

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD  
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY: 6-MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT**

AUGUST 2010 - MARCH 2011

**1. ENFORCEMENT**

**1.1. Problems closed and problems reported**

Approximately 41 enforcement problems have been closed during the period August 2010 to February 2011 and approximately 26 new problems were reported during that period. On February 1<sup>st</sup> there were **200** outstanding enforcement problems recorded on the rights of way database, **18** fewer than on August 1<sup>st</sup> when there were **218** problems recorded (summary at Annexe A).

Examples of cases that have been closed over the reporting period:

<b>Path</b>	<b>Date Reported</b>	<b>Problem</b>
Bray Footpath 25 (off Forest Green Road), 52, 53 & 54 (Fairacre Farm)	22/10/2010 25/10/2010	Path had been ploughed and not reinstated. <i>Path marked out satisfactorily by landowners following contact by PROW team</i>
Cookham FP 25 (off Dean Lane)	14/01/2005 02/03/2007	Intimidating bull sign erected on path. <i>Signs removed by PROW team and letter sent to landowners.</i>
Cookham FP 54 (off Mill Lane)	25/08/2010	Unauthorised horse use. <i>"No Horse Riding" signs installed</i>
Cox Green FP 8 (off Thrift lane)	18/11/2010	Damage to path surface by farm vehicles. <i>Path reinstated by landowner</i>
Maidenhead FP 48 (Bath Road to Altwood Road)	23/06/2009	Barbed wire dangling over path <i>Barbed wire removed by landowner.</i>
White Waltham FP 15 (off Littlefield Green Road)	06/12/2010	Intimidating bull in field <i>Bull removed from field immediately as a precaution by farmer.</i>
Wraysbury FP 8C (Old Ferry Drive to the Thames)	23/06/2004	Ditching arising and junk metal dumped on path. <i>Path has now been cleared by landowner and dividing fence installed to prevent further dumping and encroachments.</i>
Wraysbury FP 8C (Old Ferry Drive to Fairfield Approach)	07/10/2010	Path blocked by palisade fencing and dumped woodchips. <i>Path re-opened and cleared by landowner.</i>

## 2. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

### 2.1. Problems closed and problems reported

Approximately 281 maintenance problems have been closed during the period from August 2010 to February 2011 and approximately 94 new maintenance problems were reported during that period. On February 1<sup>st</sup> there were **145** outstanding maintenance problems recorded on the rights of way database, **187** fewer than on August 1<sup>st</sup> when there were **332** problems recorded (see summary at Annexe A).

Examples of projects that have been completed over the reporting period:

Bray BR 64 (Cruch Lane)	Surface improved with new trial wood product
Bray FP 61 (off Oakley Green Road)	Surface improved
Bray FP 16 (off Long Lane)	Bridge repairs (x2)
Cookham FP 48 (The Green Way)	Steps repaired and improved
Cookham FP 54 (Thames Path off Mill Lane)	Surface improvements
Hurley FP 30 (off Honey Lane)	Surface improved
Hurley FPs 4 and 5 (Frogmill Farm)	Bridge repairs (x2)
Maidenhead FP 39 (off Pinkney's Road)	Surface improved
Maidenhead FP 22 (Garrets Lane)	Major clearance works
Maidenhead FPs 23A & 23B (off Laggan Road)	Clearance works to improve sightlines/safety
Maidenhead BR 46 (Muddy Lane)	Major clearance and tree works
Sunningdale FP 3 (off Bedford Lane)	Surface improved
Sunninghill FP 1 (Church Path)	Drainage and surface improvements
Sunninghill FP 5 (off Church Lane)	Boardwalk and surface improvements
Sunninghill FP 9 (off London Road)	Surface improvements to tarmac steps

### 2.2. Works due to be carried out

The following projects are scheduled to be carried out in the next 2 to 3 months:

Sunninghill RB 27 (Buckhurst Lane)	Surface improvements
Maidenhead FP 19 and Cookham FP 48 (The Green Way)	Improvements to footbridge approaches/ramps
Eton FP's 1 and 33 (The Thames Path)	Surface improvements

## **2.3 Use of recycled and reused materials**

One of the priorities set out in the “Milestones Statement 2010/11”, approved by the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel in March 2010, is to *“Maximise the use of recycled and reused materials in rights of way maintenance where practicable.”*

In furthering this objective, two initiatives currently being progressed are the use of reprocessed wood product as a path surfacing material (using Cruch Lane in Bray and Uncles Lane in Waltham St Lawrence as pilot projects), and the use of a recycled plastic product for signposts and waymark posts as an alternative to metal or wood.

The surfacing improvements at Cruch Lane and Uncles Lane have been well received by walkers and horse riders. The woodchip surface has settled well to provide an easy to use surface, and provided that a sufficient depth of material is laid it is felt that the trial has been successful. As the cost of this product is less than half the cost of surfacing a similar length with alternative material such as stone or road planning’s, it is intended that the product will be used again on other suitable routes as the need arises.

Further investigations are being carried out into suppliers of recycled plastic products for signposts and waymarking posts.

## **3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH EAST BERKS RAMBLERS**

### **3.1 Condition surveys**

Local volunteers from the East Berks Ramblers (EBR) carry out regular inspections of the public rights of way network, based on a rolling programme of surveys in Spring and Autumn each year. This provides the Rights of Way officers with valuable information by helping to identify problems on the ground or areas where there may be scope for improvements. The Council pays EBR a grant of £1000.00 per year (administered through the Parish Paths Initiative) as a contribution to the running costs of this project. The information obtained from these surveys will also be used to compile the annual performance indicator that measures the percentage of public rights of way that are easy to use.

### **3.2 Removal of stiles and other access improvements**

The Rights of Way Officers are working closely with the East Berks Ramblers on priorities for stile removal projects and other access improvements.

During the period August 2010 to March 2011 access improvements were made on the following footpaths:

Bray FP 18 (off Long Lane)	1 stile replaced with kissing gate
White Waltham FP 18 (south of Drift Road)	Kissing gate installed
Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 13 (Mire Lane to Plough Lane)	4 stiles replaced with medium mobility kissing gates and swing gates, and minor repairs to 1 bridge.
Waltham St Lawrence FP 34 (off Hungerford Lane)	Access to 3 bridges improved
Eton Footpath 3 (Bell Farm Stables off Common Road)	5 stiles replaced with medium mobility kissing gates.

### **3.3 Signposting and waymarking**

During the past six months a concerted effort has been made by the Public Rights of Way team and the East Berks Ramblers to resolve all outstanding signposting and waymarking problems in the borough. The Council has replaced over 100 missing or damaged signposts and the Ramblers have replaced approximately 30 missing or damaged waymarks during this period.

## **4. DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT**

### **Definitive Map Modification Order applications (path claims) currently being investigated**

#### **4.1 Shottesbrooke claimed footpath 501(Pundles Lane)**

A Definitive Map Modification Order application received in May 2007 was refused in February 2010. The claimed footpath runs from Shottesbrooke Footpath 12 to Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 38.

The applicant has appealed against the Council's refusal of the claim, and the case has been referred to Planning Inspectorate, who deal with rights of way appeals on behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

#### **4.2 White Waltham claimed footpath 501 (land at Ffiennes Farm, Littlewick Green)**

A Definitive Map Modification Order application received in August 2008 was determined in July 2010. The claimed footpaths run from White Waltham Restricted Byway 4 (School Lane) southeast to and around a small copse, then northwards to White Waltham Footpath 9. The application has been partly accepted and partly refused: an Order has been made for the paths to

and from the copse, but the applications for the paths through the copse have been refused.

Objections have been received to the Order and the case is to be referred to the Planning Inspectorate who deal with rights of way appeals on behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

#### 4.3 Wraysbury claimed footpaths 501 to 505

Five Definitive Map Modification Order applications were received in June 2009 for footpaths crossing land at Thamesfield, north of Wharf Road, Wraysbury. A Village Green application has also been received for the land crossed by these claimed footpaths, and the Village Green application is being processed first before the footpath claims are investigated further.

#### 4.4 Cox Green claimed Footpath 501

A Definitive Map Modification Order application was received on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2009 to add a footpath running from Culley Way to Farmers Close. This application is currently being investigated.

### **5. CHANGES TO THE NETWORK**

#### 5.1 Waltham St. Lawrence Footpath 25 (Billingbear Park)

A Diversion Order application has been received for the diversion of part of Waltham St. Lawrence FP 25. The application, which is currently being processed, seeks to divert the legal line of the footpath to follow the line already used by the public, and will include surface improvements and removal of a step-stile which can cause access difficulties for some path users.

### **6. PARISH PATHS INITIATIVE (PPI)**

The Royal Borough continues to operate the Parish Paths Initiative (PPI). All parish and town councils in the borough are members of the scheme. The British Horse Society, East Berks Ramblers and National Trust are also members. Annual grants are paid to Cookham and Old Windsor Parish Council's who organise path clearance works in their parishes.

Over the past six months the PPI has carried out some surface improvements in Sunninghill, Hurley and Cox Green, made access improvements in Cookham, White Waltham and Bray, and carried out bridge improvements in Waltham St Lawrence. The project has also worked with the National Trust to further improve the accessibility of paths on Cockmarsh in Cookham.

## **7. ACCESS TO ETON-DORNEY LAKE FOR 2012 OLYMPICS**

The section of the Thames Path between Windsor and Dorney has been identified for surface improvements to enable improved access for walkers visiting Eton-Dorney Lake for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The project, which is funded by the Olympic Delivery Authority, will also involve surface and signage improvements on other walking and cycling routes to the venue, including Green Lane through Braywick Park, and is being progressed in partnership with Bucks County Council, Slough Borough Council and Sustrans.

## **8. MILLENNIUM WALK**

One of the priorities set out in the "Milestones Statement 2010/11", approved by the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel in March 2010, is to "*Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk.*"

### **8.1 Missing link between Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail**

Discussions are taking place with the landowners and the Environment Agency 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.

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

A permitted path agreement has been negotiated between the Berkshire College of Agriculture and East Berks Ramblers for a new permitted footpath

across land owned by the College, emerging onto Henley Road opposite an existing footpath across Temple golf course (Hurley FP 20).

Due to poor sightlines at the Golf course entrance, it is proposed to construct a short roadside footpath to enable walkers to cross at a safer point along the road.

A budget of £19,000 has been allocated from the 2011/12 capital programme to progress with this project (this sum includes partnership contributions of £1,750 from the East Berks Ramblers and £750 from Maidenhead Civic Society.)

## **9. PUBLICATIONS**

### Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2005-2015

The Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan is part of the Borough's Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (now rolled forward to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012).

The Improvement Plan was published in 2005 as a requirement of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Plan was produced following wide ranging consultations, and identifies a range of potential improvements to the public rights of way network. Annual updates are published as part of the Milestones Statement.

### Milestones Statement 2011/12

The Milestones Statement & Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan review for 2011/12 is being submitted to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The document reviews progress made on public rights of way work in the previous year sets out a range of targets and objectives for the current year.

### Borough Website

The Public Rights of Way section of the website contains comprehensive information about public rights of way in the borough, including contact details, problem report forms, downloadable leaflets, registers of path claims, and Highways Act landowner declarations. A copy of the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way is also available on the website.

The following publications are now available on the website:

- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2005-2015
- Milestones Statement 2010/11
- 6-Monthly Path Progress Reports (past two editions)

- Public Rights of Way information booklet
- Public Rights of Way: gardens, hedges and trees leaflet
- The Green Way
- Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit
- Ascot and Sunninghill Circular Walks
- Cookham Bridleway Circuit
- Foot and Cycle Paths in and around Datchet
- Holyport Health Walk
- Cookham Easy Going Route
- Waltham St Lawrence Parish Paths and Circular Walk Leaflet
- White Waltham Parish and Paths Leaflet

Current projects include the development of a Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route leaflet in partnership with the Crown Estate and development of the Cookham Easy Going Route web pages, including a 'walkthrough', with a selection of informative photographs and more detailed information on accessibility for people with restricted mobility.

The public rights of way web pages can be found at:  
[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow\\_index.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_index.htm).

## **10 LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

The Local Access Forum was set up in 2003 to advise the Council on improvement of public access to land in the Royal Borough for open-air recreation, as required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Forum has adopted the following vision statement: *“a partnership to promote and develop sustainable access for the growing benefit of the environment and all in our community”*.

The forum membership is listed at Annexe C. The Forum currently meets twice a year, with additional informal meetings or site visits as required. The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Forum held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010 are included in Annexe D.

A list of Forum members, and downloadable minutes, agendas and annual reports are available on the Local Access Forum web pages at:

[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow\\_local\\_access\\_forum.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_local_access_forum.htm).

Anyone interested in applying to join the Forum should contact the LAF Secretary, Andrew Fletcher (01628-796122).



## ANNEXE A

### Reported problems on Public Rights of Way in the Borough

	Outstanding at 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2010	Reported 1 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2010 to 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2011	1st August 2010 to 31st Jan 2011 closed	Total Outstanding at 31st Jan 2011
<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>				
Ploughing and lack of marking	2	5	7	0
Obstruction by crops	1	0	1	0
Fence encroachment	37	1	2	36
Fence obstruction	7	3	3	7
Building obstruction	3	0	0	3
Other obstructions	32	2	8	26
Stiles	49	0	5	44
Gates	10	2	0	12
Bulls/ other animal problems	0	0	0	0
Unauthorised use by horses	5	1	2	4
Unauthorised vehicular use	4	5	2	7
Electric fencing	2	0	1	1
Misleading notices	1	0	1	0
Intimidation	0	1	1	0
Overhanging vegetation	26	2	4	24
Other Enforcement Problems	39	4	7	36
<b>TOTAL ENFORCEMENT:</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>				
Vegetation	19	19	21	17
Rutting	6	0	2	4
Drainage	15	2	7	10
Fallen trees	2	25	20	7
Erosion	26	6	11	21
Tree problems	7	4	6	5
Bridges	29	1	6	24
Safety barriers	8	0	1	7
Steps	2	0	1	1
Roadside signposting	49	11	52	8
Signposting at path junctions	56	3	53	6
Waymarking	48	6	45	9
Rubbish/ waste	7	5	8	4
Other Maintenance Problems	58	12	48	22
<b>TOTAL MAINTENANCE:</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>345</b>

## ANNEXE B

### PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 OUTSTANDING CLAIMED PATHS

FEBRUARY 2011

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	Path description		Comment
			From	To	
Shottesbrooke	FP 501	2007	Shottesbrooke FP 12	Waltham St Lawrence FP 38	Claim dismissed 2010, but appeal pending
White Waltham	FP 501	2008	White Waltham RB 4	White Waltham FP 9	Order made July 2010, to be referred to Planning Inspectorate following objections.
Cox Green	FP 501	2009	Culley Way	Farmers Close	Claim awaiting determination
Wraysbury	FP 501-505	2009	Various paths at Thamesfield		Claims awaiting determination

No formal applications have been received in respect of the paths listed below, however they were included in a list of paths submitted to Berkshire County Council by the Ramblers Association in 1977 following publication of the Draft Revised Map in 1976. These paths are therefore listed here for information only.

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	From	To
Eton	FP 502	1977	North end of Somerville Rd between numbers 23 and 25	FP 8 Eton
Eton	FP 505	1977	W end of Common Lane	Bell Lane at entrance to Bell Farm
Eton	FP 506	1977	Bend in FP46	Common Lane
Maidenhead	FP 508	1977	Moorfield Terrace	FP 4 Maidenhead
Maidenhead	FP 506	1977	Ray St	FP 4 Maidenhead
Maidenhead	FP 523	1977	Castle Hill	The Crescent
Wraysbury	FP 500	1977	Staines Road	River Thames

## ANNEXE C

### LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP

FEBRUARY 2011

Name	Main Interests
Peter Thorn ( <b>Chair</b> ) (Berks College of Agriculture)	Land management
Harry Hancock ( <b>Vice-chair</b> ) (Burnham, Bucks)	Walking, open spaces
Dorothy Allard (Shottesbrooke)	Land management
Teja Bains (Maidenhead)	Running
Councillor Malcolm Beer (Old Windsor)	RBWM Councillor, Old Windsor Parish Council, walking, cycling
Margaret Bowdery (Maidenhead)	Walking, East Berks Ramblers
Mike Bruton (Maidenhead)	Disabled rambling; access for disabled
Bill Cathcart (Crown Estate, Windsor)	Land management
James Copas (Maidenhead)	Land management / farming
Margaret Cubley (Bisham)	Bisham Parish Council, CPRE, walking, open spaces
Loren Eldred (Princes Risborough, Bucks)	Land management, Woodland Trust
Hillary Essen (Maidenhead)	Walking for health, East Berks Ramblers footpath warden.
John Foulger (Fifield)	Bray Parish Council, walking
Christine Gadd (Sunningdale)	Sunningdale Parish Council, walking, cycling
Gordon Harris (Cookham)	Cookham Parish Council, footpaths and open spaces
Helen Howard (Bray)	Bray Parish Council, horse riding
Councillor Asghar Majeed (Maidenhead)	RBWM Councillor
Julie Mason (Cox Green)	Strategy, Planning and Marketing
Andrew Randall (Maidenhead)	Land management / farming
Councillor John Stretton (Cookham)	RBWM Councillor
Chris Westacott (White Waltham)	Land Management/ farming

## ANNEXE D

### ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

30 November 2010

#### ATTENDANCE LIST

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest area</b>
Harry Hancock	Vice Chairman, Walking, Open Spaces
Paul Biddle	Land Management, National Trust
Margaret Bowdery	Walking, East Berks Ramblers'
James Copas	Land Management, Copas Farms
Margaret Cubley	Walking, Access Issues, CPRE & Bisham Parish Council
Hilary Essen	Walking, Health Issues, East Berks Ramblers'
John Foulger	Walking
Gordon Harris	Footpaths, Open Spaces, Cookham Parish Council
Julie Mason	Strategy, Planning & Marketing
Christopher Westacott	Land Management
Andrew Fletcher	Local Access Forum Secretary
Tanya Leftwich	Clerk to the Forum

#### OBSERVERS

Ray Sharp	Mid & West Berkshire LAF
Ann Darracott	Civic Society
Graham Brunsten	Maidenhead Rotary Club

#### APOLOGIES

Councillor Beer  
Councillor Stretton  
Dorothy Allard  
Bill Cathcart  
Loren Eldred  
Christine Gadd  
Helen Howard  
Andrew Randall  
Peter Thorn

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**30 November 2010**

**MINUTES**

**ACTION**

**1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest**

**Harry Hancock** welcomed everyone to the twenty-third meeting of the Local Access Forum.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Beer, Councillor Stretton, Dorothy Allard, Bill Cathcart, Loren Eldred, Christine Gadd, Helen Howard, Andrew Randall and Peter Thorn.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

The Forum approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 June 2010 subject to the following changes:

- ❖ Page 4 – Item 5: Hilary Hancock be changed to read ‘Hilary Essen’.
- ❖ Page 5 – Item 7: ‘*The Forum noted that photos of the exit to Westmead, the exit to Bass Mead and the swing gate near the Hippo Sculpture showed a long standing issue where the landowner had modified the gates to stop repeated alleged motorbike trespassing.*’

**2 Membership Update**

**Andrew Fletcher** welcomed two new members to the Forum, Julie Mason (Strategy, Planning & Marketing interest) and Paul Biddle (Land Management, National Trust). **Paul Biddle** explained that whilst his interest in the forum remained strong his free time was very limited and he therefore intended to handover responsibility for attendance to his assistant Ranger once the post had been filled in January 2011.

**Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that two members had resigned, Guy Badman and June Brayne. It was noted that Guy Badman had taken up new employment and could no longer attend meetings. Members noted that there were currently 21 and 1 members of the Local Access Forum. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that Guy Badman would be sent a thank you letter for all his hard work to show that it had not gone unnoticed.

**Andrew  
Fletcher**

**3 Members' Update**

**Margaret Bowdery** explained that earlier this month she had had the privilege of representing the Ramblers at a Reception given by Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at Windsor Castle. **Margaret Bowdery** went on to explain that she had the opportunity of meeting Tourist Officers, Council Officers and various people from the farming community. It was noted that **Margaret Bowdery** had been impressed to find that footpaths and access were not only considered a tourist benefit but an economic necessity in some rural areas. **Margaret Bowdery** went onto inform the Forum that she had also been amazed by the huge sums of money that some people were able to secure for new paths and trails. It was noted that **Margaret Bowdery** had come away fired up with enthusiasm and wondered how the Forum could convince the Council that rights of way were not just a financial millstone but a valuable tourist asset which needed adequate funding for maintenance and improvements.

**Margaret Cubley** explained that she was in attendance as a representative of the Cookham Society. It was noted that Margaret believed that as Cookham was a tourist trap she felt the introduction of a children's wind in the willows trail comprising of 15 minute, 30 minute and one hour walks would be beneficial.

**Gordon Harris** informed the Forum that a new walk through Cookham, the ‘Berkshire Loop’ of the existing ‘Chiltern Way’, had been set up by the Chiltern Society and extended 200 miles from the Cookham Bridge to the Henley Bridge. It was noted that

this walk had been officially opened in October

**Andrew Fletcher** explained to the Forum that the Rural Forum had met, which Anthony Hurst had attended. **Chris Westacott** explained that the Forum had discussed crime in the countryside and the lack of broadband in certain areas. It was noted that someone from BT would be invited to present at the next Rural Forum meeting.

#### 4 **Public Rights of Way Funding & Resources**

**Margaret Bowdery** informed the Forum that for a long time she had suspected that ROWIP projects were being ignored when S.106 money was being distributed. Margaret stated that it had been a developer who had confirmed that no request had been made for funds for the Millennium link to the Thames, despite the fact that the development ran alongside the proposed path.

**Margaret Bowdery** went on to explain that she had recently been informed by **Andrew Fletcher** that no bids for S.106 money had been made for the missing link in the Thames Path at Bridge View, despite this being part of an ongoing project since 1988.

**Margaret Bowdery** explained that **Andrew Fletcher** had also given her the S.106 agreement detailing the funding secured from the Miller Homes development which provided £38,000 to move the Ada Lewis Fountain into the centre of Bridge Gardens. As the development lies very close to Bridge Gardens, she believed it would have been logical to use some of the £594,000 for highways secured in the agreement to move the Thames Path to the riverside.

The Forum was informed that all that was required of the developer was to provide a 3m wide footway along the frontage of the development site on the A4 Bath Road which could be shared by cyclists. **Margaret Bowdery** went on to explain that on the 7 August 2009 Councillor Majeed had assured Theresa May that the Council would pursue any opportunity to create a continuous riverside route in association with redevelopment in the area. It was noted that Theresa May was further assured on 17 February 2010 that if the Thames Path link over White Place Farm could not be achieved, then the money would be spent on the missing link at Bridge View. It was noted that officers had previously decided that the site was too far away but instead were prepared to spend it on improved footpath access along York Stream. **Margaret Bowdery** explained that she believed the possible benefit to town centre pedestrians should not have been given a higher priority than the safety of thousands of walkers using the Thames Path National Trail.

**Margaret Bowdery** explained that she had just learned that another Council had opened up many new paths and trails with various grants, such as £3.71M from a Liveability grant, £2.85M from Local Action for Rural Communities and £2.6M of Leader Plus money. It was noted that **Margaret Bowdery** had been informed that the Council would have an online database of sources of funding to make bids through community partnerships and that there were funds available from the Heritage Lottery Fund for Local Authorities to cover the regeneration of parks including walks and promenades, footpaths and entrances.

**Margaret Bowdery** informed the Forum that the Cycle Forum had been granted £200,000 of the Olympic funding for routes to and from the Rowing Lake. It was noted that earlier this year £340,000 had been found to move cyclists off the A4 onto the pavement and **Margaret Bowdery** questioned why a much smaller amount could not be found to move the Thames Path National Trail walkers off the A4094.

**Harry Hancock** thanked **Margaret Bowdery** for her comments and asked **Andrew Fletcher** to respond.

**Andrew Fletcher** explained that the Forum had given advice previously to the Council regarding the creation of a path at Bridge Gardens to move the Thames Path National Trail promoted route next to the river. After considering this advice the Council at its meeting on 3rd August 2009, the Panel resolved that: *“The Council proceeds with the installation of road crossing facilities at Bridge Gardens, Ray Mead Road, subject to the outcome of a road safety audit and consultations with the local ward Councillors, and to pursue any opportunity that may arise to create a continuous riverside route, for*

*example in association with future redevelopment of the site or area.”* The local Councillors for Riverside ward had accordingly been consulted and had unanimously agreed they do not wish to proceed with the road crossing facilities.

With regard to grant funding for Public Rights of Way projects in general, **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to speak to the officer that dealt with grant funding and request some feedback with regard what sort of funding was available. It was requested that a presentation from the grant funding officer be presented at a future LAF meeting.

**Hilary Essen** stated that it was not easy to find the LAF page on the website as it was not listed or linked via the homepage. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to do some further investigation and if necessary add in a key word to the homepage.

**It was recommended that:**

- **More information/feedback be provided to the LAF with regard to grants available and bids being made.**
- **The procedures for Section 106 funding being made available for public rights of way projects be reviewed**
- **Alternative grant funding be investigated**

**Andrew Fletcher**

## **5 Milestones Statement and Targets 2011 – 2012 and analysis of the existing Public Rights of Way network**

The Forum was asked to look at the priorities, targets and service standards included in the Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2011/12 and provide comment. It was noted that comments or recommendations received from this meeting would be incorporated into a report which would be presented to the next Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel meeting on the 15 March 2011. It was noted that any additional comments for inclusion in the report should be made in writing to **Andrew Fletcher** by no later than the 31 December 2010.

**All**

The following comments/recommendations regarding the priorities were made:

- **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the targets for the coming year were subject to the same level of funding and resources being available, and that more information about resources would be available in January.
- **Harry Hancock** and **Margaret Bowdery** felt it was essential to keep the existing Rights of Way team in place whilst maintaining existing budgets.
- **Hilary Essen** stated that if the Royal Borough were to encourage healthy walking they needed an adequate footpath system in place.
- **Harry Hancock** felt that due to the tourist aspect and the importance of the forthcoming Olympics essential funding needed to be maintained for footpaths, in particular with regard to the health and safety aspect.
- **Christopher Westacott** believed there was limited help given to landowners and that it was unrealistic to expect the Council to fund footpath projects when there were other priorities such as education that needed to be taken into account.
- It was requested that better communication be made with ethnic minorities with regard to the location of public footpaths. It was suggested that this could possibly be achieved via the Councils website.
- **Christopher Westacott** suggested that in order to help cut costs where paths were blocked with crops landowners be approached and asked for footpaths to be trimmed following harvest time rather than requiring the paths to be cut before harvest time.
- It was hoped that dialogue with landowners and the Rights of Way team be improved in the future.
- With regard to cutting costs it was requested that the food and refreshments supplied at the meeting be stopped with immediate effect to which the majority agreed.

**Tanya Leftwich**

**It was recommended that:**

- **No change to the targets be made for the coming year.**
- **A letter be sent from the Forum to the Chief Executive, Ian Trenholm, urging that the existing staff and resources for public rights of way be**

maintained.

**Andrew Fletcher** agreed to email both **Christopher Westacott** and **Hilary Essen** a PDF copy of the outstanding public rights of way issues summary report.

**Andrew Fletcher**

**Harry Hancock** thanked **Andrew Fletcher** and his team for a job well done which was echoed by everyone present.

#### 6 Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route

**Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that one of the targets set out in the Milestones Statement 2010/11 was to produce a leaflet publicising opportunities to people with special needs.

**Andrew Fletcher** explained that the leaflet intended to publicise a number of routes within the Windsor Great Park for mobility restricted users. It was noted that the Council had worked in partnership with the Crown Estate office in order to develop a proposed Easy Going Route which utilised existing routes within the Great Park. The Forum was informed that a site visit had taken place on the 18 October 2010 which the Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum had also attended.

**Andrew Fletcher** explained that the Council aimed to publish the leaflet in the New Year, certainly by the end of March 2011. It was noted that some further work was required with regard to assessing the suitability of selected parts of the route and to clarify the extent of the facilities at the Fox and Hounds public house and find out what they were comfortable offering walkers.

The Forum noted the report and suggested that 'non-technical' language be used in the leaflets produced.

#### 7 Volunteer work on Public Rights of Way

**Margaret Bowdery** requested an update on progress **Andrew Fletcher** had made with volunteers via articles in the local newspapers and in the Around The Royal Borough newsletter.

**Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that he had already started to make contact with existing volunteer groups such as the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and had added to their bid vegetation clearance, ditch clearance, removal of stiles, minor bridge repairs and minor surface works. It was noted that the Public Rights of Way Team had also made contact the Anti Social Behaviour Team with regard to the community payback scheme and had provided a list of suggested work which was currently awaiting feedback. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that he was under the impression that the Probation Service supervised the people on the community payback scheme.

The Forum noted that **Andrew Fletcher** would also be making contact with the Braywick volunteers in addition to the Windsor and Maidenhead volunteers.

#### 8 Local Access Forum website

**Andrew Fletcher** explained that this item was designed to stimulate discussion about the LAF website and to seek the Forum's advice as to how the website could be improved and enhanced. It was noted that whilst neither website was felt to be perfect the LAF website needed the most work done to it. The Forum were informed that **Julie Mason** had developed a detailed and considered report on what she believed could be done to develop the website. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to work with **Julie Mason** to make changes to the LAF website in light of this report

**Andrew Fletcher**

**Hilary Essen** requested that **Andrew Fletcher** also look into improving the Rights of Way area on the website.

**Andrew Fletcher**

**Harry Hancock** requested that members reported any improvement or enhancement suggestions directly to **Andrew Fletcher** following the meeting.

All



## 9 Horse grazing issues

**Hilary Essen** informed the Forum that over the last few year's landowners had changed from managing arable crops to keeping horses which she did not find surprising during the current economic climate. The Forum noted in some cases this had resulted in fields being divided up into several paddocks to cater for different horse owners. Whilst in other cases fields were being used as exercise grounds for training horses. It was explained that if horses were regularly walking along the same routes as the public footpath this put a tremendous stress on the path whilst causing concerns for walkers. It was requested that landowners be asked to re-instate their land to the quality it was before the horses had been introduced. **Hilary Essen** explained that she believed a Code of Practice could prove to be useful and asked whether fellow members knew whether one had already been published by another organisation. **Hilary Essen** went onto explain that as well as knowing what was expected by landowners another advantage of having a Code would be to let landowners know that they were being treated equally.

**Hilary Essen** informed the Forum that she believed stiles had been added to land which were not up to the British standard and it was hoped that a request could be made about electric fences being used to segregate horses from path users as an alternative to using stiles. It was noted that paddock kits could be purchased for between £100-£200. **Hilary Essen** went onto explain that when the footpaths were diverted, changes should be discussed with the Public Rights of Way Team and signage be reviewed.

**Andrew Fletcher** thanked Hilary for her thoughts and went onto explain that he felt the Code of Practice for horse owners would not be correct approach to take and these issues were best dealt with on a case by case basis. **Andrew Fletcher** noted that if landowners were found to be encouraging the horses to walk on the path for example by introducing a trough on the path then this could then be treated as an enforcement issue.

**James Copas** stated that he would personally prefer a personal approach and for a verbal discussion to take place rather than being given a Code of Practice to adhere to.

## 10 Report from working group meeting: Public Rights of Way and Planning Applications

**Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that a sub-group had been formed and had met on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2010 to discuss Public Rights of Way and planning applications.

It was noted that the following actions were agreed at the meeting:

- The Public Rights of Way Team and the East Berks Ramblers will identify potential opportunities via the weekly list and pass them to Development Control. These opportunities must be closely related with the application.
- Anthony Hurst & Graham Stallwood to jointly review and update the Officers' Guide.
- Graham Stallwood to discuss with the lead member for Development Control the possibilities of highlighting Public Rights of Way as a particular constraint on Development Control Plans, and provide feedback to the Public Rights of Way team and East Berks Ramblers.

## 11 LAF Monitoring Items

### (a) Millennium Walk

**Andrew Fletcher** introduced the monitoring report and explained to the Forum that one of the priorities set out in the 'Milestones Statement 2010/11' was to seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk.

**Ann Darracott** also gave an update to the Forum regarding the status of the missing links.

**Andrew Fletcher** requested that members of the Forum speak directly to **Anthony Hurst** if they required any further information or had any questions.

12 **Appointing observers to neighbouring Local Access Forums & Date of Next Meeting**

**Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that Ray Sharp from the Mid & West Berkshire Local Access Forum was present as an observer at today's meeting. It was noted that observers helped the neighbouring boroughs keep in touch and it also gave them an insight into how other meetings were run. The Forum noted that **Harry Hancock** had volunteered to be an observer at the next Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum meeting. **Andrew Fletcher** stated that he would pass Harry's details over to the Buckinghamshire Forum so that he could be contacted directly.

**Harry Hancock**

**Andrew Fletcher**

**Ray Sharp** informed the Forum that the next Mid & West Berkshire Local Access Forum was due to take place on the 19 January 2011. **Andrew Fletcher** requested that volunteers to observe this meeting should be contacted.

**All**

The date of the next meeting of the Local Access Forum, once scheduled, would be advised by the Clerk of the Forum.

**Tanya Leftwich**

The meeting which started at 6.30pm, ended at 9.10pm.