

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE 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 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Key:

Completed items
In progress
Incomplete

Action owners:

AF	Andrew Fletcher (Public Rights of Way Officer)	AH	Anthony Hurst (Principal Public Rights of Way Officer)
SW	Sharon Wootten (Public Rights of Way Officer)	GM	Gordon Marrs
PT	Peter Thorn		

**Agenda Item 1: Matters arising**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
1.1	Investigate options for improving the crossing point at Bisham roundabout in light of the recent decision by Highways England not to proceed with the roundabout alterations	AF	The control and responsibility for this roundabout rests with Highways England and at present they do not have any plans to undertake substantial improvements to this roundabout. We are awaiting further feedback towards any small scale improvements that may be possible. Their full response is included as Appendix A to this report.

**Agenda Item 2: Members update**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
2.1	Update Katie Sarsfield regarding the safety concerns with the Twyford Road Horse Margin barrier.	SW	Discussed with traffic engineer who has recommended vergemaster bollards at 5m intervals. It has been agreed that the existing wooden rail will stay and bollards will be in addition. Katie has been updated with this proposal.

**Agenda Item 3: Membership update**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
3.1	Vice-chair election to be held at the next LAF meeting in June 2016	AF	This will be added to the agenda for the next Forum meeting
3.2	Write to all members who had resigned to thank them for their time and effort that they put into the Local Access Forum.	AF/PT	Letter sent 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2015
3.3	All members of the forum to get back to AF by <b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2015</b> with regard to membership of the Fast Response Team	<b>ALL</b>	Email sent to all members (17/11) Volunteers for members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geoff Priest</li> </ul>
3.4	All members to respond to AF as to whether they would wish to receive any training and on what matters by <b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2015</b>	ALL	Email sent to all members (17/11)
3.5	Arrange a LAF chairs meeting for March 2016	AF	Meeting has been arranged for 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Agenda Item 4: Rights of Way Management and Improvement Plan 2016-2026**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
4.1	The forum <b>recommend</b> to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel that the draft ROWMIP be published, incorporating the comments received from the public consultation and with the additional amendments suggested at the meeting (listed as Appendix B to this document)	AH	These changes were approved by the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2015 and are included in the published plan.
4.2	Send a copy of the final plan to all forum members once it has been approved by the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on the 7 <sup>th</sup> December	AF	Sent on 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2015
4.3	Investigate options to re-instate a dedicated East Berks Ramblers Thames Path warden	GM	This is currently being investigated with East Berks Ramblers.

**Agenda Item 5: Milestones Statement**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
5.1	The forum <b>recommend</b> to the Council that the following changes are made to the priorities listed in the Milestones Statement for 2016/2017:  - Change the priority to “seek	AH	These recommendations will be reported to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2016

	<p>improvements to the network for horse riders, <i>cyclists</i>, and people with restricted mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add a new priority to “enhance and extend the network through the creation of Multi-User routes”</li> </ul>		
5.2	<p>The forum <b>recommend</b> to the Council that the following changes are made to the priorities listed in the targets for 2016/2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WM 1: remain at 95%</li> <li>- WM 2: remain at 10 surface improvements</li> <li>- WM3: remain at 5 bridges</li> <li>- LD1: No target suggested for this year</li> <li>- WP1: the forum suggests that the wording be changed from ‘people with special needs’ to ‘targeted user groups’ and suggested that this be increased to 3 leaflets. They also suggested the target be widened to include updating and improving the existing leaflets.</li> <li>- WP2: there was no discussion or advice given regarding this item.</li> <li>- AC1: remain at 1 new path</li> <li>- AC2: Remain at 15 physical access improvements</li> <li>- EN1: The forum suggested that the target be reduced to 10.</li> </ul>	AH	<p>These recommendations will be reported to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016</p>
5.3	<p>Investigate whether a monthly update of issues and what had been done to resolve them could be added to the RBWM website which can then be circulated to Forum members &amp; Parish Councils</p>	AH/AF/SW	<p>An update on the milestones targets has been added to the Milestones Statement web page and will be updated after each monthly team meeting. This document will detail particular issues that have recently been resolved.</p>

**Agenda Item 6: Hurley Footpath 18 diversion proposal**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
6.1	<p>The forum responded to the consultation with no objections to the proposal, however they</p>	AF	<p>The forum’s advice was communicated to Berkshire College of Agriculture on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov</p>

	<p>made the following additional suggestions should the diversion go ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Install an information board at the Diana statue in Hall Place giving information about the view, and the history of the statue and Hall Place</li> <li>- Ensure that the gate where the diverted path will rejoin the existing public right of way is easily accessible for the public</li> </ul>		2015
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**Agenda Item 7: Looking forward**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
7.1	(7a) Work with Charters School to improve cycling links to the school	AF	Gordon Oliver is liaising with Charters School to identify areas of improvement, and where public rights of way can be improved to facilitate this
7.2	(7a) Work with Roy Fabry, Sustrans and Gordon Oliver to identify improvements that could be made to the network to improve cycling links	AH/AF/SW	Current projects being worked on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to Wells Lane, Ascot to create a cycle route</li> <li>• Initial feasibility being conducted to create a cycle route between Hurley and Temple using Hurley Footpath 9/Bisham Footpath 21 and private land.</li> </ul>
7.3	(7b) Draft a letter to be sent from RBWM, Slough and Bucks LAF to landowners along the proposed Multi-user route through from Eton to Taplow through Dorney	AF	A letter from RBWM, Bucks and Slough Local Access Forums was sent to the landowner and tenants of the route on 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2016 following discussions with Bucks and Slough. A copy of the text of the letter, and a map detailing the requested route, is included in Appendix C to this report
7.4	Write to Parish Councils to ask them to help identify and prioritise the improvements to be made to the network in their area, in light of the suggestions made in the Rights of Way Management and Improvement	AF	An email to all Parish Council's was sent on behalf of the forum on 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2016, requesting feedback from each parish by <b>1<sup>st</sup> March 2016</b> .

Plan.		
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**Agenda Item 8: South Lincs and Rutland consultation**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
8.1	Respond to consultation: The forum consider that there is not a need for issues to be discussed and taken forward at a national level, or for an England Access Forum to be developed. The preferred approach is for issues to be tackled at a local level, and for effective consultation to each LAF to enable each forum to respond.	AF	The LAF comments regarding this consultation have been sent to John Law from South Lincs and Rutland LAF.
8.2	Provide AF with information about permitted paths that have been lost since the withdrawal of the HLS scheme	GM	Gordon has provided information about the permitted paths that we lost: <i>There was one on my patch (White Waltham) which linked Restrifcted Byway 10 (Breadcroft lane) to Cox Green Footpath 4. It started from RB 10 opposite the property The Old Cottage and went NE along a field boundary to FP 4. It was closed and the sign removed, but now, since 2013, it has been reinstated as a permitted path by BBOWT (Woolley Firs).</i>

**Agenda Item 9: LAF monitoring items**

Item	Action / Issue	Action Owner	Outcome
9.1	Write a letter to the volunteer groups thanking them for all their hard work	AF/PT	Letter sent to all volunteer groups on 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2015
9.2	Write a letter to the Council to thank the public rights of way team for arranging the volunteer works on public rights of way and to encourage the Council to continue and support their engagement. This letter should be copied to Cllr Rayner and Cllr Dudley	PT	Letter sent on 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2015
9.3	Circulate the Highways England response to the request for bridge changes as a result of the M4 Smart Motorway proposals.	AF	This has been included as Appendix D to this report
9.4	All members to consider the	<b>ALL</b>	Email sent to all members (17/11)

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	response made by Highways England and respond to AF by <b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2015</b> with suggestions and thoughts about next actions (if any)		
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**Agenda Item 10: Feedback from training and conferences**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action / Issue</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
10.1	Prepare a briefing note for the forum with feedback from the recent training and conferences attended	AF	This has been sent to all members on 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2015

## **APPENDIX A: Response from Highways England regarding Bisham Roundabout improvements**

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Consultation Report issued for the A404 Bisham Roundabout Improvement.

During the consultation period we received 659 responses, which were reviewed and collated.

The results confirmed that 77% of the respondents agreed that improvement of the A404 Bisham Roundabout is required, but felt the three options presented by Highways England only provided short term benefits and did not provide a long term solution to solve the wider issues that affect this junction and the overall route.

Option 1: Partial Signalised roundabout showed to be the most popular option, which was in line with the feedback received at the exhibitions and in discussions with the members of public, particularly those living locally. However there was a general reservation about all three options and a preference for a longer term solution, such as a flyover or other form of grade separation of this junction.

This view was also shared by the Local Authorities and stakeholders, who confirmed their opposition to the three options and are looking to Highways England to consider Bisham in the context of the A404/A404M corridor as a whole.

Highways England have, therefore, decided that none of the three proposed options should be taken forward in their present form. Further studies will be undertaken to develop longer term schemes, in the context of the A404/A404(M) corridor as a whole and Highways England will work closely with the local highway authorities and other stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the existing junction performance will remain under review to identify whether smaller scale interventions are required to deal with specific issues.

The time frame for an improvement scheme to be completed under the PPP has now elapsed and any further study or scheme will be funded through the future investment programmes.

Your comments will be passed onto the team responsible for the A404/A404(M) at Highways England to be considered during future studies.

**APPENDIX B: Recommended changes to the draft ROWMIP 2016-2026**

1. That the annual Thames Path Risk Assessment no longer needed to take place, but a risk assessment should instead be conducted in response to an extreme weather event (such as flooding), and to ensure that all waymarks along the Thames Path have RBWM telephone numbers on them so that the public can easily report any issues.
2. Item 1.2(b) - the wording to include 'in consultation with the public rights of way team, Parish Councils and the Local Access Forum on major developments'.
3. Item 1.5(c) - the wording to include Community Wardens.
4. Item 2.23 - to add a new target to develop the network using multi-user routes (for horse riding & cycling). *[Post meeting note: a target already exists for creating multi-user routes (2.23(c))]*
5. New Item 3.6 - to add a new target as follows:  
Identified need: improve community responses on issues and problems  
Proposed actions: To ensure the public rights of way signage includes the RBWM telephone number to allow the public to report any issues or concerns.
6. New site specific scheme: The existing Woodland Path be added at Broomhall Recreational Ground to Sunningdale Footpath 13.  
*[Post meeting note: This has been included as scheme 118 in the draft plan]*
7. Site specific scheme 14: Change the wording to specifically include reference to crossing the A404 Bisham Roundabout.
8. Site specific scheme 26 – Change the wording to state “To establish a continuous riverside route of the Thames Path in Maidenhead from the landing steps opposite Thames Hotel to Bridge Gardens’

**APPENDIX C: Copy of the letter sent to the landowner and tenants of the Jubilee River in Bucks regarding the proposed Multi-User Route**

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum (RBWM LAF), Slough Local Access Forum (Slough LAF) and the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum (Bucks LAF) are seeking to extend a multi-user route from Eton Wick, through Dorney, to Taplow.

The aim is to produce a traffic free horse riding route by allowing use of the existing cycle ways alongside the Jubilee River. This is a continuation of the existing permitted multi-user route that has successfully been in operation at Eton for since 2013.

We are writing to you as the landowner of the path to ask whether you would be willing to allow these cycle paths to be opened to horse riders as a multi-user route. We are proposing that this is done on an ongoing 'permitted path' basis which would allow the permission to be withdrawn if needed.

A map of the suggested route is attached to this letter. This also gives details of suggested minor alterations that could be undertaken to allow this use.

We would be grateful if you could respond to this letter and let us know if you would be amenable to this proposal. This proposal is being spearheaded by RBWM LAF and the secretary contact details are included above.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Thorn  
Chair – RBWM LAF

David Munkley  
Chair – Slough LAF

Richard Pushman  
Chair – Bucks LA

## **APPENDIX D: Responses from Highways England regarding the forum's request for bridge adjustments as part of the M4 Smart Motorway project**

### **3 Matters Agreed**

#### 3.24 Public Rights of Way

3.25 It is agreed that existing widths of the Thames Path National Trail should be maintained and that any closures should be kept short and convenient.

3.26 The existing path along the banks of the River Thames runs along the eastern bank and passes under the Thames Bray Bridge. Highways England recognise the importance of the trail and the duration of any closures will be kept to the minimum necessary. Closures of the footpath will be required when construction activities have the potential to put the safety of footpath users at risk; examples may include installing steelwork beams or installing and removing parapet temporary works.

3.27 When the new eastern abutment is constructed the current route will become a work site which will extend from the edge of the water and past the face of the existing abutment. To maintain the national trail, a local diversion will be required to route the path away from the construction of the abutment. For the trail to remain open, the only viable option is to route the path on pontoons or a temporary structure in/above the river. In order to arrange this diversion, approval of the appropriate authorities (e.g. Canal and River Trust, Environment Agency) will be sought. Trail diversions and closures will be advertised in advance and will form part of the finalised CTMP for the Scheme.

3.28 The Local Access Forum (LAF) Fast Response Team notes that there are approximately ten paths which cross the M4 in the borough. They request assurance from Highways England that these paths will be reinstated and put back to the same condition that they are now. Highways England confirms that where the Scheme works impact directly on existing PRowS, the paths will be properly reinstated and returned to their existing condition.

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### **4 Matters Not Agreed**

#### 4.55 Public Rights of Way

4.56 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead wish to see the footway/cycleways over the River Thames Bridge retained and width improved to 3m.

4.57 Highways England intends to maintain and improve the northern footway at Thames Bray bridge but not to the width requested by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The existing width of 1.67 metres will

be improved to 2.5metres as part of the structural solution. This complies with current design standards. The widening arrangement with a 2.5m footway has been configured to closely replicate the existing girder spacings and edge cantilever dimensions as far as possible for reasons of buildability, structural capacity and aesthetics. The resulting edge cantilever is 2.15m wide matching the existing width, and the girders are spaced at 4m compared with the existing 3.81m spacing. Widening in this configuration has been the subject of detailed structural assessment of the existing bridge to confirm the technical feasibility of widening. This assessment has shown that strengthening is required to the existing structure as part of the widening scheme.

4.58 The increase in loading caused by widening the footway further to 3m would be highly likely to increase the amount of strengthening required. The size of structural sections, crane sizes and temporary falsework needed to construct the widening would also need to increase to accommodate the wider footway.

4.59 An additional consideration at this structure is the presence of a high pressure gas pipeline approximately 15m to the north of the structure which cannot be permanently loaded or caused to settle by the bridge and associated embankment widening. Reinforced steepened embankment slopes are required for several hundred metres on the approaches to the bridge to accommodate the wider highway alignment. Therefore further widening the structure, to accommodate a wider footway, would further steepen these embankments which in turn would significantly increase the overall construction cost.

4.60 For these reasons Highways England has designed a 2.5m wide footway on the northern side of the widened structure and approach embankments which is sufficient for shared pedestrian and cyclist use and improves the existing situation.

4.61 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead considers that the Scheme should progress opportunities for improvements to the Thames Path National Trail. Highways England has no plans to undertake work on the trail, itself, at this stage. Should however any be needed to facilitate the bridge construction, the trail will be reinstated to its original condition.

4.62 The Local Access Forum (LAF) Fast Response Team considers that Marsh Lane bridge forms part of an aspiration to improve horse riding in this area, in particular the forum is working towards a Multi-Use Route that will utilise this bridge. This area is heavily used by horse riders. The LAF consider that modifications are needed to this bridge to make it easier for use by horse riders which could easily be folded in to the design of the Highways England works, including building in a sufficient verge width and installing higher parapets on the bridge. The LAF suggests that the British Horse Society are consulted regarding the detailed design of the bridge.

4.63 Highways England has developed the bridge replacement works and associated side road improvements on the basis that such works would be on a like for like basis to the existing situation. The online improvements avoid

the need to acquire additional lands and the DCO application has been prepared on this basis. Widening of the verges to accommodate equestrian usage of the PRow would therefore result in additional retaining works for extended earthworks and design modifications to the bridge to include for 1.8m high parapets. It should also be noted that the visual intrusion element of the Environmental Statement would not have covered the impacts of the suggested upgraded PRow provisions.

4.64 The LAF also notes that Datchet Footpath 1 is used heavily by cyclists as well as walkers and recommend that the opportunity is taken to improve the widths of the path to accommodate this use.

4.65 Highways England has developed the bridge replacement works and associated side road improvements on the basis that such works would be on a like for like basis to the existing situation. However, the cyclist usage of this bridge is recognised and as such the parapet height provisions for the new bridge have been enhanced compared to the existing situation. The parapet heights at Recreation Road overbridge will be 1.4m compared to the existing which are 1.0m high.