

NOTICE OF MEETING

LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

01 APRIL 2008

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Local Countryside Access Forum on **01 April 2008 at 7.00 pm** in the Function Room, Fifth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell, to transact the business set out in the attached agenda.

> Alison Sanders Director of Corporate Services

Members of the Local Countryside Access Forum

Mrs Diana Pidgeon OBE (Chairman)

Mr David Bertie, Mrs Celia Blay, Councillor Michael Brossard, Mr Joe Dodson, Mr Mike Gates, Anne Haydon, Sharon Holt, Mr Innes McEwen, Mr Richard Mosses, Mr Peter Radband, Councillor Raymond Simonds, Mr Derick Stickler, Mr Stuart Tarrant and Miss Caroline Tomalin

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- 1 Leave the building immediately
- 2 Follow the green signs
- 3 Use the stairs not the lifts
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LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM 01 April 2008 (7.00 pm) Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell.

AGENDA

WELCOME - DP Specific welcome/ introduction to Sharon Holt as a new member Introduce Ben Allison as our new (regular) minute taker from Democratic Services and the officer now responsible for sending out agendas and minutes. **APOLOGIES** MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING - DP **MEMBERSHIP** • Recruitment of new members (SC) Updated member interests list (SC) SITE VISITS Site Visits Informal walk around Shepherd Meadows to discuss SANGs (SPA Mitigation works) proposals. Date: 10am, Friday 4 April 2008 (JD).

• Mike Gates' bluebell walk in Warfield (SC).

6. THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPA

- SANGs update (JD)
- Access Management update (RW)

7. **REGIONAL LAF WORK**

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- Letter from the Minister Jonathan Shaw (SC).
- National Forum update (SC)

8. **RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Winkfield Bridleway Creation update (SC)

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- Definitive Map Review (JD)
- Warfield byway & bridleway improvements (JD)
- Sandhurst footpath resurfacing (JD)

9. GREENSPACE STRATEGY (RW)

10. INTERPRETATION & MARKETING

- Leaflet review (SC)
- Wildmoor Heath signage and interpretation including Access Management Grant Scheme (SC)

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Rights of way closures due to pylon works (JD)
- Performance Indicator BVPI 178 (HF/JD)
- Love Parks Week (DP)
- Annual Report (SC)

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13 - 14

15 - 20

Agenda Item 3

LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM 25 SEPTEMBER 2007 (7.00 - 8.50 pm)

Present: Statutory Board Members: Mr David Bertie Mrs Celia Blay Councillor Michael Brossard Mr Joe Dodson Mr Mike Gates Miss Anne Haydon Mr Richard Mosses Mrs Diana Pidgeon OBE (Chairman) Mr Peter Radband Councillor Raymond Simonds Mr Derick Stickler Mr Stuart Tarrant

In attendance/ Observers:

Sally Coulson, Parks & Countryside Projects Officer, BFBC Marlies Fell, Biodiversity Officer, BFBC Hugh Fitzwilliams, Rights of Way Ranger, BFBC Sue Hills, Democratic Services Officer, BFBC Melissa Read, Environmental Policy Officer, BFBC Richard Walton, Parks & Countryside Manager, BFBC

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr Innes McEwen Miss Caroline Tomalin

1. Welcome

Diana Pidgeon welcomed all members to the meeting, including Councillors Brossard and Simonds, Bracknell Forest Borough Council's newly appointed representatives.

The Forum noted that Councillor Iain McCracken hoped to attend future meetings as an observer.

2. Apologies

None received.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 27 March 2007 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising -

Minute 102a, Flooding/Sewerage Issues at the Cut

The Forum noted that this was a significant issue. There had been a blockage at the local pump house which resulted in a series of manholes discharging into the Cut during flash floods. This could impact on building in the West End area. Stuart Tarrant was asked to monitor the situation.

4. Future of the Forum

4.1 Site Visits

Informal site visit review

The Forum agreed that the first site visit around the Crown Estate had been useful and informative. The Forum was keen to continue these informal onsite meetings throughout the year.

Unfortunately the site visit scheduled for September, a historical guided walk with Celia Blay, was cancelled as a precautionary measure due to the foot and mouth outbreak and will be re-scheduled early in 2008.

Suggestions for future site visits –

- South of Bracknell along the Blackwater Valley via Shepherd Meadows and Wildmoor Heath. This would provide an opportunity to look at issues relating to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. It was suggested that this walk would take place on a Saturday morning due to the nights drawing in. 19 and 26 January were potential dates presented to the Forum. Sally Coulson to write to forum members in due course.
- A Bluebell Walk north of Warfield Parish, one afternoon in late March/early April. Mike Gates offered to provide afternoon tea. Sally Coulson would contact members with potential dates.

(ACTION - Sally Coulson)

Ideas for site visits should be sent to Sally Coulson.

4.2 Membership

The Forum agreed to look into recruiting new Forum members, and particularly to encourage new members with an interest in disabled access. Various ways of reaching potential new members were suggested –

- A returnable slip on the back of the annual report
- Advertisement in local and parish newspapers
- Information to be included in the events programme
- Leaflets/ posters/ flyers at the Look Out and in libraries and GP surgeries
- Word of mouth

The Forum agreed that Anne Haydon should remain a member, despite no longer being a Council representative.

Sally Coulson reminded members that they should contact her if they needed a copy of the LAF terms of reference.

5. Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)

Melissa Read gave an informative presentation on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The largest proportion of the SPA falls within Bracknell Forest, mainly Crown Estate to the south of the borough.

Within the Local Development Framework core strategy document is policy CS14 which related to the SPA. There is also an evidence document. Both had been the subject of extensive consultation and were awaiting the decision of the inspector.

If houses are to be built, potential harm to the wildlife has to be mitigated. Bracknell Forest needs to ensure the SPA is protected whilst still meeting housing need. Measures taken include –

- The provision of alternative open space, new open space and enhancement of existing open space.
- The formulation of visitor access management.
- A 400 metre exclusion zone around the SPA.
- Education strategy raising awareness.
- No loss of supporting habitats
- Restriction of cat ownership in areas very near the SPA.

Such measures are to be funded from S106 payments made by developers.

Richard Walton updated on prioritisation of SANGS (Sites of Alternative Natural Green Space) to be improved –

- Horseshoe Lakes mini plan had been approved by Natural England. Contractors were currently on site implementing initial access management improvements.
- Longhill Park Mini plan had been produced.
- Englemere Pond work had commenced liaising with the Crown Estate.
- Silver Green/Wick Hill area draft plan by early winter.
- Ambarrow Court working with the National Trust, draft plan to be ready by the end of December.
- Larks Hill, Garth Meadows and neighbouring copses draft plan by end of April 2008.
- Shepherd Meadows draft plan by end of April 2008.

The Forum noted that

- SPA mitigation space was in addition to green space already required on new developments.
- Cross boundary co-operation needed to be developed as all authorities were currently working independently on their own areas.

The web link to view the documents -

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/environment/env-planning-and-development/env-planning-guidance/env-thames-basin-heaths-spa/env-spa-technical-background.htm

6. **Regional LAF Work**

6.1 **Dog Control Orders**

The Forum noted the briefing paper, circulated with the agenda. Dog Control Orders could be made by all Parish, Town, District and Unitary Councils on open land to which the public were entitled or permitted to have access. Although the powers had been provided, no additional funding was forthcoming. Investigations were currently being undertaken to ascertain if the new powers could be implemented alongside the current duties of the Dog Warden. Rangers had received initial training on the use of fixed penalty notices.

There was discussion of the 'stick and flick policy' where people were encouraged to toss dog faeces into the undergrowth so that footpaths were not fouled. Bracknell Forest provides bins and encourages dog owners to 'bag and bin'.

The briefing paper highlighted the following issues:-

- Orders could impose a variety of restrictions across the county. How could we keep an overview of such orders? Should our advice to the public regarding dogs on rights of ways be amended?
- How could we input to the process? Should we ask Parish Councils and District Councils to consult us? Could we provide guidance on when we thought an order was justifiable?
- Should we ask the Secretary of State to exempt Rights of Way from more or all of the types of order?

6.2 **NE Funding for LAF Training**

The Forum noted that Natural England had funding for LAF training and that some future workshops would take place in the south east area. Most of the current training events were too far away for members to attend.

6.3 South East LAF Newsletter

The Spring 2007 newsletter was circulated. The Autumn edition is due to be published early in November. The newsletter features a brief outline of all SE LAFs' achievements over the past few months. Any items that members wished to write on behalf of the Bracknell Forest LAF should be sent to Sally Coulson by 26 October.

6.4 **Regional Support for LAFs and Role of the National Forum**

An update from Natural England was currently awaited.

7. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

7.1 Winkfield Bridleway Creation

The Forum had previously agreed that initially a 'dead end' bridleway would be created and BFBC would continue to pursue identifying and establishing a connection to the wider access network onto either Crouch Road or House Lane

(ACTION – Sally Coulson).

7.2 **Priory Fields Bridleway**

This could potentially be linked to the role of Larks Hill as a SANG. A cost allowance for the work to the bridleway would be included within the mini plan (April 2008). It would not be feasible to actively promote as a route across the highway, although it would be adjacent to permissive bridal access onto Larks Hill.

7.3 Improvements to Winkfield 5

This footpath was very muddy after heavy rainfall. Investigations were being made to see what drainage improvements could be made.

7.4 Works on Hawthorn Lane

The Forum noted slides showing a new culvert and ditches for excess water. The verges had been recovered and surface improvements made to the path.

7.5 **Access**

A £25000 Access Management Grant bid had been previously made to the Countryside Agency, but this grant scheme had ceased. The Council had now put in an application to Natural England for £25000 for access management and habitat improvement at Wildmoor, an addition to the current funding for Wildmoor of £90000.

7.6 **Definitive Map Review**

Review of the Definitive Map was ongoing and an update would be available at the next meeting.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 New Path Proposal linking Ascot Station and Kings Ride

This was primarily for the benefit of rail commuters. There were two options under consideration:-

Option 1 – north of the railway line. Network Rail had been opposed to this proposal in the past due to the increased potential for trespass and vandalism, in addition to concerns that the route was not overlooked.

Option 2 – south of the railway. The difficulty with this option would be crossing the Ascot to Camberley railway line. Consideration of this option was being further investigated.

8.2 **Consultations**

(i) <u>DEFRA – NE consultation on fire restrictions</u> -<u>www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/accessopen/nefireconsult.pdf</u>

NE was seeking views on the activation and expiry of fire prevention restrictions under CROW. A copy of the consultation document and feedback form would be provided on request. Any comments to be received by 1 October.

(ii) Department of Transport – Local Transport Planning www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/localtransportplanning/ This consultation welcomed comments from any members of the public interested in the future of local transport planning in England. The closing date is 19 October.

(iii) Consultation on the proposals to improve access to the English coast

Copies of the British Horse Society's response to the consultation were distributed to interested members.

8.3 Love Parks Week

Diana Pidgeon informed the Forum of Love Parks Week, which would take place from 15-22 June 2008. Any ideas for events that the LAF could get involved in were to be sent to Sally Coulson. (ACTION – AII)

8.4 **The Cut**

This route was still at an aspirational stage. It was not well supported by local landowners. The Forum would be kept informed.

8.5 **Foot and Mouth Disease**

There was discussion of the current situation relating to Foot and Mouth. Guidance from DEFRA did not recommend large scale closures of paths in the surveillance area. The Council would work closely with owners in infected areas. Current advice was to cancel or postpone indefinitely all countryside events which cross farmland/ grazed areas. A press release had been issued and a statement on the website asked people to be considerate and avoid unnecessary visits to farmland. Richard Walton would liaise with the Corporate Communications team.

(ACTION – Richard Walton)

Arising in discussion -

- Livestock grazing on Council owned land could not be moved.
- Agricultural operations were being cancelled.
- All bridleway flaying had been cancelled.
- Windsor Great Park was closed and signs were being displayed on the SPA side of the dual carriageway
- Advice to all countryside users was available on the DEFRA website.
- Closure powers were in the hands of DEFRA. Although land owners could not close paths they could put up notices requesting that people desist from using the paths during the outbreak.

8.6 **Ambarrow**

BFBC was commended on the archaeological dig. The Forum noted that a similar event at Bill Hill was being considered.

8.7 Wellington College Woods

The grassland at the back of Wellington College had been levelled by the Electricity Board.

8.8 Land between South of Drift Road Winkfield and the Surrey Hill and Crowthorne Reservoirs, Swinley Road.

The Forum noted that planning permission had been granted for the construction of an underground water supply main pipeline.

8.9 Marketing and Leaflet Review

A major review of marketing and leaflets was being undertaken. Some views on the Ramblers Route leaflet were expressed at the meeting and Sally Coulson asked for any further comments to be sent to her. (ACTION – AII)

8.10 Members Interest List

Sally Coulson would update the Members Interests List and would sent it out with the minutes. (ACTION – Sally Coulson/ Fiona House)

9. **Public Question Time**

None.

10. Date of Next Meeting

There was a date scheduled into the Council diary for 1 April 2008. The Forum would keep this date but asked that in future dates should not be scheduled into the Council diary in advance of being agreed/ set by the Forum.

(ACTION – Sally Coulson)



Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum

Member & Interest List

Chair:

• **Mrs Diana Pidgeon OBE** is a former Countryside Steering Group member and has been the footpath officer and representative for Sandhurst Town Council since 1985 and is a Blackwater Valley 'water walker'. She is an RSPB and National Trust member and represents countryside users.

Vice-Chair:

- **Mr Stuart Tarrant** is the chairman of the Winkfield Rights of Way Association and farms 120 acres within the Borough. He is a member of the National Farmers Union (NFU), Country Land and Business Association (CLA), Royal Agricultural Society (RASE), Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Woodland Trust and Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). He represents Landowners.
- **Mr David Bertie** is chairman of the Berkshire Committee of the CLA and sits on the Bracknell Forest Countryside and Leisure Committee. He represents a landowning interest on the Local Access Forum.
- **Mrs Celia Blay** is a member of the Windsor and Maidenhead liaison group and the British Driving Society. She predominantly represents countryside users as a carriage driver.
- **Councillor Michael Brossard** is a Local Borough Councillor. He sits on both the Licensing and Safety and Planning and Highways Committee and is part of the licensing panel. Cllr Brossard is also a representative for the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership.
- **Mr Joe Dodson** is a regular cyclist and keen walker, being a member of the CTC (formerly Cyclists' Touring Club) and the Austrian Alpine Club. In addition to enjoying the countryside for leisure, he would like to explore improving routes for enjoyable commuting.
- **Mr Mike Gates** is a founder member of the Nuptown Area Preservation Society and sits on the Warfield Parish Council planning committee. He has lived in rural Nuptown for over 20 years and represents countryside users and other interests on the forum.
- **Mrs Anne Haydon** is a landowner and horse breeder and a member of the NFU. She represents both landowners and countryside users.
- **Mrs Sharon Holt** is the Assistant Access and Bridleways Officer for The British Horse Society (BHS). As a local horse rider she represents countryside and rights of way users on the forum.
- Mr Innes McEwen has been Farm Manager at Syngenta Ltd since September

2006 and represents a landowning interest on the forum. Syngenta Ltd are NFU and FWAG members.

- **Mr Richard Mosses** represents countryside users on the forum and is an active member of the S E Berks Ramblers Association. He is also a member of the National Trust, Woodlands Trust and RSPB.
- **Mr Peter Radband** is a local teacher and the treasurer of the Berks on Bikes Mountain Bike Club and a member of the Hampshire and Berkshire Rover Owners Club. He represents countryside users on the forum.
- **Councillor Raymond Simonds** is a Local Borough Councillor. He sits on the Final Accounts Committee and is part of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Cllr Simonds is also a representative for the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership.
- **Mr Derick Stickler** is the Chief Forester for the Crown Estate and joins the forum to represent a major landowner within the Borough.
- **Miss Caroline Tomalin** is a freelance journalist for Horse and Hound online and, as a horse owner and rider and walker, represents countryside users.

Agenda Item 7

Nobel House 17 Smith Square London SW1A 3JR

Telephone 08459 335577 Email jonathan.shaw@defra.gsi.gov.uk Website www.defra.gov.uk

To: All Local Access Forums in England



Your ref: Our ref: anuarv 2008

From Jonathan Shaw MP

Minister for Marine, Landscape & Rural Affairs and Minister for the South East

Dear Local Access Forum member,

As we start a new year, I thought it would be timely to introduce myself to each Local Access Forum as the Minister for Marine, Landscape & Rural Affairs.

We have not long introduced new regulations and guidance for Local Access Forums, and I know that Natural England is also working towards producing a Handbook for Local Access Forum members. I hope that the guidance and regulations have assisted you in developing your role further, so that the support that you receive from Defra, in turn helps you to contribute effectively on issues which are most relevant to your specific locality.

Your recent contribution to the production of Rights of Way Improvement Plans has been invaluable and the achievement in producing the plans is a significant step forward in both raising the profile of the rights of way network and highlighting its importance to tourism and local communities.

I am grateful for the hard work that you put in to this important undertaking, and for the knowledge and expertise you bring in contributing your advice on improving public access. I look forward to working with you all in the future.

JONATHAN SHAW

Agenda Item 9



Summary of Draft Parks & Countryside Green Spaces Strategy (Jan 2008)

The primary purpose of this Strategy is to influence, guide and support work by Bracknell Forest Borough Council and other agencies in determining the provision and management of green infrastructure throughout the borough.

This involves development of new provision alongside management and improvement of existing facilities.

The principle is to focus on:

Priority Objective Action

Policy Priorities

Key factors include:

- Size, location, function and distribution ensuring that the right facility is in the best place
- Quality and management identifying and securing resources to enable year on year improvements, including the production and delivery of management plans and partnership working to optimise the use of skills and expertise
- Community engagement active involvement of local people, alongside addressing barriers to participation, including perceptions and behaviour

Themes

3 key themes:

- Quantity
- Quality
- Use

These encompass:

- The amount of green space
- The standard of provision
- The range of activities and functions facilitated
- Community engagement
- Management to enable successful delivery

Objectives

- A. Green Space Provision: secure and safeguard infrastructure for recreation, play, sport, health, biodiversity and heritage that is sustainable; appropriate to need; strategically located and adaptable to future requirements
- **B.** Management and Development: deliver safe and welcoming environs; achieving and raising quality standards
- **C. Use and Enjoyment**: ensure places support and sustain well-being; encouraging participation and enabling social inclusion

Actions

Resulting actions focus on:

- Function
- Distribution
- Access to / within / between green spaces
- Community use and involvement including non users, minority groups and under represented audiences
- Marketing and Promotion
- Education and Awareness
- Management

PUBLIC NOTICE

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL (VARIOUS FOOTPATH AND BRIDLEWAYS IN SANDHURST/CROWTHORNE) (TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2008

Notice is hereby given that Bracknell Forest Borough Council intends not less than seven days from the date of this Notice to make an Order, in accordance with Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the effect of which will be to prohibit any person from proceeding in any direction along the Footpaths and Bridleways specified below which are in the vicinity of overhead power lines for a period of 6 months or until the work is completed, whichever is the earlier. **Only that section of public right of way immediately affected by the works will be closed when the appropriate signs are in place and will be re-opened as the work is completed.**

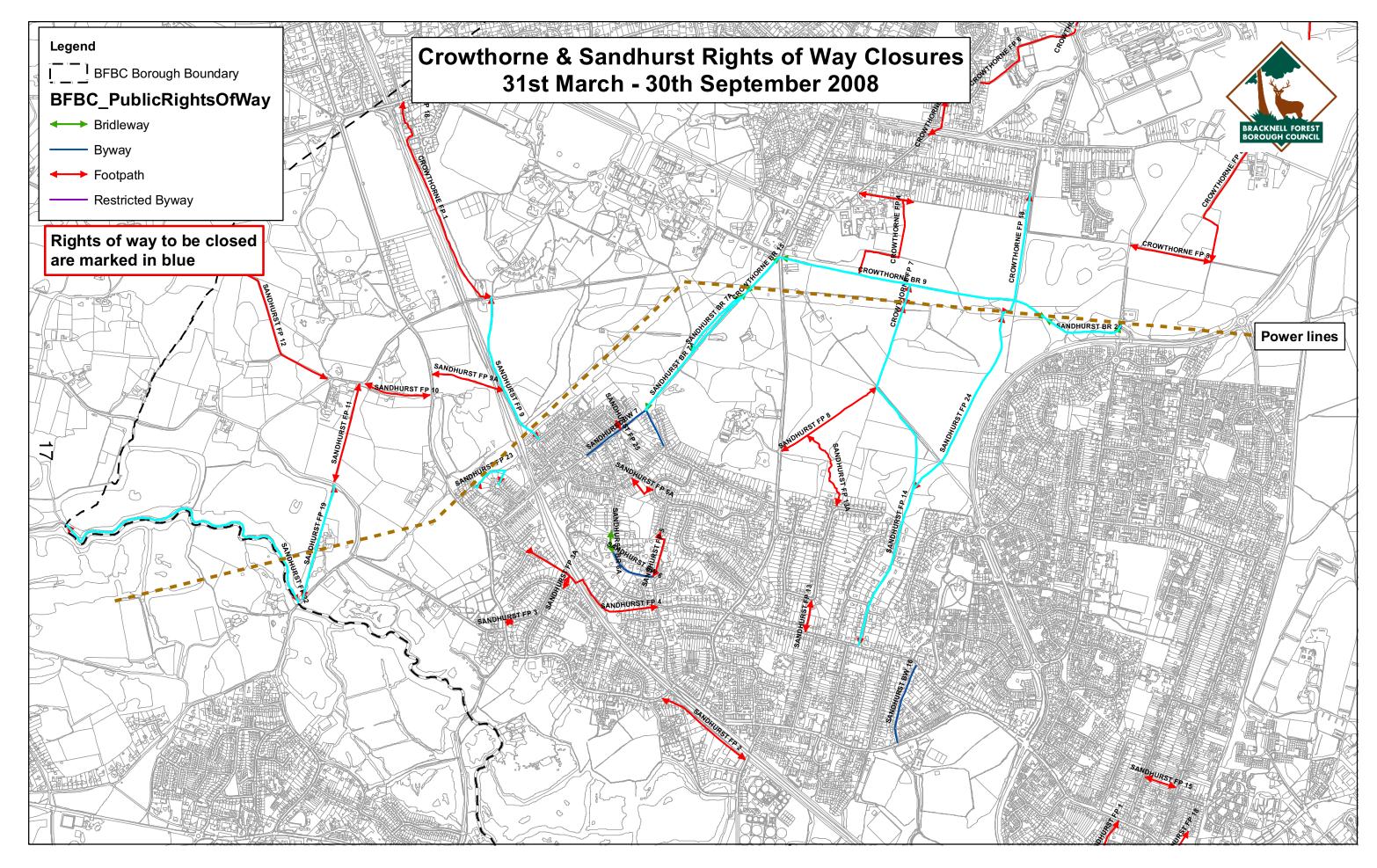
Right of Way	From	То
Sandhurst Bridleway 20	SE end of BR9 Crowthorne at the parish boundary	Owlsmoor Road
Crowthorne Bridleway 9	The Crowthorne to Sandhurst Rd (A3095) at Edgbarrowhill Star	NW end of BR20 Sandhurst
Crowthorne Bridleway 15	NE end of BR7A Sandhurst	The Crowthorne to Sandhurst Road (A3095) at Edgbarrowhill Star
Sandhurst Footpath 24	FP 18 Crowthorne across Wildmoor Heath	FP 14 N of Thibet Road
Crowthorne Footpath 18	Junction of Pinehill Road and Gordon Road	FP 24 Sandhurst
Sandhurst Footpath 14	Wellington Road/Thibet Road	S end of FP7 Crowthorne
Crowthorne Footpath 7	BR9 500 metres (550 yards) E of Edgbarrowhill Star	N end of FP14 Sandhurst
Sandhurst Bridleway 7A	NE corner of BW7	SW end of BR15 Crowthorne
Sandhurst Footpath 9	Cheviot Road	S end of FP1 Crowthorne
Sandhurst Footpath 23	Ambarrow Crescent	Maybrick Close
Sandhurst Footpath 19	Lower Sandhurst Road opp the S end of FP11,	Mill Lane
Sandhurst Footpath 22	Finchampstead parish boundary on the N bank of the Blackwater River	Mill Lane Sandhurst

The purpose of this Order is to ensure public safety whilst work is being carried out to the overhead power lines. If you have any queries on the proposed works please contact James Dymond, Parks & Countryside, 01344 354107.

The proposed Order will come into operation on the 31st March 2008.

Dated: 13th March 2008

Vincent Paliczka Director of Environment and Leisure Bracknell Forest Borough Council Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD





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SANDHURST Love Parks Week 14th-22nd June 2008



PROGRAMME – see www.sandhurst.gov.uk

- SAT. 14th June BBOWT Wildflower Identification and Meadow Management Photo-shoot/Press Call Andrew MacKay MP
- SUN. 15th June Music Event Sandhurst Silver Band St. Michael's Belles Sandhurst Corps of Drums
- MON. 16th June Blood*. Sweat and tears
- TUES. 17th June Conservation Group
- WEDS. 18th June 7.00pm Short Wildlife Walk 'Along the River'
- THURS. 19th June 7.30pm 9.00pm Craft Workshop 10.00am Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership Guided Walk to Wildmoor Heath
- FRI. 20th June 10.30am Pensioners Pond Dip
- SAT. 21st June Gardening Club Show RSPB Wildlife Gardening
- SUN. 22nd June 2.00pm Children's Picnic in the Park (Churches Together) Pond dip/beast safari Bracken and Bramble rides Pets Corner

All week, sessions and activities will be taking place in the Community Hall Complex.

Supporting LOVE PARKS WEEK - * National Blood Service. Sing and Sign, Pilates, Weightwatchers, Rosemary Conley, Talking Tots, Baby Yoga, MAD Academy, Shortmat Bowls, Baby Clinic, Slimming World, Little Steps, Jo Jingles. Sandhurst Cricket and Tennis Club games/matches.