

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 3 DECEMBER 2013

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MONITORING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the forum about the status of projects on the LAF regular monitoring list and to seek the forums advice regarding the members' discussion forum.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

(a) Easy Going Routes

The Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route has now been published and copies are available in the Borough's main libraries as well as at the Town Hall reception. The enhanced web pages have are available at:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_wgpegr.htm

The web pages follow a similar format to the Cookham Easy Going Route pages, and contain a downloadable copy of the leaflet, as well as a 'virtual tour' walkthrough which will allow users with particular access concerns to view the route in detail and decide whether it would be suitable for them. Due to space constraints a large amount of text had to be cut from the finished leaflet, this contained most of the historical and descriptive text about features of the park that was provided by the Crown Estate. This expanded text has been included in the Windsor Great Park web pages.

(b) Public Rights of Way Information Booklet

The new version of the Public Rights of Way Booklet has now been published and is available at the Town Hall, in the Maidenhead and Windsor libraries and direct from the Public Rights of Way Team. The leaflet is also available to download from the public rights of way web pages.

The Council very much appreciates the support and contribution of the forum in creating this leaflet. The new format is much easier to understand, and the electronic version contains easy links within the text to additional information, application forms and other leaflets.

Copies of the leaflet will be available at the meeting.

(c) Volunteer works

The Council continues to engage and work with volunteer groups. In 2013 the public rights of way team has worked with the Conservation Volunteers (formerly BTCV) and the Community Payback Scheme (CPS)

Most recently the TCV have rebuilt a set of steps along Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 15 at it's junction with Milley Road, and have continued their work along

Bisham Footpath 3 building steps along into the steep hill over which this path runs, and have installed additional lengths of handrailing. There are now a total of 42 steps along the hill at the steepest point, and the group receives very good feedback from local path users when they undertake the work.

The TCV volunteer works were funded through a small grants scheme operated by the Council, and the Public Rights of Way team were offered, and used, 5 work days paid for under this scheme. The cost of the materials needed for the works was be funded by the Council.

The Public Rights of Way team have continued working with the Council's Community Safety team to organise path works via the Community Payback Scheme (CPS). Since the last forum meeting works have been arranged with the CPS to undertake a large degree of clearance of Eton Bridleway 22 from South Meadow Lane towards the Thames. This path has been overgrown for some time, but as there is a surfaced cycle track at the other side of the viaduct it has been treated as a lower priority as the cost of clearance would outweigh the public benefit. The use of CPS hours to clear this path enabled it to be partially re-opened without impacting the public rights of way clearance budget.

Unfortunately the Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers were not able to offer any work days this year but it the Council does wish to work with them again in 2014.

(d) LAF members' discussion forum

The LAF online forum is found at <http://groupspaces.com/rbwm-laf/>. This forum is designed to facilitate communication and discussion between the forum members in between the formal meetings and forum members are encouraged to contribute and be engaged with the site.

Currently the forum is heavily dependent on officer support to operate but it is hoped that the LAF online forum will help the forum to become more active and independent.

Some increased use of the site has happened since the last meeting, but the 'take up' amongst forum members still appears to be very low. The forum's opinion and advice is sought as to how to take this forward and how best to facilitate discussion and interaction between members in between formal LAF meeting dates.
