the network against previous years. Ms Taylor invited members to give feedback on the survey.

The Forum were informed of the ongoing capital projects. Ms Taylor highlighted the work regarding bridge improvements and surface work that had been completed. This included Fawley Bridge and Ms Taylor explained that the team were still in negotiation of the replacement of the bridge structure and the annual clearance. The summer clearance had been completed, using two additional clearance crews for twelve weeks. Autumn clearance of bramble and side growth would be completed. Several projects would run through the winter, as it cannot be achieved in summer due to the nesting season.

In reference to Appendix 5 on the Rights of Way Group Report item, Ms Taylor welcomed comments from members and explained that it showed an average for April to October in comparison to previous years. The results for the last financial year were quite low, due to the limited work that could be achieved during COVID lockdowns.

Ms Taylor gave feedback on the priority matrix, on how issues were categorised into priority A, B, C, and D to work out a target time. Figures were also provided for the beginning of the 2021 Condition Survey. Ms Taylor welcomed comments on whether

they should continue the Condition Survey or postpone the survey for a year. The reasoning provided was that the team had a large backlog of issues, as a result of increasing usage on the network over the previous two years. More individuals were reporting issues, as people were using the network for recreation during lockdown.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Ms Taylor explained that the workload was due to it being easier for people to report issues through the reporting website. Moreover, volunteers were unable to work due to restrictions. Staff were also redeployed to community work to cover the pandemic and there were restrictions on site visits. In combination, this had resulted in a backlog.
- Feedback from members regarding the Condition Survey was that it should continue, without the year break. This would avoid issues mounting up and the importance of knowing the state of the network was emphasised.
- Concerns were raised over the RoW Team being under resourced. Cllr Peter Martin said he would speak to Cllr Steve Broadbent on this concern.
- The target times of resolving issues were published online, on the same pages as the Report It page. This allows individuals to see how their issue is prioritised.
- There was a set of core issues that may be difficult to resolve due to an enforcement issues, for example. The effort to resolve them might be quite intensive so one solution was to put a notice or informative on the land charge layer. Therefore, if the property is sold, it notifies the potential purchaser that there is a defect on the land. This had resulted in a history of problems left unresolved, but they would be monitored and reviewed.
- Parish surveys were useful in enabling volunteers to go out in the field and check to see what is outstanding in their parish against the database. This aids in clearing out old data.

## **8 LAF members' report**

Neil Harris, National Trust, informed members on ash dieback and clearance. The work had been prioritised by usage, to combat issues with potential risk to ash trees dying and falling. The focus had been on medium to very high usage zones. Ash dieback is a fungal disease causing the timber to become brittle. The longer the tree has the disease, the more brittle they become and more likely to fall over. To avoid this risk when clearing, the National Trust had used a contractor with mechanical equipment, such as a walking excavator, to clear the edges of the footpath. This is safer than manual clearing and the timber is turned into wood or chipped for wildlife. Roughly £160,000 was spent in the last year to clear sites including Pulpit Hill and Aston Wood. The next site to be looked at is Hughenden, which would be closed for two weeks to clear diseased ash trees on the main visitor route. Work was also planned for Coombe Hill this winter 2021/22, which was delayed due to the

nesting season. Where there was a lot of felling, the National Trust were also replanting, particularly at Bradenham. About 11,500 trees would be planted this winter. Funding had been provided by the National Trust Plant a Tree Campaign. £60,000 had been granted for the replanting, about six hectares of ash dieback. A large proportion of the money would go towards on-site preparation, such as deer fencing.

In response to this update, the following points were mentioned:

- The main issue of ash dieback is that the trees become unpredictable. The National Trust review their trees in June and assess them on a percentage of crown die back. 50% and greater crown dieback signals for the tree to be removed the following winter. Less than 50% dieback could mean that the tree can recover.
- To avoid ground shrinkage, the National Trust were replanting and replace with hedges and shrub layers.
- At Pulpit Hill on the edge of the Byway GLK/40A, a tree stump in the middle of the byway had been removed.
- Landowners had a duty of care to anyone on their property. Mr Harris suggested prioritising trees based on usage and the target, e.g. the target is greater if the tree is next to a house rather than a field.
- Trees in the Hughenden Valley were raised as a concern near the highway. Mr Clark requested details on the site so it can be inspected. The Forum were informed of a regular programme of inspection for trees in the county that should pick up any issues.
- Regarding the work on Naphill Common, Mr Harris explained that a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) would be protected by Natural England and the Forestry Commission. To apply to do work on a SSSI, you have to give a statutory notice of operations (SNO).
- Mr Clark informed the Forum that the Council RoW Team could organise free RoW closures for charities.

The Forum noted the letters on the Wayside Farm and Chawley Manor Farm Open Access Restriction consultation and the 2026 cut-off date introduced by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000.

Mr Brian Worrell, British Driving Society Beds, Bucks and Herts, gave an update from the Ridgeway Delivery Group. The report would be appended to the minutes of this meeting.

## **9 Any other business**

Mr Clark informed members that John Elfes has offered his resignation and Mr Clark would draft a letter of thanks for his long service as former chairman and more



recent member on behalf of the LAF. Mr Roy Johnson, Ramblers Association, has been offered and has accepted an invitation to join the Forum in his place.

**10 Date of next meetings**

Wednesday 2 March 2022; Wednesday 13 July 2022; and Wednesday 2 November 2022.

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# Buckinghamshire Greenway

The **Buckinghamshire Greenway** is an accessible, high-quality active travel route that will connect people and communities running the full length of the county.

It will be the walking and cycling backbone for everyday trips in Buckinghamshire, connecting with both existing active travel routes and other new routes currently in development. The Greenway will also link up with rail and bus services.

The Greenway will:

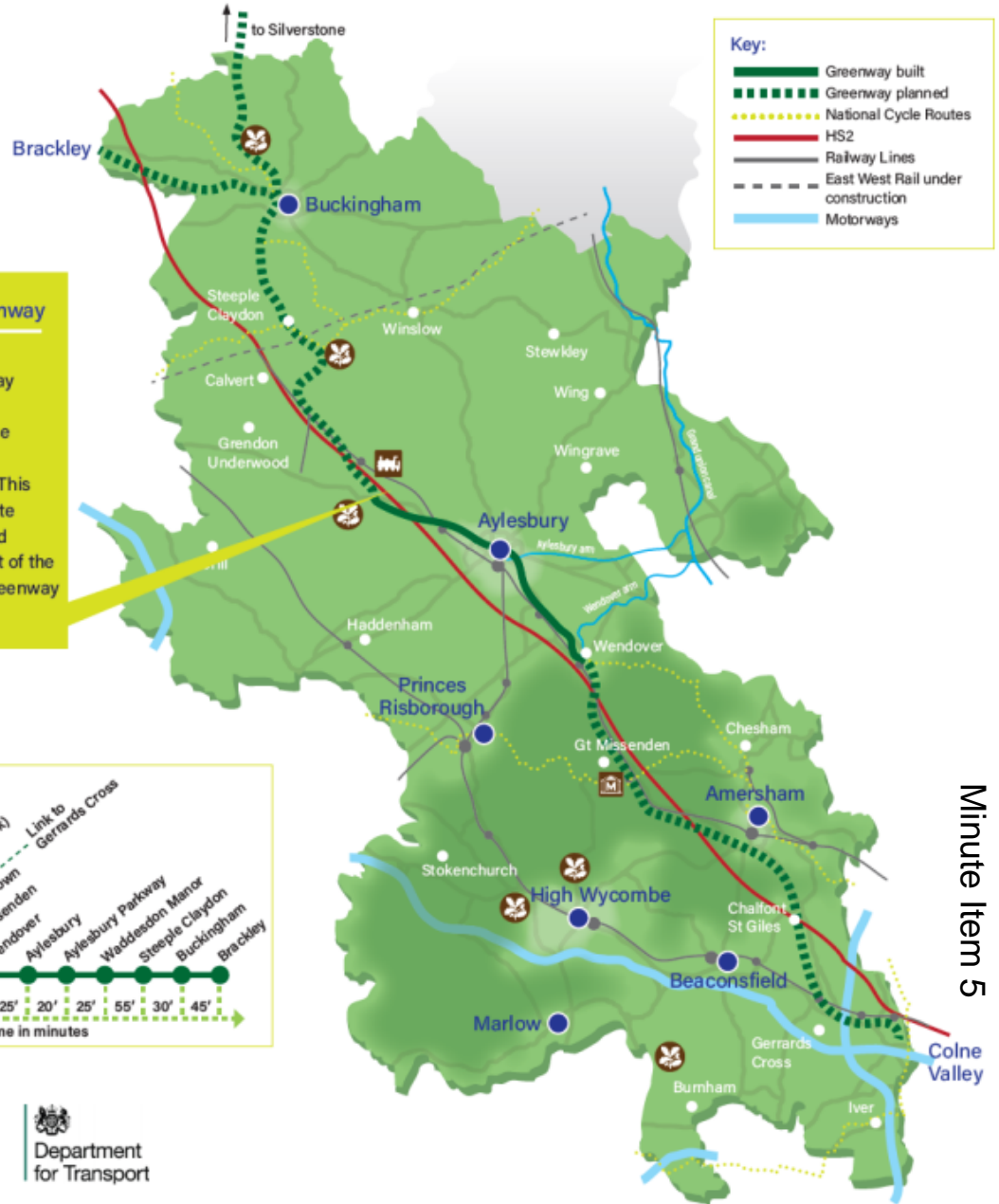
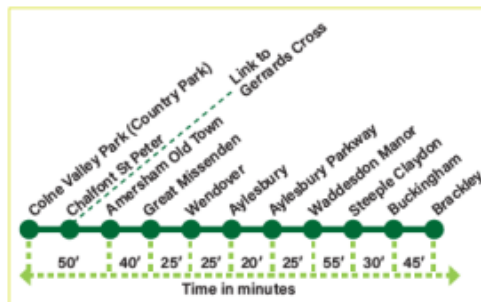
- Open up new opportunities for the people of Buckinghamshire to access education and employment;
- Provide an attractive and safe active travel alternative to local car journeys;
- Be a local leisure and tourism asset for Buckinghamshire, running through the Chilterns AONB and to key tourist destinations.

The Greenway also supports the vision for a north-south National Cycleway connecting London and the West Midlands, and communities in between.

Buckinghamshire Council is working with communities and local organisations, Sustrans and the Department for Transport to bring the **Buckinghamshire Greenway** vision to life.

## Waddesdon Greenway

The award-winning Waddesdon Greenway was opened in 2018, linking Aylesbury Vale Parkway station with Waddesdon Manor. This 4km active travel route sets the standard and aspiration for the rest of the Buckinghamshire Greenway to follow.



# Waddesdon Greenway

Aylesbury Vale Parkway 



Waddesdon Manor 



Westcott Venture Park    
(planned)



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**160,000+ trips in 2020**

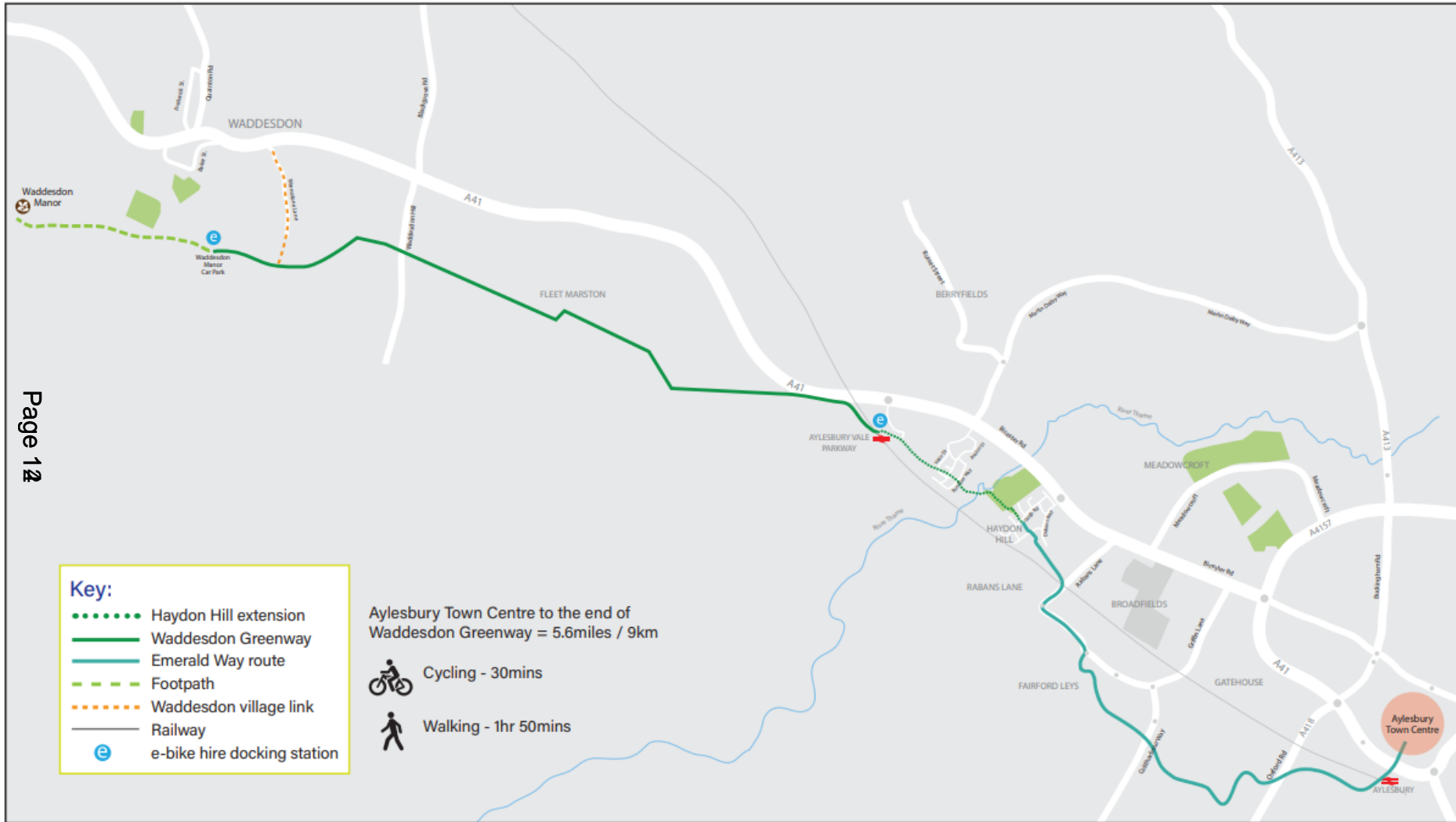
**165% growth in usage since  
2019**

**Extension to Westcott Venture  
Park planned**





# Aylesbury to Waddesdon Active Travel Route



# Misbourne Greenway (North)

Wendover      



Great Missenden       

- Enabling works commenced, main construction starting early 2022;
- Opening due Summer 2022.



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# Buckingham-Stowe-Silverstone

Buckingham     



Stowe Gardens 



Stowe School 



Silverstone   

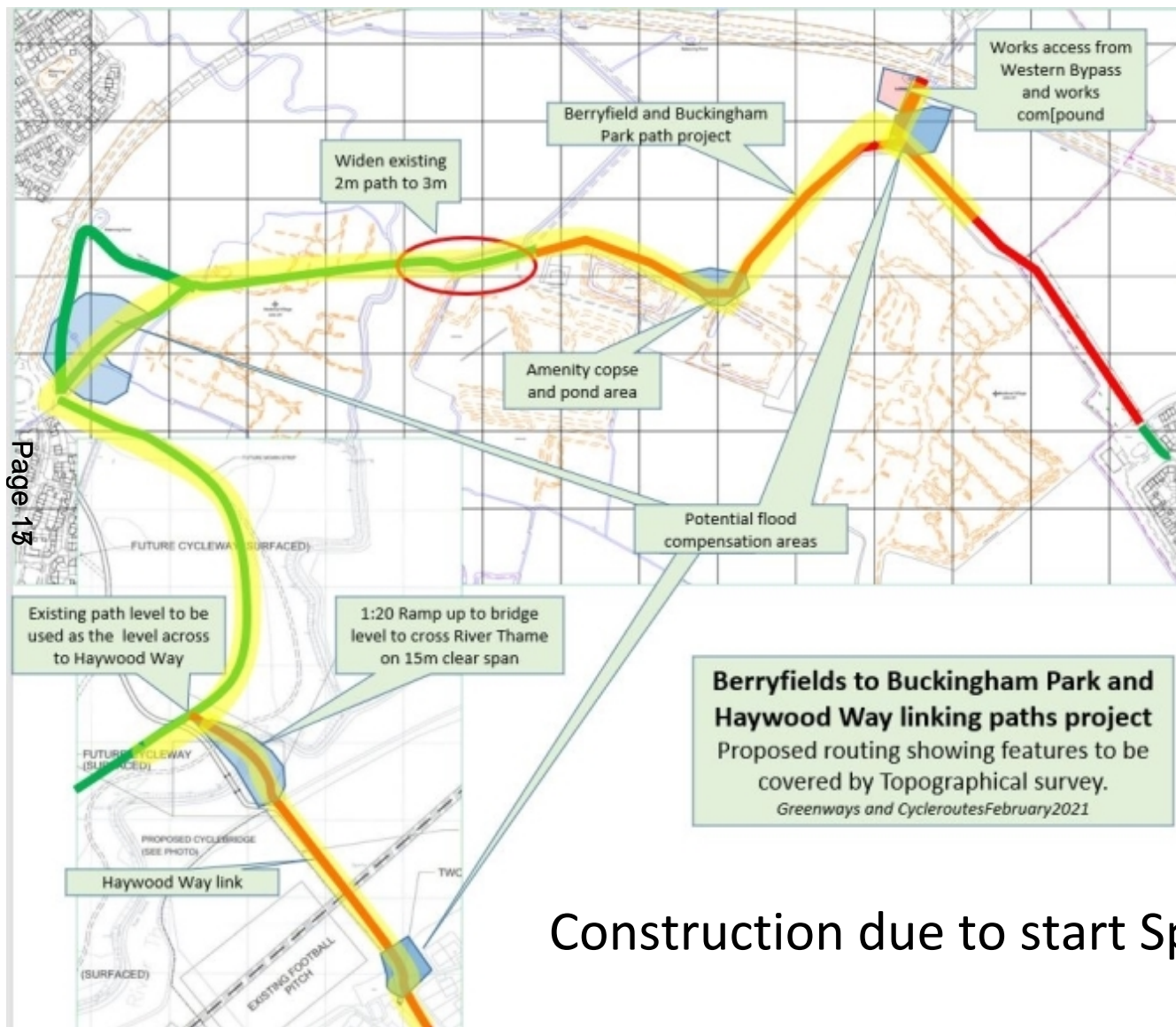
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- Business
- Education
- Employment
- Leisure



# Quarrendon Link – Berryfields-Buckingham Park



Construction due to start Spring 2022.

# High Wycombe Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

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Public  
consultation  
starting in  
November, dates  
TBC



## **Notes from Ridgeway Delivery Group Zoom meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

### **1. Managing vehicles on the Trail**

Discussion on Poacher Blocks recognised that landowners required effective barriers to illegal use by motorised vehicles. However, there was real nervousness in their use on the Trail. There is the danger of walkers tripping and possibly injury from the solid and sharp edges of the concrete. Interestingly this hazard is one of the key reasons that the Kent Gap is now not recommended. It seems people don't look where they put their feet these days.

For equestrians the issues are similar, plus the reluctance of some horses not wishing to cross the concrete. For the carriage driver, the concrete poses an unwelcome 'bump' in the surface as well as the height of the central blocks. The BHS is very much against them on a public Right of Way used by ridden or driven horses.

### **2. Ridgeway Driving Leaflet**

The final version was discussed and approved. It is aimed at the motorised user and provides best practice. Printed copies will be used by the police to hand out. However the general consensus was that whilst having a leaflet was better than nothing, it is unlikely to have a great impact as the irresponsible won't read it. The Ridgeway Delivery Group will distribute it to trail rider organisations etc. PDFs for electronic distribution is favoured as the leaflet can then be attached to electronic communications across several social media platforms. One thought was the leaflet itself should be bigger than the folded A4 version.

### **3. Ridgeway Riding Route and Wendover HS2 re-surfacing issues.**

The discussion was in praise of the work being done and moved to signage to mitigate against poor behaviour on the steep hill and blind bend, particularly by speeding cyclists and their lack of consideration of other users. A number of signs were reviewed and a number chosen to take forward.

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## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

# Report

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### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Title:** Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership  
[NEP]: <https://bucksmknep.co.uk>;

**Nicola Thomas, Partnership Manager**

Many aims of Buckinghamshire's Green Infrastructure Strategies cross-over with those in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, such as access to nature, recreation, health & wellbeing, supporting the volunteer network and sustainable development; not least ensuring the county's environment is continually recorded, protected and enhanced.

The NEP is engaged in influencing local decision-making on behalf of the partnership to ensure the environment is appropriately taken into account, as well as ensuring its partners work collaboratively towards common agreed environmental goals for the area. For example, the NEP has recently released a new [Biodiversity Action Plan](#) which sets collectively the partnership's priorities for biodiversity; it will also be a key player in producing the newly-mandated Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the detailed requirements for which the Government is due to release in Spring. The NEP also speaks collectively for its partners in calling for strong Local Plan policies around green infrastructure and biodiversity. It has, for example, successfully engaged Local Plans to commit to a biodiversity net gain and explicitly support the NEP's Green Infrastructure Vision and Principles document, which is linked to its Green [Infrastructure Opportunity mapping](#), in the hope that this influences developers. The NEP also aims to encourage community involvement in the maintenance of wilder green spaces, for health and recreation, including in areas of deprivation.

While the Local Access Forum doesn't cover Milton Keynes Council area, which the NEP does, members are invited to provide advice and feedback on how the group might usefully engage with the NEP in future to deliver shared aims. Indeed, some of those groups representing the NEP are also members of the Local Access Forum, such as the NFU, Chiltern Society and Buckinghamshire Council.

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

## Report

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### AGENDA ITEM 5

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Title:** Local Transport Plan 5

**Author:** Hannah Joyce – Transport Strategy Lead Officer

**Contact Officer:** Rebecca Binstead (01296 585244)

Local Transport Plan 4 outlines the council’s high-level approach to transport provision in Buckinghamshire between 2016 and 2036. The council is now in the initial scoping stages for LTP 5.

A local transport plan aims to encourage walking and cycling for short journeys, leisure and exercise, seeking to improve infrastructure and opportunities to use more sustainable modes of transport.

While the LTP seeks increased use of trains and buses, many of the aims and objectives of a rights of way improvement plan for walking and cycling are shared, including opportunities to improve health, safety and quality of life. This includes horse riders when improving road safety and supporting the local economy. In this way the plans complement each other and provide the framework in which transport improvements are delivered for residents.

LTP 5 will include a public consultation, to which the Local Access Forum are encouraged to take part.

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**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

# Report

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Title:** Rights of Way Group update

**A. MATTERS PREVIOUSLY DETERMINED**

1. **Hedgerley** – application to upgrade public footpath No. 14 to public bridleway status based on historical evidence. **Order made. Objection received, referred to the Secretary of State for determination.**
2. **Little Chalfont** - application to record a public footpath around Statters Field off Burton Lane. **Objection received. Referred to Secretary of state for determination. Public enquiry in preparation.**
3. **Chesham** – Application to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map between Fair Leas and Asheridge Road. **Claim accepted. Legal order to be made.**

**B. DEFINITIVE MAP APPLICATIONS TO BE INVESTIGATED (DMMO)**

All Definitive Map Modification applications are dealt with in chronological order of receipt. However, we will prioritize certain applications under the following circumstances:

Summary:

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Applications received for Definitive Map Modification Orders	2	14	4	4	5	12	12	0
Application determined (accepted or rejected)					1		1 determined	4 (being prepared for determination)
Applications completed (order confirmed or not confirmed)					1	1		0

No data collected

Applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders	
Apps. waiting to be investigated	43
Apps. under investigation	8
Orders waiting to be determined by PINS	2

- I. The evidence in support (either fully or in part) of the application is that of User Evidence
  - II. There is a threat of development affecting the claimed route
  - III. If the evidence in support of the application is shared with another application within the chronological list and it would be efficient to investigate the applications concurrently
1. **Chepping Wycombe** – application to record route between public footpath No. 14 and No. 15 Parish of Chepping Wycombe. **Application dated 14 September 2015. Investigation not started; discussions are ongoing with developer regarding a potential Creation Agreement.**
  2. **Marlow** – application to record a public footpath from Cromwell Gardens to New Court. **Application dated 15 January 2016. Under investigation.**
  3. **Wooburn** – application to upgrade Public Footpath No. 3 between Princes Road Groves Close to byway open to all traffic. **Application dated 26 February 2016. Decision report being prepared.**
  4. **Hazlemere** - application to record various routes in the field adjacent to Public Footpath No. 8 and Public Bridleway No. 6, Parish of Hazlemere as Public Footpaths. **Application dated 23 April 2016. Decision report being prepared.**
  5. **Leckhampstead** - Application to upgrade Public Footpath No. 5 (part) to Public Bridleway and add a route which connects with No.5 as Public Bridleway. **Application dated 21 June 2016. Decision report being prepared.**
  6. **High Wycombe** – Application to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map between Pinewood Road and Public Footpath No. 93. **Application received 3 October 2017. Decision report being prepared.**
  7. **Stokenchurch** - Application to add routes to the Definitive Map at East Wood, Stokenchurch. **Application received 9 October 2017.**
  8. **Penn** – Application to add a route to the Definitive Map between Public Footpath No. 36 and No. 44. **Application received 19 December 2017.**

9. **Whitchurch** – 3 new applications received to add footpaths to the Definitive Map and Statement – Awaiting acknowledgement and addition to the register of applications.
10. **Whaddon** – application to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map between Whaddon Hall and Public Footpath No.6. **Application received 21 December 2018.**
11. **Buckingham** – application to add a Public Bridleway to the Definitive Map following the dismantled railway walk from the A421 to Tingewick Road. **Application dated 14 May 2019.**
12. **Chalfont St Peter** – application to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map at Windmill Farm connecting Public Footpath No 19 with Footpath no 55. **Application dated 17 July 2019.**
13. **Chesham** – application to add various routes south of Nashleigh Hill to the Definitive Map connecting with Public Footpath nos. 117, 37 and 67. **Application dated 27 August 2019.**
14. **Chesham** – application to add two routes to the Definitive Map from Lye Green Road connecting with footpath 37. **Application dated 27 August 2019.**
15. **Quinton** – application to upgrade public footpath No. 4 to public bridleway status. **Application dated 21 October 2014. Investigation not started.**
16. **Bledlow** – application to investigate the alignment of public footpath No. 52. **Application dated 19 December 2013. Investigation not started.**
17. **Hedgerley** – application to upgrade public footpath No. 11 and No. 12 to public bridleway status. **Application dated 25 June 2015. Investigation not started.**
18. **Whaddon** – application to modify the alignment of Public Footpath No. 6. **Application dated 4 February 2016. Investigation not started.**
19. **Lillingstone Dayrell** – application to upgrade Public Footpath No.1 to restricted byway status. **Application dated 15 February 2016.**
20. **Lillingstone Dayrell** – application to upgrade Public Footpath No. 2 to public bridleway status. **Application dated 15 February 2016.**
21. **Chenies** application to add Hollaway Road to the Definitive Map and Statement as a byway open to all traffic. **Application dated 29 February 2016.**
22. **Leckhampstead** – application to upgrade Public Footpath No. 13 and 18 to Public Bridleway and add a route as Public Bridleway. **Application dated 26 May 2016.**
23. **Water Stratford** – application to add a claimed bridleway to the Definitive Map and Statement, Parish of Water Stratford **Application received 27/03/2017.**

24. **Little Missenden** - application to upgrade bridleway No. 42 and bridleway No. 29 to restricted byway. **Application received 17/01/2020.**
25. **Little Missenden** - application to upgrade bridleway No. 26 to restricted byway. **Application received 19/02/2020.**
26. **Little Missenden** - application to upgrade bridleway No. 24 to restricted byway. **Application received 07/03/2020.**
27. **Little Missenden** – application to upgrade bridleway No. 25 to restricted byway. **Application received 15/03/2020.**
28. **Water Stratford** – application to add a claimed bridleway to the Definitive Map and Statement. **Application received 1/05/2020.**
29. **Chesham** – application to add a footpath between Hill Farm Road and Pump Lane to the Definitive Map and Statement. **Application received 27/01/2020.**
30. **Denham** – application to add public footpath from Priory Close to Alderbourne Field. **Application received 23/10/2019.**
31. **Waddesdon** – application to upgrade a footpath and claim public bridleway through Eythrope Park. **Application received 7/12/2020.**
32. **Dinton with Ford and Upton** – application to add public footpath between Burgess Lane and footpath No. 53. **Application received 21/12/2020.**
33. **Dinton with Ford and Upton** – application to add footpath between Watery Lane and Moreton. **Application received 21/12/2020.**
34. **Great Marlow** – application to add public footpath around perimeter of Wycombe Air Park – **Application received 21/12/2020.**
35. **Marlow** – application to add public footpath off Liston Road. **Application received 20/12/2020.**
36. **Little Missenden** – application to add public footpath from Parish Piece to Watchet Lane. **Application received 03/03/2021.**
37. **Radnage** – Application to add Public Bridleway from Bottle Square Lane to Bowers Lane. **Application Received 17/05/2021**
38. **Chesham** – Claimed Footpath off Pednor Road. **Application received 21/06/2021**
39. **Dinton with Ford and Upton.** Upgrading to a restricted Byway, Water Lane to Marsh Hill Lane. **Application received 9/08/2021**

40. **Dinton with Ford and Upton.** Claimed Restricted Byway and Upgrading to a Restricted Byway, Moreton Road to Moreton Lane. **Application received 9/08/2021**
41. **Stone with Bishopstone and Hartwell and Great and Little Kimble** – application to add public bridleway from Moreton Lane, Bishopstone to Marsh Hill Lane, Great Kimble. **Application received 14/09/2021.**
42. **Stone with Bishopstone and Hartwell** – application to upgrade part of footpath no. 28 to public bridleway – **Application received 14/09/2021.**
43. **Little Marlow** – application to add public footpath around Roach Lane. **Application received on 02/12/2021.**
44. **Little Marlow and Marlow** – application to add public footpath along A404. **Application received on 02/12/2021.**
45. **Little Marlow/Marlow** – application to add public footpath along Crowne Plaza. **Application received on 02/12/2021.**
46. **Little Marlow/Marlow** – application to add public footpaths, west of Westhope. **Application received on 02/12/2021.**
47. **Little Marlow** – application to upgrade footpath no. 20 to public bridleway. **Application received on 02/12/2021.**

**C. PUBLIC PATH ORDERS (PPO)** – decisions made by officers through their delegated powers.

Summary:

Applications for Public Path Orders	
Apps. waiting to be investigated	2
Apps. under investigation/Orders made	22
Orders waiting to be determined by PINS	5
Cases closed	5
Awaiting works by applicant	16

1. **Quarrendon** – Application to divert Footpath No. 2. **Order made, awaiting completion of works.**
2. **Dorney** – Creation of footpath. **Awaiting signed creation agreement.**
3. **Tingewick** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos. 29(part) and 31 and Stop-Up Footpath No. 30(part) and create new Footpath and Bridleway – **Order confirmed. Creation order to be made.**

4. **Weston Turville** – Application to divert Footpath No. 33 – **Order confirmed. Cycle Track Order Made. Objections Received, to be sent to PINS for determination**
5. **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.**
6. **Mursley, Swanbourne and Little Horwood** – Application to divert Public Footpaths No. 19, 20 and 27. **Awaiting completion of works on site.**
7. **Shabbington** – Application to divert Footpath No. 5 –**Due to developer error, order to be revoked and new order to be made.**
8. **Quarrendon** – Application to divert Footpath No. 3 & 4 – **Order to be made.**
9. **Chesham** – Application to extinguish part of the width of Footpath No. 114 – **Order made and objection received and being considered. CASE ON HOLD.**
10. **Aston Clinton** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos. 3, 4 and 6 under the Town and Country Planning Act – **Order made, confirmed awaiting works to bring into effect.**
11. **Stoke Mandeville** – Application to divert Footpaths Nos. 3 and 14 – **Order confirmed. Awaiting works.**
12. **Stewkley** – Application to divert Footpath No. 19. **Order confirmed. Awaiting works to be completed.**
13. **Beachampton** – Application to divert Footpath No. 12. **Order to be confirmed.**
14. **Tingewick** – Application to divert Footpath No. 25. **Order Made. Objections received. Under investigation by PINS.**
15. **Hambleden** – Application to divert Footpath No. 44. **Order to be Made.**
16. **Waddesdon** – Application to divert Footpath No. 7A. **Order Confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
17. **Buckingham** – Application to divert Footpath No. 36. **Order to be confirmed. Awaiting works.**
18. **Waddesdon** - Application to divert Footpath No. 18. **Order confirmed, awaiting works.**
19. **Wexham** - Application to divert Footpath No. 2. **Under investigation.**
20. **Westcott** - Application to divert Footpath No. 30. **Order made and objections received. Submitted to Secretary of State.**
21. **Bierton** - Application to divert Footpath No. 3. **Order confirmed. Awaiting works.**

22. **Fulmer** - Application to divert Footpath No. 2. **Under investigation.**
23. **Stoke Mandeville** – Application to divert Footpath No.3. **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
24. **Buckland** – Application to divert footpath No. 7 – **Order made. No Objections. Awaiting Works**
25. **Cuddington** – Application to divert footpath no 13 – **Order made. Objection received. To be referred to Secretary of State.**
26. **Wingrave** – Application to divert footpath No. 11 – **Order Confirmed. Awaiting works to be brought into effect.**
27. **Great Missenden** – Application to divert footpath No. 70 – **Order to be made. Objections received. Submitted to Secretary of State.**
28. **Stone with Bishopstone and Hartwell** – Application to divert footpath No. 23-2 – **Order made. Awaiting works.**
29. **Little Horwood** – application to divert footpath No.4 – **Order Confirmed.**
30. **Chalfont St Giles/Chenies** – application to divert bridleway No.43 and 5 – **Order made. Awaiting works.**
31. **High Wycombe** – application to divert footpath No. 59 – **Order confirmed. Awaiting works to be brought into effect. Additional footpath creation agreed.**
32. **Oakley** – application to divert footpath No. 29 – **Order Made. Objections Received.**
33. **Winslow** – cycle track order to be made – **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
34. **Chalfont St Peter** – diversion of footpath No. 14 – **To be considered.**
35. **Kingsey** – diversion of footpath No. 1 – **Order to be revoked and remade.**
36. **Steeple Claydon** – creation agreement connecting existing footpath with Queen Catherine Road – **Creation Agreement completed. Awaiting works.**
37. **Steeple Claydon** – diversion of footpath No. 6 – **Order to be made.**
38. **Stoke Mandeville** – Extinguishment of Footpath No.8 & 10 – **Order Made. Objection Period.**
39. **Cholesbury-cum- St Leonard** – creation and extinguishment of footpath no. 48A – **Order to be confirmed.**

- 40. **High Wycombe/Hughenden** – creation agreement off Brands Hill Avenue – **In consultations.**
- 41. **Radnage** – Diversion of Footpath No.5 – **Objections received from User Groups in Consultation.**
- 42. **Kingsbrook** – Diversion of Footpath No.1 – **Investigation not started**
- 43. **Wing** – Diversion of footpath No. 29C – **Order confirmed. CASE CLOSED.**
- 44. **Oakley** – Diversion of footpath No. 7 – **Order to be confirmed.**
- 45. **Worminghall** – Diversion of Footpath No.2 – **Order to be made.**
- 46. **Maids Moreton** – Diversion of Footpath No.3 – **Investigation not started.**
- 47. **High Wycombe** – footpath creation off Abbey Barn Lane with Berkeley homes – **Agreement created, to be signed.**
- 48. **Great Horwood** – bridleway to be created off A421 – **Order to be made.**
- 49. **Brill** – Diversion of Public Bridleway No. 2 – **In consultation.**
- 50. **Lacey Green** – Diversion of Public Footpath No. 48 – **Under investigation.**

**D. VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATIONS**

Summary:

Applications for Village Greens	
Investigation on hold	1
Under investigation	4

- 1. **Wooburn** – land off Cherwell Road, Bourne End. **Investigation not started. On Hold.**
- 2. **High Wycombe** – land off Warren Wood Drive. **Advertised – objections received.**
- 3. **Princes Risborough** – land at corner of Shootacre Lane and Picts Lane. **Advertised – objections received.**
- 4. **Chesham** – land in Lye Green. **Advertised – objections received.**
- 4. **Stoke Hammond** – land at Layton Road. **Advertised – objections received.**



## E. Strategic Access Update

5. The **Aylesbury Gardenway** is a proposed orbital park and cycleway around Aylesbury, to include landscape enhancements, surfacing, greater public access, community benefits and environmental improvements knitting together existing and emerging communities around the town. A report and design brief of the nine delivery parcels is due to be completed imminently. It is expected that several of the Gardenway parcels will come forward through negotiations with developers and landowners. In addition, the government's 'levelling up' agenda is identified as a potential funding source as new bidding rounds open. The LAF will continue to be consulted and updated on this route. For further information visit: [www.aylesburygardentown.co.uk](http://www.aylesburygardentown.co.uk)
6. The **Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** (LCWIP) will be a county-wide walking and cycling strategy, developed by the Transport Strategy Team. It will establish a high-level walking and cycling network across the Council area and identify future investment priorities for walking and cycling infrastructure in Buckinghamshire. Engagement activities will be undertaken as part of the development of the LCWIP. It is anticipated that public consultation on a draft version of the LCWIP will be undertaken later in 2022/2023.
7. The **High Wycombe Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan** (LCWIP) focuses on High Wycombe and its links to surrounding settlements and is also being developed by the Transport Strategy Team. The LCWIP is intended to form a supporting plan to the High Wycombe Transport Strategy. The draft High Wycombe LCWIP and Transport Strategy will be consulted upon before being put forward for adoption as Council policy. Consultation timescales are currently being confirmed.
8. The Chiltern Society's **Donate-a-Gate** partnership scheme with the council has seen 6 new donors since the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 LAF meeting, bringing the total to 470 donors and 619 gates. The first tranche of Gift Aid money has been used to fund 5 new gates east of Amersham College.
9. The **Ramblers Donate-a-Gate** project The North Bucks RIPPLE team have recently engaged with Brill parish council's chairman in their efforts expand work replacing stiles with gates, seek more private income and finding willing landowners to take part.

## F. ROW OPERATIONS UPDATE (Joanne Taylor)

- 1 **The current staff structure** allows for 6.5 FTE staff: Currently in post we have: 1 Rights of Way Team Leader, 2 Area RoW Officers, 2.6 Assistant RoW Officers and 1.5 Bridge Structure Inspectors, with extra resource for Capital Project works.
- 2 **BVPI Rights of Way Condition Survey** –the 5% network survey is being carried out this winter [2021/22] and results will be collated as soon as possible.
- 3 **Capital projects update: List of current Rights of Way capital projects**

Route No. & Parish	Works	Stage
Claydon Bridleways	6 plastic Bridges	Completed
Denham Bridleway number 52	Large equestrian bridge replacement	Design Engineer engaged- remove broken bridge winter – full replacement spring/summer 2022
Fawley Footpath No 12 Bridge Replacement	Accessible bridge to replace landowner's structure	With the Landowner
Waddesdon Footpath 10	Sluice bridge renovation	Completed
Marlow - Thames Path	Surface works and bridge renovation	2021 work complete. Assessment of 2022 works underway
Wendover Ridgeway	Clearance and resurface works	Bacombe completed BW47 underway
Chesham FP114	Resurface 60 M	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Chartridge BOAT 38A	Resurface 100 M	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Chartridge BW 20A	Level and resurface 150 M	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Cholesbury-cum-St Leonards BW51	Insert Channel Drains	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Gt Marlow BW23	Level and resurface 150M	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Pitstone FP2	Adjust surface levels 60M	Completed
Westcott BW26	Level and resurface 90M	Completed
Halton FP8A	Adjust surface levels install handrail 150M	Completed
Taplow BW2	200-400M of clearance and surface works	Project scoped – contractor engaged
Hambleden FP28	Approx. 200M missing handrail	Completed
Wing FP19	9.5 M footbridge replacement	Completed
Vale Bridges	3 x larger footbridges to replace in AV area	Completed (additional bridges found)
Chalfont St Giles BW60	Resurface works	Awaiting badger licence
Buckland FP7	Drainage issue/surface	Completed
Denham BW46	Resurface works	Held
Marsworth FP8	Resurface works	Held
Stokenchurch BW7A	Resurface works	Held

<b>Little Missenden - Featherbed Lane BW24</b>	<b>Resurface works</b>	<b>Held</b>
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- 4 **Fawley Bridge** - in December 2019 the landowner installed a temporary replacement structure. Discussions are still ongoing regarding replacement of this bridge with a wider structure.
- 5 **Winter Clearance** - clearance works reported by the public including winter clearance works will continue over the autumn and winter.
- 6 **Summary of Maintenance** – see APPENDIX 1.

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**Buckinghamshire Council - Rights of Way  
Summary of Maintenance Carried Out  
Between 1/04/19 and 11/02/22**

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	Aprl 19- Mar 20	Aprl 20- Mar21	1 Aprl21-Feb22
Alignment	Path Off Line - resolved issue	31	19	25
Clearance	Clearance - carried out-jobs/km	149/361	120km/345	120km/368interim
Bridge	Installed or repaired	78	81	57
Finger/post	Installed or repaired	163	119	118
Fly Tipping	Fly Tipping - removed	49	38	43
Gate	Gate repaired or installed	104	79	130
Intimidation+animal/per	Intimidation - resolved	22	35	24
Intimidating sign	Misleading Sign - removed	8	28	25
Obstruction - resolved	Barbed wire	16	22	31
Obstruction - resolved	Barrier - Fencing, wall or other	115	143	145
Obstruction - resolved	Electric fence	15	44	24
Obstruction - removed	Fallen Tree	276	269	258
Obstruction - resolved	Locked Gate	6	6	4
Obstruction - resolved	Ploughing and Cropping	129	113	65
Other	Delivery of materials	43	20	26
Other	Miscellaneous issues resolved	103	163	131
Stile	Installed or repaired	177	177	200
Stile	Stile To Gap	16	22	13
Stile	Stile To KG	50	39	40
Stile	Stile To PG	52	62	48
Terrain	Bank Steps	9	12	4
Terrain	Path Surface problem resolved	57	55	81
Waymark Post	Installed/Repaired	167	167	175
Issues Signed off		2047	2071	2035
Volunteer Hours	The Chiltern Society	1305	TBC	TBC
Volunteer Hours	Iver Volunteers	38	TBC	TBC
Volunteer Hours	RA Only	1160	TBC	TBC
Improvements	To aid mobility access	222	202	231
5% Survey Results	Paths Rated easy to use	65%	75%	68%interim
5% Survey Results	Structures rated easy to use	88%	94%	92%
5% Survey Results	Routes with Roadside Signs	94%	94%	91%
Number on Database	No. of issues os 31/03/12	799		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/16	1531		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/17	1114		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/18	1498		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/19	1740		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/2020	2450		
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 31/03/2021		3100	
Number on Database	No. of Issues os 11/02/2022			3180
Priority A issues	No of Issues recd/dealt with		212/182	117/158
Priority B/C issues	No of Issues recd/dealt with		2337/1709	1825/1709
Priority D (low)	No of Issues recd/dealt with		142/107	93/175
% of issues in targ time	Category C issues on Matrix	74%	tbc	tbc
% of issues in targ ave.	% Enf issues in targ time in mth	74%	tbc	tbc

**Above includes****Volunteer Jobs Completed**

Clearance direct from BCC	85/15km	61/20km	87/5km
Miscellaneous Jobs	24	9	17
Waymarking and signs	78	59	132
Gates Repaired and installed	105	4	63
Bank Steps			
Stiles replaced and repaired	16	18	20
Trees removed	17	17	4
Total Jobs	325	168	323
Hours	2472	tbc hours	tbc hours

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## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

# Report

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### AGENDA ITEM 7

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Title:** LAF members' report

**Author:** Jonathan Clark, Strategic Access Officer

**Contact Officer:** Rebecca Binstead (01296 585244)

1. **CROW Act Open Access consultation on 5-year review proposing to maintain restrictions for shooting (Wayside Farm, Bledlow Ridge) and restricting walkers to a fenced, permissive path when grazing with cattle & calves (Chawley Manor Farm, West Wycombe).**

In September 2021 Natural England sought Local Access Forum comments regarding the existing land management restrictions on two parcels of land along Bledlow Ridge and whether they were still necessary. These included Wayside Farm and Chawley Manor Farm and in reply the chairman wrote to Natural England [Appendix 2]. The Wayside Farm restriction has now been granted. However, a second consultation commenced on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, with a closing date of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022, for Chawley Manor Farm only [Appendix 3]. The LAF have secured a response deadline extension to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and additional comments are sought. The consultation map is enclosed in Appendix 4, but for clarity, it has been requested the 'marked route' is moved off the scrub corridor and relocated slightly south-west of the road.

The second consultation is an improvement on the former proposal and takes into account the LAF's September 2021 comments. Should the current proposal be acceptable, walkers generally would have unrestricted access to the whole open access parcel and would not be required to stick within the fenced-off corridor of scrub when cows were present. However, walkers with dogs should, all times keep dogs on a lead and stick to the marked route. This simplifies the restriction and reflects the unmanageable situation keeping on top of the scrub growth.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/natural-england/open-access-restriction-at-chawley-manor2nd/>

**2. The 2026 cut-off date introduced by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000; and Definitive Map Modification Orders determined by the Planning Inspectorate under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1980.**

Following members resolution in July 2021 to make representation regarding the 2021 cut-off date and concerns regarding resources with the Planning Inspectorate to deal with outstanding DMMO's, a letter was sent to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Appendix 4). The Secretary of State's reply is included in Appendix 5.

**3. National Trust Open access works**

Neil Harris is managing Ash dieback works on open access land. Their teams are currently working behind the Manor at Bradenham, then moving back to areas at Small Dean, Wendover. The felling works at West Wycombe have been completed, short of chipping brash piles and hauling timber away.

**4. Local Access Forum Annual review [April 2020 – March 2021]**

This is for members to note at Appendix 6.

**5. Venue and dates of next meetings**

The Gateway, Gatehouse Rd, AYLESBURY HP19 8FF

13<sup>th</sup> July 2022; and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.



## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

*The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.*

5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Mr Morris,

### **Wayside Farm and Chawley Manor Farm Open Access Restriction consultation**

Thank you for inviting comments from the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum on the above restrictions. This response is a summary of members' written representations as our meeting schedule falls outside Natural England's consultation period.

Members' concerns relate to: 1) overgrowth along the fenced-off permissive footpath; and 2) the necessity to segregate cows from the public.

We acknowledge the site's remoteness which reflects the relatively low public use. However, there seems no sense applying a restriction to use the permissive path while it remains overgrown and inaccessible. It would only be viable if the landowner agrees to mow it regularly, otherwise there is no reason for it.

The cows and calves are only likely to be grazed for part of the year and their presence shouldn't be a reason to deter or restrict public access, just for people to be aware of their presence. It seems unlikely people will use the site for open access purposes when cows are grazing as they are a natural deterrent, and we believe the vast majority of the site's use is as a through-route between roads. For these reasons we disagree there is a need to segregate cows and public from sharing the same space.

Members certainly accept they do not want the public on the land when there is a shoot in progress.

Yours faithfully,



Richard Pushman (Chairman)

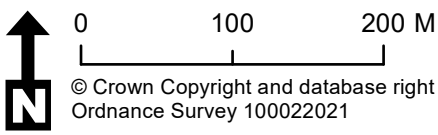
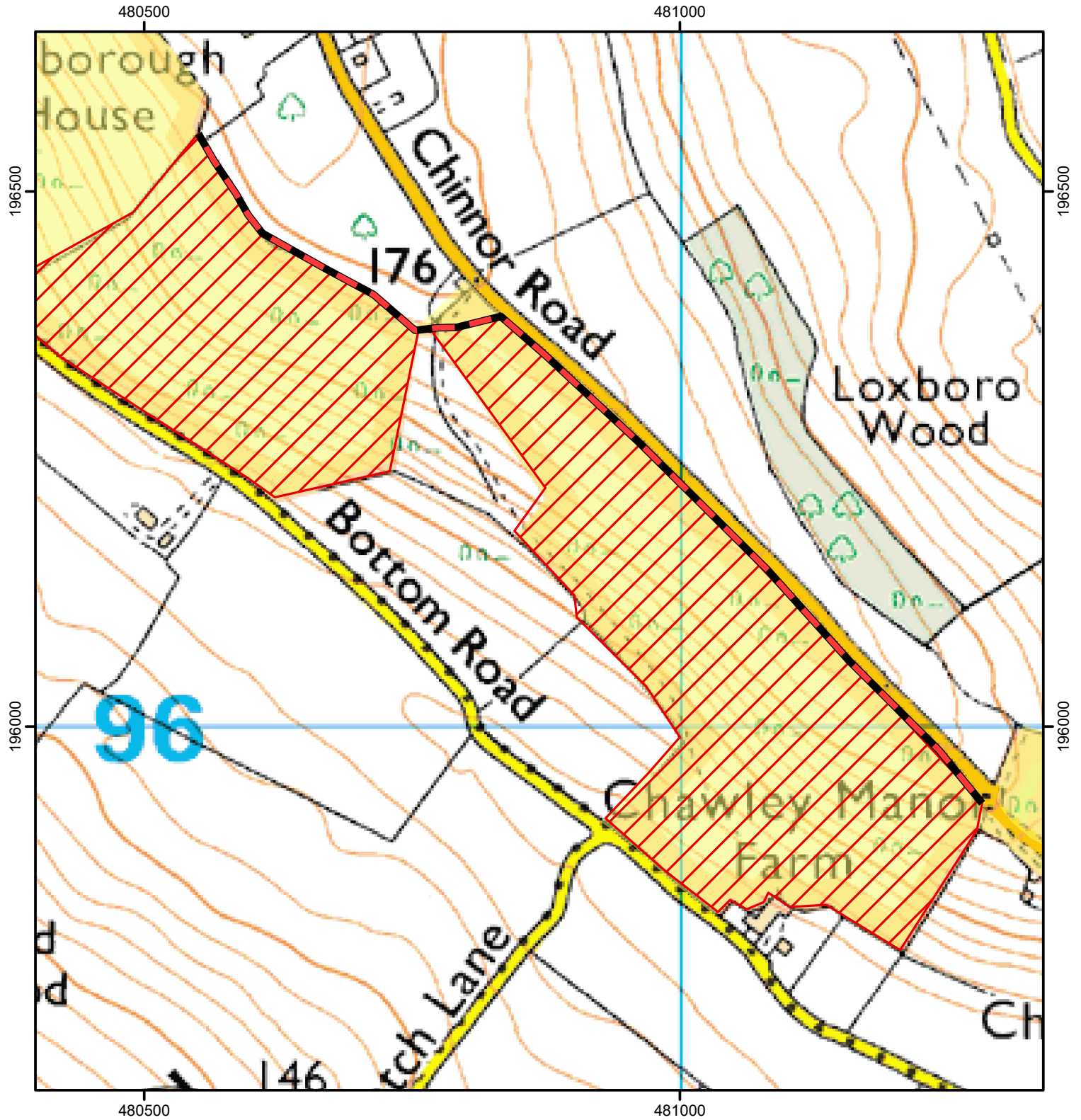
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# CROW Open Access Restrictions: Consultation





Case Number: 2012026254 - Dogs to lead on marked route

Consultation end date: 23rd February 2022



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-  CROW Consultation
-  CROW Access Land



For more information call the Open Access Contact Centre on 0300 060 2091 or visit our website at [www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/use-your-right-to-roam](http://www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/use-your-right-to-roam)

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## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

*The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.*

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

18<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Michael,

**The 2026 cut-off date introduced by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000; and Definitive Map Modification Orders determined by the Planning Inspectorate under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1980.**

At the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 meeting of Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum (LAF) members discussed the current situation regarding the 2026 cut-off date for historical evidence to determine Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO's).

In 2015/16 the Buckinghamshire LAF co-ordinated the training of over 100 volunteers to investigate evidence in advance of the 2026 cut-off, but the vast majority were intimidated by the complexity of the process and time commitments, so relatively few applications have materialised. The eventual number of applications submitted before the 2026 cut-off could be insufficient to address the number of valid claims in the county, at least at current rates. With this in mind, we believe the 2026 cut-off should be reviewed with a view to being extended, as we understand the legislation allows.

It also came to light that a DMMO's referred to PINS by Buckinghamshire Council was submitted over 12 months ago, with no indication when it might be addressed. While we are reassured DMMO's submitted to local authorities prior to the 2026 cut-off date will be valid, there is a concern resources at national level may be insufficient to address DMMO's when referred to PINS for a decision.

Byways and bridleways in Buckinghamshire are particularly fragmented and one of the main tools for reconnecting the network for cyclists and equestrians is through the DMMO process. Any delays in the DMMO process lengthens the time the network is disconnected, which is a concern to the LAF.

Some applicants in Buckinghamshire have applied for a Schedule 14 direction from the Secretary of State when no decision has been made by the local authority for over 12 months, but no process is in place for delays at national level. We therefore seek reassurance that resources are in place at PINS to address DMMO cases in the coming years, otherwise there is a risk the public's confidence in the system will be eroded.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Pushman', written in a cursive style.

Richard Pushman (Chairman)



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

*Department for Levelling up, Housing and  
Communities*

The Planning Inspectorate, 3A Eagle Wing,  
Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple  
Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN

Richard Pushman  
Chairman  
Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum  
Umtata  
Naphill Common  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP14 4SZ

Tel: 0303 444 5466  
Fax: 020 7035 0018  
Email:  
annie.owen@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dluhc

Our Ref: 12867922

Date: 23 November 2021

Dear Richard

Thank you for your letter of 18 October 2021 to the Right Honourable Michael Gove MP, regarding the 2026 cut-off date introduced by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 and Definitive Map Modification Orders and schedule 14 directions determined by the Planning Inspectorate. As my team deal with opposed orders and schedule 14 appeals and directions your letter has been passed to me for reply.

The Planning Inspectorate determines public rights of way orders, schedule 14 appeals and requests for directions under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 on behalf of the Department of Environment Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra). Whilst I can appreciate why you have requested that the cut-off date be extended, this is not within the remit of the Department of levelling Up, Housing and Communities and you should put your request to Defra. The contact details for Defra can be found here;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

I am sorry there has been a delay in processing and determining the order and schedule 14 direction you refer to. As a result of the national restrictions during the past 18 months to control the pandemic we have been able to process and decide fewer orders and schedule 14 direction cases. We now have more cases waiting for a decision than before the pandemic and recognise that some customers are waiting longer for their decision than we would like. We have put measures in place to deal with the current delays and we are working hard to decide more cases and reduce the length of time it takes to make decisions.

We keep the number of orders and schedule 14 cases we receive under review and liaise with Defra over expected forecasts, so we can try and ensure resources are in place to process cases within target. We have recently trained more Inspectors to undertake Definitive Map Modification Orders and schedule 14 appeals and directions and are hoping to undertake a recruitment of Inspectors who will specialise in this area of casework in the spring.

We are therefore hopeful that we will have cleared most of the backlog by early summer and be in a good position to deal with any orders and schedule 14

appeals & directions we receive as a result of the pending 2026 cut-off date in line with our targets.

Yours sincerely

*Annie J Owen*

Annie J Owen  
Operations Team Leader Defra Team



## Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum - Annual Review 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

### Virtual meetings

23<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020 & 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2021

Chairman - Richard Pushman

Vice-chairman - David Briggs

### Membership

Elected councillors Alan Turner and Nick Naylor joined as new members following Buckinghamshire's move to a unitary council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. Otherwise, membership remained stable.

Total number of LAF members = 14, consisting of members ...

- representing users of public rights of way and access land = 7

*British Horse Society*

*Ramblers*

*British Driving Society [Beds, Bucks & Herts]*

*Cycling UK*

*Disabled Ramblers*

*Trail Rider's Fellowship*

*Chiltern Society*

- representing owners and occupiers of access land = 3

*Country Land & Business Association*

*Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust*

*National Trust*

- representing other interests = 4

*Buckinghamshire council elected members [2]*

*Parish councils*

*Independent*

### Impact of Covid-19

Due to Covid-related meeting restrictions, the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 meeting was postponed to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 and held a virtual format. With the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 meeting following so closely it was cancelled. The 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 meeting was also held virtually.

While members found it useful to maintain continuity of LAF business and scrutiny of the council, many felt the virtual format was no substitute for meeting in person, with some unfamiliar with the technology or unable to join the meeting. Normal, pre-Covid arrangements therefore resumed at a new venue in the council's Gateway offices in Aylesbury on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

### **Improving public access: making a difference**

The LAF member for the British Driving Society met regularly with the Ridgeway Delivery Group to support and coordinate improvements along the National Trail.

The LAF member for the Chiltern Society helped design the diversion route for the Chiltern Way through the HS2 works south of Wendover in consultation with the contractor EKFB.

LAF members for cycling, horse riding and disabled users wrote to The Department for Transport in reply to the government's review of The Highway Code to improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders.

The LAF member for the British Horse Society and Regional BHS Officer [who attends LAF meets as a guest], met with HS2 to discuss continued, long-term bridleway provision around Calvert landfill. Discussions were also held regarding bridleway widths and surfaces and alterations to the design of HS2 bridge parapet.

The LAF member for the British Horse Society and Regional BHS Officer lobby Sustrans and the council to ensure equestrian users are accommodated in all new cycleway routes and landowner negotiations, including the proposed new cycleway by HS2 through the Chilterns, between Frith Hill, Great Missenden and Nash Lee Lane, Wendover.

### **The Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030**

Buckinghamshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was adopted in April 2020. A priority for 2020/21 was to shape production of the ROWIP Action Plan; one of the LAF's statutory roles. This document translates the aims and objectives of the main ROWIP into a timetabled list of delivery targets. The LAF contributed positively by advising the council on reporting timescales; a list of priorities; and likely delivery partners, including from those organisations represented on the Forum. The council's highways board approved the 2020 and 2030 ROWIP Action Plan in December 2020

### **Scrutiny**

Local Access Forum's comments and advice were sought on the evolving Gardenway Project, part of the Aylesbury Garden Town initiative. The Gardenway will be a circular, 18km-long liner park of connected green spaces around Aylesbury, aiming to encourage play, active travel, healthier lifestyles and outdoor leisure, as well as attracting wildlife. Two LAF members joined the Gardenway advisory group to input on route choice and design. Members stressed that bridleway status should be designated where possible along the Gardenway to accommodate horse riders, which should then inform surface choice and widths.

The LAF commented upon a renewal application for a Public Spaces Protection Order in Desborough Road, High Wycombe and wrote to the council expressing their views following a 6-1 vote in favour of renewing the order.

A standing item for Definitive Map team updates allow members to monitor progress and provide advice on workloads and priorities. This year members were appraised of significant temporary East West Rail and HS2 closures lasting respectively to 2023 and 2025.

The LAF sought reassurances regarding changes following the council becoming a unitary authority, such as the continued support of the LAF and the dissolution of the Rights of Way Committee. The LAF would continue as normal and Officers were confident that delegated powers, which replaced the Rights of Way Committee, would result in greater efficiency in determining Definitive Map Modification Orders. Options and the Service Director would oversee decision-making in many cases.

Concerns were raised regarding the apparent slow turnover in determining Definitive Map Modification Orders and the backlog which included applications from 2016. This was due to staff shortages, but in any case, a new method of tracking progress of applications would be reported at each LAF meeting.

A standing item for Maintenance & Enforcement allows members to oversee capital project delivery such as major bridge construction and surfacing schemes. Results are also presented on the bi-annual 'easy to use' volunteer survey results, undertaken using Best Value Performance Indicator [BVPI] methodology. A maintenance and improvement summary is also presented allowing members to monitor progress on items such as signpost and gate installations and enforcement issues resolved or outstanding.

This year also saw an increase in reported issues following the launch of the new, easier to use, online reporting system, on which the LAF provided useful

feedback. When combined with significant increases rights of way use and loss of volunteers during lockdown, this led to pressures on resources and increases in enforcement related issues..

### **Priorities for the year ahead**

- Oversee the ROWIP Action Plan Year-1 report;
- Provide input on the increased number of proposed cycleways; and
- Continue to maintain partnerships with the outside groups maintaining our access networks

### **Comments from the appointing authority**

There remains a well-balanced and well-informed membership to make good decisions and provide valuable advice to the council. There is broad range of skills and knowledge on countryside matters.

Members hold the council to account, challenging priorities and decision-making. Meeting attendance is generally good and supported by cabinet members and committee staff, but there was an inevitable drop off with members unfamiliar with Microsoft Teams technology.

The LAF have been supportive and positive to the rights of way teams when commenting on the pressures resulting from increased use during Covid and reduced staff and volunteers involved in maintenance.

We continue to enjoy use of a 'speech to text' reporter to support members hard of hearing and ensure accurate minutes.

### **Comments from the Chairman**

This concludes my fourth year as chairman and a great many thanks to members for their continued support. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in virtual meetings and few were comfortable using the technology, but we were pleased to keep the show on the road.

While an increase in number of users on the rights of way network in 2020 was welcome, it had to be balanced against reports of misuse, impacting negatively on those working on the land. The Chiltern Society and Ramblers volunteer effort ceased during the main pandemic restrictions, but we were able to welcome them back in 2021. The result of their absence was a noticeable difference on the ground with lack of maintenance. However, I am

confident ground can be made-up next year due to their excellent work and commitment.

The main work of the Forum this year oversaw the production of the ROWIP 2020-2030 Action Plan, which I'm delighted to say has been published. We look forward in the coming years to overseeing delivery and recommending priorities throughout the 10-year lifetime of the Action Plan.

We enjoy good support within the council's committee structure for administration, and cabinet member attendance is both reassuring and welcome.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Pushman', written in a cursive style.

Richard Pushman (Chairman)

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