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|----------------------------|
| Report for: Information |
| Item Number: 6 |



| | |
|--|---|
| Contains Confidential or Exempt Information | No |
| Title | PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY: 6-MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT |
| Responsible Officer(s) | Anthony Hurst, Principal Rights of Way Officer Ben Smith, Strategic Manager Highways and Transport |
| Contact officer, job title and phone number | Anthony Hurst, Principal Rights of Way Officer 01628-796180 |
| For Consideration By | Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel |
| Date to be Considered | 4 th March 2014 |
| Affected Wards | All |

Report Summary
This report updates the Panel on progress made with Public Rights of Way issues during the period from August 2013 to February 2014. The Progress Report is attached as Appendix 1. Progress Reports are submitted to the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel in March and September each year, and are also circulated to all members of the borough's Local Access Forum. During the 6-months reporting period the number of outstanding reported problems on public rights of way fell from **181** to **119**.

| If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit? | |
|--|---|
| Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit | Dates by which residents can expect to notice a difference |
| Effective monitoring of the Council's performance in providing the Public Rights of Way service. | 2014/15 |

- 1. RECOMMENDATION:** that the Panel notes the report.
- 2. Financial Details:** impact on the budget: none (information report only).
- 3. Legal Implications:** current legal cases are discussed in sections 4 and 5 of the Progress Report.
- 4. Value for Money:** effective monitoring of the Council's Public Rights of Way Service ensures that good value for money is achieved in meeting agreed objectives.

5. Sustainability Impact Appraisal: effective management of the public rights of way network has a positive impact on sustainable transport by encouraging alternative forms of transport to the car.

6. Risk Management: none (information report only).

7. Links to Strategic Objectives: effective management of the public rights of way network has a positive impact on healthy lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling.

8. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion: the Progress Report refers to a number of initiatives aimed at improving access to the countryside for people with disabilities or restricted mobility, the elderly and people with young children or pushchairs.

9. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications: n/a

10. Property and Assets: n/a

11. Consultation: the Progress Report includes the minutes of the December 2013 meeting of the RBWM Local Access Forum, a statutory consultative Forum established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

12. Timetable for Implementation: 2013/14

13. Appendices: Appendix 1: Public Rights of Way: 6-monthly Progress Report August 2013 to February 2014.

14. Background Information: none (information report only).

18. Consultation

| Name of consultee | Post held and Department | Date sent | Date received | See comments in paragraph: |
|--------------------|---|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Internal | | | | |
| Cllr John Stretton | Panel Chairman | | Briefing 19 th Feb | |
| Cllr Maureen Hunt | Panel Vice-chair | | Briefing 19 th Feb | |
| Ben Smith | Strategic Manager, Highways & Transport | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Report History

| Decision type: | Urgency item? |
|----------------|---------------|
| Key decision | No |

| Full name of report author(s) | Job title | Full contact no: |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Anthony Hurst | Principal Officer – Rights of Way | 01628 796180 |

Schedule for writing and reviewing report

| Stages in the life of the report (not all will apply) | Date to complete |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Officer writes report | 7/2/2014 |
| 2. To Chairman's Briefing | 19/2/2014 |
| 3. To Panel | 4/3/2014 |

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

AUGUST 2013-FEBRUARY 2014

The total number of outstanding reported problems on Public Rights of Way has fallen from **181** to **119** during the six month period, (*see table at Annex A for further details*).

1. ENFORCEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

| | Outstanding on 31 st Aug 2013 | Reported 31 st Aug 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Closed 31 st Aug 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Outstanding 31 st Jan 2014 |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Enforcement problems | 102 | 12 | 59 | 55 |

Examples of enforcement cases that have been resolved:

| Path | Date reported | Problem |
|---|---------------|---|
| Bray Footpath 57(off Oakley Green Road) | 6/3/2012 | Adjacent fence falling into the path and causing obstruction. <i>Fence realigned by landowner.</i> |
| | 13/8/2013 | Field gate along the path locked and obstructing use of the path. <i>Field gate moved by landowner to allow free access along the side by the public.</i> |
| Bray Footpath 40(off Windsor Road) | 30/5/2013 | Barbed wire along the side of the path causing a potential hazard. <i>Barbed wire removed from footpath by landowner.</i> |
| Eton Footpath 26 (off Keats Lane) | 2/9/2013 | Entrance to footpath from Keats Lane completely blocked by builders fencing. <i>Fencing removed by landowner</i> |
| Maidenhead Restricted Byway 72 (Nightingale Lane) | 16/10/2013 | Hedges overgrowing from both sides of the lane. <i>Hedges cut back by landowners</i> |
| Maidenhead FP 87(off Westborough Road) | 10/6/2013 | Adjacent bushes from property overgrowing the footpath. <i>Vegetation cut back by landowner.</i> |
| Waltham St Lawrence FP 8 (off Halls Lane) | 3/9/2013 | Path has been ploughed and not reinstated. <i>Path marked out by landowner with 14 day deadline.</i> |
| Waltham St Lawrence FP 41(off Brook Lane) | 21/5/2012 | Path blocked by electric fencing and post and rail fencing. <i>Barriers removed by Council.</i> |
| White Waltham Footpath 19 (off Howe Lane) | 25/8/2013 | Potentially deterrent sign erected along the path. <i>Sign removed by landowner.</i> |

The following enforcement cases have been reported to the Rural Payments Agency under Defra's Cross Compliance procedure:

| Path | Date Reported | Problem |
|---|---------------|---|
| Bisham Footpath 32 (Town Farm, Bisham) | 17/10/2013 | Path obstructed by crops. <i>Path reinstated by farmer.</i> |
| Eton Bridleway 17 & Footpath 19 (South Field, Eton) | 22/10/2013 | Path obstructed by crops. <i>Path reinstated by farmer.</i> |

2. MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Problems reported and problems closed

| | Outstanding on 31 st Aug 2013 | Reported 31 st Aug 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Closed 31 st Aug 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Outstanding 31 st Jan 2014 |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Maintenance problems | 79 | 56 | 71 | 64 |

Examples of maintenance and improvement projects completed:

| | |
|---|---|
| Wraysbury FP 9 (north of Magna Carta Lane) | Tree clearance and surface improvements |
| Sunninghill FP 5 (off Church Lane) | Repairs to boardwalk |
| White Waltham Restricted Byway 8 (Snowball Hill/Paley Street) | Surface improvements |
| Cox Green FP 4 (off Firs lane) | Surface improvements |
| Cox Green FP 7 (off Woodlands Park Avenue) | Surface improvements |
| Bisham FP 21(Temple) | Surface improvements |
| Windsor FP 9 (Thames Path at Home Park) | Surface improvements |
| Waltham St Law. FP 34 (off Hungerford Lane) | Stiles replaced with gaps and gates |
| Old Windsor FP 3 (opposite Bells of Ouseley PH) | Installation of a new safety rail alongside the river |

Works due to be carried out

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

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Hurley FP 11(off Shepherds Close) | Surface improvements |
| Sunningdale FP 13 (off Beech Hill Road) | Surface improvements |
| Maidenhead FP 6 (off Blackamoor Lane) | Surface improvements |

3. STORMS AND FLOODS

Over 100 storm-blown trees needed to be cleared from public rights of way in the borough following the heavy winds in October/November 2013, and most of the Thames Path National Trail within the borough was closed for approximately 3 weeks during January/February 2014 due to severe flooding.

4. DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER (DMMO) applications (path claims)

4.1 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 was also received for the land crossed by these claimed footpaths. The Village Green

application was refused following a public inquiry held in November 2012, but is currently subject to a Judicial Review. Consideration of the footpath application is on hold until the outcome of the Village Green Judicial Review.

4.2 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.

4.3 Maidenhead claimed footpath 530 (land west of Bray Road)

A DMMO application was received in February 2013 to add to the Definitive Map a footpath across land to the west of Maidenhead Road. This application was refused in January 2014, and the applicant has lodged an appeal.

4.5 Windsor claimed footpath 501

A DMMO application was received in September 2013 to add to the Definitive Map a footpath running from Oxford Road to Clewer Fields, Windsor. This application is currently being processed.

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 carried out and a certificate of completion has been issued.

5.2 Maidenhead Footpath 90 (The Green Way)

In January 2014 a new section of footpath that crosses land to the north of Ray Mill Road West, (owned by RBWM and the National Trust) has been dedicated as a public footpath, and will be added to the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way as Maidenhead Footpath 90.

5.3 Hurley Footpath 25 (Channers)

A Diversion Order to divert part of Hurley Footpath 25 was confirmed in October 2013. The diversion will come into effect once works to construct the new section of footpath have been carried out and a certificate of completion has been issued.

5.4 Shottesbrooke Footpath 5 (Waltham footbridge)

A Diversion Order to divert part of Shottesbrooke Footpath 5 was confirmed in December 2013 and has come into effect. The diversion involved the replacement of a footbridge across the railway as part of the Great Western Mainline Electrification Programme.

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. 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.

6.2 Volunteers

The Public Rights of Way team work with "The Conservation Volunteers" (TCV) to carry out practical work on public rights of way in the borough. Works are also carried out by Community Payback (CP) teams organised by the Probation Service.

The following projects were completed between August 2013 and February 2014:

| Date | Group | Work carried out | Number of participants |
|-----------|-------|---|------------------------------|
| 7/11/2013 | TCV | Bisham FP 3 (off Quarry Wood Road): steps and handrails installed | 7 |
| | | Total number of task days: 1 | Total participants: 7 |

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.

7. 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 2014/15, which sets out targets and priorities for the year, is being submitted for approval by the Rights of Way & Highways Licensing Panel at its meeting on 4th March.

Public Rights of Way information booklet

An updated and expanded version of the Council's Public Rights of Way information booklet was published in December 2013. This booklet was produced by the Rights of Way team in conjunction with the RBWM Local Access Forum.

Public Rights of Way section of Borough website (*currently under review*)

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.

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 following publications are now available on the website:

Policy publications and Progress Reports

- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2005-2015
- Milestones Statement 2013/14
- 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
- Ploughing, crops and paths: a practical guide

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
- Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route & enhanced web content
- Waltham St Lawrence Parish Paths and Circular Walk
- White Waltham Parish and Paths
- Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit
- Cookham Bridleway Circuit

Current projects

- Development of a register of authorised structures to enable members of the public to view authorised gates and stiles.
- Preparation for the re-design of the RBWM website

The public rights of way web pages can be found at:

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

8. 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 3rd December 2013 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).

ANNEXE A**Recorded problems on Public Rights of Way in the Borough**

| | Outstanding at 31 st August 2013 | Reported 1 st Sept 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Closed* 1 st Sept 2013 to 31 st Jan 2014 | Total Outstanding at 31st Jan 2014 |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| ENFORCEMENT | | | | |
| Ploughing and lack of marking | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Obstruction by crops | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fence encroachment | 18 | 1 | 4 | 15 |
| Fence obstruction | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Building obstruction | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Other obstructions | 19 | 3 | 9 | 13 |
| Stiles | 22 | 0 | 12 | 10 |
| Gates | 6 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Bulls/ other animal problems | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unauthorised use by horses | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Unauthorised vehicular use | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Electric fencing | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Misleading notices | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Intimidation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overhanging vegetation | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Other Enforcement Problems | 22 | 0 | 16 | 6 |
| | | | | |
| TOTAL ENFORCEMENT: | 102 | 12 | 59 | 55 |
| MAINTENANCE | | | | |
| Vegetation | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Rutting | 4 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Drainage | 6 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Fallen trees | 6 | 16 | 16 | 6 |
| Erosion | 14 | 10 | 10 | 14 |
| Tree problems | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Bridges | 9 | 7 | 9 | 7 |
| Safety barriers | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Steps | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Roadside signposting | 6 | 7 | 10 | 3 |
| Signposting at path junctions | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Waymarking | 7 | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| Rubbish/ waste | 1 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Other Maintenance Problems | 15 | 3 | 5 | 13 |
| | | | | |
| TOTAL MAINTENANCE: | 79 | 56 | 71 | 64 |
| TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT | 181 | 68 | 130 | 119 |

ANNEXE B

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

FEBRUARY 2014

| Parish | Claim no | Claim date | Path description | | Current status |
|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|----------------|---|
| | | | From | To | |
| 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 Judicial Review into village green application |
| Maidenhead | FP 530 | 2013 | Bray Road | Field boundary | Order refused January 2014, appeal lodged by applicant. |
| Windsor | FP 501 | 2013 | Oxford Road | Clewer Fields | Under investigation |

ANNEXE C**LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP****February 2014**

| Name | Main Interests |
|--|---|
| Peter Thorn (Basildon, Berks) (Chairman) | Land management |
| Harry Hancock (Vice-chair) (Burnham, Bucks) | Walking, open spaces |
| 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) | Walking and open spaces |
| Christine Gadd (Sunningdale) | Sunningdale Parish Council, walking and cycling |
| Gordon Harris (Cookham) | Cookham Parish Council, footpaths and open spaces |
| Helen Howard (Bray) | Bray Parish Council, horse riding |
| Phil Jackson (Wraysbury) | Walking, cycling, open spaces |
| 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 |
| Phil Smith (Maidenhead) | Walking, East Berks Ramblers |
| Joanne Stickland (Datchet) | Datchet Parish Council, walking and cycling, |
| 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

3 DECEMBER 2013

ATTENDANCE LIST

| Name | Interest area |
|-----------------|--|
| Peter Thorn | Chairman, land management |
| Harry Hancock | Vice Chairman, walking, open spaces, Mid-Thames Ramblers |
| Councillor Beer | Walking, cycling, Old Windsor Parish Council |
| Sara Church | Horse Riding, British Horse Society |
| Margaret Cubley | Walking, Access issues, Bisham Parish Council |
| John Foulger | Walking, open spaces, public rights of way |
| Christine Gadd | Footpaths, open spaces, Cookham Parish Council |
| Gordon Harris | |
| Andrew Fletcher | Local Access Forum Secretary |
| Tanya Leftwich | Clerk to the Forum |

OBSERVERS

Annie Keene

APOLOGIES

Name

Councillor John Stretton
Hilary Essen
Julie Mason
Joanne Stickland

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
3 DECEMBER 2013

MINUTES

- 1 **Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest** ACTION
- The Chairman **Peter Thorn** welcomed everyone to the twenty-ninth meeting of the Local Access Forum.
- Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor John Stretton, Hilary Essen, Julie Mason, and Joanne Stickland. The Forum wished Hilary Essen a speed recovery.
- The Forum, although not quorate, approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 June 2013. It was agreed that **Andrew Fletcher** would seek final approval of the decisions of the LAF subsequent to the meeting. AF
- Matters arising from last meeting
- Item 1.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that he had sourced suitable stickers to go onto the finger signs in the Royal Borough and landowners who had expressed an interest in specific signs for their land had been contacted regarding the type of information they wished to display. It was noted that bespoke laminated signs would be supplied by the Council upon request. It was suggested that the Ramblers Association and Parish Councils might assist in fixing the stickers to the relevant signs. **Councillor Beer** agreed to fix the stickers to the relevant signs in Old Windsor and **Sara Church** agreed to cover Eton. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to chase up, in the New Year, the bespoke signs that included small maps and a troubleshooting telephone number. AF
- Item 2.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that links to the Nature in Parks leaflets had been included in the related links on the public rights of way publications page.
- Item 2.2 = It was noted that an email had been sent to the Council's Leisure team and Communications team to look at improving the links and combining information where possible on the RBWM website.
- Item 2.3 = The Forum was informed that the Nature in Parks leaflets currently contained contact information for members of the public. ALL
- Item 5.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that Phil Smith had agreed to be part of the LAF Fast Response Team and it was noted that one additional member representing land management interests was needed to balance the group. Volunteers were asked to contact **Andrew Fletcher**.
- Item 6.1 = It was noted that the LAF annual report for 2012-2013 had been published.
- Item 6.2 = The Forum was informed that the Natural England pro-forma had been completed and sent to Natural England.
- Item 7.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that advice received was that the signs and set up for the multi-use route were fine and that provided the surface was suitable there was unlikely to be any liability issue for the Council if an accident was to occur on the multi-use path. AF
- Item 8.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the entire RBWM website was in the

process of being reviewed and revamped and until then this project had been put on hold.

Item 9.1 = **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to contact Healthwatch to see if they could assist the LAF in joining the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board or at least mention its existence and role. It was agreed that more information would be brought to the next meeting.

Item 9.2 = It was noted that the materials from the South East Local Access Forum conference had been added to the GroupSpaces site on the 1st July 2013.

2 **Members' Update**

Harry Hancock informed the Forum that he had attended the last Bucks County Council LAF meeting which he had found very interesting. The Forum was informed that there was a closed railway line in Bucks that ran from Oxford to Cambridge which cut through the north of the county which was due to be re-opened. It was noted that the trains would run at 125mph which meant level crossings could not be used resulting in new bridges needing to be constructed which was costly. **Harry Hancock** informed the Forum that the Chiltern Conservation Board had been given £868,000 to develop cycling in the Chilterns and that an electric charging point had been installed in Henley Station.

Harry Hancock went on to inform the Forum that a new group had been formed called Chiltern Romability which aims to promote access to the countryside for disabled people of all types. It was noted that this new group campaigns for stiles / gates to be removed and were looking to make five well known beauty spots in the Chilterns a priority.

Harry Hancock informed the Forum that Bucks County Council had transferred its Rights of Way Team to a private sub-contractor who would be responsible for maintenance on an on-going exclusive contract for seven years. It was noted that in the first year the Bucks Forum had stated that there had been a marked deterioration in the standard of service which they considered to be unacceptable. **Harry Hancock** went on to explain that the Bucks Forum wanted to establish reasons for the decline in service as the transfer had raised a number of concerns, and were asking what safeguards were in place to maintain standards.

Harry Hancock agreed to provide a further update at the next meeting.

HH

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that on-going discussions were taking place in Old Windsor with regard to disabled access and footpath gates. It was noted that operated gate solution was being investigated which would allow use by mobility scooters but also prevent children running ahead into the road. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that a roadside barrier had been considered but was not feasible as it would obstruct access to driveways. **Councillor Beer** explained that this would be on the busy Straight Road through Old Windsor near to the Speed Camera

3 **Membership update**

General Forum membership

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that everyone had been invited to re-apply and that all members had been approved. It was noted that Dorothy Allard had stood down from the forum.

LAF Fast Response Team membership

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that Phil Smith had joined the Fast Response Team which currently stood at three members. It was noted that the team had a post vacant for a member with land management interests. **Andrew Fletcher** asked members to volunteer to join the Fast Response Team if they were able.

4 Election of Chair & Vice Chair

It was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

5 Milestones Statement and targets 2013/2014 consultation

Andrew Fletcher gave everyone a short presentation ‘An analysis of the Public Rights of Way network’ which covered the state of the network, a few figures about the number of gates, bridges, stiles, barriers, steps, boardwalks and signpost and waymark posts in the Royal Borough, the number of outstanding issues, a breakdown of the number of issues resolved in 2013, a breakdown of the number of outstanding issues and work in progress (before and after photos).

The **Chairman** congratulated **Andrew Fletcher** and his team on their achievements.

Andrew Fletcher updated the Forum on the progress of the Milestone Targets for 2013/14:

- WM2 was currently at 12 major surface improvements or vegetation clearance with the target being 10.
- WM3 was currently at 5 bridges having been repaired or replaced with the target being 5.
- LD1 - Zero had been completed with the target being 4.
- LD2 – Zero had been completed with the target being 1.
- WP1 – the Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route leaflet had been produced with the target being 1. **Andrew Fletcher** showed everyone present an electronic version of the leaflet which is available on the Councils website, with paper copies available from Council offices in Maidenhead and Windsor as well as in the libraries. It was noted that copies of the leaflet would also be sent to ramblers wardens, and parish councils in the Royal Borough. **Peter Thorn** recorded his thanks to everyone who had contributed to the leaflet.
- WP2 - the Public Rights of Way information booklet had been produced in partnership with LAF with the target being 1.
- AC1 - One had been completed with the target being 1.
- AC2 – 9 stiles had been replaced with 4 coming forward – the target being 20.
- EN1 – 19 enforcement issues had been resolved – the target being 30.

AF

The following milestone targets for 2014/15 were **agreed by the forum**:

- WM1: Retain target for paths easy to use at **95%**
- WM2: Retain target for major surface and vegetation clearance works at **10**
- WM3: Retain target for the repair or replacement of bridges at **5**
- Combine the target LD1 and LD2 to the following:
“To actively progress applications to add public rights of way to the Definitive Map including resolving significant errors in the map”
- WP1: Retain target to produce **1** leaflet publicising access opportunities for people with special needs
- WP2: Retain target to assist others to produce **1** new publication
- Add new target to develop and enhance the information available online for public rights of way, including the use of social media where appropriate
- AC1: Retain target to create **1** new strategic path, either public right of way or permitted, to fill identified gaps in the network
- AC2: Change target to the following:
“To make **20** physical access improvements, including the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps, to facilitate use by those with special needs, the elderly, people with pushchairs etc.”
- EN1: Changes target to the following:
“To resolve **30** enforcement issues within 4 months of first being reported”

The Forum **agreed** the following work programme for the coming year:

- Multi-use paths / routes. AF
 - Linking of bridleways.
 - Improvements to cycling.
- 6 Improvements for cycling in Maidenhead**
- Peter Thorn** informed the Forum that **Hilary Essen** was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting to address her item.
- Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that there had been 161 injury collisions involving cyclists reported over the last three years. It was noted that of these incidents they had occurred in urban areas, in the centre of Maidenhead (and towards the A4) and in the centre of Windsor (and near the A308).
- Christine Gadd** explained that a safe cycling and walking route to and from Charters School was included as part of their Neighbourhood Plan.
- Peter Thorn** informed the Forum that he would ask **Hilary Essen** to publish a note to the forum's 'GroupSpaces' website and give an update at the next meeting. It was suggested that **Gordon Oliver** (the RBWM Principal Transport Policy Officer) be invited to attend a future meeting and address the Forum on cycling. PT
- Councillor Beer** volunteered to attend a Windsor workshop on this subject if **Hilary Essen** was unable to attend. AF
- Councillor Beer**
- 7 Horse riding and multi-use routes**
- Sara Church** informed the Forum that a lot of riders she had come into contact with had said the multi-use routes were brilliant.
- Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that he had only received two responses to the multi-use routes – one was a complaint about horse dung and the other response from an Eton resident was to request that it be made permanent. . Sara Church agreed to encourage more support for the multi-use routes from fellow horse riders. It was noted that the multi-use route would be reviewed in May 2014 SC
- Peter Thorn suggested that **Andrew Fletcher** write to Parish Councils to ask them to help identify multi-user paths/routes. AF
- 8 Authorised structure register**
- Andrew Fletcher** referred everyone to the authorised structure register that he had distributed at the start of the meeting. AF
- The forum felt that a list of authorised structures would not be particularly useful to most people, however the forum **recommended** that a map containing layers of information be added to the web to show the locations of the stiles, gates, and other path furniture.
- 9 LAF Monitoring items**
- Easy going routes
- Andrew Fletcher** referred the Forum to page 13 of the agenda. Peter Thorn suggested that **Andrew Fletcher** write to the Access Advisory Forum & Parish Councils to ask them to help identify potential new areas for Easy Going Routes. AF
- Public rights of way information booklet
- Andrew Fletcher** referred the Forum to page 13 of the agenda. Thanks to Julie Mason were recorded.
- Volunteer works
- Andrew Fletcher** referred the Forum to pages 13&14 of the agenda. It was noted that

no further volunteer works had been scheduled at present, but The Conservation Volunteers have submitted a bid for grant funding for works in 2014/2015.

LAF members' discussion forum

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to page 14 of the agenda. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that he was keen to encourage everyone to use the LAF online forum as it was a useful way for members to discuss issues between scheduled meetings.

All

It was suggested that the LAF online forum be opened up and made available to other interested associations such as horse riding groups, etc.

AF

10 Activities of the LAF Fast Response Team

The Forum was referred to pages 15-18 of the agenda.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Local Access Forum was to be confirmed.

The meeting which started at 6.30pm, ended at 9.20pm.