

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

AUGUST 2011-FEBRUARY 2012

The total number of outstanding reported problems on the Public Rights of Way Network has been reduced from 304 to 259 during the six month reporting period.

1. ENFORCEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 31 st July 2011	Reported 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan. 2012	Closed 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan. 2012	Outstanding 1 st February 2012
Enforcement problems	183	28	37	174

Examples of enforcement cases that have been resolved during the reporting period:

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Bisham Footpath 21	22/08/11	Gates erected across the path. <i>Resolved: Gates removed by the landowner following formal Notice.</i>
Bisham Footpath 23	22/12/11	Trees fallen across path from neighbouring land. <i>Resolved: trees removed by landowner.</i>
Bray Footpath 19	19/09/11	Path ploughed and not reinstated. <i>Resolved: path reinstated by landowner.</i>
Eton Footpath 4	02/07/11	Crops blocking footpath. <i>Resolved: path reinstated by landowner following enforcement notice.</i>
Sunningdale Byway 4	05/10/11	Adjacent property has placed hedge cuttings onto byway. <i>Resolved: cuttings removed by landowner.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 29	07/11/11	Encroachment onto the path by hedge. <i>Resolved: hedge encroachment removed by landowner.</i>

2. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 31 st July 2011	Reported 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan. 2012	Closed 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan. 2012	Outstanding 1 st February 2012
Maintenance problems	121	76	112	85

Examples of maintenance and improvement projects completed during reporting period:

Cookham Footpath 48 (The Green Way)	Improvements to footbridge approaches/ramps
-------------------------------------	---

Hurley Footpath 63 (Mill Lane to Thames Path)	Surface improvements
Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 25 (Billingbear Park)	Surface improvements and stile replaced with gap/staggered barrier
Maidenhead Byway 70/Cookham Byway 20 (Malders Lane)	Surface improvements

Works due to be carried out

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

Hurley FP 59 (off the Thames Path)	Surface improvements
Cookham FP 60 (nr. Bourne End bridge)	Sub-standard gate to be replaced with easy access gate
Cox Green FP 11 (Ockwells Park)	Surface improvements
Bray FP 19 (off Blackbird Lane)	Stiles to be replaced with gates

Volunteers

Local volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) carried out the following projects on public rights of way in the borough during the period from 1st August 2011 to 1st February 2012.

Date:	Work carried out:	Number of volunteers
15/12/11 and 22/12/11	Vegetation clearance on the Thames Path in Windsor and Old Windsor (Windsor FP 10 and Old Windsor FP 2)	8 (15/12/11) 7 (22/12/11)
26/01/2012	Vegetation clearance on the Thames Path in Datchet (Datchet FP 8)	9 (26/01/12)
	Total number of task days: 3	Total volunteers:24

3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH EAST BERKS RAMBLERS (EBR)

Condition surveys

Local volunteers from the EBR carry out regular inspections of the public rights of way network. The information obtained from these surveys is used to identify and prioritise works, and also to compile the annual performance indicator that measures the percentage of public rights of way that are easy to use. The 2011/12 survey results indicate that **95.2%** of the path network is “easy to use” (the figure for the previous year, 2010/11 was **94.9%**)

During the period from 1st August 2011 to 31st January 2012 the East Berks Ramblers completed approximately **213 hours** of voluntary work on public rights of way in the borough, including both survey work and practical work.

The Council pays EBR a grant of £1000.00 per year as a contribution to the running costs of this project.

Removal of stiles and other access improvements

Access improvements have been made on the following footpaths:

Bray FP 57 (off Forest Green Road)	1 step stile replaced with gate
Bray FP 53 (south of Windsor Road)	4 squeeze stiles replaced with gates
Eton Footpath 3	5 step stiles and 1 squeeze stile replaced with gates
Eton Footpath 2	2 step stiles and 1 squeeze stile replaced with gates

4. DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT

Definitive Map Modification Order applications (path claims)

4.1 Shottesbrooke claimed footpath 501 (Pundles Lane)

An application received in May 2007 was refused by the Council in February 2010. The applicant appealed and the case was referred to Planning Inspectorate. The Inspectorate allowed the appeal, and the Order was published in November 2011.

Objections were received and therefore the Order is to be referred back to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision on whether or not the Order is confirmed, (to be determined by either a Public Inquiry, a hearing, or written representations). The Council, as Order Making Authority, is adopting a neutral stance, as is usual in cases where Highway Authorities are directed to make Modification Orders following appeals to the Secretary of State.

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

An application was received in August 2008. The claimed footpaths run from White Waltham Restricted Byway 4 (School Lane) southeast to and around a copse, then northwards to White Waltham Footpath 9. An Order was made in July 2010 for the paths to the copse, but the application for paths through the copse was refused.

Objections were received and the Order has been referred to the Planning Inspectorate. A public inquiry has been scheduled for 6th and 7th March 2012.

4.3 Wraysbury claimed footpaths 501 to 505 & Village Green Applications

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.

The latest position in relation to the village green applications is:

VG101 Village Green application for 'The Kayles' Wraysbury:

The panel registered The Kayles as a village green in April 2011. The owner Mrs Sheila Fergusson has issued judicial review proceedings against the Borough which have been refused upon the initial review by the High Court. Mrs Fergusson however did not agree with the initial assessment and has requested a further oral

hearing in front of the court which has been listed for the 27th March 2012. The court has also been requested by us to deal with our application for costs.

VG102 Village Green Application Thamesfield Wraysbury:

The Borough has assessed the evidence provided by the applicant and objectors and has elected to hear oral evidence from both parties by way of public inquiry. It is anticipated that any inquiry will likely be held in July/August 2012. Due to the possible number of people giving evidence it is likely that the inquiry will be held at one of the suites in the Town Hall, Maidenhead.

4.4 Cox Green claimed footpath 501

An application was received in July 2009 to add to the Definitive Map a footpath running from Culley Way to Farmers Close. A Modification Order was made in March 2011, and objections were received. Consideration of the objections is on hold pending the outcome of an Alley Gating Order for the same path.

5. CHANGES TO THE NETWORK

Waltham St. Lawrence Footpath 25 (Billingbear Park)

In May 2011 a Diversion Order was made to divert part of Waltham St. Lawrence FP 25. The Order diverted the legal line of the footpath to follow the line already used by the public and included surface improvements and removal of a stile. No objections were received and the Order was therefore confirmed, the required works have been completed on site, and the diversion has come into effect.

6. PARISH PATHS INITIATIVE/ BIG SOCIETY

All parish and town councils in the borough, as well as the British Horse Society, East Berks Ramblers and National Trust, are members of the Parish Paths Initiative (PPI). Through this scheme the rights of way officers work directly with the Parish Councils and the voluntary groups on maintaining and improving the rights of way network in the borough. This can be regarded as a good example of **Big Society** in practice.

Projects completed over the last six months include stile replacements, surface improvements and additional clearance works on popular paths. The project has also worked with the National Trust to ensure that permitted paths in Cookham are kept clear and open for use.

As part of the project, annual grants are paid to Cookham and Old Windsor Parish Council's who organise path clearance works in their parishes.

7. ACCESS TO ETON-DORNEY FOR 2012 OLYMPICS & PARALYMPICS

Major surface improvements have been completed on the section of the Thames Path between Windsor and Dorney, and on the Green Way through Braywick Park,

to enable improved access for walkers and cyclists visiting Eton-Dorney Lake for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As well as facilitating easy access to the games venue, the surface improvements represent a lasting legacy for residents and visitors to these popular recreational routes.

The works have been funded by a grant of £200,000 from the Olympic Delivery Authority, as part of a partnership project between the Royal Borough, Bucks County Council, Slough Borough Council and Sustrans covering a network of paths that provide links to the Games venue.

8. MILLENNIUM WALK

One of the priorities set out in the “Milestones Statement 2011/12”, approved by the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel in March 2011, is to “*Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk.*”

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

A permitted path agreement has been completed 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 (Bisham FP 20).

The new footpath was opened in January 2012, following the completion of road safety works at the crossing point on Henley Road and associated signage and road markings.

This project was part-funded by the East Berks Ramblers and Maidenhead Civic Society, and an inaugural walk/opening ceremony is to be held on **12th May 2012**, hosted by Temple Golf Club.

8.2 Missing link between Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail

Discussions are continuing with the landowners and the Environment Agency on a proposal to create a new public footpath from Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path via a bridge across the White Brook. 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 proposed 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.

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. 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 2012/13

The Draft Milestones Statement for 2012/13 is being submitted to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 12th March.

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 2011/12
- 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.

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 has been very active during the reporting period, commenting on a number of planning applications (through the Fast Response Team) and supporting a number of projects including the Millennium Walk and the Council's Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid.

The Forum's website has been redesigned and developed to provide an improved resource for the public, with new links bringing together information on public rights of way, open spaces and parks, national trails and other areas of interest. The Forum is also seeking new ways to enable online collaboration between forum members and public participation.

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 13th December 2011 are included in Appendix 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.

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 (6 monthly update)

	Outstanding at 31 st July 2011	Reported 1 st Aug 2011 to 31 st Jan 2012	Closed 1 st Aug 2011 to 31 st Jan 2011	Total Outstanding at 31 st Jan 2011
ENFORCEMENT				
Ploughing and lack of marking	0	1	1	0
Obstruction by crops	1	0	1	0
Fence encroachment	34	3	2	35
Fence obstruction	6	0	0	6
Building obstruction	3	0	0	3
Other obstructions	26	5	3	28
Stiles	39	4	7	36
Gates	9	3	5	7
Bulls/ other animal problems	0	0	0	0
Unauthorised use by horses	2	1	2	1
Unauthorised vehicular use	8	2	3	7
Electric fencing	3	0	1	2
Misleading notices	0	0	0	0
Intimidation	0	0	0	0
Overhanging vegetation	19	1	3	17
Other Enforcement Problems	33	8	9	32
TOTAL ENFORCEMENT:	183	28	37	174
MAINTENANCE				
Vegetation	14	12	24	2
Rutting	4	0	1	3
Drainage	6	0	0	6
Fallen trees	8	16	19	5
Erosion	19	2	5	16
Tree problems	5	3	8	0
Bridges	17	3	12	8
Safety barriers	7	0	2	5
Steps	1	0	1	0
Roadside signposting	3	16	13	6
Signposting at path junctions	3	6	8	1
Waymarking	7	10	8	9
Rubbish/ waste	4	3	5	2
Other Maintenance Problems	23	5	6	22
TOTAL MAINTENANCE:	121	76	112	85
TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT	304	104	149	259

ANNEXE B

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

FEBRUARY 2012

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	Path description		Comment
			From	To	
Shottesbrooke	FP 501	2007	Shottesbrooke FP 12	Waltham St Lawrence FP 38	Claim dismissed in Feb. 2010, but appeal allowed and Order made in Nov 2011. Objections received and Order is to be referred back to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision on whether or not the Order is confirmed.
White Waltham	FP 501	2008	White Waltham RB 4	White Waltham FP 9	Order made in June 2010: objections received and Public Inquiry scheduled for 6 th March 2012.
Cox Green	FP 501	2009	Culley Way	Farmers Close	Order made March 2011, objections received. Currently on hold pending outcome of Alley Gating Order process.
Wraysbury	FP 501-505	2009	Various paths at Thamesfield		Claims awaiting determination of village green application

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. ***NB These paths are therefore listed here for information only.***

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	From	To
Eton	FP 502	1977	North end of Somerville Road	FP 8 Eton
Eton	FP 505	1977	W end of Common Lane	Bell Lane
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

March 2012

Name	Main Interests
Peter Thorn (Chair) (Berks College of Agriculture)	Land management
Harry Hancock (Vice-chair) (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
Lynn Cassell (Taplow)	Land management, National Trust
Sara Church (Eton)	Horse riding, British Horse Society
James Copas (Maidenhead)	Land management / farming
Margaret Cubley (Bisham)	Bisham Parish Council, CPRE, walking, open spaces
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
Tom Jarvis (Windsor)	Land management, Crown Estate
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

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

13 December 2011

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name

Peter Thorn
Harry Hancock
Dorothy Allard
Councillor Beer

Margaret Bowdery
Lynn Cassells
Sara Church
James Copas
John Foulger
Helen Howard
Julie Mason
Andrew Randall

Gail Kenyon

Andrew Fletcher
Tanya Leftwich

Interest area

Chairman, Land management
Vice Chairman, Walking, Open Spaces
Land Management, Shottesbrooke Estate
Walking, Cycling, Old Windsor Parish
Council
Walking, East Berks Ramblers'
Land management, National Trust
Horse Riding, British Horse Society
Land Management, Copas Farms
Walking, Bray Parish Council
Horse Riding, Bray Parish Council
Strategy, Planning & Marketing
Land management, Royal Berks
Agricultural Association

Planning Infrastructure and Transport
Policy Manager
Local Access Forum Secretary
Clerk to the Forum

APOLOGIES

Name

Councillor Stretton
Hilary Essen
Christine Gadd
Christopher Westacott

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
13 December 2011
MINUTES**

ACTION

1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest

In the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chair **Harry Hancock** welcomed everyone to the twenty-fifth meeting of the Local Access Forum.

RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that Peter Thorn would remain Chairman and Harry Hancock Vice Chairman of the Local Access Forum.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Stretton, Hilary Essen, Christin Gadd and Christopher Westacott.

Councillor Beer declared a personal interest in Item 8 'Easy Going Routes' as it was in his parish area where he was a Ward Councillor.

The Forum approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 05 July 2011 subject to the following change:

- ❖ Page 2 – Item 2: Members Update – **Harry Hancock** requested that the minutes be amended to show that he was referring to the HS2 project.

Matters arising from last meeting

Margaret Bowdery asked why it was necessary to delay the review of the Alley Gating policy, and asked whether the response to the consultation on this review would be delegated to the Fast Response Team as the Local Access Forum was not due to meet before the planned revision date. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the delay was due to an ongoing Alley Gating proposal and agreed to pass **Margaret Bowdery's** comments onto **Brian Martin**, the Community Safety Manager. **Andrew Fletcher** mentioned that it was down to the Forum to decide whether they wished for the Fast Response Team to deal with this on their behalf.

Margaret Bowdery requested that the existing list of Developer Contribution projects be distributed to the Forum for consideration as the next review was due in September

RESOLVED: The Forum Recommended to the Council that the 'Boundary Walk' waymarking project be funded from Developer Contribution funds. A letter to be sent from the Chair to Ben Smith, Group Manager for Highways Services.

**Peter
Thorn /
Andrew
Fletcher**

2 Members' Update

Margaret Bowdery explained that in conjunction with the Maidenhead Rights of Way and Rotary Club the Ramblers Association were intending to secure funding for waymarking the Maidenhead Boundary Walk which would be available in the New Year. It was noted that the Boundary Walk which dated back to 1582 was a highly successful walk however people walking the route often got lost due to a lack of signage. **Councillor Beer** offered his strong support as he believed this was something practical which needed wide spread support.

In **Hilary Essen's** absence **Andrew Fletcher** read out a statement she had submitted "This year East Berkshire Ramblers have undertaken 400 man hours to survey, monitor and undertake minor clearance work. I am pleased that RBWM have planned to repair Cookham tow path, FP 60, this month so that wheelchair users will be able to use it. There is a nearby nursing home and so it will really improve the wellbeing of residents if they can now be taken out along the Thames."

3 Membership Update

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the current Chairman, Peter Thorn, had been due to retire but had since decided to remain a member of the Forum.

Andrew Fletcher went onto explain that **Loren Eldred** had left the Woodland Trust to work for the Exmoor National Park Authority. It was noted that whilst **Loren Eldred's** replacement did not wish to join the Forum they were happy to be consulted on matters relating to the Woodland Trust.

4 Multi-use paths

Sara Church consulted the Forum on the conversion of cycle tracks to multi-use paths in order to allow horse riding.

Sara Church distributed leaflets which explained the health benefits of horse riding. It was noted that one of the benefits of the proposal was that taking horses off the main roads made it safer for all involved.

Peter Thorn apologised for his delayed arrival and took over the role of Chairman.

Sara Church explained that her report included in the agenda stated that a cycle wheel was constantly in contact with the ground and therefore was believed to be more damaging to the path itself than a horse. **John Foulger** stated that he believed that in bad weather horses could ruin footpaths by creating dangerous holes for cyclists and dog walkers.

Gail Kenyon, the Planning Infrastructure and Transport Policy Manager, suggested that a small working party be formed which included a member from the Local Access Forum and a member from the Cycle Forum to discuss a particular route and the possibility of taking part in a joint trial on the Jubilee River paths if the landowners and Environment Agency's consent can be acquired. It was suggested that contact be made with both Buckinghamshire County Council and Slough Borough Council to see if they would be interested in joining the working party.

Sara Church agreed to attend the Cycle Forum in January 2012.

Andrew Fletcher requested any other members who wish to be involved to contact him directly.

Sara
Church

All

5 Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Gail Kenyon, the Planning Infrastructure and Transport Policy Manager, informed the Forum that a scoping bid for approximately £5 million had been placed back in June 2011 and distributed a copy of the 'Promoting Sustainable Transport' headlines that were being compiled for the bid.

It was noted that the majority of funding was revenue funding which meant that it could not be spent on physical projects and was to be based around the Maidenhead Area Action Plan to see if travel behaviours with regard to walking and cycling could be changed. **Gail Kenyon** explained that if the Council was successful in winning the bid the Forum's help would be appreciated taking the proposals forward.

Gail Kenyon informed the Forum that the Council was focusing its attention on sustainable travel, like a one-stop centre which people could contact for information on sustainable travel activities. The Forum was informed that more information on the headlines would be provided if the Council was to win the bid.

Gail Kenyon went onto explain that STaRS was a schools travel incentive scheme which was focused at children under the age of eleven who were awarded stars, then a sticker and finally a reward if they were to use another form of transport that did not include the use of a car. **Peter Thorn** suggested that private schools be approached

and encouraged to take part.

Peter
Thorn /
Andrew
Fletcher

RESOLVED; It was agreed unanimously that the Forum supports the Local Sustainable Transport Fund Bid and will help drive the proposals forward wherever it is able. A letter to be sent from the Chair to Gail Kenyon accordingly.

6 Milestone Statement 2012/2013

Andrew Fletcher consulted the Forum on the priorities, targets and service standards to be included in the Milestones Statement & Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2012/13.

It was noted that the target on page 19 of the agenda (EN 1 – To resolve enforcement issues) should read 23, rather than 24.

Margaret Bowdery informed the Forum of her concern with regard to the type of work the volunteers were being asked to undertake and referred in particular to the work that had taken place to cut back hedges at Legoland in Windsor and the 'ditching' work being done on behalf of Royal Borough landowners. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the landowners had not had the resources which was why the 'ditching' work had taken place and that the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers had been undertaking general clearance work along the bridleway at Legoland and had cut back overhanging branches etc as a matter of course whilst they were there.

Margaret Bowdery stated that she believed that if progress was to be achieved by 2015 the Section 106 funding needed to be more fairly distributed.

RESOLVED; It was agreed unanimously that;

- **The Forum strongly recommended that Section 106 should give priority to public rights of way projects. A letter to be sent from the Chair to Ben Smith, Group Manager for Highways Services.**
- **That the same priorities, targets and service standards be included in the Milestones Statement & Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2012/13. This is to be reported to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on the 12th March 2012.**

Peter
Thorn /
Andrew
Fletcher

7 The Footpath 15 Shottesbrooke/44 Waltham St Lawrence Definitive Map Modification Order 2011 (Pundles Lane)

Andrew Fletcher gave an update to the forum regarding the publication of the Footpath 15 Shottesbrooke/44 Waltham St Lawrence Definitive Map Modification Order.

It was noted that the Council had published the Footpath 15 Shottesbrooke/44 Waltham St Lawrence Definitive Map Modification Order 2011 on the 15 November 2011 and that a copy of the order, notice and explanatory statement had been attached as an Appendix in the agenda.

It was suggested that anyone interested in developments contact Anthony Hurst, Principal Officer - Rights of Way.

8 Easy Going Routes

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum about the progress of the Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route and the website version of the Cookham Easy Going Route.

Andrew Fletcher explained that with regard to the Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route one of the targets set out in the 'Milestones Statement 2011/12' was "To produce 1 leaflet publicising access opportunities for people with special needs". It was noted that the Council had been working with the Crown Estate to produce the Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route leaflet this year towards this target. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that the descriptive text for the leaflet had been drafted and was presented to

the Forum for comments. It was noted that in preparation for the route the Crown Estate had made modifications to the electric gates in Windsor Great Park to enable the activation buttons to be easily reached by wheelchair users. It was noted that the Council would be creating specific webpages in order to provide additional and enhanced information about both the Easy Going Routes.

Andrew Fletcher explained that the Cookham Easy Going Route had been published in 2008 and had proven to be very popular. It was noted that the Council had developed content towards creating a 'virtual tour' of the route where users would be able to click on part of the route and see high resolution photographs of the area. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that there had been a number of technical restrictions and problems that had delayed the project but that the Council was currently investigating ways to resolve these issues.

James Copas requested that public transport information be added in order to deter people from driving which Andrew Fletcher agreed to include. Following discussion it was requested that information with regard to not leaving valuables on display in vehicles, dog littering and livestock on common land be included. It was also suggested that when the website and the leaflets were the Council should talk to the Maidenhead Advertiser to promote the routes.

Andrew Fletcher

The Forum was asked to provide any other comments directly to **Andrew Fletcher**.

All

9 LAF Monitoring Items

(a) Millennium Walk

Andrew Fletcher gave an update to the forum regarding the progress towards the completion of the Millennium Walk.

Andrew Fletcher explained that with regard to the missing link between Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail discussions were currently taking place with the landowners to hopefully agree the alignment for the rest of the route. It was noted that a funding contribution of £50,000 towards the cost of creating the footpath had been secured through a Section 1069 Planning Agreement relating to the re-development of the former 'Stiefel Laboratories' site off Lower Cookham Road. The Forum was informed that this funding would not become available until commencement of the development and the implementation of the footpath project was therefore dependent upon the timing of the development. **Margaret Bowdery** expressed her concern about the viability of this development and asked whether other Section 106 funding might be available.

RESOLVED: The Forum recommended that alternate options for funding the route be investigated. A letter to be sent from the Chair to David Oram, Strategic Director of Environment & Deputy Chief Executive.

Peter Thorn / Andrew Fletcher

Andrew Fletcher explained that the missing link between Hurley Footpath 18 and Bisham Footpath 20 (Speen Hill) would be completed soon thanks to a permitted path agreement between the East Berks Ramblers' and the Berkshire College of Agriculture coupled with works by the Council to create a walkway opposite the golf club on the Henley Road. It was noted that funding was available via the Councils capital programme for 2011/12 and that in addition partnership funding contributions for the project has been offered by the East Berkshire Ramblers (£1750) and Maidenhead Civic Society (£750). **Andrew Fletcher** explained that preparatory works for the permitted footpath across the Berkshire College of Agriculture land had been completed on site. It was noted that an agreement had been put in place that the route would be trialed in its current form for six months so that the level of risk could be checked and that highway works at Henley Road had been scheduled to start on the 9th January 2012. It was also noted that if any safety issues were discovered along the BCA permitted path the route would be re-aligned rather than closed.

(b) Volunteer works

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that following its previous recommendations the Council had been working this year with the Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers (WMCV) and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). In addition the Council had continued to work closely with the East Berkshire Ramblers with respect to path surveys and on occasion maintenance and signage works.

(c) LAF website & online form

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that **Julie Mason** had worked closely with the Public Rights of Way team to provide an updated and enhanced website for the Local Access Forum and had developed a template and content which was currently being put in place. A new version of the Local Access Forum website was shown at the meeting and **Andrew Fletcher** requested that any information the Forum would like included be sent directly to him. It was noted that the code of conduct for dog walkers would be added to the site along with advice on how to handle cattle.

All

Andrew Fletcher explained that a Local Access Forum members' online discussion website had been set-up to encourage and enable members to raise ideas and discuss topics of interest outside the formal meetings. It was noted that unfortunately this had not been as successful as hoped and that the Council was considering changing the system to a 'blog' based system instead of the 'web forum' based system.

RESOLVED; It was agreed unanimously that the Local Access Forum website be published.

Andrew Fletcher

10 **Activities of the LAF Fast Response Team**

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that this report considered the proposal to install a raised walkway across the Town Moor in Maidenhead and also looked at the Maidenhead Waterways scheme which had been very well received.

Margaret Bowdery congratulated **Andrew Fletcher** on the excellent reports he had compiled on the Planning Applications which the Forum echoed.

Margaret Bowdery commented on her pleasure in discovering that the proposal for the elevated escape route had been thrown out by the Royal Borough's Councillors. It was noted that the key objection to the elevated walkway was the damaging impact to the Town Moor, the Green Way and the whole surrounding network of public footpaths.

Margaret Bowdery went on to draw the Forum's attention to the failure by the Planning Department to identify the definitive map number of rights of ways in agenda reports which she explained had been a source of complaint for many years.

RESOLVED: The Chair of the forum would write to the Simon Hurrell, Interim Head of Planning and Development, to highlight the importance of including full details of public paths in Development Control reports and ask that these are included on all future plans sent to the Panel.

Peter Thorn / Andrew Fletcher

11 **A.O.B.**

Andrew Fletcher welcomed Martin Gilchrist from Natural England to the meeting and explained that he was the Forum's link to Central Government.

Martin Gilchrist informed the Forum that Natural England had recently re-organised, had a new business model and had reduced its staffing levels. It was noted that Natural England was now made up of one team with small sub teams which looked at areas such as open access, coastal access and national trails. **Martin Gilchrist** explained that his role covered green space, diversity, etc and that he currently worked with a number of Local Access Forums. It was noted that **Martin Gilchrist** would be the Forum's primary contact for Natural England.

Martin Gilchrist highlighted that a new streamlined format for submitting Annual Reports to Natural England had been produced. In addition to this a new online collaborative website called 'Huddle' had been launched for all Local Access Forum members across England, and encouraged all members to sign up to this service, adding that this is intended to be the main communication link between Natural England and forums. **Julie Mason** mentioned that she had already signed up to the service.

All

The Forum was informed that a series of workshops would take place in addition to two conferences due to be held in Newcastle and Bristol where issues for discussion could be raised. **Martin Gilchrist** stated that the Bristol conference was due to take place in March 2012.

Martin Gilchrist explained that a new grants scheme 'Paths for Communities' had been announced and would shortly be posted on the Natural England website. **Martin Gilchrist** agreed to pass this information, once available on to **Andrew Fletcher** along with his contact details for distribution to all members.

Andrew Fletcher

Peter Thorn thanked **Martin Gilchrist** for addressing the Forum.

12 **Activities of neighbouring Local Access Forums & Date of Next Meeting**

Harry Hancock informed the Forum that he had attended as an observer at the last Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum meeting on the 2nd November 2011 and had found there to be a passion amongst its members for the land they represented. It was noted that one topic the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum were concerned about was budgets and whilst the subjects of cuts had not been raised at the meeting **Harry Hancock** had noticed that uncertainty remained amongst the officers.

Andrew Fletcher requested that volunteers who were willing to observe Local Access Forums in other authorities should contact him.

All

The date of the next meeting of the Local Access Forum, once confirmed, was to be confirmed by the Clerk.

Tanya Leftwich

The meeting which started at 6.30pm, ended at 8.30pm.

Peter Thorn wished the Forum a Merry Christmas.