

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 15th JUNE 2010

DRAFT LAF ANNUAL REPORT

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

Introduction from the Chair

To be confirmed

Peter Thorn

Chairman of the Local Access Forum.

What is a Local Access Forum?

The Local Access Forum (LAF) is a statutory advisory body set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to provide advice to the Council and other organisations as to the improvement of public access to land for open-air recreation and recently under new guidelines, improvement of public access to land for any lawful purpose. This widens the Forum's remit and allows it to consider issues such as utilitarian routes to/from urban areas etc.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum was formed in April 2003, and seeks to achieve a balance of views between 'user interests' such as walking, cycling, horse riding, carriage driving and recreational motor use; landowner and land management interests; other interests including local government, education, and environmental interests.

The vision statement of the Forum is "a partnership to promote and develop sustainable access for the growing benefit of the environment and all in our community".

Since June 2002 the Royal Borough has had its own LAF Officer based in Maidenhead within the Public Rights of Way Team; Andrew Fletcher is the main point of contact for Local Access Forum matters, and can be contacted on 01628 683800 or prow@rbwm.gov.uk.

Membership of the Forum

The forum is expected to achieve a reasonable balance of members' interests. The current membership of the Local Access Forum is listed below.

Name	Representing	Other interests
Dorothy Allard	Land & Estate Management	
Guy Badman	Cycling Interests	
Teja Bains	Running	Public Rights of Way, Countryside Access
Cllr. Malcolm Beer	RBWM Councillor	Walking; Cycling; Caravanning; Member of Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve Management Committee; Rights of Way
Margaret Bowdery	Walking	East Berks Ramblers' Association; Disabled Access; Cycling; Conservation; Marketing
June Brayne	White Waltham Parish Council	Parish Paths Initiative
Mike Bruton	Disabled Users	RBWM Councillor; Disabled Rambling; Access for the Disabled; Is involved with Countryside Access on a national level
Bill Cathcart	Land & Estate Management	Crown Estate; Windsor Great Park; Management of Trees in Open Spaces
James Copas	Land & Estate Management	
Margaret Cubley	Walking, Open Spaces	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Bisham Parish Council
Loren Eldred	Land Management	Woodland Trust
Hilary Essen	Walking, Health Issues	
John Foulger	Walking	Open Spaces; Rights of Way; Bray Parish Council
Christine Gadd	Sunningdale Parish Council	Rights of Way; Walking; Cycling
Harry Hancock	Walking, Open Spaces	Mid Thames Ramblers
Gordon Harris	Footpaths, Cookham Parish Council	Open Spaces
Helen Howard	Horse Riding	Bray Parish Councillor; Member of The British Horse Society and British Dressage
Cllr. Asghar Majeed	RBWM Councillor	
Andrew Randall	Land & Estate Management	Chairman of Royal Berks. Agricultural Association
Cllr. John Stretton	RBWM Councillor	
Peter Thorn (Chair)	Land Management and Education	Estate Management; Management of the Countryside; Management of Education and Training
Chris Westacott	Land & Estate Management	Public Rights of Way

Meetings of the Forum

The Local Access Forum meetings for 2009-2010 were as follows:

- 30th June 2009, Desborough Suite 2&3, Town Hall, Maidenhead
- 4th October 2009, Site visit to Millennium Walk Missing Links (Informal Meeting)
- 4th November 2009, Site visit to Millennium Walk Missing Links (Informal Meeting)
- 1st December 2009, Desborough Suite 2&3, Town Hall, Maidenhead
- 18th March 2010, Desborough Suite 2&3, Town Hall, Maidenhead (Extraordinary Meeting)

Activities of the Forum

Milestones Statement

The forum were consulted on the Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Report 2010-2011, and in particular recommended that the Council current target for the repair or replacement of bridges at 5 for the coming year, reduce the target for the removal or replacement of stiles to 20, and increase the target to resolve enforcement issues to 40 for the coming year. The Forum also recommended that the Council seek to work closely with the Parish Councils to resolve enforcement problems.

Local Transport Plan

The forum held an extraordinary meeting on 18th March 2010 to discuss the Local Transport Plan 3 Stakeholder Consultation. The Forum held workshop sessions and a wide variety of points and issues were raised by the Forum to feed into the considerations and decision making process.

Stile Removal Priorities

The forum discussed the issue of stiles along Public Rights of Way and the target to remove or replace stiles with more accessible structures, and following these discussions the East Berks' Ramblers were asked by the forum to provide the Council with a list of stile removal priorities.

Thames Path National Trail

The forum continued to monitor the discuss issues along the Thames Path National Trail, maintaining involvement and support of efforts to improve this valuable resource.

Millennium Walk

The Forum also continued to monitor the progress towards the creation of the Millennium Walk, and held two informal site meetings with Council officers to the missing links to discuss the project. A variety of suggestions and recommendations were made by the Forum to help resolve problems which are now being progressed.

Other issues that the LAF discussed:

- Outstanding claims and potential lost paths
- LAF Fast Response Team
- Disabled Access Priority Routes

- Development and improvement of the operation and effectiveness of the forum.
- Development and Improvement of the LAF website and the Public Rights of Way website

Finances

	Room	Refreshments	Total Cost (£)
Room Booking:	-	-	
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Other Expenses:			
Subscription to “Waymark” - 2009			236
Members’ Expenses:			
Dependent Care	-	-	-
Mileage	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-
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Grand Total			£236.00
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How to get involved

For more information about the Local Access Forum and how you can get involved, visit the Local Access Forum web pages at http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/local_access_forum.htm, or contact Andrew Fletcher, Public Rights of Way Officer on (01628) 683800 or email pro@rbwm.gov.uk

Plans for the coming year

To be updated following discussions by LAF on 15th June 2010.