

LAF Access Report

Notes from the joint working group meeting 16 June

Purpose.

- To set out a way forward for optimising the PROW network for all users, including those with different ability levels and to make some initial practical suggestions to upgrade to,
 - A multiuser route
 - Cyclist to equine use
 - Walker to Cyclist use
 - Improve walker access for disadvantaged users.

Principles

- The current network is comprehensive, but we should look to cover active management and development as well as maintenance. Targets for improvement should focus on:
- Safety issues, especially those caused by increased traffic volumes and speed
- Linking/completing networks
- Joint use where appropriate and practicable, eg width, path surface, signage, safety, seasonal impact on natural surfaces
- This is not just a PROW team matter. The Council will need to participate in a corporate way: highways will be key to safety issues; planners on new/rerouted paths arising from development (and possibly income?)
- Encourage engagement with Neighbouring boroughs to establish cross boundary routes

Issues

- Different user groups need to understand each other's issues and priorities and agree where we can most productively work together.
- Some improvements could be made outside of the PROW network eg better use of the highways margin. (RBWM have more highway margin than they first thought).
- Tensions between potentially conflicting issues will need to be settled eg access vs wildlife
- Not everything will be possible at once: priorities will need to be agreed
- We need to avoid the risk of focussing on piecemeal individual improvements whilst not addressing longer term/underlying issues eg path specification;
- Other organisations eg Maidenhead Civic Society, will have views.

Initial areas for research

- Green Way, especially with regard to repairs to surfaced areas to enable full usage by wheelchair/stroller users
- Cockmarsh – potential for horse riders access
- Horse riding access on Thriftwood Park (currently under consideration)
- Ruscombe and Waltham St Lawrence bridleway
- Bridleway Willow path Dedworth to Ruddlesway

This is just an initial list which will evolve as the groups either identify insurmountable issues or other more urgent routes come up to consider.

The working groups will be meeting again in a few weeks to agree on the best way to proceed.