

NOTICE
OF
MEETING

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

will meet on

TUESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2019

at

6.30 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD

TO: MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

COUNCILLORS PHIL HASELER, MAUREEN HUNT AND JULIAN SHARPE
& EXTERNAL MEMBERS: http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/laf_members.htm

Karen Shepherd
Head of Governance
Issued: 18th November 2019

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting.

The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the
Panel Administrator **Mark Beeley** 01628 796345

Accessibility - Members of the public wishing to attend this meeting are requested to notify the clerk in advance of any accessibility issue.

Fire Alarm - In the event of the fire alarm sounding or other emergency, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

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AGENDA - PART 1

ITEM	SUBJECT			PAGE NO
1.	Welcome, Apologies and Introductions	20 mins	Geoff Priest	-
	a) Declarations of Interest		All	3 - 4
	b) Approval of Minutes - 4th July 2019		Clerk	5 - 10
	c) Matters arising from the last meeting		Jacqui Wheeler	11 - 12
2.	Members' Update	10 mins	All	Verbal Report
3.	Membership and Staff Update	2 mins	Jacqui Wheeler	Verbal Report
4.	Horse Riding and Multi-Use Provision - Creation of Sub Group	10 mins	Geoff Priest	13 - 28
5.	Accessibility Audits Working Group	10 mins	Lisa Hughes/Dom Lethbridge/Steve Gillions	Verbal Report
6.	Battlemead Common Visit/Update	5 mins	Jacqui Wheeler/Lisa Hughes	29 - 44
7.	Milestones Summary Report 2019	5 mins	Jacqui Wheeler	45 - 48
8.	Local Plan Further Consultation		Jacqui Wheeler	49 - 50
9.	Future Site Visits	5 mins	Jacqui Wheeler	Verbal Report
10.	Date of next meeting TBC 2020 – decided at February council			

MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: 'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: 'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

4 July 2019

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Interest area
Lisa Hughes	Users, Accessibility
Alan Keene	Users
Steve Gillions	Users, walking
Dom Lethbridge	Landowner
Geoff Priest (Chairman)	Hurley Parish Council
	User – Young People
David Clenshaw	User - walking
Anne Woodward	User – horse riding
Trisha Mentzel	User – horse riding
Jacqui Wheeler (LAF Secretary)	RBWM
Nabihah Hassan-Farooq	RBWM

APOLOGIES

Name
James Copas
Councillor Maureen Hunt
Councillor Philip Haseler
Councillor Julian Sharpe
Lynn Penfold

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
4 July 2019
MINUTES**

1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves. Members were reminded that the meeting was being audio recorded and this would be available on the Council website in due course.

Apologies for absence were received from James Copas, Lynn Penfold Councillors Sharpe, Hunt & Haseler.

A) DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

B) MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 5TH FEB 2019

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY; That the minutes of the last meeting held on the 5th February 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

2 Terms of Reference Review

Members of the panel discussed the current terms of reference and the need to reduce the quorate for meetings. Current quota arrangements as per the terms of reference relied upon 50% attendance and it was agreed that in practical terms this should in theory be reduced to 6 members with the chairman having a casting vote. It was agreed that the quorate should be reduced to limit the number of cancelled meetings re-occurring. Members were informed that any comments or amendments to the terms of reference should be communicated to the clerk, Nabihah.hassan-farooq@rbwm.gov.uk by Wednesday 26th July, 2019.

Nabihah explained that the LAF has now been removed from the Borough's constitution which is a change in status of the LAF. Though there is little difference in operation only that decisions about the way the Forum runs no longer have to go through Full Council.

A) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

Jacqui Wheeler and Geoff Priest (LAF Chairman) outlined that there were various matters arising from the last meeting which included:

4.1 – Members were informed that the Cookham Cycleway project would require further work and that this was a long term ambition project in conjunction with the project centre and as part of the larger Cycling Action Plan.

Members queried whether there had been any links forged with Cookham Parish Councillors and it was confirmed that there had been some conversations with Moor Hall as a stakeholder in relation to the Cookham Cycleway project. It was highlighted that there was an additional 2.3m needed of land for the access route to be provided as part of the wider cycling route. It was noted that Moor Hall did not seem wholly on board with allowing access through the grounds due to staff and security issues and it was confirmed that this access route would not be a public right of way. Jacqui Wheeler stated that she would be pursuing the project as a permissive cycle path with the owners' agreement and would update the forum as soon as possible.

Members queried what the use of the path would be classified as and it was confirmed that the preference of the Local Authority was to pursue this pathway as a multiuser accessible route. Some Forum Members highlighted their concerns as existing bridle path users and highlighted some of the issues that they had encountered when accessing bridle paths through the Cookham area and highlighted that not all surfaces were not currently suitable for horses.

Members were informed that there were currently 31 land owners involved with the plan to implement and develop the Cookham Cycle route and that discussions were being had with these important stakeholders.

4.2- A Joint Chairs meeting is due to be held with the LAF Chairs and there would be an update at the next meeting on the progress of the Forums. Jacqui Wheeler and Geoff Priest would attend once the dates were announced.

4.3- It was highlighted that it was important to have links with Surrey. Jacqui Wheeler would contact the Surrey LAF representative with regards to future joint chair meetings.

6.1- It was highlighted that Geoff Priest would meet in his capacity as LAF Chairman with Jacqui Wheeler and Anthony Hurst to discuss ways in which the LAF could be promoted through the RBWM Council website and for any further improvements to current available web pages related to the LAF.

6.2- It was noted that efforts would be made to contact the new Crown Estate representative- John Olive and that this would be reported back to the LAF at the next meeting. It was highlighted that no communication had yet been received despite efforts to make contact with the new representative but that members were aware of the work related to the pressures of starting a new role.

6.3- Members were informed that efforts would be made to contact younger representatives to attend the LAF, by contacting local organisations and groups such as BCA.

ACTION- To co-opt a non-voting youth representative from a relevant and associated organisation and to amend the terms of reference to include this subject to this being lawful under the LAF legislation.

3 Members update

Members were introduced to the three new forum members and welcomed their contributions. Members were also informed that there was new councillor representation and that the new councillors were as follows; Councillors Haseler and Sharpe. The Chairman was delighted with the ongoing membership of Councillor Hunt and advised that due to commitments they had been unable to attend the forum meeting on this occasion.

4 Milestone Statement 2019 -2020 Final

Members were informed that this was an information item and that the Milestone Statement had been approved by Full Council earlier this year. The Milestone statement set out achievements and targets for the upcoming year. The statement sought to look at the way in which targets were set, addressed and clear incident management reporting. Members were told that there had been one outstanding action in relation to parishes creating a publication of footpath maps and that this was still currently outstanding but being worked upon.

5 Urgent Response Team

Geoff Priest highlighted that there was a need for the LAF to work and resolve matters between meetings with urgency and as such it was recommended that

an urgent response team be created. The urgent response team would deal with issues that had been flagged as urgent via email, carry out important site visits and work to provide improvements and resolutions. Members of the Forum were asked whether they were able to commit to becoming a part of this additional LAF feature and it was confirmed that Lisa Hughes, Dom Lethbridge and Geoff Priest would form the co-hort for the urgent response team.

6 Battlemead Common Update

Jacqui Wheeler outlined the above titled item. Members were shown a short video clip of the Battlemead Common site. It was outlined that this large piece of land had been acquired by RBWM and had significant amounts of wildlife. The primary reason for purchasing this land was to enable open access. At a recent Friends of Battlemead Common meeting (held on the 18th June), there has been a deeper discussion relating to the types of wildlife on site which included birds and various species of woodland mammals. There were currently 68 varieties of birds and 8 species of mammals, 100 species of shrubs and trees. Members were told that this piece of land was unique as it had both woodland, wetlands and was uniquely placed adjacent to the Thames river. It was outlined that this was a fantastic opportunity for residents to access a significant asset of the borough, but that there were challenges in enabling access without detriment to wildlife on the site. . Members were told that this piece of land had been privately owned and had now been successfully purchased by RBWM.

ACTION- That Jacqui Wheeler circulates the minutes of the Friends of Battlemead Common meeting held on the 18th June 2019 to LAF members.

It was highlighted that there were 40 attendees at the Friends of Battlemead Common meeting and that this included individuals from Cookham Society, Maidenhead Rotary, Ramblers, Access Advisory Forum, Thames Path, LAF and Waterways Board. There had been a range of external stakeholders also present at the meeting and that this had been hosted and facilitated by Kevin Mist, Directorates Project Lead- Communities & Enforcement. It was noted that this was the first tentative attempt to discuss public rights of way plans and access whilst looking at the competing needs of recreation and conservation for the area. Members were told that discussions had been had in relation to when the site would be opened and it was confirmed that an extensive site survey and lifespan of flora and fauna survey was yet to be carried out. Forum Members were advised that the next Friends of Battlemead Common meeting would take place in September.

ACTION- That Jacqui Wheeler forward invitation for the September, Friends of Battlemead Common meeting to LAF members.

At the conclusion of the verbal update members discussed the following;

Planning applications- It was outlined that the planning application would be considered at the relevant development management panel in August and that permitted pathways were planned for opening in July. It was also highlighted that further fencing would need to be added to the site for areas needing protection.

Signage- Members highlighted the need for adequate signage in relation to the routes, protected species and for access reasons.

Car park- Members queried whether there would be a car park to access the

site. It was confirmed that there would be two pedestrian access points from the planned car park space and that there were some challenges with the current visibility of the displays in place. It was also outlined by Dom Lethbridge that the National Trust had looked at the hedgerow aligning the entrance to the intended car park and that this would need to be cut back to Widbrook Common.

Boundary Walk- Members queried whether this piece of land would now complete the boundary walk. It was outlined that this piece of land was the missing link in the boundary walk and that boundary stones had been found on the site. Members were also informed that from the site views of Cliveden Estate could be seen.

Public Rights of Way- It was queried whether RBWM would consider opening the paths permissions to becoming a public right of way and it was confirmed that current plans suggested that all paths would be permitted paths and that there was no ambition to change this presently.

Dogs and walkers- Members queried whether there would be any outlined restraints on dog walkers and it was confirmed that there may be dog control orders in place and signs outlining where dogs could be on lead and off of their leads.

History of the land- Members were informed that the land sought to preserve some of the local heritage and that there was some work being carried out to look at the linking of this particular piece of land with Cockmarsh. It was highlighted that Cockmarsh had some roman heritage and that members would be informed of any progress of these findings.

Members were informed that there would be a countryside walk and it was noted that all LAF members would be invited.

ACTION- That Jacqui Wheeler circulate the Countryside Walk invitation to all LAF members.

7 Feedback from Accessibility Working Group

Lisa Hughes gave a presentation on the above titled item. Members were told that a presentation had been given in 2018 to the LAF relating to the setting up of the accessibility working groups and origins of inception for the working group. It was highlighted that Dom Lethbridge, Lisa Hughes and Steve Gillions had held two meetings. Within these two meetings, terms of reference and working aims of the group had been established. Members were informed that the focus of the group was clear and that they had started working upon identifying key routes and sites, actual access improvements of public rights of way and green spaces. Ambitions of the group intended working within existing infrastructure, extended pathway proposals, access levels and criteria, refined accessibility. Whilst looking at this pertinent points, members of the accessibility working group had looked at approach taken by the National Parks, for example, South Downs National Park where 3 levels of accessibility were clearly identified and signposted throughout the park. These accessibility criteria includes, accessible by all, accessible by some and accessible by many.

It was outlined that the initial focus had been to look at piloting hubs for potential sites and surveys for identified areas. Members were told that South Downs had been contacted and that a response was awaited upon. As part of looking at the initial pilots, members were informed that six potential sites had been identified and that they were heavily or popular areas. Next steps

included agreement on proposals from LAF members and any potential actions arising from discussions at the group meetings.

ACTION- That Geoff Priest email all LAF members and ask for their support in the work of the Accessibility Working Group and their intended actions.

At the conclusion of the presentation, members commended the good work and commitment of the accessibility working group members and welcomed feedback at the next meeting of progress.

ACTION- That Lisa Hughes provides a progress update on the responses from National Parks at the next LAF meeting.

8 Site visits for 2019 - Date and location to be agreed

Members were informed that there would be a site visit scheduled for:

- Battlemead Common- scheduled for September
- Ockwells- To be confirmed and for Jason Mills to feedback at the next meeting

ACTION- That Jacqui Wheeler circulates invites to all LAF members of any confirmed site visit dates.

9 LAF Annual Report - draft

Jacqui Wheeler updated members on the above titled item. Members were advised to email all changes directly to Jacqui.wheeler@rbwm.gov.uk. It was outlined that all LAF (81 nationally) were asked to produce a report which would then be uploaded to the relevant authority website. Members were told that there was a duty imposed on the LAF to update their own authority's pro-forma and submit this to National England. It was highlighted that work with the Chair would be carried out as to how this matter is progressed through the LAF moving forward. Looking forward, members were advised that there would be a particular focus on disabled access and the overview of the Borough Local Plan with access to green sites/spaces.

The Chair highlighted that there was currently no land identified to replace the site known as HA22 within the Borough Local Plan and that an agreement had been made between both Cox Green Park and the Council to look at an evolving plan for this piece of land.

1 Date of the next meeting

Members noted that the date of the next meeting was confirmed at the 26th November 2019, Council Chamber, Town Hall, Maidenhead, 6.30pm.

Members wished to place a vote of thanks on record for Ambika Chouhan who had supported the LAF in her capacity over the last 12 months.

The meeting, which started at 6.30pm, ended at 19.54pm.

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 26th November 2019

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Local Access Forum about the progress made on actions and issues arising from the Forum meeting held on 4th July 2019

Key:

Completed items

In progress

Incomplete

Action owners:

GP	Geoff Priest	AH	Anthony Hurst (Parks and Countryside Team Leader)
SW	Sharon Wootten (Public Rights of Way Officer)	VG	Victoria Gibson
LH	Lisa Hughes	AK	Alan Keene
JW	Jacqui Wheeler	DM	Dom Lethbridge

Agenda Item 1(d): Matters Arising

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
4.1	Cookhams Cycleway Project – progress update	JW	The project is being progressed by drafting a permissive path agreement required to allow cycling. This can then be re-presented to CIMS and other landowners to allay fears of liability and security. Alternative routes for this Phase are too difficult.
4.2	Next 2019 LAF Chairs meeting proposed by Graham Pockett Parks and Countryside Development Manager of Bracknell Forest Council	GP	JW has chased again for a date for the next meeting proposed to be held at West Berkshire. GP /JW to attend once dates are confirmed.
4.3	Future links to Surrey shall be explored	GP/JW	JW has emailed Joanne Porter at Surrey CC about possible meetings with Surrey Countryside Access Forum.
6.1	Lack of promotion of the LAF on council website	JW/GP	GP has had discussions with JW to progress improving the RBWM website and its promotion of the LAF
6.2	A representative from the Crown Estate had been identified and approached. GP	GP/JW	JW left voicemail with John Oliver at the Crown Estate and emailed again.

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM REPORT - 26th November 2019
 AGENDA ITEM 1(d)

	and ACH were waiting to hear back.		
6.3	BCA had been identified as an organisation from which younger LAF members might be recruited.	GP/JW	Action required to pursue membership from BCA

Agenda Item 6: Recruitment Sub team Reports

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
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EQUESTRIANS in Hampshire

A reference guide for Transport, Planners, Developers and other decision makers



Hampshire
Countryside
Access Forum



ROAD SAFETY

3,863 horse riders and carriage drivers in England and Wales were admitted to hospital during 2016-2017 through transport related accidents

(source: NHS Hospital Episodes Statistics).

£4.3 BILLION

The **contribution** made by the equine sector to the UK economy in 2017 excluding the racing industry (source: [British Equestrian Trade Association](#)). £313,000,000 – the estimated annual contribution to Hampshire's local economy supporting many small businesses in Hampshire.

EMPLOYMENT

Second **largest rural employer** after the agricultural sector in the UK

(source: [British Horse Industry Confederation 2017 Mid-Sector Manifesto](#)).

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The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum (HCAF) is the Local Access Forum (LAF) for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton. The Forum's statutory purpose under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 is to advise local authorities and other bodies on access issues, both in the rural and urban environments. For their part, local authorities and others are required to take account of advice from HCAF.

The Forum is independent of any council or interest group – it comprises local members of the public with a wealth of experience in aspects of countryside recreation and rights of way. Members are volunteers, appointed to represent an interest rather than a specific organisation. They are balanced between those who use public rights of way (PROW) (walkers, horse-riders, carriage drivers, cyclists, disabled users and vehicle users), those who provide access (farmers, land managers etc) and other interests (e.g. conservation, education). It is this wide range of interests that enables the Forum to provide balanced advice.

HCAF is concerned about the impacts of new developments in Hampshire on the PROW network, multi-user routes, accessible green space and carriageways that together enable residents and visitors to explore and enjoy the countryside on foot, cycle, horseback, etc. HCAF members in response to this concern have developed this guidance document, focused on equestrian needs.



What this guidance is for

Hampshire is one of the most densely horse populated counties in England. Unlike the walking and cycling sectors, the benefit to the equestrian sector of the **UK Government's 'Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales'** has not filtered down to local level as part of transport planning. This national government strategy, originally devised in 2005 and published in 2011 as part of the Coalition Manifesto, sets out to foster a robust and sustainable horse industry, increase its economic value, enhance the welfare of the horse, and develop the industry's contribution to the cultural, social, educational, health and sporting life of the nation.

The Hampshire Countryside Access Plan (CAP) 2015-2025 sets out Hampshire County Council policies and actions to improve countryside access in Hampshire. It provides a high level vision of what is required for a range of users including equestrians. There is now a need to turn these aspirations into action to support the Government's strategy. This document sets out to help achieve this goal by:

- Providing guidance to help decision makers to develop strategic local/transport plans and undertake master planning that includes the needs of equestrians.
- Guiding developers at an early stage in preparing planning applications and identifying opportunities to meet the needs of the equestrian community.
- Explaining why equestrian activities are important both to individuals and to the local economy, promoting a healthy lifestyle and individual well-being.
- Providing guidance on what decision makers can do to support the growth of the equestrian sector in Hampshire.
- Improving connectivity of the public rights of way (PROW) network which is one of the highest priorities identified in the CAP, together with more paths which can be used by cyclists and horse riders.
- Suggesting ways to improve safe road connections between the PROW network to minimise risk.
- Ensuring that Hampshire's Rights of Way network remains accessible to all.
- Acting as a tool to encourage co-ordination and effective working relationships between Hampshire County Council/District/Borough Councils and the equestrian community.

Driving for the Disabled

©Riding for the Disabled Association



Key points - Why these are important to you

The UK Government's Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales has eight aims, one of which is 'to increase access to off-road riding and carriage driving'. A conservative estimate of the number of horses, ponies and donkeys in Hampshire excluding the 5,500 New Forest Ponies (as at 2016) is 87,000. Feedback from local authorities has indicated that they would welcome more information about how they can be inclusive of equestrians in their work, engagement and consultation.

Summarised below are key points that have been identified through research as what is important and why:

- **Improved safety** – equestrians are legitimate, vulnerable road users - alternatives to road links between PROW and other off-road routes need to be considered, such as creating multi-user routes by managing the verges, creating parallel routes, etc.

- **Supporting Hampshire's economy** – equestrians are estimated to contribute at least £313,000,000 pa towards the local economy. Creating better and safer routes will encourage equestrian activity and increase business opportunities.

- **Rural employment** – many large and small rural businesses depend upon the equestrian sector in Hampshire. Nationally it is the largest rural employer after the agricultural sector and employs many individuals in both the urban as well as rural areas.

- **Working with the community** – consultation with local equestrians will identify where limited resources need to be targeted.

- **Creating opportunities** - access to the countryside and natural environment increases property desirability and supports healthy, fit communities. Horses connect people to Hampshire's rich landscape and a way of life.



- **Minimising risk** – increases in traffic volume and speeds should be evaluated and mitigated. Equestrians have the right to use roads between the PROW network and need to feel confident when doing so, particularly those that are relatively inexperienced.

- **An inclusive approach** – equestrians, unlike other recreational users are not automatically included in the planning process.

- **Preserving and protecting Hampshire's heritage** – equestrian leisure activities are the most common equestrian pursuit. The PROW network provides a safe environment for equestrians and it is vital that it remains accessible, maintained and enhanced for future generations.

Key actions - What you can do

The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum recommends the following key actions to help meet the aspirations of Hampshire's CAP and the UK Government for more safe access to off-road riding and carriage driving:

Policy

- Involve equestrians in developing local policies to ensure the equestrian community is linked into key areas of planning; transport; health and well-being; economy; community; tourism and environment, thereby meeting responsibilities to a legitimate vulnerable road user group and creating parity with other recreational users.
- Planners should ensure developers have complied with all planning conditions in relation to PROW and non-motorised routes ensuring, for example, that diverted PROW are completed and safe to use BEFORE development takes place.
- Investigate the importance of unmetalled, unclassified country roads (UUCRs) and other routes with public access (ORPAS) and how they can be better utilised and maintained to help connect the PROW network.

Road Safety and Highways

- Provide horse crossings on busy carriageways ensuring that they are safe, clearly visible and fit for purpose.
- Consider using local highway authority powers to provide horse riders with the same legal rights to share routes on cycle ways and grass verges as other recreational users.
- Recognise that new utility routes, such as cycle ways, will also be used as recreational routes and that these should be addressed as integrated rather than as separate activities. They create an opportunity to provide safe links between PROW for horse riders.

Engagement and Consultation

- Research and engage with local equestrian organisations (e.g. riding clubs, livery/training yards, the [British Horse Society](#), the [British Driving Society](#), other local equestrian access groups) either directly or indirectly at the pre-consultation stage to find out where people exercise their horses, ponies and donkeys and what their needs are.

Improvements and New Connections

- Consider how the connection of urban and countryside routes can be improved through existing PROW, the creation of new multi-user routes for use by all non-motorised users and how the road network facilitates this connectivity. Consider, where practical, the upgrading of a PROW to allow horse riders and cyclists safer access through a site to connect to off-site routes.
- Provide adequate parking for horse transport at safe PROW network locations – many equestrians now have to transport their horses to ride them in safe areas due to the urbanisation of what were once rural locations in which they live and keep their equines.

Management and Maintenance

- Ensure PROWs are maintained and when routes are subjected to traffic regulation orders on motorised vehicles consider how to avoid excluding non-motorised vehicles such as horse-drawn carriages. This could be by installing lockable bollards set with a 1.6m gap allowing a carriage access to a route, but preventing four wheeled motor vehicle access. Codes for locks can be given to legitimate users by Hampshire Countryside Service.
- Wherever possible provide surfaces and widths that are fit for purpose for the environment and all users, e.g. on new routes where a sealed surface is necessary consider using water-permeable surfacing made from recycled rubber granules and aggregates bound with a specially formulated polyurethane binder that fully meet the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) requirements.
- Ensure bridleway gates and other 'street furniture' are safe for horse riders and carriage drivers that comply with Hampshire County Council's [Countryside Service Design Standards](#) and the recommendations of the [British Horse Society](#) and [Natural England](#)
- Improve signage to ensure people understand rights and responsibilities on shared routes.
- Where PROW are diverted they should go through green space wherever possible away from estate roads and other highways - see [Defra Guidance to Local Authorities Circular \(1/09\)](#). The width of the diversion should be compliant with both [Hampshire County Council Design Standards](#) and [British Horse Society](#) recommendations and surfaces should be fit for purpose and the environment.

Case study

Natural England, in partnership with the British Horse Society, Centrewire and the Pittcroft Trust, has created the country's first ever specialist centre to open up access to the countryside for wheelchair users and those with mobility needs as well as disabled and able-bodied horse riders, cyclists and walkers. Natural England research shows there are around 519 million visits to paths, cycleways and bridleways in England each year.

Launched in October 2018, the new National Land Access Centre, located at Oxfordshire's Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve, has been designed to demonstrate the use, maintenance and installation of gaps, gates and stiles meeting the new British Standard for improved countryside access.

Mobility issues can be a major barrier to people heading to the countryside. Over 20% of England's population cannot use public rights of way, either because they cannot use stiles or kissing gates themselves, or they are accompanying someone who can't. This new facility will help ensure those who usually struggle with access are able to enjoy England's beautiful countryside.

Supporting information, best practice, facts and figures

1. Highways and Road Safety

Rules 204 and 215 of the Highway Code explicitly recognise equestrians as a legitimate vulnerable road user group.

The PROW network provides equestrians with off-road routes on which to enjoy their recreational activity. It is, however, a network that has become fragmented by the highway network so that non-motorised users have to use busy roads to access these rights of way.

Equestrians are particularly affected by this fragmentation. Horse riders have access to only 22% of the total PROW network and carriage drivers have access to 5% – see section 2 on Countryside, Access and Rights of Way. Once development takes place there is often a knock-on effect requiring equestrians to use busy carriageways, which were once quiet lanes to access safe off-road routes. This means coping with HGVs, noiseless electric cars, speeding traffic and vehicle drivers unused to horses. Rural roads which are narrow with poor visibility can be just as risky to negotiate for the same reasons.

1 in 5 incidents resulted in cars colliding with horses.

30% of riders reported road rage abuse (source: BHS Accidents and Incidents)

National Driver Offender Schemes will in future recognise horse riders as vulnerable road users within all their courses, including the Speed Awareness Course.



15

**Dead?
Or Dead Slow?
Your Choice**

The
British
Horse
Society

Horses are unpredictable. Passing horses wide and slow can prevent deaths of drivers, riders and horses.

#thinkhorsethink15

bhs.org.uk/deadslow

The British Horse Society is a Registered Charity Nos. 210504 and SC038516

Dead Slow? Good Choice

It's not just the horse that will suffer when involved in a road accident. The average horse weighs half a tonne and on impact can cause significant damage to a vehicle and the people inside.

Protect yourself. Protect your car.
Protect horses and riders.

15

If I see a horse on the road,
then I will...

- 1 Slow down to a maximum of 15mph
- 2 Be patient; I won't sound my horn or rev my engine
- 3 Pass the horse wide and slow (at least a car's width)
- 4 Drive slowly away

Thank you for driving
safely around horses.

bhs.org.uk/deadslow

Reduce road accidents and you reduce NHS costs

3,863 horse riders and carriage drivers in England and Wales were **admitted to hospital** for 'animal-rider or occupant animal-drawn vehicle injured in transport accident' in 2016-2017 (source: [NHS Hospital Episodes Statistics](#))

85% the percentage of accidents involving equestrians caused by **speeding vehicles** or **passing too close to horses**

Between 2010 and 2017 the BHS horse accidents website has recorded:

39 riders killed, 10 severely injured

230 horse deaths and 840 injured, 5 severely (excluding equine deaths in the New Forest)

Only 1 in 10 horse related road accidents are reported (source: [British Horse Society](#))

These statistics demonstrate how important it is that planning authorities, developers, Highways and Strategic Transport understand the requirement for safe access for equestrians on the roads and the links to PROW. Hampshire's accident record is currently relatively low in relation to the horse density of the county, except in the New Forest where 44 ponies and donkeys were killed and 18 injured in 2017 alone. The aim is to not only sustain Hampshire's current record, but to seek out ways to improve it.

Horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians successfully share routes. The development of a cycle network, funded by the public purse, provides an excellent opportunity to create multi-user routes to be used by all non-motorised users. Where practical, horse riders should be given access to all new paths and cycle ways and opportunities should also be taken to changing rights on existing routes where safer access is required. This could, in many cases, be achieved at little or no extra cost.

Not addressing road safety issues when there is an opportunity to do so will have an impact on future generations of equestrians. They will not feel confident to use carriageways and vehicle drivers will not be used to passing equines safely, thereby limiting, and increasingly preventing, equestrians from enjoying the same open spaces that other user groups enjoy.

Case studies:

Cambridgeshire County Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and Luton Council, now have all inclusive non-motorised user policies.

Equestrian activity is included in the [West Berks Active Travel Plan](#) which is a model that has made life easier for planners whilst delivering benefits to equestrians.

[The Department for Transport and the British Horse Society](#) collaborated on the THINK! video which supported the Society's 'Dead? Or Dead Slow' campaign to raise the awareness of avoiding accidents by passing horses 'slow and wide'. This campaign won the Driving Instructors Association 'Driver Education of the Year' award in 2016.

Since 2015 [Transport Focus](#) has represented all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads, including equestrians. It has looked into users' needs and how they can be better met in future road designs. New road schemes or major upgrades should incorporate crossings for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians as well as segregated paths with minimal diversion from the intended route.

2. Countryside, Access and Rights of Way

Many rural parts of Hampshire are becoming increasingly urbanised as a result of development. The pressures of this are confining equestrian activities to ever-smaller areas.

- Hampshire Countryside Services, as the Highway Authority for Public Rights of Way, maintains and manages the PROW network.
- Hampshire Highways manages the road network including unclassified unmetalled county roads (UUCRs) that are on what is called the List of Streets and are also known as ORPAs (other routes with public access).

Combined with the scale of development and the associated increase in volume and speed of traffic, equestrians are becoming less confident in being able to access PROWs using the road network.

The UK Government's 'Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales', originally devised in 2005 and published in 2011 as part of the Coalition Manifesto, sets out to foster a robust and sustainable horse industry, increase its economic value, enhance the welfare of the horse, and develop the industry's contribution to the cultural, social, educational, health and sporting life of the nation. It has eight aims, one of which is to increase off-road riding and carriage driving routes.

The County of Hampshire has 4,500 km of PROW. This network of footpaths, bridleways restricted byways and byways open to all traffic is highly valued by residents and visitors alike, enriching quality of life and contributing to good physical and mental health, community cohesion and a strong rural economy. The

graphic below clearly identifies who has the rights to use PROW together with the number of kilometers available. The Definitive Map provides legal protection to these routes.

The work carried out by Hampshire Countryside Service is vital to ensuring the PROW network remains open and maintained to enable this recreational activity to continue for future generations.

In 2016 the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum (HCAF) recommended that, where practical, horse riders and carriage drivers should be given parity with other recreational groups in relation to road safety and access to non-motorised routes.

Planners, Developers, Highways Department and Strategic Transport are creating environments that help walkers and cyclists to reach open green spaces through the development of shared routes. Hampshire's CAP 2015-2025, and the county's walking

and cycling strategies support this work. The planned delivery of these strategies presents an opportunity to recognise and include equestrian needs within a local community.

Surfaces and widths of routes must be compliant with Hampshire County Council Countryside Service Design Standards and the recommendations of the [British Horse Society](#) and [Natural England](#).

Where it is necessary to install street furniture to restrict motorised vehicles on byways, then it is recommended that lockable bollards are used set at a gap of 1.6m with a clear visible line of sight to enable carriage drivers to negotiate them safely. This also allows for access to the route by an emergency vehicle should the need arise. Padlock codes can be given to legitimate users by the Countryside Service.

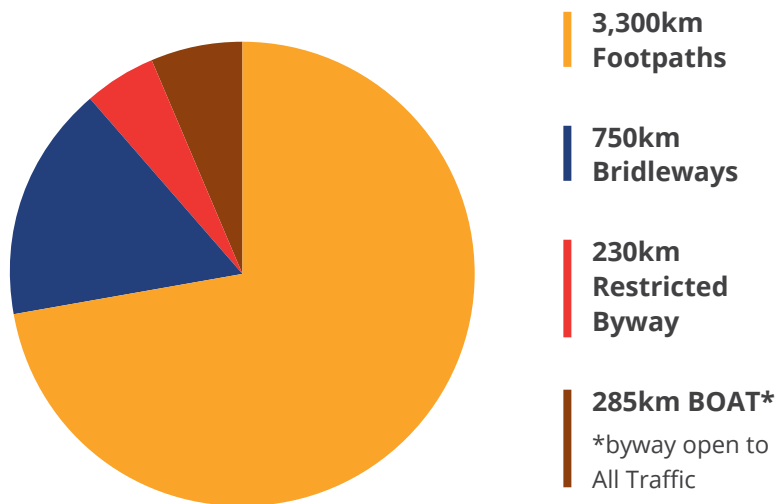
In addition, there is a vast network of other routes shown on the OS map that are available for public use which could provide more and better connectivity between communities for non-motorised users. Known as 'other routes with public access' (ORPAs), these unclassified, unmetalled country roads (UUCRs) are depicted on OS Explorer maps as white roads usually with a green dot on them. They are the responsibility of Highways and are identified on the 'List of Streets' database maintained by Highways. These roads potentially provide important connectivity between rights of way and offer opportunities to enhance access to the countryside.

PROW access

4,500km (3,000 miles) of paths enable people to exercise, explore outdoors and connect with nature.

870,000 - the estimated number of miles that are ridden or driven in Hampshire each year

2026 - the cut off date for recording unrecorded historic routes under the CROW Act 2000



Leisure riding/carriage driving are the most common equestrian pursuits.

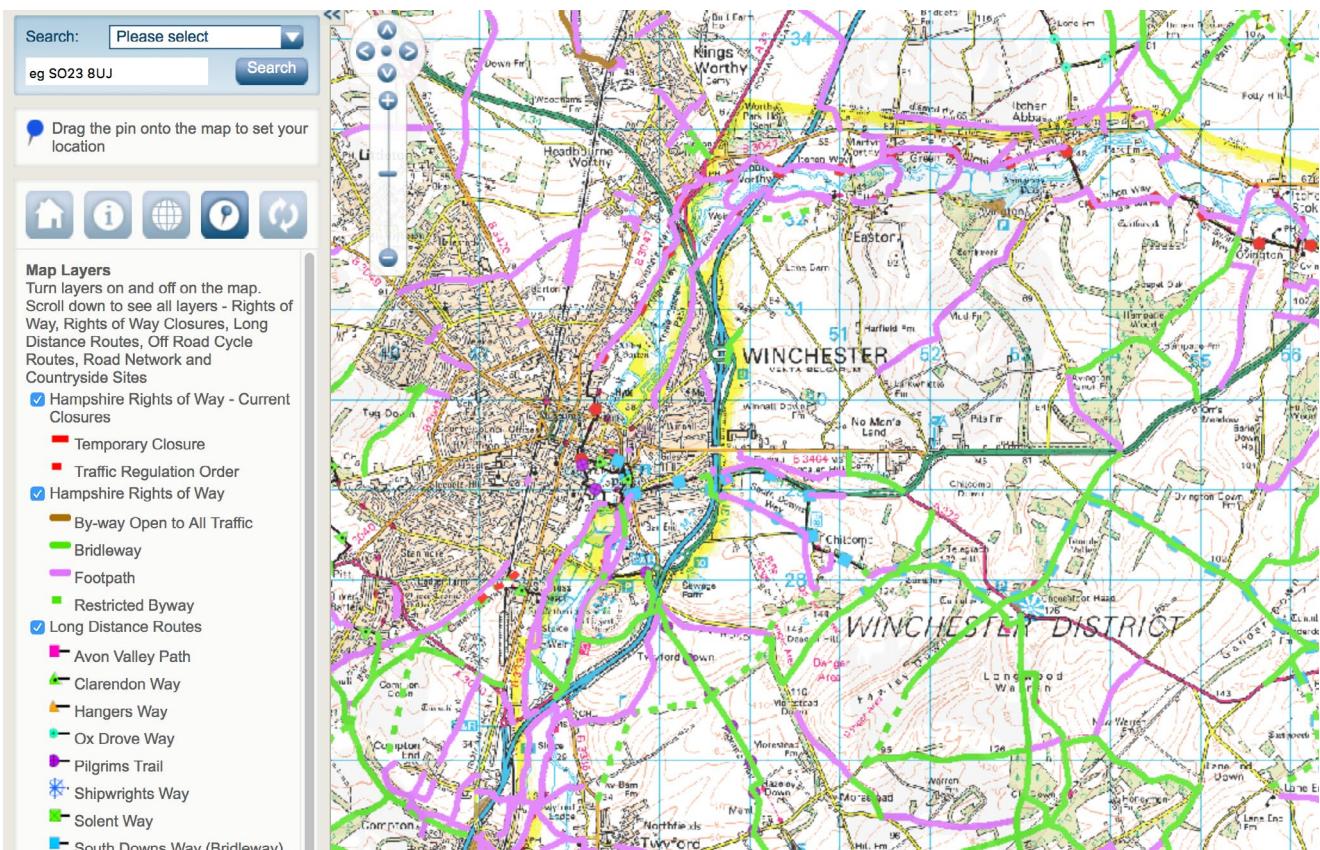
Only **22%** of this network is available to horse riders and cyclists

Carriage drivers can use just **5%**

Case Studies

The Hampshire County Council online rights of way map is the envy of people living in other counties who do not enjoy such a good facility. The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum instigated the GIS layer for adopted roads (A, B, C, U, T and W) that was added to the PROW online mapping that identifies where UUCRs/ORPAs are located. This online map means that people who wish to view both rights of way and UUCRs/ORPAs need only go to one access point to obtain information as well as being able to report a problem.

The online map is taken from the Definitive Map for the county and is used as a reference point for people undertaking historic research to identify unrecorded and under-recorded PROW. Under the CROW Act 2000 a deadline of 2026 for registering unrecorded routes was included in the legislation. Applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) not received by Hampshire County Council by that date will be lost forever. For more information go to: <http://www.bhs.org.uk/our-work/access/campaigns/2026> and www.ramblers.org.uk/dontloseyourway



<http://localviewmaps.hants.gov.uk/LocalViewMaps/Sites/ROWOnline/>

Say Hi

Horse riders and cyclists have been sharing routes for many years and both are recognised vulnerable road users. However, many people are unfamiliar with horses and how to behave around them. Equestrian and cycling national bodies are working together to ask cyclists when approaching from behind to warn horse riders and carriage drivers by saying 'Hi' and never passing on the inside of a horse. The campaign warns everyone to 'expect the unexpected'.

The local BHS Access and Bridleways Officer worked with Balfour Beatty and Highways England to create a four-mile off-road shared user route alongside the new A21 London to Hastings dual carriageway. The route, opened in 2017, is wide and has good visibility of other users approaching or up ahead for walkers, cyclists and equestrians to share the track.



3. Employment and Economic benefits

The UK has one of the highest quality equine industries in the world and is recognised as the leading source of equestrian expertise. It is also the second largest rural employer after the agricultural industry

Hampshire contributes to this through its rich equestrian heritage. The county has training facilities that attract top international riders and trainers to live and work here. It boasts one of the country's leading equine veterinary practices; it is home to one of the country's largest training colleges for equestrians; as well as a world-renowned riding therapy center and other well-respected educational facilities.

Hampshire is one of the most densely horse populated counties in the UK as indicated in the [British Horse](#)

[Industry Confederation 2017 Mid-Term Manifesto for the Horse](#). Equines are kept in both rural and urbanised environments, despite the reduction in the availability of land around our towns and cities. There is a supply chain of small and medium sized businesses that provide the services required to look after their needs creating jobs in local communities and income to farmers. If equestrian activities are supported then the rural economy will grow and create opportunities for both small and large businesses.

£313m – estimated value the equestrian sector contributes annually to Hampshire's local economy, excluding the contribution made by the horse racing industry

The horse industry is the **2nd largest** rural employer after the agriculture industry in the UK (source: British Horse Industry Confederation 2017)

87,000 - the estimated number of horses in Hampshire. In addition, in 2017 there were 5,583 ponies in the New Forest.

Types of employment



• Training yards



• Saddlers



• Harness makers



• Horse transporters and vehicle repairs



• Vets



• Riding schools



• Horse dentists



• Livery yards



• Small agricultural repair businesses



• Educational colleges



• Farmers



• Physiotherapists



• Stud farms



• Horse tourism



• Racing establishments



• Clothing outlets



• Practitioners of alternative medicine



• Feed merchants



• Farriers

Hampshire has 2 National Parks (South Downs National Park and The New Forest). It has 7 country parks as well as 12 long distance trails. Preserving and improving connections to these trails will help develop horse tourism and support an additional revenue stream for the Parks and for the Hampshire rural economy as a whole.

4. Health and Well-being – Benefits of Horse Riding and Access to Animals

The UK Government is committed to helping people develop a healthier lifestyle by providing, amongst other things, easier access to safe routes and recreational activities in both urban and countryside areas. The National Planning Policy Framework supports this commitment – see sections 3 and 5:

It is widely recognised and supported by scientific evidence that giving people access to safe green open spaces promotes health and well-being.

Equestrianism is an extremely popular and healthy outdoor activity for people of all ages and abilities. It is a diverse and family-friendly sport where men and women compete on an equal basis. It extends from amateur and community participation to international success.

Equestrian activities stimulate positive psychological feelings and a sense of well being. They also engage a higher proportion of people with disabilities than other sports.

One of the key findings of the British Horse Society report prepared by the University of Brighton and Plumpton College is that horse riders with a long-

standing illness or disability are able to undertake horse riding and associated activities at the same level of frequency and physical intensity as those without such an illness or disability. This also applies to carriage drivers.

2.7m – number of horse riders in the UK

3 times a week – the average number of times horse riders and carriage drivers participate in equestrian activities

25% – the proportion of riders below the age of 16; this illustrates how riding encourages young people to enjoy the countryside and outdoor activity

8% of equestrians considered themselves disabled in some way

In Hampshire there are:

- **14** Riding Clubs
- **488 young people** who are members of 14 active Pony Clubs
- **540 disabled riders** are catered for by 23 riding for the disabled groups on a weekly basis;
- **5 carriage** driving groups for the disabled
- **2 harness clubs** associated to British Carriage Driving
- **200 members** of the British Driving Society
- **3,207** Members of the British Horse Society (as at 2017)

These statistics are indicative only of the level of participation in equestrian activities and do not reflect the true levels of participation. It is known that there are many other active equestrians who are not affiliated to any of these groups.

Case studies:

Horses, donkeys and ponies are recognised as an important link to mental wellbeing, particularly to those people who are vulnerable and in need of emotional support. Across the county equines are helping to re-connect young people with society and also helping the elderly.

'Changing Lives Through Horses', a British Horse Society flagship programme, helps young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). It is designed to help them to reconnect with society through engagement with horses, gaining confidence and skills that will help them for life. This scheme was successfully piloted at a Hampshire riding centre. It reflects many other similar projects across the country established by other organisations helping thousands of vulnerable people.

The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT) works to harness young people's motivation for horses to enable co-operation, communication and concentration. The FCRT works especially with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, complex physical disabilities and those from deprived inner city areas. Located on the edge of the New Forest, it teaches skills by using the horses' inclusiveness, warmth, smell, movement, routine and needs.

The Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) enriches lives of people through horses and ponies providing therapy, achievement and enjoyment to people with disabilities all over the UK. It has been carrying out life-changing activities for almost 50 years, offering activities for all age groups and, where possible, to people with any disability. It relies on voluntary help, donations and legacies to deliver its services.



Mill Cottage Farm Experience, Alton – this family run business takes farm animals to people, including residential homes where donkeys can be taken into the home to be petted by people who cannot get out of bed or are too infirm to stand.

5. Planning, Development and Growth, and Policy

Equestrians, unlike other recreational users, are not automatically included in the planning process. This is partly due to the lack of an equestrian strategy for the county and to a lack of knowledge of equestrian needs generally.

The economic and health benefits of increased equestrian activity can, however, best be secured by building equestrian considerations into the planning process from the earliest stages onwards. Planners and developers should develop contacts with equestrian interests and representatives, and consult them alongside all other interested stakeholders, as plans develop and mature.

The requirement to provide more housing and employment in rural environments affects the daily lives of people who already live there, often in vibrant communities that have a large part to play in the success of new developments. Historically equestrians have been an important element in the cement that binds these communities, and it is therefore correspondingly important to identify their needs and provide access for equestrian pursuits.

Since equestrian activities are not specifically supported within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the way that other recreational pursuits are it is all the more important that local planning policy should support and facilitate a duty of care to this category of vulnerable road user. Equestrians should be considered alongside other non-motorised users as an integral part of planning policy for infrastructure and building developments.

The NPPF promotes a healthier lifestyle by providing, among other things, easier access to safe routes and recreational activities in both urban and countryside areas through the development of green infrastructure policies. This presents an excellent opportunity to local planners to include the needs of local equestrians as one of the user groups when developing these policies.

See sections 3 (Supporting a prosperous rural economy) and particularly 8 (Promoting Healthy Communities) of the NPPF where Point 75 states:

'Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example, by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.'

Planning of a new cycle way in developments often focuses on the creation of utility routes; however these will also form the backbone of recreational routes. People do not stop using these routes at weekends simply because they are not cycling to work or going to school. Therefore there is an opportunity to include equestrian use to provide safe off-road access where appropriate. Sustrans, the charity responsible for the creation of the cycleways network, states that, wherever possible, equestrians should have access to the cycleway network.

Green Infrastructure Plans create ideal opportunities to be inclusive of all non-motorised users where it is practical to do so.

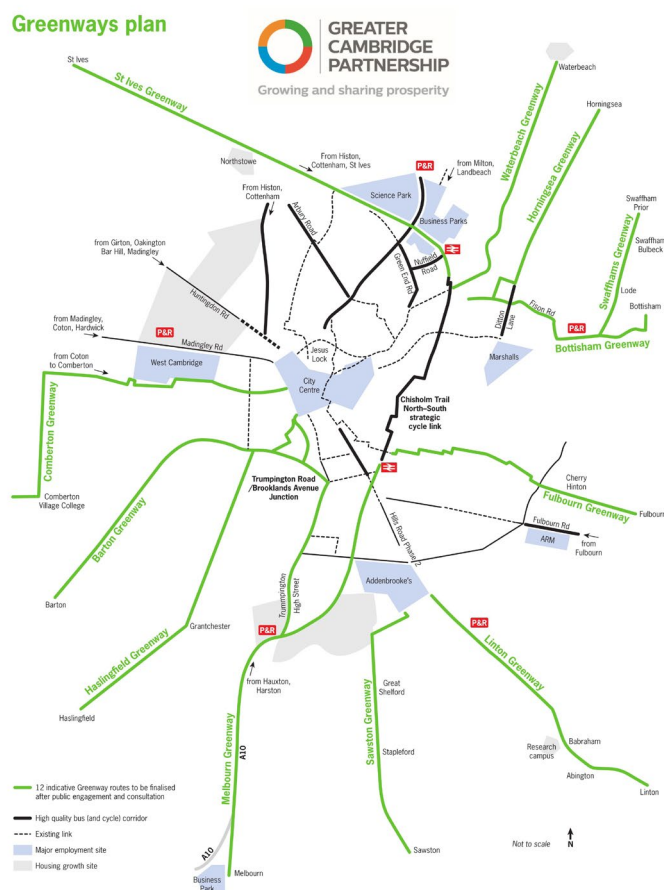
Case studies:

West Berkshire is an example of an authority that has recognised the need to include its equestrian community in developing planning policy. As a result, equestrian activity is included in the West Berks Active Travel Plan.

Mid-Sussex Plan – Development Policy 22 says that developers must consider access for all non-motorised users in their plans.

Current examples of where there are opportunities for the inclusion of equestrians in green infrastructure plans are Basingstoke & Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013-2019) and the Cambridge Green Infrastructure Strategy, which includes the Greater Cambridge Greenways Project.

In 2016 the Greater Cambridge Partnership commissioned a consultant to review the 12 greenway routes that lead into the centre of Cambridge. The study identified a number of missing links that could be provided on private land, generally on field edges, so early consultation with landowners was essential to discuss possible alignments or alternatives. Horse riders will also be able to ride these routes alongside other non-motorised groups.



Contacts / where to find more information:

Basingstoke and Dean Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013-2019)

https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/ENV09#elem_27396

British Equestrian Trade Association

<http://www.beta-uk.org>

British Equestrian Trade Association Equine Sector 2017 Mid-Term Manifesto for the Horse including horse density map

http://www.bef.co.uk/repository/EquineDevelopment/Mid_Term_Review_Manifesto_for_the_Horse_V7_Jan_2017.pdf

British Horse Industry Confederation/Equine Sector Council

<http://equinesectorcouncil.org.uk>

British Horse Society advice leaflets

<http://www.bhs.org.uk>

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/access-and-bridleways/free-leaflets-and-advice>

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/safety-and-accidents/dead-slow>

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/changinglivesthroughhorses>

Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/cambridgeshire-green-infrastructure-strategy>

Defra Guidance to Local Authorities Circular (1/09)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69304/pb13553-rowcircular1-09-091103.pdf

Hampshire Countryside Access Plan – 2015-2025

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/countryside/HampshireCountrysideAccessPlan2015-2025.pdf>

Hampshire Countryside Access Forum

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/countryside/hcaf>

Hampshire County Council Online Rights of Way Map

<http://localviewmaps.hants.gov.uk/LocalViewMaps/Sites/ROWOnline/>

Hampshire County Council Design Standards

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/countryside/designstandards>

Highway Code

<http://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/road-users-requiring-extra-care.html>

Mid-Sussex Plan

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/3406/mid-sussex-district-plan.pdf>

National Planning Policy Framework

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

NHS Hospital Episode Statistics

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-tools-and-services/data-services/hospital-episode-statistics>

Riding and Carriage Driving for the Disabled

<http://www.rda.org.uk>

Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-the-horse-industry-in-england-and-wales>

The Fortune Centre

<http://www.fortunecentre.org>

The Pony Club, international youth organisation

<http://www.pcuk.org>

Transport Focus

<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk>

The Trails Trust

<http://www.thetrailstrust.org.uk//pages/aboutus.php>

West Berks District Council Active Travel Plan

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36907&p=0>

Important pieces of legislation:

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

2026 – the cut off date for recording unrecorded historic rights of way

2018 – Deregulation Bill comes into force (expected date)

Abbreviations:

HCC – Hampshire County Council

HCAF – Hampshire Countryside Access Forum

CAP – Countryside Access Plan

PROW – public rights of way

UUCR – unclassified, unmetalled county road

also know as:

ORPA – other routes with public access

OS – Ordnance Survey

NPPF – National Policy Framework

BHS – British Horse Society

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the British Horse Society, Riding for the Disabled Association, Greater Cambridge Partnership for supplying images and to Hampshire Countryside Service for its support.

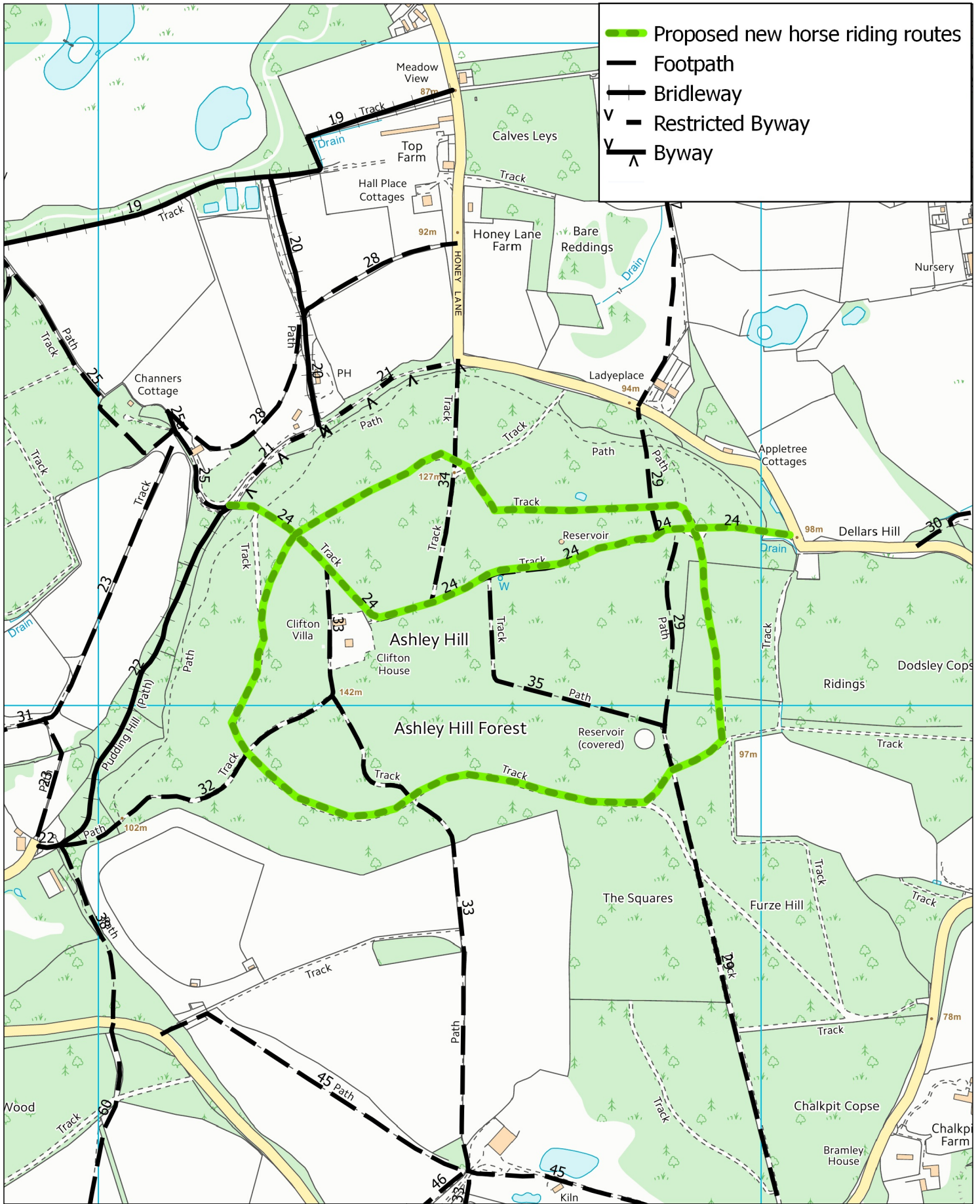
The
British
Horse
Society



HAMPSHIRE
COUNTRYSIDE
SERVICE

HCC Countryside
Service in support of the
Hampshire Countryside
Access Forum

26



Public Rights of Way
 Drawn by: Andrew Fletcher

**Ashley Hill
 Proposed Horse Riding improvements**

Date: 05/06/2017
 Scale: 1:7,500

www.rbwm.gov.uk



Royal Borough
 of Windsor &
 Maidenhead

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ITEM 6 - BATTLEMEAD COMMON UPDATE REPORT

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Forum on continuing progress concerning the priorities and management of Battlemead Common.

6

2. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION – Friends of Battlemead Common Meetings**

2.1 The Friends of Battlemead Common met on 9th Sept 2019 and agreed that four Sub groups would meet before the next meeting of the main group to look in more detail at the following areas:

- Biodiversity/ Volunteers
- White Brook
- Accessibility
- Communication and Information

The main group also agreed that the planning application would be amended to only seek consent for the car park and not for the change of use to Public Open Space. Battlemead Common currently remains agricultural land with public access.

2.2 Each Sub Group has now met and the notes from all these meetings have been circulated to members of the FoBC and to members of the LAF via email and are also included in these LAF papers.

2.3 Due to the general election on the 12th December 2019, the next meeting of the Friends of Battlemead Common has been postponed and will now be held on 13th January 2020. The last date for agenda items for that meeting is now 9th December 2019.

2.4 An overwintering bird survey is currently underway with the results due in Spring. It is hoped this and other ecological information will help the FoBC and Council decide on how to progress with managing the site.

2.5 The FoBC Accessibility Sub Group agreed that accessibility audits would be undertaken at Battlemead to tie in with the work of the LAF's Accessibility Working Group which has chosen to focus resources on auditing The Green Way and Battlemead initially.

2.6 It was agreed at the Sub Group meeting that the accessibility audit at Battlemead Common would include the Thames Path from Islet Road to the Battlemead Common permissive link path.

2.7 The FoBC Accessibility Sub Group also agreed that alterations to the pedestrian access gate need to be undertaken now to improve the gradient if possible and to replace the gate with a swing gate to improve accessibility.

2.8 Temporary site signs are currently being prepared by the Council and will be erected soon. The latest draft of the sign is also an addendum to this report.

2.9 **LAF Response/Recommendations** – Comments from members on this item can be forwarded via the LAF representatives on the Friends of Battlemead group, Lisa Hughes and Dom Lethbridge.

3. **Local Access Forum Site Visit to Battlemead**

3.1 The Local Access Forum site visit to Battlemead took place on 5th September 2019. Members attending were able to see the full extent of the site and the views afforded across to Cliveden from various vantage points including the Causeway.

Photo 1 view across West field



Photo 2 view from the Causeway to Cliveden



Photo 3 wetlands looking north from the Causeway



Photo 4 Looking back westwards along the Causeway



Welcome to Battlemead Common

History

Once part of Waldorf Astor's Cliveden Estate, Battlemead Common extends from Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path, comprising areas of wetland, meadow and woodland with White Brook dissecting the land from north to south.

Waldorf Astor bought White Place Farm (Battlemead formerly part of) in 1913 and in 1943 placed a covenant on part of his land with the National Trust, which prohibited any act that would 'injury prejudice affect or destroy the natural aspect and condition of the land'. Consequently, the land has remained virtually unchanged to this day with grazing having been the predominate use.

There are several documents relating to the common by different names including; Battilyngemeade, Bartlemead, Battling Mead. In the medieval period the site was used for growing hay and for pasture. In 1611 the Crown seized White Place, Bullocks and meadows including Bartlemead to pay the fine of their owner Edward Manfield, a recusant. In 1650, during the Commonwealth period, Battling Meadow was surveyed, and as it was reputed to be a possession of Charles Stuart, late King of England. It was seized in 1651, by virtue of an Act of Parliament, and sold on. Bartle Mead was one of the open meadows of the Common fields prior to enclosure. However, an earlier translation of a C13th document named it Battlemeade, from which the current naming of the common is derived.

Whilst some maps indicate this as a site of a battle between the 'Saxons and the Danes' and also a battle of the English Civil War, neither are designated as a Registered Battle Field, which reflects the uncertainty of these events at this location.

Archaeology

Cropmarks (in red on map), indicating the presence of buried remains, have been recorded at the common. Circular cropmarks could indicate the presence of a Bronze Age barrow cemetery while linear cropmarks may represent the remains of prehistoric or Roman field systems or settlement enclosures.

Views

The common offers an impressive view of Cliveden House and along with the densely wooded scarp of Cliveden Reach provide a pleasant backdrop. White Place Farm, which the site was recently part of, can be seen to the north.



Wildlife



Variable Damselfly

The site is mainly low-lying and part of the site is subject to flooding during winter months, with much of it being wet woodland which is a "Priority Habitat". The White Brook, also a Priority Habitat, flows through the site which will be used by otters, kingfishers, reptiles and amphibians (including the grass snake). The dominant species are usually alder, willow and birch, although other species may be present. It is an important habitat for many animal and plant groups: bats, including those associated with wet habitats such as the Daubenton's bat; invertebrates such as the very rare variable damselfly; and bryophytes such as lichens, mosses and liverworts. The reedbeds encourage the reed and sedge warblers to visit. The wet meadows benefit wading birds, ducks, geese, gulls and terns in the eastern section of the site.

The meadows and woodland/hedges provide foraging for kestrels, barn owl and badgers. Woodcock and tree creepers have also been recorded. Stock doves and large flocks of finches are winter visitors. The site was previously ploughed up, reseeded,



Reed Warbler

fertilised, and heavily grazed which reduced the number and diversity of wild flowers. Over time, through sensitive site management, the council plans to restore the meadows to their former glory.



Barn Owl

Access

Running through the Common is part of the boundary walk of the old Borough of Maidenhead, along which 3 boundary stones can be found. Battlemead Common completes a missing link in the Millennium Walk, the full route can be found on the Borough's website.



To minimise disturbance to wildlife, we would be grateful if you can keep to the paths.



	As part of your outdoor fitness programme a walk in this park can contribute 3,500 steps to the advised 10,000 steps per day that an average person should take to achieve an improvement in their fitness level		Please clean up after your dog		No cycling
	Unauthorised vehicles are not permitted on the park area		Please ensure that you keep your dog under control or on the lead at all times		No horse riding
	This open space is provided for your enjoyment, please help us keep it tidy		No BBGs		No fishing
			Use of metal detectors is not allowed		Please do not play golf

White Brook at Battlemead Common sub-group

Meeting Notes
11th October 2.00pm
May Room, Town Hall

Attended by:

Anthony Hurst (AH) RBWM

Ann Darracott (AD) Maidenhead Civic Society
Gordon Marris (GM) East Berks Ramblers
Graham Scholey (GS) Environment Agency
Lauren Giddings (LG) Environment Agency
Ian Rose (IR) Maidenhead Waterways
Brian Clews (BC) Wild Cookham
Mark Hemmings (MH) Wild Maidenhead
Dick Scarff (DS) The Cookham Society

Apologies/absence:

Ian Caird (IC) Maidenhead Waterways

1. Introductions

All members of the sub-group introduced themselves, and **AH** explained that this was one of four sub-groups established to advise the 'Friends of Battlemead Common' and the Council on the management of the site.

The other three sub-groups (Biodiversity; Accessibility; Communications and Information) will also be meeting during October, and will report back to the full 'Friends of Battlemead Common' at its next meeting on 9th December.

2. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the sub-group were circulated and agreed. **AH** explained that the membership of each sub-group includes a cross-section of interests, and a number of people sit on more than one group; this should help to encourage effective communication between the various sub-groups.

3. Open Discussion

The sub-group discussed a range of issues relating to the future maintenance and management of the White Brook.

IR presented his paper '*Maidenhead Waterways: Technical note on White Brook channel maintenance*' which had previously been shared with the full 'Friends of Battlemead Common' at its inaugural meeting in June 2019.

The paper refers to the White Brook as being the main water supply route for Maidenhead Ditch, and draws upon a report produced by Jacobs in March 2017 for South East Water, which recommends targeted vegetation clearance and de-silting at the White Brook. However, **GS** expressed some reservations about the content and conclusions of this report.

AD presented a series of photographs and maps illustrating the history of the White Brook, its relationship with the surrounding fields and the wider network of watercourses including Maidenhead Ditch, and de-silting works undertaken previously by the EA.

The sub-group then discussed the potential benefits and/or dis-benefits, in terms of water flow, flood risk, and ecology/biodiversity, of removing vegetation and/or silt from the White Brook.

There were differences of opinion within the sub-group on the impact that such interventions would have, in particular in relation to water flow, including onward conveyance of water to Maidenhead Ditch.

GS explained that the EA does not currently require the Council (as riparian landowner) to undertake any maintenance or management of the watercourse, for flood risk or flood control purposes.

AH confirmed that the Council would not be undertaking any maintenance or management works to the White Brook, or permitting any volunteer work parties to carry out such works, without first consulting with and obtaining the consent of the EA.

4. Recommendations

It was agreed that before formulating any recommendations to the 'Friends of Battlemead Common' or the Council, the sub-group would hold a site visit to view the condition of the watercourse and surrounding fields. The site visit is to be held on Monday 11th November at 10.00 am, meeting at the contractor parking area off Lower Cookham Road.

Next Meeting: 11th November 2019 (10:00 am site visit)

Biodiversity at Battlemead Common sub-group

Meeting Notes
14th October 10.30am
Braywick Nature Centre

Attended by:

Jason Mills (JM) RBWM

Ann Darracott (AD) Maidenhead Civic Society
Gordon Marris (GM) East Berks Ramblers
Lauren Giddings (LG) Environment Agency
Martin Woolner (MW) Wild Maidenhead
Sarah Bowden (SB) RBWM Climate Emergency
Hilary Phillips (HP) BBOWT
Ken Cottam (KC) RSPB
Fiona Tattersall (FT) Binfield Badgers
Lars Ahlgren (LA) Wild Cookham

Apologies/absence:

Jane Perry (Cookham Parish Council)

1. Introductions

All members of the sub-group introduced themselves, and **JM** explained that this was one of four sub-groups established to advise the 'Friends of Battlemead Common' and the Council on the management of the site. The other three sub-groups (White Brook; Accessibility; Communications and Information) will also be meeting during October, and will report back to the full 'Friends of Battlemead Common' at its next meeting on 9th December.

2. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the sub-group were circulated and agreed. **JM** explained that the membership of each sub-group includes a cross-section of interests, and a number of people sit on more than one group; this should help to encourage effective communication between the various sub-groups.

3. Open Discussion

The sub-group discussed a range of issues relating to biodiversity management of Battlemead Common. All members agree Battlemead Common is a special place and the wildlife needs to be protected.

KC raised concerns about dog access and the inevitable impact on wildlife. All agree this is a concern that must be addressed.

MW wildlife is a priority and must be the first consideration for the site management.

GM access is important and a circular route is ideal. Disabled access must be provided.

HP some access is required but must not impact on sensitive habitats and wildlife.

FT the site was previously inaccessible so any public access however restrictive is a gain and not a loss.

All discuss the need for an estimate of potential visitor numbers to determine the site capacity and size of car park. Site must be secured from traveller incursions.

AD raised concerns that an unmaintained White Brook will have a negative impact on water levels in the central Maidenhead channels. The recently planted hedge adjacent to the Thames path must not become overgrown and restrict views into the east field.

LG at present the Environment Agency does not consider there to be any essential works required on the White Brook and that any perceived negative impacts on the Maidenhead Waterways scheme should not stop habitat creation schemes i.e. new ponds and scrapes in the fields at Battlemead Common.

AD raised the concern regarding the presence of non-native species e.g. mink and the Canada Goose. The 2018 breeding bird survey considered the Canada Goose bred on the new common. It is the dominant bird on the east field together with the greylag goose. Canada Goose also occurs on the Summerleaze Sailing Lake where in the past their eggs have been blown to cut numbers.

AD pointed out that blanket weed (filamentous algae) developed on the wetland on each side of the causeway in June, gradually dying out to leave a white deposit in September. Wildfowl were absent from the wetland from June as the weed created a hostile environment. **AD** thought that scrapes would also develop blanket weed. It was suggested that as nutrients were used up in the inundated land, that the weed would not develop (N.B. however droppings from wildfowl will continue to fertilise the water).

SB site management must consider carbon sequestration – wetlands and non-ploughed land are good.

LA target species should be considered in the site management – e.g. barn owl, skylark.

Funding was discussed and **JM** informed the group that Battlemead Common will not be allocated a specific budget next year and funding will be provided from the general Parks and Open Spaces budget. Retaining agricultural land designation for Battlemead Common was discussed as a way of maintaining the subsidy entitlements as a means of funding essential work e.g. conservation grass cut & collect. Sheep grazing could replace the spring cut recommended in the management plan. All agree to help with funding ideas.

All agree the need for a 'vision' in order to guide future nature conservation management for Battlemead Common. Basic principles of Protect, Restore, Enhance, and Educate were discussed and agreed.

4. Recommendations

Protect

- better understanding of what we already have (ecology surveys e.g. great crested newt eDNA)
- dogs on leads
- seasonal access a possibility to be explored
- hedge maintained so views not obstructed (10 years off)
- protect the woodland, scrub boundaries
- discourage cycling on site
- maintain agricultural status

Restore

- cut and lift conservation grass areas
- woodland management
- barn owl nesting
- tree planting (Dr Sarah Rutherford's report for the Royal Borough, *Battlemead Common, Berkshire – Historic Landscape Analysis*, currently being finalised, will suggest where trees should be planted)

Enhance

- habitat creation (pond/wetland in the north field, wetlands in east field)
- rewilding (not cutting north field)
- possibility of Skylarks nesting in east field
- aftermath grazing with sheep in east field
- strengthen connectivity into the wider context

Educate

- what is appropriate: need to facilitate different needs at different sites rather than one size fits all
- macro-level guidance online, dedicated webpage.
- on site signage for interpretation and restrictions
- 'permissible footpath' might be more appropriate
- be clear on what is special now and in the future

Next Meeting: tbc

Accessibility at Battlemead Common sub-group

Meeting Notes
14th October 2.00pm
Meeting Room 1, Town Hall

Attended by:

Jacqui Wheeler (JW) RBWM

Mike Copland (MC) Wild Cookham (substitute for Lynne Peperell)
Steve Gillions (SG) East Berks Ramblers
Lisa Hughes (LH) Local Access Forum and Access Advisory Forum
Fiona Tattersall (FT) Binfield Badgers
Cllr John Baldwin (JB) RBWM (substitute for Cllr Brar)
Dick Scarff (DS) The Cookham Society

Apologies/absence:

Deborah Mason (DM) Wild Maidenhead

1. Introductions

All members of the sub-group introduced themselves, and acknowledged the purpose of the meeting as one of four sub-groups established to advise the 'Friends of Battlemead Common' and the Council on the management of the site.

2. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the sub-group were circulated and agreed.

3. Open Discussion

The sub-group discussed a range of issues relating to access to and from Battlemead Common and levels of accessibility within the site.

All agreed there are two different aspects of accessibility that need to be discussed and addressed for Battlemead; the physical mechanics and ease of use of the site and the current and ongoing levels of access for the public to the various parts of the site.

The group agreed that both types of accessibility would be looked at.

LH raised concerns about how information is to be conveyed about the accessibility of the site, including items such as; surfacing and resting places available and length of routes. There are a wide range of mobility issues present with 1 in 5 people in the borough having some kind of mobility problem.

People need access to high quality open space like Battlemead and it is reasonable to expect that more people with disabilities are going to be able to reach Battlemead due to its close proximity to the town.

FT felt that human usage needs to be flexible and based on seasonal wildlife and habitat changes. All agreed with this assessment and the need to be open minded. There is a need to develop the site and

access to it carefully as an understanding of the most sensitive areas becomes clearer so that no lasting damage is done.

However all agreed the need to make some decisions now is important as the site is open and being used. SG raised the questions: How accessible do we make the site? What types of paths are made available bearing in mind the needs of people with disabilities? Should there be some path improvement work to standards that reflects these needs?

LH stated that people need a smaller circular route within the site probably in West Field not just the Northern route to the Thames as for some this is too far. She suggested an accessibility audit of the site is done. All agreed.

Some of the group were also concerned about road safety ingress and egress of the site, both at the pedestrian gate and at the car park entrance. Though the speed limit had been dropped and the access points checked for safety through the Highways Team at the Council, concerns were still expressed by the group about the safety and liability of the Council should there be an incident. JB stated he would look into this issue.

The physical accessibility of the pedestrian gate was discussed with all agreeing that the design was not fit for purpose and that this should be modified to a swing gate to improve accessibility. All agreed that the work to modify this gate should be undertaken now and didn't need to wait until the FoBC meeting on the 9th Dec.

MC took an overview saying that the broad issues of accessibility need to be audited now by looking at the paths available to use on the site currently on the ground but recognising that things could change in the future with more information. All agreed that the Thames Path from Islet Road access to the Battlemead link should be included in the audit.

The issue of dogs was discussed with all seeing this as an issue crossing all subgroups. Worries were expressed about commercial dog walkers and a suggestion made that the car park could be fee charging to discourage it. The possibility of dog bins on site was also raised but no conclusion reached as to whether these should be implemented.

All agreed to look at examples of best practice elsewhere on similar sites such as Otmore, Oxon and share information with the sub group via JW.

LH would share information from her research into National Parks signage/accessibility.

SG described the success of the recent Boundary Walk which saw around 200 people using the Causeway route across Battlemead throughout the day. At any one time only a handful of people were actually on the causeway, but that those who walked across were full of admiration for the site. MC felt that Battlemead was a destination for walking and for enjoying wildlife and nature but was concerned it could also be a transit point for use of various local long distance routes. SG disagreed stating there are far better locations to park for access to these routes.

Security of the car park gate was highlighted by members and there was general agreement that the gate should be locked daily.

A question was raised about what the Environment Agency's restrictions are for alterations/actions on this kind of site due to its habitat/wildlife. JW agreed to find out more detail about this and forward to the subgroup.

The group discussed budgets and the uncertainty surrounding this and agreed that it is vital to find outside funding sources.

4. Recommendations

That visits would be made to the site by LH, JB and SG to undertake accessibility audits. The findings of these audits would be fed back to the subgroup meeting before 26th November 2019.

How information on accessibility within the site is conveyed needs to be carefully considered.

The seasonal aspect of access to the site and the various parts of the site needs to be recognised and therefore will guide to what degree and when certain areas will be accessible.

That the pedestrian gate is modified to improve accessibility in line with current standards as soon as possible.

Next Meeting:

TBC

Information & Communication at Battlemead Common sub-group

Meeting Notes
22th October 10.00 am
Zone C Meeting Room 1, Town Hall

Attended by:

Ambika Chouhan (RBWM)

Cllr Jane Perry (Cookham Parish Council)

Lisa Hughes (Access Advisory Forum/Local Access Forum)

Steve Gillions (East Berks Ramblers/Local Access Forum)

Lars Ahlgren (Wild Cookham)

Jan Stannard (Wild Maidenhead)

Apologies/absence:

None

1. Introductions

All members of the sub-group introduced themselves, and **AC** explained that this was one of four sub-groups established to advise the 'Friends of Battlemead Common' and the Council on the management of the site.

The other three sub-groups (Biodiversity; Accessibility; White brook) will also be meeting during October, and will report back to the full 'Friends of Battlemead Common' at its next meeting on 9th December.

2. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the sub-group were circulated and agreed. **AC** explained that the membership of each sub-group includes a cross-section of interests, and a number of people sit on more than one group; this should help to encourage effective communication between the various sub-groups.

The group discussed at length the ToR and its interpretation as such. **JS** representing Wild Maidenhead and **LA** representing Wild Cookham clarified that the Info & Comms Sub Group ToR suggested that the group does not seek to publicise Battlefield common as a destination as this is an ecologically sensitive site and not just a public open space. **SG** from the ramblers however disagreed and was in favour of positive advertisement and not believed it should not be downplayed. All members however agreed it is not a typical council open space and it should incorporate methods to highlight its ecological value with meaningful human interaction. They also agreed that the current wordings of the ToR do not suggest that it should be publicised but focuses on dissemination of information regarding the open space to the wider community.

3. Open Discussion

SG suggested that there are two elements of this sub group:

- On site communication through a formulated signage strategy
- Offsite communication within the FoB group and to the public

LA pointed out the fact that any communication can only be correct to whatever has been agreed so far till that point of time and hence present communication should focus on current situation until significant decisions are made on the basis of surveys and other site investigations. Comms sub group would then need

to update the information to the general public. **AC** clerking for this sub group will also be responsible for circulating the concise bullet point summary of all the key highlights from all the sub group meetings to all members of FoB through email with the input of all other officers representing sub groups.

Onsite installation of temporary signage was discussed and it was agreed that an A1 sign will be installed at the main entrance and an A2 signs would be installed on the post and rail fence near the two pedestrian entrances. The group raised their concerns of the use of the word 'Common' on information signs as it makes people believe that they have commoner rights to this land. It was recommended that no signs would use the term Common when refereeing to Battlemead and this will be circulated to the FoB group for approval. **JS** went through comments sent by Wild Maidenhead to RBWM some time ago with **AC** who would be responsible to update the temporary sign format and circulate it amongst the sub group for approval. All agreed that a graphic map showing the paths and facilitates should be part the temporary signboard. All agreed the signboard needs to convey the grass cutting and management strategy to the park users to manage expectations.

SG presented some examples from the National Parks Authority signboards and advised our signboards have the same level of graphic legibility. All agreed that signage needed to be easy to understand and attractive. **LH** pointed out that these would need to be legible for people of all abilities.

Managing dog walkers was discussed at length as the group was concerned about the effect of dogs without leads on the ecology of the open space. **AC** suggested that this was an overarching concern for all FoB members and hence 'Dogs on Leads' sign should not only be part of the restrictions section on the signboard but should also form part of the main body of text as a subhead perhaps saying 'This is a dogs on leads park'. This would hopefully help to educate park users about the ecologically sensitive nature of the site and the importance of keeping dogs on leads when using this open space. Concern was raised on the increased number of commercial dog walking activity in local parks and advised that the wording regarding dogs should clearly mention that no more than three dogs per person would should be recommended in the information boards. All agreed that there should be an early explanation of expectations from dog walkers on this site. All agreed that volunteers can go there and politely educated dog walkers about the sensitivity of this site. **Jason Mills** who is in charge of the Volunteering Sub Group can arrange such days on site. **Jason Mills** to circulate information regarding the schedule of volunteering activities to the FoB members. **AC** also suggested some larger A4 type signs along the site reiterating dogs to be kept on leads due to eco sensitive site.

It was agreed that information boards would also be required in future for educating the visitors of the rich ecology of the site. All members felt that information on seasonal flora and fauna should be made available to visitors to help educate them about the ecological sensitivity of Battlemead Common. **AC** suggested that these could be lectern types with the ability to change information.

The use of QR codes was advised by **LH** which would mean that information does not have to be on paper leaflets suitable for the current times. **SG** suggested that the signs should be of two types, informative (paths etc.) and educational (flora & fauna). All agreed that the sub group will devise a comprehensive signage strategy for the Battlemead Common further down the line next year.

All members agreed that it was 'too early' for offsite communication as of now. Whatever has been communicated so far regarding this site to the common public is sufficient.

4. Recommendations

It was recommended that the word 'Common' be removed from all the signboards for all current and future signs as it causes confusion as it is not a listed common and has no commoners rights.

It was recommended that the council look into the Bylaws regarding dogs and commercial dog walking activity as there are nothing currently which can prevent negative implications of these commercial activities on ecologically sensitive sites like this one.

Next Meeting: TBC

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Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Public Rights of Way Milestones Targets 2019-20

UPDATED: Nov 2019	
WELL MAINTAINED	
WM1 <i>To ensure that all public rights of way are easy to use by members of the public (former Best Value Performance Indicator 178). Target for 2019-20: 95%</i>	<i>[note: surveys to be undertaken in Spring and Autumn by East Berks Ramblers</i>
WM2 <i>To carry out major surface improvements or vegetation clearance on 10 public rights of way. (FP =footpath, BR = bridleway, RB = restricted byway)</i>	
Bisham FP 23 (Stubbings)	surface improvements
Cookham FP 56 (Widbrook Common)	vegetation clearance
Hurley FP 50 (Knowl Hill)	vegetation clearance
Maidenhead RB 72 (Nightingale Lane)	surface improvements
Sunninghill RB 24 (St Georges Lane)	surface improvements
Waltham St Lawrence RB 35 (Uncles Lane)	Drainage improvements
Windsor BR1 (off Wolf Lane)	Vegetation clearance (WiW)
Datchet FP5 (Montagu Road-Green Lane)	Surface improvements
	Total : 8
WM3 <i>To repair or replace 7 bridges.</i>	
Bray FP 31(off Primrose Lane)	bridge repaired
Bray FP 54 (Oakley Green)	bridge repaired
Bray FP 57 (Oakley Green)	bridge repaired
Datchet FP 9 (Thames Path)	handrails repaired
Cox Green FP 6/8 (Ockwells farm)	anti-slip, ramp and hand rails
Cox Green FP 11 (Ockwells Park)	bridge and boardwalk replaced
Maidenhead FP 13 (off Blackamoor Lane)	deck replaced
Waltham St Lawrence FP 34 (off Hungerford Lane)	2 bridges repaired
Bray FP30 j/w BR29	Bridge replacement
	Total : 9
WELL PUBLICISED	
WP1 <i>To produce 1 new Parish rights of way leaflet</i>	Total : (1 in progress)
WP2 <i>To assist others to produce effective promotional material: minimum of 1 new or updated publication.</i>	Total: (1 in progress)

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Public Rights of Way Milestones Targets 2019-20

IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	
<p>AC1 <i>Create 1 new strategic path, either public right of way or permitted, to fill identified gaps in the public rights of way network as/when opportunities arise.</i></p>	<p>Permitted Bridleway/cycleway: Bradenham Lane to Hurley Lane</p> <p>Battlemead Common Permitted Footpath (Thames Path to Widbrook Common)</p> <p>Total: 2</p>
<p>AC2 <i>To make 10 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.</i></p>	
Maidenhead FP 89 (The Green Way)	Disabled accessible linking path created from 'The Loftings'
Walt St Lawrence FP 23 (off Pool Lane)	Stile replaced with gate
Cookham FP 55 (Thames Path)	surface improvements
Cookham FP 60 (Thames Path)	surface improvements
Windsor BR 2 (Roses Lane)	surface improvements and vegetation clearance
Cookham FP32 (r/o Lester Cottages)	Replace small kissing gate with swing gate (works in progress)
	Total: 6

Public Rights of Way Milestones 2019-2020: monthly summary (running total)

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar 31 st 2020
2018/19 Achieved	Target 2019-20												
91%	95% easy to use	-	-	-	92%	-	-	-					
10	10 major surface or clearance jobs	1	2	4	4	8	8	8					
9	7 bridge repairs or replaceme nts	1	2	4	4	6	6	9					
1	1 new Parish leaflet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-					
0	1 new prom. info. (assist others)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-					
1	1 new path created	-	1	1	1	2	2	2					
10	10 access improvm ents	-	-	1	1	1	2	6					

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ITEM 8 – LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Forum on further Local Plan consultation underway from 1st November 2019 for 6 weeks and to decision whether or not an official LAF response is needed and if so how to achieve one within timescale.

2. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Online link to the Council's current consultation:

<http://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/portal/blp/blpsv-pc/blpsv-pc-oct19?tab=files>

2.1 **Background to the Consultation**

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is in the process of producing a new Borough Local Plan to replace the adopted Local Plan. The first stage of the plan-making process, known as the 'preparation' stage, ended in January 2018 when the Council submitted its Borough Local Plan (2013 – 2033) Submission Version (BLPSV) and supporting documents to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

Upon submission, the Secretary of State appointed a planning inspector, Mrs Louise Phillips MA (Cantab) MSc MRTPI, to carry out the second stage of the plan-making process, involving the Examination of the BLPSV. The purpose of the Examination is to ascertain whether the BLPSV is legally compliant and sound, and whether the Council complied with the Duty to Co-operate when preparing the BLPSV.

Having completed that additional work, the Council has formulated Proposed Changes to the BLPSV to address concerns about the soundness of the submitted Plan. On 23 October 2019, the Proposed Changes to the BLPSV and supporting documents were considered and approved by Full Council for public consultation

The Council is now consulting on the Proposed Changes to the Borough Local Plan 2013 - 2033 Submission Version.

The purpose of this public consultation is to allow an opportunity for anyone interested to make representations on the proposed changes which are set out in the 'Borough Local Plan (2013 - 2033) Submission Version Incorporating Proposed Changes, October 2019'.

Specifically, as the 'Borough Local Plan (2013–2033) Submission Version Incorporating Proposed Changes, October 2019', is the version of the BLP the Council wishes to adopt, representations should address whether the Proposed Changes make the BLPSV legally compliant and sound. Please note that compliance with the Duty to Co-operate does not apply after a Local Plan has been submitted for independent examination

2.2 **Making Representations**

Representations on the 'Borough Local Plan (2013-2033) Submission Version Incorporating Proposed Changes, October 2019' are invited for a six week period from **Friday 1 November 2019** until **midnight on Sunday 15 December 2019**.

Only representations received at the Council's offices within this period will be considered by the Inspector appointed to examine the Borough Local Plan. Late representations will not be accepted.

Details on how to comment on the Proposed Changes to the BLPSV using this Consultation Portal are as follows:

- To add an online comment, click on "Read and Comment on document" below and navigate to the document section that you wish to respond to.
- Click on the 'Add Comments' button next to the section. This will open a form where you can type in your comments for that section.
- Please note, you are required to register and login when providing us with your comments, to do this please click on 'Login/Register' at the top of this page.

Further information about the public consultation and the Proposed Changes to the BLPSV can be found in the following documents:

- [Statement of Representations Procedure and Statement of Fact](#); and
- [Consultation Explanation Statement](#)

LAF Response/Recommendations – Decision whether or not to respond and if yes, how to achieve the response within the timescales.