

ITEM 4 - Report to Local Access Forum

6 December 2022

Windsor Great Park access

Ramblers groups in Berkshire have recently been discussing what initiatives could be taken to increase public access to recreational areas in the county.

LAF will know that the Crown Estate has provided significant areas with public access in the Windsor Great Park and Swinley Forest and Ramblers are considering asking the Estate whether they would consider designating these parcels of land as Open Access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

This designation would be shown on Ordnance Survey maps and have the advantage of informing members of the public, particularly those who are not familiar with the area, where they were allowed to walk – and so discourage access to those areas where they are not allowed. The Forestry Commission land at Crowthorne Woods is already designated as Open Access land and shown in yellow on OS maps so it would be a public benefit if appropriate Crown Estate lands were added as yellow.

Ramblers are also exploring the possibility of encouraging those who own SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces) to declare their land as Open Access land as this would very much improve information for all. SANGs are designed to attract more visitors by providing enjoyable natural environments for recreation as an alternative to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, which is designed to protect rare bird species. Ramblers are aware of one SANG in RBWM, at Allen's Field near Ascot.

LAF members are invited to express their views as to whether Open Access designation should be sought for the areas mentioned above.

Steve Gillions