



## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

# Report

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### AGENDA ITEM 6

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Title:** LAF members' report

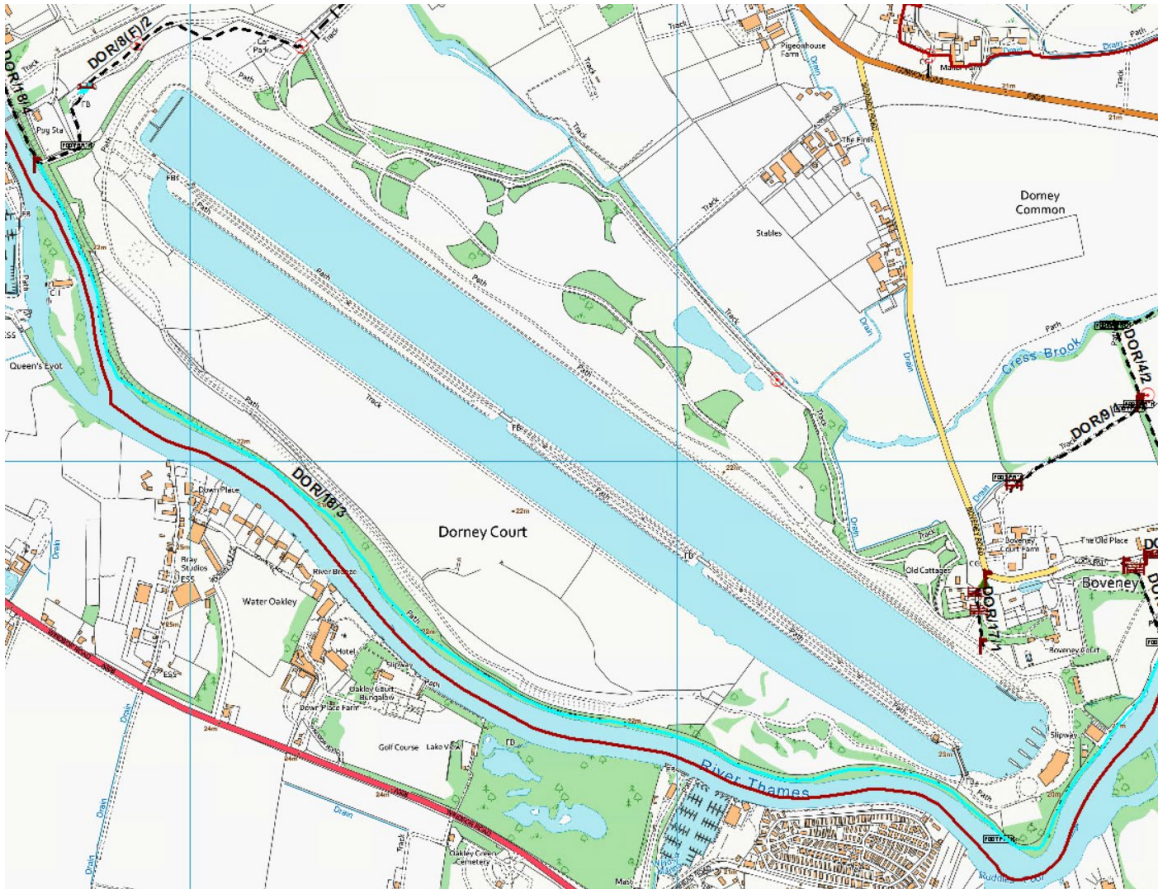
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#### **1. Eton Rowing Lake Public Access**

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead [RBWM] Local Access Forum have approached the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum via the ROW team regarding a matter their members have been raising at their meetings.

The issue relates to permissive footpaths that allow the public access around Eton Rowing Lake, in the vicinity of Dorney Parish Footpath No. 18 (DOR/18/3). These permissive paths – and DOR/18/3 - were closed over the COVID-19 period due to anti-social behaviour; a practice that appears to have continued around the permissive paths during the rowing season (spring/summer each year). Currently, access is only available along DOR/18/3 for pedestrians and with permissive access for cyclists all year round, restricted along the permissive paths during the autumn and winter.



The RBWM LAF raises concerns that closing these links during busy periods and organised events discourages people from recreational walking choices, but also walking and cycling to the rowing lake which then leads to increased traffic on local roads affecting both Dorney and Eton Wick residents. This traffic issue appears to be further impacted by the presence of vehicles bringing boats to the lake for their meetings.

The RBWM LAF requests Buckinghamshire's Local Access Forum support them in advocating for the paths to remain open all year for the benefit of public access and reducing road congestion. These paths are on private land, so there is nothing that can be done in the manner the council might act if these were recorded public right of way.

## **2. Centre for Outdoor Accessibility Training [COAT]**

This is specialist access centre, enabling countryside access managers to test a wide range of accessible gates and mobility equipment.

The COAT team at Aston Rowant have offered the Buckinghamshire LAF an 'away day' and suggested four dates in April 2024 to guide members around.

The visit would be free of charge, unless extras, like mobility scooters, are needed [Buckinghamshire Council can't contribute to the cost at present]. Gavin from the Disabled Ramblers may be able to attend to demonstrate the challenges of passing through gates on his scooter, such as those operated by a RADAR key.

### **3. Ridgeway Partnership**

Ridgeway Officer, Sarah Wright, moved onto pastures new on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024. She has been in post for some 8 years and has made a great contribution to the trail, culminating in the 50th Anniversary celebration which did so much to raise the profile of the Ridgeway. I am sure everyone at the Bucks LAF will join the rights of way team passing on our thanks for her hard work taking care of one of Buckinghamshire's most treasured assets. No doubt her successor will brief the LAF regularly on work surrounding the Ridgeway.

### **4. British Horse Society membership**

Following Alison's retirement from the Forum in November 2023, she has been seeking a local BHS member to put forward for the council to consider recruiting as her replacement. We are waiting to hear.

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

Venue: Paralympic Room, The Gateway, Gatehouse Rd, AYLESBURY HP19 8FF.

Dates: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 & 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024.