

# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

First meeting of 2017/18  
Grand Jury Room, County Hall, New Road, Oxford  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
10am – 12.30pm

## AGENDA

2017 (1)

	Item	<i>Coffee available from 9.45am (Room behind Café servery)</i>
<b>10.00</b>	1	Annual election/re-election of Chair and Vice-chair – OCC Officer to facilitate and then handover to Chair
	2	Welcome by the Chair
	3	Apologies for absence and declarations of interest - to declare any personal or prejudicial interests
	4	Confirm the minutes of 22 February 2017 (2016/3)
<b>10.15</b>	5	Matters arising from minutes
<b>10.25</b>	6	Oral update about restructure of the OCC Communities Directorate including countryside access functions – Hugh Potter/James Blockley
<b>10.35</b>	7	For discussion: Oxfordshire policy for the management of motorised vehicles on Public Rights of Way –Troth Wells
<b>11.05</b>	8	Space for discussion about Statement of Priorities for definitive map related activities
		<i>Comfort break</i>
<b>11.30</b>	9	Space for discussion about access and 'Brexit'
<b>11.45</b>	10	Space for discussion about OCC promoted routes
<b>12.00</b>	11	TOE2 Improving access to Oxfordshire's Countryside
<b>12.10</b>	12	For information: Oxfordshire Historic Landscapes Walks and associated project
<b>12.15</b>	13	Space for questions from members of public/observers
<b>12.25</b>	14	Confirm date, time and location of future meetings 2017 year , 1 Nov 2017, 7 Feb 2018, 2018 year - 16 May 2018 - all Wednesdays 9.45 for 10am location probably County Hall or Speedwell House

*n.b. all times are indicative only*

Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum is a Local Access Forum – a statutory independent advisory body, established and administered by Oxfordshire County Council to assist with improving access to Oxfordshire's countryside under s94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Contact any member via the OCAF Secretariat: Oxfordshire County Council, Countryside Area, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE Tel 01865 810226, email: [paul.harris@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.harris@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or visit [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocaf](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocaf)

## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF 2016/17  
Wednesday 22 February 2017, Signal Court, Old Station Way, Eynsham

2016 (3)

### Attending:

#### Members and their interest areas:

Stuart McGinness, Chair (SMG) User - Off-road cycling and leading youth cycle training  
Dave Cavanagh (DC) - User - Walking and practical voluntary action on paths  
Philip Chamberlain (PC) - Farming - Arable farmer and diversified farm estate  
Nigel Fisher (NF) - Landmanaging - University of Oxford land manager  
Gordon Garraway (GG) - Other - Green space protection and recreational trails  
John Griffin (JG) - User - Cycling, walking and protected areas  
Andrew Hawkins (AH) - Landmanaging - woodland owner and ecologist  
Matthew Judson (MJ) - User - 4x4 use and leading youth outdoor hiking training  
Anne Luttmann-Johnson (ALJ) - User - wheelchair user access to the countryside  
Sarah Martin (SM) - User - Walking and botany, permissive access

#### Guests/Observers:

Rob Dillon (RD) - Motorcyclist and member of Trail Riders Fellowship and mountain biker  
Chris Marriage (CM) - Observer from Mid & West Berks LAF - land managing interest  
Sarah Wright (SW) - Ridgeway National Trail Officer (for agenda item 5 only)

#### Oxfordshire County Council Officers attending to support OCAF

Hugh Potter (HP) - OCC Countryside and Records Group Manager  
James Blockley (JB) - OCC Countryside Access Team Leader  
Paul Harris (PH) - OCAF Secretary/OCC Access Strategy & Development Officer

### 1. Welcome

SMG welcomed members, guests and officers to the meeting. Those attending briefly introduced themselves and their interests.

### 2. Apologies and declarations of interest

PH informed the group that apologies had been received from Troth Wells and Harry St John. There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Confirm Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 (2016/2)

Signed as a correct record with two minor typos on page 3 and 4.

### 4. Matters Arising

SMG and PH confirmed that all actions had been completed.

*2016(2)(6). Fencing of PRow.* PH informed the group that no responses about the fencing letter had been received. SM referred to the recent fencing at Dorchester near Days Lock which had caused upset. JB replied that the field officer had been in communication with the landowner to ensure the route was the correct legal line and width and that at least one strand of plain wire ran along the path side of the fence. He added there was ongoing discussion and that the parish council were undertaking a safety assessment. PC said that he had been down to take a look and considered that the provision was satisfactory and would enable livestock to be grazed without worrying by dogs, which he considered especially relevant with the eight sheep recently killed in a river after being chased by dogs. He added that no-one seemed to have complained about the long-standing barbed wire at the lock site.

2016(2)(8) *Definitive Map Statement of Priorities*. PH informed the group that no responses had been made to this yet and members had until end April to respond. HP encouraged members to consider the document and make comments as he said it was very useful to get feedback.

## 5. Ridgeway National Trail update

The Ridgeway Officer, Sarah Wright, gave a presentation on the Ridgeway Partnership and her work since she started in July 2015. She explained that all of the 15 national trails had had formal partnerships established since the government's 'New Deal' for national trails and that members of these included highway authority, user, community, tourism and local business interests.

SW highlighted the good user satisfaction levels with the Ridgeway with people usually saying that the route is pleasant to use and well-managed. SW then talked about the work that she was trying to do to improve links to local communities and local facilities – 'Strategic Links' which involved volunteer surveys of potential routes and then selecting routes for the first phase of strategic link designation. SM questioned how this was to be funded and SW replied that the surveyors were volunteers and she was likely to submit bids to TOE2, Leader and the AONBs.

ALJ asked about information on accessibility including surface and gradients for the trail and links. SW responded that the surveyors look at all the structures and a member of the Disabled Ramblers would also be assessing them. It may be possible to assign sections of the trail with a 1-4 classification using the Disabled Ramblers assessment categories and this could be complemented by the forthcoming surveys of the trails using Google's 'Trekker' system. This was planned to be scheduled after a number of other trails had been completed so that all the lessons had been learnt and enough volunteer or staff time was available. In response to a question from CM SW confirmed that only cycle-able links between Streatley and Avebury would be signposted as the eastern section of the Ridgeway was mostly footpath.

SW outlined the five themes that the Ridgeway Partnership had chosen to focus on – Natural, Ancient, Sporting, Living and Creative/Spiritual. Each of these had aims and action plans associated with them so that all members of the partnership could contribute. An example of this was using technology where third parties had uploaded mapping data files to enable routes to be downloaded onto mobile phones or GPS devices, and there was the possibility of installing quick link codes on gates and information boards to provide enriched content. SW also highlighted that more event organisers were working with the trail now and normally contributing £1 per participant. In 2016 this brought in around £2,000 and she is confident that £3-4,000 could be brought in for 2017/18. SW said that these organisers were acting responsibly and although they want to grow their events they are aware that impacts need minimising and their events need careful management.

SW stated that climate change has had to be considered in trail management too; whether it was likely loss of beech trees or the increase in pests and disease as well as increased erosion linked to increasing weather instability as well as user pressures. DC asked what prospect there was to improve the surface of the Ridgeway. SW explained that there was a two-pronged approach to tackle damage so there was a need to engage with all stakeholders. Physical repair work and associated protection is necessary including priority repair works within the Avebury World Heritage Site accompanied by a seasonal Traffic Regulation Order.

SM asked if the Ridgeway got any money from developments. SW replied that there wasn't any formal representation to the districts' Community Infrastructure Levies to date but that may be possible for the whole trail. PC suggested that developers may resist requests to fund measures outside of their application's district council area. PH added that he tried to secure funding for rights of way including the national trails where appropriate for the likely impact area of a development and where contributions could be shown to meet the statutory tests.

SW presented the combined National Trails 'infographic' showing the social, economic and health benefits of the trails and suggested that a trail or trail-authority specific version may be useful. SW welcomed RD's suggestion that a survey in six months' time could be developed to show the effectiveness of any approach.

The Chair thanked SW for an informative presentation and asked her to keep the group informed and let it know how they could help.

## **6. Science Vale Cycle Network update**

Paul Harris showed a number of slides for two linked projects that he hoped would come to fruition in 2017/18. These were for one of the routes in the Science Vale Cycling Network (SVCN) between Wantage and Harwell and a number of rights of way improvements in the vicinity of Milton Park. The projects also tied in with improvement funding in the Cherwell area for Ardley and Upper Heyford as there was a need to increase staff capacity to be able to deliver them.

The SVCN's aim was 'connecting communities to workplaces' as funds came from the Local Enterprise Partnership and a request by hi-tech firms to provide better and safer cycling facilities for their workers. The Countryside Access Team hope to resolve problems, improve access for all and increase team capacity from involvement in this and the other schemes. Slides of example issues were shown and suggestions of possible likely solutions made. PH stressed that this was summary information only as he needed to secure occupier and landowner consents at the earliest stage and make sure that there was a solution appropriate for farmers, users and the landscape. The intention was that access was better for more people more of the time but with a 'rural' feel and specification (no blacktop) and a reduction in maintenance liabilities.

DC asked if there was or could be any volunteer involvement. PH confirmed that that was likely and that could be explored if and when land-manager permissions were obtained. PH confirmed to JG that the projects had a tight geographical scope but it was hoped that there would be some wider network and team benefits from the schemes.

The Chair thanked PH and asked him to keep the group up to date and let it know how they could help as the project progressed.

## **7. Countryside Access Team update**

James Blockley referred to his paper and said that the team, users and stakeholders have already adapted to get used to having less staff and funds, and will have to change again to meet the requirements of the service reviews and the ongoing restructure of services. The teams would be moving out of Signal Court by mid-March with the workshops being retained for tasks team, national trails and hosted projects for an extended but indefinite period. Further change was likely if the unitary authority (or unitary authorities) proposal gets implemented. He felt that the team was strong because it worked well together and with others and would work hard to manage impacts positively with any changes put forward.

DC said that in terms of the Rambler volunteers they would be prepared to consider doing more if more work was put their way. JB thanked him for this offer and reiterated his view that volunteers and communities should be adding value to what the authority does rather than trying to replace it as the authority had clear statutory responsibilities. He said that a way it could work for winter (hard) vegetation clearance could be if the tasks team went in with their specialist machinery first followed a number of times a year by volunteers to back up that work with lighter clearance. PC added that increasingly landowners needed to see proof of authority, insurance and certification for volunteers working on their land in order to protect their own interests, especially when power tools were being used.

ALJ referred to some of the images in JB's report and asked why there were gates and steps on the bridges shown. JB responded that the team never knowingly made accessibility worse but very occasionally it was necessary to replace like with like if the livestock farming needs required stiles. Sometimes the nature of the terrain also dictated whether the largest kissing gates and gates could be used.

PC said that his attitude to permissive access had had to harden since the Dorchester issue when messages from the local community referred to the previous landowner's express permission as somehow meaning that access should be provided in perpetuity or continued if the land changed hands. He said that in his case if he was starting over he would be looking for much more security.

HP referred to the existing protection methods such as landowner deposits which PC acknowledged but said would need adding to.

## 8. Definitive Map Team update

There were no comments or questions about the supplied update. DC welcomed the ability to upload photos to the forthcoming new version of CAMSWeb and asked if users could identify the path number on the display as that was very useful feature missing from current version. JB said he would check.

CM identified that the backlog represented more than twenty years of work. HP clarified that the waiting list had been around for many years and that a significant proportion of claims were from the Trail Riders Fellowship for Ridgeway that may end up failing statutory tests and timescales. The 'clunky' nature of the current process and the delays to Deregulation Act implementation meant that progress would remain at the current rate. DC pointed out that the 2026 cut off was actually the last day of 2025.

PH suggested that OCAF and other LAFs could always consider writing to the Defra or Natural England to request moving legislation or providing additional ringfenced funding. HP repeated his point that OCAF commenting on reviewing the OCC Statement of Priorities could be the way for DMMO to better link into the Rights of Way Management Plan's aims.

## 9. Update from other LAFs

There were no comments on the update. CM said that his LAF was getting more involved in commons and village green issues and noted that OCAF didn't seem to look at this area.

## 10. Forward Planning

PH suggested that OCAF members should think about possible future items for discussion as although OCC would always be happy to bring RoWMP and other matters to the group it was up to members to highlight and lead on issues important to them. He pointed out the Vice-chair's (Troth Wells) work outside of OCAF to champion equestrian issues like securing a Pegasus type crossing at the Chilton A34 Interchange and keeping pressure on the authority to consider equestrian issues at early stages in planning and transport work.

SMG identified dog fouling as a significant issue and SM suggested compulsory DNA testing. JB said that advice for dog owners was on the OCC website and PH said that Gloucestershire LAF was going to put together some advice. He added that the MoD through ex OCC Field Officer Mark Sumner was about to review its dogs guidance. PH said he would look to update OCAF with what emerged from both of these in due course..

CM highlighted his LAF's work to consider Brexit and said that they were producing a draft report to inform debate about farm subsidies and would kick off discussion at their next meeting. He would be raising it at the LAF conference on 21<sup>st</sup> March [*post meeting note -this is cancelled until June 2017*]. PC said it was not too late to do anything as government had not firmed anything up.

## 11. Questions or any other business - none

## 12. Agree dates of next meeting

Meetings were agreed for 24 May 2017, 1 November 2017 and 7 Feb 2018 for the 2017/18 LAF year, probably at 10am in Oxford unless other venues could found.

The Chair thanked Sarah Wright for her presentation, and members, observers and staff for contributing. The meeting closed at 12pm

*Signed as correct record SMcGinness Chair 24 May 2017*

# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

Agenda item 7

Date: 24 May 2017  
Title: Discussion about Oxfordshire policy for the management of motorised vehicles on Public Rights of Way  
Discussion Lead: Troth Wells, OCAF Vice-chair

## Introduction

Troth Wells has put together a discussion paper for OCAF re TROs/management vehicular use of BOATs. She has also included policies of Hants and West Berks and by doing so hopes that OCAF could start the ball rolling for a policy in Oxfordshire with a view to making it easier to address the issues of surface damage to BOATs. This should be read alongside the other documents that Troth and others emailed through.

Gordon Garraway asked for basic information about 1) how TROs operate, 2) what is the cost to impose a TRO, 3) how many TROs have been implemented to protect the surface of BOATs in say the last 5 years, etc. Paul Harris has responded: 1) A summary about the TRO process from the Ramblers has been attached as appendix 3 and the TRO policy for Surrey has been added to App 2. 2) they cost a few thousand per TRO to cover order making and notice costs if accompanied by a physical barrier – this comes from PRoW budget (temp TROs are a few hundred, no charge for emergency, and additional costs for barriers). Another cost factor is that permanent TROs have a public consultation/notification requirement. 3) No permanent TROs on rights of way have been implemented in Oxon recently– but a number of temporary and emergency ones which have been put in place and extended. A permanent TRO was proposed in Cholsey on Ilges Lane Byway 13 to help deliver a highways cycletrack scheme but on considering representations OCC decided to monitor the situation, use seasonal TROs and only use permanent TRO if evidence shows it is necessary.

## OCAF Action

Troth has asked members to consider as first step whether there should be such a policy in Oxfordshire. If a policy is considered the best way forward, Members should consider if OCC should simply adopt the Hampshire or West Berks (or another authority's) existing policy, adapt one or more, or draft a completely new one

Paul Harris also asks these questions to OCAF in order to help discussion.

- 1) Does OCC need a policy of vehicles and TROs? What significant benefit or benefits will be achieved?
- 2) Do members feel TROs by themselves will resolve surface damage or other issues?
- 3) Should the time and revenue costs of TROs be included as a factor in any policy?
- 4) Do members feel any legal vehicle use of public rights of way is acceptable or unacceptable and if so under what circumstances?
- 5) When surface damage is the main issue for a particular TRO should TROs exclude all mechanically propelled vehicles, those with 3 or more wheels only, and should they also possibly include horse-drawn carriages or ridden horses?

## **For discussion: Oxfordshire policy for the management of motorised vehicles on Public Rights of Way**

*Troth Wells, Vice-Chair, OCAF*

*May 2017*

Currently Oxfordshire does not have a policy on managing motor vehicles using PRoW, with Traffic Regulation Orders, and this is something we can discuss at OCAF to see whether and how such a policy could be initiated. Without a policy in place it is especially difficult to take steps to protect Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) from severe damage, resulting in loss of amenity to other legitimate RoW users.

At recent Oxfordshire RoW forums, and in other circles, there has been discussion of the surface degradation of some Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs). It is a headache for the Countryside Access Team where the surface damage is the result of motorised use, since motorised vehicles are allowed to use BOATs – an example of an old right that pre-dated the rise of off-road vehicles and recreational ‘off-roading’ as a sport. However, this makes some BOATs almost impossible to use for walkers, equestrians (including carriage-drivers) and cyclists, particularly during wetter periods, but dry rutting is also a problem.

At the South West (Vale) RoW Forum we discussed the BOAT Green Road/Lane between Letcombe Regis, West Challow and Childrey which is regularly used by off-road vehicles, so that other users cannot enjoy that amenity. This gives a good illustration of the issues that affect other BOATs.

If OCC put a Seasonal Traffic Regulation Order (STRO) on it, this should stop the motorised vehicles. However, the Police say they cannot police a Notice and a barrier would have to be installed. But barriers can be pulled down, so OCC would need to monitor and probably replace them. CCTV could help, but again, this involves cost and is not a guarantee. Other counties and authorities have tried to deal with the problem in different ways. The starting point seems to be to create policy on the use of TROs to manage motor vehicles on BOATs.

West Berks and Hampshire both have policies in place, and these are reproduced below. Hampshire has been looking to make a permanent TRO on two BOATs (after trialling an Experimental TRO), in line with the County Council’s Policy on its public rights of way network and the use of Traffic Regulation Orders – see <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/row/vehicles-row.htm> and APPENDIX I below. West Berks’ doc, and case studies, is in APPENDIX II below.

This is a key paragraph from Hampshire’s Policy Statement:

- *The County Council will take action to limit or prevent access by motor vehicles if this use is damaging to the route or local environment, or conflicts with the reasonable interests of walkers, riders, cyclists or carriage drivers. The County Council has a Policy on the use of Traffic Regulation Orders on rights of way.*

A first step would be for us to think about whether we should have such a policy in Oxfordshire. The attached documents form a useful basis for thinking about the issues around this, and to see where we could go forward.



Countryside Service

## Policy for the management of traffic on Hampshire's public rights of way network and the use of Traffic Regulation Orders

1. The legislation which gives highway authorities the powers to impose Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) is the Road Traffic Regulation Act of 1984. Section 1 of the Act sets out the powers and describes the circumstances or criteria which have to met for this power to be exercised.
2. Hampshire County Council's approach to the use of these powers is to consider every individual case on its merits. It will consider whether a TRO is appropriate for a specific path rather than consider the implementation of TROs for an area. The policy and individual decisions taken should, wherever possible, be in accordance with the guidance set out in the revised version of 'Making the Best of Byways' and recent Government Guidance document entitled 'Regulating the Use of Motor Vehicles on Public rights of way and Off-Road'
3. If a previously unrecorded route is added to the Definitive Map as a route with public vehicular rights, or if the recorded status of a route is changed to show the existence of public vehicular rights, then the County Council will only consider the restriction of vehicles if there are specific local circumstances which warrant such action. However, where there is no evidence of significant use of the route by motor vehicles in the previous twenty years then the presumption will be that this traffic should be prohibited.
4. Road Traffic Regulation Act Criteria: The criteria will be considered in relation to the circumstances which exist in each specific case.
5. Every Traffic Regulation Order will be reviewed by HCC officers at least once every three years to see if the circumstances which led to the imposition of the Order still apply. The conclusions of the review should be made publicly available.
6. The response to a problem or a potential problem should always be the least restrictive necessary. The Council will consider a series of other options before considering the implementation of a TRO. If a TRO is to be considered it should be the least restrictive necessary.

If a problem exists which is due to the use, or likely future use, of a route by certain types of traffic then the following must be considered

- Allowing traffic to continue to use the route but undertaking closer monitoring of use and impact of use over a period (usually several months).
- Assessing whether private use of the route is a contributory factor and if so liaising with those responsible to find a solution.
- Undertaking remedial works to a standard which can support the expected level of public use of the route.

If the problem is deemed to be more severe, and the above measures have not worked or would not work, the following options will be considered:

- The use of signs requesting particular classes of traffic to desist from use at times when such use would be harmful (Eg. after rain or over winter). In addition, asking known contacts within user groups to publicise the case and to ask that the route identified be avoided for a period of time, or at certain times of the year, depending upon the nature of the problem

- If the problem is one deemed to be caused by public use of the route by motor vehicles, the Council can ask the organised groups to agree to promote a 'Voluntary Restraint' (VR) by certain classes of vehicles and/or at certain times of the year. These VRs are accompanied by LARA (Land Access and Recreation Association) signs and an agreement that members of LARA and affiliated societies are asked to abide by the restraint being promoted.
- If a VR is deemed to be insufficient, or has been tried but been unsuccessful, then the next consideration is the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order. Again, this should be the least restrictive necessary. Consideration will be given to limiting the restriction to as short a period as is necessary and should only apply at certain times of year if appropriate. In particular, if there is an immediate risk, consideration should be given to the implementation of an 'Experimental TRO' as described in the recent Government guidance. Although these can be imposed quickly they must then be subject to the same decision making process as non-experimental TROs and, in any event, the legislation does not allow for these to be in place for longer than 18 months.

### **Process for Making a Traffic Regulation Order**

If a proposal for a TRO is to be considered, the details of what is most appropriate may change before the TRO is actually made. Interested parties including the owners or managers of the land, local councils and user groups should be informed of such changes and have the opportunity to comment. A summary of the responses and proposed action should be made available to all consultees. The same contacts will also be notified when a proposed TRO is to be considered by the Executive Member.

Whatever the outcome feedback will be provided to those consulted.

7. Provision of Information. An annual report will be produced and made publicly available which lists:
  - all the existing TROs in the county,
  - dates they commenced, the reasons why the TROs have been made and are still in place,
  - the traffic prohibited and at what times,
  - dates and conclusions of reviews undertaken,
  - details of remedial works which are planned.

This information will also be constantly available on the County Council Countryside Service web pages.

8. Signage and Barriers. Unless enforcement or non-compliance difficulties arise signs and barriers will be limited to those which are necessary to achieve the intended effect of the Order. A minimum in every case will be a permanent sign which explains clearly in words, with easily understood graphics, the traffic which is prohibited from using the route and at what times. If barriers are necessary every reasonable attempt will be made to physically allow access to the traffic which is not prohibited by the Order. This will include the use of the 'Kent Carriage Gap' where the intention is to prohibit access by 4 wheeled vehicles but allow horse drawn carriages to continue to use the route. The Kent Carriage Gap is a series of low bollards which are placed sufficiently close together to allow most carriages through but too close to allow access for most motor vehicles.
9. County Council officers will help encourage Hampshire Police to monitor adherence to all Traffic Regulation Orders across the county and to take appropriate enforcement action. In particular HCC officers will encourage local Police to take action against offenders where clear problems exist.
  - [Policy Statement](#)
  - [Full Policy Report](#)

**Approved by the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage on 18 May 2006**

## **Policy Statement regarding the use and management of motor vehicles on rights of way and unsurfaced roads in the countryside**

- The County Council recognises the rights that motor vehicle users have to access parts of the rights of way and unsurfaced road network.
- The County Council does not encourage this activity but acknowledges that responsible use on some routes can be sustained.
- The County Council will take action to limit or prevent access by motor vehicles if this use is damaging to the route or local environment, or conflicts with the reasonable interests of walkers, riders, cyclists or carriage drivers. The County Council has a Policy on the use of Traffic Regulation Orders on rights of way.
- The County Council will prioritise repair and maintenance to benefit non-motorised users on Byways Open to All Traffic. Repair work on Unclassified Roads will be undertaken to a standard which is commensurate with the level and type of public use.
- The County Council will endeavour to ensure that surface damage caused by private use of the route (eg. by agricultural or forestry vehicles) is made good by those responsible.
- The County Council will work to encourage responsible behaviour by all countryside users and a better understanding of the network
- The County Council has a legal duty to record all public rights of way on the Definitive Map. Investigating applications to modify the map can be controversial and may lead to expensive Public Inquiries. The Council welcomes discussion with interested parties at an early stage in the Inquiry process to agree common ground and minimise expense.
- The County Council is opposed to the unlawful use of motor vehicles on rights of way and unsurfaced roads, and will work with the Police and others to prevent such access and to take action against offenders.

### **Explanation of terms**

**Motor Vehicles:** Mechanically propelled vehicles, including cars, 4x4s, motorcycles, quadbikes, mini-motorbikes and mini motor scooters .

**(Public) Rights of Way:** Public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic ('BOAT's). BOATs are the only rights of way (often without a sealed surface) which motor vehicles have a legal right to use, although they are mainly used by walkers, riders, cyclists and carriage drivers.

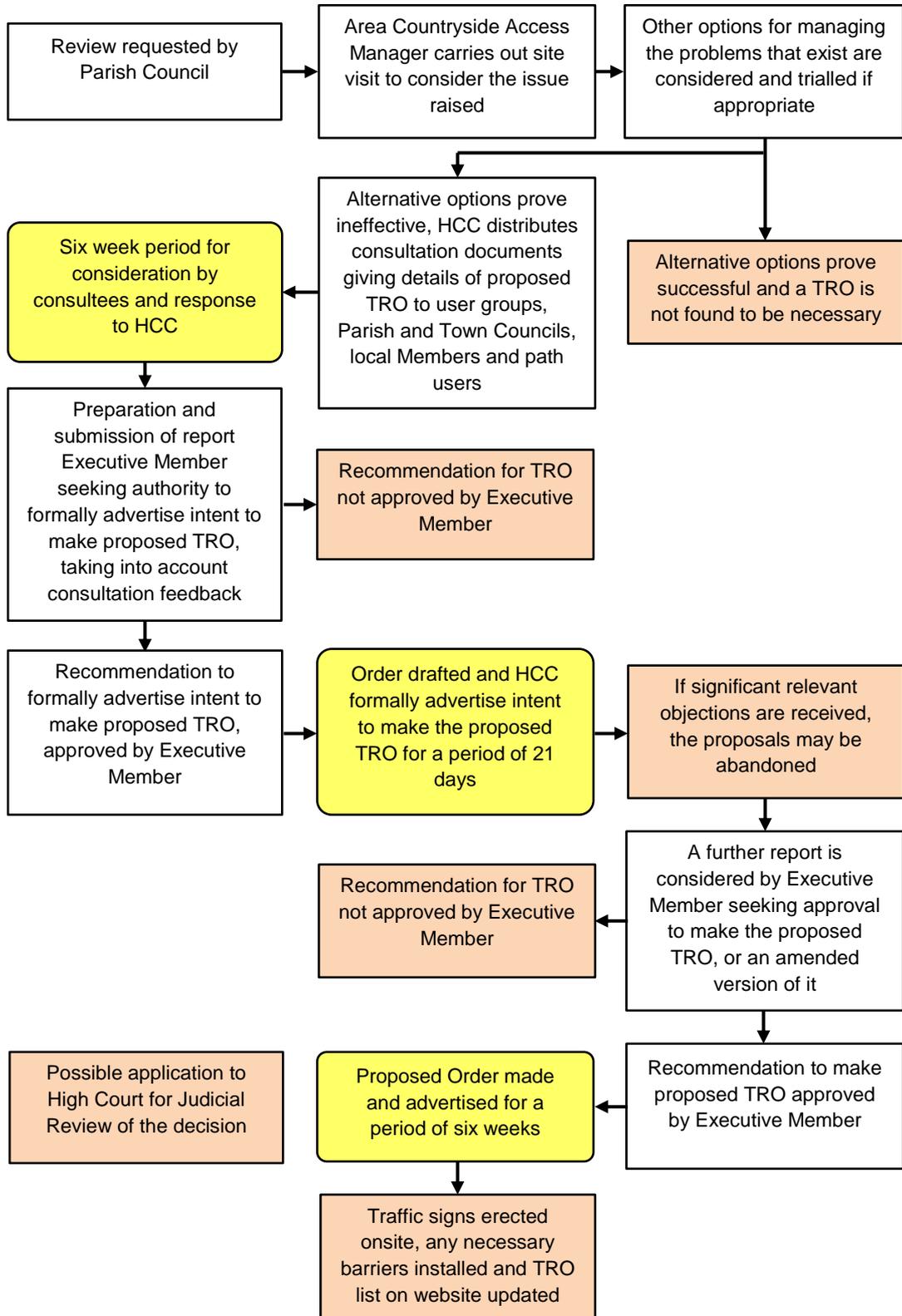
**Unsurfaced Roads:** In this context, this refers to Unclassified County Road (UCRs) without a sealed surface and where motor vehicular rights are known or presumed to exist. UCRs are highways recorded by the County Council as maintainable at public expense and believed by highway managers to be public carriage roads.

**Traffic Regulation Order:** An order to restrict, prohibit, or regulate the use of roads (including rights of way) by traffic (which can include cyclists, horse riders and walkers).

**Private Use:** Use of a route by farmers, landowners or those who hold private rights of access to property.

**Definitive Map:** The legal record of public rights of way. Hampshire County Council has a legal duty to keep this map under continuous review and to investigate applications ('claims') to modify it under section 53(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

### Traffic Regulation Order Process



**A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF DAMAGE OF WEST  
BERKSHIRE'S RIGHTS OF WAY BY VEHICULAR USE  
September 2009**

**CONTEXT**

Vehicles on public rights of way, most notably four wheel drive vehicles, have caused damage to many byways and former roads used as public paths (now Restricted Byways) in West Berkshire. The effect ranges from parallel ruts, which make use difficult for cyclists, equestrians and carriage drivers in particular, to major or deliberate damage, rendering use by any other types of user difficult or impossible. Such surface defects may deter increased participation by other users of rights of way, and there may be other detrimental effects, such as deviation of users onto adjacent private land.

Mechanically-propelled vehicles may use Byways Open to all Traffic, and prior to May 2006 were also permitted to use the then 'Roads Used as Public Paths' (RUPPs, now 'Restricted Byways'). There is some damage present on Restricted Byways as a legacy of their use by vehicles, and there may in places be continued illegal use of these routes by vehicles.

In 2008/09, West Berkshire spent approximately 50% of its works budget repairing damage caused by four wheel drive vehicles.

**LEGAL BACKGROUND**

West Berkshire Council has a duty to 'assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which it is the highway authority, including any roadside waste which forms part of it' (Section 130 Highways Act 1980).

This duty extends to all legitimate public users of public rights of way, including vehicular users of byways.

Although the District Council has the responsibility to protect the rights of users, the following are offences:

**Offences**

***Driving without lawful authority***

Under S34(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1988, any one who, without lawful authority, drives a motor vehicle on any footpath, bridleway or restricted byway commits an offence.

***Careless and inconsiderate driving / driving without license, tax and insurance***

Under S3 Road Traffic Act 1988, if a person drives a mechanically propelled vehicle on a road or other public place without due care and attention, or without reasonable consideration for other persons using the road or place, he is guilty of an offence. 'Road' is defined as meaning 'any highway and any other road to which the public has access' and therefore includes public rights of way. It is therefore also an offence to drive without tax, license and insurance on any public right of way.

### ***Driving mechanically propelled vehicles elsewhere than on roads***

Subject to the provisions of S34(1) Road Traffic Act 1988, if without lawful authority a person drives a mechanically propelled vehicle–

- (a) on to or upon any common land, moorland or land of any other description, not being land forming part of a road, or  
he is guilty of an offence.

*Note that action on road traffic offences can only be taken by the police.*

### ***Damaging the surface of the highway***

#### **S1(1) Criminal Damage Act 1971**

A person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property belonging to another intending to destroy or damage any such property or being reckless as to whether any such property would be destroyed or damaged shall be guilty of an offence.

*[The property being damaged in this case is the surface of the highway belonging to the highway authority.]*

#### **S131A Highways Act 1980**

- (1) A person who without lawful authority or excuse, so disturbs the surface of–
- (a) a footpath,
  - (b) a bridleway, or
  - (c) any other highway which consists of or comprises a carriageway other than a made-up carriageway,
- as to render it inconvenient for the exercise of the public right of way is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.  
*[Level 3 is currently a fine not exceeding £1,000.]*
- (2) Proceedings under this section shall be brought only by the highway authority or the council of the non-metropolitan district, parish or community in which the offence is committed; and, without prejudice to section 130 (protection of public rights), it is the duty of the highway authority to ensure that, where desirable in the public interest, such proceedings are brought.

### **POLICY BACKGROUND**

'Making the Best of Byways' (December 2005) is the government's practical guide for local authorities with the responsibility for managing and maintaining byways. It is an account of all legal and practical measures which might be taken to manage byways of the benefit of all users. The measures in this WBC policy broadly follow this government guidance.

### **REMEDIES**

The District Council has powers to restrict the use of any public right of way, via 'traffic regulation orders' (TROs). In view of the duty of the District Council to protect the rights of all users of rights of way, is not appropriate from the outset to impose blanket restrictions, and other measures should in general be tried first.

**Exceptions to the principle would be that a traffic regulation order to restrict the use of vehicles should be used from the outset where there is evidence of either a serious**

**threat of dangerous deterioration in the surface of the right of way, or a serious threat to the local biodiversity.**

The District Council has the power to repair the damage, but care has to be taken that acting in such a reactive way does not simply move the problem in to other areas. There are measures which are in the power of the District Council to take, many of which try to prevent problems occurring in the first place, and these are suggested below.

***First priority measures:***

- Maintain the existing information boards on all restricted byways and also the cul-de-sac byway signs. This also serves to assist the police in understanding when action can be taken on site.
- Erect a 'Land Access and Recreation Association' (LARA) code of conduct board, or similar, on each byway. A more informative board may be a good idea, explaining the situation, e.g. 'if you damage this byway, this is an offence under (named legislation) and it may result in closure of the byway in the future'. Northamptonshire County Council has a policy in this respect.
- Erect signs requesting that particular classes of traffic refrain from use at times when the surface is sensitive to such use, e.g. after rain or over winter. Publicize the request amongst local user groups and the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA). This could be extended to the system of 'Voluntary Restraint', whereby LARA will publicize the request amongst motoring groups. LARA is likely to require a commitment to future repairs from the Council, as a condition of Voluntary Restraint.
- Take steps to identify illegal users, via local knowledge, police data already in existence (e.g. from the Ridgeway policing), path wardens, liaison with responsible user groups and stakeholders, and research on web sites, e.g. vehicle club sites, where some companies organize off-roading holidays for vehicles. For example, four wheel drive groups from Germany and Holland have been seen on West Berkshire's byways.
- Consider the feasibility of employing wardens to observe use at known 'hot spots' on peak days, often Sundays.
- Consider the selective use of CCTV, e.g. to monitor use by a suspected particular offender.
- Liaise directly with motor clubs, to explain the problems and encourage supportive behaviour.
- Assess the extent of damage caused by private landowner access. Encourage landowners to use alternative non-rights of way accesses if possible, and to repair damage caused and maintain the surface. Consider any incentives which could be offered under agri-environment schemes in this respect.
- Make maximum use of neighbourhood policing, and formally approach the police with a request for increased support. Create partnerships with the police and provide help and information to assist them, as they cannot allocate resources to a 'nebulous' problem. Encourage the police to compile a specific database, so that repeat offenders can be identified. Note that a Neighbourhood Action Group is unlikely to consider a problem on a remote byway to be a priority.
- Repair and maintain byways which constitute priorities in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Follow repairs with temporary traffic regulation orders, if these are

needed to protect new works. Accompany each TRO with a press release and signs on site, to explaining why it has been necessary.

- In the case of all restricted byways, renovate the surfaces following a survey of works required, and immediately follow this work by the installation of 'Kent Carriage Gaps', which allow access for all users, except cars and larger, and allow private access by landowners.
- Erect accessible barriers to prevent vehicular use of non-vehicular rights of way where there is a reported problem.

***Second priority measures if the first priorities do not meet with any success:***

Seasonal or permanent traffic regulation orders (TROs) on byways may be imposed if vehicular use is damaging the environment, destroying local character or conflicting with non-vehicular users. Each TRO ought to be accompanied with signs on site, to explain why it has been necessary.

The guiding principle should be that the least restrictive option should be tried first. For instance, first of all, any restriction would be for as short a period as is necessary and should only apply to the most damaging types of users and at the most vulnerable times of year. An experimental TRO could also be used, but this would only be for a maximum of 18 months. A TRO would normally be accompanied by physical barriers.

**Note:** consideration would always be given to whether motorcycles are required to be a part of any traffic regulation order, as the damage caused by motorcycles is arguably less than that caused by four wheeled vehicles. Motorcycles tend to use the 'middle lane' between the tracks of four wheeled vehicles, and it takes many traverses to produce the same depth of rut as that produced by the four wheeled vehicles. Motorcycles often cannot use the outer ruts, as the depth interferes with the peddles. They also cannot use tracks which have been badly damaged by vehicles. Kent has used a system of 'gated access' which allows motorcycles but not four wheeled vehicles.

***Longer-term or ongoing high priorities:***

- Constantly review the approach once the efficacy of the measures, plus any policing operations, have been assessed.
- Continue to encourage people to report number plates, times and locations of vehicles causing damage.
- Produce a widely-distributed information leaflet on rights and responsibilities of vehicle users. Distribute to garages, off-roading magazines, off-roading web sites, etc.
- Continue to seek alternative sites for off-road vehicular use, which do not involve the use of public rights of way. Attention is initially drawn to the Auto Cycle Union's initiatives, see [www.acu.org.uk](http://www.acu.org.uk) / local authority support). Seek such a site via the draft Local Development Framework, planning applications, Stewardship, LEADER etc. Consider a pilot scheme in an area where the parish council is supportive. See the initiative by Berkhamstead Motor Club, which has negotiated the use of a Council 'land bank' for use as a motorcycle scrambling area, combined with other leisure use.

An organization called 'Enduroland' also operates sites, at £30 per day, which can attract 100+ motorcyclists on a Sunday. Provision of such sites definitely results in a decrease of 'fun riding' on public rights of way.

Formally adopt the existing draft approach to the maintenance of rights of way used as private access to properties or land.

**Note:** In this context of this document, there are three case studies, summarized below, showing how policing has helped to combat illegal vehicular use: Operation Freedown, Bucklebury Common and Sussex Pathwatch.

## **SELECTED CASE STUDIES**

### **Case studies showing how policing has helped to combat illegal vehicular use**

#### **'Operation Freedown' – Kent Police**

Operation Freedown began when, in 2002, the police responded to many complaints about off-road motorcycling. There had been no co-ordinated approach and the police called a meeting of all stakeholders. There were finite resources and it was decided to concentrate on 'hotspots' of known activity. The operation started at Freedown, and neighbourhood watch schemes, stakeholders etc. were used to identify popular times of the week. Officers with video cameras were waiting and there were prosecutions. Stakeholders were used to build up intelligence of patterns of use. There were also volunteers on the ground who reported number plates, and the police sent written notices to the owners. It transpired that many were company vehicles.

The police introduced a new code of 'nuisance motor vehicles' on the database and this also allowed for searches of patterns of use to be made.

Partnerships were also built up with local shops and newspapers. Information was given to buyers of certain types of vehicles, to inform them of responsible behaviour.

The problem, when tackled at Freedown, moved to other areas, and it became clear that more education was needed. Many vehicles came from social housing areas and clauses were inserted into tenancy agreements to prevent antisocial behaviour.

Trail riders were found, on the whole, to be responsible users: it was 'boy racers' who caused the problems.

Kent has 100 rural wardens (Kent County Council staff) – and will soon have police community wardens. Rights of way, environmental health and planning officers are also used.

#### **Bucklebury Common, West Berkshire**

Newbury police have served notices and confiscated vehicles, after observing problems with vehicular abuse of the common, first-hand. The police allocated resources to the problems following a high level of complaint from the public. Many motorbikes came from the local estates. 4 Wheel drive vehicles came from much further afield.

#### **Sussex Pathwatch (taken from a report by West Sussex County Council to the County Surveyors' Society, July 2008)**

'Sussex Pathwatch' was formed to combat motorized vehicles using public rights of way illegally in the Sussex countryside. A discussion group has been formed which comprises Sussex Police, South Downs Joint Committee, West Sussex County Council, Parish Councils, Landowners, recreation user groups and countryside organizations.

The initiative is essentially a scheme to encourage reporting of incidents, via a website or a police telephone number. Credit-card sized cards were distributed via libraries, TICs, parish councils and other local outlets.

Once incidents are reported a serial number is generated and allocated to a police officer. The officer then verifies the recorded information with the informant wherever possible. If the registration number is recorded this will be checked on the Police National Computer (PNC). The registered owner is sent a letter informing them of the complaint, along with a T51/1 form requesting the vehicle's owner to identify the driver at the time of the incident.

The identified driver is subject to either a verbal or written warning, or a Section 59 warning (anti-social behaviour with a motor vehicle, under the Police Reform Act 2002). Notification of any action is then placed on the PNC, which alerts other officers to it. The S.59 warning lasts for 12 months and if further incidents of anti-social behaviour with a motor vehicle involving the driver occur, the vehicle will be seized. If this happens, the owner has to pay to recover the vehicle (currently £105, plus £12 for every day the vehicle remains seized). If the owner has not recovered the vehicle after 28 days, it may be crushed. The vehicle can be seized each time anti-social behaviour is reported and a new 12-month period will extend from that subsequent date.

Where there are a series of reports being generated from an area, wherever possible, Special Police Officers visit the area in an attempt to catch drivers committing a crime.

Some farmers and land managers (including Estates such as Goodwood, West Dean) have subscribed to Countrywatch, where they purchase a radio (around £200) enabling them to communicate directly with the Police and each other. These are particularly useful for warning neighbours that vehicles are travelling in their direction and to notify the Police when a crime is being committed.

The TRF has reservations about the scheme, as the public does not often understand what constitute an offence, and will report merely the presence of a vehicle. There is a value in reporting schemes, however, to help better understand patterns of use.

## **Meetings**

Sussex Pathwatch meetings are held every four months and are open to anyone who wishes to attend. Currently they are attended by SDJC (Chair and secretariat), WSCC, Sussex Police, representatives from local parish councils, user groups (e.g. British Driving Society, British Horse Society) and other land managers (e.g. National Trust, Estates, farmers). Motoried user groups, including the TRF, the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) and the Green Lane Association (GLASS), initially attended meetings, but withdrew their interest. They are all still invited and sent notes of the meetings, as it is considered that they would be a valuable asset to the group.

A different venue is chosen for each meeting, hosted by a different parish council or organisation, due to the large geographical area of Chichester District. The meetings give feedback on reported incidents (which is important to make people feel that their reporting is worthwhile) and provides everyone with an opportunity to discuss problems in their areas, with the relevant organisations present to address them. The importance of continued reporting to ensure the future success of the project is also emphasised and additional publicity carried out at appropriate times.

Now the reporting system is in place the group feels that signage needs to be improved to make people aware that motor vehicles are not allowed on Restricted Byways, as all too frequently when a vehicle is approached by a member of the public or land owner the driver claims not to know he is not allowed to ride/drive there. Wooden 'no motor vehicles allowed' signs, similar in size to residential road signs, are being considered in about 10 of the worst locations. Smaller signs are being considered for wider signage, bearing in mind many of the

Restricted Byways are within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where signage 'clutter' needs to be kept to a minimum. Funding is currently being sought for the signs.

### **Successes/problems**

The scheme is already recording successes. Illegal motorised activity is estimated to have reduced by between 50% and 75% in Graffham Parish, one of the worst affected areas since the launch of Sussex Pathwatch. Over 150 warning letters have been sent to offenders, 30 Section 59 warnings have been issued and two prosecutions are pending. In addition to this, through the reports received, hot spots have been identified and Police Community Support Officers have subsequently been patrolling these areas, leading to a reduction in activity.

## **SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S POLICY ON MAKING TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS ON BYWAYS OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC**

- 1 Traffic Regulation Orders can be made by the County Council under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The County Council considers making Traffic Regulation Orders only as a last resort in line with Government advice set out in "Making the Best of Byways".
- 2 The County Council has a countywide assessment of all Byways Open to All Traffic in Surrey. This considers their current condition, spending on maintenance repair work within the last 10 years and evidence of vehicle related unlawful activity on or adjacent to the byway. The assessment indicates the principal problem is erosion caused by vehicles, which then presents difficulties and dangers to non-motor users.
- 3 The County Council's policy is:
  - that Traffic Regulation Orders be used pro-actively where a countywide assessment indicates a Byway Open to All Traffic is in poor condition, in need of significant repair and it is considered necessary to restrict traffic, coupled with programmes of repair as resources permit.
  - that where a countywide assessment indicates a Byway Open to All Traffic is in reasonable condition a Traffic Regulation Order be only made on grounds of significant danger to users of the route, or to prevent significant damage to the route.

**Surrey County Council: Approved January 2009**



Sourced from [www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales/traffic-regulation-orders.aspx](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales/traffic-regulation-orders.aspx) (accessed 4 May 2017)

## Traffic Regulation Orders

- **The basics**
- **Grounds and procedures for making TROs**
- **The misuse of TROs**
- **TROs and 'Green Lanes'**
- **Applying TROs where use is unlawful**

A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is a legal tool which allows a local authority, or a national park authority, to restrict, regulate or prevent the use of any named road. The word 'road' includes footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOAT), and the word 'traffic' includes cyclists and walkers.

Such an order mustn't stop walkers from reaching premises. If the road is a footpath, bridleway, restricted byway or BOAT, then an order may also regulate or prohibit use by horse riders. The most common use of TROs is to impose restrictions such as speed limits and one-way streets, but they can be used to important effect on public rights of way.

### The basics

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 says that local authorities must exercise their traffic regulation powers to secure the safe passage of all traffic, including walkers, horse riders, cyclists and motor and horse-drawn vehicles.

A TRO does not extinguish any rights, whether public or private, over a road, but may make it an offence to exercise such rights. A person who disobeys a TRO commits a criminal offence, for which the maximum penalty is currently a £1,000 fine.

### Grounds and procedures for making TROs

A TRO may be permanent, temporary or experimental, or may be imposed to allow the holding of a special event (a special event order).

#### Permanent TROs

The grounds for making a permanent TRO are extensive:

- For avoiding danger to people or other traffic using the road, or preventing danger arising
- For preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road
- For facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including people on foot)
- For preventing the use of the road by vehicle traffic where that use is unsuitable bearing in mind the existing character of the road or adjoining property
- For preserving the character of the road in a case where it is especially suitable for use by walkers or horse riders
- For preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs
- For conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of an area, or affording better opportunities for the public to enjoy the amenities of the area, for recreation or nature study
- For the purpose of avoiding, reducing or preventing the danger and/or damage connected with terrorism

Before making a permanent TRO, an authority must consult with organisations representing people likely to be affected by it. No organisations are listed in the legislation, so an authority is able to exercise its judgement in deciding who to consult.

Notice of a proposed TRO must be advertised in a local newspaper, sent to consultees, and placed on site. An on site notice only applies if the authority considers it desirable to give adequate publicity to the order. At least 21 days must be allowed for objections to be received.

A proposed order, together with a map showing its effect and indicating alternative routes (if any), must be made available for public inspection throughout the objection period. Unlike the **procedure for making permanent public path orders** to close or divert paths, there's no requirement to hold an inquiry if objections are received to a TRO, although an authority can hold one if it wishes.

If an authority decides to go ahead with a TRO after this consultation process it must tell any objectors, and advertise the fact in the press. It must also keep a copy of the order available for public inspection for a further six weeks.

Once a TRO has been made notices must be displayed explaining its effect in a prominent position at each end of the road to which it applies. If an alternative route is available notices must give details of its location at the points where users would need to divert onto the alternative route. This information must remain in place and legible for as long as the order remains in force.

## Temporary TROs

Authorities also have the power to make temporary Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict or prohibit the use of any road. These are the type of TROs which are most commonly encountered by those undertaking rights of way work.

The grounds for making a temporary TRO are as follows:

- Because works (e.g. road repairs) are being or are proposed to be undertaken on or near the road
- Because of the likelihood of danger to the public, or of serious damage to the road, which is not attributable to such works
- To enable an authority to undertake its litter clearing and cleaning duties
- For a purpose relating to danger or damage connected with terrorism

Temporary TROs made in respect of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways or BOATs only last for six months in the first instance, although an authority can apply to the Secretary of State for Transport for an extension to the initial six-month period.

Although this step should impose some accountability on the Secretary of State when exercising these powers, in practice, applications to extend temporary TROs are rarely refused. There appears to be no time limit to extensions sanctioned by the Secretary of State.

## Special events orders

A 'special events order' can be made if a local authority is satisfied that traffic on a road should be restricted or prohibited for the purposes of:

- Facilitating the holding of a 'relevant event'
- Enabling members of the public to watch a relevant event
- Reducing the disruption of traffic likely to be caused by a relevant event

A relevant event is defined as any sporting event, social event or entertainment which is held on a road. These provisions were introduced when the Tour de France first held a stage in England in 1994.

No rules have ever been made setting out the public consultation and notice-giving procedures an authority must follow when making a special events order. However, the Road Traffic Regulation Act itself does say that before making a special events order an authority must be satisfied that the event couldn't be held other than on a road.

Special events orders can't be applied to the same road (or stretch of road) more than once within the same calendar year and can't remain in force for more than three days. The exception is when such orders are made by the Secretary of State in which case, subject to certain criteria being met, longer periods are allowed.

## Experimental TROs

These may be made for up to 18 months and can renewed for one further 18-month period by application to the Secretary of State for Transport.

## Alternative routes

An authority doesn't have the power to create a temporary alternative to a road restricted by a TRO. In some cases nearby highways won't be suitable for traffic 'diverted' from a restricted road - it may be, for example, that the 'alternative route' to a closed footpath is a busy main road. In other cases an alternative route may not exist at all.

Whilst the law says that order-making authorities must 'have regard' to the safety and convenience of alternative routes, a TRO can still be made in the absence of a safe or convenient alternative.

## The misuse of TROs

Because an authority isn't required to hold an inquiry into a proposed TRO, there's limited opportunity for public views on such an order to be properly taken into account. Unlike **the procedure for public path orders**, authorities can make TROs without scrutiny by an independent arbitrator. The requirement to submit requests for extensions to temporary TROs is little more than a rubber-stamping exercise.

We're concerned that the lack of accountability inherent in an authority's exercise of its traffic regulation powers, and the wide range of grounds on which they may be made, means that they can be used to keep paths closed in situations where funding is not available to enable the authority to keep paths in a proper state of repair.

In cases where an authority may have made a TRO unreasonably members of the public can apply to the High Court for a Judicial Review of the authority's decision.

## TROs and 'green lanes'

Many 'green lanes' (the term commonly used to describe byways open to all traffic (BOATs), restricted byways and unsurfaced unclassified roads (UCRs)) are obvious candidates for TROs. Although all BOATs and many UCRs carry vehicular rights on the basis that they were formerly horse and cart routes, their unsealed surfaces are often unsuitable for modern vehicles such as trail bikes and 4x4s.

Where any of the grounds for making a permanent TRO are met, for example for preserving the character of a road where it's especially suitable for use by walkers and horse riders, any member of the public can lobby their local authority for a TRO to prohibit motor vehicles from a named road, or to prohibit them at a particular time of the year.

National park authorities have been given their own powers to make Traffic Regulation Orders over rights of way and other unsurfaced highways within national parks.

See the further reading section below for more information on these issues.

## Applying TROs where use is unlawful

TROs can be used to control use of a kind which is either not permitted, or is prohibited by law, on a given road. A TRO might, for example, be used in a case where horse riders or cyclists or motor vehicles were causing a nuisance on a footpath (where there's a public right of way on foot only) even though such use would already be a matter of trespass or, in the case of motor vehicles, a separate statutory offence.

There's good reason for applying a TRO to restrict traffic in such situations. Trespass, which is the wrong done when a person enters and remains on land without lawful authority, isn't usually a criminal offence, and the remedy is a civil action, not a prosecution.

The application of a TRO introduces the offence of contravening the TRO which is more robust than a civil action for trespass. In addition, even in cases where the activity in question has the express consent and approval of the landowner, an authority's traffic regulation powers may be used to stop it.

## Further reading

- *Rights of Way Circular 1/09: Guidance for Local authorities*, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2009
- *Rights of Way: A Guide to Law and Practice*, John Riddall & John Trevelyan, Open Spaces Society and the Ramblers' Association, 2007
- *Regulating the use of motor vehicles on public rights of way and off road: A guide for Local Authorities, Police and Community Safety Partnerships*, Defra, 2005
- *Public Rights of Way: Guidance for National Park Authorities making Traffic Regulation Orders under section 22BB Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984*, Defra, 2007

# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

Agenda item 8

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Title: Space for discussion about OCC's Statement of Priorities for definitive map related activities  
Author: Paul Harris, OCAF Secretary

## Introduction

At the OCAF workshop held at the end of September 2016 members said that they wanted to know how the disconnected network may be able to be addressed especially with the 2026 cut-off date for historical claims getting closer. It was also noted that the Statement of Priorities (SoP) was dated 2007 and had not been considered as part of development of either the first or second Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

At the last two meetings of OCAF and the last Monitoring Group meeting there has been the opportunity for members to submit comments and suggestions. These suggestions are welcomed as they help inform the current process of review which now forms part of the wider Communities Directorate review process. Buckinghamshire County Council amended its SoP in March 2017 and it is attached for reference.

However, OCC's situation regarding areas of work covered, Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) applications in particular, is sufficiently different that we believe our Statement of Priorities will need a rather more thorough overhaul.

## OCAF Action

Members are requested to read and consider the OCC SoP and the SoPs for Buckinghamshire (2017), Surrey (2014) and Cumbria (2010).

Paul Harris also asks these questions to OCAF in order to help discussion:

- 1) Having read the report and the SoPs, do members feel that Oxfordshire has similar issues that need consideration or not?
- 2) Should OCC have a Statement of Priorities covering all definitive map related areas or separate ones like there are at the moment?
- 3) Are there any specific matters in relation to Definitive Map areas of work that members should be prioritised?
- 4) What are the group's initial views on how the SoP as a whole or specific areas needs to be adjusted?
- 5) How would OCAF members like to assist in taking this forward?



**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 PART III**

**STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES**

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The Definitive Map and Statement (“DM&S”) of Public Rights of Way for Oxfordshire is the legal record of public rights of way in the county. As such it is conclusive evidence of the existence of a public right of way and its status, width, position and any limitations or conditions (*section 56 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (“the Act”)*).

It has a relevant date of 1 February 2006.

It is the duty of Oxfordshire County Council as the surveying authority to keep the DM&S under continuous review and modified by way of Orders as and when relevant events occur (*section 53 of the Act*).

Government Advice (*DOE Circular 2/1993 para 24*) recommends that authorities should periodically publish a statement setting out their priorities for bringing and keeping the DM&S up to date as soon as reasonably practicable, in accordance with section 53(2) of the Act.

Priorities for the Surveying Authority are as follows (in decreasing order of priority):

- 1: Updating and Maintaining the DM&S
- 2: Processing Definitive Map Modification Orders
- 3: Investigating Other Evidence to Modify the DM&S

Please note that a separate Statement of Priorities exists for Public Path Orders and Agreements.

This Statement of Priorities replaces the previous version dated May 2004.

**Priority 1: Updating/Maintaining the Definitive Map and Statement**

Between 2000-2006 a significant investment was made in the production of an updated edition of the DM&S utilising geographical mapping software. This replaced an out-of-date paper-based version and has many benefits, including improved management processes.

The continuous review and modification of the DM&S, together with maintaining and improving the accuracy and integrity of the data is vital to ensuring that the DM&S is up-to-date and provides current management information.

Future developments include the following:

- Improving the accuracy of the DM&S: A number of long-standing minor discrepancies have been identified within the existing data, for example within the detail recorded in the Statement or between information contained in the Statement and the route depicted on the Map. These cannot be amended, however minor, without carrying out complex legal order processes. An assessment will be made and discrepancies prioritised for resolution.
- Keeping the DM&S up to date by making an annual legal event order to bring into effect changes resulting from public path orders and agreements.
- Increasing public availability of the DM&S, including making map based information available on the county council website.
- Republishing the DM&S: The timing for this major piece of work will be kept under review and carried out when necessary. The minimum period before republishing will be five years, i.e. 2011.

*This work is the authority's highest priority.*

### **Priority 2: Processing Definitive Map Modification Orders**

Any person with substantive evidence of an error or omission may apply to the surveying authority for a definitive map modification order to add or delete a right of way from the DM&S, or to upgrade or downgrade one that is already shown, or to amend the particulars contained in the map or statement. Most such 'claims' are to add rights to the DM&S on the basis that they exist but are not recorded. The procedure is set out in Schedule 14 of the Act.

The authority is required, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of applications, to investigate and decide whether to make the order sought. If after 12 months no decision has been made, the applicant may appeal to the Secretary of State who may then direct the authority determine the application and may impose a deadline. The Secretary of State will take the existence of a Statement of Priorities into account when considering these appeals. Potential applicants should have regard to the Statement in deciding when to submit their application (*DOE Circular 2/1993 para 24*).

At present there are a considerable number of outstanding applications made under Schedule 14 of the Act (93 cases as at September 2007). The backlog increased substantially in 2005/06 when a large volume of applications were made to upgrade rights of way as a result of the impending reclassification by statute of Roads Used as Public Paths to Restricted Byways.

There are pending cases at various stages of the process. Previous priorities aimed to determine applications as promptly as possible but, coupled with staffing shortages, this has left a legacy of cases which had been determined but where the lengthy post-determination stages (e.g. order making, referral to the Secretary of State, public inquiry etc.) remain outstanding.

The approach since April 2003 has been to work on cases (whether at pre- or post-determination stages) as far as practicable in the order in which applications were originally received. This is considered to be the fairest and most equitable to all parties in the current circumstances.

It is recognised that it will not be possible to determine applications within the statutory 12-month period for the foreseeable future. The waiting list for new applicants, given current levels of resources, currently stands at approximately 9-10 years. However benefits will result from the current approach, as cases will no longer be subject to limitless delays post-determination. Once work on a case starts it will be processed through all the stages to its eventual conclusion, greatly reducing overall timescales.

In summary, the work to process Modification Orders will generally be undertaken in the following sequence:

- a) Completion of post determination stages for older cases which have already been determined.
- b) Newer cases through all stages.

The authority will avoid disrupting the chronological process as much as possible. However, in certain instances, it may be necessary to treat an application out of turn and give it greater priority as the impact of deferral would have significant consequences. These cases will be solely at the discretion of the authority. If an applicant considers this is warranted it should be drawn to the attention of the case officer as soon as possible, but applicants should be aware that such actions will be taken in rare and exceptional circumstances only. It may also be necessary to treat an application out of turn where the Secretary of State has directed that the application be determined within a specified time.

This approach was adopted following consultation with the Oxfordshire Rights of Way Monitoring Group, a body representing a wide range of interest groups, including user groups and landowning associations.

Application details are listed on a statutory register called the 'DMMO Register'. Progress on cases can also be tracked on a further separate report, updated monthly, called 'Pending DMMO Case List'. Both can be accessed on our website at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions)

*This work is the authority's second priority.*

### **Priority 3: Investigating Other Evidence to Modify the DM&S**

A number of situations have been brought to our attention, or come to light during the course of our work, which could indicate possible errors or omissions in the DM&S (e.g. an unexplained change of status of a path where it crosses a parish boundary). These will be prioritised and researched as resources permit. However, any person asserting that the DM&S should be modified is strongly

recommended to submit the evidence as part of a formal application under schedule 14 of the Act (see Priority 2 above).

*This work is given a lower priority.*

**Oxfordshire Council County  
Environment & Economy  
Countryside Service**

**October 2007**

# Buckinghamshire County Council

Visit [democracy.buckscc.gov.uk](http://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk) for councillor information and email alerts for local meetings

## Report to Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

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**Decision to be taken on or after 30 March 2017**

**Decision can normally be implemented at least 3 working days after decision has been signed.**

**Cabinet Member Report No. PE02.17**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Implementation of a new Statement of Priorities for the Definitive Map function</b>
<b>Date:</b>	22 March 2017
<b>Author:</b>	Martin Dickman, Director Environment Services
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Claire Hudson; Definitive Map and Local Land Charges Team Leader
<b>Local members affected:</b>	All

*For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444*

### Summary

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the County Council has a statutory duty to hold and maintain the Definitive Map and Statement. Combined, these are the legal records of all Public Rights of Way in the County of Buckinghamshire. The records are not complete and are kept under constant review. New claims for additional routes are routinely received or to correct alleged errors on the records (these are called Definitive Map Modification Orders "DMMOs" applications), and applications to change the existing network can also be made (these are called Public Path Order "PPOs" applications).

Under Part 1 Commons Act 2006, the County Council has a statutory duty to hold and maintain the Common Land and Town and/or Village Green Registers as prescribed in The Commons Registration (England) Regulations 2014. These registers are subject to changes; new land can be claimed and registered as a Town and/or Village Green, and subject to certain sections of legislation and circumstances, Common Land can be deregistered.



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So as to fairly process applications which are made to change these legal records, the Definitive Map function of the Definitive Map and Local Land Charges Team works to a Statement of Priorities which enables the Team to organise the workload.

## Recommendation

- a) That the **Statement of Priorities is updated and is adopted for the management of Definitive Map Applications and Common Land and Town and/or Village Green Applications.**
- b) That the **Statement of Priorities is reviewed by the Service Director on an annual basis.**

### A. Reasons for the decision

1. The Statement of Priorities is an important mechanism which allows the team to order and prioritise applications. Without this system, the County Council would have no defence if we were challenged on the backlog and timeframe for application completion. There would also be no clear way of demonstrating to applicants that a process is in place and that their application will be treated fairly.
2. Due to current resource levels and an increase in applications as a result of changes in legislation and increase in development areas, there is a need to update the current Statement of Priorities which was initially produced in 1989 and has been adopted ever since. The current Statement [**Appendix 1**] lacks detail and clarity for applicants and simply says that applications will be dealt with in chronological order of receipt but will be prioritised if the need arises. For many years this system worked well. But due to the increase in applications, and likely future increase, a more intuitive and detailed way of prioritising applications is needed to be able to manage competing pressures.
3. The proposed Statement of Priorities [**Appendix 2**] details the strategic aims we are working towards, the type of applications we respond to and under what circumstance we would prioritise an application over another.
4. We currently have a list of 17 applications seeking a DMMO. These applications are investigated by Officers, research is carried out and all evidence is presented to the Rights of Way Committee to make a decision on whether to reject or accept the application based on the evidence prepared. Investigations can take between 3-6 months to complete depending on what research is needed. Due to the length of time an investigation can take and also depending on how the matter continues to develop after Committee (i.e. referral to the Planning Inspectorate and subsequent Public Inquiries), and as we currently have only one part-time Officer working on these (alongside other work commitments), this backlog will currently take between 5-7 years to work through.
5. An associated risk with this time delay is if any of the applications are supported by User Evidence. Those witnesses would be needed to provide evidence during investigation and at a Public Inquiry if one is called. If such an application was at the bottom of the backlog, it could be that those witnesses (who may have critical evidence) will relocate from the area, lose interest in the application, and at worse pass away. It is

therefore considered, applications that are supported by user evidence should be prioritised to ensure we make best use of evidence and draw an appropriate conclusion.

## **B. Other options available, and their pros and cons**

Two alternative options have been considered:

### **Option 1: Take no action and continue with the current Statement**

6. It would not be appropriate to take no action and continue with the current Statement of Priorities. The current Statement was implemented in 1989 and it is now not fit for purpose given the number of applications we have, the current limited resources and external pressures from development.

### **Option 2: Refuse to accept Public Path Order applications**

7. The acceptance and processing of PPO applications is a discretionary power of the County Council. To free up resource to focus on DMMO applications, the County Council could refuse to accept PPO applications. However, this in itself poses risks and would not be recommended:

- a) There is a public expectation that applications can be made to divert, extinguish and create (by agreement) public rights of way by way of PPOs. To refuse to accept these applications could possibly lead to an increase of unlawful diversions thus increasing the enforcement liability on the wider Rights of Way service.
- b) Developments will still occur and diversions/stopping up will need to be made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Currently, the County Council, under an agreement, processes these applications for Aylesbury Vale District Council. The other three Districts administer their own Orders. If the County Council was to refuse to process those for Aylesbury Vale, the District Council is unlikely to have the expertise and knowledge to know how to process them which could result in advice/support being sought from the County Council. Further, as these Orders will amend the legal record, Officers would prefer to have control over these to ensure accuracy and avoid future issues.
- c) Even if Officer time was freed up by stopping PPO applications, this would not assist the backlog of DMMO applications. Only Officers of certain knowledge and expertise can successfully investigate these applications and the existing Officers who deal with PPOs would not have the ability to suddenly start investigating DMMO applications.
- d) The Deregulation Act 2015, when implemented, will place a new responsibility on the County Council to clearly state why a PPO has been refused. The applicant can appeal our refusal decision to the Secretary of State and we can be forced to process an application if it is deemed requisite to do so. Therefore, in readiness for the Deregulation, it would be unwise to withdraw from PPOs at this stage.

**C. Resource implications**

8. The current resource available in the Definitive Map and Local Land Charges Team mean that there is only one part-time Officer responding to DMMO applications plus a fraction of the Team Leader's time. There are two Officers responding to all other applications and there is a new Officer who started in January 2017. Whilst there is a succession plan in place, the backlog of applications needs to be addressed now. It is therefore advised that the Statement of Priorities be implemented as soon as possible but reviewed annually to ensure it is still fit for purpose into the future.
9. The County Council is under a statutory duty to receive applications for DMMOs and cannot recover any of its costs. As this is a duty and not a power, resource implications cannot be considered when determining applications.

**D. Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment**

Value for money has been considered through the assessment of options. This complies with the Value for Money Strategy.

**E. Legal implications**

There are no legal implications as the County Council will still be fulfilling its statutory duties.

**F. Property implications**

None.

**G. Other implications/issues**

None.

**H. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views**

No consultation has been carried out as it is an internal decision on how best to manage caseload. The Chairman of the Rights of Way Committee has been briefed and is fully supportive of the proposed change.

**I. Communication issues**

None.

**J. Progress Monitoring**

None.

**K. Review**

It is proposed the Statement of Priorities is reviewed annually.

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## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Statement of Priorities from 1989

Appendix 2 – Statement of Priorities proposed to be adopted from 2017

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### ***Your questions and views***

*If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.*

*If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 29 March 2017. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 383610), or e-mail to [democracy@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)*

Buckinghamshire County Council  
**Definitive Map Application - Statement of Priorities 2017**

***“Keeping Buckinghamshire Thriving and Attractive –  
 Continue to protect our high quality environment”***

*Maintain records & registers as set out in legislation & safeguard the  
 Public Rights of Way network*

The Definitive Map and Local Land Charges Team process applications to both modify the Definitive Map and Statement upon the discovery of evidence that it requires modification (these are called Definitive Map Modification Orders – “DMMOs”), and also to change the Public Rights of Way network upon an external event or application made by a landowner (these are called Public Path Orders – “PPOs”). The team also processes Creation Agreements to create new public rights of way and also Town or Village Green Applications and Common Land Deregistration Applications.

The County Council, in achieving its strategic outcome, seeks to prioritise these applications to achieve the best possible outcome for the people of Buckinghamshire.

**DMMOs**

Applications of this nature are seeking to amend the Definitive Map and Statement upon discovery that the records may require amendment i.e. additional routes have been used and should be added, routes should be removed or diverted, or the status of the route needs changing. This is a statutory function of the County Council. These applications are based upon either documentary evidence or user evidence from witnesses or a combination of both. Applications will be investigated in date of chronological Order of receipt subject to a suitably experienced Officer being available. The County Council will however prioritise certain applications under any of the following circumstances:

1. The evidence in support (either fully or in part) of the application is that of User Evidence
2. There is a threat of development affecting the claimed route
3. If the evidence in support of the application is shared with another application within the chronological list and it would be efficient to investigate the applications concurrently

**PPOs**

Applications of this nature are seeking to amend the Public Rights of Way Network by diverting, extinguishing or creating public rights by Order. These applications are made by landowners in the interests of land use, privacy and security; or may be made by Developers to realign routes or supersede routes through development sites by adopted roads / footways; or through the County Council exercising its compulsory Creation Order powers. Processing these applications is a power of the County Council and not a duty and as such will be accepted at Officer discretion; applications can be refused if they are not expedient or if they fail to meet the criteria outlined below. Applications will be investigated in date of chronological order of receipt subject to a suitably experienced Officer being available. The County Council will however prioritise certain applications under any of the following circumstances:

## **Definitive Map Application - Statement of Priorities 2017**

1. Changes to the network are needed to facilitate development
2. Where the change to the network would save costs in the wider Rights of Way service provision i.e. by avoiding enforcement action
3. Where an application is made for a School's Special Order
4. Where an application seeks a betterment to the network
5. Where an application improves or enhances public safety

### **Creation Agreements**

Creation Agreements are a discretionary power of the County Council which will only be exercised in certain circumstances:

1. Where little or no maintenance work is required to bring the route up to an acceptable standard for public use
2. If the County Council is satisfied it is prepared to take on the ongoing future maintenance liability of the route to be created; all surface works must be to the Council's required standard before an agreement is entered
3. Where a route has been dedicated by the landowner, subject to points 1 and 2 above, and/or where it would make efficiency savings by avoiding a DMMO
4. Where a route forms part of a s106 agreement

### **Town or Village Green and Common Land Deregistration Applications**

Applications of this nature are processed as a statutory function of the County Council. Applications to register new Town or Village Greens will be dealt with in chronological order of receipt unless the land is affected by development, in which case that application would be prioritised.

Applications to deregister Common Land pursuant to the implemented sections of Part 1 Commons Act 2006 in Buckinghamshire will also be processed in chronological order of receipt unless an application land is affected by development, in which case that application would be prioritised.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
PART III WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981  
REVISED STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES 1989

1. Since 1983 when the County Council abandoned its last review of the Definitive Map and Statement progress has been made in accordance with the first Statement of Priorities. The non-contentious matters referred to in the first Statement have now been completed.
2. The County Council has now commenced dealing with the matters which were outstanding under the previous Definitive Map Review. Because of the complexity and age of these claims, further investigations are being carried out and Orders are being drafted when these investigations are complete. Matters will continue to be investigated on a district by district basis.
3. New claims are being received and investigations into them are being carried out by staff of the County Engineer's and County Secretary & Solicitor's Departments. The investigations are being carried out concurrently with those in paragraph 2 above and will be dealt with in chronological order of receipt. However where there is a particular need for an Order to be investigated and made urgently then the County Council may exercise its discretion to deal with that application urgently.

# Public Rights of Way Priority Statement

For keeping the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review.

Prepared as a result of legislation contained in Part Three of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

7<sup>th</sup> Edition: October 2014



## **PRIORITY STATEMENT AND TARGETS FOR PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

### **DEFINITIVE MAP - BACKGROUND**

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 required every County Council in England and Wales to publish a Definitive Map and Statement showing all rights of way in their area. The presumed rights of way were surveyed and a draft Definitive Map was placed on deposit and advertised in the London Gazette and local newspapers. Members of the public and landowners could object to the inclusion or omission of a route. When these objections had been investigated a provisional map was placed on deposit and landowners could raise further objections to this. Only when all these objections had been resolved could the Definitive Map and Statement be published.

Surrey's first Definitive Map was put on deposit in 1952, a revised map was deposited in 1959 and a second revision was put on deposit in 1966. It took from 1966-1981 for all the objections to the second edition to be resolved and the new Definitive Map was published in 1982.

### **DEFINITIVE MAP – KEEPING IT UP TO DATE**

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 introduced new procedures for updating the Definitive Map and Statement for public rights of way. All changes to the network are now subject to individual legal orders so that objections are resolved at this stage.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act requires the Definitive Map and Statement to be updated and thereafter to be kept under continuous review. Some changes, such as Map Modification Orders, update the map and statement at the time of the order. Other changes, such as Public Path Orders, do not and the map and statement are then updated in an annual Legal Event Order. The Definitive Map was redrawn at a scale of 1:10,000 incorporating all the legal changes to the network since 1966. A consolidated Definitive Map and modified Statement was published in March 1996, and has been updated since.

### **CLAIMING PREVIOUSLY UNRECORDED RIGHTS OF WAY**

Under Section 53(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act any person may apply to the County Council for an order modifying the Definitive Map and Statement. These are called Map Modification Orders.

The legislation states that on receipt of an application, the authority shall start to investigate and make a decision as soon as reasonably practicable. If the authority has not determined the application within 12 months, the applicant has the right to appeal to the Secretary of State who can direct the County Council to determine the claim within a given timescale. Investigation and determination of Map Modification Orders is a time consuming process, particularly if objections are received. Orders can take over a year to complete once started. The Secretary of State will take into account the authority's Priority Statement when considering appeals. Claims can be based on user and/or historic evidence. If after investigation it is considered that the balance of probability is that a right of way exists over a route and it should be recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement or that the status of a right of way should be changed then the County Council must publish a map modification order. The order is subject to objections and if these cannot be resolved they must be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the issue may then be determined by public inquiry.

In keeping the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review, we will undertake work in the following order of priority, and with the following targets for completing the work:

- 1 Publication of Legal Event Orders listing all legal Orders (for e.g. Diversion Orders) and other events in order to modify the Definitive Map and Statement including the publication of updated map sheets.

We will publish these annually.

- 2 Processing of Rail Crossing Orders under s118A and 119A of the Highways Act 1980 to improve public safety.

We will start processing Orders to improve public safety as soon as an application is received.

- 3 Investigation of all claims for Map Modification Orders under Schedule 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

We will start processing the application within 2 years of receipt of an acceptable application and make a decision on whether to make a Map Modification Order within 3 years of receipt of an acceptable application. If directed to determine the application by the Secretary of State, we will process the application in accordance with the direction.

We will immediately acknowledge receipt, check notice has been served by the applicant and contact the landowner(s), if they are known, within 6 months of a claim being received.

Applications will be dealt with in date order of receipt. In exceptional circumstances an application may be processed out of date order. This will be decided by the Countryside Access Team Manager in consultation with the Cabinet Member where:

- Planning permission has been granted which, if fulfilled would have the effect of obstructing the alleged right of way;
- There is a safety issue, e.g. the route is an alternative to using a busy road;
- The alleged route would form part of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan improvement;
- A route anomaly would be resolved.

On receipt of an application, the route will be recorded on our on-line Register of Map Modification Orders and inspected on site.

- 4 Processing of Traffic Regulation Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 where there is a need and after considering a countywide assessment.

We will process these Orders in accordance with County policy <sup>1</sup>.

- 5 Processing of applications for Diversion Orders made and funded by landowners, in their interest and securing a significant public benefit in accordance with County policy <sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Surrey County Council Policy on making Traffic Regulation Orders on Byways Open to All Traffic – Approved January 2009

We will process these Orders on receipt.

- 6 Consideration of applications for Public Path Orders made under sections 118B, 118C, 119B, 119C or 119D of the Highways Act 1980.

We will process these Orders when resources are available.

- 7 Processing of Public Path Orders under sections 26, 118 and 119 of the Highways Act 1980 to divert, create or extinguish public paths where the County Council are promoting them in order to resolve problems or improve the rights of way network.

We will process these Orders when resources are available.

- 8 Processing of Cycle Tracks Orders under the Cycle Tracks Act 1984 where there is a need and the route is not suitable as a public bridleway.

We will process these Orders when resources are available.

Since systematic review of the Definitive Statement requires major resource expenditure it will only be updated to reflect legal events. Map Modification Orders solely to modify the description of paths in the statement will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

## **WHERE THE DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT CAN BE INSPECTED**

The Definitive Map for Surrey consists of 89 map sheets and can be inspected together with the accompanying Statement at Countryside Access, Meroo Depot, Meroo Lane, Guildford or County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames. Please phone 03456 009 009 for an appointment. Surrey County Council is a member of Travel Wise, and encourages visitors to use alternatives to the car. County Hall has secure cycle parking and is well served by public transport.

The Surrey History Centre at 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking (01483 594594) also holds a copy of the Map and Statement.

District and borough councils have copies of the Map and Statement for their area for inspection. Please telephone the appropriate authority for an appointment to view these documents. Parish and town councils also have copies of the Map and Statement for their areas and, where practicable, should make these available.

Surrey's rights of way network can be seen on our website: [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk). Please follow the link to the interactive map. Please note the information shown does not constitute a legal record and for legal reasons such as buying property the paper copy should always be inspected.

Copyright legislation prevents photocopying complete map sheets. However the Ordnance Survey licence allows an A4 extract from the map to be provided. A charge will be made to cover costs.

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<sup>2</sup> Surrey County Council Policy for processing applications for Public Path Orders under sections 118 and 119 of the Highways Act 1980 – Approved January 2009



## **CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **MAINTAINING THE DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981 PART III**

#### **STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES**

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The Definitive Map and Statement (“DM&S”) of Public Rights of Way for Cumbria is the legal record of public rights of way in the county. As such it is conclusive evidence of the existence of a public right of way and its status, width, position and any limitations or conditions (section 56 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(“the Act”).

It has a relevant date of 1<sup>st</sup> January 1976.

It is the statutory duty of Cumbria County Council as the surveying authority to keep the DM&S under continuous review and modified by way of Orders as and when relevant events occur (section 53 of the Act).

There are a number of areas of work which Cumbria County Council is carrying out to maintain and update the Definitive Map:

- 1. Processing Legal Event Modification Orders to consolidate the DM&S**
- 2. Digitisation of the DM&S**
- 3: Processing Evidential Event Modification Orders**
- 4: Investigating Other Evidence to Modify the DM&S**

#### **Task 1: Processing Legal Event Modification Orders**

Cumbria County Council (CCC) has the power to make Public Path Orders and Agreements to alter the public rights of way network. It is not a statutory duty for the Highway Authority to make such orders but Cumbria County Council processes requests from the public as quickly as possible depending on resources available and in the date order they are received. When such a legal change is confirmed and comes into operation CCC is required to make a modification order to alter the DM&S.

CCC is presently preparing an Omnibus Legal Event Modification Order to be able to produce a new Definitive Map and Statement with a relevant date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

## **Task 2: Digitisation of The Definitive Map and Statement**

Cumbria County Council (CCC) has made a significant commitment to produce the new 2011 DM&S utilising digital geographical mapping software. This will replace an out-of-date paper-based version and has many benefits, including Public availability and improved management processes.

The continuous review and modification of the DM&S, together with maintaining and improving the accuracy and integrity of the data is vital to ensuring that the DM&S is up-to-date and provides current management information.

Future developments include the following:

- Increasing public availability of the DM&S, including making map based information available on the county council website.
- Improving the accuracy of the DM&S: A number of long-standing minor anomalies have been identified within the existing data, for example within the detail recorded in the Statement or between information contained in the Statement and the route depicted on the Map. Many of these cannot be amended, however minor, without carrying out complex legal order processes. An assessment will be made and discrepancies prioritised for resolution.
- Keeping the DM&S up to date by making an annual legal event order to bring into effect changes resulting from public path orders and agreements.
- Republishing the DM&S: The timing for this major piece of work will be kept under review and carried out when necessary

## **Task 3: Processing Evidential Event Modification Orders**

Any person with substantive evidence of an error or omission may apply to the highway authority for a definitive map modification order to add or delete a right of way from the DM&S, or to upgrade or downgrade one that is already shown, or to amend the particulars contained in the map or statement. Most such 'claims' are to add rights to the DM&S on the basis that they exist but are not recorded. The procedure is set out in Schedule 14 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The authority is required, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of applications, to investigate and decide whether to make the order sought. If after

12 months no decision has been made, the applicant may appeal to the Secretary of State who may then direct the authority to determine the application and may impose a deadline. The Secretary of State is likely to take the existence of a Statement of Priorities into account when considering these appeals.

At present there are a considerable number of outstanding applications made under Schedule 14 of the Act (40 cases as at January 2010).

The present approach is to work on cases (whether at pre- or post-determination stages) as far as practicable in the order in which applications were originally received. This is considered to be the fairest and most equitable to all parties in the current circumstances.

It is recognised that it will not be possible to determine applications within the statutory 12-month period for the foreseeable future. The waiting list for new applicants, given current levels of resources, currently stands at approximately 10 years.

The authority will avoid disrupting the chronological process as much as possible. However, in certain instances, it may be necessary to treat an application out of turn and give it greater priority as the impact of deferral would have significant consequences. These cases will be solely at the discretion of the authority. If an applicant considers this is warranted it should be drawn to the attention of the case officer as soon as possible, but applicants should be aware that such actions will be taken in rare and exceptional circumstances only

*As a starting point the authority will process applications in date of order received. However applications will be given greater priority where:-*

- a) *the route is being threatened by potential development.*
- b) *the route is , in comparison with other cases, exceptional in terms of the personal implications of delay.*
- c) *the route has been identified as an important link in the rights of way improvement plan or as a safe route to school.*
- d) *the route is one where early resolution is in the best interests of landowners and community.*
- e) *the route forms part of a route that is considered to be of 'strategic importance' i.e. National Trails/Coastal Access.*
- f) *the route provides access to land identified as 'access land' under CRow Act.*
- g) *there is significant financial saving to the County Council (and therefore taxpayer) through the processing of an Order.*

*It may also be necessary to treat an application out of turn where the Secretary of State or the Local Courts have directed that the application be determined within a specified time.*

Application details are listed on a statutory register called the 'DMMO Register' that can be viewed on our website at;

[http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/roads-transport/public-transport-road-safety/countryside-access/Definitive\\_Map/DMMO\\_Register.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/roads-transport/public-transport-road-safety/countryside-access/Definitive_Map/DMMO_Register.asp)

#### **Task 4: Investigating Other Evidence to Modify the DM&S**

A number of situations have been brought to our attention, or come to light during the course of our work, which could indicate possible errors or omissions in the DM&S (e.g. an unexplained change of status of a path where it crosses a parish boundary). These will be prioritised and researched as resources permit. However, any person asserting that the DM&S should be modified is strongly recommended to submit the evidence as part of a formal application under schedule 14 of the Act (see Task 3 above).

Cumbria County Council  
Environment  
Countryside Access

May 2010

# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

Agenda item 10

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Title: Oxfordshire Way and promoted routes  
Author: Paul Harris, Countryside Access Strategy & Development Officer

## Introduction

Oxfordshire's Countryside Access Team (CAT) has recently been contacted by CPRE to clarify its position on the Oxfordshire Way and other promoted routes with a view to improving the coordination of information, signing, monitoring, maintenance and promotion activities between the CAT and other users and stakeholder organisations.

A paper went to Monitoring Group on 7<sup>th</sup> April which generated some discussion but no clear answers to the questions were provided. CAT would now welcome OCAF's consideration of the issue.

The questions are:

1. What countryside access 'products' are most needed by residents and visitors to Oxfordshire – promoted trails of varying lengths for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, families, people with disabilities etc? Are these products the routes on the ground, the leaflet/webpage, the specialist signs or waymarks, the guided event...or everything?
2. Are there any products that there is not a need for?
3. Who should be providing these products – private and charity landowners exclusively on their land? The county council and/or other authorities? parish and community councils? user and amenity organisations? private companies charging a fee?
4. Should one organisation coordinate and guide these products in Oxfordshire or should the responsibility be shared amongst a number of organisations?
5. What form should this involvement take e.g. volunteer/intern/staff?
6. How should these products be managed on the ground?

## OCAF Action

Members to consider the report and consider responding to the questions asked. This will help OCC in the ongoing review of its activities.

## **RIGHTS OF WAY MONITORING GROUP**

### **Oxfordshire Way & Circular Walks – Review of their future management**

CAT has recently been contacted by CPRE to clarify its position on the Oxfordshire Way and other promoted routes with a view to improving the coordination of information, signing, monitoring, maintenance and promotion activities between the CAT and other users and stakeholder organisations.

#### **Current situation**

1) CAT continues to provide information about the Oxon Way and OCC promoted circular walks, plus a range of suggested walks via its website where all the routes have dedicated content with route guides and maps available as PDFs - see [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides). These webpages are regularly the highest ranking for the CAT webpages. The PDF directions were last heavily modified in 2011. Since then they have been altered when people have advised CAT of any errors or issues. The access webpages are checked and updated reasonably regularly. The printed book was last re-issued in 2006 with no modifications to the text (an addendum sheet was included), but this is considered out of date and all old copied have now been pulped.

2) The Oxfordshire Way and OCC promoted routes have not been actively promoted since 2011 partly due to the change in OCC policy for press releases but mostly due to staff reductions and merging of roles which meant this activity has had to be de-prioritised (but not fully stopped). Before 2011 we ran a range of seasonal and cyclical 'campaigns' linked to particular themes and areas through a range of channels. Despite this lack of active marketing a reasonably large number of people still access and download the information.

3) Since 2011 CAT has not been able to undertake any regular staff surveys/monitoring or the routes as it was able to before but the Oxon Way and OCC circulars are still in sharper focus for receiving soft vegetation management as well as access improvements when these opportunities arise. These routes are still managed by Oxfordshire County Council and there is not a proposal for this to stop. This is different to the situation for the Oxfordshire Cycleway, which Monitoring Group members may remember was scrapped as a promoted facility in 2005 with all marketing materials and inclusion on replacement road signs stopped.

4) Since 2014 CAT has benefitted from PPW/OFS/Ramblers getting involved in the Oxfordshire Way but it is only just recently this has come to fruition and latterly with the excellent work by Susan Maguire's Henley Ramblers which managed to walk survey and snip along the entire route and now with a supply of waymarker discs to replace faded ones – or install them on the obverse face of waymark posts to benefit

those walking the route the 'wrong way'. One further development from this survey is that the group may be modifying the existing directions and possibly writing a south to north version of the existing route. This has coincided with a proposal from CPRE who may be interested in publishing an updated printed version of the book and it was suggested that the route could possibly be modified to include Oxford as well as avoiding some of the arable field routes etc. Although it is unlikely CAT would have the capacity to produce PDFs for a brand new or revised route to complement any printed version, there would still be a need to provide some level of freely available information on the OCC web pages in order to justify other practical inputs and support for the route(s).

### **Involvement of Monitoring Group, OCAF and stakeholders in review**

The query by CPRE is timely as it comes at a point of potentially significant change and challenge to how countryside access and public rights of way management may be going to be delivered in the future. At the moment and at the time of the Monitoring Group meeting there is still too much uncertainty to be able to provide any detail about changes and impacts. However it is clear that going forward there will almost certainly be less staff capacity and less budget available for all access related activities so the more proactive discussion of alternatives that can be had the better.

CAT considers that provision of assistance, including simple and free information about walking and riding opportunities, is an important role for the authority in order to support local rural economies and improve social, health and wellbeing benefits that come from an accessible countryside; particularly as these are all included in the adopted Oxfordshire Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-2025. The following discussion points are suggested to help understand the issues and to assist in working towards possible solutions about the wider context of the Oxfordshire Way and other promoted routes:

- a) What countryside access 'products' are most needed by residents and visitors to Oxfordshire? Are these promoted trails of varying lengths for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, families, people with disabilities etc? Are these products the routes on the ground, the leaflet/webpage, the specialist signs or waymarks, the guided event...or everything?
- b) Are there any products that there is not a need for?
- c) Who should be providing these products – private and charity landowners exclusively on their land? The county council and/or other authorities? Parish and Community councils? user and amenity organisations? Private companies charging a fee?

- d) Should one organisation coordinate and guide these products in Oxfordshire or should the responsibility be shared amongst a number of organisations? What form should this involvement take e.g. volunteer/intern/staff?
- e) How should these products be managed on the ground?

***Next steps***

Discussion points will be noted and will help to inform next steps as part of the review of countryside access functions in the wider directorate. It is expected that members of the Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum will discuss this matter at their meeting in May 2017, when it is hoped more detail about the restructure will be available.

# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

Agenda item 11

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Title: TOE2 – Improving access to Oxfordshire’s countryside  
Author: Paul Harris, Countryside Access Strategy & Development Officer

## Introduction

The Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment (TOE2) has produced an information note about how TOE2 can provide grants for countryside access projects in Oxfordshire and the work TOE2 is doing to support better access to green spaces in Oxfordshire. TOE2 has been sending this out to key stakeholders, potential partners, local community groups as well as local press and county networks.

It is a positive story about what third sector organisations can achieve by working in partnership with OCC and local communities to achieve shared outcomes. TOE2 is keen to extend the reach of its work by inviting more communities and groups to develop projects and apply for funding. TOE2 is also keen to look at opportunities for attracting additional funding to support access projects.

Do let TOE2 know if you would like any further information about how it can support access projects, or any other areas of our work.

Please let TOE2 know if you feel there are any other individuals or organisations that might be interested in knowing about grants, or that might be able to provide additional funding in support of better access to green spaces.

## OCAF Action

Members to consider the information note and discuss how they can share this within their interest areas, organisations and local networks, or how the scheme could be developed in the future.





**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **IMPROVING ACCESS TO OXFORDSHIRE'S COUNTRYSIDE AND GREEN SPACES**



Oxfordshire has an excellent network of local rights of way and accessible green spaces in its countryside, rural communities and in urban areas. The county is also criss-crossed by longer trails such as the Thames Path and the Ridgeway and by regional routes such as the Oxfordshire Way.

Footpaths and bridleways provide opportunities for people to access green spaces for relaxation, exercise and enjoyment. Walking or cycling has many health benefits and brings people closer to the natural world, while better links along rights of way within and between communities offer scope for reducing car use. Local voluntary groups are often involved with looking after local paths and bridleways; now the summer is on its way, what better time to get outside and get involved with local access projects, or just enjoy exploring our beautiful county?

But could we make better use of rights of way in Oxfordshire? Some routes have challenging surfaces, stiles or gates and many lack information and signage about points of interest and circular

routes. The County Council is responsible for managing the rights of way network, doing so by working with farmers and local communities. But OCC has limited funding and time to carry out improvements; this is where TOE2 and volunteers can help.



TOE2 works in partnership with OCC, supporting communities to ensure better rights of way networks that are more accessible and easier to use, providing valuable links between and within settlements. TOE2 is keen to support more local voluntary groups to help maintain and improve Oxfordshire's Rights of Way Network, building on the excellent work of existing groups such as the South Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers, the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, and the Ramblers Path Works Volunteers. Working alongside Parish Councils and OCC such groups help ensure that local people can enjoy better connected paths and bridleways to access local green spaces.

### **What is TOE2 and what are we doing for rights of way in Oxfordshire?**

TOE2 is Oxfordshire's independent environmental funder, supporting projects that make real and lasting improvements to the environment and to the lives of local people. TOE2, a charity and a not-for-profit company, has worked in partnership with OCC for several years to improve access to rights of way and green spaces across the county, supporting the aims of the Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip)).

TOE2 can provide grant funding to support local access projects so that local groups can get materials and possibly training. Since 2011 TOE2 has allocated about £200,000 to access projects across Oxfordshire, primarily with funding provided by Grundon Waste Management through the Landfill Communities Fund. Here are a few examples of projects we have funded:

- South Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers – several significant projects across the southern Chilterns to improve access through replacing stiles with gates. Projects often link to pubs and other village facilities and usually improve a number of stretches of rights of way or even whole routes (<https://chilternsociety.org.uk/path-maintenance/>)
- A grant of £5,000 supported path surface improvements between Benson and Wallingford, a very well used section of the Thames Path National Trail ([http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/sites/default/files/tp\\_newsletter\\_autumn\\_2016.pdf](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/sites/default/files/tp_newsletter_autumn_2016.pdf))
- The Oxford Preservation Trust has recently carried out a range of access improvements over a stretch of open countryside on Boars Hill providing valuable access to green space on the edge of the city (<http://www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/sites/www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/files/Dreaming%20Spires%20walk.pdf>)

- Bloxham Parish Council - The project created circular walks of 4.5 miles and 1 mile, including replacing stiles with gates. The route is now being enjoyed by the local community and is used by the health walks organised through the local surgery ([http://www.bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk/?page\\_id=1977](http://www.bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk/?page_id=1977))
- Aston Rowant Parish Council used TOE2 funding to create a more accessible promoted 'Discovery trail' route that gave access to the Aston Rowant NNR Talking Trail (<http://www.astonrowant.org.uk/Aston-Rowant-Discovery-Trail.pdf>)
- A partnership with Brakspear is involving local volunteers in providing information to create circular routes from 30 Brakspear pubs (<http://www.pub-trails.co.uk/>). In return Brakspear is providing funding to support additional grants for access improvements. TOE2 would welcome the opportunity to work with other corporate partners in this way.

**TOE2 welcomes funding applications** from non-profit making organisations and groups including:

- Parish Councils
- Local charities
- Environmental charities and groups
- Other local voluntary groups

#### **What sorts of projects would we like to fund?**

- More support for strategic routes and for links to these routes, eg; National Trail links, the Oxfordshire Way, longer riding routes
- Better links with the health agenda, eg; Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, trim trails and path exercise circuits, access for people with disabilities, Green Health Routes
- More funding to support families wishing to access green spaces on foot or by bicycle
- Improving year round access for wheelchairs and pushchairs
- Projects that link biodiversity, education and access
- Supporting the establishment, training and work of groups of access volunteers

#### **Are you interested in supporting access to green spaces in Oxfordshire?**

We would love to hear from any local organisations or companies interested in supporting better access to green spaces in Oxfordshire; TOE2 provides an effective mechanism for delivering funding to good local projects.

**For further information about TOE2:**

**Fiona Danks, Director, Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2)**

**Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham, Abingdon, OX14 4QZ**

[www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk) 01865 407003 [fiona.danks@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:fiona.danks@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk)  
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# Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum

Agenda item 12

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Title: New Oxfordshire Historical Landscape Walks and Living Landscapes  
Author: Paul Harris, Countryside Access Strategy & Development Officer

## Introduction

Oxfordshire's Archaeological Team (OAT) has produced a series of three walks guiding you through some of Oxfordshire's beautiful historic countryside, picking out buildings, archaeological sites and monuments, and uncovering hidden traces of the past. Produced by the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project funded by Historic England ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/historiclandscape](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/historiclandscape)).

As part of this note the **Living landscapes exhibition**. An exploration of Oxfordshire's countryside on **15 July 2017** at The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock.

Inspired by the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project, Living Landscapes showcases photographs, paintings, and poems produced by Oxfordshire school children and residents on the themes of history, memory, and change in our landscapes. Visitors will also be able to explore the Historic Landscape Characterisation interactive map and view a series of historic maps of the county.

OAT is inviting members of the public to send in their photographs and poems as part of two projects.

### Our Oxfordshire photography project

OAT is asking members of the public to take a photograph of the historic Oxfordshire place that means the most to them and to tell us why it is special. If the participant can or wants to be in the photograph, even better!

Photographs will be exhibited at Living Landscapes, a celebration of Oxfordshire's historic landscapes. Alongside the Our Oxfordshire exhibition, works by local poets and artists will be on display, you can take away copies of walks designed to lead you through the historic countryside, and the Historic Landscape Characterisation project, a new and free online resource created by Oxfordshire County Council and funded by Historic England, will be introduced. Submitted photographs should be accompanied by the following information: Name, Place photographed, The story behind the photograph. Please send photographs and accompanying information to [abi.tompkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:abi.tompkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk) by Wednesday 5 July 2017.

### Post-it Poetry: Place making in Oxfordshire

OAT is inviting people from Oxfordshire, of all ages and all walks of life, to send us their poems inspired by the parts of the county which mean the most to them. This could be a home, a school, a field you went blackberrying in with your grandparents, a tree you used to climb, the path you walk your dog, or just a favourite corner of the county - anywhere where you feel connected to the landscape.

This event is being run by the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project (created by Oxfordshire County Council and funded by Historic England) in conjunction with local poet, Romola Parish, and local artist, Miranda Creswell.

The Post-it Poems will be on display throughout the day and writers of these poems and any other poets with their own Oxfordshire poems are invited to join us at 3pm for a reading by Poet in Residence Romola Parish of work written in response to the HLC project after which there will be an open-mic session where anyone wishing to do so is encouraged to read their poem.

Poems will also be displayed on the online interactive map produced for the HLC project. This map will go 'live' at the end of May and poems will be added in July. Some poems may be selected and posted on the HLC website.

Please send your Post-it Poems to [abi.tompkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:abi.tompkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk) by Wednesday 5th July 2017. Poems should be short enough to be written on to a post-it note (30 words maximum); written in English and in any style and on any subject so long as it relates to the Oxfordshire landscape. The Post-it Poems will be displayed alongside maps of Oxfordshire, so please include a reference to the place that inspired your poem in your email.

### **OCAF Action**

Members to note the project and to consider getting involved. A few copies of the walks will be brought to the meeting or they can be downloaded from the OCC access promotion pages at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides/](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides/)