

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 7 JUNE 2012

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MONITORING REPORT

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the forum about the status of projects on the LAF regular monitoring list

2. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

(a) Millennium Walk

One of the priorities set out in the “Milestones Statement 2011/12, is to “*Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk.*”

Missing link between Footpath 18 Hurley and Footpath 20 Bisham (Speen Hill)

As members will be aware the new footpath was opened on 12th May.

Missing link between Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail

Discussions are currently taking place with the landowners on a proposal to create a new public footpath from Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path. As well as filling a “missing link” in the Millennium Walk (which runs across the north of the borough from the Thames at Hurley to the Thames north of Maidenhead), this footpath will provide a useful new link to the Thames Path and a link in various circular routes based around the Thames Path and the Green Way.

A funding contribution of £50,000 towards the cost of creating the new footpath has been secured through a S.106 Planning Agreement relating to re-development of the former ‘Stiefel Laboratories’ site off Lower Cookham Road. However, it should be noted that this funding will not become available until commencement of the development, and implementation of the footpath project is therefore dependent upon the timing of the development.

As in previous years, a route across this land was made available by the landowners for the annual Maidenhead Boundary Walk, which took place on 8th October 2011.

Any further update on the discussions currently taking place with the landowners will be provided orally at the meeting.

(b) Volunteer works

The Council continues to engage and work with local volunteer groups to undertake path works. To this end the Council has worked closely with the The Conservation Volunteers (formerly BTCV) and the Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers (WMCV).

Most recently the WMCV undertook revetment repair works along Bisham Footpath 4 which runs along the banks for a steep hill. The works involved placing planks and stakes into the ground on one side of the path, and digging and backfilling along the path to restore a level surface and widen the path. The materials were sourced by the Council and delivered on site for the day. In total the group repaired

approximately 45 metres of path. Further works are planned along the route in June, July and August, depending on the groups availability. An article has been submitted for the 'Around the Royal Borough' magazine to be distributed to all residents shortly.

Further works planned for the summer include building further steps along Bisham Footpath 3 with The Conservation Volunteers.

In addition to this, the Council has continued to work closely with the East Berks Ramblers with respect to path surveys and occasionally maintenance and signage works. A menu of volunteer works is being prepared to enable them to choose more projects that they may wish to undertake.

A report detailing the works undertaken is attached as Appendix A.

(c) Multi-use paths

At the last meeting on the 13th December 2012 the forum decided to put together a working party to take forward proposals for converting cycle tracks into multi-use routes which would allow horse riding use. In particular the forum recommended a trial of a multi-use route at the Jubilee River cycle tracks at Eton and Eton Wick.

Following approval of the proposal by the Council's cycle forum, a working party was put together consisting of the following people:

- Sara Church (RBWM LAF & British Horse Society)
- Helen Howard (RBWM LAF)
- Peter Thorn (RBWM LAF Chair)
- Harry Hancock (RBWM LAF Vice Chair)
- Hilary Essen (RBWM LAF & East Berks Ramblers)
- Alison Adcock (British Horse Society)
- Peter Challis (Sustrans)
- Sue O'Brien (RBWM local resident)
- Jacqui Wheeler (Slough Borough Council)
- Sharon Wootten (RBWM)
- Andrew Fletcher (RBWM)

The working group met in March 2012 and put together a proposal for a 1 year trial along Eton Wick and the Jubilee River, using land mainly under Eton College ownership. A plan was subsequently developed and submitted to Eton College for approval. The consent of the Environment Agency would also be needed for the part of the route that uses the Jubilee River paths.

Any further update will be provided orally at the meeting.

(d) LAF website & online forum

The new version of the Local Access Forum website was published following approval by the forum on the 13th December 2012.

A new website has been developed to provide an easy way for all members to propose and comment on ideas and current developments with the Local Access

Forum, it also allows those members who find it difficult to attend the formal meetings to still contribute to the excellent work of the forum.

The new site contains the following features:

- Simple, easy to use web pages
- Forum allowing members to post and reply to topics of interest, and share files.
- News announcements and Events calendar, with details of all LAF related events. Using this feature members of the site can be informed easily of recent news and can be invited to the events and the site can track RSVPs to these invitations
- Photo gallery and files archive
- Email archive
- Contacts information for all members.
