

NOTICE  
OF  
MEETING

**RIGHTS OF WAY & HIGHWAY LICENSING  
PANEL**

will meet on

**MONDAY, 14TH MARCH, 2022**

**At 6.30 pm**

In the

**GREY ROOMS - YORK HOUSE, WINDSOR AND ON [RBWM YOUTUBE](#)**

TO: MEMBERS OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY & HIGHWAY LICENSING PANEL

COUNCILLORS MAUREEN HUNT (CHAIRMAN), GARY MUIR (VICE-CHAIRMAN),  
SAMANTHA RAYNER, DAVID CANNON, PHIL HASELER, MANDY BRAR,  
JOHN BALDWIN AND CLIVE BASKERVILLE

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS GURPREET BHANGRA, GERRY CLARK, KAREN DAVIES,  
SHAMSUL SHELM, SAYONARA LUXTON, CHRISTINE BATESON, NEIL KNOWLES  
AND SIMON WERNER

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022

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](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) or contact the Panel Administrator **Mark Beeley** 01628 796345 / [mark.beeley@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:mark.beeley@rbwm.gov.uk)

**Recording of Meetings** – In line with the council's commitment to transparency the Part I (public) section of the virtual meeting will be streamed live and recorded via Zoom. By participating in the meeting by audio and/or video, you are giving consent to being recorded and acknowledge that the recording will be in the public domain. If you have any questions regarding the council's policy, please speak to Democratic Services or Legal representative at the meeting.

## AGENDA

### PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> To receive any apologies for absence.	-
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any declarations of interest.	5 - 6
3.	<u>MINUTES</u> To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2021.	7 - 12
4.	<u>FOOTPATH 17 COOKHAM AND FOOTPATH 59 DIVERSION ORDERS 2022</u> To consider the report.	13 - 82
5.	<u>MILESTONES STATEMENT 2022/23</u> To consider the report.	83 - 130

## MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT 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 Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Other Registerable 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.

Any Member with concerns about the nature of their interest should consult the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

### Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your DPIs (summary below, further details set out in Table 1 of the Members' Code of Conduct) you must disclose the interest, **not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room** unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted by the Monitoring Officer in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a DPI.

Where you have a DPI on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

*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 (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her 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 council.*
- *Any licence to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.*
- *Any tenancy where the landlord is the council, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest in the securities of.*
- *Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:*
  - a) that body has a place of business or land in the area of the council, 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.

### Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (summary below and as set out in Table 2 of the Members Code of Conduct), you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

*Other Registerable Interests (relating to the Member or their partner):*

*You have an interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:*

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority*
- b) any body*
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature*
  - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or*

*one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)*

### **Disclosure of Non- Registerable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a DPI) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer) you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a body included in those you need to disclose under DPIs as set out in Table 1 of the Members' code of Conduct

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

**You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

### **Other declarations**

Members may wish to declare at the beginning of the meeting any other information they feel should be in the public domain in relation to an item on the agenda; such Member statements will be included in the minutes for transparency.

# Agenda Item 3

## RIGHTS OF WAY & HIGHWAY LICENSING PANEL

MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Maureen Hunt (Chairman), Samantha Rayner, Christine Bateson, Phil Haseler, Mandy Brar, John Baldwin and Clive Baskerville

Also in attendance: Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra

Officers: Mark Beeley and Anthony Hurst

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cannon and Councillor Muir. Councillor Bateson was attending the meeting as Councillor Cannon's substitute.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Rayner explained that she had visited the footpath last year with officers.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were approved as an accurate record.**

### FOOTPATHS 17 AND 59 COOKHAM: DIVERSION APPLICATION

The Chairman confirmed that the Panel had visited the site the previous week, accompanied by an officer from RBWM. The members who had attended the site visit were Councillor Baskerville, Councillor Brar, Councillor Baldwin, Councillor Haseler and Councillor Hunt.

Anthony Hurst, Parks and Countryside Manager, explained that the application had been received from the landowner for the diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham, at Mount Farm in Cookham. The proposal was that parts of footpath 17 would be moved from crossing the field as it was currently, to be diverted to the permitted path in situ that followed the edge of the field instead, and a connecting section of Footpath 59 would also be diverted. The dashed black lines on the map showed the proposed new routes of the footpaths, with the current routes shown by solid black lines. There were some legal tests that needed to be applied when considering this application. The proposed diversion had to be considered under the criteria set out in Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980. This required that before making a Diversion Order the Council had to be satisfied that the proposal would be in the interests of the owner of the land and/or in the interests of the public. Before confirming an Order, the Council had to also be satisfied that the proposed new route would not be substantially less convenient to the public than the existing route and must have regard to the effect that the diversion would have had on public enjoyment of the path as a whole, and the effect that the coming into operation of the diversion would have had on land served by the existing right of way. The Council had to also have regard to the needs of agriculture and forestry, flora and fauna, and any relevant provisions within the current "Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Public Rights of Way improvement Plan 2016-2026".

The officer view was that the proposed diversion did not meet the criteria, both in terms of the 'convenience' test and the 'enjoyment' test, and therefore a recommendation had been put forward in the report to refuse the application. Anthony Hurst presented some photos to the Panel which showed the footpaths and area that was being discussed.

The Chairman asked if Anthony Hurst could clarify what the difference was between a permitted footpath and a public footpath.

Anthony Hurst said the fundamental difference was a public right of way was permanent and available to use all year round. A permitted footpath could be opened up by landowners, but it was up to them whether it was temporary or if it was later closed.

Dick Scarff said that he was speaking on behalf of the Cookham Society. He said the current footpath had great views whereas the new proposed footpath lost these views as it went around the edge of the field. Female walkers felt safer crossing the middle of a field, particularly as the edge was close to the woods. Dick Scarff asked the Panel to support the officers recommendation for refusal. He had spoken with the previous landowners a number of years ago and had been told that the impact the footpath had on farming in the field was very small. The main issue was when the footpath got muddy, walkers would stray off the route into planted areas. Dick Scarff suggested that the applicant created a permitted path around the field edge to avoid this, along with additional signage.

Jayne Walker explained that she was speaking in support of the application. She had been impressed by the efforts of the landowners to improve the paths and environment for both wildlife and walkers. The council should work with farmers, the new route was slightly longer but not substantially so. The permitted path should be retained so that it could be used in winter if the original footpath was to get too muddy. People were using footpaths to enjoy the countryside rather than from getting from A to B in the shortest amount of time. Jayne Walker enjoyed having the woods beside the proposed footpath. She had used the permitted path regularly and often saw more people using this path than the original cross field path. Therefore, she believed that more people would be inconvenienced if the permitted path was to close in favour of keeping the cross field path. If the issue was with the surface of the path, this could be addressed in consultation with the landowner. Jayne Walker had never encountered farm machinery on the permitted path.

Jane Shire said that she was supportive of retaining the existing footpaths on their current routes. They were well used and even when they were muddy, walkers had appropriate footwear. The views were delightful and very enjoyable for those who walked the route. Jane Shire believed that the footpath made less damage to the crops than the tyre tracks did when the crops were harvested. She did not feel there were any valid reasons to move the footpaths.

Diane Lilley said that she strongly objected to the proposal. The new route was dull, open paths provided a much better experience for walkers. The cross field path had exceptional light whereas the proposed path was largely in shade. Diane Lilley was surprised at the proposal as it would likely involve cutting down trees. A long circular route was not needed and Diane Lilley urged the Panel to reject the application.

Steve Gillions said that he was representing the Ramblers Association. He argued that the footpaths should be retained in their current form. The Ramblers had agreed to a diversion at the site before and were mindful of the criteria which had been set out by officers. Steve Gillions said there was no good reason for the footpath to be closed. The permitted path had been welcomed by some but this should not be at the expense of the current cross field path.

Jane Courtier said that she supported the officers recommendation that the application was refused. If the cross field path was closed, it would lead to a reduction in the number of local walks available. Jane Courtier felt that the permitted footpath was also worth keeping for those who were doing longer walks.

The applicant, Mr Copas, said that he appreciated the Panel undertaking a site visit of the proposed area. A lot of walkers had used the QR codes which had been placed on signs along the path, expressing their support of the footpath diversion. There was an effect on farming as walkers strayed further from the path during winter months when the path was muddy. Mr Copas walked the route regularly and a lot of walkers had said that they enjoyed the proposed route.

The Chairman said that there had been 18 objections received to the application and 27 comments in support. Therefore, the application was very divisive.

Councillor Baskerville asked how old the footpath was.

Anthony Hurst explained that the northern part of the footpath dated back to 1875 or earlier, although the route of the southern sections of the footpath were more recent.

Councillor Baskerville commented that the footpath had significant history, the largest hand axe in Europe had also been found close by. The path provided a good vantage point, with walkers being able to see a significant distance on a clear day. Councillor Baskerville was pleased to see that the footpaths were popular, he went to Furze Platt Secondary School and used to do cross country around the area and therefore knew it well. The proposed footpath around the edge of the field lost the view which was important for many people.

Councillor Haseler felt that he had heard more reasons to retain the footpath than divert it. The potential closure of the cross field footpath could make it more difficult for walkers to complete a local circular route, RBWM wanted to encourage more residents to get out and enjoy the boroughs countryside.

The Chairman asked if the footpath had been previously diverted.

Anthony Hurst clarified that the southern section of the footpath had been previously diverted. The northern section was the original route. There had been no objections to the diversion from any users, therefore the diversion was automatically approved.

Councillor Baldwin explained that this was one of the hardest decisions that he had made as a councillor. He had a huge attachment to the local area and was mindful of the arguments that had been made both for and against the application. Councillor Baldwin believed that the permitted footpath was more accessible and the loss of the direct route would be greater if there was something at the end of it. He said that he was unable to comment on the farming aspects of the application. Councillor Baldwin wanted to see the surface at an acceptable level to enable cycling but he did not find anything objectionable in the application which had been made.

Councillor Brar said that she was also torn between the two sides of the argument. She felt that the application made sense and was happy with the proposal which the landowner had made.

Councillor Bateson said that lots of people used the footpath and the views were fantastic. Lots of residents were upset about the application and she felt that the cross field footpath should stay along its existing route.

The Chairman commented that the permitted footpath was very good while the public footpath was very muddy, it was clear to see where walkers had trampled on crops. It was important that the diversion was not less convenient for the public, the Panel needed to have regard for the public's enjoyment of the footpath.

Councillor Rayner said that the borough was a good part of the country for walking and there were some good views of things like Windsor Castle from the path. However, she did not

believe that the application was detrimental to the views that could be enjoyed by walkers. Councillor Rayner felt that the new path was more convenient and was therefore better for public enjoyment. It was important that RBWM provided good quality footpaths for its residents. She had noted that there were more representations in support of the application than against it.

Councillor Baldwin commented on the landowner committing to a 2m path, as the section through the woods would be a challenge. He asked if this was enforceable on the landowner.

Anthony Hurst said that the section of path through the woodland would be 2m wide, as detailed in the report. This would mean that there could be no trees within the 2m width of the path, this would be legally enforceable.

Councillor Baskerville asked for clarification on which paths would be closed as a result of this application.

Anthony Hurst explained that if the diversions were to proceed the routes shown on the plan by solid black lines would be diverted to the routes shown by broken black lines. If the diversion was not granted, it was entirely in the control of the landowner on whether the permitted footpath was to remain open.

The Chairman asked what happened to the application after the Panel had voted.

Anthony Hurst said that if the Panel refused the application, that would be the end of the matter. If the application was permitted, Diversion Orders would be published which would then go out for consultation, signs would also be installed at each end of the sections of footpath proposed to be diverted, and a Notice would also be published in the Maidenhead Advertiser. All those who commented in response to the pre-Panel consultations would be sent copies of the Orders and Notices and would at that stage have the opportunity to either re-submit their comments unchanged, or add further comments if they wished.

Once the Diversion Orders had been published and the statutory consultation process completed, a further report would then be submitted to the Panel, for the Panel to consider any objections or representations received during the statutory consultation period. The Panel would then need to decide whether or not to refer the Orders to the Secretary of State, who would then arrange a public inquiry to determine whether or not the Orders were confirmed. The Inspector would then decide the result. RBWM was not itself able to approve the Diversion Orders if there were any outstanding objections.

Councillor Haseler asked what the status of the footpath was at 17.1.

Anthony Hurst confirmed that it was a public footpath.

Councillor Haseler asked if cyclists wanted to use the permitted footpath that they would need to walk their bikes to the footpath.

Anthony Hurst said that footpath 17 would be shared with cyclists, cyclists were able to use footpaths with the landowners permission. Horse riders would not be permitted on the route.

Councillor Baldwin asked if the cycleway could be removed at any point. There were signs at the site which suggested that cyclists were already able to use the path. Councillor Baldwin asked what weight this would have in the decision.

Anthony Hurst said that landowners could create permitted cycleways and then withdraw them, the council was unable to place any conditions on the landowner.

Councillor Rayner asked if the council could ensure that the footpath was also allowed to be used by cyclists.



Anthony Hurst confirmed that this was not possible as there was no mechanism for this in place.

A motion was put forward by Councillor Haseler to refuse the application, in line with officers recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Baskerville.

A named vote was taken.

<b>To refuse the application (Motion)</b>	
Councillor Maureen Hunt	Against
Councillor Samantha Rayner	Against
Councillor Christine Bateson	For
Councillor Phil Haseler	For
Councillor Mandy Brar	Abstain
Councillor John Baldwin	Against
Councillor Clive Baskerville	For
<b>Drawn</b>	

Due to the vote being a tie, the Chairman used her casting vote. She voted against the motion, therefore the motion fell.

A motion was put forward by Councillor Baldwin to permit the application, against officers recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

A named vote was taken.

<b>To permit the application (Motion)</b>	
Councillor Maureen Hunt	For
Councillor Samantha Rayner	For
Councillor Christine Bateson	Against
Councillor Phil Haseler	Against
Councillor Mandy Brar	Abstain
Councillor John Baldwin	For
Councillor Clive Baskerville	Against
<b>Drawn</b>	

Due to the vote being a tie, the Chairman used her casting vote. She voted for the motion, therefore the motion was passed.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the report and:**

- i) The footpath diversion application for parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham, at Mount Farm, Cookham, was permitted.**

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.55 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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Report Title:	Footpath 17 Cookham (part) and Footpath 59 Cookham (part) Diversion Orders 2022
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Officer reporting	Anthony Hurst, Parks & Countryside Manager
Meeting and Date:	Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services
Wards affected:	Bisham and Cookham



## REPORT SUMMARY

*On 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 this Panel authorised the making of Diversion Orders for parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham, in response to applications received from the owners of the land crossed by these footpaths. The Diversion Orders were duly published on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (see maps at Appendix A), and this report considers the comments received in response to the statutory consultations into the Diversion Orders. A total of 78 objections, 5 ‘neutral’ comments, and 2 expressions of support were received. These responses are set out in full in Appendix B. The report concludes that considering all comments received in response to the consultations the proposed diversions do not meet the criteria for confirmation of Diversion Orders, as set out in the Highways Act 1980, and therefore recommends that the Council does not proceed with the Orders.*

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Panel notes the report and:

- i) Does not proceed with the Cookham 17 (part) and Cookham 59 (part) Diversion Orders published on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

## 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

Option	Comments
Do not proceed with the Diversion Orders for Footpath 17 Cookham (part) and Footpath 59 Cookham (part)	It is considered that taking into account all of the objections and expressions of support received in response to the consultations the diversions fail to meet the criteria for confirmation of Diversion Orders set out in the Highways Act 1980 and detailed in paragraphs 2.3 and 5.1 below.
<b>This is the recommended option</b>	

Option	Comments
<p>Refer the Diversion Orders, together with the objections and representations received in response to the statutory consultations, to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), requesting that he confirm the Orders.</p> <p>This option is not recommended.</p>	<p>Under this option, the Council would need to support the Orders through the referral process and at Public Inquiry.</p> <p>The Council would need to be satisfied that the Orders meet the criteria for confirmation of Diversion Orders set out in the Highways Act 1980 and detailed in paragraphs 2.3 and 5.1 below.</p>
<p>Seek the withdrawal of the objections received in response to the statutory consultations.</p> <p>This option is not recommended.</p>	<p>If all objections to the Diversion Orders were withdrawn, the Council would itself be able to confirm the Orders as unopposed Orders.</p> <p>However, given the very large number of objections received, and the views expressed in these objections, this is not considered to be a realistic option.</p>

- 2.1 **The diversion proposals:** the diversion proposals submitted by the landowner are shown on the Order maps attached at Appendix A. The proposal is to divert those parts of Footpath 17 Cookham which are currently ‘cross-field’ footpaths to follow field-edge paths and a section of path through an adjacent area of woodland. The proposal would also entail the diversion of a section of Footpath 59 Cookham, which connects with this part of Footpath 17.
- 2.2 The reasons for the diversion proposals, and details of the proposed new routes, as stated by the applicant, are as follows:

*“To move paths from existing routes crossing the centre of the field to the field edge to allow more economic farming practices and create a longer circular route for public use around Mount Farm. This will also allow Beeching Grove Wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access.*

*The new route will follow the path of the existing Permitted Path which was established in 2013. This route runs along the northern boundary of the field, before running south along the western boundary, where it links with land owned by the National Trust, before connecting with the north-south leg of Cookham Footpath 59 which leads to Malders Lane. This creates a two mile circular route around the farm. There will be an additional section of footpath through the wood to the west which is known as Little Beeching Gove Wood. This links with National Trust open access land and the existing footpath network in the area. An additional permitted cycle path is also being proposed along the hard surfaced portion of the proposed path to create a safe, off-road circular cycling route.*

*The existing permitted path within the field is 3m wide and is made up of a hardcore surface with scalplings. There are no proposed changes to this surface for the diversion. The section of the proposed new footpath which passes through the woodland at Little Beeching Grove Wood will be an unmade surface between the trees. This section of the path will measure 2m wide. Trees will be cleared along the section of the footpath which runs through Little Beeching Grove Wood to create a 2m wide footpath. The surface of this section of the footpath will be unmade”*

- 2.3 **Assessment of proposal and consultation responses:** the proposed diversions must be considered under the criteria set out in Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980. This requires that before confirming an Order, the Council (or the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the case of opposed Orders) must be satisfied that the proposed new route will not be substantially less convenient to the public than the existing route, and must have regard to the effect that the diversion would have on public enjoyment of the path as a whole, and the effect that the coming into operation of the diversion would have on land served by the existing right of way. The Council must also have regard to the needs of agriculture and forestry, flora and fauna, and any relevant provisions within the current “*Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Public Rights of Way improvement Plan 2016-2026*” (ROWIP 2016-2026)
- 2.4 There are no specific provisions or proposals within the ‘*ROWIP 2016-2026*’ of relevance to these diversion proposals. In relation to the needs of agriculture, it is noted that one of the reasons for the diversions as set out in the application is to allow more economic farming practices, and in relation to forestry, flora and fauna it is noted that if the diversions were to be implemented there is reference in the application to the clearance of trees to accommodate the proposed footpath through Little Beeching Grove Wood.
- 2.5 **Analysis of consultation responses:** a total of 78 objections, 5 ‘neutral’ comments and 2 expressions of support were received during the statutory 28 day consultation period which ran from 20<sup>th</sup> January to 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022. These consultation responses are as set out in full in Appendix B. Responses to pre-Order consultations undertaken previously, and considered by the Panel on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 are included in Appendix C.
- 2.6 Objections have been received from Cookham Parish Council, the Cookham Society, the RBWM Local Access Forum and the East Berks Ramblers, and there have been 74 individual objections received during the statutory consultation period. There are a number of common themes evident in the objections that have been received; these include concerns that the views from the proposed new public rights of way around the perimeter of the fields are inferior to those available from the existing public rights of way across the fields; the proposed new rights of way would be longer than the existing cross-field routes; there would be a loss of ‘openness’ associated with the existing cross-field routes; there would be a loss of a currently-available short circular walk from Malders Lane using the existing rights of way; there would be less ‘connectivity with the surrounding path network; walkers would be required to use routes that are shared with farm vehicles and cyclists; there would be a loss of heritage/historic values associated with the existing public rights of way.

- 2.7 The officers' view is that taking into account the consultation responses discussed above, the diversions specified in the Diversion Orders do not meet the criteria for confirmation of such Orders, as set out in the Highways Act 1980. In particular, it is considered that the diversion of the cross-field sections of Footpath 17 to follow field-edge paths would result in the loss of the sense of 'openness', and the loss of wide-ranging views, that can currently be enjoyed from these sections of footpath. Several objectors have referred to this point in their objections.
- 2.8 The diversion of the southern leg of Footpath 17 and the east-west section of Footpath 59 would result in the loss of a short circular walk accessed from Malders Lane. Several objectors have referred to this point in their objections. Although longer routes would be available using the proposed diversions, and a shorter route would be available along the proposed woodland path, these alternative routes would be substantially less convenient for those who wish to follow the short circular walk that is currently available, without having to walk through areas of woodland, which some walkers have stated they would prefer to avoid.
- 2.9 The proposed new route of Footpath 17 would result in a 'detour' of approximately 380 metres, in comparison to the current route of Footpath 17; for those walkers wishing to access Footpath 33 (to the south of Malders Lane), or other connecting footpaths, this would represent a significant length of detour. Several objectors have referred to this point in their objections.
- 2.10 If the Panel decides to proceed with referral of the opposed Orders to the Secretary of State, the matter would be determined by means of a Public Inquiry. The timescale for the Secretary of State (through the Planning Inspectorate) to convene the Public Inquiry is uncertain, but based on current information it is estimated that this would most likely be in mid-late 2023.

### 3.

**Table 2: Key Implications**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Unmet</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Significantly Exceeded</b>	<b>Date of delivery</b>
Diversion Orders not to proceed	n/a	Decision taken at Panel	n/a	n/a	14th March 2022
If Orders are referred to Secretary of State	n/a	Decision following public inquiry	n/a	n/a	Estimated 2023/2024 (subject to timing of public inquiry)

### 4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 If the Diversion Orders do not proceed there will be no cost to the Council. The administrative costs of processing the diversion application to date are being met by the applicant. However, if the Orders are referred to the Secretary of State, the Council will incur legal and Public Inquiry costs; it is estimated that

these costs, including the cost of external Counsel, would be in the region of £6000.00, based on a two-day public inquiry (these costs would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process).

**Table 3: Financial impact of report's recommendations**

<b>REVENUE COSTS (if the Diversion Orders do not proceed)</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Net Impact	£0	£0	£0

<b>REVENUE COSTS (if the Diversion Orders are referred to the Secretary of State)</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b> (assuming the Public Inquiry is held in 2023/24)
Legal and Public Inquiry costs	£0	£0	£6,000

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 119(6) of the Highways Act 1980 provides that before a Diversion Order is confirmed as an unopposed order by the Council, or as an opposed Order by the Secretary of State, the Council or the Secretary of State must be satisfied that new paths will not be substantially less convenient to the public as a result of the diversion and that confirmation is expedient having regard to the effect of the diversion on public enjoyment of the path as a whole and on land crossed by the existing path or to be crossed by the new one.
- 5.2 As objections have been received to the Orders during the statutory consultation period, the Council now has three options: (a) the Council can decide not to proceed with the Orders; (b) the Council can refer the Orders together with the objections and representations to the Secretary of State, and support the Orders through the referral process and at Public Inquiry (as the Parish Council has lodged an objection, the Secretary of State, through the Planning Inspectorate, would be obliged to determine the matter by means of Public Inquiry, rather than the written representations procedure); (c) the Council could attempt to seek the withdrawal of the objections.
- 5.3 Under Section B8 of Part 6 of the Council's Constitution ('Terms of Reference of all other Committees, Panels and other bodies of the Council'), this Panel is empowered to exercise the Council's functions to determine public rights of way diversion applications.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

**Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Level of uncontrolled risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Level of controlled risk</b>
None			

**7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

- 7.1 Equalities. An Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed (see Appendix D). If the Diversion Orders do not proceed, there will be no positive or negative impacts, as the footpath routes will remain unchanged. If the Diversion Orders were to be implemented (subject to confirmation of the Orders by the Secretary of State), there may be low level impacts (some positive and negative) on some users, as set out in the EQIA screening form.
- 7.2 Climate change/sustainability. If the Diversion Orders do not proceed, there will be no impact on climate change/sustainability, as the footpath routes would remain unchanged. If the Diversion Orders were to be implemented (subject to confirmation of the Orders by the Secretary of State) there would some tree removal associated with creation of the new section of footpath through the woodland.
- 7.3 Data Protection/GDPR. All personal data has been removed from consultation respondents’ comments set out in Appendices B and C.

**8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Diversion Orders were subject to a statutory 28 day public consultation in accordance with the requirements of the Highways Act 1980 and associated regulations. Notices were displayed at each end of the sections of footpath proposed for diversion, sent to prescribed organisations, and published in the Maidenhead Advertiser. The results of these consultations are discussed in this report, and the redacted consultation responses are listed in full in Appendix B. The results of pre-Order consultations considered by this Panel at its meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 are included in Appendix C.

**9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

**Table 5: Implementation timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
14 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	If the Panel decides not to proceed with the Orders, the applicants will be advised accordingly.
Estimated 2023/2024	If the Panel decides to refer the Orders to the Secretary of State, a Public Inquiry would be convened, and subject to the outcome of this Inquiry the diversions could be implemented in 2023/2024.

**10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 This report is supported by 4 appendices:
  - Appendix A: Diversion Order Maps.
  - Appendix B: Responses to statutory consultation January-February 2022
  - Appendix C: Responses to informal pre-Order consultations.
  - Appendix D: Equality Impact Assessment screening report



## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

## 12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>	
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	22.02.22	02.03.22
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	22.02.22	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	22.02.22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	22.02.22	24.02.22
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	22.02.22	23.02.22
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	22.02.22	
<i>Heads of Service (where relevant)</i>			
Alysse Strachan	Head of Neighbourhood Services	22.02.22	
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
As set out in report and Appendix B	Statutory public consultation		

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cllr Donna Stimson; Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside.	Yes
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## REPORT HISTORY

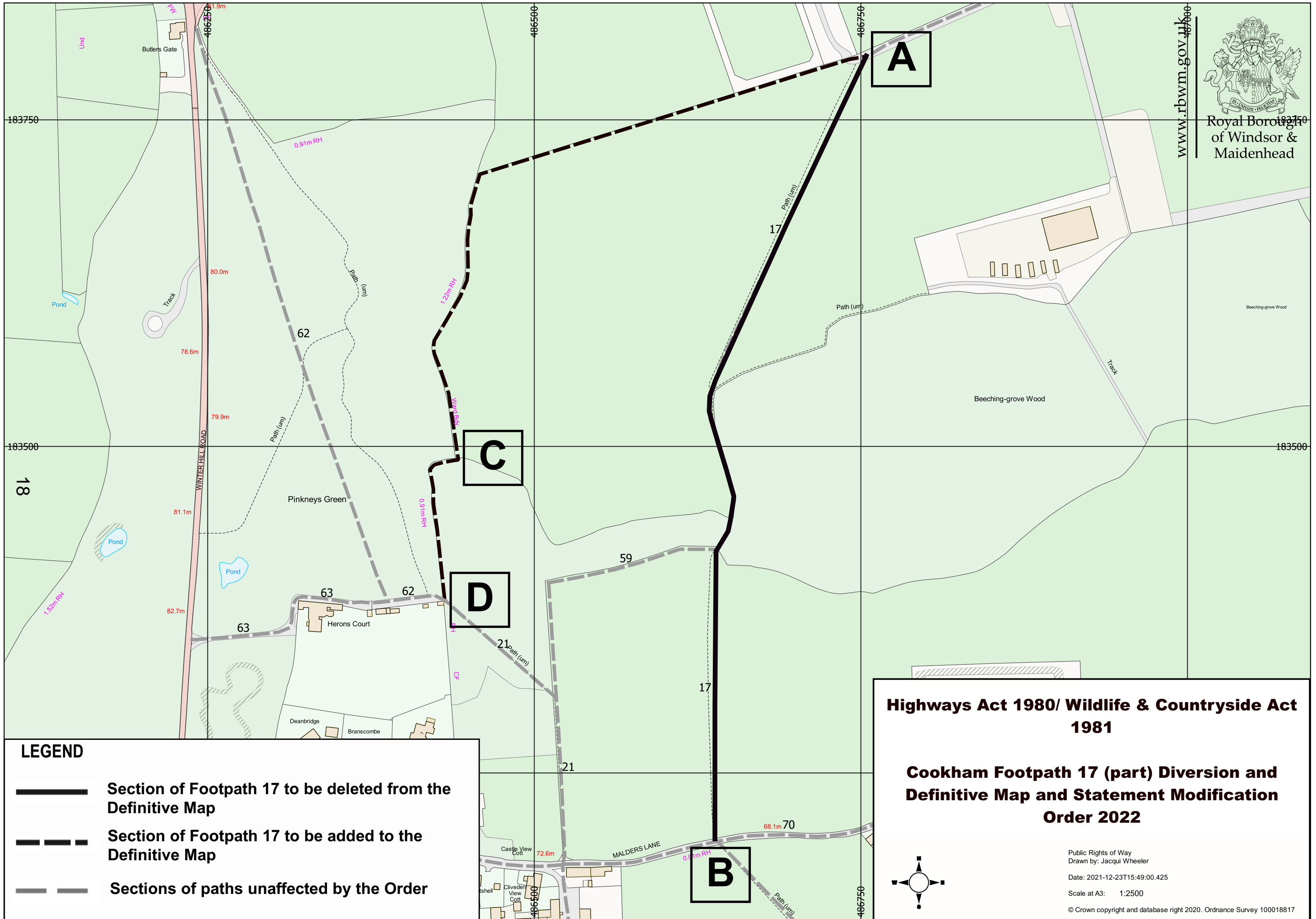
Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Panel decision	No	No

Report Author: Anthony Hurst, Parks and Countryside Manager, 07775-818622
--






Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

www.rbwm.gov.uk

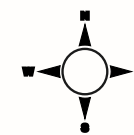


**LEGEND**

-  Section of Footpath 17 to be deleted from the Definitive Map
-  Section of Footpath 17 to be added to the Definitive Map
-  Sections of paths unaffected by the Order

**Highways Act 1980/ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981**

**Cookham Footpath 17 (part) Diversion and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2022**



Public Rights of Way  
Drawn by: Jacqui Wheeler

Date: 2021-12-23T15:49:00.425

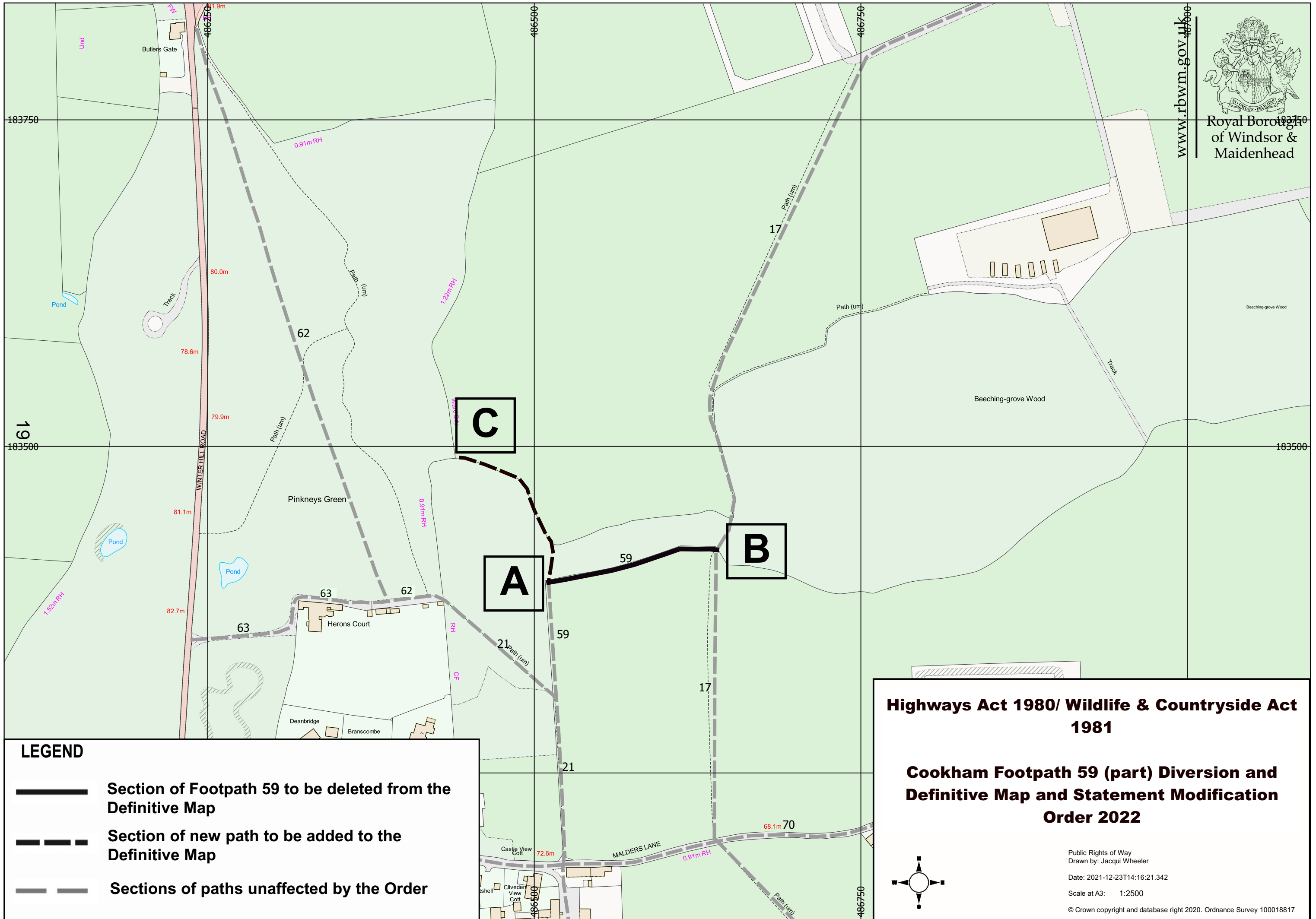
Scale at A3: 1:2500

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Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

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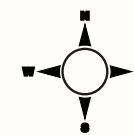


**LEGEND**

-  Section of Footpath 59 to be deleted from the Definitive Map
-  Section of new path to be added to the Definitive Map
-  Sections of paths unaffected by the Order

**Highways Act 1980/ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981**

**Cookham Footpath 59 (part) Diversion and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2022**



Public Rights of Way  
Drawn by: Jacqui Wheeler

Date: 2021-12-23T14:16:21.342

Scale at A3: 1:2500

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**Appendix B: responses to statutory consultation January-February 2022**

Cookham Parish Council

The Cookham Society

Local Access Forum

East Berks Ramblers

Community Comments



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## COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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COUNCIL OFFICES, HIGH ROAD, COOKHAM RISE, BERKS SL6 9JF  
Tel: (01628) 522003 Email: [office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:office@cookhamparishcouncil.org.uk)  
Clerk to the Council: Mrs Jill Gavin

Sharon Wootten  
Public Rights of Way Officer  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
Town Hall, St Ives Road,  
Maidenhead SL6 1RF

7th February 2022

Dear Sharon,

**Formal Consultation response from Cookham Parish Council regarding a proposed diversion of Cookham Footpath 17 and part of Cookham Footpath 59.**

At the Full Council meeting on 4th January 2022, Cookham Parish Council took the opportunity to discuss the planned formal consultation that is now underway.

Councillors decided to reiterate their objection to this proposal, which swops a pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm machinery and cyclists.

The current path is already the result of a diversion several years ago by a previous landowner which was to have made managing the field easier. This new path route was chosen with the input of stakeholders and gave good views especially eastward, to Cliveden and Hanging Wood.

This footpath section can become muddy, especially after cultivation, and users may stray on to the crop. The proposed cycle track could already be used as an alternative, or given modern tractors with GPS, the existing path could be left unploughed.

The proposed diversion is the present Permitted Path which is a hard surfaced track, which sadly loses the pleasant open views of the existing route.

The hard surface of the track, whilst being solid is not viewed positively by dog walkers nor cyclists due to the loose, sharp chippings which can find their way into the paws of animals and the bicycle tyres.

In conclusion, the proposed diversion does not offer an alternative that is at least as convenient and enjoyable as the path to be diverted, and hence we object to the diversion.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jill Gavin  
Clerk to Cookham Parish Council,

CC: Cllrs for Cookham Parish Council



# THE COOKHAM SOCIETY

Web: [www.cookhamsociety.org.uk](http://www.cookhamsociety.org.uk)

Email: [messages@cookhamsociety.org.uk](mailto:messages@cookhamsociety.org.uk)

## **Diversion of Footpaths 17 and 59**

### **Cookham Society Submission to Panel**

We strongly oppose the proposed diversion. The existing route is long established and popular with walkers. It offers a direct route and much superior views to the alternative edge-hugging path proposed. We also understand from some of our female members that when they are alone, they feel much safer walking across the open path and they consider that walking around the edge of the field close to woodland, does not provide the same sense of security.

The footpath between Mount Farm and Hindhay Farm is shown on the 1875 OS map. The section north of Beeching Grove Wood appears to be exactly the route of the present RoW. The cross-field section south of Beeching Grove Wood has been somewhat realigned in more recent times. Ancient routes and RoWs are part of our heritage and should be protected.

In consultations for the Cookham Neighbourhood Plan, we note that the landowner is suggesting that the field edge path should be a cycleway. Whilst we could support a new multi-user route as an additional resource, we believe it is totally unsuitable as a replacement for an established footpath.

This is not a new proposal from the applicant. Three members of our committee visited the farm in 2015 and discussed with Tom Copas his wish to divert FP17 from being a cross-field path to a field edge path. From that meeting we understood that the cross-field path is no hindrance to ploughing, preparation or planting because these operations are carried out right across the field with the route of the footpath being remarked once planting is complete. Similarly, we understood that fertilising and spraying are tracked straight across the footpath. Therefore, the footpath on its present route did not form an obstruction or a cost to any of these processes. We have no reason to believe conditions have changed since 2015.

When the alternative route offered is inferior to the present one, compelling reasons need to be provided even to consider diversion. Such reasons have not been provided.

However, we do understand that there is a problem, particularly in wet weather, with some walkers straying off the official footpath whilst looking for firmer ground and in so doing damaging the crops. We sympathise with this and note that since our visit in 2015 a surfaced track has been created on the field edge route. If this field edge route is clearly made available as a RoW to walkers and appears on maps, apps, etc, we believe that, when conditions are muddy, most walkers would use it in preference to the cross-field path. Information boards at either end of the cross-field route explaining why the alternative had been made available would no doubt encourage more walkers to use the field edge route. Posts at either end of the cross-field path could be put up to define the official width (2.0m) of the footpath. If the applicant would make the new field edge route available as a RoW **in addition to** the present cross-field route we would encourage RBWM to contribute to the cost of all necessary gates and signage.

Cookham has a rural character which we are anxious to preserve. Walking on an ancient, meaningful path with fine views and without impact from cyclists or farm machinery can be a sheer joy. The present path should not be lost.

The Cookham Society

February 2022

<b>The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum</b>
<b>Secretariat:</b> Jacqui Wheeler, Parks and Countryside Access Officer Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St. Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:prow@rbwm.gov.uk">prow@rbwm.gov.uk</a>
Local access forums   Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead ( <a href="http://rbwm.gov.uk">rbwm.gov.uk</a> )

## RBWM Local Access Forum

### ***Consultation response:***

### ***Diversion Orders for Cookham Footpath 17 and Cookham Footpath 59 (part)***

*The Local Access Forum (LAF) has received and reviewed the proposals for the above diversion orders to divert Cookham FP17 and FP59 (part) and wishes to make the following comments:*

*NB: All members of the LAF have been consulted via email concerning this consultation and these comments reflect those from members who have responded to the consultation.*

**The consensus reached by those members who responded means that the Forum formally objects to the proposed diversion of Cookham Footpath 17 and Footpath 59 (part).**

*The Forum recognises that the proposed diversions do not satisfy the legal criteria under S119 Highways Act 1980. The diverted route is longer and therefore not equally as convenient and the loss of the views and feeling of openness from the cross-field path means it is also less enjoyable.*

*No comments supporting the proposals were received from any Forum members therefore consensus is reached as per the above.*

*Comments were received from the following Forum members:  
T Mentzel, A Woodward, S Gillions, M Howard and G Priest*

*In addition to objecting to the diversion of FP17 and FP59 (part) Forum members also feel that the surfaced route around the field edge should be retained and that it would be beneficial to more borough users if horse-riding access either dedicated or permissive could be given along it as well as cycling to make it a fully multi-user route.*

**This letter constitutes formal response from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum. Local Authorities are required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this forum in carrying out its functions.**



## **Footpath Diversion Orders Cookham Footpaths 17 and 59**

After further consideration of the landowner's proposals and a site visit East Berks Ramblers still have strong objections to the diversions proposed by the Royal Borough. The footpaths have historic interest and are shown on the 1875 Ordnance Survey map. They are part of the Royal Borough's footpath heritage and should not be lost.

The paths between Mount Farm and Hindhay Farm are part of a longer through route between Cookham Dean and Furze Platt by way of Spring Lane, FP 17 and FP 33. The Diversion Order would mean the loss of the southern section of FP 17 and consequently the loss of the through route. The revised termination point of the diverted FP 17 is unacceptable as it is a considerable distance away from the existing termination point and significantly less convenient.

Both paths give fine open views of the surrounding countryside. The view from the northern part of FP 17 towards Cliveden would be lost, as would the panoramic views from the southern section on the way to its junction with FP 33. FP 59 similarly gives fine southern views and is also part of a short circular walk from Hindhay Farm that would be lost under the proposals. Cross field paths can be muddy after periods of prolonged rain but in this respect are no different to many other countryside public rights of way and this factor cannot be considered a viable reason for closure. The views from the alternative route suggested are far inferior to those from the existing public rights of way.

The field edge surfaced permitted path that is proposed as the replacement public right of way was opened in 2013. At present it provides an alternative but longer route in wet conditions. We hope its present status is retained were the Diversion Orders not to proceed.

The plans provided by the landowner describes the diverted FP 17 path as a cycleway. It would be multi user and used by farm traffic. We support multi user paths in appropriate circumstances but the exchange of two walker's footpaths for an existing permitted surfaced path that will also be used by cyclists and farm machinery is completely unacceptable. The current local path network would be reduced and public enjoyment of the paths as a whole would be considerably less. The Royal Borough states that the Diversion Orders are made in the interests of the landowner and the public: we fail to see any way in which the Orders are in the interests of the public.

The landowner states that the diversions will allow more economic farming practices but does not give any detail to substantiate this broad assertion. The statement regarding Beeching Grove Wood is spurious. At present FP 17 passes through a narrow neck of the Wood. The proposed diversion would pass through another narrow neck of the Wood. There is no reason at all why the Wood cannot be treated as a nature reserve under the present arrangements were the landowner so minded.

In summary, we do not believe the proposed diversions meet any of the criteria set out in Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980. They are not in the interests of the public; the longer walk is less convenient and subject to multi use; public enjoyment of the paths as a whole would be significantly reduced and the proposed new termination points are not substantially as convenient as the existing ones. We concur with the views of the professional officers and maintain our objection to the proposed diversion. We urge the Royal Borough to rescind the Orders.

Steve Gillions

Chair, East Berks Ramblers Group

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD**  
**FOOTPATH 17 COOKHAM (PART) and FOOTPATH 59 COOKHAM (PART)**  
**PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT**  
**MODIFICATION ORDERS 2022**

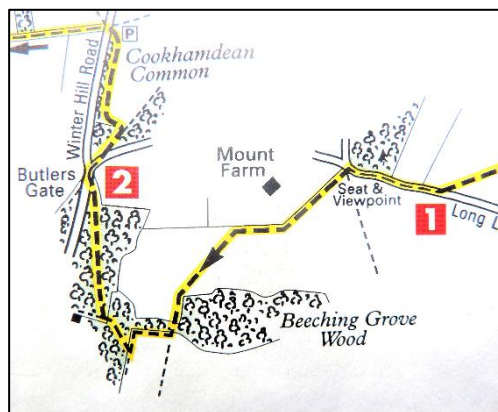
Dear Sir/ Madam,

I wish to object to the above orders. I consider they are less convenient and considerably less enjoyable than the existing paths.

For clarity I have shown the current footpath network on Appendix 1 and the net effect of these proposals on Appendix 2. I found the large plans displayed on site by the applicant to be rather disingenuous with the existing PRoW being shown in a pale yellow colour.

This order has been made at the request by Mr Copas on the basis that it is in his interest that an order be made. This primarily appears to concern the effect on farming, especially with regard to walkers straying further from the path during winter months when the path is muddy. I found this to be predominately at the southern end (just beyond the nice grass headland) in the shade of the trees.

To mitigate this I would advise that the mid-field section of Footpath 17 is not cultivated but remains undisturbed. We do not consider this especially onerous; farmers do this regularly across the country without it being considered a problem. This is especially so now, with the advent of computer controls.



Extract from Ramble No. 1

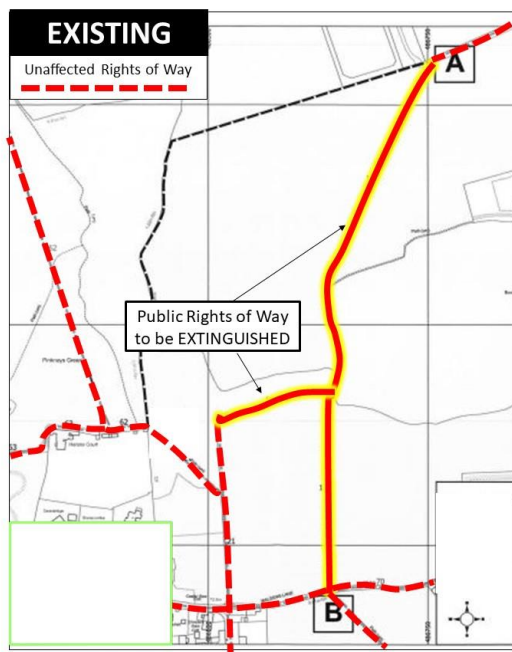
This area is especially popular with walkers and has been promoted by the **East Berkshire Ramblers** since the mid-1970s primarily through the sale of guidebooks in the 'Rambling for Pleasure Series'. As their **Publications Officer** I have been largely responsible for devising and producing these over forty years - together with a series of footpath maps. See Appendix 3 & 4

Currently parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 feature in **Ramble No. 1** in the latest 'Rambling for Pleasure in East Berkshire' guidebook, which is currently on sale to the public, (shown here) – with approx. 10,000 already in circulation.

Appendix 5 highlights a section of a longer continuous route that walkers, devising the own routes might well choose - that would no longer be available.

The illustration on Appendix 6 shows in green how the opportunity for a short circular walk, accessible from six different paths, would be lost if parts of FPs 17 and 59 are extinguished. I also question why, if the applicant's primarily concern is walkers straying from the diagonal northern section of FP 17 during winter months - 'does the southern end of FP 17 - also have to be lost'?

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2



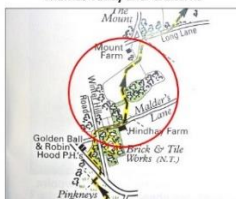
APPENDIX 3

Rambling for Pleasure Around Maidenhead



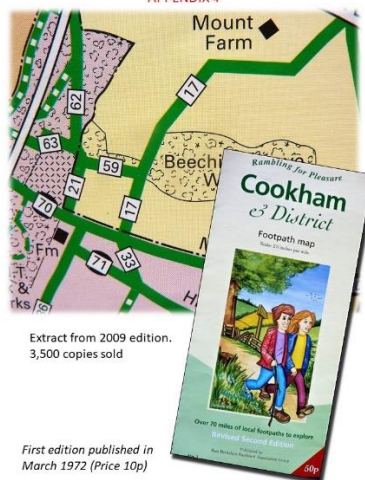
Five Editions published between 1975 and 1989. Totalling over 22,000 copies

Rambling for Pleasure Thames Valley and Chilterns



Over 6,000 copies in circulation

APPENDIX 4



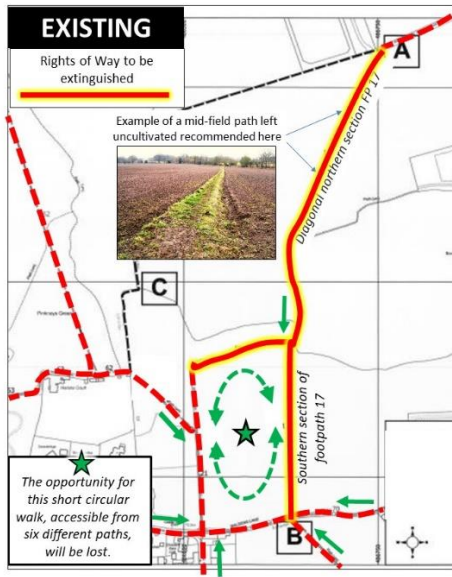
Extract from 2009 edition. 3,500 copies sold

First edition published in March 1972 (Price 10p)

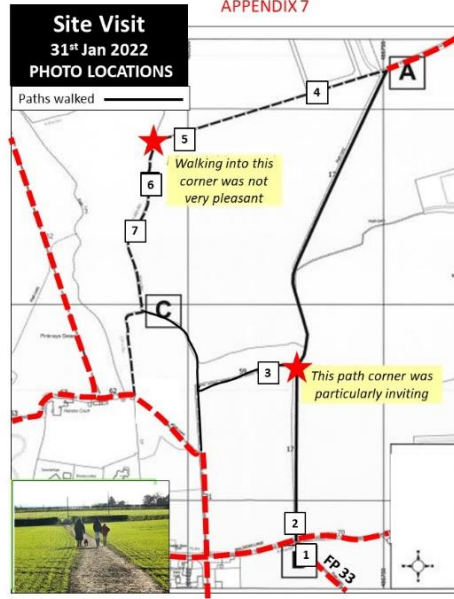
APPENDIX 5



APPENDIX 6



APPENDIX 7



At the junction of FP 33 with Moulders Lane, walkers would be unable to continue onto a path (FP 17) opposite.



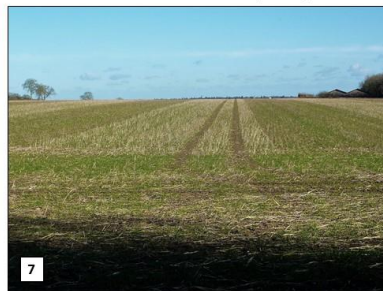
This is the southern end of FP 17. Currently firm, well used and almost 2 m wide - that would be extinguished.



This is looking west along a most attractive headland path. It is part of FP 59 that would be extinguished.



The diverted footpath is in effect a metalled roadway with evidence of vehicle use. It weaves its way around the very edge of the field with trees and a thick, high hedge to one side. The route along the western side is low and the view is completely lost. – see below.

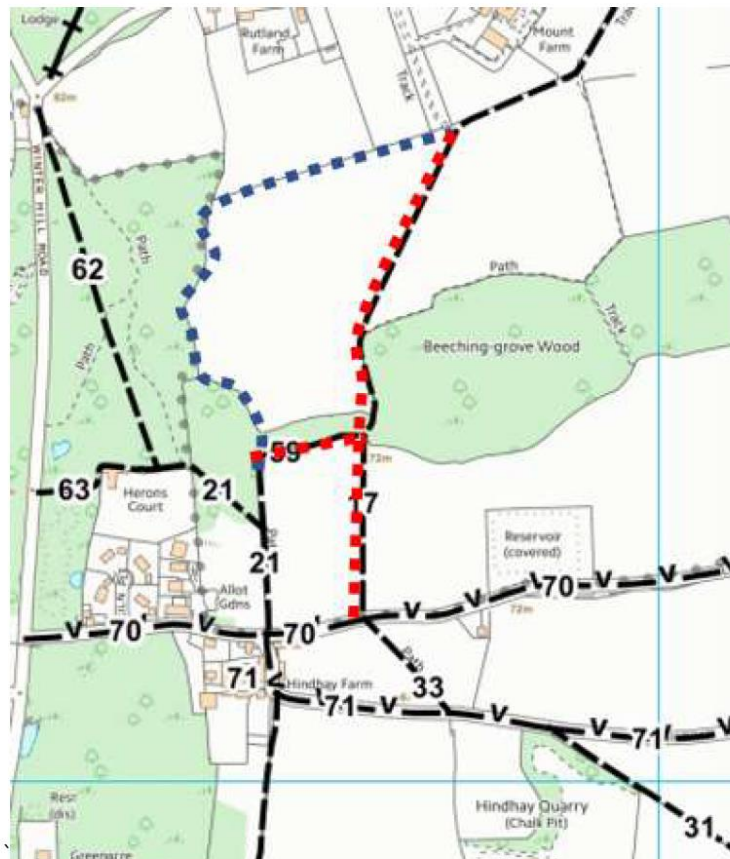


# Footpath diversion – Objection

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022

The proposed footpath diversion is open for consultation between 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The footpaths concerned are shown on this extract from the Definitive Map No. 6.

Footpaths 17 and 59 (red) are proposed to be extinguished and replaced by the permissive footpath marked blue.



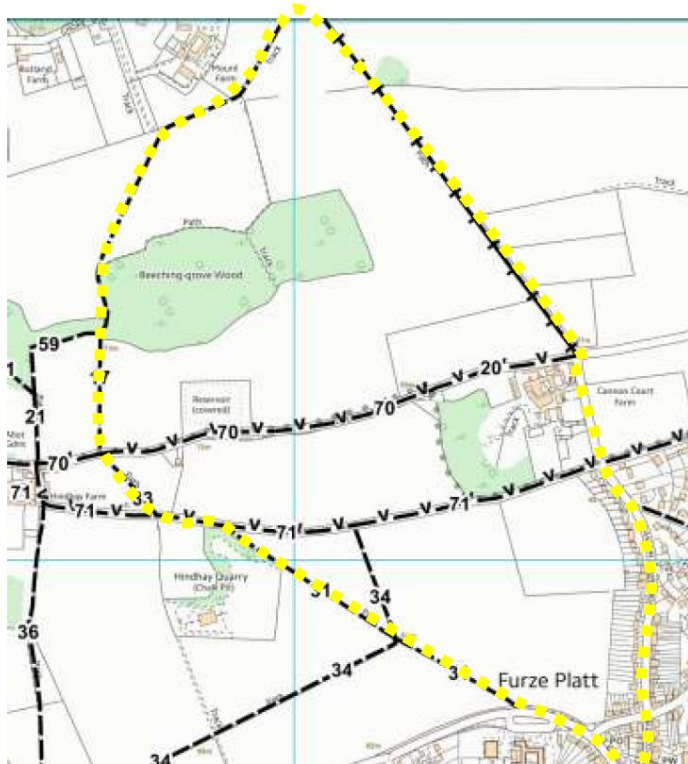
Map credit · © Ordnance Survey. Extract < 10%.

## The objections

### 1. Amenity value

The footpaths are close to large population centres, at Furze Platt and the Cranbrook Road estate. They are part of a network of footpaths that connect well and have historically been heavily utilised (though see Objection 4). It is argued that the amenity value is sufficiently high to large numbers of people as to outweigh the benefits from simplifying the farming operations of the land.

The permissive path (blue above) is a valuable addition, for which I am grateful, and I do use it. It utilises land that was covered by field margin set-aside policies. The new path adds choice but extinguishing the original path would reduce options and connectivity. For instance, one of my regular circular walks follows the yellow line in the map.



### 2. Connectivity

This one small-scale alteration causes knock-on effects that could lead to other footpaths coming under threat.

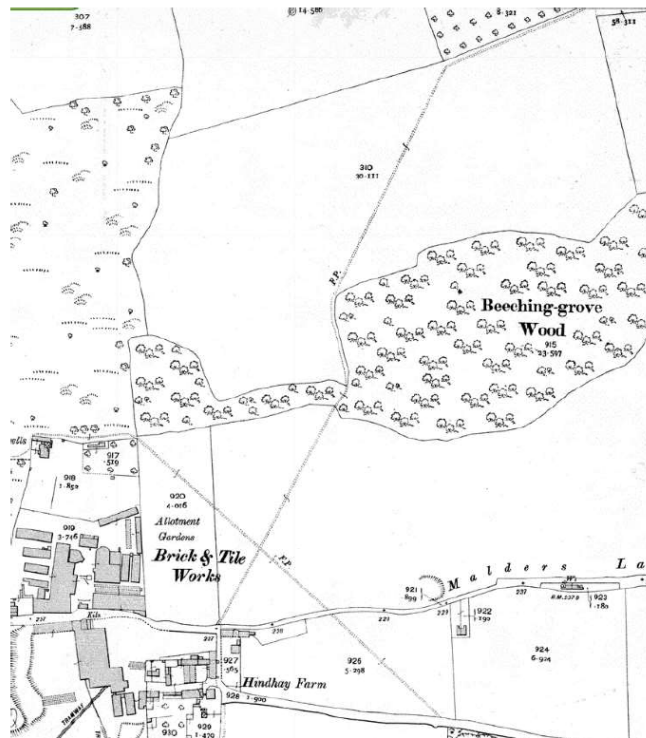
- Loss of footpath 17 would remove the logic for footpath 33 being retained
- Footpath 31 also crosses fields and creates complexity for farming the land. It has been noted that a permissive path has been added parallel to the quarry access road as a possible precursor to extinguishing footpath 31 in due course.

The landowners seem to have a propensity for making changes to public rights of way. The bridleway north from Cannon Court Farm was moved slightly to the west a few years ago and upgraded. A temporary car park at the north end was an amenity that was subsequently withdrawn.

### 3. History

Public rights of way are redolent of a history of people going about their daily lives. This path would have been used by workers from Cookham attending Cooper's brickworks, or visiting the pubs, or (in reverse) those living there attending church in Cookham. The evidence in the landscape should be respected. For instance, I admire the planners of Cranbrook Road estate for fitting a pre-existing footpath into their overall plan and doing it so well.

The current landowners are believed to have acquired the land at auction on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1938. The paths existed long before then and the landowners have had over 80 years to plan their farming practices to fit around the rights of way. The southern section was rerouted during their ownership (see OS map below), and it is not appropriate to alter historical public rights lightly or repeatedly.



Ordnance Survey 1911

### 4. Disruptive management practices

The landowner has engaged in farming practices and neglect that have made the footpath difficult to use. The result has been to push walkers towards using the permissive path, which has a hard surface. It gives a misleading impression of the choices walkers would make if the original path were maintained equally.

Specific issues are:

- The fields are ploughed annually. No effort is made to reinstate the path, so walkers end up cutting their own line. The footpath becomes muddy for long periods
- A tree fell from Beeching-grove wood in spring 2021, crossing (though not blocking) the path. For such a well-managed farm it is inconceivable that the tree would have been left there unless the aim was to skew the evidence of usage in connection with this application.

The photographs (taken 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022) illustrate that the path is well established and trafficked, nonetheless.



Looking south (top) and north (middle) on footpath 17 from Beeching-grove wood.

The fallen tree (bottom) crossing the path, showing a summer of diversionary walking around it.





<p><b>Community comments (Opposed to diversion)</b></p>	
<p>1. Cllrs Catherine del Campo and Joshua Reynolds (Furze Platt ward councillors)</p>	<p>Re: proposed diversions of footpaths 17 Cookham (part) and 59 Cookham (part): we have received a number of concerns from residents about the decision that was taken on 18th October which can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safety of lone walkers.</b> Safety, particularly of women and girls, has come under the spotlight this year after a number of high-profile incidents, although the dangers are, of course, nothing new. In the same way that some women prefer to walk down the middle of a road, some prefer to walk along open footpaths rather than through or next to woodland. A person’s sex is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, which prevents bodies such as local authorities from behaving in a discriminatory manner. As the 18 October decision has the potential to reduce women’s safety and/or their perception of safety (and therefore their enjoyment of the route), we would almost certainly be in breach of the act.</li> <li>• <b>Historical significance of the route.</b> This is a path that has been trodden for many years and forms part of a network of interconnected pathways. Residents are concerned that not only will this important route be lost, but there will also be impact on other footpaths in the network.</li> <li>• <b>Possible precursor to development.</b> Now that the Borough Local Plan has been adopted, subject to challenge, it is hard to envisage a scenario where this site could be developed. However, residents are entitled to seek — and receive — assurances that this decision (if confirmed) will not benefit any future application.</li> <li>• <b>Decision contradicts officers’ advice.</b> At the time the decision was made, the voices in favour of the proposal were perhaps louder than those against. However, the purpose of this consultation is to give residents the chance to make their objections heard, and we urge the panel to reconsider the decision in the light of those objections and officers’ original recommendations.</li> </ul> <p>The new path which is already in operation has been warmly received by some residents, and we suggest that old and new paths should remain open, giving residents the choice to take the less muddy route if they wish to and, therefore, minimising the impact of walkers’ boots on the field.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>I wish to strongly object to the proposed diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham which wants to replace a well-established, pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm vehicles and cyclists.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Older and less physically able walkers will be particularly affected by the lengthening of the route.</li> <li>2) The hard surface of the track is unpleasant underfoot due to the loose, sharp chippings which can find their way into the paws of dogs</li> </ol>

	<p>3) Public Rights of Way are part of our heritage should be preserved and protected. They should not be subject to the unnecessary whim of whoever happens to be the current landowner.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>I am writing to oppose the proposed order on the following grounds.</p> <p>The section of footpath from Beeching Grove Woods to Mount Farm was a diversion made by Copas Farms some years ago at their request. The footpath previously followed Beeching Grove wood edge to the headland which now has two large Barns built on the corner where the original path then turned towards Mount Farm. It does not seem reasonable to change what was moved at their request.</p> <p>The current footpath connects to the rest of the footpath which runs across Hindhay Farm property and then across the field to Furze Platt. Apart from crossing directly over Malders Lane and Hindhay Lane this is a continuous path from Furze Platt to Cookham Dean. It is wrong to lose what is left of this direct footpath. The final stretch has already been moved at the request of Copas Farms. It originally crossed what has now become a small paddock in front of the Office Barns and ended by the large oak tree with a stile into Choke Lane.</p> <p>I hope you will be able to take these points into account when making a decision.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Objection to:</u></p> <p>a) Footpath 59 Cookham (part) public path Diversion and Definitive map &amp; statement modification order 2022</p> <p>b) Footpath 17 Cookham (part) public path Diversion and Definitive map &amp; statement modification order 2022</p> <p>The permitted paths created by Copas Farm have been in place for some years. It is always a pleasure to have more footpath options. However, I feel it is disingenuous of The Copas organisation to say that in order to keep the permitted paths they have created the public must lose the rights of way indicated in a) and b) above. The permitted paths width and surface are also very convenient for farm vehicles, and I do not anticipate that the owners of the field will remove this facility even if the footpaths 17 and 59 are retained for their full length.</p> <p>At the Rights of Way meeting in 2021 when the proposed diversion of the Footpaths above was discussed much was made of the number of people who appear to be using the permitted paths suggesting they were an improvement for the walker's experience.</p> <p>Also, great play was made by the Copas representative, Mr Tom Copas about how muddy footpaths 17 and 59 become in less clement weather. It is therefore interesting and informative that the 2 public rights of way under threat are still heavily used even in muddy weather. Most walkers really don't mind that sort of going under foot. If people do any walking in the countryside, they wear appropriate footwear.</p>

	<p>In conclusion I object in the strongest terms to the unnecessary and unjustified closure of part of the well-used footpaths 17 and 59.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>I want to strongly object to the diversion of paths in the Mount Farm area because the suggested replacement makes the route to Cookham longer and diverts to a hard surface mainly in the shade. The choice of routes in the area is also restricted by removing 17/2 and 59/1</p> <p>The present open cross field path is a joy to walk with its expanding views across to Cliveden. The replacement field edge path keeps close to the wood, is on noisy, uncomfortable, urbanised scalplings and for much of the day is in the shade with restricted views so it becomes a much less enjoyable walk.</p> <p>The present path is the established direct route to Cookham linking up with footpath 32 on the other side of Long Lane. The suggested diversion makes the route to/from Cookham much longer and therefore is a disadvantage.</p> <p>If paths 59/1 and 17/2 disappear the footpath network will be much reduced. It would leave path 21/2 as the only north-south connection in the area. In a well walked area this is a great disadvantage. The choice of short circular routes will be severely cut, reducing the interest and variety of local walks.</p> <p>I have not seen any reason given why the cross field path is detrimental to farming practices. Apart from the care needed to avoid walkers when cultivating the fields I do not see any effect on farming or any expenses incurred.</p> <p>The applicant has stated that “this will also allow Beeching Grove Wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access”. This is irrelevant because Beeching Grove Wood is already treated as a nature reserve and there is no access for the public. Footpath17 passing one edge for about 50 metres has minimal impact on the wood.</p> <p>The creation of a new permitted route around the edge of the field has been popular during the wet weather when normal footpaths are muddy. However I don't think this justifies removing the right of way across the field.</p> <p>The longer route is being advertised as cycle path at Mount Farm. Again this could be popular and become a family off road cycle route. But this would be a drawback for dog walkers and family walkers as they would always have to expect bikes appearing suddenly. Keeping the option of the cross field path would reduce the potential clash of interests. Please keep the rights of way as they are, there is no valid reason to change them and I would be very disappointed to lose the established enjoyable routes.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>I would like to object to the plan as a principle to protect the rights of individuals to retain the use public footpaths and to close these would set a precedent to close other rights of way.</p> <p>In particular these paths are across open fields and afford peace and quiet and lovely views whereas the alternative is around the edge in shade with no views.</p>

	I cannot find the place on the RBWM planning portal to object to this latest order so please add my continued objections to ensure that the Diversion Order is withdrawn.
7.	We moved to Maidenhead last year and have been enjoying our walks. It's unfortunate that this footpath is currently being reviewed and is being diverted. I object to this change. In order to get to the other side, now I need to go up hill and also go via residential properties which is not fair for those residents. Also, my dog and I enjoy these walks and rerouting this path, our walks are subject to cars, lorries and other vehicles which are no longer safer for the animals. Hence I object to this order.
8.	<p>Objection to Footpath diversion. Yesterday we walked up Footpath 31 from Furze Platt to Hindhay Lane then west to FP33 and north along FP 33 to Malders Lane. We saw a notice on the gate to FP33 of a proposed diversion order. I have searched the RBWM website but cannot find the detail so am unable to quote any full reference from the notice. How do I find the detail online please? Could you look at making this easier for people to find details, e.g. add such applications to the planning map showing applications?</p> <p>In any event I am writing to object to this proposal if it is simply convenience for the landowner. This footpath has been in existence for as long as I can remember and is in frequent use. It provides a means to a circular walk back down Malders Lane and Cannon Court Road back to Furze Platt, or access to a longer walk to the north via FP17. If every such diversion application is to be approved, we will soon lose ever more of our traditional footpaths.</p>
9.	<p>I wish to strongly object to the proposed diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham which wants to replace a well-established, pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm vehicles and cyclists.</p> <p>1) Older and less physically able walkers will be particularly affected by the lengthening of the route.</p> <p>2) The hard surface of the track is unpleasant underfoot due to the loose, sharp chippings which can find their way into the paws of dogs</p> <p>3) Public Rights of Way are part of our ancient heritage should be preserved and protected. They should not be changed to suit the whim of whoever happens to be the current landowner.</p>
10.	<p>I am emailing in regard to the proposed plan to close the public footpaths from Malders Lane over Copas farmland. I live in Furze Platt and am fortunate enough to use these paths on a daily basis – sometimes twice a day – and have done so for the last 7.5 years.</p> <p>I walk from my house to the entrance of the fields opposite Furze Platt Senior School and use a public footpath to cross the first field. I then use another public footpath to cross over the next field which takes me onto Hindhay Lane. Off Hindhay Lane I generally take the public footpath at the end of the quarry, across the next field, which crosses over Malders Lane and onto the beginning of the footpath which the council has now voted to abolish as the public right of way. Then back the other way until I am home and generally takes about an hour. I meet lots of people doing the same walks every day.</p> <p>I believe this is quite a damaging precedent to set - if the landowner of those first few fields which lead up to the Copas farmland makes the same request</p>

to abolish the public right of way over his fields I cannot see how the council could refuse. There would be no access other than either walking along the main roads or driving. Or walking along the single track roads which surround the fields, most are without footpaths and with limited to zero areas to move into when cars and cyclists need to pass. The traffic has increased on these roads since the barn conversions were completed at the end of Cannon Lane and Malders Lane (especially since lockdown and the increase in home deliveries). I cannot really understand why there is a need to remove the public right of way – when the fields are harvested those pathways don't get in the way, all that land is treated the same, with those footpaths retrodden by the public. I had assumed the council members who voted in favour of this actually visited the area so can see how it would reduce the access to public who use it from the Furze Platt side, but if that's the case I can't see how they would have reached this decision.

When Copas 'improved' the pathways to the outer edges of part of the farmland, the notices asked users to scan a barcode to comment on how much they enjoy the new paths, it didn't ask for opinions on the enjoyment of the other pathways. I personally do not consider these pathways to be 'improved'. The original pathways were created by footfall but are now covered in tar and gravel whereas the ones planned for closure are still as they should be.

It is a shame these pathways are being opened up as proposed cycle paths when there is already plenty of areas to cycle while the areas for walkers is being reduced. This cycle path is no more than a cut through taking cyclists off the main Winter Hill Road to the top of Long Lane.

I would like to appeal the decision and would appreciate the decision to be forwarded to Central Government for review.

I would also like to point out when entering path B at Malders Lane a tree that has blown over and from the entrance of path B it looks as though the pathway is blocked at the point it meets the woods onto path A. The tree came down sometime in November (I started taking photos 7th December before any official signs were placed behind the tree. It is only if you walk down the path you can see there is access around the tree and have visibility of the most recent signs which have been pinned to the fence behind the tree (I have attached a photo which I took this week showing the tree with the public signs pinned behind it. The signs were not in place at the time the tree came down in November)

I would also like to add, in my experience, very few cyclists slow down when approaching and if I have asked anyone to stop allowing me to put my dog on a lead out of harm's way, I have been met with abuse most of the time. As cyclists are now using the area shown on your map as a dotted line from the other point of entry at Malders Lane, footpath 21, onto paths D and C I have even come across some using the paths in the woods as a cut through (I assume the councillors who made the decision must have visited so would know what area I am talking about) – the woods run from next to path 21, D and C are have a few pathways that cut through to Winter Hill Road.

11.	<p>Re: Notice of Making an Order dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham Public Path &amp; Definitive Map &amp; Statement Modification Order 2022</p> <p>With regard to the above Order, we would like to make representation in relation to this. Whilst we appreciate the landowners concerns regarding access across their land and any issues relating to this where members of the public stray from the designated footpaths involved. We are disappointed that these two public footpaths will be closed.</p> <p>Our concerns relate to the alternative paths which are hardcore and used by cyclists and runners as well as walkers with/without dogs/children etc. When we use these new paths regrettably the behaviour of cyclists and some runners is very poor and often dangerous where cyclists are speeding along, no warning bell or shouting that they are coming through from behind, we then have to jump aside into either the hedge or the field itself. Runners are often two or three abreast and will not split into single file. If we or others do say anything in a friendly way is usually returned with unpleasant comment. This is not one-offs but on a regular occurrence and very unpleasant especially during the ongoing Covid situation. At least when using footpaths 17 and 59 as walkers we get some relief from this. Like the majority of the public walking dogs we keep them under control especially around other people as we all want to benefit and get peaceful enjoyment from our local countryside which we are lucky to have on our doorstep.</p> <p>The above outlines our concerns and we would respectfully ask that you take these into consideration, thank you for your attention.</p>
12.	<p>The plans provided by the landowner describes the diverted FP 17 path as a cycleway. It would be multiuser and used by farm traffic. The exchange of two walker's footpaths for an existing permitted surfaced path that will also be used by cyclists and farm machinery is not acceptable to me. The permitted paths do not offer the views across the local countryside that Footpaths 17 and 59 do. The Royal Borough states that the Diversion Orders are made in the interests of the landowner and the public. I fail to see any way in which the Orders are in the interests of the public who enjoy a walk on our local footpaths.</p> <p>I agree with the views of the professional officers and object to the proposed diversion. I hope that the Royal Borough will on reflection overturn the Orders.</p>
13.	<p>Your email address was given to me by my neighbour as I wanted to add my objection to the proposed division of the footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham.</p> <p>I understand that there is a plan to divert Footpaths 17 and 59, to replace a well-established and pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, one that will be shared with farm vehicles and cyclists.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Older and less physically able walkers will be particularly affected by the lengthening of the route.</li> <li>2) The hard surface of the track is unpleasant underfoot due to the loose, sharp chippings which can find their way into the paws of dogs and cause injury.</li> </ol>

	<p>3) Public Rights of Way are part of our heritage and as such they should be preserved and protected. They should not be subject to the unnecessary whim of whoever happens to be the current landowner.</p>
14.	<p>I am writing to object to this diversion - in line with the council officer's recommendation not to divert. Please can you ensure my view is reflected in the final decision.</p>
15.	<p>Re: Cookham copas footpath 17 and 59: I don't usually complain to changes in planning but this one I feel I must put in an objection. Hope this is the right place? I understand the plan to remove the footpath is going ahead. I would like to put in my objection having walked the paths often for the past 23 years, it will be a sad loss to the area. Despite the farmer ploughing the path up every year, it provides a welcome route around the Fields between Cookham and Furze Platt. Additionally the signage to object was very difficult as the cleverly placed QR code only gave the option to support the change. Look forward to your comments.</p>
16.	<p>I have walked these fields for over 40 years and enjoy them immensely. Copas purchased these field a few years back knowing that the footpaths were in existence. My objections still remain:</p> <p>Although the Copas' have provided all weather paths around some of the perimeter of the proposed diverted fields, it is a much longer walk and the access across the field provides a quicker alternative. Not everyone has the luxury in the morning to undertake a longer walk or is able to physically. I wouldn't object so much if they permitted access to all the perimeter of the fields, i.e. near the wooded areas.</p> <p>I appreciate during the winter months the path across the fields does become impassable at times, this has been exasperated over the last couple of year with the sheer volume of people out walking due to Covid, but it is also hampered at times with the farm machinery ploughing the field also plough up the paths [if they were left the soil would become compacted], which then makes it difficult to walk over. Other paths in the vicinity are not ploughed and walking in all weathers is easier.</p> <p>If this application was permitted, I feel it would set a precedent for other applications in the area for example MAID/33/1 and possible application to build on, should greenbelt restrictions be relaxed.</p> <p>There are rumours that anyone logging onto the QR code, unknowingly automatically gave their approval for the diversion. I do not know how true it is but needs to be investigated.</p>
17.	<p>Thank you for sending these through. In response to these consultation Notices and Orders for the proposed diversion of Footpaths 17 and 59 I have the following comments that support my strong objection to the proposal to divert these paths. I also have a question for you which is noted at the end of this communication.</p> <p>The new paths will be substantially less convenient to the public and will affect the public enjoyment of the paths and routes that they link up for the following reasons;</p>

	<p>The current paths are pleasant rural paths, for pedestrians only, affording good views and linking up with other long established footpaths. The existing paths are unmade and used only by walkers. The proposed diversions around the edge of the fields are already made up with hardcore and scalping and it is proposed that they will be used by cyclists as well as pedestrians. Providing field edge hardcore paths wide enough for farm traffic does not provide an acceptable or justified alternative to diverting the existing paths with loss of views and opportunity to walk on unmade footpaths without cyclists, horses or farm machinery.</p> <p>The applicant cites one reason for diversion of the footpaths is to allow for more economic farming practices. This should not be taken as a justification for removing footpaths and would set a dangerous precedent for any future applications where footpaths cross the centre of fields.</p> <p>The small section of footpath 17 that passes through Beeching Grove Wood makes up a part of the overall pleasant to use unmade footpath. The wood itself has already been fenced off with wire fences, barbed wire and padlocked gates, along with signs that the land is private. This approach is more than enough to protect a nature reserve and the very short section of path that would be lost with the diversion proposal allows walkers to observe nature up close, listen to the birds and other wildlife. The area would be very unwelcoming if the landowner was able to encircle the whole area with barbed wire, locked gates and privacy notices following the diversion as proposed coming into effect. To approve this diversion would effectively remove remaining public rights of way around Beeching Grove Wood.</p> <p>The permitted path runs around the field edge and lengthens the route between Malders Lane and Long Lane. Although this extension to the route is not particularly great, it completely alters the nature of the walk, views and enjoyment afforded by the existing paths.</p> <p>I trust that the above comments will be taken into account by the panel when considering these proposals. Will members of the public be allowed to speak at the Panel meeting on March 14th?</p> <p>Finally, I noted in the Modification of Definitive Statement a recorded width of 4.0M for section A-D in Modification Order 259. Could you give me some further clarification on this as I can only see widths of 3.0m referred to in other sections of the documents. Many thanks, I look forward to hearing from you on the above points.</p>
18.	<p>I would like to object to removing the existing footpaths Cook/17/1 and Cook/17/2 and Cook/59/1. It is used by me and others daily, it is safe as it doesn't allow cycles and other vehicles on it. The proposed route will be less safe for walkers as it allows motor vehicles, electric bicycles and cycles endangering pedestrians and dogs.</p>
19.	<p>I would like to register my extreme objection to the proposed rerouting of footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham due to my right to roam on these existing and adequate paths. I have reported the intention to the Ramblers Association.</p>
20.	<p>I am writing to oppose the amendments to the above mentioned footpaths. These have given public access for almost 200 years and are a favoured route</p>



	<p>for local residents. Corralling walkers around the edge of the fields gives an entirely different experience. Also, the landowner only provided notice if how to support the footpath amendments and not how to object - a low strategy in my opinion.</p>
<p>21.</p>	<p>I don't disagree that in some cases it is necessary or beneficial to divert a public footpath. However I strongly oppose the proposal to divert Cookham footpaths 17/1 and 17/2 for a number of reasons.</p> <p>Having walked these two paths regularly over many years, I can confidently say that they are walked and enjoyed by walkers, dog walkers, and families with children of all ages. People often choose these paths over the surfaced, sometimes drier, certainly longer, and definitely duller alternative route created by the late Mr Copas some years ago. If muddy, we simply put on our boots or wellies because that's what you do if you're walking in the countryside. If there is a concern about losing crops due to the muddy footpaths and walkers spreading out onto the crop, I would suggest the farmer leaves the path unploughed as some other farmers do, not difficult with modern tractors with GPS. If Mr Copas prefers, he could keep the permitted paths in place as well as 17/1 and 17/2, and if muddy, he could sign walkers to the permitted path when he thinks it necessary as he did last year, and some may choose to use the permitted paths.</p> <p>These open paths undoubtedly offer a substantially better and more convenient walking experience than the newer permitted path. As you walk, a panorama slowly emerges across the fields and woods in all directions, walking north to south, with views over the woods towards Maidenhead, and south to north, across to Cliveden. In the early morning and late afternoon the light is exceptional. The permitted path in contrast, creeps around the edge of the field and much of it, even in summer, is in shade for much of the day. It is also considerably longer and so less convenient. I'm not the only woman who feels safer crossing the middle of a field rather than the permitted path next to the woods.</p> <p>It is unclear to me how removing these paths would, and I quote, <i>"allow Beeching Grove wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access"</i>. The section of path that goes past the wood is very short. It's already clearly out of bounds with signs stating "Private Woods. No Public Access". There is an iron padlocked gate with barbed wire at the top of the gate to deter. In 30 years I have never seen anyone in the woods. Additionally I was very surprised at the proposal to create a new footpath, 2 metres wide, in Little Beeching Wood which Mr Copas admits would involve cutting down trees. Surely anybody with a passing concern for the environment would agree that we need to protect the mature trees that we already have.</p> <p>Mr Copas stated that a reason for his application is the creation of a longer circular route. I do <u>not</u> believe this is needed. The footpath and bridle path network is already good, quite possibly the best in the borough, and it's already easy, by using existing paths 17/1 and 17/2, to create walks of different lengths literally north, south, east, and west, i.e. to Cookham, to Furze Platt, to Cannon Court Road, and to Pinkney's Green. By removing 17/1 and 17/2, a beautiful</p>

	<p>link path with open views would be replaced by a longer, dull and certainly inferior walk.</p> <p>The deletion of these pleasant rural paths (17/1 and 17/2) and replacing them with the newer permitted hedge hugging hard surfaced tracks would mean that walkers, many with children or more usually dogs, would need to share proposed the paths with cyclists and probably with farm vehicles. This is far from ideal from a safety point of view for obvious reasons. The permitted hard surfaced tracks already allow cyclists to travel at speed (I've witnessed this). Why not simply keep these permitted tracks for those that want to use them, but do not delete 17/1 and 17/2. Some years ago when I met the late Tom Copas, he said he could not maintain all the paths for walkers. It's unclear why as the permitted hard tracks around the field edges appear to be used by farm machinery anyway and so would be maintained even if not used by walkers. Many landowners and farmers across the country have long standing public footpaths crossing their land, often by the most direct route and the landowners have respected these. If this application is accepted, it gives the green light to landowners and farmers that a public footpath can be diverted simply because it is less convenient for them.</p>
22.	<p>As a local resident, I'd like to register my objection to the proposed cessation of Right of Way for the above paths. This has been a RoW for two centuries and I am concerned both on account of the loss of a historic path but also the precedent which this sets. This is an important path from the town to some ancient woodlands and enjoyed by many people and walkers. I feel this is surely a precursor to selling off the land ahead of a planning application to build houses on an area of greenbelt land.</p>
23.	<p>I would like it noted I strongly object to the proposed closure or redirection of the footpaths across the fields opposite Furze Platt senior school. As a resident of Maidenhead for all of my 57 years I have walked across these fields many times. It's a place of peace and tranquillity and outstanding beauty the footpaths all join up to make a large or small circular walk. They were there long before I was born. We are losing Green Belt land which our government has vowed to protect and I feel the closure or redirection of these ancient footpaths would only lead to more being eroded. For the sake of Residents mental and physical wellbeing these footpaths should remain as they are as they have always been.</p>
24.	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the proposed closure of some of the footpaths in the fields across from Furze Platt school. My family home is in Cranbrook Drive and my parents have lived there for nearly 30 years: we continue to enjoy many walks through those fields. Having been a right of way for 200 years, why change now and deter families from visiting.</p>
25.	<p>This is the beginning of the end to the right to walk across open ground? Move by landowner to close footpaths across open fields. Is awful and shouldn't be allowed to happen. Despite the report recommendation of the council's officer, the council's Rights of Way Panel has moved to close footpaths across some of the fields opposite Furze Platt Senior school. This removes the right (held for nearly 200 years) to walk across open fields, but forces walkers to be corralled around the periphery. A very different experience and sets a precedent to re-route many similar paths. I am really against this as we need our green spaces especially near schools to improve air pollution levels. It's a lovely walk to do and such a shame if we lose it.</p>

26.	I am writing to object to the proposed diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 & 59 Cookham. As a local resident I have used these footpaths for over 20 years, and regularly use them for family walks with my 3 children. I am also concerned that this paves the way for the area to be built on, which would have negative impact on the area, and set a worrying precedent.
27.	I am writing to express my concern and objection regarding the proposed closure and diversion of parts of the footpaths opposite Furze Platt school where I am a regular dog walker. I do not wish to see closure and diversion on these footpaths. I believe this will set a precedence in the Borough as well as leading to more building on green belt land where residents enjoy the land for exercise and socialising.
28.	I hope you are well. I would like to object against the proposed diversion of footpaths in the Royal Borough.
29.	I would like to oppose the closure of some of the footpaths and using the footpaths are a huge help to ensuring people are able to explore the countryside and also this can help with mindfulness and mental help.
30.	I am writing to contest the proposed removal of the right of way along these footpaths which have been prescribed for over 200 years.
31.	I use these footpaths frequently and I feel the public consultation has not been well publicised- many people walk these routes. Thank you for noting my objections.
32.	<p>I would like to object to the proposed closure of the current right of way on Mount Farm and the introduction of a new path layout. While the introduction of the edge-hugging permitted path has some benefits it should not be at the detriment of the existing footpath, which offers superior views and is of historical significance.</p> <p>At a time when RBWM look to encourage residents to explore and enjoy the area's countryside, they should not dissuade them in partaking in physical activity by removing such beautiful walks. As such, I believe the application must be refused, in accordance with the officer's recommendations.</p>
33.	Please register my objection to close off the paths across the fields around Cookham.
34.	<p>Proposed diversion of public footpaths 17 and 59: I wish to state my objection to the diversion (removal) of footpaths numbers 17 and 59 across farmland which I understand to be owned by Tom Copas. I frequently use both these footpaths while taking exercise in the locality and fully enjoy the additional 'openness' offered by these footpaths across this area of land. The loss, and I do believe it to be a loss, not just a diversion onto the perimeter track to this area of farmland would in my mind be an unnecessary act with only minimal increase in the output of the land.</p> <p>I am 75 years old and the loss of these footpaths would limit me to either using the full perimeter track which I would not wish to do in its entirety at my age and I would not wish to have to walk so far on this track before turning round and retracing my footsteps.</p> <p>I am also concerned that this may only be the beginning of the subtle closing of the footpaths directly across the farmland in the area. I speak particularly about the footpath that starts opposite the Furze Platt senior school and</p>

	<p>travels in a North Westerly direction across farmland towards the quarry, before joining Hindhay Lane. Is this the next footpath to be diverted?</p> <p>I trust that the above statement of objection will be taken into account when making a final decision regarding these footpaths and that the Secretary of State will fully take regard of similar objections of which I am sure there will be many, before making a decision.</p>
35.	<p>It has come to my attention that there's plans in place to divert parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham. I would like to OBJECT this as it removes the right (held for nearly 200 years) to walk across open fields, forcing walkers to be corralled around the periphery. My family and I use that path every week and during lockdown we used it every day.</p> <p>There's already far too many new houses in Maidenhead. This increases the burden on public services and as far as I've seen, there's never any improvement to infrastructure, additional schools or doctor's surgeries. What I want to understand what the council is doing to ensure developers also put in those measures and actually give back to our town? How many new schools and amenities have been built as a result of all the additional Shanley homes for instance?</p>
36.	<p>I would like to raise an objection to the proposed diversion of these footpaths given that these are historic rights of way. I agree with the officers in relation to this application that the diversion of these footpaths "would result in the loss of the sense of 'openness' and wide-ranging views that can be enjoyed from these sections of footpath". It has been apparent during the last 2 years that out open spaces are needed more than ever and that we need to increase access to open space and wide ranging views withing this area of the borough.</p>
37.	<p>I am writing to place my sincere objections to the closure of part of these footpaths beside Hindhay Farm. I have been lucky enough to live nearby for the past 12 years and my son has grown up here. We walk this route I walked as a child pretty much daily, as many others do and have done for the past 200 years.</p> <p>The field nearest the farm is my biggest objection as I see many elderly or very young able to enjoy this shorter circuit. The freedom you feel in the fields cannot be replaced by a wandering wood, which they have tried to implement. Many people are more afraid of walking in the woods and keep away, but being in a field such as these 2 gives people the great physical and mental wellbeing everyone deserves. I can see how awful the past 2 years have been with the field further away from the farm with people not sticking to the path, but this has been the same all over, again the cut through the field allows less abled people to still enjoy part of the countryside and do a circular walk.</p> <p>The paths that have been made around these fields have been labelled as bike paths now as well. They now have so many bikes at weekends ploughing through walkers with no regard of young, old or loose dogs enjoying the space and quite frankly has made it dangerous to walkers. Without the cut through the fields we have no escape from the cyclists.</p> <p>I do hope you will forward my objections and help keep our footpaths open.</p>

38.	I am writing to protest the changing of footpaths 17 to 59, this crosses a wonderful set of fields with stunning views and is so uplifting to see the skyline and views. These footpath changes are most likely ahead of housing on green belt land, which is appalling. This council must stop building on open spaces and continue to focus on re generation within the town centre on brown belt. Please lodge my objection to the path changes.
39.	I would like to object to the proposal to divert the current footpaths. I also object to any proposals to cut down trees in the nearby wood.
40.	I would like to advise you of my objection to the proposed closure of footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham, these paths are used frequently and should remain open to the public as they have done so for over 200 years.
41.	<p>I am writing to object to plans to divert parts of footpaths 17 and 59 and have the following points to make. I understand, from what has been shared online, that the change is part of plans to eventually build houses on the land. I had a quick look on the council's site but haven't found any more information. The council has already pushed through plans to sell off Maidenhead Golf Course and build far more houses than we actually need in Maidenhead, persisting in using out of date figures because they the real reason is that they need the money. RBWM has refused to acknowledge this despite the overwhelming evidence of RBWM's debt. But all this means it makes no sense to pave the way for further housing.</p> <p>I strongly object to the landowner's methods to gain support. Only giving walkers on the current routes the opportunity to support the plans, not object to them, leads to results that are of questionable use, at the least. They are too biased in favour of the proposals to be used as part of any fair planning consultation. Why would walkers using the current paths want to discourage their use? Unfortunately, I have been unable to see this for myself as I'm currently self-isolating with confirmed Covid-19. But I only found out about this today and wanted to have my say. Thank you for reading, and I trust that the right decision can be made.</p>
42.	I strongly object to the council removing the right (held for nearly 200 years) to walk across these open fields, and forcing walkers around the periphery.
43.	<p>One of the criteria when considering a proposed new route for a footpath is the effect the division will have on public enjoyment of the path as a whole. I recently walked the cross field section of Footpath17/1 from Beeching-grove wood towards Mount farm. The effect as you come into the open is like film camera panning the valley. First you see Hedsor Priory and then, as you pass over the field your view pans backwards down the valley taking in Cliveden, the house and finally the park toward Taplow. The vista of the entire Thames Valley can be taken in as you cross the field. If you take the alternate path following the new route along the western boundary of the field all you can see is a few tree tops and then the northern boundary has a large hedge blocking all views north. There is no comparison.</p> <p>During the Rights of Way meeting held on Monday, 18th October to discuss the footpath diversion, one of the panel I commented that footpath 17/1: "didn't go anywhere". Not true. I have been walking this path and adjacent paths for over thirty years. The walk across the field via footpath 17/1 to the walnut trees in Mount Farm on the northern boundary of the field from my house near St Mark's hospital, takes around an hour and a half there and back</p>

	<p>and makes a fine afternoon walk. You can also continue the walk crossing Long Lane, taking Spring Lane up to Cookham Dean or through the turkey farm and then back through the woods to Pinkneys Green. It was clear that many members of the panel were not regular walkers of this path and indeed some of them admitted they had made a flying visit and canvassed the views of a few of the walkers there at the time.</p> <p>What I am trying to convey is that footpath 17/1 across the field to Mount Farm is an integral part of the walk and contains the finest views in the whole walk, in fact it is the very reason I take that route in the first place. Trudging around the edge of the field is no substitute and spoils the whole experience.</p>
44.	<p>I am writing to strongly object to the proposed diversion of these footpaths across open scenic and safe countryside. These footpaths are safe and have existed and been used by walkers for many years, and there is no reason to now remove them, or even divert them to the edge of dark woods where visibility is very much reduced.</p> <p>I would also request that, as the Copas family now have permission for a new livery yard at the bottom of Long Lane, very near these footpaths, that they consider opening it up as a bridlepath to link in with the Cookham Bridleway circuit and safe passage from Hindhay Farm on Malders Lane Farm and the Switchback Road. This would provide safe and traffic free access for riders from Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead Thicket and Cookham. The current route up a narrow and unsafe route of Long Lane, or Switchback Road both have to negotiate fast traffic with very limited visibility up Long Lane.</p>
45.	<p>I understand that there is a proposal to close some footpaths opposite Furze Platt school and wish to register my objections to the plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These paths are regularly used by walkers, who enjoy the right to walk across open space;</li> <li>2. The ability to lodge objections as easily as comments to support the application have been thwarted by using a QR code on a prominent notice that only registers support - an underhand tactic;</li> <li>3. I understand that the report from the Council's officer did not support the closures and the Right of Way panel overturned the recommendation; and</li> <li>4. That if this goes ahead, it sets an alarming precedent for maintaining access to open country.</li> </ol> <p>I would appreciate these objections listed in this email being taken into account as there seems to be no other formal method to lodge them.</p>
46.	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham. The freedom of walking on existing paths at the edge of Maidenhead is really valuable to people's well-being.</p>
47.	<p>I strongly oppose the closure of any footpaths which are currently open in the Royal Borough.</p>
48.	<p>I am very much against the diversion of Footpaths 17/1 and 17/2 (Point A to Point B) to be replaced with the new paths (currently permitted.) Paths 17/1 and 17/2 are popular with walkers of all ages, particularly dog walkers, throughout the year. Both public footpaths offer fantastic, and I believe unique, open views across the Thames to Cliveden and Taplow as well as to Maidenhead. The proposed diversion, currently a permitted path, (Point A to Point B) is a wider hard surface, less rural and with no significant views at all as it hugs the field edge and is often in shade. The proposal is to share it with</p>

	<p>cyclists and presumably farm machinery (as now). Sharing a path with cyclists is rarely an improvement for walkers (and dogs) as there is a constant need to watch out for them as they often pass at speed from behind.</p> <p>These existing public footpaths (17/1 and 17/2) are also more direct than the proposed route.</p> <p>The hard surface track A to C to D already exists as a farm track. To continue to allow the public to use it as it is would therefore result in no additional cost to the landowner. Footpaths 17/1 and 17/2 are clearly popular and pleasanter paths for many walkers, as evidenced by their use.</p> <p>The argument that the path should be diverted to improve farming practices is dangerous, and not just for residents of the RBWM. Hundreds of footpaths nationally cross landowners' fields. Approving this particular diversion could indicate that any landowner has a good chance of deleting or diverting a footpath and substituting it with an inferior path for no other reason than convenience.</p>
49.	<p>I would like to object to these diversions on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These paths have been in regular use by local residents for many, many years. They have not fallen into disuse. They are popular and an important source of recreation for many. Their diversion will tear up another piece of local heritage and history.</li> <li>2. The alternatives proposed are longer and do not provide the feeling of space, the amenity or the views of the current paths.</li> <li>3. There has been extremely poor publicity about these proposed changes, and this has not allowed adequate public debate. In the interests of local democracy this must be rectified as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>4. It is hard to see how the presence of these established paths is in any way seriously detrimental to the agricultural use of the fields around them.</li> </ol>
50.	<p>I wish to object to the suggested alterations to the above footpath for these reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Replacing the circular walk with a much longer one would affect the elderly and people with limited physical abilities.</li> <li>2. Removing the alternative path will force people into close proximity when they all have to use the same route, which will inevitably cause frictions, especially with the existing Covid danger and people wishing to maintain some distance from others.</li> <li>3. People with nervous dogs will have a limited ability to avoid other dog walkers if everyone is shepherded into one circular route.</li> <li>4. The field only changed hands a couple of years ago. The buyer purchased it with the existing rights of way. Their wish to alter the route demonstrates extreme lack of consideration to tradition and public rights.</li> <li>5. I'd like to mention that the map you use to illustrate the plan is incorrect as the section of Malders Lane which borders the field is not a public footpath.</li> </ol>
51.	<p>I would like to formally object to the proposed diversion of Footpaths 17 &amp; 59 Cookham and plans for diversions to pathways opposite Furze Platt Senior School. These are critical paths used by the community to access the school and surrounding communities. Not to mention their outstanding value for exercise and general well-being of the community - especially important over</p>

	<p>the last two years. With so much construction and change to our landscapes planned for other areas in the borough, it is so important to preserve these paths for the community who rely on them. The community has happily used the paths for over 200 years, without disruption to farming and it is important to uphold this right we have to enjoy our countryside.</p>
52.	<p>Please add my name to those objecting to the diversion of Footpaths 17 &amp; 59 Cookham and all plans for path diversions in the Furze Platt area. These are frequently used, and important paths used by our community. Diversions will lengthen the route and impact many users of these paths. Access to these paths is a long held right of this community and we should not be so hasty to give up the rights of the community to our countryside - especially at a time where so much of it is threatened by development in the borough. Thank you for your consideration and support to preventing these diversions.</p>
53.	<p>I object to rerouting the path through these fields. I can't explain how important this walking route is to many, many people and myself. It has helped me personally during times of being really unwell, a walk I couldn't live without and to hear that it could be taken away is just devastating. It is just like an amazing back garden for me as it is so close to my home. We need it in our lives! I truly hope you will consider all of our objections.</p>
54.	<p>I was very concerned to read about the diversion of footpaths across the fields by Hindhay Farm and Furze Platt School. Maidenhead is fast becoming the town no one wants to visit. The continued restrictions of passage over the countryside is destroying the town and making it a pass-through town rather than a destination.</p> <p>People in Maidenhead have enjoyed passage across the fields for more than 200 years and the restricting and corralling of people in the proposed manner clearly has only one objective - to ultimately sell off the land to allow development - more houses in an already very busy part of town, driving more dangerous traffic towards a school area. This type of approach by the landowner will set a dangerous precedent - restricting the general public from enjoying land which has had rights of passage over for many years.</p> <p>There has also been an extremely unfair play by the landowner, placing a QR code for scanning which only allowed a positive and supportive response to the proposal.</p>
55.	<p>I am writing to object to the Proposed Diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham. As a resident for more than 20 years I have often used these paths for recreational walks. To change the route from across the field to the periphery will greatly reduce the amenity of this area and sets a precedent to reroute many similar paths in the Borough.</p>
56.	<p>I strongly object to the diversion of footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham and would like to register that. It is clear from the council meetings that this is not clear cut, and I would like to add my voice to those who object.</p>
57.	<p>I'd like to object to the proposed diversion of parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham. The main reason is the change from a public right of way to a private footpath which can be removed at any time by the landowner. This also sets a dangerous precedent for other landowners to apply to change public rights of way.</p>
58.	<p>I wanted to take this opportunity to express my concern at the diversion of footpaths 17 and 59 in Cookham. I really do feel that the rights of local</p>



	residents to enjoy our countryside are being disregarded to allow an easy life for developers. I really hope this move can be prevented.
59.	Hello, I would like to register my opposition to the proposed footpath diversion. We are regular users of the paths in question and believe strongly that they are a vital community resource and essential to our community wellbeing.
60.	<p>I should like to object to the proposed diversions of footpaths 17 and 59. Any alteration to the footpath network should provide benefits to both the landowner and users of the footpath network. Clearly this proposal is to the benefit of the landowner, but benefit to footpath users is disputed, with opinions both for and against. My view is that the diversion would result in a reduction in the variety of paths available, with the removal of a route through woodland and crossing open fields, and therefore have a negative effect on public enjoyment of the footpath network.</p> <p>The diversion has been promoted by the landowner as providing a "new" path around the field perimeters. However, there has been a permissive path around the field perimeters for at least a decade. Whilst this permissive path currently has no legal standing, the current proposal would de facto result in a reduction in footpaths available for public use.</p> <p>It's my understanding that the landowner has concerns, quite reasonably, about walkers trespassing onto crops because the current path can get extremely muddy after spells of wet weather, and passage then becomes difficult. However, a seemingly simple solution to this would be for the landowner to improve the surface of the muddy section, using material such as that used on the permissive path around the field perimeter. I do not feel that sufficient effort has been made to remedy the problem to justify diversion of the current right of way.</p>
61.	Please can I register my opposition to the removal of paths 17 and 59 in Cookham. I live in Pinkneys Green and these footpaths through wonderful countryside are my route into Furze Platt, and Cookham. Thus avoiding a busy and polluting road with my small dog. I also think that closure of these paths sets a dangerous precedent for future inappropriate building on Green Belt countryside. I would be very grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this, and confirm that it will be counted as an 'against' vote.
62.	<p>Thank you for the consultation notices and orders to divert paths COOK/17/1, COOK/17/2 and 59 Cookham. I have the following comments I would like taken into account:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Whilst the hard-surfaced portion of the permitted path is much used during the very wet months, I observed (last winter) many people also use the routes which are proposed to be moved as soon as the drier weather arrived in February. This indicates there are people which value the route across 'open fields' in spite of the new perimeter route. During a 5-minute run across the field route in drier weather, I passed 3 people walking the cross-field route and 2 walking the perimeter route. This supports my view that when conditions permit, it is preferable to maintain the right of way across the fields since this is a significantly nicer walk across an open field compared to being re-directed around the periphery.</li> </ol>

	<p>2. If this application is allowed to proceed I believe it will set a precedent for further similar applications, for example, to re-route other open-country/cross-field routes such as MAID/33/1 opposite Furze Platt Senior School which is used by many residents.</p> <p>3. If this application is allowed to proceed there is also a future threat that applications to build on the land will be easier should greenbelt restrictions be eased</p> <p>4. If this application is allowed to proceed, there is a risk that the owner may eventually fence in the footpaths and the paths will become more like lanes corralling walkers along hedged or fenced corridors- this is already evident on some routes.</p> <p>5. If the current permitted route around the field remains, then the pressure on the cross-field route will be reduced and there will be less economic loss to the owner since during the wettest months walkers may choose the perimeter route - I would therefore suggest that both routes should remain. In any case, the width of the damage to the crops will be generally less in non-Covid restriction times as there is abnormally high traffic during Covid-restrictions</p> <p>6. It was suggested in the October panel meeting that there had been more comments in support than objections. I suggest this results from the fact that the applicant erected prominent notices displaying a QR code, making it very easy for comments in support of his application whereas, there was only a small reference to the general RBWM website for those that wished to object. Even now despite there being an email address it is still easier to use the QR code.</p> <p>In summary, I strongly object to the order to re-route the paths and believe the Panel should withdraw the order.</p>
63.	<p>Dear Sharon, please register my objection to the proposed diversion of parts of footpath 17 and 59 in Cookham. The proposal will diminish the enjoyment and utility of the paths and I totally agree with the criticisms voiced by various objectors during the meeting of the rights of way and highway licencing panel on the 18th of October 2021.</p>
64.	<p>I am writing to list my objection to the application "Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham: diversion application".</p> <p>Primarily, my objection falls in the line with the appointed expert's recommendation. The Parks and Countryside officers view is to refuse the proposal on the grounds that the proposed diversion did not meet the essential criteria needed to justify footpaths change of route, both in terms of the 'convenience' test and the 'enjoyment' test, and therefore a recommendation had been put forward in the report to refuse the application. A permitted footpath may work in conjunction with the established footpaths and appropriate signage, but must not be in replacement of.</p> <p>I would also argue that the replacement of an established 200-year-old footpath with a permitted footpath is not a like-for-like and comes with an access risk, as well as other risks listed below. Most significantly, a permitted footpath can be closed at any time at the discretion of the landowner. While the current landowner may state they have local interest in mind, this may change with opinion or new ownership and it poses a great risk to place control of access to the Cookham and surrounding countryside walking network in a private individual's hands.</p>

	<p>The interest of the local were reflected in not only the officers' recommendations, but also local bodies set up to protect Cookham and its environs interests as well as wider organisations: the Parish Council, the Cookham society, The Open Spaces Society, and five out of the six speakers (not including the landowner) recorded in the minutes of having actually attended and spoken at the meeting all spoke out in refusal of the proposal. I think the Parish Council puts it best with their statement from the full Council meeting on 2nd March, stating they object to this proposal, which swaps a pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm machinery and cyclists". Reference:</p> <p>The office makes reference to critical criteria set out under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 that must be met to justify a diversion as proposed: These have not been and so the council is acting outside of this established criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Firstly, the 'Convenience' test: At the most basic level a footpath around the perimeter is longer, therefore not convenient to the public but to the landowner.</li> <li>- Secondly, the 'Enjoyment test': The current route allows for enjoyable uninterrupted views and the enjoyment of the countryside, especially eastward, to Cliveden and Hanging Wood. These will be lost with a route around the edge of the field. The current "permitted" path that was put in place as an earlier re-route skirts the periphery and the surface is made up of hardcore with scalplings., an unpleasant material to walk or cycle. The track is of huge benefit to the agricultural vehicles that it can be argued benefit more from its location and material, and sharing a path with these agricultural vehicles is not enjoyable or convenient for walkers.</li> </ul> <p>In reference to further critical criteria that must be met to change a footpath route: the diversion must benefit the public. The replacement of a public footpath with an established footpath, controlled at the whim of a private landowner, is not a beneficial situation for the public and poses a risk for the linked walking network running across Cookham and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Footpath 17 is also a cycleway, with riding bicycles permitted, and as no conditions have been placed on the landowner by the council then there is a risk at losing this usage and improper/unsafe materials may be employed in its construction and size considerations. The current permitted path that replaced an earlier route is also made up of a material not suited to cycling.</p> <p>Dog walkers: the stone chips and chunks of rock that make up the current permitted path are not convenient for walkers, dogs or bicycles, more suited to the agricultural vehicles they were designed for. These uncomfortable rocks can shift and lodge in paws, boots and bicycle tires alike, causing harm and damage. This is not a convenient nor beneficial track material for walkers, cyclists and dogs alike.</p> <p>This also sets a dangerous precedent, with many networks of ancient and established footpaths crossing much land owned by this landowner and a small group of individuals. We must protect our countryside, especially in light of the local plan that is reducing and removing crucial green space that has historically been protected.</p>
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In reference to the minutes stating the needs of agriculture and forestry, flora and fauna must be considered: A longer footpath around the periphery means that members of the public and their dogs are in the field for a longer period of time and therefore can interact with the crops or livestock for a longer period of time. Hedgerows are also the established habitat for a lot of wildlife and new footpaths interacting with these environments would be disruptive to these biodiverse habitats.

In reference to the concern raised by “muddy footpaths” and “straying off-route”: It is of the opinion of the Parish Council that these footpaths become muddy as they are ploughed during cultivation, which is against the main issue around the paths becoming muddy through public foot traffic (which is their intended usage). I would also comment that the proposed complaint of foot traffic causing destruction to crop bordering the path, that this could also happen with a permitted footpath that is still within the perimeter of the field. The only way around this would be a network of permitted footpaths alongside the established footpath to offer a re-route away from the currently muddy one. This is in line with the opinion of the Ramblers Association, represented by Steve Gillions, who state that while a permitted footpath is useful it should not be employed at the expense of the current cross-field footpath.

Safety: we must also consider the safety of the public, not only will they be mingling with farm vehicles on a stony and hard track, but female walkers will need to skirt the edge of a woodland and hedgerows for many miles. The safety they feel using the exposed track crossing the wide-open space of the field is lost. This acts as a deterrent to solo walkers.

RBWMs own strategy to encourage use of the network of footpaths is also not employed here. This re-route overall must be considered a negative – to solo walkers, dog walkers and cyclists who do not find: the current rock and shale permitted path to be inconvenient for foot and pedal traffic, a re-route skirting woodland posing increased hazards, and a route that is overseen and controlled by the landowner will potentially disrupt and/or close the walking network that this area is fortunate to have access to.

Finally, in reference to the minutes referring to the data on the “for” comments and “against” objections ahead of the meeting: I have looked into this report, and many of the “for” comments appear to come from a QR code – I would request information onto how this data was gathered, who controlled it, and if an option to make “for” and “against” comments was easily available through this QR code method of gathering information.

This is an extremely popular route, on any given day you will see hundreds of walkers, dogs, children and cyclist enjoying the varied route. It is surprising there are not more comments for or against. This information could sway opinion at a meeting and data gathering must be consistent. I have looked into the report itself “Title: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham: diversion application” and many of the comments listed as “in support” mention that the permitted footpath should be allowed *in conjunction* with the current footpaths, not replacing them. Concern is also raised in these “for” comments that the private landowner changing his mind or closing the footpaths at their own whim is a

	<p>huge risk. The comments also frequently draw attention to the established footpath being a “mud bath” as the reason to change the route – but it is noted earlier in the report to the fact this path is ploughed/cultivated along with the field and then “remarked” by the landowner – the same landowner who wants it gone – is the reason of its state, and that there exists a footpath created by the landowner at current that can divert foot traffic to when conditions are poor (or ploughing is taking place). One of the comments listed as “for” is neither for nor against “Many thanks for forwarding this to me. I am afraid I have too much going on at the moment to be able to give this my proper attention, so I will have to pass on this occasion. (Support via QR code)”.</p> <p>As such, I would say this motion does not have enough evidence to establish a replacement, and privately controlled, footpath is needed, but that a permitted footpath used <i>in conjunction</i> with the established footpath – which already exists – is adequate.</p>
65.	Dear Sharon Wootten, please include my name amongst those objecting to the proposed closure of footpath 17 and 59 in Cookham.
66.	I object to these changes. I often enjoy the view from these paths. I do not enjoy walking on the alternative paths with hard surface. I also feel much safer going across the middle of a field. I do not know why landowners think they can buy land with a path, and then divert it. This path is 200 years old, before they were born.
67.	I write to officially object to the proposed redirection of parts of footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham. I have walked these paths regularly as a resident of the area. The importance of such rights of way remaining as they are across open fields and not being rerouted is crucial to the ongoing pleasure of walkers as has been the case for generations past, present and future. Why the need for change?
68.	I do object to relocating these 2 footpaths, this will seriously change the feel of the open space and lead room for development of the land. Please add my objections to such a matter and I trust that enough people know about this to object too. I would like to object to the moving of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham, they have been there for over 200 years. Please can you tell me why they are being moved? There is nothing better than walking in a wide open space, we walk to roads all the time, and walking around the edge is not the same. I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.
69.	<p>I am writing to list my objection to the application "Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham: diversion application". I am objecting on the grounds that the proposed does not meet a varied set of criteria, including those set out in Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 as well as a number of factors that pose a great risk to access and enjoyment of our countryside and local walking network. These I list below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Parks and Countryside officers recommends to refuse the proposal on the grounds that the proposed diversion did not meet the criteria needed to justify a footpaths change of route, both in terms of the ‘convenience’ test and the ‘enjoyment’ test.</li> <li>2. In reference to the ‘Convenience test’ criteria: The convenience of the public is not considered: At the most basic level a footpath around the perimeter is longer, therefore not convenient to the public but to the landowner.</li> <li>3. In reference to the ‘Enjoyment test’ criteria: The current route allows for enjoyable uninterrupted views and the enjoyment of the countryside,</li> </ol>

	<p>especially eastward, to Cliveden and Hanging Wood which will be lost with a route around the edge of the field.</p> <p>4. A permitted footpath is a risk as can be closed at any time at the discretion of the landowner who will not always have the local interest in mind</p> <p>5. The replacement of an established 200-year-old footpath with a permitted footpath set a dangerous precedent and risks other footpaths crossing land owned by this landowner and others.</p> <p>6. The proposal swaps a pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm machinery and cyclists</p> <p>7. The current “permitted” path that was put in place as an earlier re-route skirts the periphery and the surface is made up of hardcore with scalping’s, an unpleasant material to walk or cycle on.</p> <p>8. The current “permitted” path is of huge benefit to the agricultural vehicles but is not enjoyable or convenient for walkers.</p> <p>9. Other criteria that must be met to change a footpath route is also not met: the diversion must benefit the public and replacement with one controlled at by a private landowner is not beneficial for the public at all times.</p> <p>10. Footpath 17 is a cycleway, with riding bicycles permitted, and as no conditions have been placed on the landowner by the council then there is a risk at losing this usage and improper/unsafe materials may be employed in its construction.</p> <p>11. Dog walkers: the stone chips and chunks of rock that make up the current permitted path are not convenient for walkers, dogs or bicycles, more suited to the agricultural vehicles they were designed for. These uncomfortable rocks can shift and lodge in paws, boots and bicycle tires alike, causing harm and damage. This is not a convenient nor beneficial track material for walkers, cyclists and dogs alike.</p> <p>12. The needs of agriculture and forestry, flora and fauna must be considered: A longer footpath around the periphery means that members of the public and their dogs are in the field for a longer period of time and therefore can interact with the crops or livestock for a longer period of time. Hedgerows are also the established habitat for a lot of wildlife and new footpaths interacting with these environments would be disruptive to these biodiverse habitats.</p> <p>13. Safety: we must also consider the safety of the public, not only will they be mingling with farm vehicles on a stony and hard track, but female walkers will need to skirt the edge of a woodland and hedgerows for many miles. The safety they feel using the exposed track crossing the wide-open space of the field is lost. This acts as a deterrent to solo walkers.</p> <p>14. RBWM strategy to encourage walking and exercise in our walking network is not considered as the removal of a public footpath with a privately controlled replacement risks access and places walkers in unfavourable conditions.</p> <p>15. References to “muddy” and unusable footpaths can be argued that the cultivating of the field, and footpath, causes this and that there exists already a path skirting the outside of the field that can be used when conditions are poor. As such, I would say this motion does not have enough evidence to establish a replacement, and privately controlled, footpath is needed, but that a permitted footpath used <i>in conjunction</i> with the established footpath – which already exists – is adequate.</p>
70.	<p>Rerouting footpaths 17 and 59 will create a longer walk between Cookham and Furze Platt RBWM is trying to encourage active travel, and whilst the</p>

	<p>alternative route may have a better surface, lengthening walking routes seem to be at odds with the council policy.</p> <p>This could also lead to farmers in the future trying to move or close footpaths.</p>
71.	<p>As frequent users both walking and cycling across the fields adjacent to Malders Lane, Long Lane, Winter Hill Road, Cannon Court Road and the Switchback Road we are concerned about news of plans to divert the footpaths and reduce the status of the public rights of way in these fields. Many people use this amenity and have done so for decades. Rights of Way exist for the purpose of benefiting the public and this is something the landowner needs to respect. If there is a concern about crops being trampled then it is for the landowners to engage with walkers, explain and educate and put in place measures which encourage people to stick to the paths, not just remove or divert the paths completely.</p> <p>We would also point out that the consultation on these plans has been poorly handled and are lacking in transparency i.e. a QR code which did not allow open access or full disclosure.</p> <p>We object to the diversion and ask that the Panel sets an expectation that public rights of way are not negotiable for the convenience of the private landowners.</p>
72.	<p>I'd like to object to this diversion on the basis of it not being as convenient or enjoyable.</p>
73.	<p>We write to object to the proposed re-routing of footpaths 17 and 59 from Furze Platt towards Cookham. These footpaths through open fields are extremely popular and provide a much needed amenity for the residents of Furze Platt. When I passed yesterday, there were three families using the footpath. The open nature of the footpath creates a strong visual amenity and a safer experience than walking along the edge of the field. It is a right of way that has been in place for several centuries and we object to the plan to re-route it.</p> <p>We would be grateful if our objection can be taken into account when considering the proposal.</p>
<b>'Neutral' comments</b>	
1.	<p>I am responding on behalf of <b>WildCookham</b> to your request for submissions relating to the proposed diversions at Mount Farm, Cookham.</p> <p>We largely reiterate the points made a year ago when this proposal was first put forward. At that time I noted our discussions with the Copas Partnership about this and about their plans for Beeching Grove Wood. Our position remains that we have no objection to rerouting the path but, as then, our support has been based partly on the Partnership's statement in their application that "This will also allow Beeching Grove Wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access." Our discussions with them were positive in general terms, indicating a keenness on their part to encourage biodiversity on their land and, we believe, a desire to maintain Beeching Grove Wood as a secure place for nature, with no public access.</p>

	<p>Whilst accepting the diversions in principle we would want any permission given to be based on a clear understanding of the Partnership's intentions for the wood. The term 'nature reserve' has little legal relevance and our fear is that it could simply be a means of ensuring that they can still manage it with little or no external oversight. We note that the wood is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (a status which has limited legal weight) and we suggest that, since they have referenced the wood as one of the justifications for the diversion, you should seek clarification as to what they intend for it as a 'nature reserve' and specifically stress the LWS designation and the expectations that this brings. We have indicated our willingness to help with the surveying of the site to help maintain the LWS status, as well as the possibility of managed school visits to the site (under their control, of course) as a valuable public benefit.</p> <p>We should also note that the wood is one of three in close proximity which are designated as LWS - the others being Cannon Court Wood (also owned by the Partnership) and Pigeonhouse Wood. Together these have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the Borough's Environment and Climate Strategy, as well as to the Cookham Neighbourhood Plan, currently in preparation, by contributing significantly to the local Nature Recovery Networks plans.</p> <p>We accept that this is private land and we make no assumptions about WildCookham's possible role, if any. The key for us is that the intention for land to be a nature reserve must mean something. We are not suggesting that the owners have any specific intention at present to undermine the biodiversity of the wood but, given their use of the phrase as a justification for the path diversion, it should be given some extra protection.</p> <p>We are ready to discuss this further if helpful - with you as well as with the Copas Partnership.</p>
2.	<p>I would request that the panel considers the information below when making their decision and recommends that the proposed path is accessible for walkers, cyclist and horse riders creating a safe off road environment to enjoy.</p> <p>The proposals to permanently instate a footpath/ cycle way from the top of the 'Pig Track' (COOK/19/1) round to Malders Lane (MAID/70/3) would be very well suited to being truly multi use and also allowing horse rider access. This would open up the area to a wider range of the community. It would also link infrastructure in the area creating a new circuit linking existing bridleways.</p> <p>The track that has been put in is already 3m wide which would be considered wide enough for a multi-use path and is made up of a hardcore surface with scalplings which would not result in the ground being churned up by the addition of hooves. The only amendment that would need to be made would be changing the gate onto Malders Lane to one similar to that on the entrance of the pig track from Cannon Court Road. I think that multi-use paths would benefit the whole community and also reduce some of the conflict of cyclists using footpaths. Covid has led to an increase in the numbers of people wishing to access the countryside but there is a lack of shared infrastructure to support everyone.</p>



	<p>By opening up this route it would provide an off road circular route for walkers, cyclists and equestrians linking up with Hindhay Farm which is already on the Cookham Bridleway Circuit and also providing better off road access to Pinkneys Green and Cookham Dean Common.</p> <p>The Cookham Bridleway Circuit map published in 2005 is now out of date as paths have been removed and the roads described as quiet lanes are not as quiet 15 years on and with further development in the area proposed it is likely that there will be further conflict with traffic in the future. There is a current application for 16 stables on land Lower Mount Farm which is recommended for approval. If approved this will increase the number of riders in this immediate area further justifying the need for better off road access for riders.</p> <p>A survey carried out in 2020 identified the current lack of bridleway routes in Cookham with just 8% of the 34.14km of public rights of way being bridleways – this equates to just 2.85km of official bridleway. With increasing traffic on the roads there are increasing conflicts between drivers and riders.</p> <p>The Cookham Bridleway circuit is also currently incomplete due to the loss of BISH/12/4 from Bisham Woods through Park Farm meaning that the remaining bridle path through the woods is currently a dead end.</p>
3.	<p>Concerning Footpath 17 Cookham, I am given to understand that this footpath is to be closed across two fields to enable the farmer to better manage the fields. If this is the case, I have no objection as long as we can still walk around that field as we can today. I would have an objection if this is a precursor to selling off this land for houses. Please take this into consideration.</p>
4.	<p>I am responding to your notices posted at either end of a footpath with Public Right of Way from Malders Lane to Lower Mount Farm on farmland between Furze Platt and Cookham (Footpath 17 Cookham).</p> <p>Having discussed this matter with neighbours and the land-owners, I am aware that there are strong and valid opinions on both sides of this decision. While Copas Farms have invested in an alternative route around the perimeter of the field which will accommodate cyclists as well as walkers, I understand that this footpath has been a public right of way for perhaps 200 years or more, and affords better views towards Windsor, as well as a more pleasant walking experience to those who have used it for years, if not decades.</p> <p>I am also sympathetic to the land-owner's desire to gain a greater yield from this tract of land which, particularly since lockdown and the greater leisure use of the local footpaths, has seen this path widened into a muddy highway, with subsequent loss of crop.</p> <p>The primary concern of local residents is that this may be a precursor to greater development of the surrounding area, whether that be commercial or residential. If this fear can be publicly allayed, I believe most objections will be diminished. The erection of 'turkey tunnels' on nearby land and the proposed construction of a new stable block at Lower Mount Farm is adding to the volume of built forms in what was a rural setting, and anything which adds to the development of this land, and removes the access and amenity of RBWM residents, will be seen as adversely affecting this area of Greenbelt.</p>

	<p>This is not to devalue the genuine concerns and objections of those residents who have enjoyed this amenity for a considerable time, and I hope that the deciding officer will take these heartfelt apprehensions into account when making the final ruling.</p>
5.	<p>I have not been able to find this consultation on the RBWM website. There have been notices on the fields for years and I did not realise there was a current consultation. I can walk to these fields and walk on them often.</p> <p>I love walking across the middle of the field as the views are wonderful. I prefer walking on open land (fields) to walking in woodland as I feel safer that way. However, in winter (when it's muddy) I use the all-weather track.</p> <p>I would like reassurance that the changes will not lead to more vehicles on the tracks, or to houses being developed there. Those fields were the breathing space for the community during lockdown – I have never seen so many people there at one time before. Also there are lots of skylarks on the fields. I am neutral about the diversion proposal for the paths. A few years ago I was against it, but I have got used to it now.</p>
<b>Community comments (in support of the diversion)</b>	
1.	<p>I wanted to write to say I support the new paths at Lower Mount Farm and the surrounding fields. I walk my dog there at least 3 times a week. I think they have really opened the area up to be a nice walk for the general public, with lovely views of the surrounding areas. The only thing I would say, is will the new paths become a public right of way. We wouldn't want to lose the public footpath and then in 10 - 20 years Copas close the new paths and then the public lose their chance to walk across the land.</p>
2.	<p>Thanks Sharon, yes I'm in support of the footpath change.</p>

<b>Consultee comments (Opposed to diversion)</b>	
Cookham Parish Council	<p>At the full Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Cookham Parish Council decided to object to this proposal, which swaps a pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm machinery and cyclists.</p> <p>The current path is already the result of a diversion several years ago by a previous landowner which was to have made managing the field easier. This new path route was chosen with the input of stakeholders and gave good views especially eastward, to Cliveden and Hanging Wood.</p> <p>This footpath section can become muddy, especially after cultivation, and users may stray on to the crop. The proposed cycle track could already be used as an alternative, or given modern tractors with GPS, the existing path could be left unploughed.</p> <p>The proposed diversion is the present Permitted Path which is a hard surfaced track, which sadly loses the pleasant open views of the existing route.</p> <p>The hard surface of the track, whilst being solid is not viewed positively by dog walkers nor cyclists due to the loose, sharp chippings which can find their way into the paws of animals and the bicycle tyres.</p> <p>In conclusion, the proposed diversion does not offer an alternative that is at least as convenient and enjoyable as the path to be diverted, and hence we object to the diversion.</p>
Cookham Society	<p>We strongly oppose the proposed diversion. The existing route is long established and popular with walkers. It offers a direct route and much superior views to the alternative edge-hugging path proposed. We also understand from some of our female members that they feel much safer walking across the open path when they are alone and they consider that walking around the edge of the field close to woodland, does not provide the same sense of security. The footpath between Mount Farm and Hindhay Farm is shown on the 1875 OS map. The section north of Beeching Grove Wood appears to be exactly the route of the present RoW. The cross-field section south of Beeching Grove Wood has been somewhat realigned in more recent times. Ancient routes and RoWs are part of our heritage and should be protected. This is not a new proposal from the applicant. Three members of our committee visited the farm in 2015 and discussed with the applicant his wish to divert FP17 from being a cross-field path to a field edge path. From that meeting we understood that the cross-field path is no hindrance to ploughing, preparation or planting because these operations are carried out right across the field with the route of the footpath being remarked once planting is complete. Similarly, we understood that fertilising and spraying are tracked straight across the footpath. Therefore, the footpath on its present route did not form an obstruction or a cost to any of these processes. We have no reason to believe conditions have changed since 2015. When the alternative route offered is inferior to the present one, compelling reasons need to be provided even to consider diversion. Such reasons have not been provided. However, we do understand</p>

	<p>that there is a problem, particularly in wet weather, with some walkers straying off the official footpath whilst looking for firmer ground and in so doing damaging the crops. We sympathise with this and note that since our visit in 2015 a surfaced track has been created on the field edge route. If this field edge route is clearly made available as a RoW to walkers and appears on maps, apps, etc, we believe most walkers would use it in preference to the cross-field path when conditions were muddy. Information boards at either end of the cross-field route explaining why the alternative had been made available would no doubt encourage more walkers to use the field edge route. Posts at either end of the cross-field path could be put up to define the official width (2.0m) of the footpath. If the applicant would make the new field edge route available as a RoW in addition to the present cross-field route we would encourage RBWM to contribute to the cost of all necessary gates and signage.</p>
<p>East Berks Ramblers</p>	<p>I attach our thoughts on the changes proposed for Mount farm. We are not prepared to lose an open cross field path, for shared use of a farm track, with cyclists and probably horses. It would set a dangerous precedent encouraging the loss of similar cross field paths. A possible compromise could be straightening the section of 17/1 to form a direct line from the corner of the wood to the track. This would reduce the length to be reinstated after cultivation, or preferably left unploughed. This is as far as we could go. (word doc attached to email)</p> <p>Application to divert Cookham FP17 and part extinguish FP 59</p> <p>Consultation response from EBR</p> <p>East Berks Ramblers reject the above proposal, which would entail exchanging a pleasant rural path across open fields, for a much longer, hard surfaced farm track, shared with farm machinery and cyclists.</p> <p><u>The current path description.</u></p> <p>Footpath 17 starts at the RB Malders lane and goes straight across an open field to pass through a gate at the edge of Beeching Grove wood.</p> <p>This section of the path was diverted several years ago by a previous landowner with our agreement. It originally formed a diagonal cross shaped (X) junction with FP 21; after the diversion 21 was moved to the left hand field edge and 17 straight ahead to the wood. This made managing the field easier, and in return (by a gentleman`s agreement) the landowner refrained from ploughing up the line of the path.</p> <p>The next section of FP 17 is a pleasant, grassed path at the western edge of Beeching Grove wood.</p> <p>After leaving the wood the path goes diagonally (half right) across a large field (Catsey field), to reach the boundary hedge of Mount farm, where it becomes a surfaced track to Long lane. The path across the</p>

	<p>field has open views, especially eastward, to Cliveden and Hanging Wood.</p> <p>This section can become muddy at times, especially after cultivation, and users may stray on to the crop. The proposed cycle track could be used as an alternative, to reduce encroachment, or given modern tractors with GPS, the path could be left unploughed.</p> <p>Footpath 17 is well used by walkers and dog walkers as part of a longer walk, or a shorter circuit, since it links to Cookham RB's 70 &amp; 71 and hence to the wider network.</p> <p><u>Proposed diversion.</u></p> <p>The Permitted Path, a surfaced track, circumnavigates the field and considerably lengthens the route between Malders lane and Long lane. The pleasant open views are lost, as is the use of the much used loop formed by the paths south of Beeching Grove wood.</p> <p>Dog walkers have reported that the track surface contains small sharp stones, which can cause damage to the paws of some animals.</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Any proposal to divert or exchange a public footpath should offer an alternative that is at least as convenient and enjoyable as the path to be diverted.</p> <p>This proposal does not meet this criterion and if an application is made we will lodge an objection.</p> <p>We support the Permitted paths remaining in place, these provide a useful addition to the rights of way network, especially during wet weather.</p>
The Open Spaces Society	<p>The Open Spaces Society would object most strongly to these proposed changes. As we are unclear under which section(s) of the Highways Act 1980 it is proposed to make the changes, we cannot comment in detail and with reference to legal criteria. However, the overall effect is to remove the direct route between Malders Lane and Long Lane and to replace it with a circuitous route. It is also proposed to make part of the route (although I am unclear exactly which part) into a cycle route, which is disadvantageous to walkers unless the use is segregated—which will then have an urbanising effect. The reference to allowing Beeching Grove Wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access would appear to be specious, since FP17/1 runs along the western edge, not through the wood. We trust that you will proceed no further with these plans and will abandon them forthwith, it would be a poor use of your limited resources to spend time, effort and money on these dismal proposals.</p>
<b>Community comments (Opposed to diversion)</b>	
1	<p>I have been a resident in Malders Lane for a great many years and have used these foot paths regularly and still do multiple times per week. I might add that I see quite a number of people using these paths, I just hope that they have emailed in also. I personally can see no reason why these paths should be done away with as farmers have to work around paths as a norm. The path to the north of the</p>

	<p>woods has always been prone to becoming very muddy and unpleasant to walk on in the winter months or after persistent rain but the fact that it is ploughed up every year does not help its cause. I know Mr Copas has seen fit to create a solid path round the edge of his field but I am sure that is as much for his benefit as anyone else. The new, widened path through the woods was certainly not put in for pedestrian traffic but most likely for farm machinery. The upgraded path is most welcome, particularly in the winter months, but not to the degree of losing the long standing original ones that he is trying to do away with. I know also he is proposing that this new path be used by cyclists as well as walkers, which if all cyclists showed consideration in attitude and speed would not necessarily present a problem, but sadly as we all know this is not always the case. This is not the first time he has tried to close at least one of the paths but I seem to remember the ramblers association jumped on it previously. I look forward with optimism that our right of passage via these paths be maintained.</p>
2	<p>I am responding to this consultation as the ex-committee member for the East Berkshire Ramblers largely responsible for the Group's publications over many years. These particular paths have been included in the 'Rambling for Pleasure' guidebooks since 1975 and 10,000 copies showing them, are in circulation. Public rights-of-way around Beeching Grove Wood were I recall, a constant topic of discussion for many years. This proposal now, is to effectively wipe them off the map and substitute a stony field-edge roadway that walkers would no doubt at times, have to share with farm vehicles. I would object strongly if an order were made; this route is clearly unpleasant to walk on, less convenient and of course, none of these FP.s could possibly be considered not necessary for public use - and thereby extinguished.</p>
3	<p>As a recreational user of the public rights of way through open fields for many years, not just since the outbreak of the pandemic, I would be disappointed to see Copas redraw the rights of passage that are in existence for no other reason than self-interest. It's not acceptable for the public rights of way to be eroded in favour of a local landowner's desire.</p>
4	<p>I have discovered the plans for restricting rights of way on Mount farm and would be grateful if you could advise me how/when I can voice my objections My daughter lives in Scotland where there's the right to roam - and you're amazed at the selfish behaviour of landowners who want to restrict access to the Earth we all must share!</p>
5	<p>I understand that you are involved in the consultation on the request to close a Public Right of way across land owned by Copas Brothers between Furze Platt and Cookham. Can you please advise how I can voice an objection to this closure please? I do not agree with the closure of a Public right of way that has been such for a very long time even if it is more convenient to the landowner – this seems a very poor precedence to set and I would wish to object in the strongest terms. I understand that there has been an effort to provide a 'convenient' pathway as an alternative, but I did not wish,</p>

	<p>nor request, to have a tarmacked pathway there. I would be grateful if you could advise the consultation process that you refer to on signs posted there and how I may register with it.</p>
6	<p>I am writing about the 'proposed new layout' for walkers around Mount Farm and the suggestion to close the existing public rights of way across a couple of fields. Please do not allow these public footpaths to be closed. They are a public right of way and how do we know that in future the farmer will not close the permitted footpaths? I would also like to express my disappointment at how this proposal has been handled: It is not a new layout – the existing permitted footpath has been open for a number of years The signs with this so-called new layout went up a few months ago indicating information about it would be on the RBWM planning website but I have checked several times and there is nothing Until your email address was posted the only way to express a view was to scan a QR code but this is only to support the 'new' layout There are many signs posted around the permissive path but only ONE (in a not very visible location and not by the actual path) where the public footpaths are that the farmer would like to close There have been no notices from the Council about this action . Please do not allow these paths to be closed.</p>
7	<p>In response to the notices placed on land close by Hindhay Farm, I wish to add my voice to object to any change or removal of the public right of way over footpaths COOK/17/1 and COOK/17/2. I have lived in Furze Platt for over 25 years and walk almost daily on footpaths around that area. Removal of those two footpaths would materially affect my regular walks.</p>
8	<p>On my early morning walk I saw a sign saying that there is a consultation about the right of way across the fields near Malders lane. I would definitely be opposed to the rerouting of this path as it would be less enjoyable for walkers.</p>
9	<p>I have the following comments and objections regarding the proposals to divert the above paths: I can see no appropriate reason why the footpaths need re-routing when they have been in place for very many years and enjoyed by walkers such as myself without any problems or apparent issues for the landowner. The relevant paths are used only by walkers and form part of an existing circular walk which links to other footpaths. The proposed re-routing would fundamentally change this. To re-route the footpath to wide hardcore field boundary will see a mix of uses along the footpath which could pose hazards for walkers. To legitimize the re-routing of the existing footpaths to allow for more economic farming practices would set a precedent for the re-routing of all footpaths which go cross any part of any field. Moreover, the landowner has already reduced the area for planting crops by laying down a wide hardcore area along the field perimeter. The short path section through Beeching Grove Wood would not threaten wildlife as the section is so short and, apart from the narrow gated path section, the wood has been fenced off with barbed wire for many years. Rather, this short path allows walkers and wildlife enthusiasts to observe nature close up without being able to disturb it. Based on the above, I believe it is in the interests of</p>

	the community to maintain the status quo and the proposal to close the existing paths and to re-route them should be rejected.
10	I have used these paths for many years and considerably more this past year and appreciate the efforts of the owner to develop the network. I note that he would like to divert the paths across the fields and has promoted this plan with signage and a QR code to support the plan. I would like to object to the plan as a principle to protect the rights of individuals to retain the use public footpaths and to close these would set a precedent to close other rights of way.
11	My comments on the application: Although the Copas' have provided all weather paths around the perimeter of the proposed diverted fields, it is a much longer walk and the access across the field provides a quicker alternative. Not everyone has the luxury in the morning to undertake a longer walk. I appreciate during the winter months the path across the fields does become impassable at times, this has been exasperated this year with the sheer volume of people out walking due to Covid but it is also hampered at times with the farm machinery ploughing up the paths which then makes it difficult to walk over. Other paths in the vicinity are not ploughed and walking in all weathers is easier. If this application was permitted, I feel it would set a precedent for other applications in the area for example MAID/33/1 and possible application to build on, should greenbelt restrictions be relaxed. My comments on the process Although notices were placed along the footpaths, the maps were difficult to pin-point which paths were being referred to, unless you knew the area well. It would have been beneficial to have had "you are here" on the maps too. Using the "QR" supplied I followed the links hoping to be given information on how to register my objections, if they were there it was not obvious as I couldn't locate them. I feel there was no true transparency. In essence I strongly object to the proposal to rerouting the paths as feel it will be detrimental to walkers. I have lived in Maidenhead for over 50 years and this is the first time I have ever objected to anything like this, but feel so passionately about it, my liberty to choose where I want to walk without someone dictating where I can go. Copas knew when he purchased the land that these fields had paths across them, paths that have been in place for hundreds of years. I hope we will be kept in the loop and any further developments will be relayed to us more openly
12	My comments on the application: Whilst the hard-surfaced portion of the permitted path has been much used during the very wet months of December and January I have observed many people also using the routes which are proposed to be moved as soon as the drier weather arrived in February which indicates there are people which value the route across 'open fields' in spite of there being an alternative route around the fields via the perimeter route. During a 5-minute run across the field route today I passed 3 people walking the cross-field route and 2 walking the perimeter route. This supports my personal feeling that when conditions permit it is preferable to maintain the right of way across the fields since this is a significantly nicer walk across an open field than being re-directed around the periphery. If



	<p>this application is allowed to proceed I believe it will set a precedent to for further similar applications, for example, to re-route other open-country/cross-field routes such as MAID/33/1. If this application is allowed to proceed there is also a future threat that applications to build on the land will be easier should greenbelt restrictions be eased If this application is allowed to proceed, there is a risk that the owner may eventually fence in the footpaths and the paths will become more like lanes corralling walkers along hedged or fenced corridors- this is already evident on some routes. If the current permitted route around the field remains, then the pressure on the cross-field route will be reduced and there will be a less economic loss to the owner since during the wettest months walkers may choose the perimeter route - I would therefore suggest that both routes should remain. In any case, the width of the damage to the crops will be generally less in non-lockdown times as there is abnormally high traffic during the current Covid-restrictions My comments on the process I am not certain of the process regarding the informal consultation you mention and whether a more public consultation must take place if the application is allowed to proceed further.</p> <p>However, I raise the following concerns: As is its right, the owner set up notices along the route encouraging the public to scan a 'QR' code 'if supportive of the application' the QR code links to a form to support the proposal but there is no equivalent for those that object to register their comments. Further, it is very hard to find the proposal or comment on the RBWM website, in fact, I could not find it at all. Please confirm that should the application be allowed to proceed further that the proposal is fully publicised allowing those that object, as well as those that support, have their comments taken into account. In summary, I strongly object to the proposal to re-route the paths and believe that if the proposal is in any way allowed to proceed further the public should be widely and properly consulted.</p>
13	<p>I would like to comment on the application for the diversion of Cookham Footpath 17 and part of Cookham Footpath 59. I oppose the diversion particularly Footpath 17. I understand that the proposal is at the preliminary consultation stage. These paths are clearly heavily used by walkers and families all year round despite the fact that an alternative route (permitted path) was created by Copas several years ago. Having walked 17/1 and 17/2 frequently and over many years, without doubt they offer a much better walking experience than the permitted path. The views across the woods and fields, especially from north to south are fantastic, the light at all times, but especially early morning and late afternoon from March to October, is exceptional. In contrast the permitted path creeps around the edge of the field and even in summer, much of it is in shadow. Certainly an inferior route for the public. I can provide further details of my objections. Do you need this detail now?</p>
14	<p>I am not in support of the proposed changes to the Cookham 17 and Cookham 59 “to allow more economic farming practices and create a</p>

	<p>longer circular route for public use” 1. The southern part of 17 would be completely lost and hence all users young and old and less able would be prevented from taking a short trip out north on 17, west on 59 then south on 21 back to Malders Lane. This short route is very much valued by many including the residents of Malders Lane2. It says Beeching Grove Wood would be treated as a Nature reserve but the Applicant wants to cut down trees in Little Beeching Grove to create a new path. Not a great move3. The arable farmland in question is no longer ploughed so no difficulty should be encountered in reinstating the paths within the statutory period. Dangers to walkers due to livestock does not appear to be a factor in this case4. Redirecting 17 round the edge of the field on a hard core and scalping surface is not an option. There are enough of unwanted surfaces in this rural area eg Cookham 19 plus all the roads and pavements.5. These ancient paths evolved through people taking the shortest route from A to B and this is still the case as many users walk or run to work or school and take the shortest route so lengthening 17 in the north around the field and changing the surface and removing it in the south is not the right thing to do. The southern end of 17 joins directly to Maidenhead 33 and 31 and this is very much a direct route from Furze Platt which must be preserved.6. It is safer for lone walkers to go through the middle of a field where they can see around rather than around the edge where wildlife are more likely to be disturbed by loose dogs.7. Exercise is very important and with events such as “Tough Mudder” being organised nationally it is very important to be able to train on natural ground .8. I have walked, ridden or cycled on most paths in this rural area and have no support to turning them into hard surfaces These are not paths in the town parks. I attach a cutting from the Telegraph by Helen Chandler-Wilde and research shows the many benefits of exercising on natural ground. Should this proposal be allowed It would be the beginning of all paths across fields to be redirected for no good reasons. These paths should remain in the position they have been in since they were introduced. Maidenhead 31 is a much used path in the middle of a field and it could be next on the diversion list. On 21st February I walked all the paths mentioned. Between Maidenhead 31 and Long Lane. I have never seen so many people in the countryside. I was saddened to read notices by the applicant how 17 was impassable. This was not the case. The conditions at the southern end were very good and I saw no less than 6 runners using it. The northern end was not a problem but was a little muddy where the farm machinery had crossed over it from the evenly spaced tram lines in the crop. Should the paths be upgraded to cycle paths the scalping would only be suitable for mountain bikes All ancient rights of way must be kept here. It is so close to Maidenhead with very few people arriving by car as they are able to make use of and enjoy the rural areas on their doorsteps.</p>
15	<p>I object to the planned diversion of Cookham Footpath 17 and part of Cookham Footpath 59 for the following reasons: 1) The existing route Cookham 17 is an old and established footpath which is well used and popular with local walkers. Although the section crossing the field is</p>

	<p>difficult to pass in the winter months due to ploughing work, we have endeavoured to ensure the route is continually used and that the path is clearly visible, and wish to continue to do so. 2) The new footpath created in 2016 which runs around the edge of the field is rough paved and is uncomfortable for walkers and dogs alike with sharp stone underfoot. 3) Encouraging cyclist and dog walkers to share the same routes is not relaxing or safe for either group. Cyclists do not slow to allow dogs and walkers to pass safely, and dog walkers do not like having a speeding cyclist suddenly wizz by. Dogs are not always aware of the approaching cyclist and cannot be expected to know the rules of the road. I point this out because this is a particularly new problem which has arisen due to Covid lockdown and has resulted in a huge increase of people wanting to enjoy the walks around Cannon Court Farm. As wonderful as this is, I don't expect the numbers of new walkers and cyclists to continue indefinitely as the Covid restrictions allow people to return to work and school. 4) The new paving has also allowed vehicles to traverse the footpath between Mount Farm and Beeching Grove Farm which has on more than one occasion been observed to be dangerous. Despite there being signs warning the drivers to go slowly, I have witnessed vans driving too fast around the blind bend from Mount Farm to Beeching Grove Farm. 5) Regarding the removal of trees in the wood to widen the path, this flies in the face of Government and environmental groups endeavours to plant more trees. The landowner has persistently removed trees, established hedges and scrubland from the whole of the Cannon Court Farm site resulting a drastic loss of habitat for birds and insects. I particularly draw attention to the rapid removal of nearly all the established hedgerows along Malders Lane. Where are the birds and insects are supposed to live, breed, feed and overwinter in the years until the new hedge plantings are of a size to provide shelter and habitat. We will have no birds and insects left if they are effectively exterminated in order to 'tidy' the countryside. 6) If every farmer and landowner decided they wanted to relocate a public footpath for no reason other than to make life easier for the farmer, our ancient network of paths would be mismatched and become untraversable, unless you don't mind going from A to B via X, Y and Z. I appreciate you taking the time to note the thoughts and wishes of the local people who live and work in the area, and who take an active interest in the environment.</p>
16	<p>I would like to object to the diversion of paths in the Mount Farm area because the new route makes the route to Cookham longer and diverts to a hard surface mainly in the shade. The choice of routes is also restricted by removing 17/2 and 59/1. The creation of a new permitted route around the edge of the field is to be welcomed as an additional choice for the public and it has been very popular during the wet weather when normal footpaths are muddy. However I don't think this justifies removing the right of way across the field. The cross field path is part of a wider network of paths and links with footpath 32 leading towards Cookham, in this instance the longer diversion is a disadvantage. I would be interested to know how the</p>

	<p>removal of the rights of way would help the economy of farming practices in these arable fields. The paths are minimal compared to the area of the fields and, apart from the care needed to avoid walkers when cultivating the fields, I don't know how else the paths affect farming or cost money. The longer route is being advertised as cycle path at Mount Farm. Again this could be popular and welcome as a family off road cycle route. But this would be a drawback for dog walkers and family walkers as they would always have to expect bikes appearing suddenly. Keeping the option of the cross field path would reduce the potential clash of interests. If paths 59/1 and 17/2 disappear the footpath network will be much reduced. It would leave path 21/2 as the only north-south connection in the area. In a well walked area this seems a disadvantage, forcing people to come together more than necessary. Beeching Grove Wood is already treated as a nature reserve and there is no access for the public. Footpath 17 passing one edge for about 100 metres has minimal impact on the wood. So far notices around Mount Farm have clearly shown what the planned changes involve but they only have an option to encourage approval of the plan and there is no indication of how to comment or possibly object so I feel the balance of views received will be skewed in favour of the plans. Please consider keeping the right of way open, the increased number of walkers and runners each year merit a greater choice of routes rather than less.</p>
17	<p>Reference proposed diversion of Cookham footpath 17 and part of Cookham Footpath 59; application by Mr T A Copas &amp; Mrs B Copas. I am opposed to the proposed diversion of the above named footpaths for the following reasons. The footpaths in question are well used and it is always helpful to have the choice of several routes. If the footpaths are diverted it would increase the number of people walking in other areas such as the Little Beech Grove Wood and National Trust owned land which also has wildlife while not being closed off to the public (see my third point). The footpath merely skirts the edge of the privately owned Beeching Grove Wood and in my opinion does not in any way impede into the area of the wood which can remain a "nature reserve". I am against any unnecessary cutting down of trees, which is suggested by the diversion of footpath application to "make a 2 metre wide path through Little Beeching Grove Wood". Please let me know if you require a more detail explanation for my opposition to the above named application.</p>
18	<p>Thank you for sending me the details of Mr Copas' recent application. I wish to object to the proposal to close Cookham footpaths 17/1 and 17/2 for the reasons stated below. These paths are clearly heavily used by walkers and families all year round despite the fact that an alternative route (permitted path) was created by Copas several years ago. Having walked 17/1 and 17/2 frequently and over many years, without doubt they offer a much better walking experience than the permitted path. The views across the woods and fields, especially from north to south are fantastic, the light at all times, but especially early morning and late afternoon from March to October, is exceptional. In contrast the permitted path creeps around</p>

	<p>the edge of the field and even in summer, much of it is in shadow. Certainly an inferior route for the public. Beeching Grove Wood is already clearly signed as private and there appears to be no access to the public. It is not clear to me what difference diverting the footpath will make. I have never seen anyone in the woods during the thirty plus years I've walked the paths. The attached photos show the clear signs that it is private. The gate is padlocked with barbed wire on the top bar. However the wooden fence itself is surprisingly flimsy! Mr Copas states as a reason for his application that it will create a longer circular route for public use around Mount Farm. This is not needed as there are numerous round routes of varying lengths in that area, in the adjacent NT woods, several footpaths from Hindhay Farm (Malders Lane, Hindhay Lane) towards Cannon Court Road, the NT Brick and Tile works behind Hindhay Farm, several footpaths south from the farm towards Furze Platt, and to Pinkneys Green which can be linked to form several round walks of various lengths. I would say that this area is already one of the richest in the area for linked footpaths!</p>
<b>Consultee comments (in support of diversion)</b>	
Local Access Forum (fast response team)	<p>The LAF fast response team having reviewed the application, arguments for and associated maps would be happy to support the application as it stands. We would however ask that consideration be given to the opportunity to upgrade for Multi Users.</p>
Wild Cookham	<p>I'm coming back to you about this application on behalf of WildCookham. As I believe I mentioned earlier we have had some discussion with the Copas Partnership about this and about their plans for Beeching Grove Wood. We have no objection to rerouting the path but our support has been based partly on the Partnership's statement in their application that "This will also allow Beeching Grove Wood to be treated as a nature reserve with reduced public access." Our discussion with them is aiming to clarify what they mean by 'nature reserve' and at present the ball is in their court to come back to us based on some suggestions we have put forward. The term 'nature reserve' has little legal relevance and our fear is that it will simply be a means of ensuring that they can still manage it in whatever way they see fit. We note that the wood is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (a status which has limited legal weight) and we suggest that, since they have referenced the wood as one of the justifications for the diversion, you should seek clarification as to what they intend for it as a 'nature reserve' and specifically stress the LWS designation and the expectations that this brings. We have indicated our willingness to help with the surveying of the site to help maintain the LWS status, as well as the possibility of managed school visits to the site (under their control, of course) as a valuable public benefit. We should also note that the wood is one of three in close proximity which are designated as LWS - Cannon Court Wood (also owned by the Partnership) and Pigeonhouse Wood. Together these have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the Borough's Environment and Climate Strategy. We accept that this is private land and we make no assumptions about WildCookham's possible role, if</p>

	<p>any. The key for us is that the intention for land to be a nature reserve must mean something. We are not suggesting that the owners have any specific intention at present to undermine the biodiversity of the wood but, again given their use of it as a justification for the path diversion, it should be given some extra protection. We stand ready to discuss this further - with you as well as with the Copas Partnership. Let me know if we can add anything to the above comments.</p>
Cookham Running Club	<p>I am fully in favour of the proposals. As founder of Cookham Running Club (which has 150 members) we are supportive of the efforts made by Mr Copas and family to accommodate runners, walkers and cyclists and see the new routes as a positive step to improved access.</p>
<b>Community comments (in support of diversion)</b>	
1	<p>I have read the plans for the diversion of the footpath and am strongly supportive of the proposal. I live very locally and my family and I use the paths daily to walk our dog. I believe the diversion and expansion of the walking loop is beneficial for the local community.</p>
2	<p>I think the proposal looks great. The new paths the Copas team have put in offer much better accessibility to the area for push chairs and wheelchair users. The fact that this will also allow for a nature reserve in the woodland is an added bonus. The existing path through the field seems unnecessary and is often difficult to navigate after even the smallest amount of rain. I hope the plans will be passed.</p>
3	<p>I walk my dog at the fields almost daily - the perimeter footpath is far less muddy than the old path. It is more accessible too so I can walk with friends. It also protects the farmers' fields because as the old path hit muddy people were walking over plants. It is such a fantastic place to walk and I would like to continue to do so respecting the farmers crops too.</p>
4	<p>I have used the proposed new footpath regularly over the last few weeks. It is a great improvement on the old one especially in muddy conditions.</p>
5	<p>I hope I am not too late with my comments on the proposed footpath changes. I fully support the closure of the path across the centre of the field and to make the permitted way a footpath with comments below. - I would have preferred to see a separate proposal for also making it a cycle path as would not support it.- I would suggest more signs about keeping to the footpath and not lettings dogs onto the fields growing crops next to the paths (the owners would not let them run about on their gardens at home growing vegetables/flowers). It is sad to see the effort done by the farmer to provide the paths is abused by dog owners. Most of the recent signs put up about keeping dogs under control have been vandalised.</p>
6	<p>I am in full support of the application to divert this footpath. I have been enjoying the path to the edge of these fields since moving to the area in 2018 and am very grateful for the recent dressing to the permitted path, especially in the wet winter months. Path erosion is something that affects most PRowS across the country and has only been exacerbated during the pandemic from heavier use. I have noticed the path COOK/17/1 has more than trebled in width during</p>

	<p>the autumn/winter months. This is also evident on the path that spurs off south-easterly from the junction between MAID/71/3 and MAID/71/4 (not part of this application) has also increased greatly in width. This path erosion is clearly detrimental to the landowner/farmer's crop yield and only adds to the increasing problem of food waste in the UK. The diversion of the footpath to the permitted path is beneficial to the local community, landowner and the environment.</p>
7	<p>Thank you for your communication regarding the diversion of public footpaths over farmland at Mount Farm, Cookham. My wife and I regularly walk along the permitted paths around the fields, especially during the pandemic lockdown periods over the past 12 months. The existing public footpaths cook 17/1 and 17/2 were all but impassable during the wet winter weather, and are so every winter. Mount Farm have provided an excellent wide and firm, dry path along the west and north boundaries of the field (crossed by cook 17/1) and linking with footpaths cook 59/1 and 21/2 to the south and cook 17/1 to the north, all paths also well maintained and always passable. The result is an excellent round walk, pleasant to use all year and in all weather via the permitted path links, cook 19/1 and Malders Lane or Hindhay Lane linking back up to Hindhay Farm. This walk has been very popular and well used during the pandemic and provides a very attractive rural walk close to Maidenhead. The route is also well used by cyclists and the paths are wide enough for both uses. Although the existing public footpaths cook 17/1 and 17/2 run across the middle of 2 fields we consider that the alternative paths provided by Mount Farm are excellent substitutes. Efficient farming is very important and I can understand how footpaths running across the middle of fields waste usable land and complicate the farming process. My wife and I fully support this application.</p>
8	<p>Thank you for your email. This proposal has my full support. I have very much enjoyed using the new foot path. It appears a very popular route given the amount of people I have observed using it. It seems very logical for the foot path to follow the perimeter of the farmers fields. I hope this is what you need, please let me know if I can offer any further support to this proposal.</p>
9	<p>Thank you for your email. I have reviewed the maps and application that you sent. I support this application, having made use of this new route at least twice per week since the summer, often more. I can assure you that it has proved very popular with dog walkers, runners, cyclists, and walkers alike. I seldom see anybody make use of the existing route across the field, and the path made of scalplings makes this route ideal in all weathers.</p>
10	<p>This is a sensible proposal that benefits both the landowner and the public. The new footpath around the field is a good one whilst the old path it replaces is often muddy and difficult. Since the path has been made available as a permitted path, we have seen a big increase in walkers in the area taking advantage of it. We walk our dog in this area almost daily. Anyone who objects to this proposal is only being contrary.</p>

11	I have been walking these routes around Mount farm for around 15 years. I was very happy to use the permitted path around the edge of the field when it was first proposed a few years ago. This is a much more suitable all-weather track. The footpath across the field gets very muddy which means people walk at the edges further encroaching on the crops. Until a year ago when the pandemic began I would encounter at the most a dozen people on an hour circuit. At the peak of the good weather in the first lockdown there were up to 100 people in that same hour. Although this has eased it is still around 10 times previous numbers during the week. I don't go there at weekends as it is too busy. I am happy to see so many others enjoying this lovely area of countryside but it has to be compatible with the farmers livelihood. I see no reason why anyone should object to the redirection of this footpath. I am a keen walker interested in nature conservation & a habitat monitor volunteer with the national trust at Runnymede.
12	Thanks for sending me the details of the application. I have no comments to add to this proposal. (support via QR code)
13	I have reviewed the proposal. As a regular dog walker in the area, I support the proposed changes. In the recent muddy ground conditions the surfaced path at the perimeter of the field has been most welcome. I also understand that it is not optimal to have a footpath straight through the middle of a cultivated field. I support the application.
14	The footpaths have been well maintained and I agree with the proposals, causing less damage to crops and a clear route through the land
15	I don't have any comments on the application, other than to say that as a regular user of the new footpath, I think it an excellent footpath and is greatly appreciated and enjoyed.
16	I have read and understood your documents and fully agree with the suggested changes as they benefit the community and the farm.
17	Not sure what else I can say to support this. The farmer has built a proper path around the field which is safe, level and drains well. It is a vast improvement on the muddy, boggy path which went diagonally across the field. It seems to be very well used by walkers of all ages. I can't see any negative aspects to this, and there are lots of positives.
18	Please accept this email as support for the proposal that has been made by Mr and Mrs Copas. one point that has not been noted in the proposal is the access this hard-surfaced, ungated route will give to wheelchair users and parents with children in strollers or buggies. The proposed changes are a useful addition to the accessible areas of green space in the area.
19	I am very much in favour of the proposed diversion and the work that has been done to the surface of the path. The circular route around Mount Farm following the path around the perimeter of the fields has been one of our favourite walks as a family throughout the many lockdowns.
20	Thank you for your email below. I have reviewed the planned changes and have no objection



21	<p>In essence, I would whole heartedly support this diversion application. I enjoy walking, the open countryside, and the fresh air. I am in no hurry in my outdoor walking pursuit to take a 'short cut' across the middle of a field, especially where crops are grown, and I am quite used to walking around the edges of a field where there is a footpath. In this particular case, the farmer has provided an excellent walking path, free from ruts, mud or any other obstacles, so I congratulate, and thank him for providing it. I recall that in the past, the footpath between Spring Lane and Cannon Court Road was deeply rutted, and muddy, and the path was not used much. In its present excellent form, the route is heavily used by walkers and some cyclists, and in these 'Covid days' a most welcome opportunity to get some exercise out in the fresh air. I note too, the routes around the new diverted paths around the edges of the farmland are also well used. I would hope that if the Application is successful, the farmer maintains the excellent standard of the paths.</p>
22	<p>I think the proposed change makes perfect sense. The path around the edge of the field is well maintained and a sensible route rather than cutting through the middle of a field. Farmland walks such as the Copas Farm are essential to the community. I walk there often as do many hundreds of people, I can see the edges of the crops are trampled by walkers. To avoid walking through a large field is a fair and sensible change of footpath. I am fully supportive of this change - strange to consider the current/original path is actually where it was!</p>
23	<p>Many thanks for forwarding this to me. I am afraid I have too much going on at the moment to be able to give this my proper attention, so I will have to pass on this occasion. (Support via QR code)</p>
24	<p>Have studied the enclosed footpath rerouting and am in full agreement with the proposed layout. The landowners have done a splendid job of resurfacing most of the route, and my wife can now join me using her mobility scooter.</p>
25	<p>No comments, other than that the current temporary path is fantastic and I would like it to be made permanent. I think it makes total sense to close the path across the middle of the field, as it is frequently a mud bath.</p>
26	<p>We regularly walk our dog around the Malders lane farmers field and we stick to the existing perimeter and do not cut across the field. I can fully understand why the farmers would like to do away with that path and see no reason to object. We are very grateful to be able to walk this land. It is an excellent footpath in all weathers which is a rarity in the area particularly in wet weather where other paths become flooded or treacherous from mud. We have reviewed everything attached and have no questions.</p>
27	<p>Hope you are all well? Looking at the consultation on the above footpaths in a way it makes sense, but my only one thing I would like to see these footpaths remain as public footpaths. Because knowing Mr Copas he might change his mind and then residents are not allowed use these footpath. That is one the condition I would like to see as part of the consultation that these 2 footpaths remain public footpaths?</p>

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

#### Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Plan		Project		Service procedure	x
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Responsible officer	Anthony Hurst	Service area	Neighbourhood Services	Directorate	Place
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<b>Stage 1: EqlA Screening (mandatory)</b>	Date created: 22/02/2022	<b>Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)</b>	Date created: (n/a)
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

*"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."*

Signed by (print): Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Dated:

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

#### Guidance notes

##### What is an EqlA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqlAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups. All completed EqlA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council's website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

##### What are the "protected characteristics" under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

##### What's the process for conducting an EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

##### Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

##### Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

#### Stage 1: Screening (Mandatory)

##### 1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?

To determine an application to divert parts of Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham.

The application is being recommended for refusal, which would mean the footpath routes would remain unchanged and therefore there would be no impact on any of the protected characteristics.

However, in the event that the Panel determines to proceed with referral of the opposed Diversion Orders to the Secretary of State, and the Orders are in due course confirmed, there may be some low level impacts on some protected characteristics as detailed below.

**1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics? Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is Relevant or Not Relevant to that characteristic. If Relevant, please assess the level of impact as either High / Medium / Low and whether the impact is Positive (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or Negative (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please document your evidence for each assessment you make, including a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as “Not Relevant”.**

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

Protected characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
<b>Age</b>	Relevant	Low	Negative	<p>The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed.</p> <p>If the Panel were to proceed with referral of the opposed Diversion Orders to the Secretary of State, and the Orders are in due course confirmed, there could be low level negative impact on this characteristic, as a short circular walk would be lost, and this may disadvantage more elderly walkers.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	Relevant	Low	Some positive and some negative	<p>The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed.</p> <p>If the Panel were to proceed with referral of the opposed Diversion Orders to the Secretary of State, and the Orders are in due course confirmed, there could be low level negative impact on this characteristic, as a short circular walk would be lost, and this may disadvantage less mobile walkers.</p> <p>However, there may also be a positive impact on some users, as some consultees refer to increased accessibility of the hard-surfaced field-edge footpath, for example for wheel-chair users.</p>

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# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

<b>Gender re-assignment</b>	Not relevant			The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed. If the diversion were to proceed, it is not considered that there would be a specific impact on this characteristic.
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	Not relevant			The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed. If the diversion were to proceed, it is not considered that there would be a specific impact on this characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Relevant	Low	Negative	<p>The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed.</p> <p>If the Panel were to proceed with referral of the opposed Diversion Orders to the Secretary of State, and the Orders are in due course confirmed, there could be low level negative impact on this characteristic, as some consultees have stated that female walkers may feel less sense of security whilst using the woodland routes as an alternative to the cross-field footpaths. Additionally, the loss of the short circular route could potentially disadvantage pregnant walkers.</p>

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

<b>Race</b>	Not relevant			The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed. If the diversion were to proceed, it is not considered that there would be a specific impact on this characteristic.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	Not relevant			The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed. If the diversion were to proceed, it is not considered that there would be a specific impact on this characteristic.
<b>Sex</b>	Relevant	Low	Negative	<p>The recommendation is not to proceed with the footpath diversions, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application does not proceed.</p> <p>If the Panel were to proceed with referral of the opposed Diversion Orders to the Secretary of State, and the Orders are in due course confirmed, there could be low level negative impact on this characteristic, as some consultees have stated that female walkers may feel less sense of security whilst using the woodland routes as an alternative to the cross-field footpaths.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Not relevant			The recommendation is to refuse the diversion application, which would mean the footpath routes would remain un-changed; there would be no impact on this characteristic if the application is refused. If the diversion were to proceed, it is not considered that there would be an impact on this characteristic.

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Footpaths 17 and 59 Cookham diversion application

#### Outcome, action and public reporting

Screening Assessment Outcome	Yes / No / Not at this stage	Further Action Required / Action to be taken	Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group	Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact
Was a significant level of negative impact identified?	no			
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	no			

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If you answered **yes** to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).



Report Title:	<b>Public Rights of Way ‘Milestones Statement 2022/23’</b>
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Officer reporting:	Anthony Hurst, Parks and Countryside Manager
Meeting and Date:	Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services
Wards affected:	All



## REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks the Panel’s approval for the ‘*Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2022/23*’ attached at Appendix A, which sets out the Council’s objectives, priorities, targets and service standards for public rights of way work in the coming year, and the resources available for delivering this service.

Effective management of the Borough’s network of over 310km of public rights of way makes an important contribution to the Council’s Corporate Plan 2021-2026, in particular the objective to increase walking and cycling in the borough.

### 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel approves the ‘*Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2022/23*’ attached at Appendix A.

### 2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

#### Options

**Table 1: Options arising from this report**

Option	Comments
Approve the ‘Milestones Statement 2022/23’  <b>This is the recommended option</b>	The approved Milestones Statement will ensure that the Council’s Public Rights of Way team will have a clear set of objectives, priorities, and targets for the coming year.

**3. KEY IMPLICATIONS**

**Table 2: Key Implications**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Unmet</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Significantly Exceeded</b>	<b>Date of delivery</b>
Approval of Milestones Statement 2022/23	<i>n/a</i>	April 2022	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	2022/23

**4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, setting clear targets for the Council’s Public Rights of Way team and their partners ensures good value for money is achieved in delivering agreed objectives.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

**6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 The ‘Milestones Statement’ approach is an efficient and effective way of planning, prioritising and monitoring public rights of way work. Without an approved set of objectives, priorities, targets and service standards for the coming year there is a risk that the quality of service delivery would decline.

**7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

7.1 Equalities: an ‘Equality Impact Assessment screening form’ has been completed in relation to this report, and the screening assessment did not identify any negative impacts (see Appendix C). The ‘Milestones Statement’ includes several targets aimed at improving access for people with disabilities or restricted mobility, the elderly and people with young children or pushchairs.

7.2 Climate change/sustainability: effective management of the borough’s public rights of way network has a positive impact on sustainability by encouraging alternative forms of transport to the car.

7.3 Data Protection/GDPR: no impacts arising directly from this report.

## 8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Borough's **Local Access Forum (LAF)** has been consulted on the targets, objectives and service standards set out in the draft Milestones Statement and have confirmed that. Responses are set out in Appendix B.

8.2 All Parish and Town Councils have been consulted on the targets, objectives and service standards set out in the draft Milestones Statement. Comments and suggestions have been received from a number of Parish Council's, as set out in Appendix B, and the public rights of way team will work with the Parish Councils to progress these suggestions where feasible.

## 9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 2022/23.

## 10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by 3 appendices:

- Appendix A: Milestones Statement 2022/23
- Appendix B: Consultation responses
- Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment screening form

## 11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 None.

## 12. CONSULTATION

<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Post held</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date returned</b>
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	23/02/22	02/03/22
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	23/02/22	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	23/02/22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	23/02/22	24/02/22
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	23/02/22	23/02/22
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	23/02/22	
<i>Heads of Service (where relevant)</i>			

Alysse Strachan	Head of Neighbourhood Services	23/02/22	
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
Local Access Forum, and Parish and Town Councils	As set out in report and Appendix B		

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cllr Donna Stimson; Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside.	Yes
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## REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Panel decision	No	No

Report Author: Anthony Hurst, Parks and Countryside Manager, 07775-818622
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*Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead*

# *Milestones Statement*

*and Public Rights of Way  
Management and Improvement  
Plan review*

*2022-23*

## **FOREWORD**

I am pleased to introduce the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Milestones Statement for the Royal Borough, marking 24 years since this Council, as Highway Authority, became responsible for the management and maintenance of the borough's public rights of way in 1998.

I hope that residents and visitors to the borough will continue to enjoy these public rights of way as a means of accessing the borough's beautiful countryside, and as a healthy and stress-free way of getting about.

We will continue to work with all our partners, including the Local Access Forum, Parish and Town Councils, landowners, and path user groups (including the East Berks Ramblers, the British Horse Society and Sustrans) to achieve these goals, and I wish to thank all our partners for their continued co-operation, support and enthusiasm.

Councillor Maureen Hunt

Chair of Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

**April 2022**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 General

The Royal Borough as the surveying and highway authority is responsible for the management and maintenance of the public rights of way network in the borough. There are over 310 km (192 miles) of public rights of way, about a third of the borough's total highway network (see Table 1 for lengths of rights of way by parish).

This Milestones Statement sets out the Council's priorities and targets for ensuring that the network is legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised. The Statement also incorporates an annual update on the Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026.

## 1.2 The Milestones approach

The 'milestones approach' is an effective means of prioritising public rights of way work and measuring performance against an agreed set of targets. This is achieved by:

- setting individual, realistic targets, taking into account the available resources – these are the Milestones Targets (see page 7).
- monitoring progress towards achieving the Milestones Targets (see page 19).

## 1.3 Partnership working

The Council works closely with public rights of way user groups, landowners, parish and town councils, local conservation volunteers, neighbouring local authorities, and the borough's Local Access Forum. Two Parish Councils (Cookham and Old Windsor) undertake routine clearance of vegetation from public rights of way in their area on behalf of the borough, as part of the Parish Paths Initiative.

## 1.4 Volunteers

During 2021/22, several volunteer groups worked on public rights of way around the Borough:

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) carried out **16 workdays** with a total of **96** participant days.

Ways into Work (WiW) carried out **18 workdays** with a total of **90** participant days.

Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) carried out **16 workdays** with a total of **80** participant days.

East Berks Ramblers carried out 298 hours of work on behalf of the Borough, mainly through undertaking condition surveys.

Based upon our current commercial rates for path works the value of the volunteer works listed above is **£14,149**

## 1.5 Resources

The Council's 'Parks and Countryside Team' manage the public rights of way network; 3 members of the team work specifically on public rights of way, totaling 1.7 full time equivalents (fte). In addition, the Council's Legal team provides legal support, and the Democratic Services team provides secretarial support for administering the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel and the Local Access Forum.

## Revenue Budget

<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>
<b>£60,000</b>	<b>£60,000</b>

This works budget funds the annual vegetation clearance contract of programmed works, as well as reactive works such as clearance of fallen trees and branches from public rights of way, replacement of missing or damaged signs, surface repairs, removal of fly-tipping etc.

There is also a capital budget of **£40,000** for public rights of way work in 2022/23. This will be used for path improvement projects across the borough.



**Table 1: Lengths of Rights of Way by Parish, March 2022**

Parish	Length (km)				Total km	% of network
	Footpath	Bridleway	Byway	Restricted Byway		
Bisham	13.146	2.524	-	2.228	<b>17.898</b>	5.75
Bray	36.803	9.999	2.184	0.564	<b>49.550</b>	15.93
Cookham	34.294	1.980	0.469	0.405	<b>37.148</b>	11.94
Cox Green	8.395	1.399	-	-	<b>9.794</b>	3.15
Datchet	4.761	-	-	-	<b>4.761</b>	1.53
Eton	18.396	3.561	-	-	<b>21.957</b>	7.06
Horton	1.200	1.254	-	-	<b>2.454</b>	0.79
Hurley	31.608	6.115	-	6.909	<b>44.632</b>	14.35
Maidenhead	29.796	0.439	-	2.596	<b>32.831</b>	10.56
Old Windsor	4.574	-	-	-	<b>4.574</b>	1.47
Shottesbrooke	3.240	-	-	1.612	<b>4.852</b>	1.56
Sunningdale	3.554	1.666	0.337	-	<b>5.557</b>	1.79
Sunninghill	11.244	-	3.592	1.299	<b>16.135</b>	5.19
Waltham St Lawrence	17.728	-	-	7.209	<b>24.937</b>	8.02
White Waltham	11.011	0.530	0.342	4.165	<b>16.048</b>	5.16
Windsor	4.339	1.994	1.644	0.259	<b>8.236</b>	2.65
Wraysbury	9.648	-	-	-	<b>9.648</b>	3.10
<b>Total (km)</b>	<b>243.737</b>	<b>31.461</b>	<b>8.568</b>	<b>27.246</b>	<b>311.012</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>9%</b>		

# OBJECTIVES

## Priorities for 2022/23

- Maintenance and enforcement: bring all public rights of way up to an acceptable standard for all users.
- Recognise and further develop the role public rights of way management can play in furthering the Council's Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- Encourage and support the involvement of volunteers in the maintenance and improvement of public rights of way.
- Equality of service: ensuring that the needs of all users, regardless of race, disability, sexuality, age and religion, are taken into account.
- Ensure that the Thames Path National Trail is consistently safe and easy to use by all members of the public.
- Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk.
- Partnership working with all interested parties in the management of public rights of way, (e.g. Local Access Forum, Parish Councils, Civic Societies, residents' associations, user groups and landowners, neighbouring local authorities, 'Wilds' groups across the borough)
- Changes to the network: seek improvements in association with development and other proposals.
- Improvements: seek improvements and additions to the network to enhance connectivity for horse riders, cyclists and people with restricted mobility.
- *Explore opportunities to extend, create or promote safe, properly surfaced and well-maintained Multi-user Routes*
- Ensure effective early consultation with interested parties on proposed changes to the network, in accordance with government regulations, circulars and codes of practice.
- Liaise with landowners and occupiers on all public rights of way matters, including updating and advising landowners on changes in legislation and encouraging the establishment of permitted routes.
- Maximise the use of recycled and reused materials in rights of way maintenance where practicable.
- *Develop and enhance the information available online for public rights of way, including compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and the use of social media where appropriate.*
- *Respond to reported fly-tipping on public rights of way promptly and efficiently and work with landowners to prevent or deter fly-tipping.*
- *Investigate including destinations and distances where new signage is installed where appropriate.*
- Accessibility
  - Aim to establish a network of urban, semi-urban and highly used footpaths to be reasonably accessible for people with disabilities, older people and parents/ carers with young children.
  - The initial 6 localities to be surveyed are Battlemead Common, The Green Way, Ockwells Park & Thriftwood, Cock Marsh, Boulters Lock and the Thames at Old Windsor.
  - Recommendations from the annual footpath surveys to be considered for inclusion in the annual Milestones Statement and Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
  - Investigate best practice with path surface materials that enable people with disabilities to use public rights of way and other footpaths. Use the results to develop a list of suitable surfaces and the circumstances in which they might appropriately be used.
  - Adopt the signage and information approach used by South Downs National Park for all online and hard copy maps of green spaces and accessible walks/routes; access for all/many/some; mapping symbols include gradients/resting places/access controls; standard information templates.
  - Consider the needs of people with disabilities in all footpath design and improvement programmes. Key aspects to consider: access of the route/site; appropriate footpath surfaces and width; removal of access barriers; resting places; connections with other footpaths/green spaces and transport (parking, bus stops); signage and information.

Develop a footpath survey template for use in areas where access for all or some routes are considered feasible. It should include the following elements: surfaces, gradients and condition; obstacles (access barriers, stiles, gates, steps); hazards (tree roots, overhanging or intrusive vegetation, barbed wire); signage and information; resting places.

***The outcome of this study to be used to inform surveys of other localities throughout the borough.***

### **Milestones Targets for 2022/23**

#### **Well Maintained**

**WM 1:** To ensure that all public rights of way are easy to use by members of the public. (This is based on the former ‘Best Value Performance Indicator’ for public rights of way). Target for 2021/22 is **95%**.

**WM 2:** To carry out major surface improvements/vegetation clearance on **10** public rights of way.

**WM 3:** To repair or replace **7** bridges.

#### **Well Publicised**

**WP 1:** To produce **1** new Parish rights of way leaflet, including availability on-line.

**WP 2:** To assist others to produce effective promotional material: a minimum of **1** new or updated publication, including availability on-line.

#### **Improving Access and Connectivity**

**AC 1:** Create **1** new strategic path, either public right of way or permitted path (*in partnership with landowners*), to fill identified gaps in the public rights of way network, as/when opportunities arise.

**AC2:** *To make 10 physical access improvements, including the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps, to facilitate use by people with disabilities, the elderly, people with pushchairs etc. and provide appropriate information to users.*

**Note:** *the above targets are ‘subject to funding’, and subject to change should the need arise. This will ensure flexibility considering changing circumstances, for example to take advantage of opportunities that may arise during the course of the year, discussions with landowners, funding sources for specific projects etc.*

### ***2.3 Equal opportunities***

The Council continues to seek improvements to public rights of way to enable use by a wide range of people with sensory or physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

The Council supports the establishment of routes suitable for use by disabled people, in consultation with the Local Access Forum and the Disability and Inclusion Forum.

The Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan and annual Milestones Targets include a number of policies and proposals aimed at improving access for people with special needs.

### ***2.4 Parish Paths Initiative***

The Parish Paths Initiative (PPI) works with Parish and Town Council’s to identify or carry out maintenance, improvement, or promotional works on local path networks. All Parish Councils in the Borough and Eton Town Council participate in the PPI scheme.

Additionally, two Parish Councils (Cookham and Old Windsor) undertake routine vegetation clearance on the public rights of way networks in their area.

The British Horse Society, East Berks Ramblers and National Trust are also members of the Parish Paths Initiative. The scheme operates a rolling condition survey of all public rights of way in the borough, carried out in partnership with the East Berks Ramblers.

During 2021/22 projects carried out by the PPI included the reprint of a Hurley walks leaflet, improvements to bridge approaches in Bray, improved signage in Bisham, surface improvements in Sunninghill, and further work on a new Wraysbury walks leaflet.

### ***2.5 Local Access Forum***

The Local Access Forum is “*a partnership to promote and develop sustainable access for the growing benefit of the environment and all in our community*”. Established in 2003, the Forum is statutory advisory group which advises the Council on the management and improvement of public access to land in the Royal Borough for open-air recreation.

In 2019 the Forum established two working groups to focus on significant hot topics to investigate in detail and feedback to the main Forum. These are: the Accessibility Working Group and the Horse Riding/Multi-User Working Group. These groups

continued to work with the public rights of way team throughout 2021.

The Forum publishes an annual report detailing its activities. Forum membership details, agendas, minutes, and annual reports are available on the Local Access Forum pages of the borough website:

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/rights-way/local-access-forums>

## **2.6 *Thames Path National Trail***

Natural England promotes the Thames Path as one of 13 National Trails in England.

The Thames Path passes through Hurley, Cookham, Maidenhead, Eton, Windsor, Datchet and Old Windsor, where possible following the course of the river. In places the Trail crosses the Thames to follow the Buckinghamshire side of the river.

The Royal Borough recognises both the national and local importance of the Thames Path and is represented on the Thames Path Partnership, which also includes representatives from all Highway Authorities along the route of the Trail, as well as the River Thames Society, the Environment Agency, the Ramblers, Cycling UK, Transport for London, and Natural England.

Volunteers organised by the Thames Path Partnership regularly monitor the condition of the Trail and undertake practical maintenance works. Information about the Trail can be found on the following website:

<http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/thames-path>

## **2.7 *Equestrian initiatives***

- Investigating possible upgrading of existing footpaths to bridleways, by negotiating with landowners and user groups, to improve road safety for horses and riders while considering the needs of other users. All negotiations must have clear resolutions and ensure that all users are satisfied with any changes to the status of the footpath(s) before modifications take place, including adequate width and, where appropriate, segregation of users.
- Continuing with an initiative to designate highway verges as horse margins by identifying suitable areas adjacent to the

carriageways and adapting the maintenance of highway verges to enable safe use by horse riders. As an example, a new horse margin has been created adjacent to the Henley Road, to create a safe riding link between Rose Lane and Hodgedale Lane and the path continues to be well used by horse riders as well as walkers.

- Continuing to work with the Local Access Forum to identify and establish multi-use paths to allow horse riders to use existing cycleways and other tracks where appropriate, and where suitable surfaces can be provided, in conjunction with landowners.
- Development and promotion of circular riding routes where appropriate, avoiding main roads and busy crossings where possible. This includes investigation into possible routes through and around Ashley Hill, Hurley
- Improvements to gates to make them more 'horse rider friendly'.

## 3 WELL MAINTAINED

Service standards, including British Standards for path furniture, are set out on page 17 of this Milestones Statement.

### 3.1 *Maintenance and Enforcement*

Path condition surveys are carried out on a 3-year rolling programme, with approximately 1/3 of the network being surveyed each year. Volunteers from the East Berks Ramblers carry out these surveys on the Council's behalf.

During these surveys the volunteers also check whether problems that had previously been reported and entered onto the Council's rights of way database have since been resolved, and this helps to keep the records up to date.

Priority criteria for dealing with maintenance and enforcement problems are listed on page 16 of this Milestones Statement.

The table in **Appendix 9** includes a list of outstanding reported problems on public rights of way in the borough

### 3.2 *Noteworthy current issues*

- Improvements to the Thames Path National Trail
- Multi-user and horse-riding provision – to aid the most vulnerable road users
- Accessibility to open spaces for people with mobility issues.

### 3.3 *Access for people with special needs*

When dealing with the provision of stiles and gates, an assessment is made to ensure that the appropriate type of barrier is used, and that wherever possible gaps are used rather than stiles or gates.

The Council places high priority on the use of effective designs of barrier to facilitate use by those with restricted mobility, the elderly, people with young children in pushchairs etc.



## 4 LEGALLY DEFINED

### 4.1 *Definitive Map and Statement*

The Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way are legal documents that provide conclusive evidence of the existence and status of public rights of way. It is therefore important that these documents are kept up to date and accurate.

The Map and Statement was last updated in 2015 (effective date 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015) including all legal changes made since the previous consolidated Map was published in 2008. Subsequent changes are recorded by means of 'Definitive Map Modification Orders'.

The Definitive Map and Statement and can be viewed on the borough website.

Copies are also held by user groups and relevant extracts are held by Parish Councils.

### 4.2 *Modification Orders*

Definitive Map Modification Orders are made to update the definitive map, to show the effect of legal changes to public rights of way. Copies of the Orders are sent to all those who hold copies of the Definitive Map and Statement, so that up to date information is available

### 4.3 *Rights of way database*

The Definitive Map is shown on the Council's GIS system. The Council also maintains a comprehensive public rights of way database, the Countryside Access Management System (CAMS). Information is held on path maintenance records, condition surveys, reported problems, landownership details, and path furniture such as stiles, gates, bridges and signposts.

These electronic records enable the rights of way officers to record and prioritise problems and respond to public requests for information quickly and effectively.

### 4.4 *Applications to modify the Definitive Map (claims)*

There are no outstanding applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO's)

A statement of priorities for dealing with applications for DMMOs is shown in Appendix 2.

### 4.5 *Changes to the network*

Applications for changes to the network are occasionally received from landowners or developers and can also be initiated by the Council where changes are in the public interest.

Planning applications are checked by planning officers who consult the Public Rights of Way team and also the East Berks Ramblers on applications that may affect public rights of way. The Local Access Forum is also consulted on planning applications affecting public rights of way.

Where appropriate, conditions and informatives are then included in planning consents.

Following a recommendation from the Local Access Forum, "Planning Position Statements" have been passed to the Council's Planning team as set out in **Appendix 8**.

## 5 WELL PUBLICISED

### 5.1 Leaflets produced by the Council

- Public Rights of Way information booklet (*for landowners and path users*)
- Public Rights of Way and your Gardens, Hedges and Trees (*information leaflet for householders adjacent to rights of way*)
- Ploughing, crops and paths: a practical guide (*information leaflet for farmers and landowners*)
- The Green Way
- Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit
- Cookham Bridleway Circuit
- Cycling in Windsor and Maidenhead
- Cookham Easy Going Route
- Windsor Great Park Easy Going Route

*All the above leaflets are available from the Borough Council free of charge.*

*These leaflets are currently being converted into a more web and printer-friendly version to make them easier for people to access online.*

### 5.2 Other books and publications

Sunningdale, Bray, Datchet, Waltham St Lawrence, White Waltham and Hurley Parish Councils have all produced their own walks leaflets, with help from the Borough Council through the Parish Paths Initiative:

- “Walk, discover, enjoy - your Sunningdale” (Sunningdale Parish Council)
- “Parish Millennium Rights of Way Map” (Bray Parish Council)
- Holyport health walk (Bray Parish Council)
- “Foot and Cycle Paths in and around Datchet” (Datchet Parish Council)
- Waltham St Lawrence Parish Paths and Circular Walks (Waltham St Lawrence Parish Council)
- White Waltham Parish and Paths (White Waltham Parish Council)

- Hurley Circular Walks (Hurley Parish Council).

*The above leaflets are available from the Parish Councils free of charge.*

The Environment Agency has published a leaflet showing the paths along the Jubilee River (*available from the EA 08708 506506*)

The East Berks Ramblers, the British Horse Society, Sustrans and commercial publishers have produced a number of leaflets, booklets and books promoting routes along public rights of way locally, including the Thames Path National Trail.

### 5.3 Guided walks and rides

Guided walks and rides encourage the public to enjoy the countryside. The Ramblers organize a programme of walks for its members and the general public, and the British Horse Society organize various rides and events using the boroughs public rights of way and minor roads network.

### 5.4 Borough Website

The Borough’s Public Rights of Way web pages can be accessed directly at

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/rights-way>

The web pages contain detailed information including publications, report forms, and maps of all public rights of way in the borough.

Public rights of way are also shown on the ‘Neighbourhood Maps’ on the borough website.

The web pages also include Registers of applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO’s), and landowner’s statutory declarations, together with application forms and guidance notes for path diversion orders.



## 6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

### 6.1 *Monitoring/Performance indicator*

The following ‘performance indicator’ which provides a useful benchmark for assessing the condition of the network:

**“The percentage of the total length of footpaths and other rights of way which were easy to use by members of the public”**

The indicator is calculated using a methodology originally devised by the County Surveyors Society and is widely adopted by Highway Authorities to enable benchmarking between individual authorities’ performance.

The borough’s indicator is based on information obtained from condition surveys undertaken by volunteers from the East Berks Ramblers, and the indicator result for the borough in 2021/22 was **90.7%** (against a target of **95%**).

### 6.2 *Review*

The Council is committed to working with all interested parties in carrying out public rights of way work in the borough.

This Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan will continue be reviewed and published annually, and the Milestones Targets will be discussed with the Local Access Forum, and Parish/Town Council’s so that co-ordinated priorities can be adopted.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Consultation on the Milestones Statement**

The following organisations were consulted on the 2022/23 Milestones Statement

- Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel
- All Parish and Town Councils in the borough
- The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum, which includes members of the following organisations:
  - East Berks Ramblers
  - British Horse Society
  - Disability and Inclusion Forum
  - Royal East Berks Agricultural Association
  - National Trust
  - National Farmers Union

## APPENDIX 2

### **Statement of priorities for dealing with applications to amend the Definitive Map**

The Council aims to process uncontested applications for Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders (claims) within 1 year of receipt.

Applications for Orders to amend the Definitive Map and Statement (claims) will be prioritised based on the following factors:

Highest Priority: Closure very likely (e.g. area subject to planning application).

Path currently blocked by planting, fencing etc. which could be removed.

Path currently blocked by permanent structure e.g. building.

Possible threat to path, and/or partial blocking likely.

Lowest Priority: No recognised threat, and route useable by the public.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Statement of priorities for dealing with maintenance and enforcement problems**

Maintenance and enforcement problems will be prioritised on the basis of the following factors:

Safety of users

Level of usage

Extent of obstruction of definitive line (i.e. completely obstructed or partially obstructed)

Benefit to public once resolved

Cost/time effectiveness in resolving problem

Number/level of complaints

Potential for deterioration of the problem

Age of the problem

Note: for efficient working practice, lower priority problems will be dealt with alongside higher priority problems where appropriate, for example if they are in the same locality or involve the same landowner. Lower priority problems will also be tackled as required in order to meet specific targets.

## APPENDIX 4

### Service standards

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has the following key aims in relation to public rights of way:

- To ensure that the borough's public rights of way network is properly maintained and well publicised
- To ensure that public rights of way are safeguarded and enhanced
- To help landowners and users to understand their responsibilities and rights
- To consult and work with interested parties to achieve the provision of a well-maintained and signed network of public rights of way

#### We will liaise with and involve:

- Local Access Forum
- All Parish Councils and Eton Town Council
- *Disability & Inclusion Forum*
- Natural England
- East Berks Ramblers
- Disabled Ramblers
- British Horse Society
- British Driving Society
- Cyclists' Touring Club
- Sustrans
- Vehicle User Groups
- National Farmers' Union
- Country Land & Business Association
- Thames Path Management Group
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- *'Wilds' groups and other environmental groups across the borough*
- *Volunteer groups such as: The Conservation Volunteers, Good Gym, BCA volunteers*
- Any other interested parties

**We will comply with British Standards** on all new structures and furniture, and where possible, upon replacement of existing structures or furniture. *BS 5709:2018* gaps, gates and stiles; order of preference; a) gap, b) gate, c) kissing gate, d) stile. Barbed wire, razor wire, farm type electrical fences and suchlike should not normally be used in the vicinity of structures covered by this standard, but where these wires are necessary then assessment should be made of the effect they have on the safety and convenience of people in the vicinity. A condensed version of *BS 5709:2018* produced by the Pittcroft Trust is available on request from the public rights of way team. *BS 8300-1:2018 contains some standards relevant to recreational use of land.*

#### We will carry out:

- A condition survey of each path every three years based on a rolling programme of six-monthly surveys (in partnership with East Berks Ramblers Association).
- An inspection of rights of way in a dangerous condition within one working day of notification, make safe within one working day of inspection, and inform correspondents of the results within three working days.

**We will use our powers:**

- To enforce removal of any obstructions to the public rights of way network within three months of inspection, enforce compliance with the Rights of Way Act 1990 (ploughing etc) in accordance with the Council's Ploughing and Cropping procedure below, and give consideration to all available statutory powers including prosecutions where appropriate.

**Ploughing and cropping procedure:**

1. Make first contact with farmer via telephone and email (with a read receipt) to explain the report or issue. This telephone call and email should agree the date with the farmer for the resolution of the issue based upon the statutory 14-day deadline. Explain that if the works are not done by this deadline the issue will be reported to the Rural Payments Agency.
2. Take the 14-day deadline from the date that the farmer is first contacted by the Council. Where necessary, agree an extension of this deadline for up to 28 days, for example where ground conditions do not allow proper reinstatement within the normal 14-day period.
3. Request the farmer to contact RBWM when the reinstatement works have been done, if possible, providing photographic evidence. If the agreed deadline has not been met, the breach of regulations should then be reported to the Rural Payments Agency.
4. If the path has not been cleared and the path reinstated by the stated deadline the Council to arrange for a contractor to clear the path and reinstate the surface (as required) and the cost of these works is re-charged to the farmer. This issue is then closed.

***We will publish an updated consolidated 'Definitive Map and Statement' in 2025 (consolidating the current edition which was published in 2015)***

## APPENDIX 5

### Definitive map modification order applications (claims) currently being investigated

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	Path description		Current status
			From	To	
No current claims					No current claims

## APPENDIX 6

### Achievement of Milestones Targets 2021/22 (March 2022)

<p><b>WM1</b> To ensure that all public rights of way are easy to use by members of the public (based on methodology from former Best Value Performance Indicator 178). Target for 2021/22: <b>95%</b></p>	<p>[note surveys undertaken in Spring and Autumn by East Berks Ramblers]          Spring survey result: 89.2%          Autumn survey result: 92.2%          Combined annual result: <b>90.7%</b></p>
<p><b>WM2</b> To carry out major surface improvements or vegetation clearance on <b>10</b> public rights of way. (FP =footpath, BR = bridleway, RB = restricted byway)</p>	
<p>Bray FP61 (off Oakley Green Road)</p>	<p>Removal of trip hazards</p>
<p>Datchet FP 5 (off Montagu Road)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Cookham FP 48 (The Green Way)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Cookham FP55 (Thames Path)</p>	<p>Removal of remains of old metal fencing stubs from footpath</p>
<p>Hurley RB 57 (off Bath Road)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Hurley RB 58 (Green Lane)</p>	<p>Surface repairs</p>
<p>Maidenhead FP 9 (Thames Path)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Maidenhead FP 16 (The Green Way)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Maidenhead FP 19 (The Green Way)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Maidenhead RB 70 (Malders Lane)</p>	<p>Surface improvements</p>
<p>Sunninghill RB 21 (Hodge Lane)</p>	<p>Surface repairs</p>
	<p><b>Total: 11</b></p>
<p><b>WM3</b> To repair or replace <b>7</b> bridges.</p>	
<p>Bray FP16 (off Blackbird Lane)</p>	<p>Bridge replacement</p>
<p>Bray FP 24 (off Drift Road)</p>	<p>Bridge replacement</p>
<p>Bray FP 57 (off Oakley Green Road)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
<p>Margaret's Bridge (Braywick Park to Oldfield School)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
<p>Cookham FP 48 (The Green Way)</p>	<p>Repairs to decking</p>
<p>Datchet FP 9 (Thames Path)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
<p>Waltham St Lawrence FP 38 (off Smewins Road)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
<p>Waltham St Lawrence FP 31 (off Pool Lane)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
<p>Waltham St Lawrence FP 34 (off Hungerford Lane)</p>	<p>Bridge repairs</p>
	<p><b>Total: 9</b></p>



<b>WELL PUBLICISED</b>	
<b>WP1</b> <i>To produce 1 new Parish rights of way leaflet</i> Wraysbury Parish leaflet (currently being finalised)	<b>Total: 1</b> (in preparation)
<b>WP2</b> <i>To assist others to produce effective promotional material: minimum of 1 new or updated publication.</i> Eton Town Council and Hurley Parish Council – walk leaflets updated	<b>Total: 2</b>
<b>IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY</b>	
<b>AC1</b> <i>Create 1 new strategic path, either public right of way or permitted path (in partnership with landowners), to fill identified gaps in the public rights of way network as/when opportunities arise.</i> Water Oakley Quarry- new circular walk around perimeter of the quarry, off Windsor Road, Bray	<b>Total: 1</b>
<b>AC2</b> <i>To make 10 physical access improvements, including the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps, to facilitate use by people with disabilities, the elderly, people with pushchairs etc.</i>	
Bisham BR 2 (off Gibraltar Lane)	Safety signage installed
Bisham FP 21 (off Temple Lane)	Safety signage installed
Bray FP 72 (the Causeway)	Bridge repair access improvement
Datchet FP 10 (off Windsor Road)	Repair of the sleeper steps
Hurley FP 17 (Prospect Hill)	Repair handrail & steps
Hurley FP 29 boardwalk (off Bath Road)	Boardwalk repairs
Maidenhead FP 6 (Town Moor)	Bridge repair access improvement
Maidenhead FP 48 (The Green Way)	Ramps installed at both ends of bridge and across road cobbles
Maidenhead FP 80 (The Green Way)	Repairs to steps and handrails
Maidenhead FP 80 (The Green Way)	Removal of width restriction barriers to facilitate disabled access
	<b>Total: 10</b>

## APPENDIX 7

### Site specific projects in “Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026

#### Hurley, Shottesbrooke & the Walthams

Ref	Proposal (not in priority order)
1	Work with Wokingham Borough Council to secure a new off-road horse-riding link between Star Lane (Hurley) and Canhurst Lane by upgrading Wargrave Footpath 42
2	A crossing over the Thames across Hurley Lock and weirs
3	Upgrade White Waltham Footpath 9/National Cycle Route 4 to permitted bridleway. <i>(April 2015 update: the landowner has declined a proposal to create this new pedestrian link: however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
4	(a) New route along the Cut from Bray Wick upstream to Westleymill on the Bracknell Forest boundary  <i>(March 2019 update: new section of streamside footpath has been included within layout of Ockwells Park/Thriftwood, Cox Green)</i>  (b) Establish a new path from Windmills (White Waltham Footpath 20) to Howe Lane near Howe Lane Bridge
5	Work with Wokingham Borough Council to upgrade Waltham St. Lawrence Footpath 9 / Ruscombe Footpath 4 for horse riding use
6	Creation of a path from Great Wood, White Waltham, south of the B3024 road to the track at Pond Wood Farm
7	Create a route for carriage drivers from Beenhams Road in White Waltham to Mare Lane in Binfield.
8	Improve bridleway links between RBWM and identified horse riding networks in Wokingham and Bracknell Forest
9	Direct crossings over/under the M4 avoiding the use of road bridges

#### Cookham & Bisham

10	Create a new bridleway/horse margin connecting the end of Hurley Lane with the eastern end of Bradenham Lane using existing highway land alongside the A404 northbound carriageway: <i>(March 2020 update: route opened in Dec 2019, in conjunction with Highways England)</i>
11	Create a new right of way for non-motorised users linking Burchetts Green Roundabout to Permitted Bridleway 20, following the route of the A404 on its western side <i>(June 2015 update: proposal not supported by landowners, Temple Golf Club)</i>
12	Create a link between Bisham Bridleway 22 and the A404 tunnel at Dungrove Hill Lane

	<i>(March 2014 update: the landowner has declined a proposal to create this new link: however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
13	Upgrade Bisham Footpath 19 (Michael's Path) to a bridleway and divert the path to adjoin the disused Henley Road. <i>(March 2018 update: the landowner has declined a proposal to upgrade this footpath, however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
14	Improve links between Bisham and Bisham Woods for non-motorised traffic, particularly regarding crossing the A404 Bisham Roundabout. <i>(February 2016 update: Highways England have decided not to proceed with the proposed alterations to this roundabout, however they are keeping the junction performance under review to identify whether small scale improvements can be made.)</i>
15	Extend the southern end of Bisham Bridleway 22 to connect with Dungrove Hill Lane
16	Upgrade part of Bisham Footpath 17 to a Bridleway
17	Upgrade Bisham Footpath 23 to a bridleway, to link Burchetts Green to Stubbings and Maidenhead Thicket <i>(March 2018 update: the landowner has declined a proposal to upgrade this footpath, however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
18	Create a cycling route between Hurley and Temple (a) Create a route adjacent to Bisham Footpath 21 to allow cycle use  (b) Upgrade part of Bisham Footpath 21 and Hurley Footpath 9 to allow cycle use and link with Mill Lane
19	Improve the surface of Bisham Restricted Byway 11 and Bisham Bridleway 12  <i>(March 2017 update: surface improvements completed)</i>
20	Route from Mill Lane to Odney Road, Cookham – perhaps across Odney Common <i>(March 2009 update: the landowner has declined a proposal to create this new pedestrian link: however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
21	Access improvements at Cookham Lock to provide high degree of accessibility to the site.
22	Upgrade Kennel Lane (Cookham Footpath 22) to a bridleway <i>(March 2009 update: one of the affected landowners has declined a proposal to upgrade this footpath to bridleway: however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
23	Crossings over the Thames:  (a) from Hythe End to south bank avoiding M25  (b) from Magna Carta Island to north bank  (c) from Wraysbury riverside to Old Windsor  (d) from Ham Island to Sunnymeads

	<p>(e) from Datchet centre to Home Park</p> <p>(f) from north side of Eton to south bank</p> <p>(g) from Windsor near Slough railway bridge to north bank</p> <p>(h) from west side of Windsor (A308) to north bank</p> <p>(i) from Bray village to east bank</p> <p>(j) from west bank to southern tip of National Trust Cliveden Park</p> <p>(k) upstream of Maidenhead where towpath crosses to Bucks bank</p> <p>(l) near Cookham Lock where towpath crosses back again</p> <p>(m) from south side of Cookham bridge to towpath on Lock Cut</p> <p>(n) from Spade Oak Farm to south bank</p> <p>(o) downstream of A404 bridge</p> <p>(p) at Bisham Church</p> <p>(q) from south bank to Medmenham</p>
124	<b><i>(added for 2022/23: investigate creation of horse margin adjacent to the shared use cycle way on Switchback Road North. This would create a multi-user route and safe link for horse riders from Cookham village to the Cookham Bridle Circuit at Malder's Lane)</i></b>

#### Maidenhead & Cox Green

24	<p>Fill in missing links on the "Millennium Walk" from Hurley to Maidenhead Riverside / Cliveden Reach connecting to the Thames Path by securing a path from:</p> <p>(a) Nightingale Lane to the Green Way, subject to rail crossing provision</p> <p>(b) Lower Cookham Road at Widbrook Common to the Thames Path.</p> <p><i>(March 2014 update): Discussions are being held with the landowners about the proposed new footpath.</i></p> <p><i>(March 2015 update): the landowners have declined to agree the creation of a new footpath across this land; however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened).</i></p> <p><i>(March 2020 update: new footpath created across "Battlemead Common" to complete missing link)</i></p>
25	<p>Create the following paths from the 1999 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan:</p> <p>(a) a path from Lower Cookham Road at Widbrook Common to the Thames Path</p> <p><i>(March 2020 update: new footpath created across "Battlemead Common" to complete missing link)</i></p>

	<p>(b) a route from the Causeway at Braywick Park to Old Mill Lane via Bray Bridge</p> <p>(c) make the Green Way accessible to mobility restricted users</p> <p><i>(March 2014 update: upgrades to footbridges on Cookham FP 48 to enable disabled access: works ordered)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2015 update: improvements to gates at National Trust land, and stepped footbridge replaced with step-free accessible bridge)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2015 update: steps south of Chapel Arches replaced with a ramp, in association with redevelopment at former cinema site)</i></p>
26	<p>To establish a continuous riverside route of the Thames Path in Maidenhead beside the riverbank from the landing steps opposite Thames Hotel to Bridge Gardens</p> <p><i>(March 2010 update: the footpath opposite the Thames Hotel was extended in 2007, however a gap of approximately 30m remains in order to complete the link to Bridge Gardens)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2011 update: funding options for completing the remaining section of missing link are being explored in discussion with the Ramblers)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2015 update: Path Creation Agreement secured, and new roadside footpath opened north of Bridge Gardens)</i></p>
27	<p>A footbridge from Boulter’s Island to east bank of the Thames, which would link the Thames Path and Jubilee River, and the walks in Taplow</p> <p><i>(March 2013 update: a new footbridge across the Thames at Boulters Lock is included in a Draft Development Brief for the Mill Lane, Taplow site produced by South Bucks District Council)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2015 update: new footbridge design agreed, subject to redevelopment proposal on east side of the river being approved by South Bucks District Council)</i></p> <p><i>(March 2019 update: new footbridge opened from Ray Mill Island/Boulters Lock to Taplow Riverside”)</i></p>
28	<p>Create a new foot/cycle bridge across the Cut and new footpath-cycleway linking Braywick Park to Bray Road adjacent to Oldfield Primary School</p> <p><i>(March 2019 update: new bridge and footpath-cycle way opened September 2018, named “Margaret’s Bridge” in memory of Margaret Bowdery MBE)</i></p>
29	<p>(a) Upgrade Kinghorn Lane (Maidenhead Footpath 30) to a cycle route</p> <p>(b) <i>March 2009 addition:</i> Reinstate the definitive width of Kinghorn Lane (Maidenhead FP 30) to provide segregated route for cyclists</p>
30	<p>Create a continuous streamside footpath around “The Maidenhead Ring”, including the Moor Cut and The Green Way, in association with the Maidenhead Waterways project</p>
31	<p>Upgrading Thames Path to allow cyclists to share route</p>
125	<p><b><i>(added for 2022/23: explore, in discussions with the Parish Council and Local Access Forum the possibility of creating permissive horse-riding access at Thriftwood extension to Ockwells Park).</i></b></p>

## Bray, Windsor and Eton

32	An extension of the Green Way from Hibbert Road in Braywick to the River Thames at Summerleaze Bridge to provide a traffic free route for walkers, cyclists and disabled users.
33	Promote a circular route around Bray village, and around the old Biffa pits
34	Improve bridleway links between Eton, Dorney and Bray working with Bucks County Council and other neighbouring authorities.
35	A riverside path should be created in parallel to the Thames Path on the opposite side of the river
36	A route from Bray to Windsor, past Bray Film Studios
37	Create a circular route around Eton and the Boveney area for mobility restricted users <i>(March 2012 update): surface improvements carried out to paths in this area in conjunction with access to Eton-Dorney Lake for the 2012 Olympics, facilitating use by mobility restricted users.</i>
38	Expand the multi-user routes in Eton to surrounding areas and link with other bridleway routes. <i>(March 2017 update: Discussions with landowners to allow horse riding use of the Jubilee River cycleway. At present permission has not been granted due to concerns about path width and potential issues at M4 underpass)</i>
39	Create of a path between Sutherland Grange public open space, via the rear of the Centrica complex, and the access road to the Racecourse Marina
40	Secure a Public Right of Way or permitted link at end of Bridleway 11a Windsor, and a new footway along Winkfield Road to create a circular walk
41	Crossings over the Thames to link villages /settlements on either bank with paths on the other, and to link isolated bits of the old towpath

## Datchet, Horton, Old Windsor & Wraysbury

42	Access around the Queen Mother reservoir, Datchet <i>(March 2011 update): The landowner has declined to agree the creation of a new footpath across this land; however, if circumstances change this project could be re-opened</i>
43	Improve and ensure long term accessibility (including possible bank repair / diversion) Datchet Footpath 8 <i>(March 2009 update: handrails installed by landowner in 2008)</i> <i>(March 2015 update: discussion with landowner about potential for widening the footpath)</i> <i>(March 2016 update: landowner has declined to widen the path, bank repair improvements completed to secure the riverbank)</i>
44	Thames side paths:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) along the banks of Ham Island</li> <li>(b) south bank of Thames from Home Park</li> <li>(c) along the shores of the big islands downstream of Cookham (<i>Cookham Parish</i>)</li> <li>(d) south bank between Bisham and Temple (<i>Bisham Parish</i>)</li> </ul>
45	<p>Create the following paths from the 1981 Horton, Datchet and Wraysbury Local Plan, depending on the working arrangements with the landowner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) footpath from Datchet Footpath 7 southwest around the Queen Mother Reservoir, over the Horton Road (B376) to the railway line</li> <li>(b) footpath from Datchet Footpath 5 running southeast on the northern side of the railway line to Datchet Footpath 6</li> <li>(c) footpath along northern side of the Thames from Albert Bridge linking with Datchet Footpath 6</li> <li>(d) footpath from Welley Road, Wraysbury along southern side of the railway line to Wraysbury Footpath 6</li> <li>(e) footpath from Park Avenue, Wraysbury to Kingswood Creek</li> <li>(f) footpath from northern end of Douglas Lane (at termination of Wraysbury Footpath 6) to The Green</li> <li>(g) footpath running from High Street car park in Wraysbury, around southern part of lakes parallel to Staines Road to Staines Road near termination of Wraysbury Footpath 4</li> <li>(h) footpath running from Horton Footpath 3 around northern part of lakes to Stanwell Road</li> <li>(i) footpath from Station Road, Wraysbury, to Stanwell Road running along the western bank of the Colne Brook.</li> <li>(j) footpath from Hythe End Lane to southern end of Ferry Lane (Wraysbury Footpath 3)</li> <li>(k) bridleway from Embankment to Magna Carta Lane in Wraysbury</li> <li>(l) bridleway from Horton Road, alongside the Queen Mother Reservoir to Majors Farm Road (B370)</li> <li>(m) Footpath from Kingswood Creek to Old Ferry Drive</li> <li>(n) Footpath from Stanwell Road, northeast along Mill Lane, running east along the Colne Brook.</li> </ul>
46	New route along the Colne Brook

Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale

47	Disabled friendly routes should be investigated at Eton, Sunninghill and Ascot, Sunningdale, Knowl Hill, White Waltham and Hurley Lock  <i>(December 2015 update: replacement of stepped footbridge west of Hurley Lock completed)</i> <i>(March 2015 update: surface improvements at St Georges Lane and Wells Lane)</i>
48	Extend Sunningdale Footpath 13 through to Sunninghill <i>(March 2009 update: feasibility studies have indicated that this project is not viable, however if circumstances change this project could be re-opened)</i>
49	Create a path from Ascot Station westwards parallel to the railway line to Kings Ride <i>(March 2007 update: Network Rail are unwilling to consider this proposed footpath creation)</i>
50	New footpath between Ascot High Street and Ascot Rail Station. <i>(March 2017 update: Path Creation Order confirmed, and path opened 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017)</i>
51	New footpath or cycle route from Ascot Centre to Ascot Rail Station
52	New footpath from St Georges Lane to Ascot Rail Station
53	New footpath or cycle route from Heatherwood Hospital to Prince Albert Drive
54	New footpath or cycle route between Prince Albert Drive and Ascot High Street around Heatherwood Hospital
55	New footpath or cycle route linking Bridge Road to Kings Road
56	New footpath or cycle route from Cavendish Meads to railway line
57	New footpath from Farm Close to Upper Village Road
58	New footpath linking Allen's Field to Swinley Forest
59	New footpath from Coombe Lane to Victory Fields Recreation Ground
60	New cycle route from Ascot High Street east of Station Hill to South Ascot via the A330 viaduct
61	New cycle route alongside Winkfield Road from the entrance to Ascot Racecourse and Royal Ascot Golf Course to the junction of A330 and A329 London Road/Ascot High Street
62	New cycle route from A330 Winkfield Road alongside New Mile Road, Cheapside Road and Watersplash Lane to B383 Sunninghill Road
63	Upgrade Sunninghill Footpath 5 to a bridleway usable by cyclists
64	Upgrade Sunninghill Footpath 1 to a bridleway usable by cyclists
65	New footpath from Liddell Way to Whiteladies Park



66	New footpath or cycle route from Heatherwood Hospital to Ascot Rail Station
67	New footpath from North Ascot to Ascot High Street across Ascot racecourse and through tunnel
68	New footpath east of Ascot Racecourse alongside Winkfield Road
69	New footpath through Silwood Park from Sunninghill Footpath 2 to Buckhurst Road
70	New footpath along Mill Lane linking into Windsor Great Park
71	New footpath alongside Whitmore Lane linking Sunningdale Byway 4, Sunningdale Footpath 2 and A329 London Road
72	New footpath alongside railway between Beech Hill Road to Kings Road
73	New footpath or cycle route from Sunninghill to Charters School on the edge of the railway and around school sites
74	New footpath from Sunningdale Park parallel to Larch Avenue
75	New footpath from Sunningdale Park / Larch Avenue to Park Drive
76	New footpath within Sunningdale Park linking Silwood Road to Station Road
77	New footpath around Southern border of Sunninghill Park parallel to Park Drive
78	New footpath from Sunningdale Park to Station Road
79	New footpath from Sunningdale Footpath 1 to Windsor Great Park adjacent to London Road
80	New footpath or cycle route linking Beech Hill Road over railway line to Charters School
81	New footpath from Bagshot Road to Charters School along Broadlands Drive
82	New footpath from Sunning Avenue into Charters School
83	Record the existing path round Beaufort Gardens loop to Burleigh Lane
84	Record the existing path from Kings Ride west of Heatherwood Hospital to the railway line
85	Record the existing path between Vernon Drive and Ruston Way
86	Record the existing path around Allen's Field
87	Record the existing path around the woods off Allen's Field
88	Record the existing path from Woodlands Ride to Allen's Field
89	Record the existing path along pine tree ridge near Liddell Way
90	Record the existing path to the west of Allen's Field

91	Record the existing path From Carroll Crescent via Beaumont Court to adopted path onto Bouldish Farm Road
92	Record the existing path between Elizabeth Gardens and Brockenhurst Road
93	Record the existing path from Armitage Court through open land / woods off St Mary's Hill
94	Record the existing path through woodland north west of Coombe Lane
95	Record the existing footpath round woodland off Coombe Lane
96	Record the existing path from St George's Lane to Coombe Lane
97	Record the existing path from Coombe Lane to Victory Field through Tom Green's Field
98	Record the existing path around the woods off Allen's Field
99	Record the existing path between New Road and Kennel Ride
100	Record the existing path between Winkfield Road and Oaklands Drive
101	Record the existing path across Ascot Racecourse
102	Record the existing path behind Hilltop Close
103	Record the existing path south of Hilltop Close to Sunninghill Footpath 2
104	Record the existing path from Hilltop Close to Playground
105	Record the existing path from Park Drive to Sunningdale Park
106	Record the existing path from Queen's Road Car Park to High Street by Chapmans
107	Record the existing path through woodland adjacent to Blythewood recreation area
108	Record the existing path through protected woodland by Blythewood recreation area
109	Record the existing path to/from green on Hanover Estate
110	Record the existing path under Ascot station and to Lyndhurst Rd
111	Record the existing path between Sutherland Chase and Blythewood Lane
112	Record the existing path from Cross Rd into Sunningdale Golf Course
113	Record the existing path between the A30 and the RBWM Car Park
114	Record the existing path around RBWM car park at Sunningdale
115	Record the existing path between Priory Road and Richmond Road
116	Record the existing path between Ridgemount Road and Priory Road to the level crossing
117	Record the existing path between Cedar Drive and Sunningdale Footpath 13

118	Record the existing path through Broomhall Recreation Ground
119	Record the existing paths linking from Hamilton and Greenways Drives to London Road A30
120	Record the existing path through Sunningdale Park from Old Sunningdale via Silwood Rd to Sunninghill via Larch Avenue
121	Record the existing path through Sunningdale Park from Silwood Rd to Sunninghill or Sunningdale
122	Record the existing path from Dale Lodge Rd via Leacroft (west) to Coworth Rd
123	Record the existing path from Dale Lodge Rd via Leacroft (east) to Coworth Rd

## APPENDIX 8

### Planning Position Statements

#### Guiding Principles for Planning to improve local access

1. All new proposed development should refer and comply with the *Policy IF5 of Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside* while designing new access routes and paths.
2. All access should be consistent with the Borough's *Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026*.
3. All access improvements, routes, locks and POS should be dedicated as highway or protected legally in some way.
4. Access new developments should aim to provide accessibility to all and improve accessibility for disabled or elderly people and families with pushchairs.
5. All new access structures should comply with **BS 5709:2018** for gaps, gates & stiles, and all new routes should comply with *Environment Agency Access for All design guide* and RWBM ROWMIP.
6. On sites prone to flooding, paths need to be constructed with suitable permeable surface to ensure it can withstand and recover from a flood event.
7. If the path is a designated escape route it needs to be usable in the event of flooding and remain open at all times with suitable lighting for night-time use.
8. When considering fencing a path /route it should allow visual permeability and open views to create safe access route. The fencing should suitably blend into the character of the space without being detrimental to the aesthetics.
9. Boundaries should not be designed to deliberately curtail any views.
10. Paths should be wide enough with green verges so that they do not become narrow alleys. Footpaths should be wide enough to allow the use as cycle paths.
11. Enhancements should be sought through CIL contributions

**Note:** *Policy IF 5 “Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside”* is included in the Borough Local Plan 2013-2033, adopted by the Council on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, and this Policy incorporates the Borough's *“Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026”*.

The adopted Borough Local Plan also includes a Policy on open space, **Policy IF4 “Open Space”**

## APPENDIX 9

### Outstanding recorded problems on public rights of way at (March 2022)

Parish/Path number	Issue	Date reported
Bray FP 8 (Cresswells Farm)	Missing stile/furniture mid path. Obstructed by fence	29/11/21
Bray BR 22 (Long Lane)	Surface deterioration and ruts	10/10/21
Bray FP27 (off Gays Lane)	Widening sleeper bridge and replacing stile	22/06/21
Cookham FP55 (Thames Path)	Request to install bench	21/02/22
Eton FP4 (Jubilee river path)	Drainage issues	Ongoing
Eton BR 13 (off Haywards Mead)	Uneven surface reported on bridleway by the scout hut. Being investigated.	10/02/22
Hurley FP 61 and 62 (off Burchetts Green Lane)	Bicycle usage causing damage. Signage needed.	17/01/22
Maidenhead RB 72 (Nightingale Lane)	Ivy overgrowing from neighbouring property obstructing sightlines. Letter required.	10/02/22
Maidenhead FP80 (The Green Way and National Cycle Route 4)	Accessibility problems due to motorcycle barriers, reported by Sustrans.	25/11/21
Windsor FP10 and Old Windsor FP2 (Thames Path from Alberts Bridge)	Cyclists using FP illegally at speed. 'No Cycling' signs removed. New signage needed.	23/02/22

**Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
Public Rights of Way Team  
Place Directorate  
Town Hall, St Ives Road  
Maidenhead  
Berks SL6 1RF**

**If you require information in an alternative format, please contact the Public Rights of Way team at: [prow@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:prow@rbwm.gov.uk)**

## **Appendix B: consultation responses**

<b><u>Responses from Parish Councils</u></b>	<b>Officer comment, and/or suggested additional wording to be included in Milestones Statement</b>
<p><b><u>Bray Parish Council</u></b> Thank you for forwarding the Right of Ways Milestone Statement for 2022-23, this has been reviewed by the Land Management Committee for Bray Parish Council. They are pleased to note the works due to be completed in Bray this year, but have no further comments.</p>	Noted.
<p><b><u>Cookham Parish Council</u></b> For information, the Parish Council discussed the Milestones statement at our meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> February but had no comment to make.</p>	Noted.
<p><b><u>Horton Parish Council</u></b> Horton Parish Council would like to suggest that there is a milestone relating to working with landowners to prevent fly tipping on public rights of way and where measures haven't been a prevention or deterrent there is a clear plan in place to remove the fly tipping that is then enforced. Maybe a target to reduce the fly tipping reports on public rights of way by x%.</p>	<p>It is suggested that the following is added to the list of 'Objectives' in the Milestones Statement:</p> <p><i>Respond to reported fly-tipping on public rights of way promptly and efficiently and work with landowners to prevent or deter fly-tipping.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Hurley Parish Council</u></b> Hurley Parish Councillors, at their meeting on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February, made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors thanked the Rights of Way Team for the ongoing annual consultations, and also for the good works in and around the Parish Council area.</li> <li>• They observed that some works had been completed on FP1, adjacent to the Thames to Marlow, but considered that additional surfacing works, particularly where tree roots were exposed, could be beneficial.</li> <li>• They observed that FP59, from the river to Dairy Cottage, was particularly muddy and might benefit from further inspection.</li> </ul>	The team will liaise with the Parish Council on these points.
<p><b><u>Waltham St Lawrence Parish Council</u></b> It is an impressive report but what I miss and maybe we can obtain it is the survey report of</p>	

<p>our Parish rights of way and the priority identified.</p> <p>This regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access for disability</li> <li>• Environmental surface if needed, this can be coordinated with local tree surgeons and obtain their wood chips.</li> <li>• Which rights of way are allowed for horse riding.</li> <li>• Available signs and possible gate upgrades which the PC can obtain for potential installation.</li> <li>• Vegetation cutting and verge protection due to allowed traffic and according to that the approved weight limits.</li> </ul>	<p>The team will liaise with the Parish Council on these points.</p>
<p><b><u>Wraybury Parish Council</u></b></p> <p>In principle the Parish Council agrees with the aims of the document, but would like to see the previous <b>2021/22</b> target implemented: -</p> <p>The production of a leaflet covering the Public Rights of Way within and adjoining the Parish is finally achieved. The Parish Council would like to see the following included in the targets &amp; priorities for 2022/23: -</p> <p>a) The Parish Council still contends that Magna Carta Lane is a Public Right of Way, it does not appear as such on the current Definitive Map. Appropriate steps need to be taken to rectify the current Definitive Map. This Lane previously appeared as a Public Right of Way on both Buckinghamshire &amp; Berkshire County Council Definitive Maps. We do not want to see this lost.</p> <p>b) The Parish Council would like to see the Definitive Map updated to include the newer Public Footpaths with the Thames Field. They have now been official paths for a few years.</p>	<p>The team is working with the Parish Council on this leaflet, which we aim to publish by the end of March 2022.</p> <p>a) The team has a procedure in place for processing 'Definitive Map Modification Order' (DMMO) applications, also known as 'claimed' public rights of way. The 'Milestones Statement' includes a target to process all DMMO applications within one year of receipt of the application. DMMO applications can be based on documentary evidence, user evidence or a combination of both.</p> <p>b) The Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way' (DMS) is updated on a continuous basis, as and when changes are made, such as confirmation of Diversion Orders or 'Definitive Map Modification Orders' (DMMOs). The Thames Field DMMO's were confirmed on 19th July 2018, following the Public Inquiry, so from that</p>



<p>c) There should be a priority shown for an update to the Definitive Maps, so that the public can clearly see where the Public Rights of Way are and what their status is.</p> <p>d) Back in 2016 in the Management &amp; Improvement Plan, the Borough identified a path it called No. 45g, running from the Village centre car park along the back of the properties on the eastern side of the B376 Staines Road to the path at the front of the properties in Broadwater Close, then continuing beyond to link with Magna Carta Lane &amp; to the permitted path at the side of 104 Staines Road. The Parish would like to see a commitment by the Borough in the 2022/23 Milestone document, to actively follow up on this identification of a possible Public Right of Way.</p> <p>e) Within the Milestone document the Parish Council would like the Borough to commit to entering dialogue with the National Trust to add the footpaths that are already signed on the ground within the Ankerwyke Estate, to the Definitive map as Permitted Paths.</p>	<p>date these paths are legally included on the 'Definitive Map and Statement'.</p> <p>c) Consolidated Definitive Maps and Statements (i.e. incorporating all confirmed DMMO's made since the previous consolidated map was published) are normally produced a number of years after the previous consolidated map was published (typically every 10 years, but this does vary between different Highway and Surveying Authorities). As the current RBWM 'Definitive Map and Statement' is dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015, we propose to publish the next 'Consolidated Map' with an effective date of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025. However, in the meantime, the paths at Thames Field are shown on the interactive mapping service on the Borough website ("Know your Neighbourhood") and will also be included on the new Parish leaflet.</p> <p>d) The team will aim to process any DMMO application received for the footpath referred to within one year of the application being received.</p> <p>e) The team will liaise with the Parish Council and National Trust on these points. There are a number of Permitted Paths across NT land at the Ankerwyke Estate.</p>
<p><b>Responses from Local Access Forum members</b></p>	<p><b>Officer comment, and/or suggested additional wording to be included in Milestones Statement.</b></p>
<p>A number of members of the Local Access Forum have reviewed the Milestones Statement in discussion with the Public Rights of Way team, and a number of suggestions have been made</p>	

for amendments/additions, which have been incorporated into the draft Statement for 2022/23.

Additional or amended objectives or targets:

- *Explore opportunities to extend, create or promote safe, properly surfaced and well-maintained Multi-user Routes*
- *Develop and enhance the information available online for public rights of way, including compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and the use of social media where appropriate.*
- *Investigate including destinations and distances where new signage is installed where appropriate.*
- *To make 10 physical access improvements, including the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps, to facilitate use by people with disabilities, the elderly, people with pushchairs etc. and provide appropriate information to users.*
- *Update all references to BS to latest version (BS 5709:2018 gaps, gates and stiles; and BS 8300-1:2018 which contains some standards relevant to recreational use of land).*

Additional groups to be added to Appendix 4

We will liaise with:

- *Disability & Inclusion Forum*
- *Wilds' groups and other environmental groups across the borough*
- *Volunteer groups such as: The Conservation Volunteers, Good Gym, BCA volunteers*

Additional site specific projects to be added to Appendix 7:

- *investigate creation of horse margin adjacent to the shared use cycle way on Switchback Road North. This would create a multi-user route and safe link for horse riders from Cookham village to the Cookham Bridle Circuit at Malders Lane*
- *explore, in discussions with the Parish Council and Local Access Forum the possibility of creating permissive horse-riding access at Thriftwood extension to Ockwells Park*

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqIA: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23

#### Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Plan		Project		Service procedure	x
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Responsible officer	Anthony Hurst	Service area	Neighbourhood Services	Directorate	Place
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<b>Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)</b>	Date created: 23/02/2022	<b>Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)</b>	Date created: (n/a)
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

*"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."*

Signed by (print): Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Dated:

123

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23

#### Guidance notes

##### What is an EqlA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqlAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups. All completed EqlA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council's website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

##### What are the "protected characteristics" under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

##### What's the process for conducting an EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

##### Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

##### Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqlA: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23

#### Stage 1: Screening (Mandatory)

##### **1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?**

The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23' sets out a series of objectives, targets and service standards for the management of the Council's public rights of way network in the coming year. The key objectives are to ensure the effective management, maintenance and protection of the borough's public rights of way network for all users and stakeholders.

**1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics? Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is Relevant or Not Relevant to that characteristic. If Relevant, please assess the level of impact as either High / Medium / Low and whether the impact is Positive (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or Negative (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please document your evidence for each assessment you make, including a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as "Not Relevant".**

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqIA: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23

Protected characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
<b>Age</b>	yes	medium	positive	The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' includes objectives and policies aimed at ensuring and improving access for people of all ages.
<b>Disability</b>	yes	medium	positive	The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' includes objectives and policies aimed at ensuring and improving access for people with disabilities.
<b>Gender re-assignment</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Race</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Sex</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' will have no relevance to this characteristic.

# ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### EqIA: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2022-23

#### Outcome, action and public reporting

Screening Assessment Outcome	Yes / No / Not at this stage	Further Action Required / Action to be taken	Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group	Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact
Was a significant level of negative impact identified?	no			
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	no			

If you answered **yes** to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).

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