

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

FEBRUARY-AUGUST 2012

The total number of outstanding reported problems on Public Rights of Way in the borough has fallen from **259** to **228** during the six month period, (see *table at Annex A for further details*).

1. ENFORCEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 1 st February 2012	Reported 1 st Feb to 31 st July. 2012	Closed 1 st Feb to 31 st July. 2012	Outstanding 31 st July 2012
Enforcement problems	174	33	65	142

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

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Bisham Restricted Byway 10 (Bisham Woods)	24/5/2012	Fallen tree blocking path from adjacent land. <i>Tree removed by landowner.</i>
Bray Footpaths 25 & 28 (off Forest Green Road)	14/4/2012	Path blocked by crops. <i>Path reinstated by landowner</i>
Cookham Bridleway 19 (Cannon Court Farm)	11/6/2012	Unauthorised gates and obstructions. <i>Gates and obstructions removed by landowner</i>
Cookham Footpath 26 (Winter Hill to Dean Lane)	14/02/12	Unauthorised gate. <i>Gate removed by landowner and replaced with authorised British Standard gate.</i>
Maidenhead Restricted Byway 72 (Nightingale Lane)	11/6/2012	Overhanging and overgrown vegetation. <i>Vegetation cleared by residents.</i>

2. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 1 st February 2012	Reported 1 st Feb to 31 st July. 2012	Closed 1 st Feb to 31 st July. 2012	Outstanding 31 st July 2012
Maintenance problems	85	59	58	86

Examples of maintenance and improvement projects completed during reporting period:

Cox Green Footpath 8 (off Thrift Lane)	Footbridge repaired
Horton Bridleway 4 (Horton to Colnbrook)	Surface improvements
Hurley Restricted Byway 41 (Star Lane)	Surface improvements

Maidenhead Bridleway 46 (off Bath Road)	Major clearance works
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Works due to be carried out

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

Bray Footpaths 18 and 20 (off Long Lane)	Stiles to be replaced with gates
Bray Footpath 19 (off Blackbird Lane)	Stiles to be replaced with gates
Cox Green Footpath 11 (Ockwells Park)	Surface improvements

3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH EAST BERKS RAMBLERS (EBR)

Condition surveys

Local volunteers from the East Berks Ramblers carry out inspections of the public rights of way network in spring and autumn each year, based on a three year rolling programme (i.e. approx. 1/3rd of the network is surveyed each year). The information obtained from these surveys is used to identify and prioritise works, and to calculate the annual performance indicator that measures the percentage of public rights of way that are easy to use.

The spring 2012 survey results indicate that **89.9%** of the path network is “easy to use” (the combined spring and autumn survey result for the previous year, 2011/12, was **95.2%**)

The East Berks Ramblers completed approximately **179 hours** of voluntary work on public rights of way in the borough (between February and May 2012), including both survey work and practical work. Additionally, many hours were completed waymarking and signing the Maidenhead Boundary Walk (see below).

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

Maidenhead Boundary Walk

As a partnership project with the East Berks Ramblers, the Maidenhead Boundary Walk has been signed with permanent finger signs and waymarks. Volunteers from the EBR carried out most of the work to install the signs and waymarks, and S. 106 funds were used to purchase the materials.

4. DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT

Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) applications (path claims)

4.1 Shottesbrooke claimed footpath 501 (Pundles Lane)

A DMMO 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 Modification Order was published in November 2011.

Objections were received, and therefore the Order has been referred back to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision on whether or not the Order is confirmed.

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)

A DMMO 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. A Modification 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 was therefore referred to the Planning Inspectorate. A public inquiry was held on 6th and 7th March and 24th April 2012, and was adjourned until 22nd August.

4.3 Wraysbury claimed footpaths 501 to 505 & Village Green Applications

Five DMMO 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.

A public inquiry into the Village Green application is scheduled to start on 10th September.

4.4 Cox Green claimed footpath 501

A DMMO 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

Bray Footpath 24 (Harford Farm/Mount Skippet Farm)

A Diversion Order is to be published to divert part of Bray Footpath 24, in response to an application received from the landowner. The application was approved by the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing panel at its meeting held on 4th March, and the Order is currently being prepared.

6. BIG SOCIETY

Devolution of Services to Parish Councils

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.

Projects completed over the last six months include stiles replaced with gates, 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 PPI project, annual grants are paid to Cookham and Old Windsor Parish Council's who organise routine path clearance works in their parishes.

Three other Parish Council's (Waltham St Lawrence, Wraysbury and Cox Green) have also expressed an interest in taking on responsibility for routine maintenance of public rights of way as part of the Devolution of Services to Parishes initiative.

Volunteers

The Council works with local volunteers from "The Conservation Volunteers" (TCV), the Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers (WMCV), and with the East Berks Ramblers (EBR) to carry out public rights of way improvement and maintenance projects in the borough.

The following projects were completed during the period from February to August 2012:

Date	Group	Work carried out	Number of volunteers
29 th Mar 2012	TCV	Cookham FP 42 (Marsh Meadow): bramble clearance	5
15 th Apr 2012	WMCV	Bisham FP 3 (off Quarry Wood Road): path revetment work	5
8 th Jul 2012	WMCV	Bisham FP 3 (off Quarry Wood Road): path revetment work	5
16 th Jul 2012	TCV	Bisham FP 4 (off Winter Hill): step building	10
Ongoing	EBR	Hurley FP 13 (Thames Path): removal and disposal of Himalayan Balsam.	4
		Total number of task days: 5	Total volunteers: 29

Community Payback

A Community Payback team organised by the Probation Service spent two days in early August clearing vegetation from a new 'horse margin' path that is being created adjacent to Henley Road. The new path provides a safe off-road link between Hodgedale Lane and Rose Lane, which will be useful both for walkers and horse riders.

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).

This project was funded from the Council’s capital programme, with additional contributions from the East Berks Ramblers and Maidenhead Civic Society, and included road safety works at the crossing point on Henley Road and associated signage and road markings.

An inaugural walk/opening ceremony was 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.

Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2012/13

The Milestones Statement for 2012/13, which sets out targets and priorities for the year, was approved by the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel at its meeting on 12th March.

Borough Website

The Public Rights of Way section of the borough 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. Information on "Dogs in the Countryside" has recently been added to the web pages.

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 2012/13
- 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 further development of the Cookham Easy Going Route web pages.

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 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 7th June 2012 are included in Appendix D.

The Local Access Forum web pages can be accessed from http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_local_access_forum.htm.

The content was developed by the forum and contain the following:

- Information about the Local Access Forum
- Links and information tailored for specific classes of user for example walkers, horse riders and cycle users.
- Information about maps, signs and publications
- Information about how to get involved with the forum
- Information about the members and the projects the forum has been involved in
- Minutes and agendas for the formal meetings
- Information about the forum's Fast Response Team and copies of the advice supplied.
- Information about strategy and planning for the forum
- Links to neighbouring local access forums and other useful links.

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

ANNEX A

Recorded problems on Public Rights of Way in the Borough (6 monthly update)

	Outstanding at 31 st Jan 2012	Reported 1 st Feb 2012 to 31 st July 2012	Closed* 1 st Feb 2012 to 31 st July 2012	Total Outstanding at 31st July 2012
ENFORCEMENT				
Ploughing and lack of marking	0	3	0	3
Obstruction by crops	0	3	2	1
Fence encroachment	35	3	10	28
Fence obstruction	6	2	3	5
Building obstruction	3	0	1	2
Other obstructions	28	6	21	13
Stiles	36	0	5	31
Gates	7	2	0	9
Bulls/ other animal problems	0	0	0	0
Unauthorised use by horses	1	0	0	1
Unauthorised vehicular use	7	1	2	6
Electric fencing	2	1	2	1
Misleading notices	0	2	1	1
Intimidation	0	0	0	0
Overhanging vegetation	17	6	9	14
Other Enforcement Problems	32	4	9	27
TOTAL ENFORCEMENT:	174	33	65	142
MAINTENANCE				
Vegetation	2	10	9	3
Rutting	3	2	0	5
Drainage	6	1	1	6
Fallen trees	5	14	15	4
Erosion	16	1	3	14
Tree problems	0	1	1	0
Bridges	8	2	2	8
Safety barriers	5	0	1	4
Steps	0	0	0	0
Roadside signposting	6	9	8	7
Signposting at path junctions	1	4	2	3
Waymarking	9	11	8	12
Rubbish/ waste	2	1	2	1
Other Maintenance Problems	22	3	6	19
TOTAL MAINTENANCE:	85	59	58	86
TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT	259	92	123	228

* This column includes 'historic' issues where it is considered that no further action is required; the details are being kept on file for information purposes only.

ANNEXE B

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

AUGUST 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 Modification Order made in Nov 2011. Objections received and Order has been 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 held on 6 th and 7 th March, and 24 th April, adjourned until 22 nd August 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 concurrent village green application

ANNEXE C

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP

August 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)	Hurley Parish Council, Land Management/ farming

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

7 June 2012

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name

Peter Thorn
Harry Hancock
Dorothy Allard
Councillor Beer

Margaret Bowdery
Sara Church
William Emmett

Hilary Essen

Christopher Westacott

Andrew Fletcher
Tanya Leftwich
Hilary Oliver

Interest area

Chairman, Land Management
Vice Chairman, Walking, Open Spaces
Land Management, Shottesbrooke Estate
Walking, Cycling, Old Windsor Parish
Council

Walking, East Berks Ramblers'
Horse Riding, British Horse Society
Substitute for James Copas and Andrew
Randall

Walking, Health Issues, East Berks
Ramblers'

Land Management

Local Access Forum Secretary
Clerk to the Forum
Special Projects Officer

OBSERVERS

John Coombe
Ann Darracott
Martin Gilchrist
Rosie Norris
Ray Sharp

Civic Society
Natural England

Mid & West Berkshire LAF

APOLOGIES

Councillor Stretton
Lynn Cassells
Margaret Cubley
Julie Mason
Andrew Randall

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
7 June 2012**

MINUTES

ACTION

1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest

The Chairman **Peter Thorn** welcomed everyone to the twenty-sixth meeting of the Local Access Forum.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Stretton, Lynn Cassells, Margaret Cubley, Julie Mason and Andrew Randall.

The Forum approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 December 2011.

Matters arising from last meeting

Margaret Bowdery referred to item 6.1 and explained that none of the projects since 2005 appeared to have had developer contributions allocated to them. Clarification of this letter was requested.

Margaret Bowdery went on to state that she believed the S106 money had been distributed unfairly and that if any money was available to the LAF then details would be welcomed. **Margaret Bowdery** informed Members that she did not feel the S106 distribution was transparent enough. **Councillor Beer** informed **Margaret Bowdery** that the whole system with regard to S106 was being reviewed both locally and nationally so things should improve in the Royal Borough in the future. It was noted that a capital programme was produced which was approved at Cabinet and that it would be looked into whether individual projects were flagged as being funded by S106.

Margaret Bowdery referred Members to page 8 of the agenda, in particular ID 637 – the footbridge over the Thames at Boulters Lock project. Concern was expressed as to why this Maidenhead development was being funded by another Local Authority.

Councillor Beer expressed a concern that maps supplied to the Development Control Panels did not show road names which made it very difficult to identify public rights of way. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to speak to the Geographical Mapping Team to see if the issue could be resolved.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that;

i) A letter be sent to the Council from the Chair to question the decision made with regard to S106 funding. It was highlighted that projects should be being undertaken within the Royal Borough rather than outside it (e.g. the footbridge over the Thames at Boulters Lock which covered the Maidenhead Riverside ward / South Bucks (lead authority)).

**Peter
Thorn &
Andrew
Fletcher**

ii) It was also agreed that the Chair would question why PH2, PH3 & PH4 all referred to maintenance projects when the LAF had always been told that S106 money could not be spent on maintenance / repair works.

**Peter
Thorn &
Andrew
Fletcher**

2 Members' Update

Christopher Westacott informed Members that he believed the Royal Borough had an agenda against landowners with regard to the unreasonable and unjust way they were claiming a footpath across his farmland. It was noted that **Christopher Westacott** had to go back thirty years as a claim had been backdated ten years. **Christopher Westacott** informed the forum that the Royal Borough was supporting the footpath claim and that he had requested a public inquiry as they wanted to open an ancient burial path that he did not believe to have historically existed. The public inquiry is currently adjourned until 22nd August 2012. **Christopher Westacott** explained that he wanted a more fair and just system used, in other words an independent investigator so that a public inquiry was no longer deemed necessary. **Peter Thorn** explained that the Forum had been set up to look at strategic issues in principle and he would therefore use

Christopher Westacott's situation as an example rather than discuss specific details.

William Emmett explained that he was concerned that **Christopher Westacott** should not have to put up a sign to state that the specific area of his land in question was not a footpath when there was adequate signage to show people where they could walk. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the Council complies with the legal framework relating to public rights of way and added that the current law required landowners to take reasonable steps, where use is known, to demonstrate to users that they did not intend to dedicate a public right of way. However he referred to agenda item 5 in which a package of proposals had been put forward by DEFRA to improve the policy and legal framework for public rights of way.

Hillary Oliver agreed that she did not believe it should be the landowner's duty to sign non-footpath areas.

Margaret Bowdery, on behalf of the Civic Society and Ramblers Association, thanked LAF and its officers for attending the path opening on the 12th May 2012. **Margaret Bowdery** went on to explain that waymarking the Maidenhead Boundary Walk was underway and she thanked the LAF for helping to secure £2,600 funding from developer contributions.

3 Dog Walking issues

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the purpose of his report was to inform and consult the LAF about the current problems being experienced with dogs and dog walkers, and the approaches used to tackle the issues. It was explained that the Forum's opinion was being sought in particular about the efficiency of the approaches and any other suggestions as to how the Council could tackle these problems.

It was noted that two problems were occurring regularly on public rights of way with respect to dog waste:

- a) Dog waste being left on paths and public spaces without being cleaned up.
- b) Waste being picked up and bagged but the bags then being discarded along the path either in the undergrowth or simply hung into adjacent fences.

Andrew Fletcher explained that 'There's no such thing as the Dog Poo Fairy' posters will be installed at selected sites by the Public Rights of Way team. These posters were produced as part of the Keep Britain Tidy campaign.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that whilst historically there had been generally good relations between dog owners and horse riders within the Royal Borough, this was an area of conflict and the Council planned to place some information on the public rights of way website to address the issue. **Sara Church** suggested that information be provided to horse riders in the area and also be displayed in local shops.

With regard to dogs scaring and causing distress to sheep and cattle, especially when the dog was not under close control, the following suggestions were made:

- a) **William Emmett** suggested that the Council look into whether signage was available to place at styles to highlight the dangers of dogs being let off leads around farm animals.
- b) **Hillary Essen** suggested that the Council look into whether signs could be put up in parish councils, vet surgeries and dog grooming parlours with regard to the dangers of dogs being let off leads around farm animals.
- c) **Margaret Bowdery** suggested that the Council look into the possibility of putting a small article in the ATRB with regard to clearing up dog mess.

Councillor Beer informed LAF that Old Windsor were looking at a new scheme which would provide bins with adverts on them and that once this information was available he would provide it to Andrew Fletcher so that the Forum could be updated.

RESOLVED: The forum RECOMMENDED that;

- i) **The Council to look into whether signage was available to place at styles to highlight the dangers of dogs being let off leads around farm animals.**

**Andrew
Fletcher**

**Councillor
Beer**

- ii) The Council to look into whether signs could be put up in parish councils, vet surgeries and dog grooming parlours with regard to the dangers of dogs being let off leads around farm animals.
- iii) The Council to look into the possibility of putting a small article in the ATRB with regard to clearing up dog mess.
- iv) Andrew Fletcher agreed to promote 'dogs and horses' leaflet and put information on the RBWM website.

Andrew Fletcher

4 **Bray Footpath 24 (part) diversion application consultation**

Andrew Fletcher explained that the purpose of his report was to consult the forum on an application received from the landowner for the diversion of part of Bray Footpath 24 which would be considered at the ROW Panel on the 12th June 2012. It was noted that the LAF's response to the consultation would be reported verbally at the meeting.

Photographs which illustrated the diversion proposal were displayed at the meeting.

Margaret Bowdery informed the forum that she had known the footpath for many years and whilst she had opposed previous applications she, on behalf of the Ramblers Association, was happy to support this one. It was noted that the width and surface of the proposed diversion was believed to be very good and that the diversion would also ensure no conflict with horses.

William Emmett stated that he found it strange that the Ramblers were supporting this application when they had not supported previous applications in the past.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the width of the proposed diversion matched the current footpath.

Councillor Beer expressed his concern that if tarmac was used to surface the footpath it would urbanise the area which he felt would be inappropriate.

RESOLVED: The forum RECOMMENDED that;

- i) The ROW team be asked to reconsider the width of the path as it was believed to be too wide along with the material to be used for the final surfacing of the path as concerns had been raised over the future use of the path by vehicles.
- ii) That both the majority view (as above) and Margaret Bowdery's view (to leave it as proposed) be reported at the next ROW Panel.

Andrew Fletcher

5 **DEFRA Consultation: Improvements to the policy and legal framework for public rights of way**

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the purpose of his report was to consult them on proposals published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to change how public rights of ways were recorded, diverted and extinguished.

It was noted that the deadline for responses was the 6th August 2012.

It was agreed that a working party be formed to meet at the end of June / early July to respond to the proposals. **Andrew Fletcher** asked anyone interested to contact him after the meeting.

It was requested that any summaries that had already been produced be distributed to the working group. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to circulate the DEFRA briefing note that **Martin Gilchrist** had given him. **Margaret Bowdery** and **William Emmett** agreed to investigate whether they had any information available that could be shared with the working group.

All/
Andrew Fletcher

RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that a working party be formed to meet at the end of June / early July to respond to the proposals.

Andrew Fletcher

6	Natural England consultation on the future management of National Trails from April 2013	<p>Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to his report on page 68 of the agenda.</p> <p>LAF were requested to read the Executive Summary included in the agenda and provide Andrew Fletcher with comments.</p> <p>The deadline for responses was noted as being the 5th July 2012.</p> <p>RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that; i) LAF members would read the Executive Summary and contact Andrew Fletcher with any comments. ii) Andrew Fletcher to send comments onto the Rapid Response Team and include Hilary Essen.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Andrew Fletcher</p>
7	Paths for communities	<p>Andrew Fletcher welcomed Martin Gilchrist from Natural England to the meeting and explained that he was the Forum's link to Central Government.</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist informed the Forum that he had met a number of them at the last meeting in December. 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.</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist explained that a new (pilot) grants scheme 'Paths for Communities' had been set up and would be running for the next two years to create new and permanent rights of ways. It was noted that this scheme consisted of £2million funding.</p> <p>The clerk agreed to send a copy of the presentation out with the minutes.</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist confirmed that grants could directly benefit a private sector organisation but that the project had to be community lead. It was noted that projects had to be agreed with landowners and then proposed, not vice-versa.</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist explained that Natural England were looking for applications between £5k and £150k and wanted to see partnerships between landowners and applicants, with the ROW team involved – linked to strategies. It was noted that applicants needed to be able to handle cashflow which was paid in arrears and also be a legally constituted group.</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist went onto explain that projects needed to add value to the local community and that applications could be made via the website www.naturalengland.org.uk/p4c</p> <p>Martin Gilchrist agreed to check how the information was being disseminated, whether it was via Parish Councils and asked the LAF to help spread the word.</p> <p>Peter Thorn thanked Martin Gilchrist for addressing the Forum.</p> <p>RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that; i) Andrew Fletcher write directly to Parish Councils to highlight the scheme. ii) Andrew Fletcher to contact the Windsor & Maidenhead conservation volunteers and other voluntary organisations to highlight the scheme.</p>	<p>Tanya Leftwich</p> <p>Andrew Fletcher</p>
8	LAF Plans for the coming year	<p>(a) LAF Annual Report 2011-2012</p> <p>Andrew Fletcher gave an update to the Forum regarding the preparation of the annual report with regard to its activities over the past year and to seek approval for it to be published.</p> <p>Comments to be submitted to Andrew Fletcher by the end of June.</p>	<p>All</p>

Andrew Fletcher agreed to send a final draft to LAF members once the comments had been incorporated.

Andrew Fletcher

- (b) Work programme for the coming year

Peter Thorn informed the Forum that targets needed to be set for the coming year.

RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously that the work program would include;

- ii) **Multi user groups – better information in planning applications.**
- iii) **The use of volunteers in the Royal Borough.**
- iiii) **Devolution of public rights of way services to parishes.**

9 Maidenhead Boundary Walk

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the production and placement of waymarking signs across the Maidenhead Boundary Walk was slowly progressing and should be completed by the end of June.

RESOLVED: The forum RECOMMENDED that the RBWM website be updated with information about the Maidenhead Boundary Walk.

Andrew Fletcher

10 Easy Going Routes

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that there were currently two Easy Going Routes:

- a) Cookham (promoted since 2008)
- b) Windsor Great Park (in development)

It was noted that a draft leaflet had been produced and sent to the LAF and the Access Advisory Forum. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that he was currently awaiting formal advice from the Access Advisory Forum before making changes to the draft leaflet.

It was noted that the issues with the Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route was the limited provision of toilets, the size of the leaflet and the amount of content to be included.

Andrew Fletcher explained that he had encountered technical problems with the Easy Going Route web pages.

The Forum were informed that they had three options to choose from which were:

- a) Commission an external web developer to produce the web pages.
- b) Develop similar content internally.
- c) Develop simple pages without any enhanced features.

RESOLVED: the forum RECOMMENDED that;

- i) **The Council develop simple pages on the RBWM website and monitor the number of hits / gather feedback and not develop use an external web developer for the time being.**
- ii) **The Council promote the Windsor Great Park route by placing an advert in the ATRB and by organising a press release.**

Andrew Fletcher agreed to provide maps of the two schemes to the forum.

Andrew Fletcher

11 LAF Monitoring Items

- (a) Millennium Walk

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the missing Link between Footpath 18 Hurley and Footpath 20 Bisham (Speen Hill) had been opened on the 12th May 2012.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the public rights of way team is in the process of arranging to meet to discuss the missing link between Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail.

(b) Volunteer works

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to report which could be found on pages 95 and 96 of the agenda.

(c) Multi-use paths

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to report which could be found on page 96 of the agenda.

(d) LAF website & online form

Andrew Fletcher explained that whilst he was aware not every LAF member had access to the internet he was trying to encourage as many members of the forum as possible to use the online forum as a way of encouraging debate and discussion in between formal forum meetings. **Peter Thorn** explained that the online forum could be used by the working group.

The link to the online forum was <http://groupspaces.com/rbwm-laf/>

12 **Activities of the LAF Fast Response Team & Date of Next Meeting**

Harry Hancock informed the Forum that the report on page 98 of the agenda updated them on the advice submitted on their behalf by the members of the fast response team.

It was noted that the Fast Response Team had considered the consultation regarding motorcycle barriers to be erected along Maidenhead Footpath 48 (Dead Man's Alley) which ran between Altwood Road and the A4 Bath Road opposite Highway Road. The Fast Response Team had responded on behalf of LAF to state that the proposed barriers, which had since been changed to staggered barriers, would be deemed acceptable.

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

Councillor Beer, on behalf of the Forum, thanked Andrew Fletcher for all his work.

The meeting which started at 6.30pm, ended at 8.35pm.

**Tanya
Leftwich**