

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

**Local Countryside Access Forum  
Tuesday 1 October 2013, 7.00 pm  
Function Room, Fifth Floor, Easthampstead House, Town Square,  
Bracknell**

**To: Local Countryside Access Forum**

Mr Michael Abbott  
Mr David Bertie  
Councillor Michael Brossard  
John Deakin  
Sharon Holt  
Mr Innes McEwen  
Mr Richard Mosses  
Councillor John Porter  
Mr Peter Radband  
Mrs Jenny Yung

ALISON SANDERS  
Director of Corporate Services

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- 3 Use the stairs not the lifts.
- 4 Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

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**Local Countryside Access Forum  
Tuesday 1 October 2013, 7.00 pm  
Function Room, Fifth Floor, Easthampstead House, Town  
Square, Bracknell**

**AGENDA**

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5. **Membership and Recruitment**
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6. **National and Regional LAF Work** 7 - 14
  - Update on LAF meetings / conference
  - Huddle
  - Local Nature Partnership newsletter
  - Richard Benyon letter
7. **Definitive Map and Statement Review**
8. **Access Improvement Works**
9. **LCAF Annual Report**
10. **Site Visits**

Please bring ideas for future visits.
11. **Reports from Officers**
12. **Reports from Members round the table**
13. **Public Question Time**

(Maximum 10 Minutes)
14. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 4 March 2014, 7pm, Function Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell



**LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM  
12 MARCH 2013  
7.00 - 9.00 PM**

**Present:**

**Members:**

Mr Michael Abbott (Chairman)  
Councillor Michael Brossard  
Sharon Holt  
Mr Richard Mosses  
Councillor John Porter  
Mr Peter Radband  
Mrs Jenny Yung

**In attendance:**

Hugh Fitzwilliams, Rights of Way Ranger, BFC  
Graham Pockett, Parks & Countryside Development Officer  
Amanda Roden, Democratic Services Officer  
Rose Wicks, Parks & Countryside Projects Officer

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

John Deakin  
Mr Innes McEwen  
Richard Walton, Head of Parks & Countryside

**13. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

**14. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

**15. Membership and Recruitment**

Mike Gates, Vice-Chair of the Forum had resigned and a new Vice-Chair was sought. Peter Radband volunteered for the role and as there were no other volunteers, Mr Radband would be the new Vice-Chair of the Forum. The Chairmanship of the Forum was due for review in September 2013. Michael Abbott mentioned that he was happy to be considered again for this role.

The Forum had a new observer from Mid and West Berkshire, Ian Pittock. A membership application had been received from Jenny Yung of Tally Ho Stables and was accepted by Forum Members. Jenny was welcomed as a new member of the Forum.

There would be a recruitment drive for new members for the Forum as some members had resigned and there were a few vacancies. Work had been undertaken

in relation to Town and Country, Bracknell Forest Homes, and a flyer had been created for notice boards and libraries. It was suggested that the flyer also be circulated to Parish and Town Councils, and it was suggested that recruitment could be mentioned at Parish and Town Council meetings but it would need to be made clear that the Forum was seeking lay people with, for example, land owner interest, cycling interest etc.

Dog walkers could be targeted and flyers could be posted on the Crowthorne Woods Forestry Commission notice boards. An e-mail version of the flyer would be useful for Forum Members to pass on.

**(Action: Rose Wicks)**

## 16. **National and Regional LCAF Work**

There had been a national conference in Sheffield for Local Countryside Access Forum (LCAF) Members but not officers, and no one had been able to attend this year, in part due to the distance to the location. The summary and notes from talks and speakers were awaited but it was noted that the event had been successful. Feedback from the event would be given at the next LCAF meeting. There had also been a Regional Officers meeting.

Natural England had a selection of sources of evidence on the importance of the Natural Environment and the benefits that people received when accessing it. There were match funding projects and authorities had round table reports. There were a number of websites from which to gain information, listed on page 12 of the agenda papers and including <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/research/mene.aspx> .

There was no definitive guidance regarding the mid-term review as Bracknell Forest were one of the first local authorities to reduce their Rights of Way Plan, and so the first to review it. A questionnaire had been completed from Defra and Natural England and it was queried whether LCAF members would benefit from training.

It was queried whether a route via Billingbear Park was a permitted route but it was thought that the route was not a public right of way and it was not present on the definitive map. The land had changed ownership a few times over the years. This would be investigated further.

**(Action: Graham Pockett)**

Dates regarding the annual regional LAF conference would be circulated when known. Forum Members considered an Access Newsletter of 18 February 2013 from Defra. There had been concern regarding professional fungi pickers, and the West Surrey Badger Group were concerned regarding the effect on the environment and local wildlife of young people biking or building trails in forests and green areas.

The Forum considered the government response to the Independent Panel on Forestry released by Defra <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2013/01/31/pb13871-forestry-policy-statement/> . There was a new body to hold land in trust and to work alongside the Forestry Commission to advise and support.

## 17. **Definitive Map and Statement Review**

There had been no representations or objections to the final Modification Orders linked to Definitive Map and Statement Review received after 42 days, so this would be published on 1 April 2013 (Relevant date 1 January 2013). This was the second consolidated map for Bracknell Forest. The sheets had been reorganised relative to

the OS grid resulting in a document with fewer pages. There had been some Modification Orders to tidy up errors and changes of descriptions in the definitive statement. Public notices were published in the local paper at the end of January 2013.

The Definitive Map and Statement Review would be held at the Time Square offices and Bracknell Central Library. Modification orders would be accumulated for the next review in ten years. The Definitive Map would be published on the Borough Council's website and PDF copies would be circulated to neighbouring authorities. This was not the legal record but was based on the same information.

The Forum congratulated everyone involved in the working on the Definitive Map and Statement Review.

#### 18. **Thames Basin Heath and SANGS**

There were projects including three new interpretation panels at Englemere Pond: Wetland Wonder, Heathland and Forestry and a general site entrance board. There would also be a new viewing platform. There would be a series of way markers around the site for the Dragonfly and Woodpecker trails.

Initial bank restoration work had been completed at Shepherd Meadows and follow up work was due during spring or summer.

Work was being undertaken with the Forestry Commission to produce interpretation panels at key access points to the Crowthorne Woods site, such as, Devil's Highway and Muzzy's roundabout. It was noted that there was no parking by Muzzy's roundabout and there was a permitted route but this was not a right of way.

#### 19. **LCAF Annual Report**

There was a new draft reporting template prepared by Natural England which was expected to be available around April or May. This would be used to submit the LCAF Annual Report (proforma) for April 2012 to March 2013. The glossy version for 2012 was due to be published on the Borough Council's website in the near future.

#### 20. **Site Visits**

Ideas for future site visits included:

- Queenswood; seeing the harvest in progress
- Crown Estate; £250,000 would be invested in bike trails here and Forum members may be interested to see how the trails would be constructed
- Jennett's Park; tree planting and creation of new footpaths
- Shepherd Meadows; bank restoration, a possible site visit in Spring 2013
- South Hill Park; new waymark trails, floating pond to be assembled by end of March 2013
- Jealott's Hill Farm; Forum members were invited to visit the farm
- Broadmoor/ Foresters Way

It was suggested that the Jennett's Park site visit be organised first. Saturday morning appeared to be a good time for a site visit and dates would be circulated soon for this.

**(Action: Graham Pockett)**

John Deakin would be contacted regarding the possibility of a Crown Estate visit.

**(Action: Rose Wicks)**

Bad weather and some issues with workmanship had affected the bank restoration at Shepherd Meadows and it was suggested that this site visit should be postponed until at least autumn 2013 after follow up work had been undertaken. The Jealott's Hill Farm visit would also be weather and season dependent.

A new suggestion for a site visit was Broadmoor/ Foresters Way to look at issues arising from work undertaken here and how rights of way had been affected. A contact would be sought in the NHS for this visit with the aim of organising the visit later in the year.

**(Action: Graham Pockett)**

## 21. **Reports from Officers**

**Rose Wicks** reported that the Red, White and Blue photo competition in Bracknell's parks and countryside had taken place. The shortlisted entries were being exhibited at the Community Gallery at South Hill Park between 9 February 2013 and 7 April 2013. First place was Summer with Regrets at Horseshoe Lake, by Ida Groot-Attias; Second place was 100m Final at Lily Hill Park by Barry Callan; and Third place was Ladybird on flower, by Peter Edwards.

A new photo competition for 2013 would likely have a watery theme to coincide with the UN International Year of Water Co-operation.

The Green Flag Awards had been submitted for four sites: Lily Hill Park, Pope's Meadow, Shepherd Meadows & Sandhurst Memorial Park (in partnership with Sandhurst Town Council), and restored South Hill Park for the first time. Notification of the judges' arrival would be in June or July. For the record, Bracknell Town Council entered Jocks Lane park and Winkfield Parish Council entered Locks Ride and Carnation Hall and Grounds, giving a total of seven applications in the borough area.

Bracknell Forest Council had developed a new Dog Owners and Dog Walkers Code of Conduct leaflet which promoted responsible dog ownership and included important messages regarding dog health (vaccination), identification (tags and chips), fouling (dog bins, reporting, fixed penalty notices) and behaviour (dogs under close control near livestock and ground nesting birds). The information leaflet involved rangers, environmental protection officers, Sandhurst Town Council and the Cleaner Borough Group, and connected to the action the six Parish and Town Councils in Bracknell Forest were undertaking with the 'Be A Responsible Dog Owner' (BARDO) campaign.

The leaflet would be trialled via dog walkers on site and would be available to download on the Borough Council's website. There would be a limited print run initially to gauge feedback and comments. It was suggested that dog fouling and behaviour be listed above health and identification in the leaflet. It was suggested that people should be made aware of the effects of dogs chasing people on bikes or horses. There was a need to be positive and focused in the leaflet, which suggested places for walking dogs. Veterinary surgeries and dog wardens would likely find the leaflet useful.

Any feedback on the Dog Owners and Dog Walkers Code of Conduct leaflet should be forwarded to Rose Wicks [rose.wicks@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:rose.wicks@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) or Graham Pockett [graham.pockett@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:graham.pockett@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) .

**Graham Pockett** reported that the temporary footpath diversion of Crowthorne Restricted Byway 12 had been extended. The current order was due to expire on 31

March 2013 and an extension beyond six months could not be granted without referring it to the Secretary of State.

A footpath creation agreement with The Crown Estate had been drafted for signing. The path would run from the eastern end of Winkfield Footpath 15 at Sunninghill Park to Sunninghill Road opposite Ascot Gate, Windsor Great Park.

## 22. Reports from Members round the table

**Michael Abbott** mentioned that the Ramblers were considering obtaining two kissing gates this year, to replace styles, to stop cattle getting out and to provide access to open access land and rights of way, for example, for disabled people. Each gate would cost approximately £200 to £300 and they were cost effective and enduring.

**Sharon Holt** highlighted the following articles from the BHS:

- Important Milestone for equestrian Access in Scotland
- Equestrian Access Forum launches Making Way for Horses
- Are Lower speed limits the answer?
- No extra speed for HGV's says horse charity
- New leaflet aims to make roads safer for all
- Catching the bus As campaign success
- <http://www.bhs.org.uk/our-charity/press-centre/results?&page=1>

There had been an accident involving three people and horses out riding; two horses were killed instantly and two people were air lifted to hospital. A drunk driver was responsible. The horse riders had all survived but were seriously psychologically damaged as a result and may never ride again.

Horse riders were encouraged to wear high visibility gear and undertake a riding road safety test to know the requirements when riding on a road. Motorbikes and lorries were found to be the most respectful users of the road for horse riders.

Sharon and other horse riders, in light of the accident, were looking at all bridle paths in the borough to see if there were ways to connect them via roads and pathways. Councils and landowners were being approached regarding this and possibly linking different circuits in different local authorities. Where to park trailers and horse boxes was an issue.

Access to car parks was difficult due to height barriers and keys needed to open them were difficult to use. Car parks were vulnerable to fly-tipping and travellers, so height barriers were needed. A possible design solution in some cases could be to leave a couple of bays outside the barrier at the entrance to car parks but these would still be vulnerable to misuse.

Graham Pockett reported that some resolution on the Winkfield bridleway creation was making some progress but the land had changed ownership a few times, making enforcement of the section 106 agreement more complicated.

It would be clarified where permits were needed for horse riders, for example, at Swinley Forest, where parking charges had been introduced. There was no intention to charge horse riders twice. John Deakin at the Crown Estate would be contacted regarding this.

**(Action: Rose Wicks)**

**Jenny Yung** mentioned that she liked the dog walkers leaflet and that the cost of under £200 to use Windsor Great Park for a year was very good value. Jenny would think about how to possibly link Winkfield bridle path to Crouch Lane.

**Cllr Brossard** mentioned that Huddle training had been impressive and thanked Rose and Graham for arranging it. It was suggested that cycle ways could be incorporated in developments.

23. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 1 October 2013, 7pm, Function Room, 5th Floor, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell.



# Agenda Item 6

## Report on the SE Local Access Forum Conference

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May

A lot of the sessions were to do with cycling, one of which was promoting cycling in the Chilterns for some reason financed by Wokingham Borough Council. There is somewhere in the Henley/Twyford area where you can hire electric bicycles, we were told that they are allowed to go anywhere that a pedal cycles can go. There are plans to have a network of recharging points all over the Chilterns, see <http://www.ctc.org.uk/near-me/chilterns> at the moment but in the future they will use <http://www.cycle-chilterns.co.uk/>

There was a talk by someone from the CLA, they have produced a document [http://www.cla.org.uk/Policy\\_Work/Policy\\_Reports/Access\\_to\\_the\\_Countryside/Rights\\_of\\_Way/1009310.htm/](http://www.cla.org.uk/Policy_Work/Policy_Reports/Access_to_the_Countryside/Rights_of_Way/1009310.htm/) which they describe as a common sense approach to access to the countryside. Our local U3A have a project on to search the historic records to find lost rights of way. Naturally the CLA are very much against this, land owners buy land in good faith, their searches show no access, then campaigners bring up these historic claims. They want the procedures for sorting it out streamlined. They also want to be able to divert or close rights of way with less bureaucracy. They are in favour of permissive paths because of the flexibility it gives.

There was a talk by the Senior Environment Advisor (Access & Recreation) of the MOD. Most of their training areas were "waste" land, now it is highly praised environmentally sensitive land, so they have to balance their training needs with conservation and recreational use. He complained of people whether on foot, horseback or in 4x4s appearing in the middle of firing ranges that are supposed to be closed off and when areas are open, people interfering with live ordnance despite warnings not to touch things. If there are accidents the MOD is blamed. Some of the training involves crawling through bushes which is not very pleasant if there is dog mess. For historic reasons there is a plethora of different byelaws, some inconsistent. They are wanting to produce a consistent set of byelaws and improve signage.

There was a talk on the virtues of smart phones. He described these QR codes as 3D bar codes and give you access to pages and pages of information. We were told that mobile web access will overtake that from home based computers next year and is 3 to 5 times faster. Something called Augmented Reality (AR) is free to download from LAYAR. All along the South Downs Way are QR codes give access to details of the route and points of interest, they have started on the North Downs Way.

We had a talk about the history of cycling in the New Forest. For some reason the Court of Verderers very anti-cyclists. In 1925 parliament gave public access to Crown Lands, which included for cyclists in the New Forest, then in 1995 there was a draconian byelaw which restricted cycling.

There was an update from Natural England. There is a delivery plan to be issued this week. There is a survey, Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE), see <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/research/mene.aspx> There is European money for Paths for Communities over two years, of which we are half way through. In the SE there have been 43 enquiries, 3 applications of which one has been approved. There are 48 Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) for which there is no money, see <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/default.aspx>. These are to connect area of high conservation value to allow plants and animals to move between them, the target is Biodiversity 2020 which contains four key outcomes covering priority habitats and ecosystem services, marine, species and people that it is seeking to achieve by 2020.

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## RBWM Local Access Forum

Hi, Mike and I attended the meeting of the RBWM Local Access Forum last night. It was reported that the LAF has now been going for ten years.

There were two talks, the first by Lynne Penn on Disabled Access in the Countryside. RBWM have installed a number of kissing gates where users in wheel chairs can open them fully with the standard Radar key to get wheel chairs through. It was reported that there were a number of problems with the installations so some of the gates could not be opened sufficiently to allow a wheel chair through.

The second was a powerpoint presentation by Anne English on the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership, they are holding a conference "A Shared View of Biodiversity" in Reading on 28th September 9 to 4:30 cost £10 per person see

<http://www.berkshirelnp.org/index.php/what-else-is-happening/events-calendar/icalrepeat.detail/2013/09/28/1/-/berkshire-local-nature-partnership-conference>

Andrew Fletcher, the LAF Secretary, reported that they are planning to the Council's contact number and 24-hour trouble shooting number on way mark signs. He said that their web site had been much praised.

One of the members wanted information to be made available as to which rights of way are suitable for buggies. Andrew Fletcher said that he would like to have information on the web about each right of way, possibly having a QR code sticker at the end of each right of way so such information could be accessed from a smart phone, but all this was resource dependant.

The LAF is setting up a LAF discussion forum so that they can consider and respond to events between meetings, this would be done by e-mails between the discussion forum members.

The Bracknell LCAF might consider identifying which of our paths, if kissing gates that could be opened with a Radar key were installed, could be suitable for wheel chair use. One that comes to mind is Crowthorne FP8, the gates could be paid for by the Broadmoor Hospital developers.

Regards, Richard Mosses.

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## Hello!

### Welcome to the first Newsletter for the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (BLNP).

Firstly I would like to introduce myself, Annie English, as the BLNP Officer. Previous to this I worked for Natural England as a Land Management Adviser based in London. I have an MSc in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation and a BSc in Zoology. I have an interest in all areas of ecology and conservation, and am excited to be helping shape the future of the BLNP.

Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum (BNCF) was successful in the application to Defra for funding to develop our existing partnership into one of a Local Nature Partnership. [Please click here for more information on Local Nature Partnerships.](#)

Our aim is to create a sustainable, healthy and vibrant Berkshire by working together with all sectors of the community to promote the conservation and enhancement of nature, and the benefits



[Find out more about Berkshire's Biodiversity Opportunity Areas](#)

#### BERKSHIRE LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP CONSTITUTION

1. **Name:** The name of the association is the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (BLNP).
2. **Subject to the statutes set out below the LNP and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with the constitution by the members of the Executive Board, constituted by clause 4 of this constitution.**
3. **The Berkshire LNP will resolve key opportunities across Berkshire providing access to expert knowledge and resources (paid and co-ordinating efforts in order to maximize gains and efficiencies for biodiversity. The LNP will work towards achieving agreed objectives that will deliver positive, strategic benefits for Berkshire's community, businesses and the natural environment. This will be undertaken for example by engaging with strategic planning processes across Berkshire.**
4. **The LNP's objectives are:**

[View the BLNP Constitution here!](#)

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we receive from a healthy environment.



[Visit our Website](#)

## Funding success for case-study project

We are delighted to have received funding from Natural England to compile case studies of projects in Berkshire that demonstrate the links between the natural environment, the local economy and the health and well-being of the community. The case studies will be available soon on our website. We hope to use this work to engage with the business and health sectors to help explain the real value of the natural environment to the people and businesses of Berkshire.

## Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs)

As many of you will be aware Berkshire has 29 BOAs. They represent a targeted landscape-scale approach to nature conservation in Berkshire, and help us to achieve Berkshire's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). If you are currently working in any of the BOAs, whether as an individual or organisation we would like to hear about the work you are involved in. We hope that by working together we can create a strategic and supportive approach to nature conservation in the BOAs.

If you have any queries regarding the BLNP, or have any project ideas that we may be able to help with please [get in touch](#).

*Best Wishes*

*Annie English*

Email: [Annie@BerkshireLNP.org](mailto:Annie@BerkshireLNP.org)

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Local Access Forum Coordinators

3 September 2013

From Richard Benyon MP  
Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries

*Dear Chair*

I would like to thank you for your work and achievements during the period of April 2011 to March 2012 in providing a local level body of expertise on public access and outdoor recreation issues.

The annual report by Natural England summarises this range of achievements including good partnership working on Coastal Access Paths, proactive working on the Pennine Bridleway, value for money use of a budget for countryside access improvements, and assurances of a better deal for access and rights of way along the HS2 line.

The Government recognises the important role of the Forums in contributing to improvements to greenspace, open access and connecting routes. These improvements contribute to local economic growth as well as the health and wellbeing of the population by attracting visitors to explore the landscapes, wildlife and heritage in an area. I also welcome your contribution to the successful delivery of the Paths for Communities scheme which has awarded 28 projects aimed at improving the network of public rights of way. In order to make the most of your expertise in these and other areas I would encourage you and your members to continue to develop relationships with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, and Health and Wellbeing Boards.

I look forward to hearing about the continued achievements of LAFs in the future.

*Yours sincerely*

*Richard Benyon*

**RICHARD BENYON MP**

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