

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING MINUTES

24 June 2015

ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Interest area
Peter Thorn	Chairman, land management
Julie Mason	Vice-Chair, walkers, strategy
James Copas	Land management, Copas Farms
Roy Fabry	Cycling, disabled access, SUSTRANS
Harry Hancock	Walking, open spaces, Mid-Thames Ramblers
Gordon Harris	Walking
Councillor Beer	Walking, cycling, Old Windsor Parish Council
Councillor Majeed	RBWM Councillor, Oldfield Ward
Owen Hibben	Land management, National Trust
Tom Jarvis	Land management, Crown Estate
Gordon Marrs	Walking, East Berks Ramblers
Rosemarie Nash	Sunningdale Parish Council (sub for Christine Gadd)
Andrew Fletcher	Local Access Forum Secretary
Tanya Leftwich	Clerk to the Forum

OBSERVERS

Councillor Hunt
Annie Keene
Alan Keene
Valerie Pike

APOLOGIES

Name

Margaret Cubley
John Foulger
Christine Gadd
Andrew Randall
Chris Westacott

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
24 June 2015
MINUTES**

ACTION

1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions, Declarations of Interest

The Chairman **Peter Thorn** welcomed everyone to the thirty-second meeting of the Local Access Forum.

Apologies for Absence were received from Margaret Cubley, John Foulger, Christine Gadd, Andrew Randall, and Chris Westacott.

The Forum approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2014.

Matters arising from last meeting

Andrew Fletcher referred members to pages 1-3 of the agenda.

2 Members' Update

Owen Hibben informed the Forum that the National Trust was putting in more gates to upgrade stiles and that they would be in touch with RBWM officers shortly. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that the East Berkshire Ramblers had funded a replacement gate at Widbrook Common. **Owen Hibben** went on to state that they were experiencing problems with motorised vehicles getting onto the rights of way which they were currently trying to restrict. Again the National Trust would contact RBWM officers to discuss issues.

James Copas informed the Forum that a new gate was needed at Cock Marsh (at the bottom of the track heading towards the railway line) and that he would need a new RADAR lock too for a second gate in the same area.

3 Membership update

General Forum membership

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that two new members had joined since the last meeting:

- Gordon Marrs (walking, East Berkshire Ramblers)
- Roy Fabry (cycling, disabled access, Sustrans)

It was noted that the following members had resigned from the Forum:

- Hilary Essen
- Phil Smith
- Jo Strickland
- Councillor John Stretton

Andrew Fletcher explained that the Forum membership was made up of a balance of six land management interest members, eleven user interest members and 2 'others'.

LAF Fast Response Team membership

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the LAF Fast Response Teams membership currently consisted of four volunteers who looked at issues outside the Forum meetings in order to meet deadlines and reported back to subsequent

meetings. It was noted that these issues tended to be handled via email as it was less time consuming than meeting face to face. **Andrew Fletcher** stated that additional LAF members were needed on the LAF Fast Response Team. The team should consist of two land management members and two user interest members. **Andrew Fletcher** informed the Forum that they currently had one of each one category.

ALL

Andrew Fletcher went onto explain that Julie Mason would be unable to act as Vice-Chair as of next year, but wished to remain on the Forum, which meant the Forum would need to appoint a new Vice-Chair next year.

ALL

4 **Current cycling schemes**

The Forum was referred to page 4 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the current cycling schemes being implemented, and schemes that were currently being planned.

Andrew Fletcher informed Members that **Gordon Oliver** had attended the Forum in the past to speak on this subject.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that he was currently working on the Wells Lane scheme with **Gordon Oliver** as part of a joint scheme. In addition to this a Traffic Regulation Order was being made to restrict the width of traffic to 1.6 metres.

Andrew Fletcher agreed to find out from **Gordon Oliver** whether schools were being provided bikes for their pupils as part of the school cycle parking scheme.

AF

Roy Fabry stated that the multi use routes covered walking, cycling and horse riding, not just cycling and informed the Forum that Sustrans would support the schemes listed as much as possible.

Councillor Majeed stated that whilst the Council did not normally have to provide car parking for developments in the town centre they could look to provide cycle racks. It was suggested that **Councillor Majeed** and **Andrew Fletcher** look at planning applications and current cycle routes / tracks around the town centre to see what could be identified.

AF /
CLLR
MAJEED

Councillor Beer stated that fresh cycle racking had been replaced / added at Maidenhead Station. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that it all linked into the Rights of Way Improvement Plan which featured later in the agenda.

It was **agreed** that a report from the Cycle Forum on this subject (problem areas / strategies) be brought to a future Forum meeting with **Gordon Oliver** in attendance.

AF /
CLLR
BEER

5 **Quiet Lanes**

The Forum was referred to pages 5-6 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the operation and implementation of Quiet Lanes and the experiences of

neighbouring authorities where these schemes to be implemented.

It was **agreed** that as there evidence showed that Quiet Lanes have had limited success in the South-East region it was not considered worthwhile to have a target to create them within the Royal Borough.

6 **Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026**

The Forum was referred to pages 7-40 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to consult the Forum on the ‘Consultation Draft Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Public Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-26.

Andrew Fletcher explained that the Improvement Plan would then go before the Rights of Way & Highway Licensing Panel on the 20 July 2015, then go out to a ten week consultation period, then back to the Forum on the 11 November 2015, back to the Rights of Way & Highway Licensing Panel in December to come into force in January 2016.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that late comments had been received from Ann Darracott and a Bisham Parish Councillor. It was noted that the grey sections in the Improvement Plan were either new sections or sections of the plan that had been changed from the previous plan.

The **Chairman** ran through the Improvement Plan (third draft) page by page and the following was noted:

- Page 16 – **Andrew Fletcher** to provide **James Copas, Owen Hibben** and **Christine Gadd** with a copy of the dog walking leaflet / Code of Conduct. It was also agreed that a copy of the map of recognised paths in Sunninghill be provided to **Christine Gadd**. **AF**
- Page 17 – para 1.12 – the **Chairman** commended **Andrew Fletcher** on the number of days of volunteers works that had been achieved. It was noted that if anyone was interested in volunteering their time to contact **Andrew Fletcher**. **Councillor Majeed** suggested that **Andrew Fletcher** contact local businesses as they offered their staff time off for volunteering days. **ALL**
- Page 23 – **Andrew Fletcher** to suggest that **Gordon Oliver** add ‘cycle refuges on long roads’ into the Highways element of his plan. **AF**
- Page 27 – **Andrew Fletcher** referred everyone present to the seven maps that showed the site specific schemes. It was noted that all schemes needed landowner approval. **AF**

The draft Improvement Plan was **agreed** by the Forum subject to the following:

- Removal of para 1.8 (Quiet Lanes)
- Add in businesses and schools to para 1.12 (volunteer work)
- Add in horse riding to para 3.3 (health benefits)

7 **Multi-user routes and bridleways**

The Forum was referred to pages 41-43 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the current progress towards the extension of the Multi-User Route from Eton

through Dorney and Taplow.

Multi-user route extension Eton-Dorney-Taplow

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that this work was still ongoing and that he was happy to report that no issues had been reported from any of the users.

It was noted that this was renewable by a review on an annual basis.

The Forum was informed that Phase 1 was Eton and Phase 2 looked at linking Eton to Maidenhead via Dorney and Taplow. It was noted that the LAF Fast Response Team had written to Bucks LAF to get a 'missing link' established. The **Chairman** explained that this 'missing link' was established it would create a circular route of approximately 10kms and would be considered a real success.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that three potential routes had been identified (gold, silver and bronze) which could be found on page 43 of the agenda. It was noted that if the Bucks LAF was in agreement the landowner and environmental agency could be approached for permission for horse riders to use the route..

The **Chairman** requested any areas / links suggestions that would offer a valuable scheme to be sent to **Andrew Fletcher**.

ALL

Access to Windsor Great Park

Andrew Fletcher explained that a Pegasus crossing had been installed which could be used by horse riders. It was noted that the timings of this crossing were out of sync (too long to wait and short a time to cross). **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to ask for the timings of the crossing to be adjusted.

AF

It was noted that there might be scope for a similar crossing at the Bisham roundabout.

8 M4 Smart Motorway proposals

The Forum was referred to pages 44-61 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the M4 Smart Motorway proposals being developed by Highways England and the Forum was invited to discuss and prepare feedback to be sent to Highways England.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that they had until the 3rd July 2015 to submit their comments. It was noted that if the bridges were to be widened it could make them easier to be used by horse riders.

Councillor Beer stated that he was horrified by the concept of Smart Motorways but that if the Royal Borough had to have them he hoped recreational activities would increase as a result.

Andrew Fletcher was requested to speak / write to Datchet Parish Council to request suggestions / input.

AF

9 LAF Annual Report & Pro-forma

The Forum was referred to pages 62-71 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the preparation of the annual report and Natural England Proforma for its activities over the past year, and to seek approval from them to be published.

Andrew Fletcher explained that he hoped to send the draft out at the end of the week. It was requested that comments be submitted to Andrew Fletcher by the end of the week.

AF / ALL

Andrew Fletcher requested items for the 'Looking Forward' section of the report. The following were suggested:

- Disabled access (suggested by Councillor Majeed)
- Site visits with Bucks LAF and Slough LAF. **Andrew Fletcher** to circulate a list of suggested joint visits for the Forum.
- That **Owen Hibben** request footfall figures from the Park Rangers with regard to the improvement works from the Church to the Anchor Estate that led to National Trust land completed approximately a year ago.

AF

OH

10 Ramblers' Big Pathwatch

The Forum was referred to pages 72-83 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to inform the Forum about the 'Big Pathwatch' scheme being launched by The Ramblers.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that this was an information item and explained that the Forum was invite to consider whether members would wish to take part in the survey. It was noted that a report to the RBWM Rural Forum was also being prepared.

Councillor Majeed suggested that the subject of volunteering needed more publicity and that it should therefore be presented to the Big Society Panel. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to speak to the Democratic Services team to see how best to progress this.

ALL

AF

11 LAF Monitoring items

The Forum was referred to pages 84-98 of the agenda.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to update the Forum about the status of projects on the LAF regular monitoring list and to seek the Forums advice regarding the members' discussion forum.

Thames Path 'missing link' at Bridge Gardens

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the Thames Path 'missing link' at Bridge Gardens by way of a roadside path was now in place.

Deregulation Bill update

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that the Council was awaiting regulations and guidance before the public rights of way sections were enacted fully.

Volunteer works

The **Chairman** informed the Forum that the Council was looking to extend

volunteer works. It was noted that as these works were organised through the Royal Borough the volunteers were covered for insurance purposes.

Activities of the LAF Fast Response Team

Andrew Fletcher referred the Forum to pages 85 & 86 in the agenda that listed the activities.

12 Feedback from meetings and conferences

SE LAF Conference

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that he had sent the presentations out by email in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the SE LAF Conference had taken place on the 19 May 2015 where it had been reported that cattle attacks were on the increase. It was noted that other items mentioned at the conference included the Deregulation Bill, improving rural businesses, the Ramblers' Big Pathwatch project and a discussion on measuring the impact of bids for funds, specifically cycling in the Chilterns.

Andrew Fletcher informed the Forum that he had a copy of the Natural England engagement plan if anyone wanted a copy.

LAF Chairs meeting

Andrew Fletcher explained that three meetings had taken place to date. It was noted that **Andrew Fletcher** would circulate the action notes he took at the LAF Chairs meeting to Forum members.

AF

13 Date of Next Meeting-

The date of the next meeting was confirmed to be Wednesday 11 November 2015 (6.30pm start in Desborough 4, Town Hall, Maidenhead).

Councillor Beer thanked **Andrew Fletcher** for all his hard work which was echoed by the Forum.

The meeting which started at 6.30pm, ended at 8.15pm.