

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

AUGUST 2012- FEBRUARY 2013

The total number of outstanding reported problems on Public Rights of Way in the borough has fallen from **228** to **192** during the six month period, (see *table at Annex A for further details*).

1. ENFORCEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 1 st August 2012	Reported 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan 2013	Closed 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan 2013	Outstanding 31 st Jan 2013
Enforcement problems	142	43	73	112

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

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Datchet Footpath 8 (off Southlea Road)	08/08/2012	Trees from private land fallen across path. <i>Trees cleared by landowner</i>
Hurley Footpath 17 (near Prospect Hill)	17/09/2012	Pigeon shooting taking place very close to the footpath. <i>Landowner advised shooters not to shoot close to or in the direction of the footpath at the request of the Council.</i>
Waltham St Lawrence Footpaths 34 and 37	13/10/2012	Paths ploughed and not reinstated. <i>Paths reinstated by farmer.</i>
Old Windsor Footpath 3 (Thames Path National Trail)	14/08/2012	Path obstructed by fence posts. <i>Posts removed after discussions with the Council. It was agreed that some posts could remain with "no cycling" and "no dog fouling" signs attached.</i>

The following enforcement cases have been reported to the Rural Payments Agency under Defra's Cross Compliance procedures, during the period August 2012-February 2013.

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Bisham Footpaths 9 & 32 (Town Farm, Bisham)	17/10/2012	Paths obstructed by crops. <i>Paths cleared by landowner.</i>
Bray Footpaths 25, 28 & 31 (off Forest Green Road)	18/10/2012	Paths obstructed by crops. <i>Paths cleared by landowner.</i>
Eton Bridleways 17 & 18 and Footpath 19 (South Field, Eton)	18/10/2012	Paths obstructed by crops. <i>Crop harvested by farmer.</i>
Eton Bridleways 17 & 18 and Footpaths 4 & 19 (North and South Field, Eton)	10/01/2013	Paths ploughed and not reinstated. <i>Paths marked out by farmer.</i>

2. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

	Outstanding on 1 st August 2012	Reported 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan 2013	Closed 1 st Aug to 31 st Jan 2013	Outstanding 31 st Jan 2013
Maintenance problems	86	49	55	80

Examples of maintenance and improvement projects completed during reporting period:

Bray Footpaths 18 and 20 (off Long Lane)	Stiles replaced with gates
Cox Green Footpath 11 (Ockwells Park)	Surface improvements
Henley Road Horse Margin	Ramp creation to enable easy access to off-road horse margin
Hurley Restricted Byway 41 (Star Lane)	Major surface improvements, part funded by £35,000 Land Fill Tax grant provided by Grundons.

Works due to be carried out

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

Cookham Footpath 48 (off Maidenhead Road)	Stiles to be replaced with gates
Hurley Bridleway 20 (north of Dew Drop Inn)	Surface improvements
Maidenhead Footpath 13 (off Blackamoor Lane)	Surface improvements
Bray Footpath 19 (off Blackbird Lane)	Stiles to be replaced with gates

3. TEMPORARY PATH CLOSURES AND DIVERSIONS

During the flooding in December 2012 temporary path closures were put in place on the section of the Thames Path National Trail that passes through Old Windsor and Datchet, when the paths needed to be closed for public safety reasons.

In a separate incident, a footpath in Hurley was temporarily closed to enable works to repair subsidence caused by a nearby badger sett, under licence from Natural England.

A number of temporary diversions have also been put in place to divert paths in White Waltham and Shottesbrooke that cross railway bridges, whilst works are taking place to facilitate the Great Western Mainline electrification programme.

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.

The decision of the Secretary of State on whether or not to confirm the Order is awaited.

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

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

Objections were received, and the Order was therefore referred to the Planning Inspectorate. Following a public inquiry which concluded in August 2012 the Order was confirmed, and the footpaths to and from the copse have been added to the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way as Footpath 25 White Waltham.

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 concluded in November 2012 and the outcome of the inquiry is awaited.

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

5.1 Bray Footpath 24 (Harford Farm/Mount Skippet Farm)

A Diversion Order to divert part of Bray Footpath 24 was confirmed in January 2013. The diversion will come into effect once works to construct the new section of footpath have been completed and a certificate of completion has been issued.

6. BIG SOCIETY

6.1 Working with Parish Councils, path user groups and the National Trust

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. In particular the PPI replaced a number of stiles with gates in Bray, undertook path clearance work on a restricted byway in Cox Green, and carried out surface improvement works in partnership with the National Trust on a permitted path in Maidenhead. 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. Discussions are currently being held with other Parish Council's over whether they wish to take on additional work as part of the current Devolution to Parishes initiative.

6.2 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 between August 2012 and February 2013:

Date	Group	Work carried out	Number of volunteers
16/08/2012	TCV	Step building along Bisham FP 3 (off Quarry Wood Road)	6
11/10/2012	TCV	Step building along Bisham FP 3	6
04/10/2012	TCV	Step building along Bisham FP 3	8
		Total number of task days: 3	Total volunteers: 20

6.3 Partnership working with the East Berks Ramblers

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 autumn 2012 survey results indicate that 91.4 % of the path network is "easy to use" The spring survey result for the year 2012 was 89.9%, giving a combined annual score of **90.7%**.

The East Berks Ramblers completed approximately **228.5 hours** of voluntary work on public rights of way in the borough between August 2012 and February 2013, including both survey work and practical work.

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

6.4 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 has been 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.

Further works by the Community Payback team on a footpath in Sunningdale are currently being planned.

7. THE GREEN WAY

A new link in the Green Way has been created to the north of Ray Mill Road West, through a new public open space managed by the Council's Leisure Services section. The new footpath is to be dedicated as a public right of way (Footpath 90 Maidenhead).

8. MILLENNIUM WALK

One of the priorities set out in the "Milestones Statement 2012/13", approved by the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel in March 2012, 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 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 would 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 potential 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, and other potential funding sources are therefore also being explored.

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 2013/14

The Milestones Statement for 2013/14, which sets out targets and priorities for the year, was submitted to 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" is also included as part of the team's approach to tackling the issue of anti-social dog problems on public rights of way.

The Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way is available online for members of the public to download and print, and the public rights of way information is also available through the Council's MapsOnline service, allowing users to view the paths around their home address.

The Cookham Easy Going Route leaflet has been improved to include special web pages with enhanced information about the route and a 'virtual tour' allowing users to browse detailed photographs of the entire route.

The following publications are now available on the website:

Policy publications and Progress Reports

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

Information leaflets

- Public Rights of Way information booklet
- Public Rights of Way: gardens, hedges and trees leaflet

Promotional leaflets

- The Green Way
- The Millennium Walk

- Map of the Maidenhead Boundary Walk
- Ascot and Sunninghill Circular Walks
- Walk, Discover, Enjoy: Your Sunningdale
- Foot and Cycle Paths in and around Datchet
- Holyport Health Walk
- Cookham Easy Going Route & enhanced web content
- Waltham St Lawrence Parish Paths and Circular Walk Leaflet
- White Waltham Parish and Paths Leaflet
- Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit
- Cookham Bridleway Circuit

Current projects include:

- Development of a Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route leaflet in partnership with the Crown Estate.
- Working in partnership with the East Berks Ramblers to review and improve the Council's information about permitted paths. It is intended that this project, once completed, will lead to more information online about permitted paths.
- Developing a register of authorised structures to enable members of the public to view which gates and stiles have been authorised on a path.

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 (LAF) is *“a partnership to promote and develop sustainable access for the growing benefit of the environment and all in our community”*. Established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the LAF is a statutory forum advising the Council on the management and improvement of public access to land in the Royal Borough for open-air recreation.

The Forum membership is listed at Annexe C. The Forum meets twice a year, with additional informal meetings or site visits as required. The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 6th December 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 web content was developed by the Forum and contains the following:

- Information about the Forum, and how to get involved
- Minutes and agendas for the Forum meetings
- Links and information tailored for walkers, horse riders and cyclists
- Information about the Forum members and projects
- Copies of advice supplied by the Forum's Fast Response Team
- 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 July 2012	Reported 1 st Aug 2012 to 31 st Jan 2013	Closed* 1 st Aug 2012 to 31 st Jan 2013	Total Outstanding at 31st Jan 2013
ENFORCEMENT				
Ploughing and lack of marking	3	8	11	0
Obstruction by crops	1	2	3	0
Fence encroachment	28	1	10	19
Fence obstruction	5	3	4	4
Building obstruction	2	0	1	1
Other obstructions	13	15	7	21
Stiles	31	1	5	27
Gates	9	2	6	5
Bulls/ other animal problems	0	0	0	0
Unauthorised use by horses	1	0	0	1
Unauthorised vehicular use	6	0	2	4
Electric fencing	1	0	0	1
Misleading notices	1	0	1	0
Intimidation	0	0	0	0
Overhanging vegetation	14	3	11	6
Other Enforcement Problems	27	8	12	23
TOTAL ENFORCEMENT:	142	43	73	112
MAINTENANCE				
Vegetation	3	4	3	4
Rutting	5	1	2	4
Drainage	6	1	3	4
Fallen trees	4	6	5	5
Erosion	14	8	7	15
Tree problems	0	1	0	1
Bridges	8	5	4	9
Safety barriers	4	4	5	3
Steps	0	0	0	0
Roadside signposting	7	4	6	5
Signposting at path junctions	3	2	2	3
Waymarking	12	2	8	6
Rubbish/ waste	1	2	1	2
Other Maintenance Problems	19	9	9	19
TOTAL MAINTENANCE:	86	49	55	80
TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT	228	92	128	192

* 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

FEBRUARY 2013

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 concluded in August 2012. Order confirmed and added to Definitive Map as White Waltham FP 25.
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 public inquiry

ANNEXE C

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP

February 2013

Name	Main Interests
Peter Thorn (Chairman)	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
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
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, Cookham Parish Council
Chris Westacott (White Waltham)	Hurley Parish Council, Land Management/ farming

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

6 December 2012

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Interest area
Peter Thorn	Chairman, Land management
Harry Hancock	Vice Chairman, Walking, open spaces
Councillor Beer	Walking, cycling, Old Windsor Parish Council
Councillor Majeed	RBWM
Lynn Cassells	National Trust
James Copas	Farming & land management
Hilary Essen	Walking, health issues, cycling
Gordon Harris	Footpaths, open spaces, Cookham Parish Council
Julie Mason	Walking, web
Christopher Westacott	Land management
Paul Rinder	Farming
Andrew Fletcher	Local Access Forum Secretary
Tanya Leftwich	Clerk to the Forum

OBSERVERS

Annie Keene	
Ray Sharp	Mid & West Berkshire LAF
Phil Smith	East Berkshire Ramblers

APOLOGIES

Name
Councillor John Stretton
Sara Church
Margaret Cubley
William Emmett
Helen Howard
Andrew Randall

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
6 December 2012**

MINUTES

ACTION

1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest

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

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor John Stretton, Sara Church, Margaret Cubley, William Emmett, Helen Howard and Andrew Randall.

The Forum approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 June 2012.

Matters arising from last meeting

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to pages 1-3 of the agenda. It was noted that with regard to item 1.2 **Andrew Fletcher** was in contact with the Special Projects Team who deal with developer contributions about whether these items can be removed. With regard to item 3.1 it was noted that **Andrew Fletcher** was in contact with the RSPCA with regard to signage options.

2 Membership Update

The Chairman, **Peter Thorn**, informed the Forum that **Margaret Bowdery** has chosen to reduce her voluntary activities and has stepped down from the forum. It was noted that **Peter Thorn** had written to **Margaret Bowdery** to thank her for all her hard work, which the Forum endorsed.

3 Members' Update

None reported.

4 Public Rights of way and land management

The Forum welcomed **Paul Rinder**, who had agreed to attend in William Emmett's place. **Paul Rinder** explained that land managers got to see a lot of what was happening in the countryside, especially in urban areas which covered:

- Gates being left open which meant stock were set loose, resulting in damage to both drivers and landowner's property.
- Sheep worrying and maiming.
- Litter and Chinese lanterns that had to be cleared. It was noted that cows often ate plastic bags, which could kill them.
- Bridleways being used to access fields, and vehicles being driven on the fields.
- Hare coursing.
- Deer coursing (usually at night with dogs).
- Drug taking (needles and syringes often found and needed to be dealt with).
- Abandoned cars / burnt out cars / motorbikes driven on land.
- Fly tipping.
- Raves / loud music played at night.
- Travellers.
- Suicides and attempted suicides.
- Football and other games being played on land.

Paul Rinder informed the Forum that whilst landowners ended up policing their land (usually outside the 9am-5pm hours) and keep everything clear he believed the following things could be done in the future to help:

- Footpath signs – to include landowner's numbers, the footpath number and a 24-hour trouble-shooting telephone number.
- Information signs on paths to show where the public where footpaths ran and including information about rules and responsibilities.
- More police enforcement and increased powers to the Council to be able to deal more effectively with issues.
- Increased education for the public about expected behaviour when using public rights of

way.

- Making it easier to change / improve footpaths.
- Landowners to have more information re: ploughing and land crops.
- A little give and take with regard to crops as crops often grow and fall across cross-field paths.

Peter Thorn thanked **Paul Rinder** for his useful ideas and stated that he particularly liked the idea about marking footpaths with their numbers. **Hilary Essen** raised the point that the ideas suggested all had costs associated to them. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that the idea for putting numbers on public footpath signs had been looked at before but it was considered too costly to get signs with specific numbers printed upon them, but suggested that stickers could be used to number current signs and that the work to implement this could potentially be passed to volunteers and parishes.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that, with regard to dog littering, he had written to all professional dog walking organisations and veterinary practices and would be writing shortly to all parish councils. He had to date received two responses, which had been very positive towards the Forum's stance on the subject. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that he would welcome any advice on how to deal with dog littering, or where any particular problem area existed. **Peter Thorn** suggested that members contact **Andrew Fletcher** if they are aware where there is a particular problem. The forum asked whether byelaws could be put in place to enable the Council to deal with dog issues more effectively and **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to investigate this.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

Hilary Essen informed the Forum that she had taken a photo of a motorcyclist, who was driving on a footpath, which she believed, had been a successful deterrent. **Councillor Beer** stated that he believed taking photos could expose people to violence. **Andrew Fletcher** suggested that registration numbers be taken in future and be reported to the Thames Valley Police so that appropriate action could be taken.

Christopher Westacott raised the issue that the law relating to public rights of way encourages landowners to put up 'private' signs on their land wherever people may possibly walk, in order to protect themselves from a claim for public rights. **Harry Hancock** agreed that the overuse of the sign tends to litter the countryside and have a negative impact.

After discussion of the issues it was agreed that **Andrew Fletcher** would write to Brian Martin and ask that Community Wardens make contact with landowners in their areas to establish better liaison and communication. It was felt that this would enable both the landowner and the Council to respond more effectively to problems on their land. It was also agreed that **Peter Thorn** write to Theresa May MP to communicate the forum's concern that the state of the law regarding public rights of way effectively encourages landowners to litter the countryside with "Private" signs.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

**Peter
Thorn**

5 Milestones Statement and targets 2013/14 consultation and analysis of the existing public rights of way network

Andrew Fletcher gave the Forum a short presentation entitled 'An analysis of the Public Rights of Way network'. A copy was available on request from the Clerk.

The presentation covered the following:

- State of the Network
- A few figures
- Outstanding Issues
- Issues resolved 2012
- Outstanding Issues
- Work in progress

Andrew Fletcher explained that the purpose of this report was to consult the forum on the priorities, targets and service standards to be included in the Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2013/14. It was noted that the Milestones Statement was scheduled to be submitted to the Council's Rights of Way and Highway Licensing

Panel on the 12 March 2013.

RESOLVED: After discussion, the forum made the following recommendations:

- All targets save for AC1 remain the same as last year. All members of the forum to send any other suggested changes to Andrew Fletcher which would be collated and sent to all members for comment.
- Target AC1 to be changed to “Create 1 new strategic path, either permitted or public right of way, to fill identified gaps in the network.
- Maintenance and Enforcement of public rights of way should be moved to the top of the priorities list

Andrew
Fletcher
All

All

The deadline for comments in writing to Andrew Fletcher is the 8 January 2013.

Andrew
Fletcher

The forum also requested a report for the LAF concerning the condition of bridleways and the state of the network, particularly identifying gaps and missing links in the network.

6 Public rights of way booklet review

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the purpose of his report was to consult them on the review of the Public Rights of Way Information booklet.

It was requested that a more punchy title be sourced, an example ‘Out in the Country – where can you go and what can you do?’ was given.

It was noted that the target readership was currently everyone but that it could be split into two markets; landowners and walkers if the Forum so wished.

RESOLVED: The forum recommended the following changes:

- The leaflet needs a better title which will appeal to both users and landowners
- The leaflet should be split into 2 sections, one dealing with user rights/information and the other with landowner and farmer related information. These sections should have a colour band at the top to enable ease of use.
- Information about responsible dog ownership should be included
- There should be a clearer definition about who produced the leaflet.
- Information for farmers should include information about the reasons why something should be done rather than simply because it is the law.

Andrew
Fletcher

Hilary
Essen,
Julie
Mason,
Peter
Thorn &
Andrew
Fletcher

It was agreed that Hilary Essen and Julie Mason assist Andrew Fletcher with the work and that the Chairman would proof read the revised document.

7 Farming and ploughing leaflet

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to his report on page 34 of the agenda.

It was noted that the Council was proposing to produce a similar leaflet to Kent County Council and Hampshire County Council to send to farmers and to accompany letters when initial contact was made about ploughing or cropping problems.

James Copas informed the Forum that all the information included in the leaflet was already provided in the annual DEFRA handbooks, which were provided to farmers. Andrew Fletcher responded by explaining that the Council were not planning to print the leaflet but to make publish it electronically, something that could also be emailed or printed out only when needed. It was suggested that the information could be incorporated into a standard letter rather than a leaflet. Andrew Fletcher stated that he believed it was easier to send a reminder rather than having to arrange enforcement.

RESOLVED: It was agreed unanimously to proceed with the electronic version of the leaflet only so that it could be sent out with a reminder letter.

Andrew Fletcher

8 Devolution of public rights of way services to parishes

Andrew Fletcher explained that the report updated the Forum about the role of Parish Council's in public rights of way work, and progress in the devolution of public rights of way works to Parish Councils.

It was noted that the Council was offering Parish Councils the opportunity to administer the service within their areas thus enabling them to locally determine how the service was provided.

Andrew Fletcher explained that the service was currently carried out by a single contractor covering all Parishes in the Royal Borough with the exception of Cookham and Old Windsor, who already arranged routine vegetation clearance on public rights of way in their areas.

It was noted that the value of the contract for 2012/13 was £18,000 and that invitations for tender for the 2013/14 contract was due to be issued in January 2013. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that the contract included a schedule of programmed works for example strimming and mowing vegetation growing on the paths, and a unit price for reactive tree clearance works. It was noted that the Royal Borough usually had between 40-50 requests for tree clearance per annum.

RESOLVED: The forum recommended that option 3 is the best approach for managing the PROW service, for the following reasons:

- **RBWM is able to synchronise and arrange jobs in the same area, leading to economies of scale**
- **The work can be completed to the same standard if RBWM are managing the contract**
- **RBWM is able to maintain their database of issues and delegate some work over to volunteer groups where possible.**
- **It is easier for RBWM officers to manage cross-boundary maintenance rather than if it was managed at a parish council level.**
- **Parish Councils may have differing priorities to the public.**

Andrew Fletcher

9 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 and a leaflet promoting the Walk had been published by Maidenhead Civic Society and the East Berkshire Ramblers. It was noted that a signage of the route was also being explored.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that discussions were continuing with the landowners on the proposal to create a new public footpath from Lower Cookham Road and Thames Path National Trail. It was noted that a funding contribution of £50,000 towards the cost of creating the proposed new footpath had been secured through a S106 Planning Agreement although it was highlighted that these funds would not become available until commencement of the development and there was no indication that the development was imminent. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that an alternative source of funding was therefore being explored by Maidenhead Civic Society and the Council.

(b) Volunteer works

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to report which could be found on pages 43 and 44 of the agenda and explained that the Council continued to engage and work with The Conservation Volunteers (formerly BTCV) and the Windsor and Maidenhead Conservation Volunteers (WMVC).

(c) Multi-use paths

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to report which could be found on page 44 of the agenda and explained that work had started to create a multi-use route along the cycle tracks and the Jubilee River paths at Eton on a one-year trial basis. It was noted that discussions were currently ongoing with Eton College regarding the trial route and that a meeting had been arranged for the 18th December, the project was currently on hold pending the outcome of the meeting.

Councillor Beer offered his help by explaining that a fellow Councillor was a tutor at Eton College and was a keen cyclist and walker and might be interested in being involved. **Councillor Beer** agreed to let him know about the scheme.

(d) LAF website & online form

Andrew Fletcher explained that the LAF website had been reviewed and updated following the last Forum meeting where the Forum had asked for a report about the number of website hits and the amount of feedback received. It was noted that, whilst complete information was not available, the information that was available could be found on page 44 of the agenda. **Andrew Fletcher** thanked **Julie Mason** for her help and support.

(e) Easy going routes

Andrew Fletcher explained that the Cookham Easy Going Route web pages had been developed following the advice of the Forum in June.

It was noted that the Windsor Great Park leaflet was still in development and had been revised following advice from the Access Advisory Forum. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that he hoped the leaflet would be ready for publication in January.

Andrew Fletcher explained that the web pages would be developed following the template established during the creation of the Cookham Easy Going Route web pages. **Julie Mason** requested that a mini-map be included to show where the photos shown were located. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to implement this.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

12 **Date of Next Meeting**

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 8.40pm.