

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY: 6-MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT**

AUGUST 1st 2008– JANUARY 31st 2009

1. ENFORCEMENT

1.1. Problems closed and problems reported

Approximately 83 enforcement problems have been closed during the period from **August 1st 2008 to January 31st 2009**, and approximately 69 new problems were reported during that period. A statistical summary of reported, closed and outstanding problems is included in Annexe A.

1.2. Reported enforcement problems currently being investigated

The list of cases below has been extracted from the Council's public rights of way database and shows unresolved cases that have been actively investigated during the report period. Further details of the status of specific cases on this list are available on request.

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Bisham Footpath 8	30/12/08	Metal strut sticking into path from adjacent land
Bray Footpath 28	13/10/08	Stile step loose in ground
Bray Footpath 38	27/01/09	Stile step rotten and loose
Bray Footpath 41	11/09/08	Damage to path caused by utility works
Cookham Footpath 60	02/05/08	Planting issue
Cox Green FP 8	04/03/08	Horse riding on footpath
Eton Footpath 1	16/10/08	Horse riding use along newly surfaced path
Eton Footpath 12	27/11/02	Derelict stile
Eton Footpath 19	25/07/08	Path re-instatement issue
Eton Footpath 2	29/10/07	Stiles in poor condition
Hurley Footpath 28	03/09/08	Unauthorised stile installed
Hurley Footpath 8	27/11/08	Overgrowth
Maidenhead FP 83	07/01/08	Encroachment from adjacent property over path
Maidenhead FP 44	20/02/08	Rat infestation problem
Maidenhead FP 25A	23/07/08	Overgrowth
Old Windsor FP 4	20/08/08	Overhanging tree
Sunninghill Byway 18	07/10/08	Overgrowth
Sunninghill FP 25	04/12/08	Chain link fence out of repair
Sunninghill FP 29	26/11/08	Overgrowth
Sunninghill FP 30	26/11/08	Overgrowth
Walth. St Law. FP 40	14/01/08	Unauthorised barrier
Walth. St Law. FP 40	18/06/08	Squeeze stile difficult to use
Walth. St Law. FP 41	31/10/08	Barbed wire adjacent to path
Walth. St Law. FP 41	09/02/04	Sub-standard stile
Walth. St Law. RB 20	19/01/09	Vehicular use of Restricted Byway
White Waltham FP 20	08/10/07	Stile and surface issues
Wraysbury FP 8C	08/08/98	Various path obstructions

1.3. Reported enforcement problems that have been closed Aug. 1st 08 – Jan. 31st 09

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Bisham Footpath 21	17/09/08	Path misused by mopeds and motorcycles. <i>Closed: Site inspection shows no evidence of use & no damage to path.</i>
Bisham Footpath 29	31/05/02	Horse use: <i>Closed: EBRA reports mud issue in winter not considered a problem</i>
Bisham FP 32	04/08/08	Crop obstruction. <i>Closed: Crops removed and path open.</i>
Bray Bridleway 22	16/04/08	Private property signs erected adjacent to path, causing confusion. <i>Closed: Waymark installed to prevent people from being deterred from using path.</i>
Bray Footpath 27	11/10/05	Stile issue. <i>Closed: EBRA reports stile replaced by gap.</i>
Bray Bridleway 29	20/08/08	Hedge cuttings used to make horse jumps and obstructing the path. <i>Closed: bridleway cleared</i>
Bray Footpath 1	21/05/09	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 1	03/12/04	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 1	17/05/06	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 1	14/05/07	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 1	10/05/07	Path obstructed by overgrowth. <i>Closed: path cleared</i>
Bray Footpath 20	11/12/07	Electric fence. <i>Closed: reported by EBRA as resolved.</i>
Bray Footpath 21	10/05/07	Gate issue. <i>Closed: Gate replaced by landowner.</i>
Bray Footpath 21	13/02/08	Fence erected across path. <i>Closed: obstruction removed.</i>
Bray Footpath 21	18/12/08	Earth obstructing path. <i>Closed: obstruction removed.</i>
Bray Footpath 40	16/11/01	Redundant stile. <i>Closed: Stile replaced by swing gate.</i>
Bray Footpath 40	27/10/08	Chain link fence leaning onto path. <i>Closed: chain link fence replaced by wooden fencing.</i>
Bray Footpath 45	26/06/08	Polo field and canter track constructed on footpath. <i>Closed: Letter sent to landowner about occupier's liability, line of path made clearer for users.</i>
Bray Footpath 45	11/10/05	Stile issue. <i>Closed: EBRA reports stile step issue resolved.</i>
Bray Footpath 46	21/05/08	Paddock fencing erected obstructing path. <i>Closed: fencing moved so that paddock does not obstruct path.</i>
Bray Footpath 49	26/06/08	Stile issue. <i>Closed. Stile is firm but not British Standard.</i>
Bray Footpath 6	21/05/99	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 6	13/02/02	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 6	10/01/06	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 6	17/05/06	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 7	21/05/99	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Bray Footpath 7	17/05/06	Stile problem. <i>Closed: stile replaced by gate</i>
Cookham Byway 70	25/03/91	Fence encroachment issue. <i>Closed: EBRA report – no subsequent reports and consider that issue is resolved.</i>
Cookham Footpath 1	02/07/99	Stile problem. <i>Closed: A kissing gate has been installed.</i>
Cookham Footpath 1	10/08/07	"Dogs MUST be kept on a lead" sign query. <i>Closed: signs are reasonable request in the circumstances and do not require further action.</i>
Cookham Footpath 1	20/05/08	Path surface has been upgraded and potentially to be used by farm vehicles. <i>Closed: not considered actionable as farmer entitled to drive along path; letter sent to landowner re. Occupier's liability.</i>
Cookham Footpath 13	03/03/08	Path obstructed by boulders. <i>Closed: EBRA reports boulders have been removed.</i>
Cookham Footpath 14	05/01/09	Sign overgrown. <i>Closed: cleared by EBRA path warden.</i>
Cookham Footpath 17	23/09/08	Ploughing obstruction. <i>Closed: path rolled and open for use</i>
Cookham Footpath 33	02/07/99	Stile issue. <i>Closed: stile replaced with gate</i>
Cookham Footpath 48	20/07/99	Two substandard stiles. <i>Closed: Both stiles were replaced by kissing gates in 2005.</i>
Cookham Footpath 52	10/07/00	Overgrown. <i>Closed: Cleared by EBRA path warden.</i>
Cox Green Footpath 2	25/07/08	Overhanging vegetation issue. <i>Closed: Vegetation cleared.</i>

Path	Date Reported	Problem
Cox Green Footpath 8	12/06/99	Stile removed. <i>Closed: Not considered an issue as gap allows for better public access.</i>
Eton Bridleway 13	05/04/07	Damage to path from unauthorised vehicular use. <i>Closed: Warning notice displayed against vehicular use.</i>
Eton Footpath 1	25/07/08	Overgrowth. <i>Closed: no problem found on site inspection.</i>
Eton Footpath 27	05/07/90	Fence obstruction. <i>Closed: BVPI inspection, no obstruction.</i>
Horton Footpath 3	22/02/07	Tree fallen from adjacent land blocking path. <i>Closed: reported by EBRA that tree has been removed.</i>
Hurley Footpath 48	12/05/00	Line of path obstructed by pub benches, fencing and tables. <i>Closed. EBRA reports obstruction removed.</i>
Hurley Footpath 4	10/10/03	Stile issue. <i>Closed: EBRA reports stile removed.</i>
Hurley Footpath 62	06/02/95	Horse use damaging surface. <i>Closed: EBRA reports surface in satisfactory condition.</i>
Hurley Footpath 9	15/10/08	Mound of earth over path: <i>Closed: not considered a significant problem for path users</i>
Maidenhead Footpath 61	01/08/99	Barrier problem encouraging use of alternative route. <i>Closed: reported by EBRA as resolved.</i>
Maidenhead FP 61	05/05/03	Stile issue. <i>Closed: EBRA reports as resolved..</i>
Maidenhead FP 44	21/06/06	Barrier issue. <i>Closed: Barrier replaced.</i>
Maidenhead FP 44	14/07/06	Surface damage from utility works. <i>Closed: EBRA reports surface now in good condition.</i>
Maidenhead FP 82	02/12/06	Bramble overgrowth. <i>Closed: EBRA reports issue resolved.</i>
Maid. Bridleway 46	19/11/06	Overgrowth. <i>Closed: overgrowth cleared</i>
Maid. Bridleway 46	10/09/08	Branch overhanging path. <i>Closed: branch cleared</i>
Maidenhead Footpath 4	27/11/03	Entrance of path difficult to negotiate. <i>Closed: EBRA reports issue as resolved</i>
Maidenhead Footpath 9	03/04/06	Fence encroachment. <i>Closed: EBRA report as resolved.</i>
Maidenhead FP 61	05/05/03	Stile problem. <i>Closed: Reported by EBRA as resolved.</i>
Sunninghill Byway 17	07/04/08	Reported encroachment issue. <i>Closed: not considered to be encroachment onto path.</i>
Sunninghill Byway 24	14/08/08	Vehicle and parking issue related to development. <i>Closed: Issue passed to Planning Enforcement.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 1	30/06/08	Complaint about damage to path caused by adjacent fencing works. <i>Closed: no damage found on site inspection.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 1	02/05/08	Iron fencing fallen over footpath. <i>Closed: fencing repaired.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 12	22/02/07	Complaint about damage to the path from vehicles. <i>Closed: Reported by EBRA as no longer a problem.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 19	06/08/08	Wasps nest on path. <i>Closed: contractor dealt with nest.</i>
Sunninghill Footpath 8	11/12/07	Hardcore track has been constructed across path. <i>Closed: track not considered to have adverse impact on use of path..</i>
Sunninghill Restricted Byway 21	16/10/08	Vehicle problems along Restricted Byway. <i>Closed: bollard installed to prevent motor vehicular use.</i>
Waltham St Lawrence Footpath 10	17/09/08	Protruding fence issue. <i>Closed: Work done by landowner and no longer an inconvenience to path users.</i>
White Waltham Footpath 12	11/09/08	Temporary gate obstructing path. <i>Closed: Temporary structure – no further action necessary.</i>
White Waltham FP 13	12/06/99	Stile issue. <i>Closed: stile replaced with a gate 2007-2008</i>
White Waltham Footpath 14	08/01/03 08/11/04	Stile issues (2). <i>Closed: stiles replaced with gates 2007-2008</i>
White Waltham Footpath 17	11/09/08	Interference to path by utility company. <i>Closed: clearance and improvements made by utility company.</i>
White Waltham FP 21	29/10/08	Path surface disturbed. <i>Closed: reinstated by landowner.</i>
Wraysbury Footpath 13	02/06/07	Encroachment by planting. <i>Closed: planting removed.</i>
Wraysbury Footpath 6	07/01/99	Obstruction to path by gravel conveyor. Permitted path provided as alternative. <i>Closed: EBRA survey reports conveyor removed and path no longer blocked.</i>

2. MAINTENANCE

2.1. Problems resolved and problems reported

Approximately 188 maintenance problems have been resolved during the period from **August 1st 2008 to January 31st 2009**, and approximately 152 new maintenance problems were reported during that period. Additionally, approximately 198 items of routine maintenance have been carried out during the period.

The following major projects have been completed over the reporting period:

Cookham FP 60	Surface improvements north of Bourne End footbridge.
Bray FP's 1 and 8	Two footbridges replaced.
Cookham RB 70 (Malders Lane)	Surface improvements
Maid. BR 72 (Nightingale Lane)	Surface improvements
Bisham BR 11 (Bisham Woods)	Surface improvements

2.2. Works due to be carried out

The following projects are scheduled to be carried out in the next 2 to 3 months:

Sunningdale FP 13	Drainage and ditch clearance works
Waltham St Lawrence FP 38	Footbridge replacement
Signposting works	Various paths

3. REMOVAL OF STILES

During the period **August 1st 2008 to January 31st 2009** stiles were removed from the following footpaths:

Cresswells Farm, (Bray FP's 1, 6, 7, 8)	15 stiles/barriers replaced with 12 pedestrian gates and 3 kissing gates
Bray FP 40	1 stile replaced with a pedestrian gate

4. DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT

There are currently 10 outstanding 'claims' for paths to be added to the Definitive Map and Statement, as shown in Annexe B.

Claims recently resolved

4.1 Hurley claimed Bridleway 502

Definitive Map Modification Order application received on 18th October 2004. The claimed bridleway runs from Hurley Bridleway 15 (Hodgedale Lane) to Rose Lane, parallel to the Henley Road (A4130). This claim has now been dismissed on the grounds that pre-existing highway rights already exist over the land.

Claims currently being investigated

4.2 Eton claimed Footpath 505

“Claimed’ by representation to BCC Draft Revised Map in 1977. The claimed footpath runs from Common Lane to Bell Lane, across an area of public open space owned by Eton College. Discussions are taking place with the College about dedication of the footpath as a public right of way.

4.3 Shottesbrooke claimed Footpath 501 (Pundles Lane)

Definitive Map Modification Order application received on 30th May 2007. The claimed footpath runs from Shottesbrooke FP 12 to Waltham St Lawrence FP 38

4.4 White Waltham claimed Footpath 501

Definitive Map Modification Order application received on 22nd August 2008. The claimed footpath runs from White Waltham Restricted Byway 4 (School Lane) southeast to and around a small copse, before turning north to join White Waltham Footpath 9.

5 PUBLICATIONS

5.1 Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2005-2015

The Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan is part of the Borough’s Local Transport Plan 2006-2011.

The 10-year Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan was published in 2005 as a requirement of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Plan was produced following wide ranging consultations, and identifies a range of potential improvements to the public rights of way network. Annual updates are published as part of the Milestones Statement.

5.2 Milestones Statement 2009/10

The Milestones Statement & Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan annual review for 2009/10 is to be submitted to the Rights of Way and Highways Licensing Panel on 16th March 2009. The document reviews progress made on public rights of way work in the previous year sets out a range of targets and objectives for the coming year.

5.3 Borough Website

The Public Rights of Way pages on the Borough website contain comprehensive information about public rights of way in the borough, including problem report forms, contact details, public notices and consultations, downloadable leaflets and registers of Definitive Map Modification Order applications and Highways Act declarations. The website also includes maps showing all the public rights of way in the Borough, and Public Rights of Way are now included in the Council’s “Maps Online” interactive mapping service.

The following publications are now available on the website:

- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2005-2015
- Milestones Statement 2008/09
- Public Rights of Way information booklet
- The Green Way
- Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit
- Ascot and Sunninghill Circular Walks
- Cookham Bridleway Circuit
- Foot and Cycle Paths in and around Datchet
- Holyport Health Walk
- Cookham Easy Going Route
- Waltham St Lawrence Parish Paths and Circular Walk Leaflet
- White Waltham Parish and Paths Leaflet

The public rights of way web pages can be found at:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_index.htm.

6. PARISH PATHS INITIATIVE

The Royal Borough continues to operate the Parish Paths Initiative (PPI). All parish and town councils in the borough are members of the scheme. The British Horse Society, East Berkshire Ramblers Association and National Trust are also members. Grants are provided to Cookham and Old Windsor Parish Council's who organise path clearance works in their parishes.

7. LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

The Local Access Forum was set up in 2003 to advise the Council on improvement of public access to land in the Royal Borough for open-air recreation, as required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Forum has adopted the following vision statement: *"a partnership to promote and develop sustainable access for the growing benefit of the environment and all in our community"*.

There is a maximum allowable membership of 22, and the Forum currently has 20 members: see membership list at Annexe C.

The Forum currently meets twice a year, with additional informal meetings or site visits scheduled as required. The minutes of the meeting held on **20th January 2009** are included in Annexe D.

A list of Forum members, and downloadable minutes, agendas and annual reports are available on the Local Access Forum web pages at:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_local_access_forum.htm.

Anyone interested in applying to join the Forum should contact the LAF Secretary, Andrew Fletcher (01628-796122).

8. THAMES PATH NATIONAL TRAIL

8.1 Thames Path at Ray Mead Road

On 24th February the Council received a petition which states that: *“We, the undersigned, petition the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to pursue with vigour the creation (on grounds of safety, amenity, convenience and visitor attraction) of the remaining 33 metres of footpath needed to provide a traffic-free route along the riverside from Boulter’s Lock to Maidenhead Bridge.”*

In accordance with the Council’s procedures, the petition will be reported to the Cabinet within the next three months.

The Council is aware that West Berkshire Council made a Public Path Creation Order in July 2007, relating to a section of the Thames Path at Purley-on-Thames, and that a Public Inquiry into the Order was held in January 2009. The outcome of the Inquiry is awaited with interest, and any implications or lessons that can be drawn from this case will be included in the forthcoming Cabinet report on the petition.

As agreed at the 8th September 2008 meeting of the Rights of Way and Highway Licensing Panel, a Prioritisation Model is to be submitted to the Cabinet Prioritisation Sub-Committee on 19th March, seeking capital funding for the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities over Ray Mead Road, north of Bridge Gardens.

8.2 Cookham Footpath 55 (Cliveden Reach) bank erosion problems

Riverbank repairs, erosion control and path reinstatement works are scheduled to be carried out in March 2009.

The improvement works involve installation of stone gabions, revetments, and coir rolls to control future erosion, together with bank side planting. The works, to be carried out by specialist contractors, have been approved by the Environment Agency, and include 9 sections of riverbank, totalling approximately 75 metres.

Further works to improve the path surface are planned for later in 2009, subject to securing a grant from Natural England.

8.3 Datchet Footpath 8 (opposite the Home Park) bank erosion problems

The landowner (Crown Estate) has installed safety rails on two sections of footpath that have been narrowed by localised bank erosion. The scheme will also include planting at the base of the bank to help stabilise the bank and prevent further erosion.

ANNEXE A

Reported problems on Public Rights of Way in the Borough

	Outstanding at 31 st July 2008	Reported 1 st Aug 2008 to 31 st Jan 2009	Resolved 1 st Aug 2008 to 31 st Jan 2009	Outstanding at 31 st January 2009			Total Outstanding
				Problems Outstanding 5 years +	Problems Outstanding 2-5 years	Problems Outstanding up to 2 years	
ENFORCEMENT							
Ploughing and lack of marking	0	3	2	0	0	1	1
Obstruction by crops	4	1	1	0	1	3	4
Fence encroachment	42	5	4	20	11	13	44
Fence obstruction	15	4	10	4	2	4	10
Building obstruction	3	0	0	2	1	0	3
Other obstructions	31	11	7	8	8	19	35
Stiles	72	13	24	12	5	44	61
Gates	12	1	1	0	5	7	12
Bulls/ other animal problems	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Unauthorised use by horses	6	2	2	2	2	2	6
Unauthorised vehicular use	8	3	7	1	2	1	4
Electric fencing	4	1	2	0	1	2	3
Misleading notices	3	1	2	0	0	2	2
Intimidation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overhanging vegetation	29	15	10	1	11	22	34
Other Enforcement Problems	46	9	11	11	6	27	44
				61	55	149	-
TOTAL ENFORCEMENT:	277	69	83				265
MAINTENANCE							
Vegetation	55	28	41	13	8	21	42
Rutting	14	1	10	3	2	0	5
Drainage	32	4	9	8	12	7	27
Fallen trees	19	19	30	0	2	6	8
Erosion	53	6	11	14	14	18	46
Tree problems	18	16	19	0	2	13	15
Bridges	27	6	5	7	7	14	28
Safety barriers	12	3	1	2	5	7	14
Steps	3	1	1	0	1	2	3
Roadside signposting	29	24	10	2	9	32	43
Signposting at path junctions	73	11	16	6	12	50	68
Waymarking	51	4	9	15	17	14	46
Rubbish/ waste	6	7	6	1	2	4	7
Other Maintenance Problems	54	22	20	8	15	32	55
				79	108	220	-
TOTAL MAINTENANCE:	446	152	188				407
ISSUES RECORDED OUTSIDE REPORTING PERIOD: (SEE NOTES BELOW)		2					
TOTALS OF MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT	723	223	271				675

Routine maintenance: work items completed 01/08/2008 – 31/01/2009:	198
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Note: For case management purposes it is desirable that the date when an issue is added and/or resolved is as accurate as possible, but as a result of this Issues are sometimes added and/or resolved in the database retrospectively. These issues are now shown as 'recorded outside reporting period'.

ANNEXE B

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 OUTSTANDING CLAIMED PATHS FEBRUARY 2009

Parish	Claim no	Claim date	Path description		Comment
			From	To	
Shottesbrooke	FP 501	2007	Shottesbrooke FP 12	Waltham St Lawrence FP38	Claimed Footpath
Eton	FP 505	1977	W end of Common Lane	Bell Lane at entrance to Bell Farm	Claimed for DRM
White Waltham	FP 501	2008	White Waltham RB 4	White Waltham FP 9	Claimed Footpath
Eton	FP 502	1977	N of Somerville Rd between numbers 23 and 25	FP 8 Eton	Claimed for DRM
Eton	FP 506	1977	Bend in FP46	Common Lane	Claimed for DRM
Maidenhead	FP 508	1977	Moorfield Terrace	FP 4 Maidenhead	Claimed for DRM
Maidenhead	FP 506	1977	Ray St	FP 4 Maidenhead	Claimed for DRM
Maidenhead	FP 523	1977	Castle Hill	The Crescent	Claimed for DRM
Maidenhead	FP 524	1977	Fane Way, through Desborough Park	Rixman Close and FP56	Claimed for DRM
Wraysbury	FP 500	1977	Staines Road	River Thames	Claimed for DRM, currently 'permitted' by Ankerwycke

DRM = Draft Revised Definitive Map of Berkshire (1976)

Shaded sections indicate claims currently being investigated

LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP

FEBRUARY 2009

Name	Main Interests
Peter Thorn (Chair) (BCA Burchetts Green)	Land management
Geoff Hill (Vice-Chair) (Hurley)	Hurley Parish Council, landowner
Dorothy Allard (Shottesbrooke)	Land management
Guy Badman (Maidenhead)	Cycling
Councillor Malcolm Beer (Old Windsor)	Old Windsor Parish Council, walking, cycling
Margaret Bowdery (Maidenhead)	Walking
June Brayne (Hawthorn Hill)	White Waltham Parish Council
Mike Bruton (Maidenhead)	Disabled rambling; access for disabled
Curly Carver (Cookham Dean)	Land management, common land, National Trust
Bill Cathcart (Crown Estate, Windsor)	Land management
Margaret Cubley (Bisham)	Bisham Parish Council, CPRE, walking, open spaces
Loren Eldred (Princes Risborough, Bucks)	Land Management, Woodland Trust
Hillary Essen (Maidenhead)	Walking, health Issues
John Foulger (Fifield)	Bray Parish Council, walking
Christine Gadd (Sunningdale)	Sunningdale Parish Council, walking, cycling
Harry Hancock (Burnham, Bucks)	Walking, open spaces
Clare Harding-Brown (Waltham St. Lawrence)	Horse riding, walking
Gordon Harris (Cookham)	Cookham Parish Council, Footpaths and open spaces
Councillor Asghar Majeed (Maidenhead)	RBWM Councillor
Councillor John Stretton (Cookham)	RBWM Councillor

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
20 JANUARY 2009
MINUTES**

ACTION**1 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions**

Geoff Hill welcomed everyone to the eighteenth meeting of the Local Access Forum.

Attendance List

Name	Interest area
Geoff Hill (Vice Chairman)	Land Management
Dorothy Allard	Land Management
Guy Badman	Cycling, Sustrans
Malcolm Beer	Walking
Margaret Bowdery	Walking
Curly Carver	Land Management
Bill Cathcart	Land Management
Margaret Cubley	Walking, Open Spaces
Ann Darracott	Maidenhead Civic Society
Hilary Essen	Walking
John Foulger	Walking
Harry Hancock	Walking, Open Spaces
Gordon Harris	Footpaths, Open Spaces
Cllr. Asghar Majeed	RBWM Councillor
Cllr. John Stretton	RBWM Councillor
Andrew Fletcher	Local Access Forum Secretary
Rebecca Lever	RBWM Public Rights of Way Assistant

Apologies

Peter Thorn
Loren Eldred
Christine Gadd

2 Membership Update

Andrew Fletcher gave an account of membership changes to the Forum since the last meeting. The Forum welcomed **Hilary Essen** and **Guy Badman** as new members; **Celia Blay** has resigned from the Forum.

There are currently 20 members of the Forum and 2 vacancies.

An updated contact list will be distributed to members.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

3 Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

The LAF approved the minutes of 10th June 2008.

4 Actions arising from the minutes

Andrew Fletcher introduced the item and read through the actions taken from the last meeting.

Margaret Bowdery made reference to the LAF Work Programme (7b of the previous minutes), and in particular to the issue of Quiet Lanes. It was discussed that many Local Authorities have abandoned Quiet Lanes as it seems to have had limited impact, and **Margaret Cubley** confirmed that the CPRE no longer list them as a priority. **The Forum resolved not to pursue this work item.**

John Foulger asked whether the Council has any 'No Horses' signs for use on Rights

of Way, and raised this item in relation to Bray Footpath 59. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that much misuse was considered to be a trespass against the landowner and he is currently investigating the type of sign that could be used in these situations.

The Forum requested that something be done in relation to the use of paths by illegitimate users, particularly on public safety grounds, and RECOMMENDED to the Council that signage be improved at the start of paths, particularly in Bisham Woods and Maidenhead Thicket. Andrew Fletcher agreed to discuss this issue with the Public Rights of Way Team and to provide a response in the Post Meeting Report.

Andrew Fletcher

Margaret Bowdery asked about the Fast Response Team. **Andrew Fletcher** replied that a letter would be sent shortly.

Andrew Fletcher

(5.1) The Forum discussed the response from the Council regarding potential access improvements to Cookham Lock. **Margaret Bowdery** asked whether any official complaints had been received on this issue, as the lock gate is only shut when cattle are in the field and after 7pm. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to provide an answer to this for the LAF in the Post Meeting Report. Possibilities of improvement or replacement of the gate will be pursued when Sharon Wootten returns from maternity leave.

Andrew Fletcher

(5.2) The Forum discussed the update on the proposed diversion of a bridleway at Dungle Hill Lane. **Margaret Bowdery** felt that the update was not a true reflection of the situation and that this is a matter of public safety. She stated that in correspondence with the landowner in 1998, the project was considered a 'good idea'. **Margaret Bowdery** suggested that public use of the path would form a deterrent against unsavoury activity. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to provide **Margaret Bowdery** with further details about this case.

Andrew Fletcher

Margaret Bowdery requested that cross-referencing be used in the post meeting report; linking the Item Number with the ROWIP ID Number and also include a 'date outstanding' column.

5 Discovering Lost Ways

Andrew Fletcher introduced the report and asked if any members had any comments.

(2.15): Local DLW Initiatives in Hampshire

Cllr. Asghar Majeed asked about the external funding that Hampshire LAF was seeking to obtain. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that it was his understanding that Hampshire had submitted a bid for Funding but that the process for doing so is fairly stringent.

Cllr. Malcolm Beer suggested that a press release would help to publicise the issue and encourage communities to become involved. It would also help to publicise the LAF. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to write to the Parish Council's on behalf of the LAF regarding this issue.

Andrew Fletcher

6 Milestones Statement 2009/10

Andrew Fletcher introduced this item and provided brief details of what had been achieved towards the Milestones Targets so far this year. He welcomed suggestions and targets.

Margaret Bowdery highlighted that the priority to publish a Definitive Map and Statement could be removed from the 2009/10 objectives.

Margaret Bowdery clarified that AC1 was a target to 'achieve one new path on the ground'.

Gordon Harris enquired as to why gates on Rights of Way were not all wheelchair accessible. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that gates are installed with negotiation and agreement with the landowner, following the order of preference stated in the British Standard. Landowners are often concerned about the size of the large mobility vehicle

kissing gates and the opportunity they provide for non-legitimate users to access the path. **Cllr. Asghar Majeed** recommended that when writing to landowners, the Council should describe the gates as 'wheelchair accessible', rather than taking the names assigned to the gates in the Centrewire catalogue, as calling them 'large gates' could be potentially off-putting. The Forum agreed that landowners are generally supportive of improving access for less mobile users and so by changing the wording, they would be more likely to cooperate.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

Gordon Harris asked about the law relating to disabled access and **Andrew Fletcher** explained that access law relates primarily to premises, and it does not allow scope to compel changes to existing furniture on Rights of Way.

Hilary Essen considers that some of the priorities are more like mission statements and would like them to be more specific and quantifiable. However, **Margaret Cubley** expressed concern that targets may encourage the Council to take the easy route in order to achieve the target, and therefore suggested that the Forum choose priorities rather than targets.

Harry Hancock suggested that enforcement action and securing the missing links in the Millennium Walk should be priorities. **Andrew Fletcher** explained his reservations in including a specific route or path as a target because failure to meet the target, for example if progress is delayed for any reason, would not be a true reflection of the work done. If the target is kept more general, an alternative path or route can be pursued.

Cllr. Asghar Majeed suggested that resolution of enforcement problems should be included, and asked how many enforcement issues could be resolved using current resources.

Cllr. Malcolm Beer agreed that dealing with the backlog of enforcement issues should be treated as a priority but stated that targets should not be linked to resources available, but resources should instead be linked to targets. **Margaret Cubley** suggested raising the profile of the need for more staff within the team.

Margaret Bowdery suggested that LD2 is unrealistic. **Andrew Fletcher** explained that correcting significant errors on the definitive map required a substantial amount of work and, in most cases, provided little public benefit on the ground.

Discussions took place over the AC2 target. **Margaret Bowdery** pointed out that the reason that the Council was able to achieve the target this year was partly due to two large projects involving single landowners.

Margaret Bowdery commented that the allocation of money is confusing and would like to see a comprehensive financial statement. **Andrew Fletcher** agreed to take this back to the Rights of Way team.

**Andrew
Fletcher**

After further discussion, the LAF approves the Milestones Statement with the following RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The current WM1 target should be increased from 95% to 97%
2. The current LD2 target should be reduced from 10 to 1
3. The current AC2 target should be increased from 25 to 27
4. A new target should be introduced: "To resolve 24 enforcement issues"
5. A new priority should be introduced: "Seek to complete the missing links in the Millennium Walk"

7 Draft Leaflet: Responsibilities for vegetation and disposal of garden waste

Andrew Fletcher introduced the item and explained that the aim of the leaflet was to make residents more aware of their responsibilities, rather than to replace the need for enforcement action.

The Forum requested that the text for the leaflet be simplified. **Cllr. Asghar Majeed** would like the leaflet to be more visual. **Andrew Fletcher** replied that he would simplify

Andrew

the wording of the leaflet and make it more visual.

Fletcher

Andrew Fletcher asked the Forum how they envisage the leaflet to be distributed. **Cllr. John Stretton** suggested that the information be included in 'Around the Borough'. The Forum expressed concern that this approach would not be direct enough and many residents would not read the article. **The Forum suggested that path wardens deliver the leaflet to householders as necessary. The wardens would keep a note of who has received a leaflet and for what reason, and would report this to the Rights of Way team.**

Andrew Fletcher

John Foulger suggested that the Parish Council's deal with these issues themselves, for example by writing or speaking to the households concerned, or by advertising the responsibilities of householders in the Parish newsletter.

8 River Thames Locks in RBWM

Andrew Fletcher introduced the item.

After discussion, the **LAF agreed that details of the Locks should be sent to Parish Council's**, together with a request that they review their paths in the lock areas to see if any unrecorded paths could be claimed.

Andrew Fletcher

9 Path Improvement Plan

Cllr. Asghar Majeed and **Cllr. John Stretton** declared a prejudicial interest in this item and abstained from comment or voting.

Margaret Bowdery delivered a presentation on the progress of securing the missing link in the Thames Path at Bridge Gardens. In response to the Council's resolution, she stated that the site is unlikely to be redeveloped and urged the Council to go ahead with the Path Creation Order.

After discussion, the **LAF agreed and RECOMMENDED to the Council that they reconsider a Path Creation Order over the land north of Bridge Gardens to continue the Thames Path on the immediate bank of the river.**

[Post-Meeting Note: A letter will be sent to the relevant contact within the Council communicating the Forum's recommendation above.]

Andrew Fletcher

10 Millennium Walk update

Ann Darracott delivered a presentation on the progress of completing the missing links in the Millennium Walk. She requested that the LAF write to the Cabinet Prioritisation Sub Committee in order to release money from the s106 funds for the progressing of the link from Prospect Hill to Temple Golf Club. These funds would be used to supplement the money that the Civic Society and other amenity groups have already committed to the project.

The LAF agreed to write to the relevant contact within the Council in support of Ann Darracott's request.

The LAF requested **Andrew Fletcher** to organise an informal LAF meeting to walk the missing links of the Millennium Walk.

Andrew Fletcher

11 Any Other Business

The Forum received no items under this heading.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Local Access Forum is provisionally scheduled for **23rd June 2009**.