

**Countryside Access  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Signal Court  
Old Station Way  
Eynsham  
Oxford OX29 4TL**

**Bev Hindle – Interim Director  
Environment & Economy  
Directorate**

## **RIGHTS OF WAY MONITORING GROUP**

A meeting of the Rights of Way Monitoring Group will be held on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 10.00am.

VENUE: Meeting Room 2, County Hall, Oxford

**Chair: Hugh Potter** – Countryside & Records Manager

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies and Introductions**
- 2. Minutes** To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- 3. Matters Arising - The impacts of enclosing PRoW with fences** – Nick Moon OFS
- 4. Definitive Map & Commons** - Report by the Interim Senior Rights of Way Officer
- 5. Countryside Access and Information** – Report by Countryside Access Team Leader
- 6. National Trails**
  - 6a Thames Path** - Report by Thames Path Manager
  - 6b Ridgeway** – Report by Ridgeway Officer - to follow
- 7. Brexit – Potential impacts on PRoW** – Verbal report by Harry St John CLA/OCAF
- 8. OCAF papers\***
  - Minutes of 26 April 2016 meeting
  - Bucks LAF letter - Restoring the Record & plan
  - BHS – Auditing the List of Streets paper

\*NB. Next OCAF meeting is 17.30pm @ County Hall, Oxford

## **9. Any Other Business**

### **Please note:**

If you cannot attend the meeting **please advise**, and if possible send someone else to represent your organisation.

If you no longer wish to receive these papers, or they should be sent to someone else, please let us know so we can make the necessary amendments the mailing list

## RIGHTS OF WAY MONITORING GROUP

Minutes of meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at OCC, Signal Court Eynsham

### PRESENT

#### Members

Stuart McGuinness	Vice Chair OCAF, Witney Mountain Bike Club
Chris Blomfield	Trail Riders Fellowship
Ian Clarke	Trail Riders Fellowship
Dave Scott	Cotswold Wardens
Jim Park	Oxford Fieldpaths Society
Nick Moon	Oxford Fieldpaths Society
Gordon Garraway	CRPE & OCAF
Alan Futter	Chiltern Society
David Godfrey	Ramblers

#### Oxfordshire County Council Officers

Hugh Potter	Countryside Records Manager (Chair)
Anita Coghlan	Senior Rights of Way Officer
James Blockley	Countryside Access Team Leader
Paul Harris	Access Strategy and Development Officer
Katie Skinner	Assistant Rights of Way Officer

Item		Action
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Introduction and Apologies</b></p> <p>1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced all to James Blockley OCC's new Countryside Access Team Leader. All members introduced themselves. Apologies received from Tom Cackett, Kevin Larnar, Chris Hall and Troth Wells.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Minutes of meeting 16<sup>th</sup> October 2015</b></p> <p>2.1 Amendment to item 4- 'Meeting frequency and timings should remain at before' should read 'Meeting frequency and timings should remain as before'. Minutes from meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012 then agreed.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>3.1 Item 3- HP- spoken to Sarah Wright (OCC Ridgeway Officer) regarding Ridgeway Forum. Priority has been elsewhere in her first year however there is still an intention to have a forum. Likely to be late summer/ early autumn.</p> <p>3.2 Item 3- AC explained that Adam McQueen had provided training on the CAMs Web Map. OCC's website contained two further versions of the Rights of Way information, the Definitive Map and Statement (including list of changes since 21<sup>st</sup> February 2006) <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/definitivemaponline">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/definitivemaponline</a> and the Countryside</p>	

	<p>Access Map <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysidemap">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysidemap</a> . The latter had useful layers and features for public not otherwise available. Guidance on using the CAMs Web Map was available from Adam McQueen</p> <p>3.3 Item 6- JP to send PPWs updated guidelines including CAMs Web. Some will use the old method of reporting if they do not have access to a computer etc. PPWs using current priority categorisation list. As soon as an amended priority list has been created HP to send to JP to circulate to PPWs. HP- Oxford Ramblers documents on the website are outdated. JP to email Ramblers when new priority list sent.</p> <p>3.4 Item 8 spring cultivations letter- PH emailed to JP just before today's meeting.</p> <p>3.5 Information exchange between Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum (OCAF) and Monitoring Group (MG) - Minutes from current MG were sent to OCAF. PH to send to OCAF Minutes (email) to MG members. Next OCAF meeting 26<sup>th</sup> April. PH will upload MG papers onto the OCAF website <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocaf">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocaf</a>.</p> <p>3.6 HP- We are trying to get greater representation at the meetings and trying to encourage NFU and CLA. Unfortunately they couldn't attend today. OCAF's Terms of Reference (last updated in 2004) isn't on the website but PH will do this. Action on HP to devise similar terms of reference for the MG.</p> <p>3.7 HP- Budget cut consultation responses to £40,000 cut within Countryside Access received the third highest level of responses. However proposed cuts were overtaken by Chancellor's Autumn Statement which may mean cuts are increased. At the moment there is no further detail of cuts other than the £40,000 cut to PRoW maintenance earmarked for 2019/20. In 4-6 months' timescale we should know more and it is hoped an update will be able to be supplied at the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>JP/HP/ JB</b></p> <p><b>PH</b></p> <p><b>HP</b></p> <p><b>HP</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion Topic- The Impacts of Enclosing PRoW with Fences – Nick Moon OFS</b></p> <p>The Chair offered to postpone the discussion until the next meeting or defer to area RoW meetings as no land managing interests could attend.</p> <p>PH supplied an oral update received that morning from Harry St John [CLA]. HSJ wished to know if the issue was widespread and actual or just perceived to be an issue. He also referred to the one case of permanent fencing he knew about on the Cotswold Way and suggested that landowners put up temporary/ permanent fencing to protect people from cattle especially people with dogs. HSJ advised</p>	<p><b>HSJ</b></p>

	<p>that he had contacted CLA's access adviser and would provide feedback.</p> <p>NM responded that across the Chilterns and south Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire since the 1960s many routes that were once open had been fenced and this was widespread in other areas. Although not illegal this often results in more urbanised looking routes, more nettles and vegetation on route, users can't avoid puddles and there was more erosion of the route. This meant more maintenance costs for resurfacing or drainage. AF and DG agreed that the problem was widespread. SM also highlighted the problem of finding routes without livestock as when taking children mountain biking the horses and cattle often bit saddles or riders.</p> <p>HP said that Field Officers will actively discourage landowners from putting up fencing that is inappropriate or that restricts the usable width of a RoW where possible and will make sure that any barbed wire does not cause a hazard to users.</p> <p>AC said that for diversions, OCC tried to secure a wide width to allow for fencing and ongoing maintenance. Fencing in most cases was requested to prevent users and their dogs from straying onto adjacent land, livestock security (including horses) and privacy. HP added that people may break through the fencing if a route has become impassable if they are at a critical point of their walk.</p> <p>JP identified that fenced paths wouldn't be so much of a problem if landowners maintained the boundary hedgerow on the other side of fence. He questioned whether this type of issue featured strongly in caseload reporting.</p> <p>PH responded that it doesn't feature too highly in the current caseload of the team but the team would do as much as they could - with a priority given for new fencing installations. NM said that it may be for a number of cases that the fenced routes may not be reported as an issue they may be reported as vegetation clearance issues or surface issues. HP added that the landowners should be contacting Field Officers before fencing so that they can check the alignment and width of the route and to ensure suitable fencing is used etc.</p> <p>HP stated that the item would be added as a small agenda item or a matter arising at the next meeting together with any written update from HSJ. It was suggested that the issue could be raised at the next meeting of OCAF in order to get some wider debate and PH offered to gain Chair and Vice-Chair of OCAF's approval for this to be added to the agenda.</p>	<p><b>PH</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Definitive Map and Commons (AC)</b></p> <p>AC highlighted a number of items in her written report, including as</p>	

	<p>follows:</p> <p><i>Deregulation Act:</i> No formal announcement had been issued on the date of the Deregulation Act regulations but these were expected 1<sup>st</sup> July. There were a large number of outstanding questions, including the need for applicants to provide copies of evidence, which could not be addressed at this stage.</p> <p><i>Cuddesdon &amp; Denton:</i> AC and DG reported back on the recent public inquiry. The decision was awaited. Following that further decisions would need to be taken on any provision of a bridge and the associated pending diversion proposals.</p> <p><i>Public Path Orders:</i> objections received to Idbury and Rollright applications meant these cases were likely to be referred to committee for decision as to whether they should be referred to PINS.</p> <p><i>New Con29 form:</i> This was due to come into effect on 4.7.16 and included a compulsory question on the existence of rights of way on the land.</p> <p><i>BOAT DMMO applications made by TRF:</i> AC advised CB that these cases were reaching the top of the waiting list to be considered. To date, no evidence had been provided to shown an exemption under NERCA applied.</p>	
6	<p><b>Countryside Access and Information</b></p> <p>PH gave a summary of his report. Arthur McEwan-James had stepped up to Field Officer from Assistant Field Officer and was doing very well, as was Jackie Smith the new Assistant Field Officer. For the recruitment to Tasks Team he reported that both candidates offered the job had declined. This meant that the team was two tasks team and one Assistant Field Officer down.</p> <p>PH corrected his report. Page two should read “£100k had been earmarked in capital....”</p> <p>For Marcham Mill PH stated that an application had been made to the District Council for listed building advice and he hoped to meet with the Conservation Officer soon. Although listed building consent isn’t needed for repair, if surface fill depth was increased then parapet height may need to be increased which may then need consent. He still hoped that the issue could be resolved this financial year.</p> <p>Local Area RoW forums would be held from week beginning 12<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p>Soft vegetation clearance will be at the same level as previous years.</p>	

<p>Copies of the soft vegetation clearance maps were made available at the meeting and would to be circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>A new round of bridge inspections was to be started soon. For the major structures it was anticipated that five would be designed and installed over the next year with East Hendred Fp 15 the first bridge on the list for replacement. JP asked if any bridges had been affected by this year's floods. PH said that this year was pretty standard unlike 2012 and no additional damage had been reported yet.</p> <p>For the Big Pathwatch JP asked what was the total number of reports. PH clarified that the 68,000 figure in the report was the national picture and he would try and find the Oxfordshire figures.</p> <p>CAMsWeb reporting- PH thanked members of MG for using the new system and stated that he hoped the upgrade would happen soon so photos can be uploaded. He also said that CAMsMobile hadn't progressed but that he hoped it could happen this year. He said that there is a big difference between unresolved issues and resolved issues and sometimes a large amount of work necessary by different teams to get a problem fixed. So just because the issues do not appear as resolved does not mean that they are not being worked on.</p> <p>PH thanked the group for their assistance in his fifteen months as Acting Countryside Access Team Leader and invited questions on his report.</p> <p>DG reported back from the Rambler's AGM where some complained that the issue categories in Big Pathwatch reported to the County Councils were vague. He also queried what priority 9's were. PH replied that priority 9 was used for administration to identify redundant structures.</p> <p>JB added his thanks to PH for the last 15 months and support over the last 3 weeks while handing over. He gave his perspective in the areas of recruitment, caseload and CAMS.</p> <p>Recruitment- whilst the two candidates did not accept the offer of the job they were the only ones who completely fit the bill and it would be counterproductive to appoint someone whom is not suitable for the position. If recruitment was started again it would conflict with soft vegetation clearance timing. Therefore discussions are taking place about contractors covering some areas of work in the interim. We are keen to ensure that the vacant posts remain on the structure chart although the positions are not going to go back out to recruitment immediately.</p>	<p>PH</p>
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	<p>Case Load Review- the work PH has done to date is great. When implemented it will be very useful as subjectivity has crept in when looking at issues. Will be useful to manage public expectation and also make sure that the team and volunteers can account for their achievements and feel proud about that they have done.</p> <p>CAMs Web Map- he is keen to upgrade and improve for ease of use by public and to encourage engagement. CAMs Mobile – it is a good system which could be effectively used by the team however it is quite expensive. JB is working with colleagues on a business case for this.</p> <p>JB stated that he was honoured to be part of the team and had enjoyed starting to get to know all of Oxfordshire by going out on site, this would continue over the coming months.</p> <p>GG Thanked AMJ for the training given to the Green Belt Way volunteers.</p> <p>GG expressed his disappointment that Marcham bridge still has a barrier across and wanted OCC to press on with the repair as English Heritage wouldn't want to see this in a state of disrepair. PH said that barriers had been strengthened as public are moving them and putting themselves in danger and that he was moving things forward with the district council. He clarified that the landowner had private vehicular rights and that these could not be simply curtailed PH has worked with SKANSKA and OCC bridge engineers and reopened dialogue with landowner so positive steps are being taken. HP added that he had raised this at ADEPT but no other authority has had a similar issue with this.</p> <p>HP thanked PH for his report and for his work as acting team leader for the last eighteen months.</p>	
<p><b>6a</b></p>	<p><b>Valuing Oxfordshire's Countryside Access Volunteers</b></p> <p>PH summarised his report and said it was based on the valuable survey and practical work that the four key standalone groups did with OCC's support – the Parish Path Wardens, the four Ramblers work groups, the Cotswold Wardens and Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers. He added that on top of this a huge amount of work by farmers, individuals, and parish councils was done on a daily basis. The report wasn't about putting a price on volunteer work but was about recognising the community spirit and goodwill, the health and social aspects, and the local ownership of areas that was very important to recognise.</p> <p>NM said that the group needed to make politicians aware of the good work that is going on with the CAT currently in place and the need for reasonable level of funding to be maintained.</p>	

	<p>HP agreed with NM. The groups did not take a huge staff or cash input but there is a lot of value that really does depend on expert and committed staff to support this and release that community potential. Senior management were increasingly appreciating what value the investment in communities and volunteers creates and the need to maintain the ability to provide that support. .</p> <p>JP said that he would provide PPW figures e.g. amount of clearance to PH</p> <p>HP added that the paper should also be circulated to OCAF</p>	<p><b>JP</b></p> <p><b>PH</b></p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>National Trails</b> HP said that across National Trails the principal issue was that Natural England and Defra haven't given any information yet on the funding settlement for 2016/17.</p> <p>However he reported that the two partnerships were picking up steam and the breadth of activity has increased including sponsorship, tourism, brewery sponsors, business engagement. Strong partnerships need to be created. Corporate volunteering was still going strong.</p>	
<b>7a</b>	<p><b>Thames Path</b> HP invited views on the TP report and said that the Thames Path Partnership had met in the last couple of weeks.</p> <p>7a.2 NM - Asked for update on Thames Path alignment issues and including the addition at Shiplake into the Thames Path route. HP- Currently the focus is on missing links including just outside of Swindon to take people off a busy main road.</p> <p>7a.3 In London the Thames Path team are building relationships with key partners e.g. TFL who have recently completed a survey of the route through the City. There are currently 3,000 pieces of furniture although Thames Path team are struggling to get a copy of the dataset from TFL.</p> <p>7a.4 GG- Asked for update of getting route at Oxford Cruisers Boatyard open. HP said that the situation hadn't moved on and it was a lower priority simply because another route nearby was open and used – with no complaints. GG said that he thought there had been positive discussions with the landowner. HP responded that the previous field officer had made some progress but higher priority issues had to take precedence. He would refer this back to the new field officer but there was no assurance that this could be prioritised.</p>	<p><b>HP</b></p>
<b>7b</b>	<p><b>Ridgeway</b> HP urged members to participate in supporting the annual visitor survey. Sarah Wright was working with SM on Sporting Ridgeway.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>

	HP referred to the ongoing request for a Ridgeway Forum to be established and said that the officer was aware of this but that the Partnership did have other priorities for her limited hours. HP stated that the Ridgeway Partnership was due to meet 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2016 and that he understood the Partnership hoped to run the Forum in October. This would need to be confirmed.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b> No any other business	

**Next Meetings-**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 Oxford**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017 Eynsham**

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## Rights of Way Monitoring Group 14 October 2016

### Interim Senior Rights of Way Officer's Report

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#### Introduction

This report sets out progress in this period according to the different areas of Definitive Map work as follows:

1. Definitive Map Modification Orders - Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
  2. Definitive Map and Statement
  3. Public Path Orders - Town & Country Planning Act 1990
  4. Public Path Orders - Highways Act 1980
  5. Public Path Agreements - Highways Act 1980
  6. General
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#### **1. Definitive Map Modification Orders and Applications - Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 s53**

90 cases are pending countywide. Waiting times for applications have therefore remained fairly static.

The latest position is given below.

More detail can be found in the "Pending DMMO case list" report which is updated monthly, and the statutory "DMMO Register" which lists all cases, both pending and complete, received since 31 December 2005. Both reports can be found at: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions).

#### ***New Applications***

Parish	Effect	Location	Status
Great Haseley	Add FP	Lewington Close to Backway	Received 9.3.16

#### ***Applications at pre-determination stage***

Parish	Effect	Location	Status
South Newington	Add FP	From the ford at the east end of Moor Lane, along the north bank of the river Swere for approx. 175m, to a field boundary at grid ref: SP 4138 3339	Informal consultations issued 17.12.14
Checkendon/Stoke Row	Add FP	From Neal's Lane/Busgrove Lane, corner of Busgrove Wood, Stoke Row, to Common Wood	Informal consultations issued 12.05.15
Didcot, East Hagbourne, Harwell, East Hagbourne	Add 6 FP's	A: E Hagbourne-Park Road at SU51518891 to East Hagbourne FP1 at SU51228889 B: Harwell BR1 at SU49899071 to	Informal consultations issued 22.08.16

		Harwell FP23 at SU50259068 L: Didcot/W Hagbourne-B4493 (Wantage Rd) at SU51138979 to FP 'M' at SU5079389504 M: FP'L' at SU5079389504 to B4493 at SU50608963 P: Didcot FP35 at SU50869091 to meet Didcot FP34 (proposed) at SU51189091 R: Didcot FP35 at SU50619074 to SU50739060 (An additional 8 routes were also applied for, but have since been dedicated)	
Chinnor	Add FP	From Greenwood Avenue to St Andrew's Road, Chinnor	Informal consultations issued 28.7.15
Sutton Courtenay	Add FP	from All Saints Lane to Churchmere Road, via the Millennium Common.	Informal consultations issued 21.9.15
Shenington with Alkerton	Add FP	To add a footpath from Stocking Lane (SP37034283) to Kenhill Road at the Bell Inn (SP37124286)	Informal consultations issued 06.04.15
Wallingford	Add FP	To add a footpath from the corner of paddock Road/Wormald Road to a gate on Squires walk at the back of 18-18 Reading Road.	Informal consultations issued 17.08.16

### ***Applications concluded***

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Sparsholt	Add FP	From Partridge Way to Seven Days Lane (along Coffin Lane) Sparsholt	Determined against 07.04.16 No appeal

### ***Orders made***

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Combe & Stonesfield	Add FP	From Brook Lane at grid ref SP 3935 1650, along the Evenlode Valley, to bridge over the River Evenlode at grid ref SP 3990 1578, near Lower Westfield Farm	Informal consultations issued 6.7.15 Order made 13.09.16
Combe & Stonesfield	Add FP	From Stonesfield to Combe Road at grid ref 3990 1680, along a valley known as Baggs Bottom, via grid ref SP 3945 1578, to Brook lane at grid ref SP 3935 1650, near Stonesfield Ford.	Informal consultations issued 6.7.15 Order made 13.09.16
Blewbury	Add FP	From FP19 along the track known locally as Pilgrim's Way to London Road	Determined in favour 11.4.14 (as BR). Order made

			18.5.15, advertised 4.6.15. Objections received.
Blewbury	Add BR & upgrade part of FP19 to BR	From London Road along part of FP19 and the track known locally as Pilgrim's Way to re-join London Road	As above.

### **Orders concluded**

Parish	Effect	Location	Status
Cuddesdon and Denton	Add FP	To add a FP across the River Thame at Chippinghurst, from the end of the spur of Cuddesdon FP 19 to the junction of Little Milton FPs 4 & 5 at the parish boundary.	Order made 19.9.13. Objections received. Order submitted to PINS Sept 14. Public Inquiry held 3.16 Inspector decided not to confirm 13.05.16
Islip	Add FP	From Islip Playing Field to Islip Footpath No. 9	Determined in favour 21.1.16. order made 4.2.16; advertised 25.2.16. Order confirmed 05.05.16

## **2. Definitive Map and Statement**

On 18.04.2016 a Legal Event Modification Order was made to bring into effect all changes to the Definitive Map and Statement for the year ended 31.12.2015.

A PDF copy of the Definitive Map and Statement, relevant date 21.2.2006, plus a list of all changes made to the Definitive Map and Statement up to 01.06.2016 is available at:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/definitive-map-and-statement-online>

All changes up to January 2016 are also incorporated in the interactive Countryside Access Map at: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysidemap](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysidemap)

The public rights of way data is also available on our website for download under the provisions of the Ordnance Survey Open Data. Note that this data is indicative only and is not the legal record.

## **3. Public Path Orders - Town & Country Planning Act 1990**

### ***New Applications***

Parish	Effect	Path	Location	Status
Harwell	Divert	BR12(part)	Didcot Road B4493,	Application received

			Harwell, OS Grid Ref SU499893	27.06.16, informal consultations issued 10.08.16
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### ***Applications in progress at pre-order making stage***

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
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Finmere	Divert	BR4(part)	Finmere Quarry, OS Grid Ref SP626326	Application received 20.6.14, informal consultations issued 19.5.15

### ***Orders confirmed - none***

## **4. Public Path Orders - Highways Act 1980**

There are a total of 28 public path order applications throughout the county outstanding at various stages. This comprises 25 standard diversion applications, 1 rail crossing diversion application and 2 concurrent extinguishment and creation applications. For further information on cases please refer to the monthly 'Pending PPOs Case List' available on our website at: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/modificationsanddiversions)

### ***New applications***

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Wardington	Divert	FP27(part)	Glen Meadows Farmhouse, OS Grid Ref SP489441	Application received 26.04.16
Wroxton	Divert	FP9(part)	Wroxton Mill, OS Grid Ref SP397404	Application received 20.06.16
Chinnor	Divert	FP11 (part)	New Close Farm, Henton OS Grid Ref SP750039	Application received 12.08.16

### ***Applications in progress at pre-order making stage***

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Great Haseley/Tet sworth	Divert	FP13 &30 ; 33,34,36,69 &70	The Oxfordshire Golf Hotel Spa, OS Grid ref SP681042	Informal consultations issued 16.12.15
Stanton Harcourt	Divert	BR12 (part)	East of River Windrush, OS Grid Ref SP402050	Informal consultations issued 12.1.16
South Leigh	Divert	FP15 (part)	Stow Cottage, Station Road, OS Grid Ref 392084	Informal consultations issued 14.06.16 Order to be advertised October 16
Highmoor	Divert	FP2 (part)	Highmoor Park OS Grid Ref SU698850	Informal consultations issued 24.07.16 Order to be drafted.
Tetsworth	Divert	FP 1 and 2	Lobb Farm, Great Haseley, OS Grid Ref SP664025	Informal consultations issued 21.06.16 Order to be drafted

Weston on the Green	Divert	FP22 (part)	Stoneyfield, North Lane, OS Grid Ref SP531189	Informal consultations issued 12.09.16
Bucknell	Divert	BW1 (part)	Yew Tree House, Bucknell, OS Grid Ref SP560256	Informal consultations issued 26.09.16

### **Orders made**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Launton	Divert	FP4 (part)	Launton Level Crossing, OS Grid Ref SP604218	Informal consultations issued 5.1.16 Order made 22.03.16; advertised 14.04.16
Idbury	Ext/Create	FP4	Idbury House, Idbury OS Grid Ref SP233197	Informal consultations issued 14.2.12. Order made 6.9.12; advertised 20.9.12 Report to P&R Committee 28 <sup>th</sup> Nov 16
Nuffield/ Stoke Row	Divert	FP25 (part) ; FP24 (part)	Nuffield, Howberrywood Farm, OS Grid Ref SU6885	Informal consultations issued 17.2.15, Order made 15.9.15; advertised 24.9.15
Rollright	Divert	FP7 (pt)	Manor Farm, Little Rollright OS Grid Ref SP294299	Informal consultations issued 10.11.14; Order made 28.5.15; advertised 18.6.15
Rollright	Divert	FP15 (pt)	Manor Farm, Little Rollright	Informal consultations issued 13.5.14; Order made 3.9.15; advertised 10.9.15
Uffington	Divert (119A)	FP4 (part)	Railway line south of Moor Mill Farm, OS Grid Ref SU307904	Informal consultations issued 7.7.14 Order advertised 11.03.16 To be confirmed 2017 following NR Footbridge Construction

### **Orders confirmed**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
South Leigh	Divert	FP8 (part)	Field House, South Leigh OS Grid Ref 398084	Informal consultations issued 15.03.16; Order Made 02.06.16; Order Advertised 09.06.16; Order Confirmed 18.08.16

## **5. Public Path Agreements - Highways Act 1980**

No dedications have been signed since the last meeting

## **6. General**

Finally, the following general matters are for information:

- *Deregulation Act 2015:* We are still waiting for secondary regulations and guidance to bring everything into effect. At the time of writing, no date has been officially advised, but we believe it will now be late 2016 at the earliest.
- *Law Society Con29 Form:* The Law Society's proposed changes to the Con 29 form, came into effect on 4.7.16. Public rights of way questions have been expanded and made compulsory. It appears to have gone smoothly so far.
- *CAMS Web* – You can now report Definitive Map and Statement anomalies and other problems in CAMSWeb. Please use the new 'Definitive Map' issue category.  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/report-issue-public-right-way>
- *DMC staff changes:* Anita Coghlan, our Senior Rights of Way Officer, has left the authority. She had been with the team for almost 20 years and will be sorely missed. A direct replacement for her position is not possible at this time, so her post is being covered on an interim basis by Lisa Gray-Wright and Eleanor Hazlewood. Katherine Skinner continues her secondment as Assistant Rights of Way Officer. Gillian Ghosh is due to go on maternity leave in November and as it is not possible to cover her position with external staff some of her hours are being covered by Alex Humphreys. We have been able to take on an agency member of staff in a full time role, Michael Bartleman, to cover the Commons Registration and Rights of Way Assistant position and hope to keep him until March 2017.

**Lisa Gray-Wright**  
**Definitive Map and Commons**  
**October 2016**

## Countryside Access Team Leader's Report

1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016

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### 1. Introduction

The last six months have been a period of emerging transition for the Countryside Access Team. We continue to engage with the Highways Service review which presents exciting opportunities but also uncertainty, whilst financial and caseload pressures continue to increase. Furthermore, a new prioritisation system continues to be developed which will represent the single most significant change in network management for a number of years. The team however, remains as committed to countryside access as ever; a solid baseline of quality access has been maintained, whilst working closely with Council colleagues, volunteers and third parties has brought numerous and lasting improvements to paths across the county.

### 2. Personnel

- James Blockley was appointed the new Countryside Access Team Leader in March. Formerly with the Cotswolds Conservation Board, James has a long background in access and countryside management
- Will Saunder joined the team as Assistant Countryside Tasks Officer in August. Will has a background in farming and had been volunteering with the Worcestershire County Council Countryside Service for a number of months prior to starting with OCC. He is keen and committed and will be a real asset to the team and wider service.
- Two vacancies remain in the team structure, Assistant Countryside Tasks and Assistant Field Officer. A business case has been made to recruit to the AFO post. Whilst the outcome of this is uncertain due to the recruitment freeze, it is hoped to have an officer in post before the Spring.

### 3. Operations

Despite time and budget pressures, key development and improvement projects have been delivered across the county. In addition, routine inspections, data management, planning consultations, alignment issues, proactive and reactive maintenance, coordination with landowners, volunteers and other stakeholders continue to form the bulk of the team's work crossing over with and supporting the wider service.

#### 3.1. Development / improvement works

A selection of practical improvement works delivered between March and August are as follows:

- *Chesterton Footpath 4*: A stream with no crossing led to a stile at the top of a bank; both were very difficult to negotiate. The Parish Council agreed to pay for a kissing gate to replace the stile at the roadside so that this could be undertaken at the same time as a culvert and kissing gate were installed at the stream crossing as a more cost effective and long-lasting alternative to a wooden footbridge:

- *East Hendred Footpath 15*: A completely new bridge eagerly anticipated by neighbouring communities. Successfully installed after protracted delays following seasonal access issues.

Before:



After:



### 3.2. Tasks Team

- All contracted Soft Vegetation Cutting Programme works have been completed, with almost all of Tasks Team led priorities completed.
- Statistics for worksheet and task delivery are included at Appendix 1. *Please note that these statistics do not include the final set of data entry for the contract works for the South East area.*
- Out-turn figures for the Tasks Team are proportionally lower than previous periods due to a drastically reduced workforce (two vacant posts with only one being filled at the end of the season). Despite these difficulties, they have maintained remarkable efficiency but it must be acknowledged that they have effectively been running 'on a shoestring' for almost 12 months and the impacts of this have been immediate and continue to hamper workflow and processes. The team would normally look to create around 50 worksheets a month, but this period have created an average of 31 per month. Similarly they would previously have looked to complete around 56 Worksheets a month in this period, but have averaged 31 a month since March.
- Despite this, the team continues to bring added value and ingenuity to practical management of the network. Having the skills, equipment, experience and county-wide knowledge to carry out lower priority (but still important) works whilst tackling urgent or high priority tasks is a benefit that would be impossible with a fully contracted system.
- The prioritisation approach will impact on Tasks Team worksheet production and resolution and across CAT we are looking at new ways of delivering 'emergency' and 'urgent' works more effectively and efficiently in future as part of this.

## 4. **Access Strategy & Development update**

This period has seen a significant amount of strategy and development activity since the handover of Countryside Access Team management from Paul Harris to James Blockley in March. Some items of interest are summarised below:

#### 4.2. Science Vale Cycling

In the 'Science Vale' area in Didcot, Harwell and surrounds, OCC Transport has been allocated around £4.5m by the Local Enterprise Partnership in order to improve connections between homes and the key high-tech employers. As part of this Countryside Access Team was asked to assess possible access measures using public rights of way between Wantage and Harwell and around Milton. After completing these audits the team is now in discussion with transport colleagues about which of the potential schemes will be funded so that the next steps of landowner and community discussion can proceed. The team is planning to use the approach to project management and delivery in this area when it comes to the development mitigation work funded from the Ardley Energy from Waste site as well as RAF Upper Heyford and we are also hoping that by recharging staff time we might be able to fund / backfill additional staff to help with the rest of the team's work, including the Tasks Team.

#### 4.3. Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum (OCAF)

The group recently held a work planning session and is hoping to focus on the review of the Definitive Map 'Statement of Priorities' in future meetings as well as trying to improve awareness and joint working on development planning issues. The group recently contacted all local councils in Oxfordshire about the need to get involved in local planning matters and consider what improvements to public rights of way could be made and they hope to apply the same approach to encouraging more direct action by local communities. The Chair of the group is now Stuart McGinness with Troth Wells as Vice-chair. Their next meeting is on 1st November at 6pm in County Hall, Oxford.

#### 4.4. Marcham Mill -Rushey Bridge (Marcham Bridleway 17)

This long running closure of a key bridleway connection continues with regular communication between OCC and the landowner. In the meantime the barriers have had to be repaired a number of times. It is still hoped that works can be underway by June 2017 but this is dependent on finalising the specification to be used, obtaining district council and Environment Agency consent for alterations to the listed structure, and the agreement on funding issues and obtaining OCC capital programme allocation.

#### 4.5. Access Land

Most of the access land parcels were surveyed again in summer 2016. Many access points were overgrown and most of their information signs had faded to some extent so these matters were tackled as part of the inspection visits. However, it was clear that all parcels surveyed were being well used. At Hackpen Hill/Crowhole Bottom near Letcombe Bassett there was a risk of losing permissive access routes apart from the internal connections as the access payments under Higher Level Stewardship had stopped. Fortunately an agreement was reached to maintain the key access connection to the footpath leading to Letcombe Bassett church, as well as the connection up to the Ridgeway.

### 5. **Countryside Access Management System (CAMs)**

Our spatial data and issue management system continues to bring tangible benefits to CAT officers and the public alike. Developments and efficiency with the system are primarily down to the Countryside GIS and Data Management Officer. The role has grown and expanded over recent months with expertise being applied to other areas of the service, such as assisting with the Highway Records digitisation programme, whilst networking with other authorities to develop improvements of mutual benefit.

The online reporting system, CAMS Web, has grown to be the primary source of public reports on network condition. This leads to greater data management efficiency bringing knock-on time benefits across the CAT, alongside more effective engagement with the public and ‘regular reporters’.

Funds have now been identified outside of CAT operational budget to source a much-needed upgrade to CAMs Web. The new system will bring a host of benefits including greater efficiency, small-screen optimisation (for use in the field), photo upload capacity and the ability for ‘trusted users’ to input and process their own reports.

## **6. Priority Caseload Approach (PCA)**

Following approval of the PCA by OCAF and MG in April, a summary paper was presented to the Cabinet Member for Environment in August. Following on from this, a full paper will be tabled at a public Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions meeting in November. As initial discussion was completely positive, full adoption is expected which will give the final ‘green light’ for the initiative to proceed.

A CAMs compatibility assessment has already been completed, so implementation can proceed in line with the Highways Service review during 2017/18 following a 2 year action plan, which will be developed in the coming months.

A current summary paper is included at Appendix 2.

## **7. Caseload**

As indicated above, this period has seen the volume of public reporting continue to escalate. This leads to a greater awareness of network demand, but also adds pressure on a limited workforce and can raise the expectations of the reporting public. The PCA will help to prioritise this demand whilst managing public expectations, and instigate a more qualitative approach to caseload management. For the time being the target should be to have the ‘issues received’ figure fall below ‘issues resolved’ in order to reduce the balance of 3812 issues outstanding.

The current caseload out-turn is summarised at Appendix 3.

## **8. Budget / Finance**

The operational budget remains around £100k to cover all aspects of reactive and proactive practical management of the network. In addition, we retain a capital programme of the same amount tied to bridge repair and replacement, both larger key structures and smaller footbridges.

The March to August period has seen some success with income generation following assessment work highlighted in 4 above and s106 agreements. Further significant income will be generated as this and other similar projects progress, but as this will be predominantly tied to key projects it is highly unlikely that it will meet the operational / revenue demand arising from any future efficiency measures.

The outcome of the Highways Service review will to a certain extent direct the financial future, but it is inevitable that significant further savings will need to be found. Building efficiency and value for money into everything we do is a constant theme for CAT process and development, but as suggested above, there is very little cloth remaining to be cut. Roll-out of the PCA will provide a framework for a different

way of working and help us adapt to changes, however the challenge of managing public expectations, whilst maintaining standards, will only increase.

## 9. Volunteering

With increasing financial pressures, engaging and supporting volunteer groups becomes more and more central to what we do. Adding value to basic maintenance in this way is incredibly valuable, but does not come cost free – financial support and officer time is essential if voluntary effort is to complement and enhance the work of the CAT. Furthermore, engaging with community led projects, often signposting to additional funds such as Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment, is increasingly one of the few ways that real development / improvement works can be delivered. Beyond project based funding, there is also the ongoing potential to raise awareness of the Oxfordshire Together programme within third party groups to expand on and support ownership of local paths and routes.

We continue to work closely with three distinct groups, but also with a range of other volunteers such Parish Path Wardens and third party works for example through Parish Council facilitated groups.

A good example of this is Chastleton Footpath 4, where six new gates were installed by the East district group of the *Cotswold Wardens* to replace stiles. The gates were paid for by the Wardens’ Countryside Fund and the Oxford Fieldpaths Society, with the works programmed, organised and executed by the Wardens. A solid development therefore, with minimal input required from CAT.

In the other side of the County, proactive and lasting improvement projects continue to be instigated, funded and delivered by the *South Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers*, supported and guided by CAT. Their contribution to the excellent quality of the network in the South East of the county is indispensable and cannot be underestimated. Recently produced (1<sup>st</sup> August) statistics for the year so far are testament to this:

- Total number of gates installed: 20
- Gates waiting to be installed (funding and permissions in place): 18
- Gates in the pipeline (some permission and funding still required): 21
- Waymark posts installed: 44
- Total length of paths mown / cleared: 4520

A third group, the *Vale Path Volunteers* is gathering momentum and it starting to take on more repeat and reactive works under guidance from CAT officers. The VPVs are a sub-group of the Oxfordshire Ramblers, who have also been instrumental in the development and delivery of the Vale Way which was officially launched in July 2015. Since then the Vale of White Horse Rambler group has completed the waymarking with adhesive decals, and also prepared information that will enable the Ordnance Survey to include the Way on its maps. This is another great example of how promoted access can be achieved by working with and supporting voluntary groups.

## 10. Feedback

A small but representative selection of feedback from the last six months:

- March: *“Just to say my wife and I walked the Tiddington paths today and what a wonderful job! Well done OCC!”*

- April: *“I was delighted to find today when I went to walk round Spring Lane to the post box that the path across the paddock has been cut very recently. I have been finding it too much to tackle recently, so my profound thanks”*
- May: *“Talking of priorities cannot be a defence to the fact you have not fulfilled your duties to maintain and signpost this footpath. I hope action will be taken to open this footpath as soon as possible”*
- June: *“Thank you so much! You and your team are ace (and I'm not just saying that: I know how much of a struggle it is to keep things shipshape - or try to, anyway - at the present time).”*
- July: *“I wanted to say an enormous thank you to you and the team for the excellent clearance work that's been done on the Eynsham Mill walk. The paths through the fields are unmissable (yippee!) and the whole walk is a delight (I did it on Sunday).”*
- August: *“the work you have done is OUTSTANDING!”*

## **11. Note from CATL**

Throughout my work history, education and volunteering, I have always held the belief that the surest way to protect our countryside is to encourage understanding and involvement through the provision of well-managed and sustainable access. In the short time I have been involved with the Countryside Access Team, I have been incredibly impressed with the ingenious approaches the team takes to making this belief a reality. All officers have a deep commitment to access and see their role as a vocation as opposed to just a job. From this comes enthusiasm, commitment, and longevity. I consider it an honour to be working with the team and all our partners and look forward to a constructive future of maintaining and improving the wonderful countryside access network of Oxfordshire.

James Blockley

Countryside Access Team Leader

## **Appendices:**

1. Tasks Team statistics – 1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016
2. Priority Caseload Approach summary paper
3. Caseload summary statistics – 1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016.

## Task Team Statistics : 1 March 2016 - 31 August 2016

Worksheets created this season: **188**  
 Worksheets completed this season: **192**

Worksheets completed on/by due date this season: **125** 65.10%  
 Worksheets completed after due date this season: **67** 34.90%

<b>Worksheets completed by team this season:</b>	<b>Total</b>
TaskTeam	<b>149</b>
Bridge Team	<b>24</b>
Contractor	<b>18</b>
Volunteers	<b>1</b>

<b>Worksheets completed by type this season:</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bridges and Infrastructure Work(s)	<b>32</b>
Fingerpost(s)	<b>27</b>
Repeat Site Inspection	<b>24</b>
Vegetation Clearance	<b>22</b>
Urgent Work(s)	<b>21</b>
Bridges External	<b>17</b>
Repeat Works	<b>15</b>
Infrastructure Work(s)	<b>13</b>
Emergency Work(s)	<b>8</b>
Inspection(s)	<b>5</b>
Drainage/Surfacing	<b>3</b>
Infrastructure Plus Work(s)	<b>3</b>
Vegetation Plus Clearance	<b>2</b>

Individual Jobs completed this season: **972**

<b>Jobs completed by type this season:</b>	<b>Total</b>
RepeatVegetation/SoftVegetationClearance	<b>679</b>
RepeatInspection	<b>48</b>
InstallCrossing/Bridge/General	<b>30</b>
RepairCrossing/Bridge	<b>29</b>
RemoveVegetation/Fallen Tree(s)	<b>19</b>
Emergency Works/Emergency Works	<b>19</b>
RemoveVegetation/Furniture	<b>15</b>
RepairFingerPost	<b>14</b>
InstallWaymark/Post	<b>13</b>
RepairFingerPost/Plate	<b>12</b>
RemoveVegetation/SoftVegetationClearance	<b>11</b>
Inspection/Inspection	<b>11</b>
RepeatWorks/Repeat Works	<b>9</b>
Delivery/Delivery	<b>8</b>
RepairSurface/General	<b>7</b>
InstallWaymark/Waymarking	<b>6</b>
Install/Gate/Kissing	<b>5</b>
RepeatDrainage/RepeatDrainage	<b>4</b>
InstallGate/Pedestrian	<b>4</b>
RepeatVegetation/Furniture	<b>3</b>
Others	<b>26</b>

## PROTOCOL FOR PRIORITY CASELOAD APPROACH FOR THE PROTECTION, MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Oxfordshire County Council's statutory duty for public rights of way (PRoW) management under the Highways Act 1980 centres on ensuring that, across the network, rights are not obstructed and routes are maintained in a reasonable condition. The strategy for this is set out in the Rights of Way Management Plan 2015-2025. Note that management issues on asphalt PRoW are managed under a separate process by Oxfordshire Roads and Transport.

This protocol is intended to manage expectations and give objective guidance to officers and others involved in the fulfilment of that responsibility in a transparent and fair way. It is intended to encompass the majority of the Oxfordshire County Council's Countryside Access Team's (CAT) work through this approach, not just managing the priority of reported issues.

### Anticipated benefits from implementing the Priority Caseload Approach:

- 1) Public and stakeholder expectations and the authority's ability to meet them will be better understood as people know there will have to be more of a focus on higher priority works across the county
- 2) Greater objectivity in issue prioritisation and management means less reliance on officers' subjective assessments
- 3) Adopted protocol for issue and other workload management will increase consistency and focus across the county
- 4) Field Officers retain knowledge and oversight of their areas but embedding the PCA means that highest priority issues can be shared out across officers when necessary. Time allocated to support community and volunteer work can then be balanced across the county to ensure consistency
- 5) Team and authority can still add 'value' across the county by working to secure additional resources and supporting and encouraging farmers, land managers, local communities, groups, volunteers and individuals to improve the network for all users -but in a more structured and transparent way, especially focusing on those routes that offer the greatest potential or that provide other social, health or economic benefits -the **Strategic Path Improvement Network**
- 6) The Priority Caseload Approach process has synergy with the Highways Service Review and should inform and add value to that wider process.

## **1. How issues are allocated a priority**

The majority of public rights of way issues reported to the County Council or identified through internal inspections will be prioritised or programmed by CAT after the issue has been assessed. This assessment may use supplied reports, photos, database records, and site visits to help in the determination and will normally consider one or more of the following factors where they are relevant:

1. Overall level of hazard or actual risk that the issue (if a safety matter) represents
2. The degree of obstruction
3. The cause and likely duration of the issue
4. The character of the route, its normal use and the route's normal state of repair
5. The impact of the issue looking at the wider network.

Due to the nature of rights of way and the wide range of local circumstances it is unrealistic to set out hard and fast lists of issues or work areas and their associated priority. However using the factors above will help develop and maintain a more consistent approach within the CAT.

## **2. How programmed maintenance and other demands form part of CAT work and fit into the priority caseload approach**

CAT commits significant resources to public rights of way maintenance and repair work such as bridge repair and replacement, vegetation clearance, surfacing and drainage, signing, as well as responding to large and small planning applications and liaising with and supporting community and volunteer groups. All of this work is part of CAT officers' potential workload but all of these involve choices being made about relative priorities

A balance has to be struck that enables the tackling of the highest priority issues as well as making time for lower priority work, especially that delivered by communities and volunteers where this doesn't limit highest priority action. This means that across the county a greater focus will normally be paid to the two highest priority categories 1 and 2a-c and may mean that there is less of a focus on area based management areas. Priority derived caseloads will be kept under review.

Lower Priority (3 and 4a-c) workload issues will have their own processes to maximise outputs and make the most of available finance, staff, volunteer or community resources. This may result in them being worked on with greater urgency. Examples of when this might occur include:

- When the issue is part of the same path or close by a higher priority issue receiving attention
- When the issue is part of work being funded and delivered by the landowner, volunteer group, parish council or community group
- When the issue can benefit from external funding such as TOE2 or s106/CIL
- When action is linked to seasonal or cyclical issues – e.g. installing bridges outside of flood periods and arable cultivations, or cutting vegetation outside of bird nesting period
- When a likely rapid deterioration could be prevented by swift action
- When a sudden change of circumstances makes it possible to resolve a long standing problem, e.g. minor misalignment

The two factors of issue prioritisation and other workload demands are combined in the table overleaf. A separate performance management framework will define operational standards where possible, in order to enable better monitoring and reporting.

<b>Issue and Caseload Priority Table</b>	
<b>Priority Category</b>	<b>Classification and guideline circumstance</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Public Safety Incident</b> - where an accident has occurred resulting in serious injury <b>Public Safety Issue</b> - with high likelihood of imminent accident resulting in serious injury
<b>2a</b>	<b>Lesser Safety Issue</b> - with possibility of accident resulting in less severe injury
<b>2b</b>	<b>Priority Repeat Process</b> - Higher priority maintenance task such as key route vegetation clearance that comes up each year or more regularly
<b>2c</b>	<b>Non-hazardous but significant or time-limited issue</b> - likely to completely obstruct access very soon or a major planning issue
<b>3</b>	<b>Lesser hazard/lesser significance issue</b> - affects a PRoW but does not completely obstruct it or may not be time-limited
<b>4a</b>	<b>Area or bulk processing</b> - lower hazard or lower priority issue such as signing or furniture that can be packaged together with others
<b>4b</b>	<b>Repeat Process</b> - Lower priority maintenance task such as less frequent vegetation clearance that comes up regularly
<b>4c</b>	<b>Opportunity</b> - standalone improvement project or request
<b>5</b>	<b>No Action intended/Record may be updated</b> –minor issues

Oxfordshire County Council  
 Countryside Access Team  
 Signal Court. Old Station Way, Eynsham, OX29 4TL

June 2016

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess)



# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## End of Season Report : Oxfordshire

Caseload at start of reporting period (1st March 2016) :

By Type (top 10) :	Total : 3,604
Stile/Repair or Replace	501
Vegetation/Undergrowth Removal Required	214
Waymark/Waymarking Required	188
Surface Improvement Request	181
Definitive Map/Walked line incorrect	177
Crossing/Bridge or Culvert Repair	167
Ploughing Cropping/Cropping Cross Field Path	159
Vegetation/Overgrowth Removal Required	155
Fence/Fences	152
Gate/Repair or Replace	120
Others	1,590

By Priority :	
Priority : 1	9
Priority : 2	963
Priority : 3	1646
Priority : 4	788
Priority : 5	187

Issue added during reporting period  
(1st March 2016 - 31st August 2016) :

In this season the total number of reports  
including duplicates was : 1,364

By Type (top 10) :	Total : 827
Stile/Repair or Replace	87
Vegetation/Undergrowth Removal Required	74
Tree/Fallen Tree(s)	70
Definitive Map/Walked line incorrect	67
Crossing/Bridge or Culvert Repair	61
Ploughing Cropping/Cropping Cross Field Path	60
Finger Post/Repair or Replace	43
Vegetation/Overgrowth Removal Required	31
Finger Post/Request	25
Gate/Repair or Replace	24
Others	285

Issues reported by: (Top 10)	
Public	453
Ramblers Parish Paths Wardens	53
The Chilterns Society	49
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England	47
Oxford Fieldpaths Society	17
Ramblers' Association	11
Oxfordshire County Council	8
Landowner	6
Town and Parish Council	2
Big Path Watch	1
Others	2

By Priority :	
Priority :	1
Priority : 1	25
Priority : 2	199
Priority : 3	399
Priority : 4	179
Priority : 5	23

Issue resolved during reporting period (1st March 2016 - 31st August 2016) :

By Type (top 10) :	Total : 626
Stile/Repair or Replace	83
Tree/Fallen Tree(s)	56
Crossing/Bridge or Culvert Repair	48
Ploughing Cropping/Cropping Cross Field Path	40
Vegetation/Undergrowth Removal Required	39
Finger Post/Repair or Replace	34
Surface Improvement Request	23
Vegetation/Overgrowth Removal Required	23
Gate/Repair or Replace	21
Fence/Fences	20
Others	239

By Priority :	
Priority : 1	21
Priority : 2	186
Priority : 3	306
Priority : 4	95
Priority : 5	17

Current caseload at end of reporting period (31st August 2016) :

By Type (top 10) :	Total : 3,812
Stile/Repair or Replace	505
Vegetation/Undergrowth Removal Required	249
Definitive Map/Walked line incorrect	232
Waymark/Waymarking Required	197
Crossing/Bridge or Culvert Repair	181
Ploughing Cropping/Cropping Cross Field Path	180
Surface Improvement Request	174
Vegetation/Overgrowth Removal Required	164
Fence/Fences	145
Gate/Repair or Replace	123
Others	1,662

By Priority :	
Priority :	1
Priority : 1	13
Priority : 2	979
Priority : 3	1,740
Priority : 4	875
Priority : 5	193



# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL End of Season Report : Oxfordshire

## Current Caseload by Type and Priority (top 10 Issues) :

### Stile/Repair or Replace : 505

Priority 2 : 180

Priority 3 : 278

Priority 4 : 44

Priority 5 : 3

### Vegetation/Undergrowth Removal Required : 249

Priority 1 : 2

Priority 2 : 62

Priority 3 : 137

Priority 4 : 40

Priority 5 : 8

### Definitive Map/Walked line incorrect : 232

Priority 2 : 14

Priority 3 : 61

Priority 4 : 133

Priority 5 : 24

### Waymark/Waymarking Required : 197

Priority 2 : 6

Priority 3 : 75

Priority 4 : 105

Priority 5 : 11

### Crossing/Bridge or Culvert Repair : 181

Priority 1 : 4

Priority 2 : 83

Priority 3 : 68

Priority 4 : 16

Priority 5 : 1

Priority 9 : 9

### Ploughing Cropping/Cropping Cross Field Path : 180

Priority 2 : 42

Priority 3 : 115

Priority 4 : 17

Priority 5 : 6

### Surface Improvement Request : 174

Priority 1 : 1

Priority 2 : 44

Priority 3 : 92

Priority 4 : 29

Priority 5 : 8

### Vegetation/Overgrowth Removal Required : 164

Priority 2 : 45

Priority 3 : 90

Priority 4 : 26

Priority 5 : 3

### Fence/Fences : 145

Priority 2 : 39

Priority 3 : 60

Priority 4 : 33

Priority 5 : 13

### Gate/Repair or Replace : 123

Priority 2 : 37

Priority 3 : 70

Priority 4 : 16

### Others : 1,662

Priority : 1

Priority 1 : 6

Priority 2 : 427

Priority 3 : 694

Priority 4 : 416

Priority 5 : 116

Priority 9 : 2

# Thames Path



## THAMES PATH NATIONAL TRAIL REPORT JUNE to SEPTEMBER 2016

### MEETINGS and WORKS

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Baton Relay Source to Sea, 16 Day walking festival is now complete. Eventbrite booking system worked well for the public to book onto each days walking. Walkers came from as far afield as America, Germany, Spain and Chile, alongside a good number of Rambler Groups, including lead walkers for each day. The trail was in good condition with no obstructions along the whole route.

There has been good press coverage from local county newspapers through to London's Metro, as well as 5 days of BBC Oxfordshire radio live and pre-records during the event with studio session's in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire prior to the event. Various Thames related magazines covered the event from the Stripling in the Upper Thames Society through to The River Thames Society. #thamespath20 was set up, with tweeting and photos being uploaded throughout the event and afterwards. Of the 16 days of walking the Thames Path National Trail, 7 were spent on the trail walking through Oxfordshire.

Further negotiations have taken place with the EA to gain the consent for revetment works along several locations in Streatley, West Berkshire. The funding is in place and landowners are all on board, as soon as the consent is issued the works can begin. The works are far more extensive due river depths and failing existing revetment works below the surface.

Site meetings took place with West Berkshire and landowners to negotiate a new fence line and look at surface and erosion issues along the trail between Pangbourne to Purley.

Natural England – meeting held to discuss additional funding opportunities for National Trails for the future.

London - a planning application to lock a gate on the trail near Tower Bridge – Tower Hamlets from 4pm onwards was objected to and has been overturned. Southwark Council are looking to revamp all their Thames Path signage as part of the 400 year anniversary of the Mayflower 2020. They have requested signage spec and the National Trail logos to ensure the route has the correct designation of a National Trail.

A wish list has been sent to the Deputy Mayor of London for The Thames Path National Trail in London.

Access audit of the trail is still ongoing.

Further emails have been sent out to Highway Authority Partners asking for Purchase orders for their 2016 contributions.

Mowing Contracts are now all complete. (NB Increase in complaints regarding vegetation growth from around three per year to over fifty, due to a later start in the mowing contracts).

Meetings have taken place with two landowners over the removal of the last two stiles on the Thames Path, Kemble, Gloucestershire.

Little Marlow Buckinghamshire, liaising with the Chilterns Society and land owners about access and possible match funding of a volunteer scheme project for surfacing, signage and links into the newly created walks and open access around Little Marlow lakes. (a new mini Country Park).

Obstruction of a barbed wire fence has been removed from the trail in Shiplake, Oxon.

### **Larger Scale Works**

Oxford City revetment works are underway; working with Skanska we have negotiated the construction of a floating pontoon during the build. This will allow the public riverside access throughout the work period, thus eliminating the need for a long diversion during the busy summer season.

Revetment works next to the recreation ground in Marlow are now complete.

Benson to Wallingford revetment and surfacing works -The final 1000m of surfacing to link Benson with Wallingford is now complete. The works also included several weldmesh and stone revetments along eroded sections. Funding came from Reading Angling Society, OCC, NT and a landfill tax grant.

We are in the process of sourcing works for corporate groups. This involves site inspections to find suitable works for a large group with nearby toilet facilities. Locations identified include Goring (Berkshire) Sonning (Berkshire) Shiplake (Oxfordshire) Whitchurch (Oxfordshire). The areas identified have to be site specific when working with corporate groups; they have to be within a 25 minute journey time. Companies who have shown an interest in corporate volunteering include Vodaphone, British Gas, Fujitsu and Involve.

### **National Trails Volunteer Works**

Each section represents one day's work with between five to nine volunteers per day.

#### **Gloucestershire**

Near Oxfordshire boundary. Strimming and Mowing SU16219582 to SU17469600 1,500m.

Lechlade Strimming SU22299500 to SU22539881 330m.

#### **Wiltshire**

Cricklade, strimming SU09449416 to SU09659406 180m. SU09999399 to SU10069396 100m. SU10349381 to SU10419376 100m.

#### **Oxfordshire**

Osney, mowing SP50360583 to SP50890553 1,500m.

Chimney, mowing and tree and bramble clearance SP33450042 to SP35369958 5,600m.

**Oxfordshire cont.'**

Newbridge, mowing and Strimming SP37970161 to SP38140160 200m,  
SP38920116 to SP39470128 560m, SP40530137 to SP40710133 200m.

Grafton, mowing SU27079921 to SU26569881 650m SU27229933 to  
SU28449944 1,750m.

Clifton Hampden, Strimming, sign installation and light clearance SU5477595374  
to SU5494595544 400m.

Kelmscot, mowing SU25299883 to SU24409844 1,210m.

Chimney mowing SP33450042 to SP35369958 5,700m.

**Buckinghamshire**

Marlow, mowing and strimming, SU84788578 to SU83868448 1,980m.

Marlow Surface removing plastic trip hazards SU84788578 to SU83868448  
1,720m.

Marlow, strimming and mowing and bramble clearance SU84788578 to  
SU83868448 1,720m.

**Wokingham**

Sonning, strimming 1,800 metres.

**Workshop 6 task days**

Machine maintenance, signage- making up eight wooden Thames Path fingers,  
truck and trailers maintenance.

**Steve Tabbitt**

**Thames Path Manager**