

Public Document Pack

Notice of Meeting

Local Access Forum

Geoff Priest (Hurley Parish Council) (Chair), Lisa Hughes (MS Society) (Vice-Chair), Alan Keene (Bisham Parish Council), Steve Gillions (User - Walker), Ian Ient (User - Walker) James Copas, Susy Shearer (User - Cyclist), Trisha Mentzel (User – Horse Rider), Mark Howard (Cookham Parish Council), Ian Harvey (Cox Green Parish Council), Ceri Richardson, Martin Richardson, Claire Taylor, Benta Hickley (Horton Parish Council), and Councillors Catherine Del Campo, Jack Douglas and Gurch Singh

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Tuesday 28 November 2023 6.30 pm

Council Chamber - Town Hall - Maidenhead & on [RBWM YouTube](#)

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1(a)	Welcome, Apologies and Introductions To welcome everyone to the meeting and receive any apologies for absence. (5 mins)	-
1(b)	Declarations of Interest To receive any declarations of interest.	3 - 4
1(c)	Approval of Minutes - 20th June 2023 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023.	5 - 12
1(d)	Matters arising from the Last Meeting To receive report on Matters arising from the last meeting by Jacqui Wheeler.	13 - 16
2	Membership Update To receive a Membership Update from Geoff Priest. (2 mins)	17 - 18
3	Update on Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy To receive an update on Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy from Rosie Street of the Natural Environment Team. (15 mins)	19 - 54
4	Taxi Consultation To note a Taxi Consultation from Greg Nelson, RBWM Trading Standards & Licensing Manager. (10 mins)	55 - 58

5	<p>Subgroups Reports</p> <p>Discussion of way forward notes and sharing draft LAF Work Plan, plus subgroup updates from Trisha Mentzel, Lisa Hughes/Steve Gillions, Susy Shearer/ Martin Richardson. (15 mins)</p>	59 - 62
6	<p>Training</p> <p>To note training. (5 mins)</p>	-
7	<p>LCWIP Updates from RBWM Transport team</p> <p>To receive LCWIP Updates from RBWM Transport team delivered by Jacqui Wheeler. (5 mins)</p>	63 - 70
8	<p>Milestones Statement Updates</p> <p>To note Milestones Statement Updates by Jacqui Wheeler. (10 mins)</p>	71 - 72
9	<p>Temple footbridge (Thames Path) closure - Does LAF support lobbying Govt and EA?</p> <p>To discuss report on Temple footbridge (Thames Path) closure – Does LAF support lobbying Govt and EA? (5 mins)</p>	73 - 80
10	<p>Joint LAF Chairs - cross boundary issue from West Berks LAF</p> <p>To receive item from Jacqui Wheeler. (5 mins)</p>	81 - 84
11	<p>Horizon Scanning - SAPC Report - Status & Recommendations, and Sustainability SPD engagement</p> <p>To note reports in Horizon Scanning. (5 mins)</p>	85 - 94

By attending this meeting, participants are consenting to the audio & visual recording being permitted and acknowledge that this shall remain accessible in the public domain permanently.

Please contact Mikey Lloyd, Mikey.Lloydy@rbwm.gov.uk, with any special requests that you may have when attending this meeting.

Published: 20 November 2023



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.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

20 June 2023

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Interest Area
Geoff Priest	Hurley Parish Council
Alan Keene	Bisham Parish Council
Steve Gillions	User - Walker
Claire Taylor	User – Cyclist and Biodiveristy
Susy Shearer	User - Cyclist
Trisha Mentzel	User – Horse Rider
Mark Howard	Cookham Parish Council
Ian Harvey	Cox Green Parish Council
Jacqui Wheeler	RBWM – LAF Secretary
Kirsty Hunt	RBWM – Democratic Services

Observers

Anne Keene
Councillor Douglas

Apologies

Lisa Hughes
James Copas
Martin Richardson
Ceri Richardson

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
20 June 2023
MINUTES**

ACTION

1 Nomination and election of Chair and Vice-Chair

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Geoff Priest be appointed Chair of the Local Access Forum for the municipal year 2023-25.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Lisa Hughes be appointed Vice-Chair of the Local Access Forum for the municipal year 2023-25.

2 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and asked those present in the Council Chamber to introduce themselves.

Apologies for absence were received from James Copas, Councillor Benta Hickley, Lisa Hughes, Ceri Richardson and Martin Richardson.

A) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

B) APPROVAL OF MINUTES - 6TH DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022 were approved as a true record, provided the following amendments were made:

- In Item 3 - Deerswood Meadow, "While..." be deleted from the second to last paragraph
- In Item 4 - Cycling Groups updates, it was amended from 'achieve' to 'work towards'
- In Item 4 – Cycling Groups updates, the final paragraph be amended to delete 'in' and change 'she' to 'WCH'
- In Item 6 - LCWIP / ROWIP, the spelling of 'Stovall' be corrected to 'Stovell'

3 Matters arising from last meeting

Jacqui Wheeler, Parks and Countryside Access Officer, listed the updates on matters arising from the last meeting as set out on pages 15 – 22 of the agenda pack.

1.2 Matters arising regarding LAF Training: Claire Taylor had attended the British Horse Society training level 1 for Access and Rights of Way. Claire Taylor reflected that the training had identified some gaps in knowledge, and this had been shared with Windsor Cycle Hub so had been a useful tool. Jacqui Wheeler advised that there were two further dates when the Introduction to equestrian access & rights of way (England & Wales) training was being run: Sunday 16 July @ 9.30am and Sunday 17 September @ 9.30am. Members were asked to contact her if they wanted to attend either option.

13.1 Matters arising regarding LAF Chairs meeting: Jacqui Wheeler would circulate notes from the regional LAF Chairs meeting that was held on 14 June 2023. The regional meeting currently covered LAF from across Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire and Oxfordshire. It was reported by the Chair that the group was keen to extend representation across Kent, Sussex and into one or two of London Boroughs. This was well represented and was working well. The LAF Chairs meeting had been seeking engagement from Natural England and DEFRA across all LAFs in the area. This had been taken to the ADEPT meeting across the South East region and in March an email was received

from Natural England to engage with the LAF which was shared at page 18 of the agenda pack. A new person was in post who looking at supporting LAFs and was setting up a dedicated SharePoint site to facilitate communications between all LAFs and Natural England. Jacqui Wheeler advised that there had been no further contact since then. Jacqui Wheeler would be following this up on behalf of the LAF Chairs meeting.

5.1 Windsor Great Park Access: Steve Gillions advised the meeting that he had a meeting scheduled with the Deputy Head Ranger of the Park at the end of the month to discuss the possibility of open access and inviting them to consider which areas may be appropriate. He explained that the areas they would be focusing upon would be the areas that were open already. This would be an opportunity for them to promote open access this although it would not be a change on the ground and could be withdrawn in the future. He would update LAF members before the next scheduled meeting via email.

6.1 LCWIP/ROWIP crossovers and update: The request had come from Councillor Sharpe regarding the emerging ascot development engagement. Jacqui Wheeler advised the meeting that the Windsor and Maidenhead Infrastructure delivery team had provided the update as set out on page 16 of the agenda pack. The LAF confirmed that they would like her to follow this up.

4 Membership Update

Jacqui Wheeler advised the meeting that following the recent election Councillors would be appointed to LAF at the Cabinet meeting on 29 June 2023. It was discussed that Mark Howard was now a borough Councillor and if he continued to be a member there would be four borough councillors attending the LAF.

Councillor Howard explained that he was not being nominated to LAF as the borough member and would like to continue attending as the parish council representative as long as that was appropriate and another representative from Cookham would attend if required.

The Chair reflected that people could attend and sit on the LAF as an individual, he had experience of people continuing after their original role had changed as long as attendees were adding value. Advice would be sought from Democratic Services to clarify the situation.

Jacqui Wheeler added that there were two Parish Councillors who were no longer elected representatives e.g. Sue Nichols from Wraysbury Parish Council and Ceri Richardson from Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council. She explained that they were no longer Parish Councillors and Jacqui Wheeler clarified that the individual was the representative and not the organisation. She would contact each member to confirm how they wanted to proceed.

5 Multi-User Subgroup

Trisha Mentzel followed up that the work being undertaken at Uncle's Lane (part of the Knowl Hill Bridleway) had now been completed and it was already well used. She had walked the route and initially had some concerns as there were some large stones on the edges of the Lane but she believed these would bed down over time and would be a better surface for walkers and cyclists. The ditches had also been cleared out which would resolve previous drainage issues. They had achieved all the funding that was required for the work.

Trisha Mentzel raised there was another track that a number of riders had been using which was not on the definitive map. It was located from Henley Road to

Dungrove Hill Lane which went through Woodlands Trust land. She described it as a wide path and easily accessible but not a marked or defined route but it was a very good circular route. She understood that the Woodlands Trust did not want horses to go through there. She noted that Google maps indicated that RBWM owned the land and Woodlands Trust managed it but she was unsure if that was accurate. She concluded that she had enquired with Land Registry to confirm ownership information to discussions to allow access.

Through discussion it was confirmed that it was a track off Dungrove Hill Lane shown as footpath 19 and Alan Keene explained that it was called Michael's Path and previous attempts had been made to make it accessible as it had been used for farm vehicles. He reflected that it was an interesting initiative to propose multi-user access through the woodland past the war memorial.

Alan and Annie Keene offered to join Trisha Mentzel in undertaking further research as they knew the area well but noted a slight complication that the western end of Michael's Path came to a stop where the A404 had been built. He explained that it was joined to the Henley Road by another path which was owned by another landowner.

Trisha Mentzel confirmed that Sharon Wootten had agreed to look into the site. Jacqui Wheeler would follow this up with Sharon as it would be an interesting project to follow that up with the Woodlands Trust.

Trisha Mentzel reported that a horserider at Dorney, Eton Wick had said one of the bridleway path on the south side of the Jubilee had been flooded for some time. It was queried who was responsible and whether there was anything that could be done.

Claire Taylor advised the meeting that the footpath was managed by Slough Borough Council. The enhanced water course was blocked by weed growth around Eton Wick. As the fishing season opened on 15 June the volunteers, Eton Wick Waterways Group were working on this, and Eton Wick College had commissioned activities that started yesterday. She anticipated that water levels around the whole area would drop within the next week. She was aware that the new RBWM councillors were very active on this issue and discussions were ongoing with relevant councils to raise the level of the footpath. She added that they were in discussions with the Environment Agency to improve this area as well.

Councillor Howard commented that access into the rowing area at Dorney from riverbank appeared to be sealed and that this was significantly increasing traffic during competition time with people driving a long way around to enter, especially from Maidenhead. He proposed that if pedestrian and cycling access from the riverside was opened that would take a reasonable amount of people off the roads.

Councillor Howard commented that Cookham Parish Council was very supportive of creating circular routes for horses and would help by contacting landowners if they could help to link up small parts of the network.

Claire Taylor responded, in relation to access to Dorney Lake, that the site was private property and Eton College had taken the decision for the safety of events to close access between April to September.

Councillor Howard understood the rationale but observed that given the level of security at such event days wondered whether having two people stationed at that entrance would be proportionate to mitigate the additional traffic and travel

required.

Claire Taylor commented that attendees on events days were likely to be bring boats and therefore travelling by road which caused congestion at the junction on Eton Wick road.

Councillor Howard and Claire Taylor agreed that there was potential to the proposal to improve things for local residents, maintaining security, car parking and reducing congestion.

Jacqui Wheeler commented that this location was within Buckinghamshire. The Local Access Forum requested that the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum be contacted to request this change as it would improve local transport on the Buckinghamshire side as well as encourage people travelling from Marlow and Maidenhead to walk to events. The Chair asked for details to be shared with him and he would write to the Buckinghamshire LAF Chair to request their support.

6 Accessibility Working Group

Steve Gillions updated the meeting that Lisa Hughes had developed her knowledge about the technology and was ready to use that. He was focused on writing up the walk route information.

He advised that they had originally put Runnymede on the list of areas to cover, despite being outside of the borough, he observed it was an ideal landscape for mobility issues. He advised that the National Trust were installing all ability paths and a circular walk was being installed. He was contacting them to use their walks to demonstrate different levels of walks along the same route. Jacqui Wheeler advised she had a number of contacts within the National Trust to help him identify who produced the maps.

7 Cycling Groups Updates

Susy Shearer referred to the report that had been prepared for the agenda pack and reiterated the aim of Windsor Cycle Hub (WCH) was to help raise awareness of cycling for everyone throughout the Windsor community through activities to encourage residents and visitors into, or back into cycling. She explained that WCH worked closely with representatives from Windsor Ascot Maidenhead Active Travel group and the RBWM Disability and Inclusion Forum on the project as part of the Borough's emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan involving improvements to existing cycling and walking infrastructure. All three groups attended a site visit and their comments were incorporated into the final scheme. She noted that this was on the verge of being finished although there was a small amount of signage to be installed. She added that WCH worked closely with the Maidenhead Cycle Hub and both hubs had been successful in promoting active travel. WCH were looking forward to working with colleagues from the British Horse Society at the event on 15 July at the Great Park.

8 Training

Trisha Mentzel confirmed she had nothing to add to what had been raised as part of matters arising.

9 Informal Consultation for diversion of Maidenhead FP19

Jacqui Wheeler referred members of the Forum to pages 27 to 44 of the agenda pack which was the pre-order informal consultation on the proposed footpath diversion application for Maidenhead Footpath 19.

It was explained that Maidenhead Footpath 19 runs from North Town Moor in

Maidenhead through to Widbrook Common and is part of the Green Way East. The application form had been received from Summerleaze, the landowner of the path, the associated map and path surface specification were provided.

The map showed the existing route as a dashed green line heading north crossing across Footpath 17 and northwards running alongside existing football pitches. The existing route was also a permissive cycleway. It was proposed that the path would be diverted to the dashed red line as shown on the map. It was clarified that the intention was to allow the landowner to extend the size of the existing football pitches so that adults could use the facilities. Opinions were being sought from all the informal consultees including the East Berks Ramblers and the Maidenhead Civic Society, some other parish councils as well as the National Trust.

Steve Gillions advised the meeting that this had been discussed by the East Berkshire Ramblers and they had not been happy with the original proposal however felt the revised proposal, as set out here, worked well.

AGREED: The LAF supported the recommendations of the changes.

In response to Ian Harvey's enquiry, it was confirmed that there was a written correspondence confirming that the proposed diverted path would be 3m wide rather than 2.5m as in the application.

10 Draft LAF Annual Report

Jacqui Wheeler presented the draft RBWM Local Access Forum Annual Review 2021-22 for comments by members. She explained it contained detail of what had happened over the period and once approved this would be published on the borough's website and a copy to Natural England.

The Chair commented that the report fully explained what the LAF had done and what they continued to want to do.

AGREED: The LAF approved the report.

11 Suggestions for summer site visit

The Chair asked members for suggestions of where the LAF could go for a site visit and the following were raised:

- a return trip to Battle Common would be interesting once the cattle returned to site
- Ockwells was a potential site as further development had been discussed there
- a visit to Braywick Nature Centre as they had been doing more with schools then LAF could share information about what they had been doing
- Ascot High Street initiative was an interesting proposal and Jacqui Wheeler would enquire on suitable timing
- Copas Family had invited the LAF to attend the area they had created as a nature reserve, this could be discussed further with James Copas in November
- potential of large developments in Cookham, specifically AL37, proposal was for the LAF to attend to ensure that the site was accessible to the public right of way network and connect into schools

The Chair advised that when the first Local Plan was drafted the LAF went through and put all recommendations relevant to each of the packages. These were given to Planning and the intention was that they would be submitted to

any developer as part of the process of applying for the packages. Councillor Howard advised that the road across the front of the site was the obvious route to school but there was a network of footpaths that would offer a better leisure amenity and an off-road option for the route to school. He advised that the developers, Bellway, had indicated that a detailed planning application would be made at the end of the month. Jacqui Wheeler confirmed she would check further details with colleagues in Planning.

12 Horizon Scanning - Update for Local Nature Recovery Strategy; Local Transport Plan Update and Cycle Training

Jacqui Wheeler led the discussion looking to future items for the LAF to discuss:

- Rosie Street, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Officer was working with other Berkshire authorities on the strategy and would be happy to attend November's meeting to provide an update.
- The Local Transport Plan has had its first consultation on the proposed vision and themes and would be an engagement that the LAF could consider.
- There was cycle training being provided on the Borough Website under Transport and Streets, Cycle Skills and training. She explained that it was not just Bikeability for children but confidence sessions for adults were being offered. Various dates were available. Maidenhead bike maintenance workshop classes were also available. Jacqui Wheeler would circulate the link.

13 Any Other Business

Alan Keene asked whether the LAF had any further information on the closure of the footbridge over the Thames at Temple. Bisham Parish Council had a report last night that the Environment Agency advised that the crossing may never be reopened and may be demolished which was causing concern to local residents. Jacqui Wheeler advised that her colleague was having conversations with the Thames Path Partnership which the Environment Agency were part of. She noted that it was the Environment Agency's structure and unfortunately it was one of those wooden span bridges that was coming to end of life. Jacqui Wheeler confirmed she would request an update as it was part of the Thames Path and they did not want it to be closed.

Councillor Howard suggested that if the LAF was reaching out to the Environment Agency asked if the closure of Locke Island could be raised. This was the missing link between two public footpaths and had been closed since 2019. It was understood that this was a health and safety concern and Jacqui Wheeler would endeavour to request an update on the situation.

The meeting, which started at 6.30 pm, ended at 7.35 pm.

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LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 28th November 2023

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Local Access Forum about the progress made on actions and issues arising from the Forum meeting held on 20th June 2023.

Key:

Completed items
In progress
Incomplete

Action owners:

GP	Geoff Priest (Chair)	CC	Chris Capper (Parks and Countryside Team Leader)
SW	Sharon Wootten (Public Rights of Way Officer)	JW	Jacqui Wheeler (Parks & Countryside Access Officer/Secretary of the LAF)
LH	Lisa Hughes (Vice Chair)	ML	Mikey Lloyd (Democratic Services)

Agenda Item 1(c): Matters Arising

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
1.2	Training for LAF members – GP consulted members on scope of potential training and received feedback. Two members LH and CT have undertaken the BHS training. Access & RoW Level 1 training course.	GP/LH/JW	Please contact JW if you wish to attend the BHS training.
1.3	BCA had been identified as an organisation from which younger LAF members might be recruited.	GP/JW	GP has spoken with BCA – membership Item 2 – this action is on hold as BCA currently integrating with East Berkshire College. Any update GP
13.1	LAF Chairs Meeting took place as a virtual meeting on 11th January and 14th June 2023. JW circulated notes from the meetings, and these are included in the papers for info.	JW/GP	Further meeting to be held on 6 th Dec 2023. GP, LH and JW to attend. Meeting notes to follow. Further correspondence received from Natural England LAF Engagement Officer – confirmed RBWM LAF Annual Report for 21-22 has been loaded onto the SharePoint site. Requests to know the types of issues LAF's may want to collaborate on.

6.1	Look into emerging re-development of Ascot High Street engagement	JW/LH	RBWM Planning Policy are currently undertaking stakeholder and community engagement to help them prepare the concept design for Ascot High Steet and SPD. Further public consultation on the Draft SPD and preferred High Street option is likely to be in late Jan/Feb 2024. LH was unable to attend the Reference Group meeting that took place on 6 th Sept but did provide information guidance information relating to inclusive street design. JW emailed Planning Policy for an update.
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Agenda Item 5: Multi-user Subgroup

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
5.1	Dorney Rowing Lake - RBWM LAF seeking to engage the support of the Bucks LAF in asking Eton College to open the seasonal gates from the Thames Path on event days during the summer with suitable security presence to mitigate congestion and encourage active travel.	GP	Emails exchanged with Bucks LAF Officers, who have agreed to add this request to the March 2024 LAF folder for inclusion at the meeting then.

Agenda Item 9: Informal Consultation for diversion of Maidenhead FP19

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
5.1	Confirmation of LAF response sent on 12 th July 2023 in support of the proposed diversion.	All	Informal consultation now complete and Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel arranged to meet on 14 th December to consider whether to make the order.

Agenda Item 11: Summer Site Visits

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
11.1	The Stakeholder Masterplan Document for AL37 Lower Mount Farm (also known as Land West of Cannondown Road) was approved by Cabinet in March this year, and is now a material consideration for any planning application on	Info	Bellway Homes Planning applications for 200 dwellings on two sites making up site AL37 Cookham have yet to be determined.

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM REPORT - 28 November 2023
 AGENDA ITEM 1(d)

	the site. Land West of Cannondown Road Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (rbwm.gov.uk)		
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Agenda Item 13: Any other business

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
5.2	Access to Sashes Island (Cook/FP65) via the permitted path across the EA bridge. No evidence of historical agreement of permitted path. PRoW officers have been pushing for access to FP65 to undertake inspection as it's possible for people to access the path via the river.		SW visited with the EA and path was cleared on 12 th Oct by PRoW contractor. Clearance will be done again in April 2024. EA are considering seasonal access. No further update received as EA did not attend last Thames Path Partnership meeting (8 th Nov).

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The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum
Secretariat: Jacqui Wheeler, Parks and Countryside Access Officer Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St. Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1RF
Email: prow@rbwm.gov.uk
Local access forums Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (rbwm.gov.uk)

Mr Steve Gillions

19 October 2023

Dear Steve.

Thank you for your email. I am very sorry that you are resigning from the LAF, I fully understand your reasons for doing so. You will be sorely missed.

I would like to offer my personal thanks for all your support and wise council during my tenure as chairman.

Your contribution to the working groups both in time, the sharing of your extensive knowledge of the public Rights of Way network and broad list of contacts is going to be missed by both the groups and the wider LAF.

I am pleased that you will be attending the next meeting. This will give us all the opportunity to thank you in person and wish you well for the future.

Kind regards

Geoff Priest

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19

Introduction to the Berkshire Local **Nature Recovery** Strategy

A presentation for the
Wild About Datchet
Environment Event 19/10/2023

Rosie Street
Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Agenda Item 3



Who is in the core LNRS team?

- West Berkshire Borough Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Bracknell Forest Borough Council
- Slough Borough Council
- Natural England

Agenda

Section	Time
What are Local Nature Recovery Strategies?	15 minutes
Why recover nature in Berkshire?	5 minutes
State of LNRS and opportunities for you	5 minutes
Q&A	5 minutes

What is a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)?

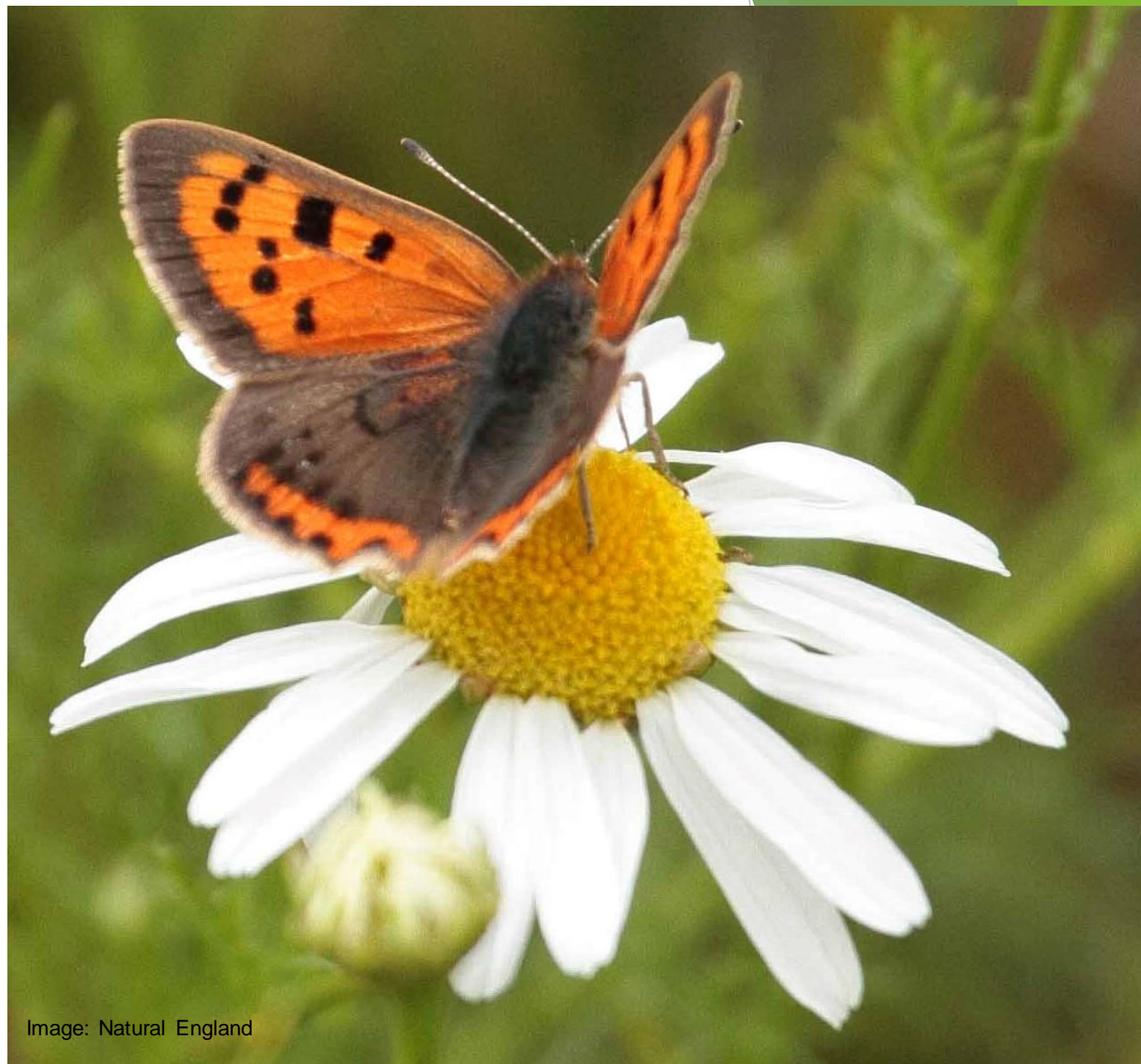


Image: Natural England

Understanding the context for LNRS

- ▶ England's biodiversity is declining*,
 - ▶ 13% of species are threatened with extinction
 - ▶ 36 plant species have become extinct
 - ▶ 35% species in England have seen their populations decrease
 - ▶ 31% species found in fewer places

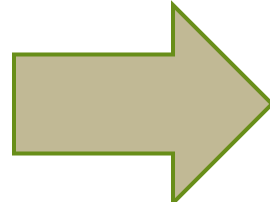
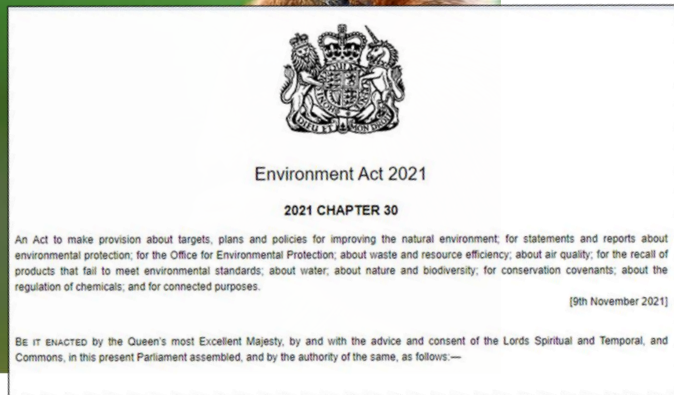
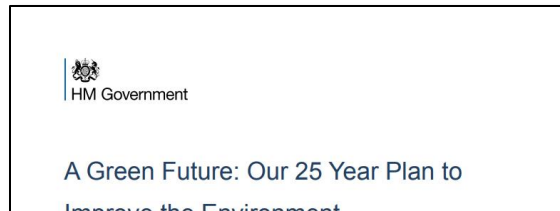
▶ Climate change, some land management practices and development pressures have contributed to this decline

* % decline since 1970



Understanding the context for LNRS

24



Improving environmental quality



- Goal 2:** Clean air
- Goal 3:** Clean and plentiful water
- Goal 4:** Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides

Improving our use of resources



- Goal 5:** Maximise our resources, minimise our waste
- Goal 6:** Using resources from nature sustainably

Improving our mitigation of climate change



- Goal 7:** Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Goal 8:** Reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards

Improving our biosecurity



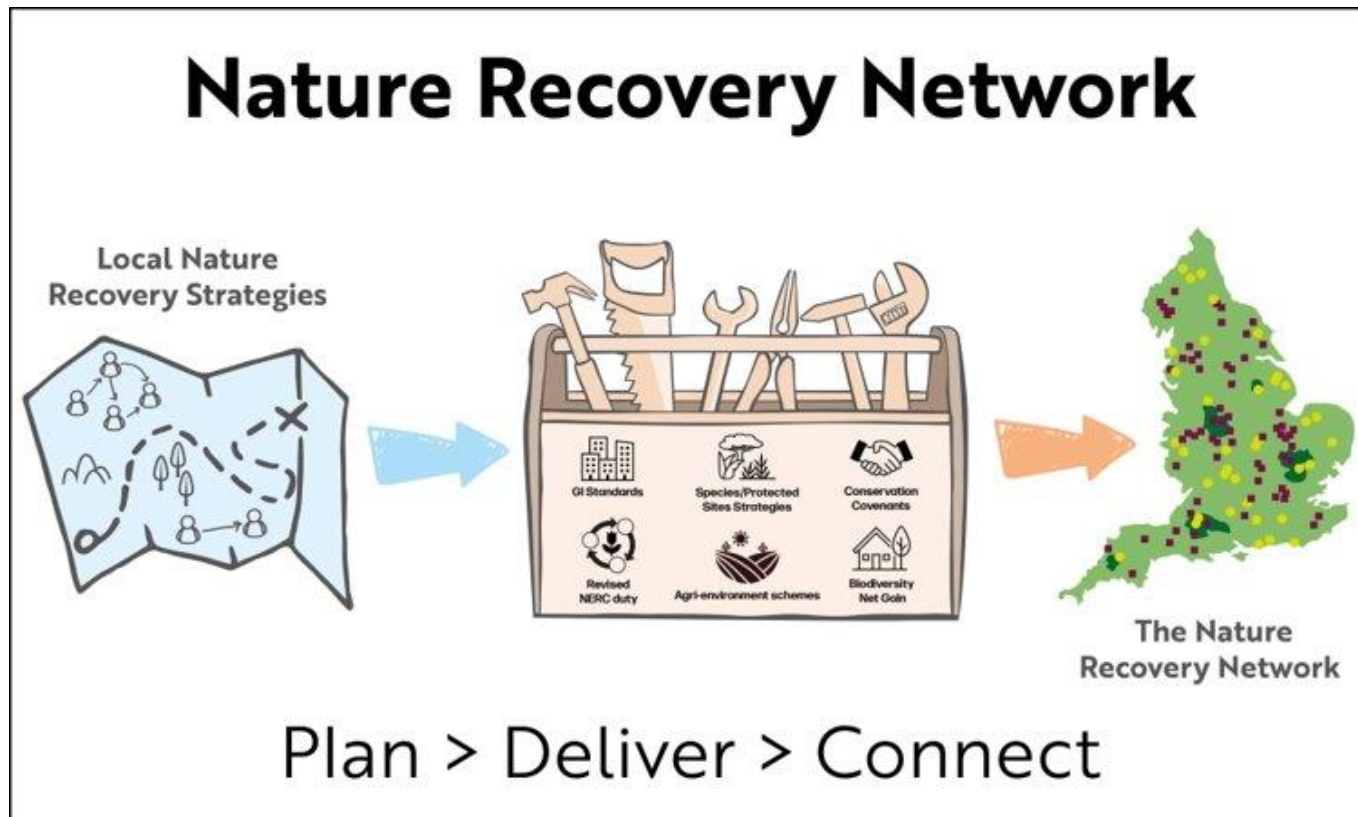
- Goal 9:** Enhancing biosecurity



Goal 10: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment

LNRS - part of the Nature Recovery Network

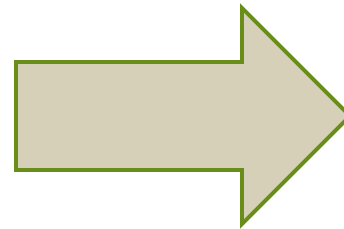
25



What is an LNRS?

26

A new, locally led, transparent and collaborative planning and decision-making tool for nature's recovery



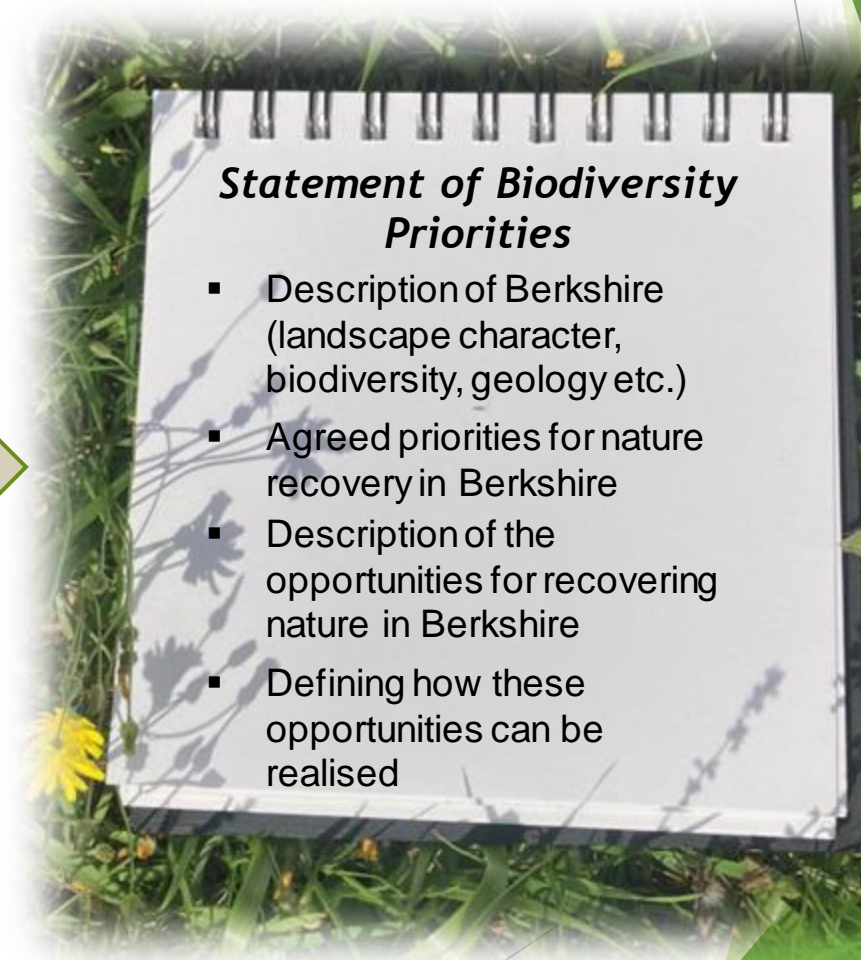
**Local Nature
Recovery
Strategy**

**Statement of
Biodiversity
Priorities**

Local Habitat Map

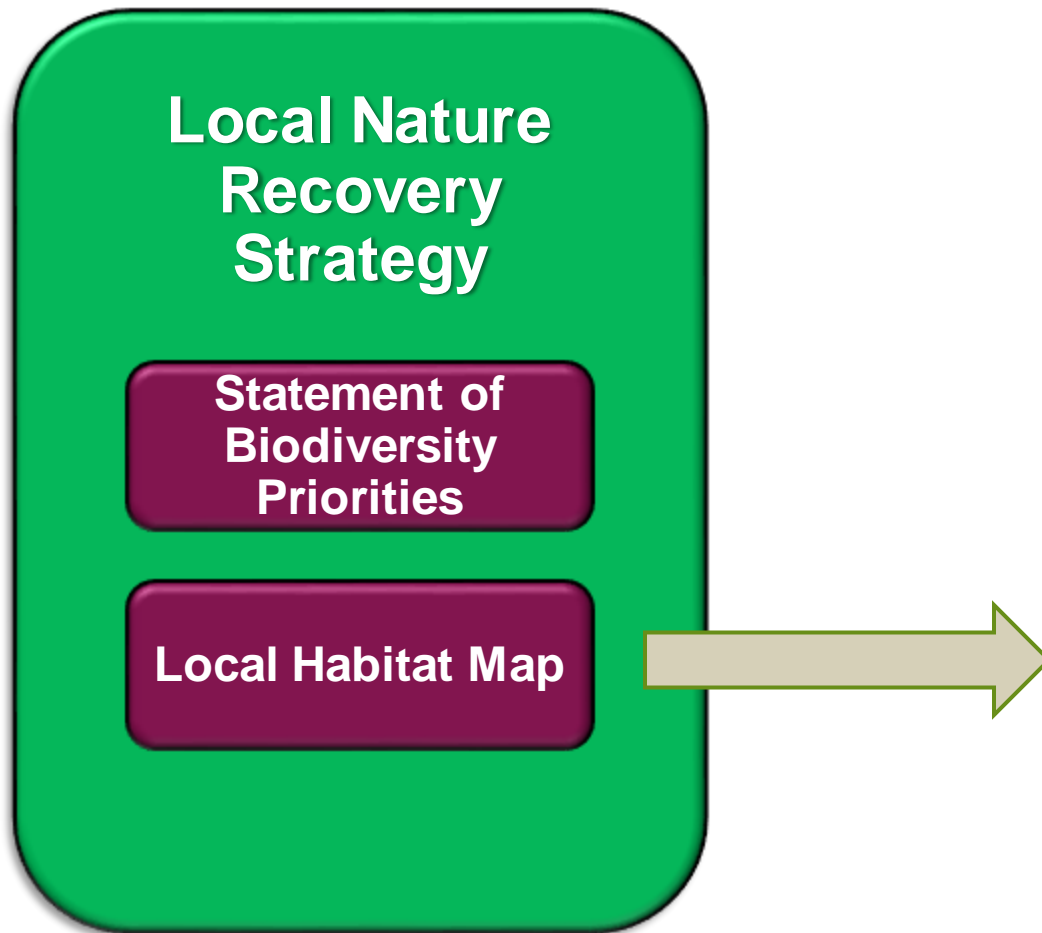
What is in an LNRS?

27



What is in an LNRS?

28



Example LNRS output – the Cornwall LNRS Pilot

CORNWALL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

OUR PRIORITY MEASURES & OUTCOMES

For the next five years the following will be our collective **priorities**. We have distinguished two measures for each priority: to **Enhance & Protect** existing high-value habitats in Zone 1; and to **Create & Restore** in priority opportunity areas in Zone 2, towards extending, defragmenting and connecting the network with corridors. (The method for prioritisation and zoning is described in Appendix 1.)

SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES:
WE WILL ENHANCE, PROTECT, CREATE & RESTORE...

WETLAND AND NATURALISED WATERCOURSES
A dynamic, healthy and more connected wetlands, floodplains, ponds & watercourses are naturally functioning, whilst supporting diverse species, flood resilient communities, and fulfilling their blue carbon potential – especially peatland.

WOODLAND AND ANCIENT WOODLAND
An increase in woodland cover which is well managed, more connected and linked by resilient corridors with the right tree in the right place, protected ancient sites, and all woodland types supporting a diverse community of species.

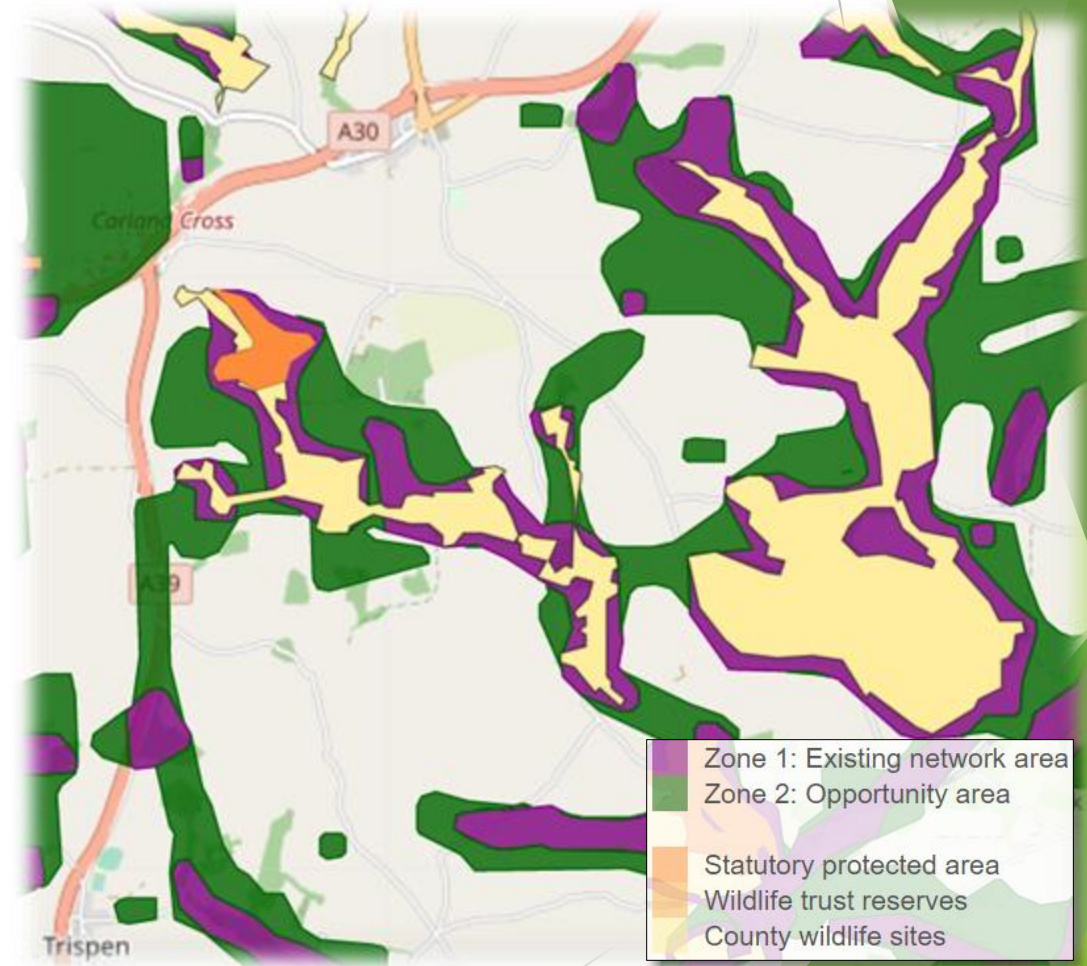
CORNISH HEDGES & EDGES
A wider, wilder and more joined up network of Cornish hedges and edges with enhanced canopy cover and uncultivated margins that is supporting diverse species to feed, breed and move.

HIGHER NATURE VALUE FARMLAND & WILDLIFE-RICH GRASSLAND
Less intensive, regenerative practices are enhancing habitats for increased biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable food production – including on non-marginal land. Wider and wilder margins are established, connecting wildflower-rich grasslands and pollen & seed-rich crops in a mosaic with other semi-natural habitats like scrub.

OUR COASTAL FRINGE
A continuous, buffered, nature-rich coastal corridor that joins up the coast to establish a climate resilient and adaptive coastal fringe of dynamic dunes, natural wetlands, and species-rich cliff-tops, slopes and intertidal habitats.

SOILS
Our soils are protected from erosion, compaction and loss by careful management and efficient use of crops and inputs – capturing and storing carbon, efficiently cleaning the air and water, and harbouring diverse fungi, bacteria & invertebrates.

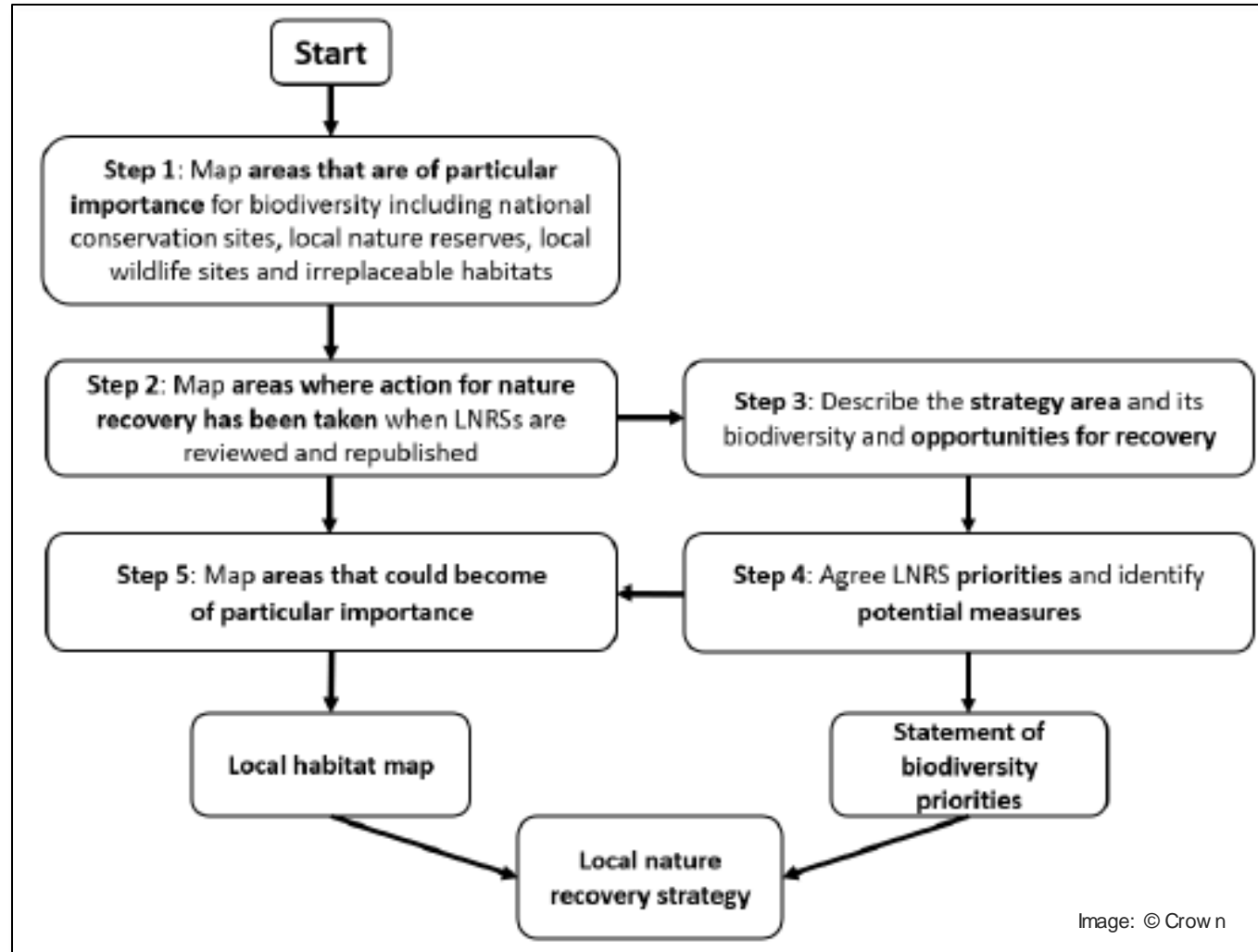
57



Images: Cornwall LNRS Pilot

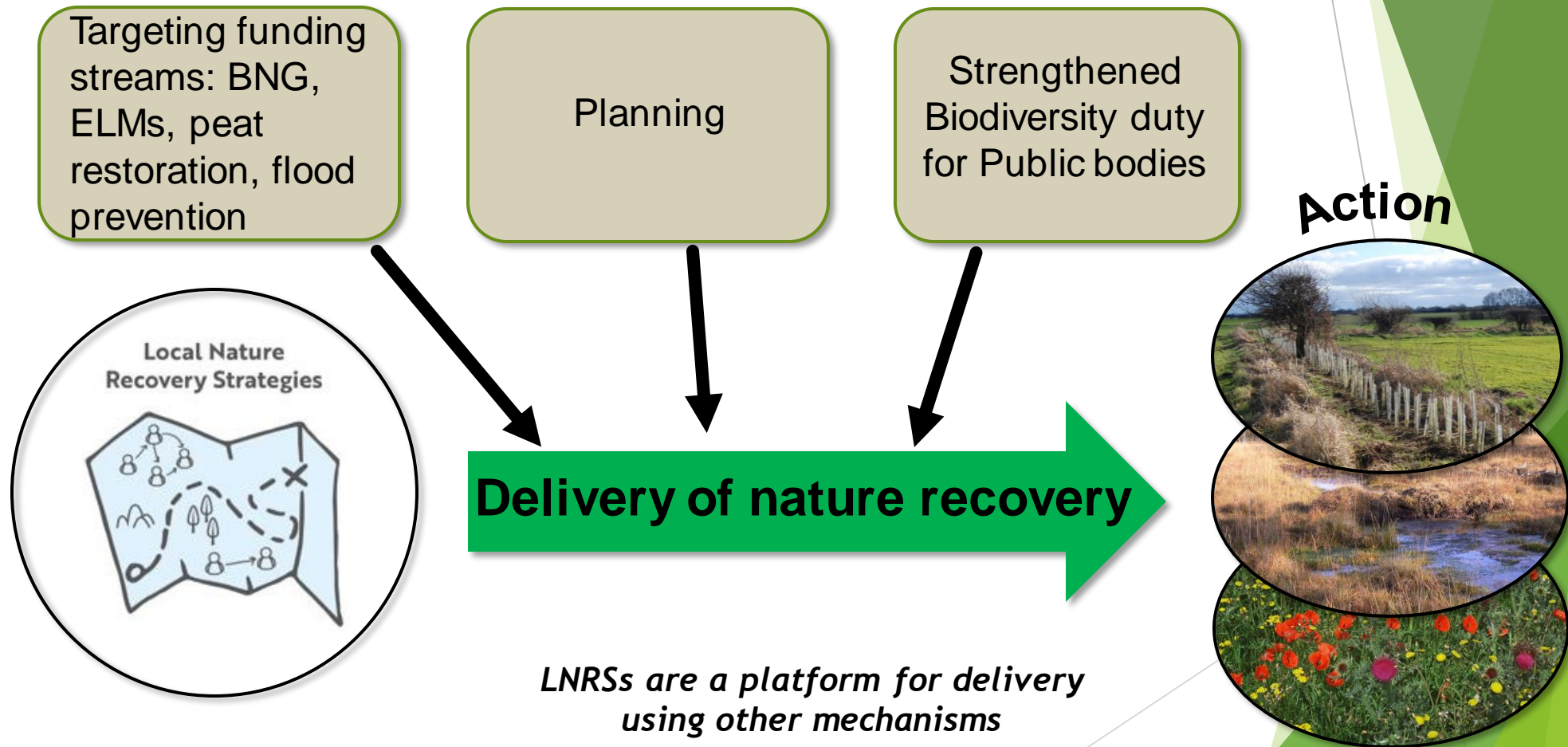
The LNRS development process

30



How will the LNRS be used?

31



Summary: what an LNRS will deliver!

- ▶ More, bigger, better and more joined up wildlife spaces for biodiversity to thrive
- ▶ Ecosystem services:
 - ▶ Health and well being
 - ▶ Cleaner air
 - ▶ Cleaner water
 - ▶ Healthier, more resilient soils
 - ▶ Flood prevention
 - ▶ Carbon sequestration

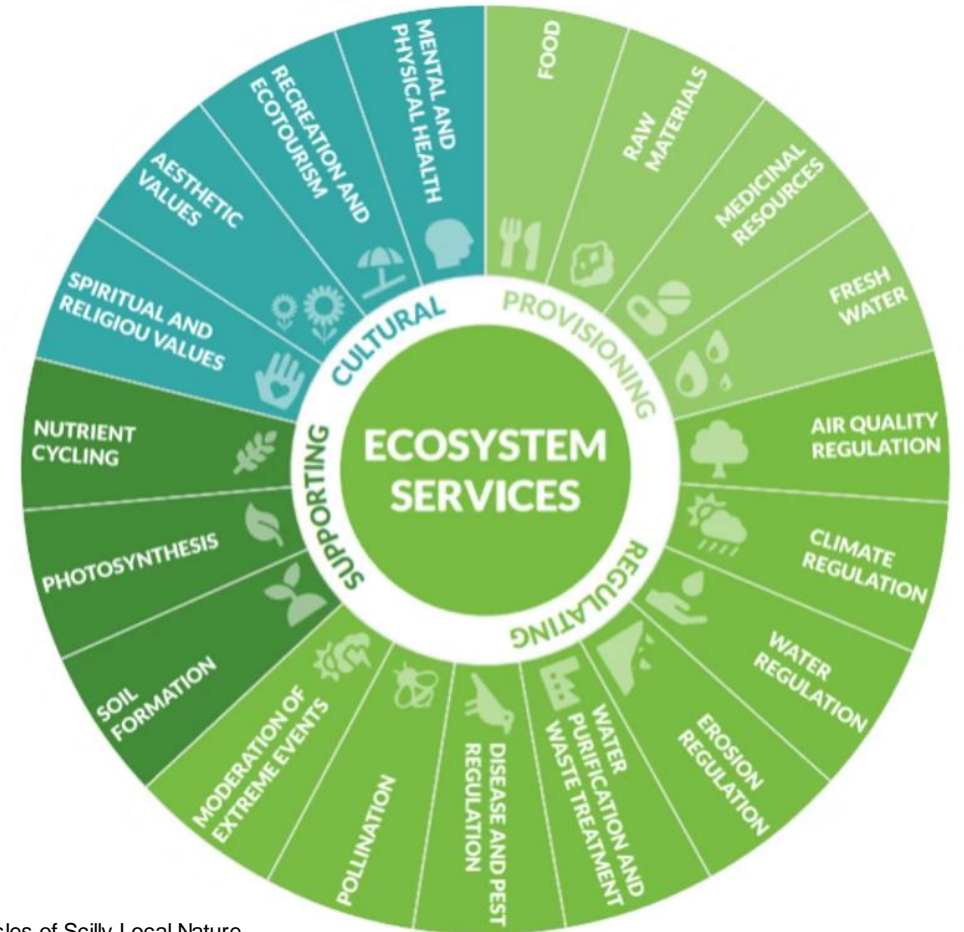


Image: Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership

The Berkshire Nature Recovery so far

- ▶ Governance structure
- ▶ Baseline of nature for Berkshire
- ▶ Planning engagement strategy



35 Our Steering Group

- Berkshire Nature Partnership
- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
- Wokingham Borough council, representing Berkshire ecologists
- West Berkshire Council representing local authorities of Berkshire
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- NFU (National Farmers Union)
- The Crown Estate
- University of Reading, Head, Agri-Environment Group
- The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead - Climate Change and Biodiversity Cabinet member

Stakeholder Engagement Working Group	
Lynn Hughs	BBOWT, Education Manager
Alistair Will	Engagement Manager, Natural Environment Team at RBWM
Chris Moriarty	Councillor and Consultation Champion, RBWM
Steve Wilkes	Director, TVERC
Sarah Thornley	Thames Catchment Partnership, Maidenhead to Teddington Catchment Coordinator
Lorna Clark	Forestry Commission
Potential members	
Charlotte Hitchmough	Director, Action for the River Kennet
	Thames Basin Heath Partnership
	South East Water Catchment

Our Stakeholder Engagement Working Group

Mapping Working Group	
Julie Gill	Bracknell Forest Borough Planning Policy
Mark Worrington	Reading Borough Planning Policy
Ian Motuel	RBWM Planning Policy
Howard Albertini	Slough Borough Planning Policy
Ian Bellinger	Wokingham Borough Planning Policy
Bryan Lyttle	West Berkshire Planning Policy
Dan Tritton	BBOWT - Senior Biodiversity and Planning Officer
Paul Temple	Application Administrator - GIS - RBWM
Steve Wilkes	Director, TVERC
Lorna Clark	Forestry Commission
Potential members	
Corinna Woodall/Henry Oliver	North Wessex Downs AONB
	Natural England
	EA Flooding team

Our Mapping Working Group

Farmer and Landowner Working Group	
Nick Manderfield	East Berks Agricultural Society, NFU
Karen Davies	Natural England
Ben Gibbons	NFU, County Advisor for Berks, Bucks and Ox
Piran Borlase	Ecologist at AWE
Rosie Salt-Crockford	Rural Surveyor at CLA
Greg Wilkinson	CPRE
	National Trust
	Crown Estate
Potential members	
Nick Wallis	Newbury and District Agricultural Society

Our Farmer/ Landowner Working Group

Provisional timeline



Summer 2023 -
**Creating governance,
baseline map
creation**



Autumn 2023 -
**Introductory
Webinars**



Winter 2023 -
Consultation period 1



Spring 2024 -
**Analysis of
Consultation 1**



Spring 2024 -
Consultation 2



Summer 2024 -
**Habitat Map creation
and working group
draft reviews**



Summer 2024 -
Priority list creation



Autumn 2024 -
LNRS publication

What are the opportunities of the LNRS for you?



Recorders - contribute valuable information



Residents - have your say in consultations



And so much more!

SUTHERLAND GRANGE



BATTLEMEAD



BRAYWICK



OCKWELLS



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ENGAGEMENT

Social Media - Instagram, Facebook

Website - RBWM Together

Events - PlasticBlitz, Pond Dipping, Harvest Festival

Volunteers - Bat, Pond, Hedgerow Surveys



30 BY 30

CURRENT - 26%

43

30% of Land

Woodlands + Grassland

Protect + Connect

Hedgerows + Waterways

Prioritise targets by their progress towards 30 by 30

HABITAT ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

PROGRESS METRIC

45

GREEN - Completed

ORANGE - In Progress/On Track

RED - To be Started/Reviewed

DARK GREEN - Ongoing

Specific, **M**easurable,
Achievable, **R**elevant,
and **T**ime-Bound

GRASSLAND

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Grassland HAP Progress



PROGRESS TABLE

Objective	Target	Responsibility		Target date	2023 Progress
		Lead	Partner		
Understand the distribution of Priority Habitat grasslands and the species they support	1. Survey 25% of grassland LWS in five years to inform priority habitat distribution, condition and carbon sequestration	TVERC	RBWM	2025	Awaiting results from TVERC/Have received some habitat assessments
	2. Survey at least 20 sites for each of the associated species in five years to better understand their distribution	Wild groups	RBWM, BBOWT	2025	Wilds to choose sites for surveying.
Identify opportunities to increase the distribution of Priority Habitat grassland	3. Survey at least 5ha of potential priority habitat grassland sites with the aim to propose new LWS	RBWM	Wild groups, TVERC	2025	Potentially with mandatory BNG January 2024 - wait for LNRS opportunity areas. Needs budget and landowner consent.
	4. Identify 10% of other grassland creation or enhancement that can be managed to develop into priority habitat	RBWM	RBWM, Developers, Farmers, Landowners	2023	Potential BNG involment
Identify opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value and carbon sequestration of existing grasslands	5. Review management plans for all RBWM owned grasslands to optimise opportunities for wildlife (to include recreational areas, roadside verges and roundabouts) and estimate sequestered carbon.	RBWM		Update management plans by 2024	Quarterly meetings between Naural Environment and Parks Teams Verge mapping starting in the near future with the view of updating Tivoli contracts.
Achieve 30 by 30	6. Identify how targets will have contributed to 30 by 30 by 2025 and how much additional grassland would need to be created by 2030	RBWM		2022	Awaiting data from TVERC about HAP proportions within 30 by 30 results.
Increase the area of priority habitat grassland in the Borough	7. Encourage 50% of LWS grassland in positive management	RBWM	TVERC, BBOWT, Farmers	2025	With TVERC to encourage landowners with letters. RBWM have offered consultations and are managing our own grasslands.
	8. Maintain all SSSI grassland in favourable or favourable recovering condition with at least 40% in favourable condition.	NE	RBWM, Landowners	2025	Management by Natural England. Ongoing but unknown and not in our remit.
Increase the area of other grasslands managed for biodiversity	9. Positively manage 5km of roadside verge and roundabout grasslands	RBWM		2025	Wildlife verge scheme to expand. Change wording to m2?
	10. Provide best practice guidance for RBWM grassland areas	RBWM		Provide best practice guidelines by 2025	Management Plans are in place for Borough grasslands. Clarification needed - council land or land in the borough?
	11. New developments to create 20 ha biodiverse grasslands	RBWM	Developers	2025	BNG on new developments - with the Planning Dept and pre-development habitats/condition
Encourage the creation and enhancement of biodiverse grasslands	12. Engage with the National Trust to look at increasing the land owned by them for biodiversity by 10%	RBWM	National Trust, Wild Groups	2025	Quarterly meetings are taking place - 10% out of our remit.
	13. Provide best practice guidelines to other landowners, including private individuals and organisations, schools, farmers and other public bodies.	RBWM	NE, BBOWT, Landowners, Farmers	From 2022	Resources have been shared on all social media platforms, including RBWM Together page, along with an invite for landowners to contact the Natural Environment Team for a free site visit and consultaion.

WOODLAND

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Woodland HAP Progress



STANDING WATER URBAN

Waterways HAP Progress



Standing Water HAP Progress



Urban HAP Progress



Question time



What's next?

Survey emailed shortly -
sign up!

Stakeholder Engagement
sessions coming soon

January 2024

Thanks so
much for
attending
today

Rosie.street@rbwm.gov.uk

[Berkshire's Local Nature Recovery
Strategy | RBWM Together](#)

<https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/Berkshire-local-nature-recovery-strategy>

Berkshire NRN Stakeholders
Stakeholders: farmers, local planning authorities, government agencies, businesses, Non-Governmental Organisations, community interest groups and the public

Berkshire	West Berks	Reading	Wokingham	Bracknell Forest	RBWM	Slough
Public bodies						
Natural England	LA (land managers, planners, etc)	LA (land managers, planners, etc)	LA (land managers, planners, etc)	LA (land managers, planners, etc)	LA (land managers, planners, etc)	LA (land managers, planners, etc)
Environment Agency	Parish and Town Councils	Parish and Town Councils	Parish and Town Councils	Parish and Town Councils	Parish and Town Councils	Parish and Town Councils
Forestry Commission	North Wessex Downs AONB		Schools	Broadmoor Hospital (West London Health Trust)		
TVERC	Schools	Schools	Youth Council	Schools	Schools	Schools
Network Rail	Youth Council	Youth Council		Youth Council	Youth Council	Youth Council
National Highways (Highways Eng AWE)						
North Wessex Downs AONB						Burnham Beeches
Chilterns AONB						
Berkshire Health NHS Trust						
NGO's						
	Newbury and District Agricultural Society					
BBOWT		FOE				
RSPB						
Woodland Trust						
Freshwater Habitats Trust						
Peoples Trust for Endangered Species						
National Trust	Basilidon Park		Finchampstead Ridges		Cookham Commons	
butterfly Conserv upper Thames branch						
Buglife						
CPRE						
Ramblers						
Plantlife						
Nature Space Partnership						
Rewilding Britain						
Wild Trout Trust						
Catchment Partnership hosts	Action for River Kennet	South East Rivers Trust	South East Rivers Trust		Thames 21	Thames 21
Mammal Trust						
Partnerships						
Berkshire Local Nature Partnership	Kennet Catchment Partnership	Kennet Catchment Partnership	Loddon Catchment Partnership	Bracknell Forest Nature Partne	Maidenhead to Teddington CP	Maidenhead to Teddington CP
Big Chalk Programme	Solent mitigation partnership (River Test has a small part in W Kennet Catchment Partnership Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership & Trust)					
Landowners/ reps						
NFU	Local Wildlife Site owners	Local Wildlife Site owners	Local Wildlife Site owners	Local Wildlife Site owners	Local Wildlife Site owners	Local Wildlife Site owners
Crown Estate	Beale Park		Reading Football Club	Syngenta		
Polo/racing clubs	Town and Manor of Hungerford		Johnson & Johnson	Southern Housing Group		
Ministry of Defence				Sylva Homes		
Oxford Diocese				Billingbear Park		
Farmers						
Private organisations/business						
Thames Water	Eling Estate	University of Reading	Farley Estates	Waitrose & Partners	Centrica	Mars
Affinity Water	BioCap	Grundon	Oracle	Hewlett Packard	Colgate	Telefonica
South East Water	Atomic Weapons Establishment		Industrial Estates	3M	Legoland	Ferarri
Ethos EP	Englefield Estate			Panasonic	Volvo	Lanes Group
Cemex	Wasing Estate			Private fisheries(Binfield/Sand Summerleaze		UCB
TV Berks Local Enterprise Partners	Ufton Court			Warfield Park Homes		
UK Power Networks				Wellington College		
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks						
Horse riding/livery stables						
Golf courses						

Ecological consultants

Universities/colleges

FWAG

CLA

Voluntary Groups

County Recorders	NDOC	Conserve reading on wednesda	Hedge and woodland conserva	Binfield badger group	Windsor & Maidenhead conse	Datchet village society
Berkshire Ornithological Club	Bucklebury heathlands conserv	Reading urban wildlife group	Wokingham without environme	Bracknell conservation volunte	Windsor & Maidenhead urban wildlife group	
Berkshire Conservation Volunteers	East Ilsley conservation group	https://nature-nurture.co.uk/	Earley Environmental Group	Bracknell district urban wildlif	Wild Maidenhead	Evergreen 2000
BRAG	Elm farm group	RSPB Reading	Friends of the Emm Brook	Hedgerow & woodland conserv	Wild Cookham	
Berks Mammal Group	Greenham & crookham cons. V	Reading district angling associ	Wokingham District Veteran Tr	Bracknell Forest Natural Histor	Wild Datchet	
Berks & Sth Bucks Bat Group	Kennet valley countryside project		Lavells Wetland Trust	Warfield Environment Group	Ascot Wildlife	
Berkshire Moth Group	Pang valley conservation volunteers		Loddon Fisheries and Conserva	Wildlife in Ascot	Wild Eton Wick	
The Conservation Volunteers	Speen conservation group		BENHS	Blackwater Valley Countryside	Binfield Badger Group	
Binfield badger group	Theale area bird conservation group		Moor Green Lakes Group	Binfield Environment Group	Bisham Barn Owl Group	
	Hamstead Marshall Wildlife Group		Friends of Ruscombe Wood	Wokingham&Bracknell Local G	Friends of Summerleaze Lake	
			Holt Copse Conservation Volunteers		Transition Maidenhead, Maidenhead Eco Action Hub	
Fishing clubs			Feeling Fruity			

Wider Community

Scout Association

Woodcraft Folk (International Falcon Movement)

Forestry Societies

Faith groups

Fitness clubs

University of the Third Age

Ethnic diversity groups

Traveller communities

Rotary clubs

Berkshire Guiding

Bracknell Nepalese Society

Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum

Hackney Carriage Livery

RBWM licenced hackney carriages (taxis) are currently required to be white with a purple bonnet and boot and a large RBWM coat of arms on the side. This livery makes the vehicles instantly identifiable as RBWM licenced vehicles

The RBWM Licensing Panel of 16 October 2023 agreed that consultation should be conducted with taxi users, taxi drivers and all other interested parties as to possible changes to this livery

The consultation can consider whether any changes should be linked to a move from fossil fuelled vehicles to electric/hybrid vehicles so that electric/hybrid vehicles can be identified

DBS Checks on Licenced Drivers

RBWM Licensing are looking to introduce six monthly checks on the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service - formerly known as the Criminal Records Office) records of all RBWM licenced hackney carriage and private hire drivers. This is a requirement of statutory standard (the Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards) which the Council is obliged to implement unless there are compelling local reasons not to.

The RBWM Licensing Panel of 16 October 2023 agreed that consultation should be conducted with licenced drivers, operators all interested parties and residents to determine how this was best achieved.

The views of licenced drivers, operators all interested parties and residents are sought to see if there are any compelling reasons why these six monthly checks should not be introduced at RBWM

Please answer the following questions

Licenced Drivers

1. Are you a RBWM licenced hackney carriage or private hire driver? **YES / NO**

Hackney Carriage Livery

1. Were you aware that RBWM licenced hackney carriages (taxis) are required to be white with a purple bonnet and boot and a large RBWM coat of arms on the side (known as the vehicle livery)? **YES / NO**

2. What benefits, if any, do you think this livery provides?

3. What detriments, if any, do you think this livery causes?

4. Do you think that this livery (choose one option);
 - a. Should be kept as it is
 - b. Could be reduced in some way
 - c. Could be removed entirelyPlease give reasons for your answer

5. As and when RBWM licenced hackney carriages move from being fossil fuelled to being hybrid or electric vehicles (choose one option);
 - a. Should the livery be kept as it is now?
 - b. Could it be reduced in some way to demonstrate that the vehicle is hybrid or electric?
 - c. Could the livery be removed entirelyPlease give reasons for your answer

6. Do you have any other comments on the use of the livery on RBWM licenced hackney carriage vehicles?

DBS Checks on Licenced Drivers

1. Do you know of any compelling reasons why RBWM Licensing should not introduce six monthly checks on the DBS records (formerly known as the Criminal Records Office) of all RBWM licenced hackney carriage and private hire drivers? **YES / NO**

If you answered "YES", please give reasons for your answer

There are two options for the process by which RBWM Licensing can conduct six monthly check on each driver's DBS, as follows;

- a) RBWM Licensing uses the DBS's Multiple Status Check Facility to conduct six monthly checks, or
- b) Use is made of a "DBS Update Service Status Checks" facility provided by the third party

Option (a) will be a significant administrative burden for RBWM Licensing, particularly at the start, as there are approximately 1000 licenced drivers whose details would need to be inputted

Option (b) would be at a cost of £6 + VAT per driver, per year, which would have to be paid by either the individual drivers or by RBWM Licensing. This option would,

however, be far quicker, more efficient and cheaper in the long run for both drivers and RBWM Licensing

2. Do you have a view on which option should be chosen to carry out six monthly checks;

- a. RBWM Licensing uses the DBS's Multiple Status Check Facility to conduct six monthly checks **YES / NO**
- b. Use is made of a "DBS Update Service Status Checks" facility provided by the third party **YES / NO**

3. If you chose option (b), do you think this should be paid for by

- a. RBWM Licensing **YES / NO**
- b. Licenced hackney carriage and private hire drivers **YES / NO**

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Local Access Forum - Subgroup Meeting

Weds 20th September 2023 at 2pm

Braywick Nature Centre

Those present: Geoff Priest, Lisa Hughes, Trisha Mentzel, Martin Richardson, Susy Shearer, Cllr Gurch Singh, Cllr Jack Douglas, Jacqui Wheeler (RBWM)

Notes of meeting

LAF Subgroups came together to discuss the way forward.

[NB: The LAF Guidance 2009 (pub. By Defra) section 4.1 recommends that a forum prepare a forward work programme which sets out priorities and areas of special interest. This does not need to be over-detailed or time-consuming to produce. It can be made available for public inspection and can play an important role in helping to: -

- *ensure that the forum focuses on issues which are the most relevant for the area.*
- *clarify the issues on which the appointing authority(ies) or other section 94(4) bodies would benefit from receiving advice.*
- *timetable when specific matters are likely to be discussed by the forum, enabling the secretary to commission reports or speakers, etc.*
- *inform the public about the work of the forum and assist the appointing authority in recruiting suitable new members.*
- *identify training or other requirements; and*
- *review effectiveness when preparing the forum's annual report.]*

Update on current subgroup projects and any roadblocks.

Accessibility Working group – LH reported work on the Walks for All project has stalled.

There are resource issues; lack of time and knowledge of the **RBWM Together** website. IT support is needed as to how to use the mapping symbols and build the webpages. Most of the content has been produced.

Horse Riding/Multi-user Subgroup – Recognising that opportunities for new provision in the borough are limited, TM reported the following as possible projects to be explored/pursued for multi-use provision.

- Carpenters Wood part of Bisham Wood
- Cannon Lane at Maidenhead Thicket - possible highway verge or National Trust land
- Forty Acres/Wokingham - working with neighbouring LAF's

Cycling groups – MR suggested building on the idea of multi-user routes in conjunction with the LCWIP and asking the WCH and WAMACT for suggestions.

SS thought that the Windsor Neighbourhood Plan mentioned a possible off road cycle path – Winkfield Road – Crown Estate land. MR would share the mapping and LH suggested she could include the suggestion for this route at the Visit Windsor Accessible Tourism Group.

Action – MR share mapping.

Action - JW will request update from RBWM Transport team regarding LCWIP implementation.

Windsor Great Park Event – educational event for all users (cyclists, walkers and horse-riders) to promote considerate behaviour.

Willow Path – existing dual status route (adopted highway and bridleway) adjacent to green belt land up for development under outline planning – site code AL21 & 22. Offers an opportunity for improvements to this multi-use route through planning contributions.

Questions raised as to the quantity, quality and implementation speed of cycling infrastructure and what the new administration’s direction will be on funding for improvements of the active travel network.

Resource Issues

Agreed to request support from the RBWM Communities team for the Walks For All project.

Action: JW to make request.

Action: Agreed TM would contact the local landowner in Bisham to ask for support.

Local Access Forum Forward Work Plan – November 2023 Timeline

This draft forward work plan aims to set out the Forum’s priorities and special areas of interest going forward.

<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Priorities/Areas of Interest/Projects</i>
2023 – Summer 2024	Review effectiveness and prepare LAF Annual REPORT (2022 -2023) - to be approved at 2024 LAF
2023 -	Biodiversity Net Gain/ Green Infrastructure – possible need for training? Volunteer activity/tasks to improve biodiversity on PRow network and POS. LAF funding bids in partnership with local groups?
2024 - 2025	Specific projects – accessibility, multi-user Walks For All project Multi – Use Sub group projects
2024	Engagement with Regional LAF’s and joint working on shared issues (e.g., cross boundary)
2024 – 2025	Engagement with NE and Defra through LAF SharePoint to develop communication links nationwide to further LAF agenda
2024	Review of the LAF Planning Position Statement to ensure it is fit for purpose and updated for the forthcoming development sites. Arrange sub meeting
2024 - 2025	DMS Consolidation engagement exercise. Relevant date is 1 st Jan 2015.
2024 - 2026	Review of Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2016 – 2026 – involving review of the Site-Specific Improvements Appx 7 of the Milestones Statement

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ACTIVE TRAVEL/ LCWIP UPDATES – RBWM Transport Team

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Forum about Active Travel - LCWIP delivery.

2. UPDATES FROM RBWM TRANSPORT TEAM

2.1 **Ascot and The Sunnings**

Active Travel England have funded studies into what walking and cycling improvements could be made in the following two areas:

- Heatherwood Hospital to Ascot High Street and Burleigh/North Ascot (in particular, safe paths and crossing around Heatherwood roundabout)
- Improved walk/cycle access from South Ascot and Sunninghill to the village shops and schools, and Ascot railway station.

These studies are underway and will conclude in early spring.

The outcome of these studies would be to identify what (if any) improvements might be possible and worthwhile, and then to build a business case to attract funding to build.

2.2 **Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury**

New pedestrian crossings are being installed on Horton Road in Datchet, for improved access to the village centre and park.

2.3 **The Windsors and Eton**

- ‘Quietway’ walking and cycling upgrades along Stovell Road largely complete, featuring pedestrian priority crossings over side roads, widened footways and cycle facilities, changed priorities at junctions to calm traffic, modernised tactile paving arrangements for accessibility. A 20mph speed limit will be introduced shortly following a separate public consultation. An intelligent digital sign is displaying how many pedestrians and cycles are using the route in real time, giving us great data about how the facility is being used and also ‘gamifying’ the experience of walking/cycling into Windsor – people feel part of something bigger than their own journey, and it is interesting to watch the numbers go up week after week.
- The borough’s pilot secure cycle storage facility is planned for Windsor Leisure Centre. Planning permission has been applied for and, if approved, the facility would be open spring 2024.
- The planned junction upgrade at A308/Mill Lane/Parsonage Lane linking the quietway into Clewer and Dedworth and the priority corridor to Maidenhead will not now be built.
- Crossing near Trevelyan School. The consultation review for St Leonards Road, Windsor to replace the current zebra crossing with a set of pedestrian controlled traffic lights has been completed.

Please see details below:

- 200 letters were delivered to residents.
- 63.6% of responses supported the proposal of replacing the current zebra crossing with a set of pedestrian controlled traffic lights.
- **Appx 1** - a copy of the report including most common comments and responses.

Councillors have been informed and they support the proposal. We have had an informal discussion with the Police, and they were in favour. A formal consultation with Police will follow.

We are looking to go ahead subject to funding approval.

- A 20mph zone was introduced in the Springfield Road area of Windsor last year, a neighbourhood that is within comfortable walk/cycle distance of the town centre and local shops, schools and services.

2.4 Maidenhead

- The new toucan crossing over St Cloud Way is operational and accessible for pedestrians.
 - The cycle connection on the north side will require a new ramp down to Holmanleaze, which has been designed and efforts to secure necessary land and construct are progressing.
 - The cycle connection on the south side – a new cycle track linking around to Waitrose, is designed but cannot be constructed until works to Cookham Bridge have been completed because the A4 is currently the diversion route.
- A study on options for improved walking, cycling and public realm in Maidenhead town centre has completed and local businesses have had an initial chance to feed back.
 - There were concerns from some businesses about widened footways and contraflow cycle facilities in the centre of the town on Queen St and High St (between Broadway and St Ives Road) as some businesses desire additional on-street parking there and there is not the width to do it all.
 - Instead, improvements will initially be focused at the southern end of the town centre near the railway station, firstly up along King Street to Broadway, and secondly along Queen Street and York Road to the football club.
 - Active Travel England have funded a study of the road junction outside Waitrose, to look at how at the other end of town the new cycle connection from the crossing at St Cloud Way could link into the town centre, as well as how the pedestrian environment could be improved to extend the High Street environment to Waitrose's door, for Waitrose to make a more effective anchor store for this end of the town centre and encourage increased footfall on Bridge St and in Waterside Quarter. Work to this end of the town centre would need to be subject to the study identifying suitable improvements could be made, as well as a future business case and funding bid as it is not currently funded.
- The 'Missing Links' bridge on Town Moor is now complete, connecting the new crossings over the A4 at Kidwell's Park and St Cloud Way to the residential areas in the northeast of the town.
- Our next ambition is to make comfortable walking and cycling connections from these crossings to the north and northwest of the town, and our first step in doing this is to look at the Norfolk Park neighbourhood, creating safe and attractive neighbourhood streets as alternatives to walking/cycling on the main road towards North Town, Belmont and Furze Platt, as well as making it much easier and pleasant for people living there to pop into Maidenhead town on a whim.
 - This could be accompanied by a crossing over the A308 linking Norfolk Road to Belmont Road.
 - Early resident engagement events showed support for better connections and safer streets in the neighbourhood, and their ideas have been fed into options studies.
 - These studies are nearing their conclusion and we hope to consult publicly shortly on their findings.

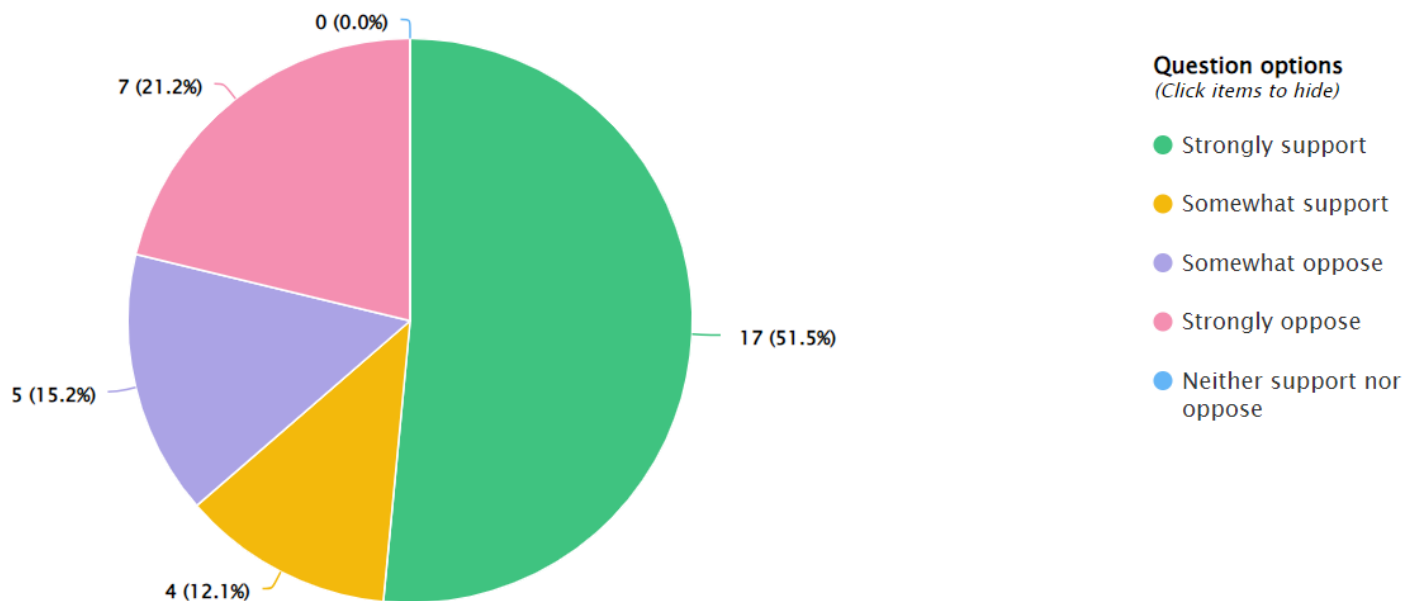
2.5 Status of Active Travel England support and funding

- Regular engagement between Active Travel England and RBWM
- Active Travel England now a consultee on larger developments in the borough
- RBWM is currently graded National Capability Level 1 of 4 which determines the amount of government funding the council is offered, and this has reduced the amount of funding that the council has available to it for active travel schemes compared to other councils. However, RBWM have successfully secured all of the c. £300k that has been available to us so far from Active Travel England, to support delivery of many of the studies and projects described above.

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Consultation responses: St Leonards Rd – Upgraded zebra crossing

Overview



In total 34 responses were received:

- 51.5% of responses strongly supported the proposals.
- 12.1% of responses somewhat supported the proposals.
- 15.2% of responses somewhat opposed the proposals.
- 21.2% of responses strongly opposed the proposals.

Additionally, 26 respondents expanded upon their answers with detailed written comments. The most common comments are documented in the 'Written comments' section, below.

The consultation showed that more people were in favour of the planned improvements than not, and the most common comment was that these improvements will increase safety for school children, also for regular pedestrians and it will improve the traffic flow on St Leonards Rd during school start/end times.

As a result of this consultation:

- We will replace the current zebra crossing with a set of pedestrian controlled traffic lights.
- As this is a residential area the light will be shielded to avoid any pollution into people homes and the beeping sound removed.

Written comments

You told us	Action we will take
<p>#1 Most commented.</p> <p><i>The current roundabout junction between Bolton Road and St Leonard's Road is a bigger issue as there is no raised centre in the roundabout which causes the high speeds along St Leonard's Road and causes many near misses. Very dangerous with large amounts of pedestrian crossing at this junction. Place traffic lights and the lights should prioritise the pedestrians.</i></p>	<p>The installation of pedestrians traffic lights will slow traffic down.</p> <p>There is no raised center due to the size of junction and a raised center would upset balance of large vehicles turning at the junction.</p>
<p>#2 Most commented.</p> <p><i>A 20 MPH speed limit should be introduced in the location of the crossing to improve the safety of the crossing especially due to the distance from the school.</i></p>	<p>The speed limit and the provision of traffic calming in this area will be reviewed.</p>
<p>#3 Most commented.</p> <p><i>A raised pedestrian crossing to improve the visibility of the zebra crossing and provide a speed bump to slow down the traffic to improve safety at the crossing.</i></p>	<p>The traffic lights were considered to be the safer option to answer complaints of vehicles that are not giving way to pedestrians.</p>
<p>#4 Most commented.</p> <p><i>The lights should be pedestrian controlled. To increase the power of the pedestrian as we are losing the zebra crossing which gives the public the right of way.</i></p>	<p>The lights will be pedestrians controlled.</p>

<p>#5 Most commented</p> <p><i>Increase protection for cyclists on the road as there is a danger for cyclists entering and leaving Trevelyan car park. Creating cycle lanes will improve cyclist safety and the flow of cycling to the local schools and Legoland.</i></p>	<p>The provision for cyclist will be reviewed in line with the LCWIP (Local cycling and infrastructure plan)</p>
<p>#6 Most commented</p> <p>WAMACT</p> <p><i>Zebra crossings tend to result in lower delays to traffic, except where pedestrian flows are heavy (which is likely for 10 minutes or so at the start and end of the school day at this location). A signalised crossing will also delay pedestrians more as they must 'beg' to cross by pressing a button and wait for the lights to change in their favour.</i></p> <p><i>WAMACT would much prefer that steps are taken to improve compliance at the crossing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>raising the zebra onto a tabletop crossing.</i> - <i>adding footway build-outs to narrow the road to slow drivers down and increase the visibility of the crossing.</i> - <i>removing the right turn filter to further reduce the potential distractions which drivers experience on the approach to the crossing.</i> - <i>installation of CCTV to monitor the crossing.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As above the traffic lights will be installed to improve safety. - Build – outs will not be installed close to junctions as this put traffic towards to the center of the carriageway. - The right turn lane assists traffic to enter the school car park allowing other traffic to continue. - CCTV will not be installed at the junction.

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Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Public Rights of Way Milestones Targets 2023-24

UPDATED: 14/11/23	
WELL MAINTAINED	
WM1 <i>To ensure that all public rights of way are easy to use by members of the public (former Best Value Performance Indicator 178). Target for 2023-24: 95%</i>	[note surveys undertaken in Spring and Autumn by East Berks Ramblers] Spring survey result: 89.2% * Autumn survey result: XXX%
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>	
Hurley Footpath 4	Vegetation clearance
Maidenhead Footpath 80 The Green Way at Braywick (Volunteer Day)	Clearance of steps linking to the footpath
Path at Braywick Nature Reserve (Volunteer Day)	Surface improvement to prevent flooding
Cookham Footpath 48	Surface improvement
Sunningdale Bridleway 1 (Parish Council to fund)	Surface improvement
	Total: 4
WM3 <i>To repair or replace 7 bridges.</i>	
Bisham Footpath 15	Bridge replacement
Hurley Footpath 5	Small bridge replacement
Hurley Footpath 5	Bridge repair
Cookham Footpath 48	Bridge repair
Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 38	Bridge repair
Sunninghill Footpath 5	Bridge repair
Hurley Footpath 5 (£1445 just authorised)	Large bridge replacement
Cookham Footpath 48 (need authorisation for funding)	Bridge refurbishment
	Total: 6
WELL PUBLICISED	
WP1 <i>To produce 1 new Parish rights of way leaflet</i>	Total:
Sunninghill & Ascot	1
WP2 <i>To assist others to produce effective promotional material: minimum of 1 new or updated publication.</i>	Total:

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Public Rights of Way Milestones Targets 2023-24

Walks For All Project	1
Waltham St Lawrence PROW leaflet update	1
IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	
AC1 Create 1 new strategic path, either public right of way or permitted, to fill identified gaps in the public rights of way network as/when opportunities arise.	Total:
Historical feasibility study (c.2017) into extending SUND FP13 found. Discussions with PC on way forward and approach to pursue with landowners.	1
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..	
Hurley Footpath 4	New gates replacing stiles
Datchet Footpath 9	Handrail repaired
Hurley Footpath 5	New gate replacing stiles
Hurley Footpath 7	New gate replacing stiles
Eton Footpath 9	Redundant gate removal (landowner agreed)
	Total: 4

Black text – works complete

Red text – works not yet complete

* NB: Spring condition survey was undertaken just after extreme weather incidents so there were exceptional amounts of trees down and flooding.

TEMPLE FOOTBRIDGE OVER THAMES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the situation with the Thames Path temporary diversion due to the closure of Temple Footbridge across the Thames and whether the LAF would like to make representations to the Environment Agency and government on two fronts; to push for funding to be made available for repairs and that an alternative diversion route for the Thames Path be opened.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 Extract from LAF Minutes dated 20th June 2023:

“Alan Keene asked whether the LAF had any further information on the closure of the footbridge over the Thames at Temple. Bisham Parish Council had a report last night that the Environment Agency advised that the crossing may never be reopened and may be demolished which was causing concern to local residents. Jacqui Wheeler advised that her colleague was having conversations with the Thames Path Partnership which the Environment Agency were part of. She noted that it was the Environment Agency’s structure and unfortunately it was one of those wooden span bridges that was coming to end of life. Jacqui Wheeler confirmed she would request an update as it was part of the Thames Path, and they did not want it to be closed.”

2.2 Appendix 1 – GOV.UK News Story “Temple Footbridge to remain closed”.

2.3 The closure of this bridge was discussed at the recent Thames Path Partnership meeting. The following was noted:

2.4 The EA reported they now have a project manager in post specifically to look at this issue and there’s a monitoring system in place to review how badly the bridge has deteriorated. Results are expected next month. They are investigating the possibility of rerouting the Thames Path on to the other side of the Thames for a section if the closure is going to be in place for a long time as the current diversion is not deemed suitable by users (too much dangerous road between Temple and Marlow).

2.5 The volunteer co-ordinator for the Thames Path was looking for local authority contacts who would be willing to join a lobby group to put pressure on the EA and Government concerning the need for the bridge repairs and an alternative, safer diversion route.

2.6 RBWM PRoW team will ask Cllr Reynolds if he would like to be involved in a possible lobby group and let him know the issue is on the LAF agenda.

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[Home](#) > [Access to the countryside](#)

News story

Temple Footbridge to remain closed

Temple Footbridge crosses the River Thames west of Temple Lock near Marlow. Bridge specialists have advised that immediate repairs are not possible.

From:

[Environment Agency \(/government/organisations/environment-agency\)](#)

Published

6 September 2023



On 15 May 2023, the Environment Agency [closed Temple Footbridge until further notice](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/temple-footbridge-closed-until-further-notice>)

due to safety concerns. Since then, the Environment Agency have been assessing what work is required to make the bridge safe. The first part of that assessment is now complete.

History of the bridge

Temple Footbridge was opened in 1989 with an estimated design life of 30 years. Funding for its construction was provided by a range of organisations (private companies, local councils and charities) and through public donations.

When the Environment Agency was formed, ownership of the bridge transferred to us. Responsibility for funding the cost of repairs, refurbishments and the eventual replacement of the bridge passed to the government.

We have carried out inspections, maintenance and repairs, which have kept the bridge in safe use beyond its estimated design life.

In 2019, a structural survey found that some structural elements of the bridge, including the parts the walkway is fixed to, were decayed. This decay was natural and unpreventable. We made significant repairs as recommended by the survey. The survey found that no further repairs would be possible.

Bridge inspections

We recently hired bridge specialists to check the findings of the 2019 survey and find out if any repairs are possible so that we can reopen the bridge soon. We also asked them how we can make sure that the bridge can be used for another 5 to 10 years.

The specialists found that there is no way to safely open the bridge in the short term.

They advised that we may be able to refurbish the decayed parts of the bridge and may not need to replace the entire bridge.

Next steps

We are now progressing with the recommendation to replace parts of the bridge. This will be an extensive project and we will need to dismantle sections of the bridge.

The work will be done during an annual work programme, along with other significant engineering works on our structures used for boating on the Thames.

First, we will hire an engineering contractor to create a refurbishment proposal and estimate costs. We will then request funding from the government to carry out the work.

Although this is likely to be the quickest and most affordable option for safely reopening the bridge, we are not yet able to confirm that or estimate when the bridge will be open.

Funding

Funding for major work on our boating-related structures is provided yearly by the government. We invest this across our 45 lock and weir sites along the Thames and numerous locations in between, including around 100 bridges.

The government allocates us what it can afford, given its other spending priorities. In recent years we have received more funding, which has helped refurbish many such structures.

Many more structures will need refurbishment, and whether this is affordable will need to be considered by the government at the time. With limited funding, we must prioritise work to our most critical structures each year, such as our locks and weirs, which enable the public to enjoy their legal right of navigation on the Thames.

In some cases, such as Temple Footbridge, we may need to temporarily close a structure while we work to both secure the funding and create the capacity in our work programme to bring it back into safe use.

Diversion

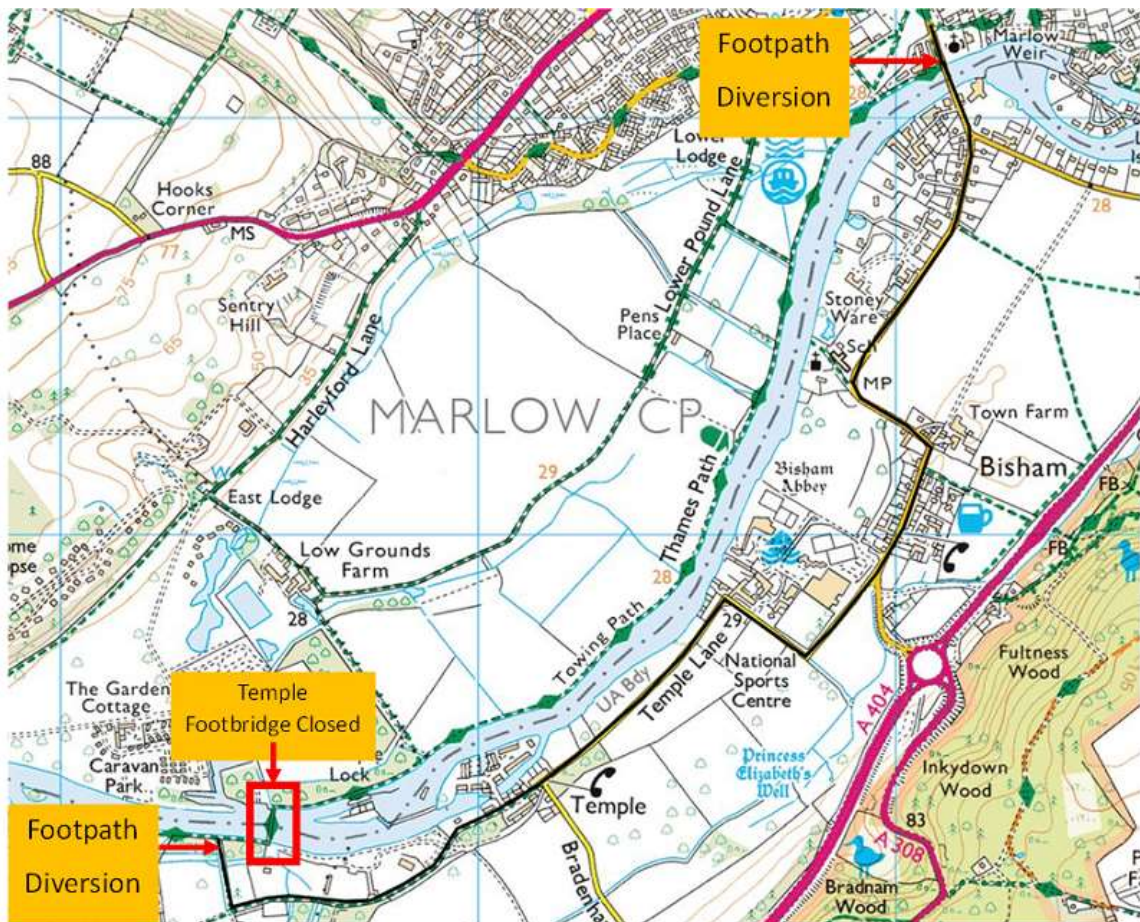
The diversion agreed with the National Trail is still in place. You can find full details of the Thames Path diversion on the [National Trail website](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/short-routes/temple-bridge-closed-thames-path-on-diversion-may-2023-onwards/) (https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/short-routes/temple-bridge-closed-thames-path-on-diversion-may-2023-onwards/).

The diverted route follows:

- Temple Lane
- Marlow Road
- Bisham Road

The diversion rejoins the Thames Path:

- at The Causeway in Marlow
- near Temple Footbridge



The existing diversion is the shortest route using public footpaths and highways. It reflects the route users of the Thames Path would have taken before the bridge was built.

Some users have expressed concern because parts of the route do not have footways. The route has been approved by the responsible local authority, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The lack of a footway does not prevent pedestrian use. However, when walking on roads without footways, pedestrians should take sensible precautions as recommended in [the Highway Code \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-pedestrians-1-to-35\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-pedestrians-1-to-35).

Now that we know the bridge will need to remain closed for an extended time, we will look into providing a shorter diversion through private land. This will need the landowners' agreement, and the cost of work needed to make the route safe must be affordable.

We will provide an update in due course.

Contact us

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Telephone: 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

Telephone from outside the UK: +44 (0) 114 282 5312 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm GMT)

Published 6 September 2023

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[Access to the countryside \(/environment/access-to-the-countryside\)](/environment/access-to-the-countryside)

[Parks, trails and nature reserves \(/environment/parks-trails-nature-reserves\)](/environment/parks-trails-nature-reserves)

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REQUEST FROM MID & WEST BERKSHIRE LAF ABOUT THAMES VALLEY CIRCULAR WALK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Forum of a request from the Chair of Mid & West Berks LAF (MWBLAF) to consider a new long-distance route known as the Thames Valley Circular Walk.

2. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Chair of the Mid & West Berks LAF (MWBLAF) seeks to inform RBWM LAF about an unofficial long-distance walk called the Thames Valley Path. This is a circuit of around 180km around Reading, with access by public transport from Reading to the start and end of each leg. It is therefore of particular interest for Reading, though it does not pass at all through Reading Borough.
- 2.2 The paper at Appendix 1 was submitted for information to the recent meeting of MWBLAF, and there was interest in potentially promoting this walk. However, it passes through several other Local Authority areas, so the MWBLAF would be interested in views from the relevant LAF's about the sections in their area, and especially any parts of the route that raise particular issues.
- 2.3 The route appears to pass through the following authority areas: West Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Slough (a short distance), Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell, Wokingham (appears to skirt the border), Hampshire.
- 2.4 Appendix 1 has links to route descriptions on both a dedicated website and Visorando - on Visorando, you can click on 'bigger map' and then zoom in to OS 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 mapping, so you can see the route in detail together with your local authority boundaries.

Proposed action –members are invited to investigate the route where it passes through Windsor and Maidenhead and provide feedback to MWBLAF.

APPENDIX 1

DATE OF MEETING: 20 September 2023

AGENDA ITEM X: The Thames Valley Circular Walk

Prepared by: Simon Pike

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To inform the Forum of a new long-distance walk that circumnavigates Reading

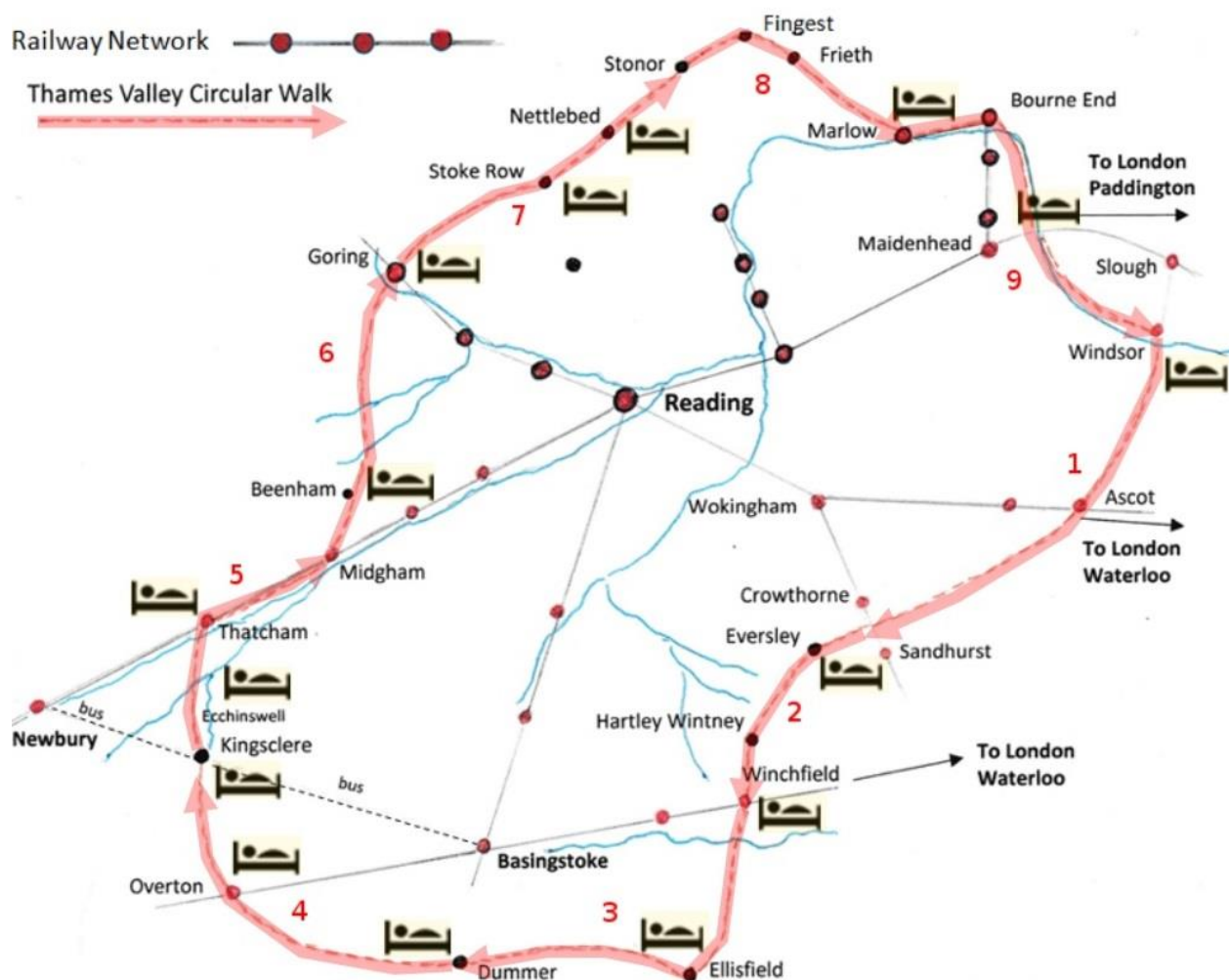
PROPOSED ACTION

- 1) This meeting to note this report.
- 2) Members are invited to provide comments on the quality of this walk to a future meeting of the Forum - which could then consider whether this route might be promoted
- 3) The Chair to inform other Forums through whose area the walk passes.

BACKGROUND

I recently came across a new circular walk on the internet, called the Thames Valley Circular Walk. It is 125 miles long, and passes through the districts of West Berkshire and Wokingham.

Thames Valley Circular Walk



Click the red arrows for details of the stages.
Click the beds for accommodation information.

However, it may be of particular interest to Reading BC, because it is divided into day sections with starts and ends that are all accessible by public transport from Reading.

I found it because the walks have recently been added to the Visorando Website, although it has apparently been available for some time on a dedicated website (the map above is taken from this website).

This route looks interesting, especially as it is entirely accessible as day walks by public transport from Reading. The website also has other circular day walks from railway stations accessible from Reading.

Interestingly, this website is run by supporters of Oxfam. See:

<https://www.roundreadingwalk.co.uk/>

<https://www.visorando.com/en/walk-walks-around-reading/>

The route descriptions have hand-drawn maps; the Visorando site provides Ordnance Survey mapping on both printed route cards and on a smartphone app (you may need to register to see these, but registration and use is free).

I suggest that this route merits further investigation and walking. If it is sufficiently interesting, the Forum (together with other Forums through which it passes) might consider recommending that it is promoted as a long-distance walk, especially given its accessibility by public transport.

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RECOMMENDATION FOR CRITICAL WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Sunninghill and Ascot Parish

August 2023

This document illustrates the recommended improvements to the walking infrastructure in the Parish of Sunninghill and Ascot that would complete the route North West – South East, between the Heatherwood roundabout and the Sunningdale train station.

Background

1. Current network of connections

- a. There is an existing network of Public Right of Way (PROW) connections in RBWM. On the RBWM website at (<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/rights-way/definitive-maps-public-rights-way>) it is possible to find all the maps (the 3 key ones are in the appendix of this document) and the Definitive map statement where all current connections are listed and described.
- b. The borough regularly maintains the network via their 'Parks and countryside team' in which 1.7 FTE are dedicated to the PROW management. The current budget for regular maintenance is £ 60'000 to cover vegetation clearance, emergency interventions, surface repairs, signage replacement, fly-tipping removal, etc. This budget must cover approx. 311 km of PROW in the borough, of which SAPC and Sunningdale represent 21 km (ca. 7%).
- c. The SAPC wants to find the most effective way to provide feedback to RBWM about the maintenance of the current network as a number of routes are in poor state.

2. Improvements to the network

- a. RBWM has issued an Improvement Plan for the period 2016-2026, illustrating their policies for the enhancement of the PROW network and listing a number of specific improvement proposals grouped by parish. This document can also be found on the RBWM website at (<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/rights-way/rights-way-policies-plans-and-progress-reports>) together with a map illustrating the proposed improvements (the one for our parish is in the appendix).
- b. RBWM issues every year a Milestones Statement indicating the objectives and the targets for the management and the improvements for the coming year, which refers to the broader document of the 2016/26 plan. The Milestones statement for 2023-24 was sent to us recently. It does not indicate any particular improvement from the 2016-2026 list for our Parish as being planned for the year 23-24.
- c. RBWM does not have a capital budget for the improvements and relies on 'external funding'.

3. Work from the Cycling and Walking Joint Working Group

- a. In July 2021 the working group jointly created between SAPC and Sunningdale Parish Council has issued a document illustrating the critical walking and cycling infrastructure needed across the two parishes. The priority intervention suggested at the time by the working group (illustrated in the Appendix) was the creation of a continuous route connecting the Heatherwood Hospital in the NW to the Sunningdale train station in the SE.

Work done recently

On Saturday Jul 29th and Sunday Aug 6th, we (Cllr Sanders and Cllr Tavoletti) have inspected the areas around the Heatherwood hospital, South Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale in order to assess the situation and cross reference the recommended routes from the Joint Working Group (3.a above) and the improvements included in the RBWM plan (2.a and 2.b above), and be able to make a recommendation to RBWM as to which of the improvements in their plan should be prioritized. The focus has been on assessing the interventions needed to create *walking* path.

Findings and recommendations

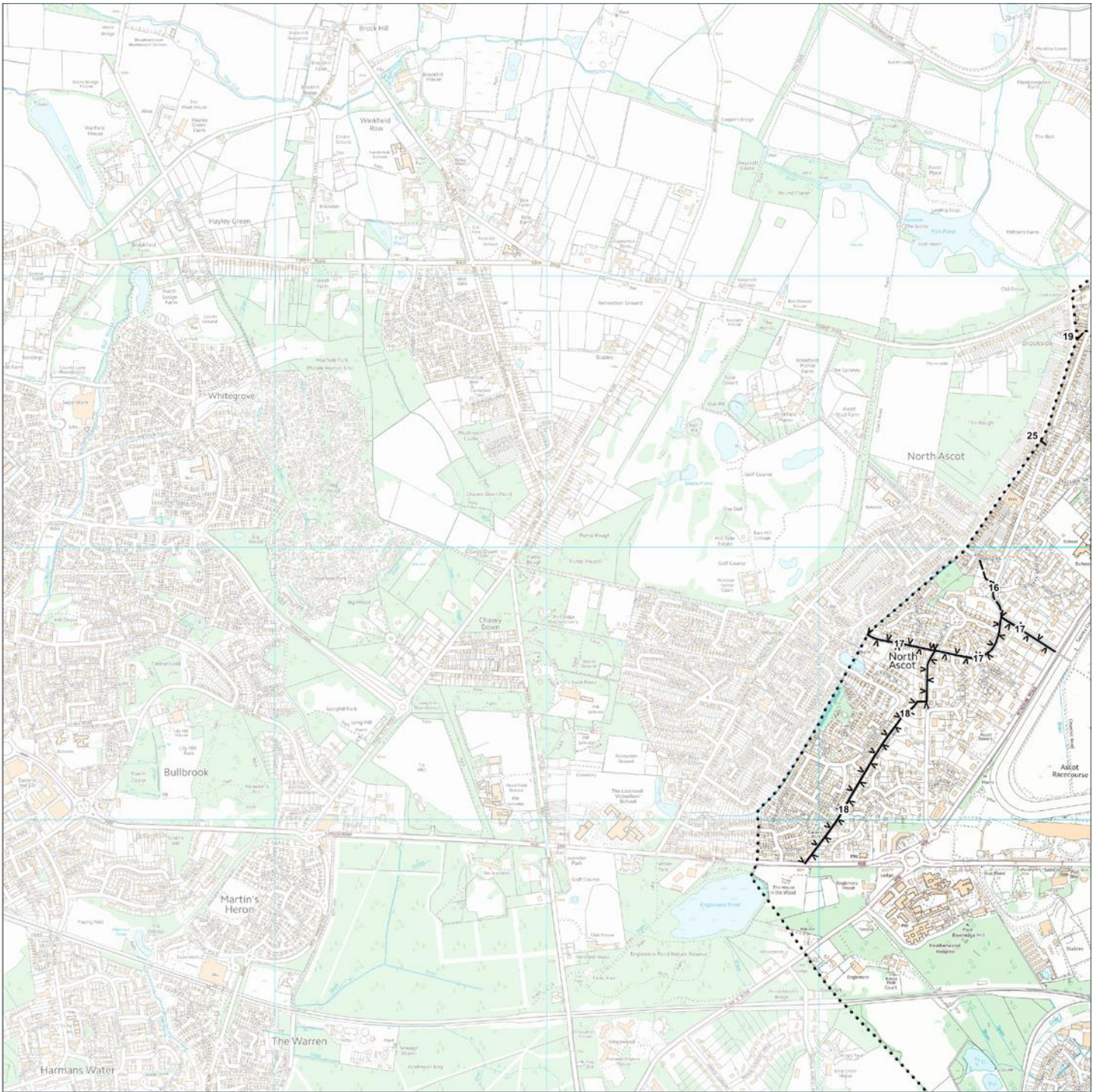
- A. Ascot high street at former Heatherwood hospital → Ascot station. We have walked from the parking on the high street through the racecourse land to the stables and the vast green at the bottom. Despite it gets very close to exit of the underpass of the Ascot station there is no connection to it. We do not see this as a focus area as the alternative route along the high street and down the footpath to the underpass is a very good alternative already existing, safe and illuminated. **Recommendation: do not pursue this for now. Once the Heatherwood housing site will be built there might be enough reasons for RBWM to open this - tbc.**
- B. Kings ride court (to the side of the new Heatherwood hospital) → South Ascot. The footpath on Kings ride Ct crosses the rails onto the south bank but then stops at the entrance of private estates. There is a passageway that points east towards South Ascot but it is unclear if it could lead to the bridge over the north-south railway branch close to Kinross Avenue in South Ascot. **Recommendation: check with RBWM if there is a chance to create a PROW from Kings ride to the bridge.**
- C. Prince Albert drive → South Ascot. There is an old footpath that connects the drive to the end of Kings ride court but it passes through land marked as private - but it should be checked (C-1 on the map). **Recommendation: Check if this land is really private.** There is also a usable path from the end of Prince Albert Drive through Buttersteep forest down to the bridge at the entrance of the forest in South Ascot at the end of Woodlands ride (C-2 on the map).
- D. Sunningdale station → Beech Hill road. This is an existing footpath (#13 in the maps) but is poorly maintained. **Recommendation: we should flag, together with Sunningdale Parish Council, to RBWM that it should be cleaned, the grounds levelled, and the vegetation cleared.**
- E. Beech Hill road → bridge close to Kings Road surgery. There appears to be a way to extend the footpath that terminates at Beech Hill Rd along the north bank of the railway up to the bridge at Kings Road surgery. **Recommendation: engage with RBWM representatives to discuss this further in person + include this in our list of 23-24 priorities for RBWM - this is the improvement #72 in their 2016-2026 plan.**
- F. From bridge at Kings road → Cavendish meads and / or Bridge road. This would be on the South bank of the railway and would complete the connection to Sunninghill High street. There seems to be space and technical feasibility to make these connections. **Recommendation: engage with RBWM in person to discuss how to make these parts happen + engage with the developers of Sunninghill Square to see how they can support. These two potential connections are also listed in the 2016-2026 RBWM PROW improvement plan as # 55 and # 56.**
- G. Overall we also recommend to increase the amount of signage on poles/walls/grounds/fences to help walkers discover about the existing paths.

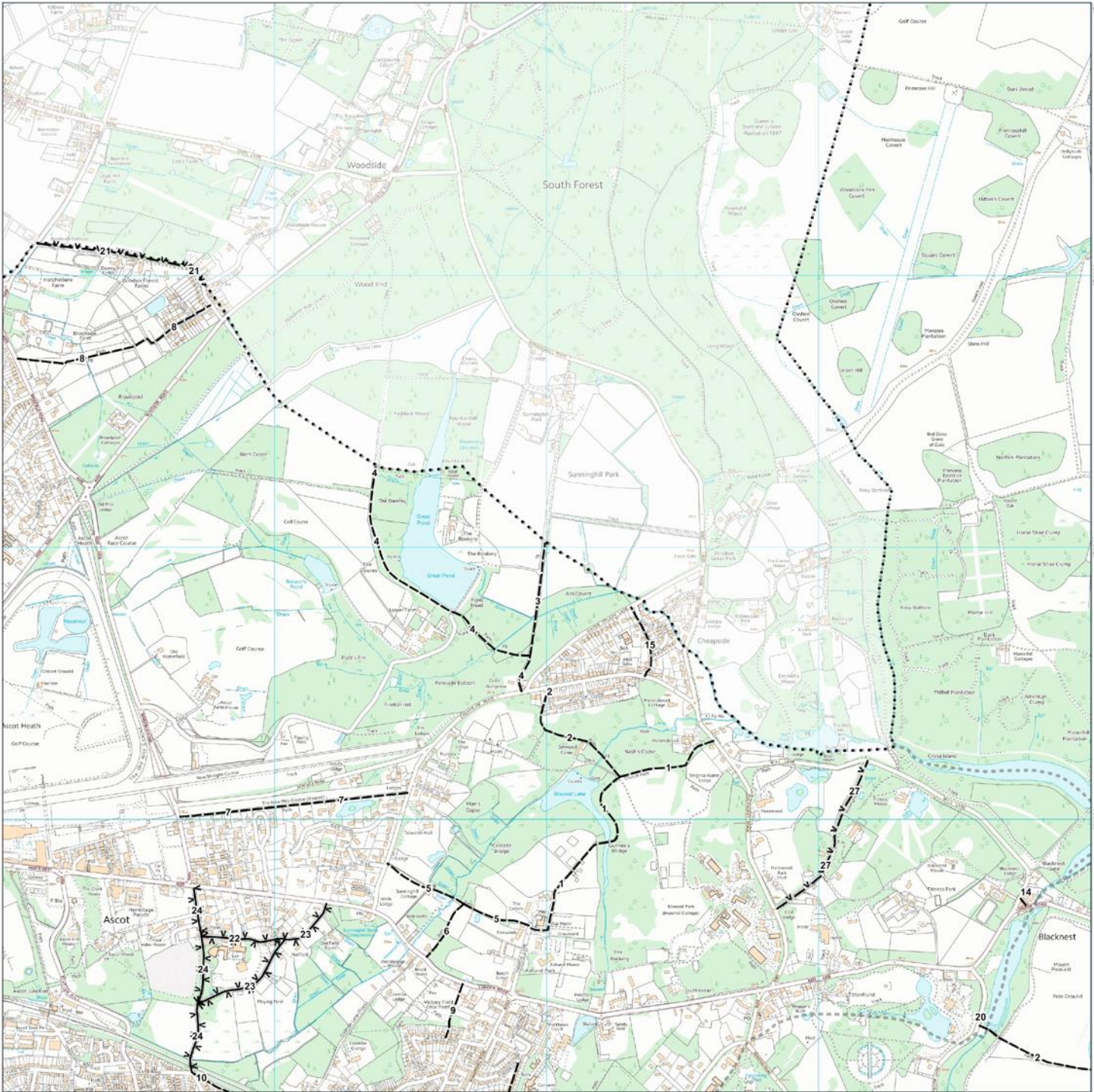
Riccardo Tavoletti
David Sanders

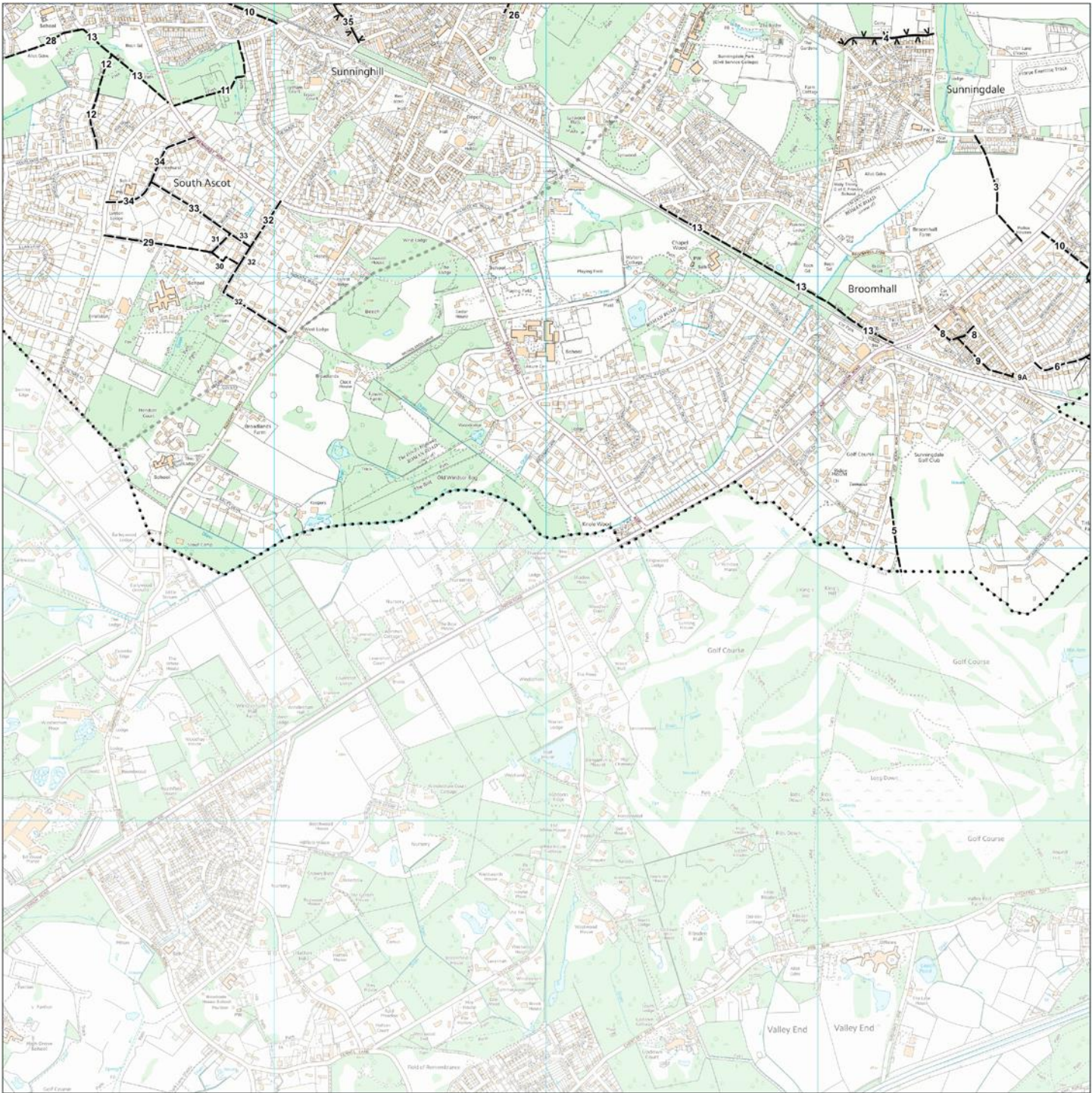
August 2023

APPENDIX

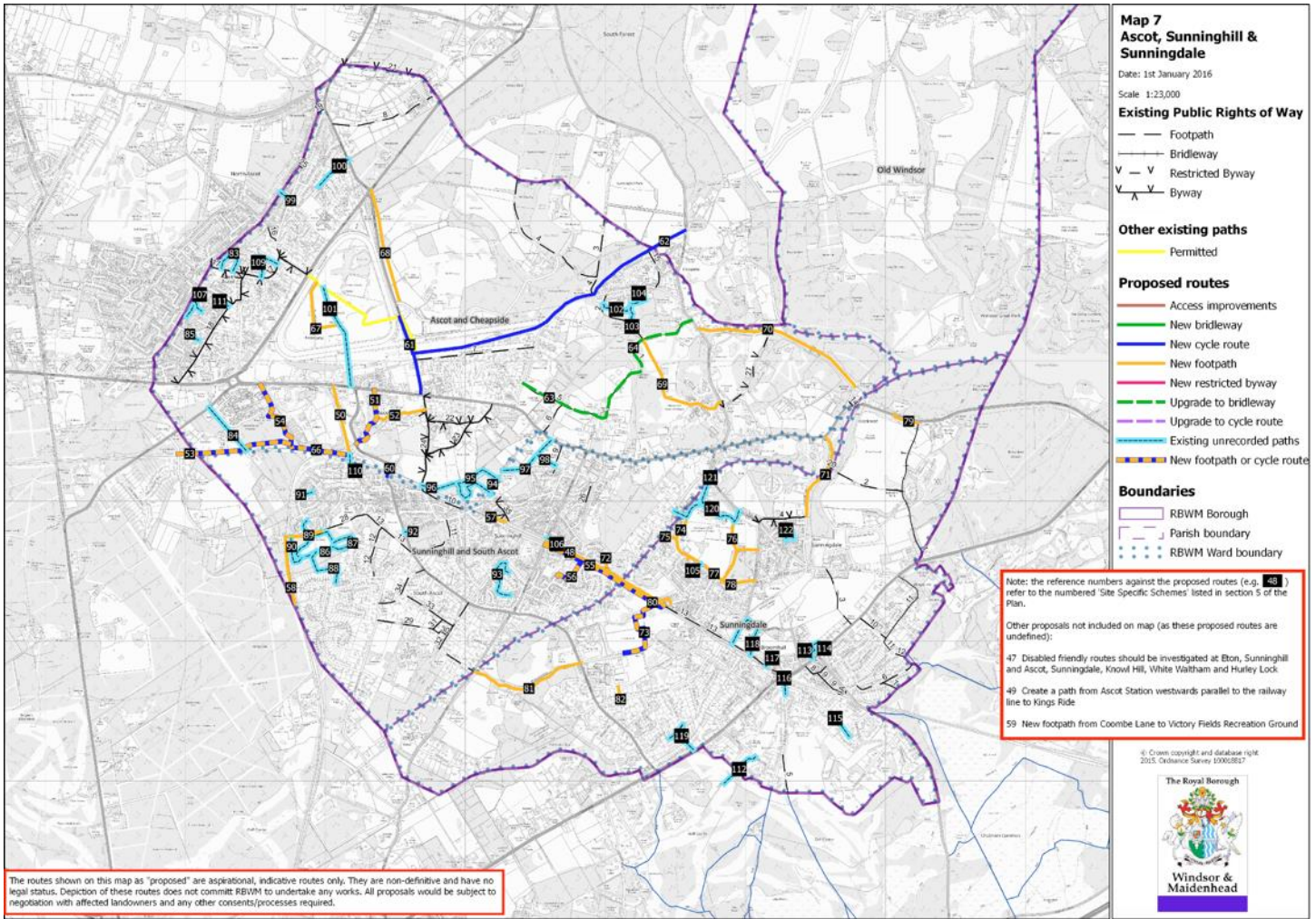
- MAPS OF CURRENT NETWORK -



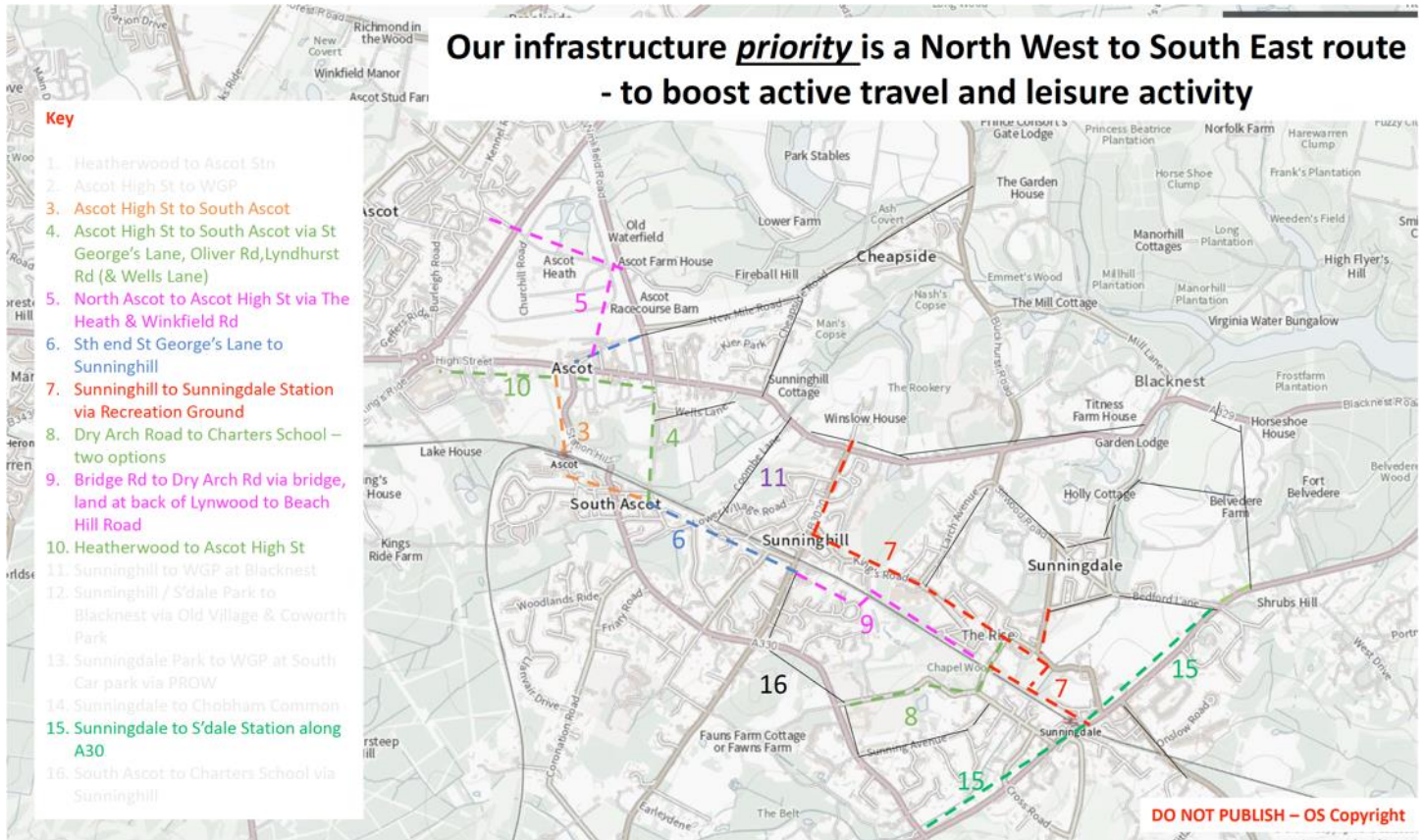




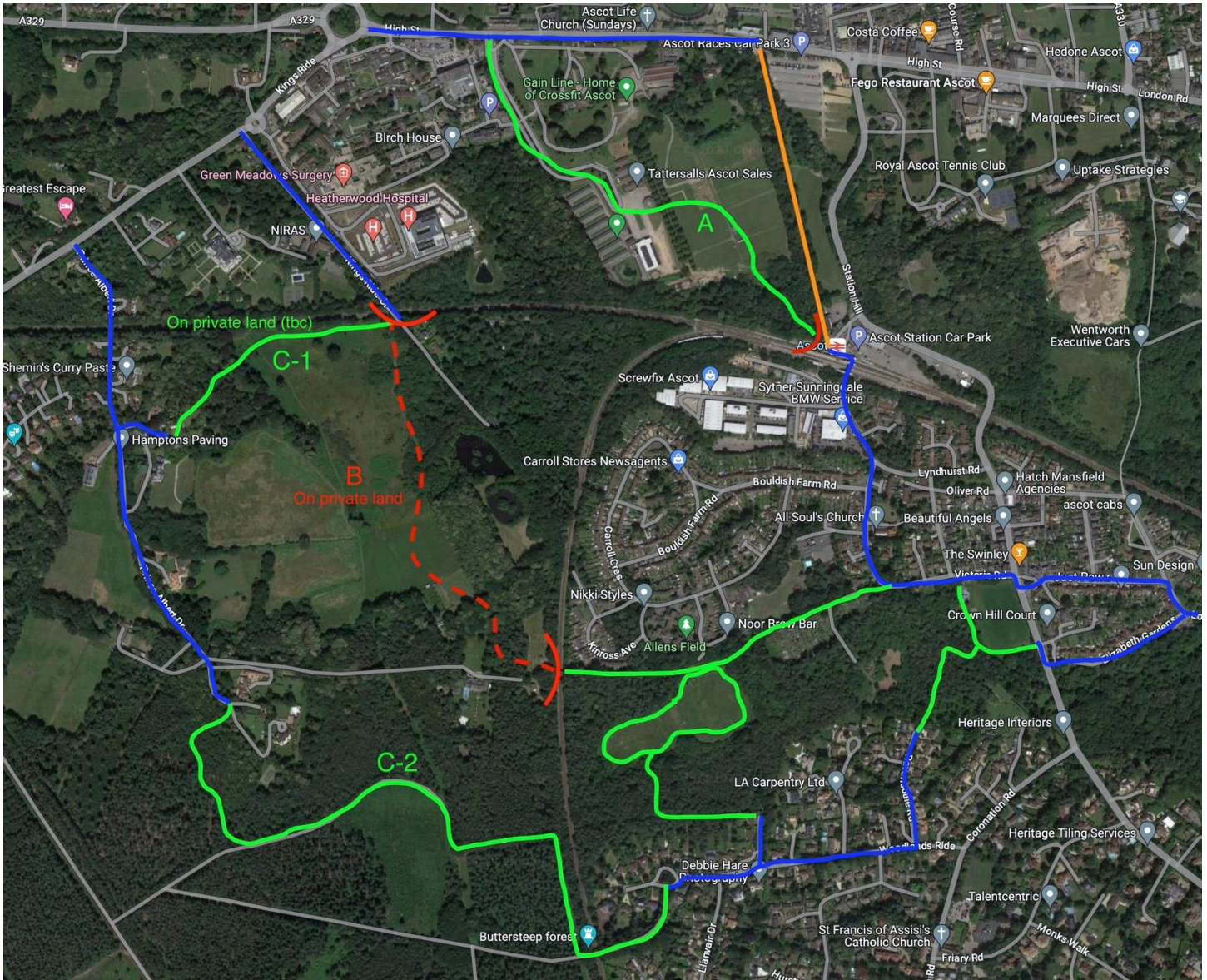
- MAP OF PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS IN RBWM 2016/2026 PLAN -



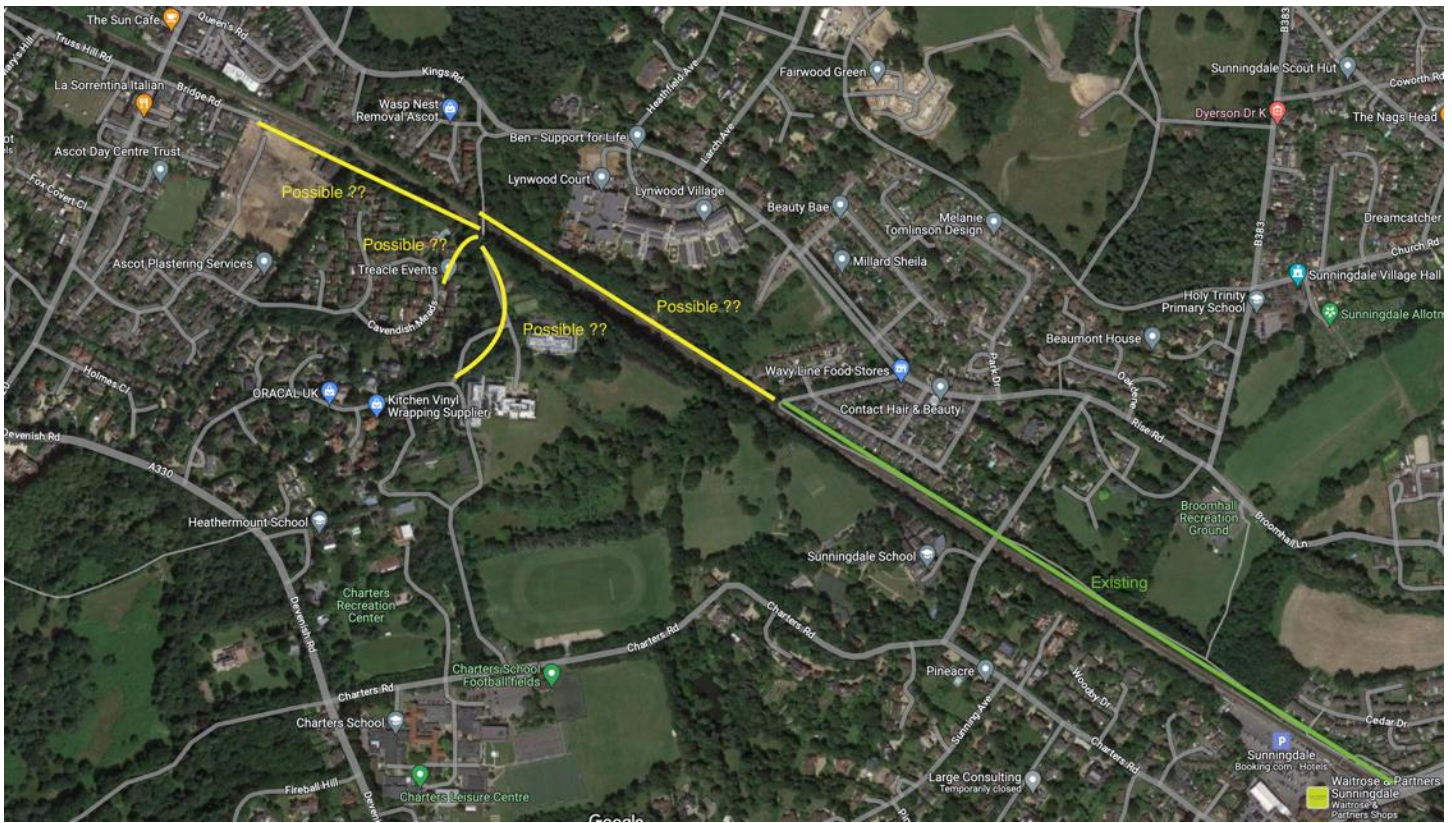
- CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT WORKING GROUP IN JUL 2021 -



- INSPECTED POSSIBLE ROUTES -



Next step is to check if C-1 is really on private land, check if we can create a PROW on the path B.



Next step is to engage with RBWM and Sunninghill Square in person to assess the feasibility of the yellow connections above.

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