

NOTICE
OF
MEETING

RIGHTS OF WAY & HIGHWAY LICENSING PANEL

will meet on

Wednesday 29 March 2023

At 6.30 pm

By

Virtual Meeting - Online access, 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, Clive Baskerville and Ewan Larcombe

Substitute Members

Councillors Gurpreet Bhangra, Gerry Clark, Shamsul Shelim, Sayonara Luxton, Christine Bateson, Neil Knowles, Simon Werner and Karen Davies

Kirsty Hunt, Service Lead – Electoral & Democratic Services - Issued: 21 March 2023

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Democratic Services Officer **Becky Oates** 01628 796310 / becky.oates@rbwm.gov.uk

Recording of Meetings – In line with the council's commitment to transparency the Part I (public) section of the 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 a Legal representative prior to 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 interests.	3 - 4
3.	<u>Minutes</u> To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022.	5 - 12
4.	<u>Public Rights of Way 'Milestones Statement 2023/24'</u> To approve the Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2023/24.	13 - 64

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:

- a) any unpaid directorships
 - b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
 - c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)
- of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

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, or a body included under Other Registerable Interests in Table 2 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 financial interest or well-being of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in Table 2 (as set out above and in 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 (referred to in the paragraph above) **affects** the 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, 14 MARCH 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Maureen Hunt (Chairman), Gerry Clark, Shamsul Shelim, Mandy Brar, Simon Werner and Clive Baskerville

Also in attendance: Councillor John Baldwin, Councillor Catherine del Campo, Councillor Samantha Rayner and Councillor Donna Stimson

Officers: Mark Beeley, Catherine Woodward, Anthony Hurst and Naomi Markham

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cannon, Councillor Haseler, Councillor Baldwin and Councillor Muir. Councillor Clark, Councillor Shelim and Councillor Werner were attending the meeting as substitutes.

Councillor Rayner was attending the meeting virtually, due to the current legislation this meant that she was unable to vote on any item on the agenda.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rayner declared a personal interest, that she had visited the site with Councillor Stimson, officers and the applicant. This had also been declared at the last meeting of the Panel, where the diversion orders had been initially discussed.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

FOOTPATH 17 COOKHAM AND FOOTPATH 59 DIVERSION ORDERS 2022

The Chairman explained that this item had been considered at the last meeting of the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel. The footpath diversion order, for parts of footpath 17 and 59, was to make the permitted footpath into the permanent right of way and close the current public footpath at the site. The Panel had voted to proceed with the diversion orders, the report had now come back to the Panel for consideration after the statutory public consultation.

Anthony Hurst, Parks and Countryside Manager, said that the report was for the Panel to consider the responses to the statutory consultation on the diversion orders. Maps in the agenda pack showed the location of the footpaths, while all responses to the consultation had been included. There had been a total of 78 objections received from a number of different groups, along with a number of individuals. Five neutral comments and two comments in support of the proposals had also been received. Anthony Hurst had also included the informal comments which had been made as part of the preliminary consultation, which the Panel had initially considered in making their decision in October 2021.

Steve Gillions said that he was the Chairman of the East Berkshire Ramblers Association. A number of the members had walked the footpaths a number of times and still objected to the diversion orders. Any amendment needed to be in line and meet the requirements of the Highways Act, the group had discussed it with a professional and they agreed with officers at RBWM, that the requirements had not been met. The views from the current footpaths would

be lost and also the ability for walkers to participate in a circular walk. Steve Gillions did not feel that the new permitted footpath was a like for like swap, but it would be good for both footpaths to exist. Steve Gillions said that the council had a good record of looking after its footpaths and footpath 17 had historical significance as a through route, it had been there since at least 1875. Landowners had a responsibility to maintain rights of way across their land, muddy paths were not a new issue and the Ramblers suggested that signage could be erected to explain to walkers that they should look to use the permitted footpath in bad weather. Steve Gillions concluded that the diversion orders were not acceptable and that the permitted footpath should be maintained along with the current footpath.

Dick Scarff explained that he was representing the Cookham Society. The Society had objected to the diversion orders for a significant period of time, it was pleasing to see the number of objections and also officers recommendations to not proceed with the diversion orders. In the report, it stated that the closure of the current footpath would allow for more economic farming practises, but there was mention of what this actually involved or what the savings could be. Three members of the society had met with the applicant in 2015 to discuss the footpath being moved to the edge of the field. At this meeting, the society was told that the cross field path was not a hindrance to harvesting or planting and therefore the current footpath did not provide an obstruction to farming of the field. The field edge path was longer and did not provide the same level of views as the cross field path. Reasons for the diversion had not been provided. Dick Scarff urged the applicant to keep the permitted footpath to be established as a permanent right of way.

Councillor Del Campo said that when paths became muddy, walkers naturally used the edge of the footpath and when the footpath in question was a cross field path, there could be problematic issues. A field edge path had initially seemed a good solution but Councillor Del Campo had received a significant number of emails about the diversion orders. She was particularly concerned about the equalities issue and the concern around women, who often preferred to be out in the open when walking or running in the countryside. The Equalities Impact Assessment, included in the report, stated that the impact on women would be low but Councillor Del Campo disagreed with this. She felt that the benefits needed to outweigh the disadvantages, the number of objections showed that this was not the case. Councillor Del Campo urged the Panel to agree with the officers recommendation, but she wanted to see the permitted footpath remain in place.

Nick Russell said that he had used the footpath twice a week for many years and strongly objected to the closure. There were physical and mental health benefits to running, Nick Russell used a route which included the current footpath and it was a direct route which crossed a total of four open fields. Nick Russell felt that this was a different experience to be forced to the edge of the field, which was oppressive. At the October meeting of the Panel, it was suggested that there were more positive than negative responses to the preliminary consultation. Nick Russell argued that this showed that the notices that the applicant had displayed had played a role in ensuring that mostly positive responses were sent through.

Tom Copas was the applicant of the diversion orders. He explained that his late father had initially come up with the project to improve the footpath. He showed the Panel some photos of the footpaths, with extensive planting being done on the site. On farming practises, the cross field footpath caused issues with the GPS and the middle of the field was the most productive part for crop. There would not be an issue if walkers stuck to the footpath and wore appropriate footwear. A lot of objections had been made on views, Tom Copas felt that the new route had some new views which were just as good, it provided a multi-surface footpath and linked up with other existing routes. The footpath needed to be adequate, Tom Copas argued that the current footpath was not adequate.

Councillor Werner said that he knew the route well, he had grown up walking along the route and had visited the area many times. It was important to note that this was not a planning application, therefore the decision hinged on the public opinion of the proposed diversion and whether walkers still got the same enjoyment out of the new route compared to the old one.

Councillor Werner argued that the new route would lose public enjoyment. The cross field footpath did get muddy but this was not a valid reason on its own to divert it to the field edge. The views from the cross field path were also very good, they were not as good from the edge of the field and therefore the public would be losing out. There were also proposals to clear more trees in the area to make way for the diversion, which was a concern. Councillor Werner had huge respect for the Ramblers Association, they were experts on local walking and their opinion should be listened to carefully. The footpath also had a significant amount of historical heritage, it had been open as a footpath since at least 1875. Councillor Werner concluded by stating that the number of objections to the proposals could not be ignored by the Panel.

Councillor Brar agreed with the comments from Councillor Werner and felt that there was no valid reason why the diversion should take place.

Councillor Clark said that while he was not on the Panel at the last meeting in October 2021, he was familiar with the proposals and had walked the routes. He had sympathy with the farmers who had footpaths cutting across their land. However, Councillor Clark said that RBWM was a custodian of the right of way and he felt that there needed to be a particularly significant argument made in support of the footpath being diverted for it be something that the Panel should go ahead with. He said that a significant or justifiable argument had not been made and therefore he could not support the changes to the footpaths.

The Chairman said that it was not an easy decision. The proposed diversion was welcomed but this had to be considered under the legislation. The Chairman said that she would like to see the status quo maintained, where both the cross field and permitted footpaths were to remain open. However, the permitted footpath was at the landowners discretion.

Councillor Rayner said that the new, permitted footpath was much more convenient for walkers and added to their enjoyment. She felt that the new path did comply with the Highways Act, it was more accessible too and therefore allowed more users to access it. Considering the economic viability of farming, Councillor Rayner said that adaptations needed to be made and she felt that this made things better from a farming point of view. One of the key problems with the cross field footpath was that walkers often walked off the footpath to avoid the mud, the new footpath did not have this problem. Councillor Rayner was very supportive of the new permitted footpath, at the top of the path there were extensive views over to Windsor Castle.

Councillor Baskerville argued that the current footpath should be retained. It was a direct route across the field, it was historically significant and the views were superior to that of the permitted footpath. He felt that the existing footpath needed to be kept.

The Chairman agreed with some of the points which had been raised by Councillor Rayner, particularly as the multi-user group had expressed a preference for the permitted footpath due to the improved surface.

Councillor Brar said that this was why she found it difficult to decide what to do at the previous meeting in October 2021. However, with the number of objections which had been submitted as part of the consultation from the public, she could not support the diversion order.

Councillor Stimson said that the footpath was historic. She understood what some residents had said about safety, particularly with the permitted footpath being close to the trees. It was also important that the council supported its farmers.

Councillor Baldwin said that he remembered the first meeting on the topic, in October 2021, very clearly. He asked what legal basis the original decision the Panel made had and why they were now seeking to reverse that decision.

Anthony Hurst explained that it was a two-stage process. The preliminary consultation had taken place, where the Panel were first asked what they wanted to do with the diversion

orders. As the Panel had voted to proceed with the process, the diversion orders had been the subject of a public consultation. Now that the public consultation had concluded, the Panel were asked to determine if they still wanted to proceed with the diversion orders.

Catherine Woodward, Legal Advisor, added that as there had been objections in the consultation, RBWM was unable to confirm the diversion order. The Panel could either decide not to proceed or refer the matter to the Secretary of State.

Councillor Baldwin questioned the balance, 78 objections was seen as enough for the Panel to potentially review their original decision. He asked where the line was drawn.

The Chairman said that if objections were received, the application had to go out to a statutory consultation.

Catherine Woodward said it was a two-point process, with two consultations carried out. The preliminary consultation allowed the Panel to have some insight into the public opinion before the formal consultation took place. If one objection was received, the local authority was unable to determine the diversion order and the matter would have to be referred to the Secretary of State for approval.

Councillor Baldwin said that one objection was enough for the matter to be referred to the Secretary of State but asked if 78 objections was enough for the Panel to reverse their original decision.

Catherine Woodward said that the 78 objections were not before the Panel when the original decision was taken. This was something that the Panel would take into account when it made its decision at the meeting now.

Councillor Baldwin said that the original supporters may have not realised that there was another stage to the process and assumed that the diversion orders had already been approved.

Councillor Rayner said that the new proposed footpath gave better protection for women. The current path went through a wood and this could therefore be a greater risk. The Maidenhead Advertiser had written a report about the Panel meeting and there had been some messages in support of the proposals on the comment section of this article.

Councillor Shelim said that he had not been at the original meeting, he was not sure which path was better.

Councillor Werner said that the Panel needed to consider the objections, with the detail and reasons being provided by the public. Trees along the edge of the permitted footpath would be lost as well as public enjoyment of the footpaths. Councillor Werner said that the Panel should change its original decision and not press ahead with the diversion orders.

The Chairman commented that the permitted footpath was much better, was easier to walk and was more user friendly. She agreed with the points raised by Councillor Baldwin, that supporters of the change may not have realised that there was another stage to the process.

Councillor Clark said that the Panel could only take into account the comments that had been submitted as part of the public consultation.

Catherine Woodward added that the responses to the statutory public consultation were the ones that counted.

Councillor Baskerville proposed the recommendation listed in the report by officers, that the Panel did not proceed with the diversion orders. This was seconded by Councillor Werner.

A named vote was taken. As she was attending the meeting virtually, Councillor Rayner was unable to vote.

That the Panel did not proceed with the Cookham 17 (part) and Cookham 59 (part) Diversion Orders. (Motion)	
Councillor Maureen Hunt	For
Councillor Gerry Clark	For
Councillor Shamsul Shelim	Abstain
Councillor Mandy Brar	For
Councillor Simon Werner	For
Councillor Clive Baskerville	For
Carried	

RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the report and did not proceed with the Cookham 17 (part) and Cookham 59 (part) Diversion Orders published on 20th January 2022.

MILESTONES STATEMENT 2022/23

Anthony Hurst set out the report and explained that the Panel was being asked to approve the Milestones Statement, which set out the priorities, standards and targets for the coming year. RBWM had consulted with the Local Access Forum and a number of parish councils. Comments from parish councils would be followed up in due course. Suggestions that had been made and were reasonable had been incorporated into the Milestones Statements. Considering the targets achieved from the current year, a presentation was shown to the Panel which showed various photos of the work which had been undertaken.

The Chairman thanked the volunteers, who had done a great job. She asked if comments from the volunteers on the work they had done was in the 'Around the Royal Borough' publication and in media outlets such as resident newsletters.

Anthony Hurst said that an article had been included in the most recent issue. He agreed with the Chairman's comments and said that they provided invaluable support, it was important to continue to promote the work that volunteers did for the borough.

The Chairman asked if links could be added for potential volunteers to join the volunteer groups.

Naomi Markham, Environmental Services Manager, confirmed that this could be done and it could also be added to the website.

ACTION – Officers to add links to the various volunteer groups in both articles and the website.

Councillor Brar said that the path from Odney Lane to Cookham Lock had a significant pothole, she asked if this was the responsibility of RBWM to fix.

Anthony Hurst said that he would discuss this case with Councillor Brar after the meeting.

Councillor Werner said that he echoed the sentiments from the Chairman and officers on the volunteers. He suggested a letter from the Chairman of the Panel, thanking volunteers for their work.

The Chairman said that this had already been done, they had done an excellent job and their work deserved to be recognised.

Councillor Werner commented on number 20 on the Milestones Statement and asked if there was any progress. The last time Councillor Werner had visited Odney Common, the gates on the lock were locked and walkers were unable to get across to the island. He asked if this had been reopened.

Anthony Hurst said that on number 20, which was around filling in a missing link, the landowners had not been willing to agree to the proposal. Unfortunately, this meant that there was little that RBWM could do but the case would remain in the statement in case the situation was to change. On the lock, Anthony Hurst explained that the path was under the control of the Environment Agency and was a permitted footpath, there had been an incident in this area of drowning and the Environment Agency were therefore putting in extra fences to make the path safer and more secure.

Councillor Werner commented that it was the only way to get to the island, he asked how confident officers were at the Environment Agency would reopen the footpath. On number 20, Councillor Werner said that John Lewis owned the Odney Club and were going through a tough time financially, it might therefore be worth approaching them.

Anthony Hurst responded by saying that the Environment Agency had said they would reopen the footpath. He was not able to speculate on the comments Councillor Werner had made on number 20, but if the opportunity arose then officers would look to provide the link to this footpath.

Councillor Baskerville said that volunteers worked with the landowners and it was important that this partnership was maintained. The National Trust also had an important role. Litter picking was needed and those that volunteered their time did a good job.

Councillor Rayner said that a lot of businesses took part in volunteering days for staff as part of their corporate strategy. She asked if something could go in the residents newsletter to widen the publicity of volunteer groups.

Councillor Clark proposed the motion in the report, that the Milestones Statement was approved. This was seconded by Councillor Shelim.

A named vote was taken.

To approve the Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2022/23. (Motion)	
Councillor Maureen Hunt	For
Councillor Gerry Clark	For
Councillor Shamsul Shelim	For
Councillor Mandy Brar	For
Councillor Simon Werner	For
Councillor Clive Baskerville	For
Carried	

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel approved the ‘Milestones Statement and Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Annual Review 2022/23’.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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Report Title:	Public Rights of Way ‘Milestones Statement 2023/24’
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Officer reporting:	Jacqui Wheeler, Parks and Countryside Access Officer
Meeting and Date:	Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel 29 th March 2023
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 2023/24’* 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 2023/24’* 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 2023/24’ This is the recommended option	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

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Approval of Milestones Statement 2023/24	<i>n/a</i>	April 2023	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	2023/24

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 2023/24.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by 3 appendices:

- Appendix A: Milestones Statement 2023/24
- Appendix B: Consultation responses
- Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment screening form

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 None.

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	17/03/23	
Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	17/03/23	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	17/03/23	17/03/23
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	17/03/23	20/03/23
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	17/03/23	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	17/03/23	
<i>Heads of Service (where relevant)</i>			

Alysse Strachan	Head of Neighbourhood Services	17/03/23	
<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 Bhangra; Cabinet Member for Parks and Countryside.	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

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

Report Author: Jacqui Wheeler, Parks and Countryside Access Officer, 07990 568616
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Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Milestones Statement

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

2023-24

FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce the 25th annual Milestones Statement for the Royal Borough, marking 25 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 2023

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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 21).

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 2022/23, several volunteer groups worked on public rights of way around the Borough:

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) carried out **7 workdays** with a total of **35** participant days.

Ways into Work (WiW) carried out **32 workdays** with a total of **160** participant days.

Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) carried out **12 workdays** with a total of **69** participant days.

East Berks Ramblers carried out 227 hours of work on the Spring Survey and 167 hours on the Autumn Survey 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 **£15,473**

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>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
£60,000	£60,000

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 no allocated capital budget dedicated for public rights of way work in 2023/24. However, the Council will continue to work with volunteers on public rights of way improvement projects, and sources of external funding will be sought for individual projects if possible.

Table 1: Lengths of Rights of Way by Parish, March 2023

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

OBJECTIVES

Priorities for 2023/24

- 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 and **help improve signage for this and other similar locally significant routes.**
- 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, **carriage drivers**, 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 **route** 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 2023/24

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 2023/24 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 2022/23 projects carried out by the PPI included the design and development of a Wraysbury Walks Leaflet, a contribution to a bridleway upgrade in Waltham St Lawrence and minor surface improvements in various parishes.

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.

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.
- Long term funding solutions for PRoW volunteers to enhance the network

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 1st 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 2022/23 was **94%** (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 2023/24 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 as well as animals** 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 publish an updated consolidated ‘Definitive Map and Statement’ in 2025 (consolidating the current edition which was published in 2015)

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.

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 2022/23 (March 2023)	
WM1 <i>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 2022/23: 95%</i>	<i>[note surveys undertaken in Spring and Autumn by East Berks Ramblers]</i> Spring survey result: 93.2% Autumn survey result: 94.8% Combined annual result: 94%
WM2 <i>To carry out major surface improvements or vegetation clearance on 10 public rights of way. (FP =footpath, BR = bridleway, RB = restricted byway)</i>	
Eton BR13	Surface improvements
Bray BR20	Surface improvements
Braywick Park route to school	Surface improvements
WSL FP39	Major vegetation clearance
Uncles Lane, Shurlock Road – RB35	Major surface improvement project
Burleigh Road, Ascot – SUNH/ Byway 18	Potholes filled
Cox Green FP11	Vegetation Clearance
Cox Green FP7 (TCV)	Surface improvement
Long Lane Bray 22	Surface improvement
	Total: 9
WM3 <i>To repair or replace 7 bridges.</i>	
Bray FP52	Repair
Eton FP2	Repair
Margaret's Bridge	Repair to ramps
Bray FP57	Repair to bridge
Bray FP16	Repair
Eton FP2	Replacement
WSL FP38	Repair
	Total: 7
WELL PUBLICISED	
WP1 <i>To produce 1 new Parish rights of way leaflet</i> Wraysbury Parish leaflet	Total: 1
WP2 <i>To assist others to produce effective promotional material: minimum of 1 new or updated publication.</i> Maidenhead Boundary Walk partnership work for signage	Total: 1
IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	

<p>AC1 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.</p> <p>Thriftwood Permissive Bridleway access Trial</p>	<p>Total: 1</p>
<p>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.</p>	
<p>Cookham FP60</p>	<p>Works to remove tree roots and smooth surface laid</p>
<p>Cookham FP42</p>	<p>Surface improvement</p>
<p>The Green Way and Maidenhead FP90</p>	<p>Removal of lockable posts due to refreshing the security bund and resurfacing work on path prone to flooding</p>
<p>Cookham FP46</p>	<p>Step refurbishment</p>
<p>Cookham FP55</p>	<p>Remove metal trip hazards in Thames Path</p>
<p>Maidenhead RB70 (Malders Lane)</p>	<p>Installation of posts to prevent obstruction by parking</p>
<p>Permissive path from Court Rd to Thames Path Maid FP18P</p>	<p>Tree works</p>
	<p>Total: 7</p>

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

<u>Cookham & Bisham</u>	
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	<p>Crossings over the Thames:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 (e) from Datchet centre to Home Park (f) from north side of Eton to south bank (g) from Windsor near Slough railway bridge to north bank (h) from west side of Windsor (A308) to north bank (i) from Bray village to east bank (j) from west bank to southern tip of National Trust Cliveden Park (k) upstream of Maidenhead where towpath crosses to Bucks bank (l) near Cookham Lock where towpath crosses back again (m) from south side of Cookham bridge to towpath on Lock Cut (n) from Spade Oak Farm to south bank (o) downstream of A404 bridge (p) at Bisham Church (q) from south bank to Medmenham
124	(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)

<u>Maidenhead & Cox Green</u>	
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 Boulders 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/Boulders 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	Create a continuous streamside footpath around "The Maidenhead Ring", including the Moor Cut and The Green Way, in association with the Maidenhead Waterways project
31	Upgrading Thames Path to allow cyclists to share route
125	<p>(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).</p> <p><i>(March 2023 update: Successful trial undertaken and agreed to be continued in 2023)</i></p>

<u>Bray, Windsor and Eton</u>	
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

<u>Datchet, Horton, Old Windsor & Wraysbury</u>	
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"> (a) along the banks of Ham Island (b) south bank of Thames from Home Park (c) along the shores of the big islands downstream of Cookham (<i>Cookham Parish</i>) (d) south bank between Bisham and Temple (<i>Bisham Parish</i>)

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"> (a) footpath from Datchet Footpath 7 southwest around the Queen Mother Reservoir, over the Horton Road (B376) to the railway line (b) footpath from Datchet Footpath 5 running southeast on the northern side of the railway line to Datchet Footpath 6 (c) footpath along northern side of the Thames from Albert Bridge linking with Datchet Footpath 6 (d) footpath from Welley Road, Wraysbury along southern side of the railway line to Wraysbury Footpath 6 (e) footpath from Park Avenue, Wraysbury to Kingswood Creek (f) footpath from northern end of Douglas Lane (at termination of Wraysbury Footpath 6) to The Green (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 (h) footpath running from Horton Footpath 3 around northern part of lakes to Stanwell Road (i) footpath from Station Road, Wraysbury, to Stanwell Road running along the western bank of the Colne Brook. (j) footpath from Hythe End Lane to southern end of Ferry Lane (Wraysbury Footpath 3) (k) bridleway from Embankment to Magna Carta Lane in Wraysbury (l) bridleway from Horton Road, alongside the Queen Mother Reservoir to Majors Farm Road (B370) (m) Footpath from Kingswood Creek to Old Ferry Drive (n) Footpath from Stanwell Road, northeast along Mill Lane, running east along the Colne Brook.
46	New route along the Colne Brook

<u>Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale</u>	
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 1st 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 8th 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 2023)

Parish/Path number	Issue	Date reported
Bray FP 8 (Cresswells Farm)	Missing stile/furniture mid path. Obstructed by fence	29/11/21
Maidenhead FP13 (The Green Way)	Accessibility problems due to motorcycle barriers, reported by Sustrans.	2022
Cookham FP48	Steps and revetment work	November 2022
New Windsor FP14	Broken Fencing adjacent to ditch	January 2023
White Waltham FP18	Obstruction due to surface disturbance (construction bund)	January 2022
Maidenhead FP3B	Underpass adjacent to waterway – leaking onto path (With Infrastructure)	2019
Wraysbury FP3P	Signage missing	14/03/23

**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

Appendix B: consultation responses

<u>Responses from Parish Councils</u>	Officer comment, and/or suggested additional wording to be included in Milestones Statement
<p><u>Cookham Parish Council</u></p> <p>The Milestones Statement was discussed at the meeting on 7th March and the response was:</p> <p>“Cookham Parish Council welcomed the statement, but removal of fly tipping is not aspirational.”</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p><u>Horton Parish Council</u></p> <p>Horton Parish Council have stated that they do not feel they see benefits of these activities in Horton which is a rural area.</p> <p>The issues they have are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high rate of fly tipping and massive amounts of littering. • Lack of safe access to bridleways • Arthur Jacobs Nature Reserve is now looked after by RBWM rather than the people who ran the volunteer sessions. How do they find out what is happening there? <p>Would it be possible to work a bit closer with Horton Parish Council to help them understand what is being done here and how they can support and encourage input into it please?</p>	<p>The PRow team have responded to Horton Parish Council on these issues and have suggested a site meeting to discuss.</p> <p>The issue of fly tipping/littering was recognised as an issue across the network and added to the Milestones Objectives last year. See following wording:</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>It would be good to identify the hotspots on Horton’s public rights of way as then PRow contractors or Ways Into Work Parks team could potentially make regular visits. Fly tipping/littering hotspots which are not on the PRow network could be highlighted to other RBWM contractors if on land the council is responsible for.</p> <p>The Arthur Jacobs Nature Reserve is managed under the Council’s Natural Environment team and this issue has been forwarded to them for action.</p>
<p><u>Hurley Parish Council</u></p> <p>Hurley Parish Councillors, at their meeting on Thursday 16th February, made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All present noted the content of the Milestones consultation. Prior to the meeting, Cllr Priest had confirmed that he had been directly consulted and provided feedback. 	<p>Noted.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors were very supportive of the work of the Public Rights of Way team and how responsive they were to issues as they arose. • They had no specific comments or issues to submit on the Milestones consultation. 	
<p><u>Old Windsor Parish Council</u></p> <p>The Parish Council noted the bit about maintenance and enforcement.</p> <p>There is an ongoing issue where a property are parking their vehicle in a way to almost completely block access/egress to the river Thames from Church Road, Old Windsor via FP4.</p>	<p>The PRow team have responded to the Parish Council liaising on this specific issue.</p>
<p>Responses from Local Access Forum members</p>	<p>Officer comment, and/or suggested additional wording to be included in Milestones Statement.</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 for amendments/additions, which have been incorporated into the draft Statement for 2023/24.</p>	<p>Additional or amended objectives or targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk and help improve signage for this and other similar locally significant routes. • Improvements: seek improvements and additions to the network to enhance connectivity for horse riders, carriage drivers, cyclists and people with restricted mobility • Develop a route 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. <p>Additional wording to be added to Appendix 4</p> <p>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</p>

	they have on the safety and convenience of people as well as animals in the vicinity.
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ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement 2023-24

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION										
Item being assessed <i>(Please tick):</i>	Strategy		Policy	√	Plan	√	Project		Service/Procedure	√
Responsible Officer:	Parks and Countryside Manager (current vacant post)				Service:	Neighbourhood Services				
					Directorate:	Place				
STAGE 1: EqIA SCREENING (MANDATORY)					STAGE 2: FULL ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)					
Date created:	17.03.23				Date created:					
Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:	<i>"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."</i>									
	Signed:	Alysse Strachan, Head of Neighbourhood Services								
	Date:	17 th March 2023								

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.

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.

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 2023-24' 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".*

Protected characteristic	Relevance	Level	Positive / Negative	Evidence
Age	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
Disability	yes	medium	positive	The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Statement' includes objectives and policies aimed at ensuring and improving access for people with disabilities.
Gender reassignment	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
Marriage and civil partnership	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
Race	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.

Religion or belief	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
Sex	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.
Sexual orientation	no			The 'Public Rights of Way Milestones Satetment' will have no relevance to this characteristic.

OUTCOMES, ACTION & 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).

All completed EqIA 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.

STAGE 2: FULL ASSESSMENT

2.1 SCOPE & DEFINE

2.1.1 Who are the main beneficiaries of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List the groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

2.1.2 Who has been involved in the creation of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List those groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

2.2 INFORMATION GATHERING/EVIDENCE

2.2.1 What secondary data have you used in this assessment? Common sources of secondary data include: censuses, organisational records.

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2.2.2 What primary data have you used to inform this assessment? Common sources of primary data include: consultation through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.

Equality Duty Statement	Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty		Negative impact		Explanation & Mitigations
		Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the	If yes, to what level? (High /	Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	
						Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic

		protected characteristic (Yes/No)	Medium / Low)			
Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					
	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					
62 Advance equality of opportunity	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					
	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					
Foster good relations	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					

	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					

2.4 Has your delivery plan been updated to incorporate the activities identified in this assessment to mitigate any identified negative impacts?
These could be service, equality, project or other delivery plans. If you did not have sufficient data to complete a thorough impact assessment, then an action should be incorporated to collect this information in the future.

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