

The Second Bracknell Forest Rights Of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP2)

2017-2027



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Figure 1:

Table of lengths of each type of Right of Way and the percentage each represents of the total network by length

Figure 2: Bracknell Forest Public Rights of Way by Type (by length in kms of path)

Figure 3: Bracknell Forest Public Rights of Way by Parish (by length in kms of path)

Figure 4: Rights of Way density (km per km²) by parish

Figure 5: Appropriate colours and styles for PRow waymarkers

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Figure 9: Pie chart - Feedback from RoWIP User Survey Q. "Do you use any of the following?"

Figure 10: Pie chart - Feedback from RoWIP User Survey Q. "Have you heard of any of the following?"

Foreword

“Thank you for taking an interest in our 2nd Rights Of Way Improvement Plan, which sets out our shared vision for the protection, improvement and promotion of our rights of way network over the next 10 years.

We are fortunate in Bracknell Forest to have an extensive network of rights of way, which has wider links to cycleways, permissive routes and open spaces. It is this green infrastructure network which means that people of all ages and abilities are able to explore the borough by foot, bicycle, horse, scooter and wheelchair.

Getting close to nature and engaging in physical activity are factors that are proven to boost health and well being. In addition to social benefits, Rights of Way are an important part of our heritage; they provide opportunities for sustainable travel and help to boost tourism, thus contributing towards the local economy.

Ensuring that the network is fit and available to use, and that it meets the modern demands for recreation is a challenge, especially as much of the network evolved to serve the purposes of local people who lived and worked in the countryside. The pressure placed on rural Rights of Way from large residential developments is addressed in this plan and we examine how this can be turned into an opportunity by using developer contributions to improve access and links, provide areas of public open space with path networks, and cycle routes within a short walk of new homes.

Working closely with these Rights of Way stakeholders will be important in delivering the vision of a thriving and accessible Public Rights of Way and greenspaces network and this Plan is the result of extensive consultation with users, land managers, access providers, the Local Countryside Access Forum and residents and visitors. From the large response we had to our survey, it is clear that people value the recreational opportunities afforded by the Rights of Way network and we have tried to incorporate their concerns, aspirations and ideas into this document.”



Cllr Iain McCracken

*Executive Member for Leisure,
Corporate Services and Public
Protection*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iain McCracken'.



Vincent Paliczka

*Director of Environment,
Culture and Communities*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vincent Paliczka'.



Vision:



A thriving and accessible Public Rights of Way and greenspaces network in Bracknell Forest; that provides opportunities for open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area and which supports wider interests including sustainable transport, the local economy, tourism, and health and wellbeing benefits.





Bridleways account for 14% of the Rights of Way network (by length).

1. Introduction

1.1 What are Rights of Way Improvement Plans and why do we need them?

To understand what a RoWIP is, it is necessary to know what Rights of Way are. Simply put, Rights of Way are routes that the public have a legal right to use. They can be broken down into 4 categories; Footpaths, Bridleways, Byways Open to all Traffic and Restricted Byways. Each have different levels of use (see Chapter 4) and often run over private land and can be found in towns or in remote countryside. They can be narrow paths or wide tracks, and in many areas they are the main, if not only, method by which the public can access the countryside.

Through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) the Government recognises this value of public Rights of Way and requires that each highway authority produces a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP). These plans, which have a 10-year life span, are intended to be a mechanism for improving the local network of public Rights of Way for all users – walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, horse and carriage drivers, vehicular users and those with mobility problems.

RoWIPs are required to assess:

- The extent to which local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- The opportunities provided by local Rights of Way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of the area;
- The accessibility of local Rights of Way to the blind or partially-sighted people and people with mobility problems.

They are also required to contain a statement of the action the Authority proposes to take:

- for the management of local Rights of Way
- for securing an improved network of local Rights of Way.

1.2 Bracknell Forest Borough

Bracknell Forest Borough covers an area of 10,937 hectares and is located in central Berkshire, approximately 30 miles from central London and between the M3 and M4 motorways. The river Blackwater forms the south-western boundary of the borough, which contains six parishes: Bracknell, Sandhurst, Binfield, Warfield, Crowthorne and Winkfield.

For its size, the borough has a very diverse character. This is due to the change in geology between the north and the south. The northern parishes of Binfield, Warfield and the northern part of Winkfield are located over London clays; this area is characterised by small fields used for pasture and paddocks with hedgerows and small copses. The southern part of the

borough's geology is over the sand and gravel Bagshot beds; this acidic geology supports heathland and conifer plantations.

The history of the area has also had an impact on the landscape character. The area once formed part of a vast Royal Hunting Forest associated with royalty from Saxon times, but particularly associated with the Norman Kings after 1066 and the development of Windsor Castle and estate. This legal status maintained and restricted the use of the land for many hundreds of years. It wasn't until the 18th century that land was granted out for the establishment of estates such as Easthampstead and South Hill. The arrival of the railway in the 1880s saw the first expansion of the area, but the major change did not occur until the development of Bracknell New Town in the second half of the 20th century.

Today, the borough enjoys permissive public access to over 1580 hectares (3904 acres) of Crown Estate land and just under half that again for sites in various ownerships (e.g. Borough and town and parish councils). Of this access, 217.2 hectares (536 acres) is accessible under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 as Access Land. This equates to just under 2% of the borough's total area. Information about the extent of the Rights of Way network can be found in Chapter 4.

1.3 Bracknell Forest RoWIP2

RoWIP2 is the prime means by which Bracknell Forest Council will manage, provide and promote Rights of Way for the benefit of walkers, equestrians, cyclists, and those with visual or mobility difficulties over the next 10 years.

The Plan details our vision for the future of access to Rights of Way and green space network in Bracknell Forest and is designed to be an informative document setting the full context of the provision of Rights of Way and other forms of countryside access in the borough.

Our policies, which are fully listed in Chapter 7, comprise:

Policy RoWIP 1 Rights of Way for All

Policy RoWIP 2 Fulfil Legal Duties

Policy RoWIP 3 Routes and Links

Policy RoWIP 4 Information and Marketing

Policy RoWIP 5 Responsible Use

Policy RoWIP 6 Preserve Rural Character

Policy RoWIP 7 Sustainable Benefits

Policy RoWIP 8 Working in Partnership

Policy RoWIP 9 Raise Strategic Profile

Policy RoWIP 10 Monitor and Review



Travelling by bike improves health, cuts fuel costs and helps the environment.

2. ROWIP process and consultations

2.1 Preparation

Following examination of the RoWIP Guidance, a review of the Bracknell Forest RoWIP 2006-2016, and looking at a selection of other authorities' RoWIPs, a project programme was drawn up.

The Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum (LCAF) was notified of plans to produce a new RoWIP and consulted from the earliest stages. Workshops on specific topic areas were held during regular LCAF meetings, and feedback received was incorporated as the structure and content of the plan was developed.

2.2 Information gathering

Existing policies and research relating to public Rights of Way were examined, including the local context for Bracknell Forest Council.

Public consultation then determined:

- Local use and demand
- Needs of the existing users
- The perceived quality of the network; its condition and ease of use
- Needs of potential new users
- Wider interests and knowledge of PRow and access to the countryside

Consultation was carried out in 2 phases; the first consisted of a questionnaire (See Appendix A), which was distributed on public on Rights of Way by BFC officers / rangers, LCAF members, volunteer path wardens and local groups such as Ramblers and mountain bikers. Copies were provided at libraries, parish and town council offices, Borough Council offices, The Look Out Discovery Centre and tack shops. An electronic copy was available on the council's website via their consultation portal and promoted through social media and was made available to employees via their intranet. The second phase of the consultation is detailed under 2.5.

2.3 Evaluation

The evaluation stage of the RoWIP consisted of three main parts and brought together all the views on the network in terms of maintenance and condition, accessibility of information, disability issues (mobility and sensory), ease of use and gaps in provision:

- Consideration of the adequacy of the existing network;
- Consideration of suggestions & ideas for new provision;
- Consultation on results of evaluation.

2.4 Plan for action

- From the evaluation of each user type, the following elements were established:
- Proposed actions where appropriate;
- The key organisations / stakeholders to be involved;
- The resources needed to complete proposed actions.

2.5 Second stage consultation and publication

In early August 2017 the draft RoWIP was made available to the public on Bracknell Forest Council's website. The consultation was publicised through local newspaper notices, such as Bracknell News and Town & Country, the council's newsletter for residents) and via social media. An email was also sent to notify stakeholders, including LCAF, user groups, landowners and stakeholders, Natural England, other interested parties, BFC councillors and town and parish councils. See full list of those consulted in Appendix B.

Feedback received was assessed and either incorporated into the final RoWIP, or if not, the reasoning for non-inclusion given. The feedback received is summarised in Appendix A.

The final RoWIP was then approved by the Council's Executive Committee and formally adopted and published in (date to be confirmed in final version).

2.6 Implementation, monitoring and review

Progress made with actions will be monitored via the quarterly LCAF meetings and through an annual review carried out by BFCs Rights of Way team, in consultation with the forum and key stakeholders.

Annually, monitoring against targets set for actions will be reported to Departmental Management Team (DMT) for Environment, Culture & Communities in Bracknell Forest Council.

Five yearly reviews of the current RoWIP will take place, also involving key stakeholders including LCAF, and the resulting review will be published on BFCs website



Wildmoor Heath section of the Bracknell Forest Ramblers Route.

3. Policy context

It is important to consider the Bracknell Forest RoWIP in the context of other Bracknell Forest, Berkshire and Regional plans and strategies. The most significant of these are considered below.

3.1 The South East Plan

The South East Plan was partially revoked on 25 March 2013. Policy NRM6 that deals with the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area remains in place.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

75. Planning policies should protect and enhance public Rights of Way and access.

Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing Rights of Way networks including National Trails.

3.3 The Council Plan

The Council Plan sets out the approach we are taking to address the financial challenges ahead and deliver the commitments made in the 2015 election manifesto.

This approach is expressed in a new narrative for the organisation that we believe is right for the challenges we face:

- Bracknell Forest is a good place to live with a mainly affluent, well educated and independent population
- the council will provide leadership and work with others to keep the borough a place where all residents can thrive and benefit from core services - what we do ourselves we aim to do well, but we must prioritise to live within our means
- we will provide an essential safety net, and target this to people and areas with greatest need - in targeting our services, we will continue to prioritise early help and prevention so struggling or vulnerable people can maximise their opportunities to become independent

The plan sets out 6 strategic themes:

- value for money
- a strong and resilient economy
- people have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive
- people live active and healthy lives
- a clean, green, growing and sustainable place
- strong, safe, supportive and self-reliant communities

Each strategic theme is linked to key measures of success and performance indicators. The narrative, strategic themes and key measures provide the framework for us to deliver our new

approach and be a council that can adapt and innovate to keep Bracknell Forest a good place to live.

3.4 Bracknell Forest - Comprehensive Local Plan

The Comprehensive Local Plan will set the long term spatial vision and development strategy for the borough up to 2036.

Once adopted, it will replace many of the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (2002) and the Core Strategy (2008). It will therefore be wide ranging in terms of the issues that it will cover.

Across a wide range of policy areas, the following will be of particular relevance to Rights of Way and access to the countryside:

- development within the countryside
- environmental issues such as flood risk and water quality
- the natural environment and biodiversity including landscape, green infrastructure and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- infrastructure needs including open space, sport and recreation and community facilities

3.5 Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2026 (LTP3)

LTP3 provides the framework by which the borough's transport system can be secured through investment, managed, maintained and monitored so that the council can keep pace of, and respond to, changing circumstance in the borough.

It covers all modes of transport including walking, cycling, public transport, car-based travel and freight. It contains policies that meet the borough's social, economic and environmental objectives. It also includes an implementation plan that outlines how these strategies will be delivered.

The plan broadly seeks to:

- promote healthier forms of transport
- support robust economic growth
- reduce road congestion
- make public transport a more attractive option
- protect the natural environment
- improve air quality
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions

A range of key aims, objectives and policies in the plan can be identified that relate primarily to walking, cycling and horse riding.

17.0 WALKING AND CYCLING

17.1 Walking and Cycling play a significant role in reducing congestion and improving the health of the community in Bracknell Forest. The Borough has seen an increase in the number of those walking and cycling over the period of LTP2. Increasing walking and cycling in the Borough is key to delivering the national goals for transport and the walking and cycling strategies will set out the focus for delivering the aims of the Council.

17.2 The focus for delivering Policy TP8 will be for the Borough to continue to increase walking and cycling levels through a combination of infrastructure improvements and promotional activities.

Policy TP8 – Walking and Cycling The Council will promote walking and cycling in the Borough through:

- Marketing cycling and walking as a healthy, sustainable and attractive travel choice.
- Improving, where feasible, walking and cycling infrastructure.
- Ensuring the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are fully considered within new developments.
- Improving green infrastructure to make walking and cycling more attractive.
- Improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

17.3 The Council's approach to walking and cycling will be implemented through the Walking and Cycling Strategy, the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the Sustainable Modes of Travel to School strategy and the production of Travel Plans.

18.0 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

18.1 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are important to our heritage and a major recreational and transport resource. Bracknell Forest's 77km of PRoW are an integral part of the sustainable transport network, by encouraging alternative modes of transport for short journeys and offering a safer, often more convenient alternative to main roads away from traffic congestion and harmful emissions.

18.2 For many people they are an important element in their daily lives, providing connections between rural communities to access facilities and by offering links from urban areas to gain access to the countryside, and 244 hectares of the Borough's Open Access Land, for the purpose of tranquillity or exercise, by bicycle, on foot or on horseback.

18.3 As set out within Rights of Way Circular 1/09 Version 2 Guidance for Local Authorities (Defra, October 2009) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17, local authorities should protect and enhance the existing path network and identify opportunities to create new strategic links.

18.4 PRoW should be duly considered in the site layout of new development for interlinking services and settlements to mitigate its impact on the highway network. This includes protecting the character of the path network and avoiding paths being absorbed within estate roads. This is particularly important in light of increased traffic volume and speed and the need to provide more attractive alternatives to the private motor vehicle for short journeys.

Policy TP9 – Public Rights of Way The Council will endeavour to manage the Public Rights of Way network as key infrastructure in support of recreation, travel, health and biodiversity. Alongside the policies set out within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, this will be achieved through:

- Protecting and maintaining the Public Rights of Way network in accordance with legislative duties and powers.
- Promoting use of the public Rights of Way network to encourage walking, cycling and horse riding for enjoyment, health benefits and as alternative modes of travel to the car.
- Seeking opportunities to benefit biodiversity, e.g. through the creation of green corridors.
- Seeking opportunities to enhance the network by creating, reclassifying and / or improving paths to provide new linkages and circular routes and to increase accessibility for disadvantaged users.
- Encouraging joint working with landowners, user groups, volunteers, neighbouring Highway and Access Authorities, the Police and other agencies to improve accessibility and use.
- Supporting the work of the Local Access Forum with regards to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment. • Supporting the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Project with regards to public access on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).

18.5 The Council's approach to Public Right of Way will be implemented through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan: LTP Objectives Supported:

1. Reduce delays associated with traffic congestion and improve reliability of journey times.
2. Maintain and improve, where feasible, the local transport network.
3. Secure necessary transport infrastructure and services to support sustainable development.
4. Encourage and promote accessibility by sustainable modes of transport.

3.6 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2012

This strategy is concerned with the management and development of recreational green space, particularly in the context of contributing to quality of life.

A key theme set out in the Strategy includes:

A10. Implement priority actions as set out within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (co-ordinated through the Local Countryside Access Forum).

3.7 Play, Open Spaces and Sports Study 2016-2036 (POSS Study)

Bracknell Forest Council has undertaken a study of green infrastructure, play provision, open space and indoor and outdoor sport and recreational facilities. This study is designed to provide an up to date evidence base for both planning policy and prioritisation of enhancement projects, funded through S106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This supersedes the BFC PPG17 Study (2006).

3.8 Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-17 (BAP)

This plan aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity within Bracknell Forest Borough.

Many areas of biodiversity importance need to be accessible for the public to enjoy and appreciate access to nature. However they must also be carefully managed to avoid negative impacts on wildlife habitats and species.

A new BAP is currently being written covering the next six year period.

3.9 Blackwater Valley Strategy 2011-2016

This is a co-ordinated strategy for the valley of all the local authorities with an interest in the area, including Bracknell Forest. A new strategy for 2017 – 2022 is currently being written and there will be a consultation before final publication.

Many actions are aimed at access related projects, including completing a key section of riverside path between Swan Lane and Mill Lane in Sandhurst. Currently the Blackwater Valley Path has to leave the vicinity of river and follow roads through Sandhurst town.

3.10 Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and came into effect in April 2012. It is a government initiative aimed at trying to empower local communities to help make and take forward planning proposals at a local level.

On 20 April 2016 Bracknell Forest Council brought the Binfield Neighbourhood Plan into legal force. It now forms part of the Development Plan for Bracknell Forest and is used in determining planning applications in Binfield Parish.

During consultation on the plan, many in the community stated as part of the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process that this increase in car movements has made them less likely to make journeys by bicycle and on foot because they feel less safe. The plan includes policies to help reverse this trend by making it easier and safer for short journeys to be completed by walking or cycling instead of by car.

POLICY TC1: PROVISION FOR CYCLING AND WALKING

Strategic developments in Binfield parish shall where practical be designed to provide dedicated footways and cycleways which will provide access for pedestrians and cyclists towards the existing built-up areas of Binfield, including Binfield village. In particular proposals for the Blue Mountain strategic development should be formulated alongside school travel plans and provide for safe access for pedestrians and cyclists to new schools including access points from any wider school designated area beyond the strategic development. Non-strategic developments sites³ that make direct improvements to cycling and walking will be strongly supported, subject to other material considerations and compliance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations. Where possible, developments should include segregated footways and cycleways. Proposals to improve dedicated cycle access towards Bracknell Town Centre and Bracknell Railway Station will be strongly supported.

POLICY TC1.1: ENHANCING HISTORIC PROVISION FOR CYCLING AND WALKING

Proposals that protect and enhance historic footpaths and bridlepaths as part of a network of routes for cycling and walking, will be supported.

Neighbourhood plans for other designated areas are at various stages of production and consultation, and some or all of these are likely to come into force at some stage during the life of RoWIP2. The other neighbourhood plans cover all of the Bracknell Forest area between them and are based on the town and parish boundaries.

3.11 “Seamless Health” Bracknell Forest Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020

The objective of this strategy is ‘To make sure that every resident of Bracknell Forest lives in a healthy, safe and caring place, and gets good services and support when they need them.’

There are 4 priorities listed in the strategy, which are based on what is known about the health of people in Bracknell Forest, and what they have said is important to them. The priority that most relates to RoWIP is set out below.

‘Promoting active and healthy lifestyles

A physically active and healthy lifestyle enhances wellbeing at all stages of life, as well as preventing or delaying people becoming ill or less independent. People need the opportunity to understand:

- what opportunities there are for becoming more active and healthy
- how they can make use of them

Therefore organisations need to make sure that they take whatever actions they can to address the factors that promote active and healthy lifestyles, cause ill health, or that prevent people staying independent for as long as possible. This involves many things such as:

- participation in sport or physical activity – making more opportunities accessible to more people via community wide collaboration and promoting volunteering
- transport – to access community opportunities which may include exercise, social opportunities, etc. as well as promoting active travel through walking, cycling, etc.’



Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum meeting.

4. The Bracknell Forest Rights of way Network

4.1 Current network statistics

The public Rights of Way network is made up of the following four categories:

1. Footpaths (FP)	Open to walkers
2. Bridleways (BR)	Open to walkers, horse-riders and cyclists
3. Restricted Byway (RB)	Open to walkers, horse-riders, cyclists and non-motorised vehicles
4. Byway open to all traffic (BOAT or BW)	Open to walkers, horse-riders, cyclists and non-motorised vehicles

1, 2 & 4 were originally defined in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

3 – restricted byway – was defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Public Rights of Way are definitive if shown on the Definitive Map and Statement. Other rights may exist but not be recorded. The Definitive Map is conclusive evidence of the existence of rights shown on the map, but it does not prove other rights do not exist if not recorded.

The network within Bracknell Forest borough consists of approximately 78km of public Rights of Way (PRoW), distributed across the parishes as shown in the Rights of Way maps in Appendix D. The table below (Figure 1) shows the lengths of each type of Right of Way and the percentage each represents of the total network by length.

(NB these figures will be different to the Definitive Statement because of double counting of some PRoW which are located on parish boundaries and thus listed twice in the statement)

Figure 1

Classification	Total length (kms)	No. of paths	% Network by length
Footpath	53.40	115	68.82
Bridleway	10.98	15	14.16
Byway	8.00	20	10.31
Restricted Byway	5.21	6	6.71
Total	77.60	156	100.00

The network, in terms of km length of PRow, is fairly evenly distributed across the six parish areas that make up the borough and footpaths are the predominant type of Right of Way (69%). When analysed by density according to the land area of each parish, Binfield and Warfield are shown to have the highest density of PRow, whilst Winkfield falls significantly below the average.

Figure 2

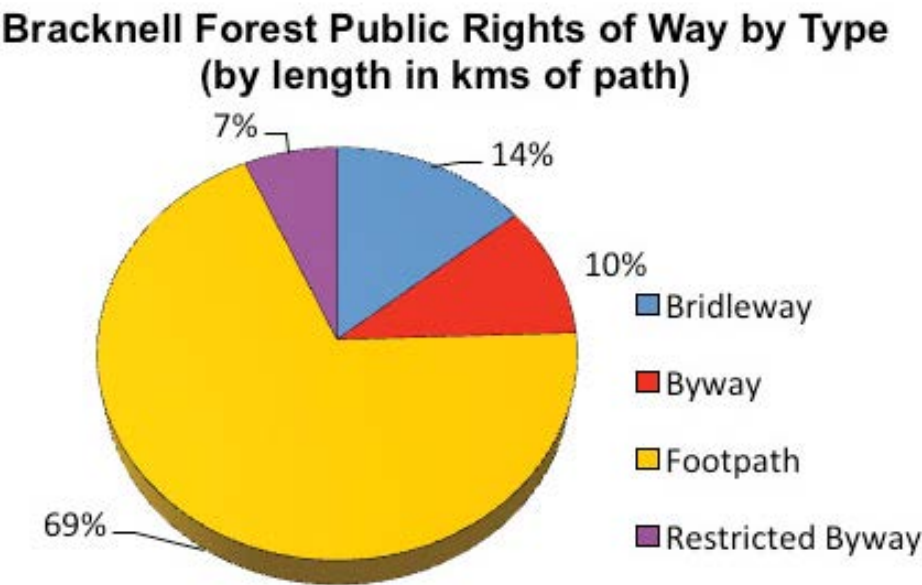


Figure 3

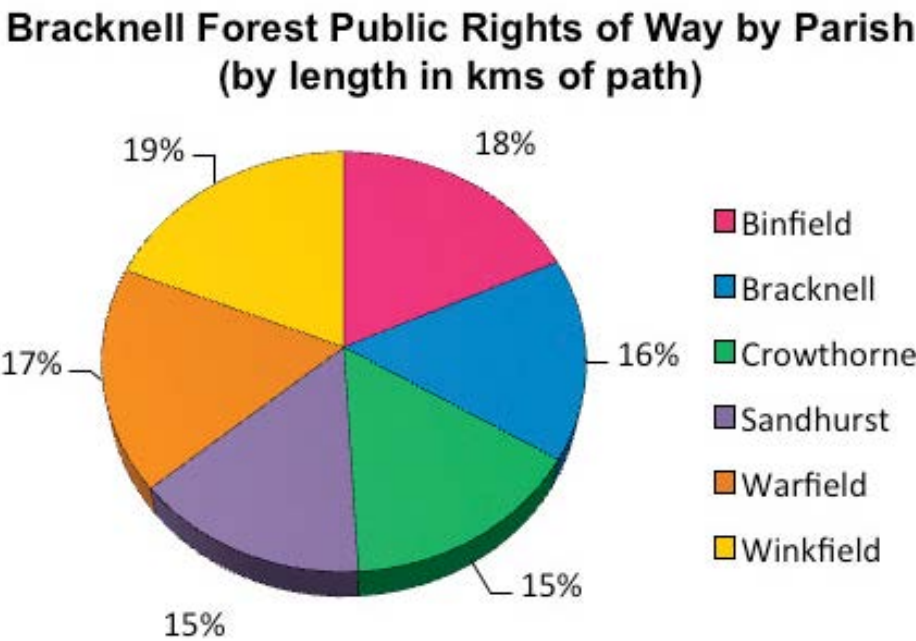
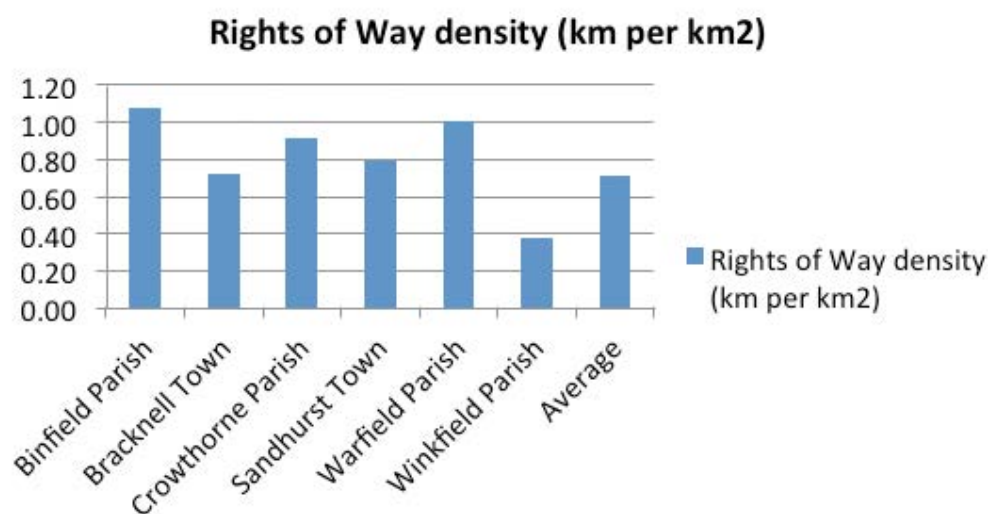


Figure 4



Further assessment of the distribution of PRow across the borough illustrates the following:

- The dominance of footpaths over all other type of PRow in all the parishes
- The low number of any Rights of Way other than footpaths in Bracknell, Sandhurst and Winkfield
- The small number of BOATs and RBs in all parishes except Warfield and Binfield.

This distribution is a result of the historical development of Bracknell as a new town, the geology and resulting land uses in the northern and southern parts of the borough, and the large area of land within the Crown Estate in the south of the borough. The traditional agricultural land uses in Warfield and Binfield have resulted in more paths and old lanes that have become incorporated in the current network. Some are ancient highways that have never been surfaced with tarmac. The development of the Royal hunting forests extending from Windsor into the south of the borough has resulted in an absence of public Rights of Way over large of land that are nevertheless accessible to the public through permissive path networks, off-road cycle tracks, and areas of Open Access land. (refer to 4.4 below for more detail)

4.2 Permissive paths & other paths

In addition to the 78km of PRow across the borough, there are also numerous permissive paths in use. These ways are not definitive Rights of Way, but are paths in regular use, usually through consent of the landowner. Permissive routes provide the majority of paths available through Crown Estate owned land.

A permissive footpath on council owned land near a landfill site has recently been dedicated as a public footpath, Winkfield Footpath 21.

There are a variety of other paths around the borough that enhance access to the countryside, offer traffic free walking and cycling routes, and provide links to and between parts of the PRow network. In particular, the development of connected open spaces called SANGs (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces) has led to a significant increase in walking routes available. These provide a variety of linear and circular walking routes, through and between areas of natural or semi-natural landscape.

Urban footpaths in residential areas are often not designated as Rights of Way, but many are Highway Authority adopted paths, footways and cyclepaths, and therefore as public highways carry public rights. Bracknell benefits from a comprehensive dedicated cycleroute network away from trafficked roads, which is a product of the new town development corporation's planning.

Conversely the new town development also resulted in sections of path and ways that have become embedded in tarmac roads, and/or crossed by new roads and divided into shorter sections. Some of these old paths and lanes have become 'fossilised' under surfaced highways, or isolated within residential or commercial areas.

4.3 Accessible land

There are approximately 217.2 hectares of land designated as Open Access Land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in Bracknell Forest.

Wildmoor Heath in Crowthorne and Sandhurst accounts for approximately 37 hectares of Open Access Land. This site is owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council and the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT);

Crowthorne Woods and Brookers Row accounts for approximately 165.3 hectares of Open Access Land. These sites were formerly managed by the Forestry Commission, but are now under the responsibility of The Crown Estate.

Other accessible land throughout the borough, which also provides a valuable resource, includes:

- Swinley Forest 955 hectares and Swinley Park, owned and managed by The Crown Estate
- As of September 2017, SANGs sites that are accessible by the public cover an area of 121 hectares.
- Bracknell Forest Council owned land, forming accessible natural and semi-natural greenspace (320 ha) plus all open spaces managed by Town and Parish Councils (116.71 ha).
- Public open space in private management, for example open spaces laid out by housing developers, and in the process of being transferred to Bracknell Forest Council or to other long term management arrangements.

These areas therefore add to the overall areas of land that can be freely accessed by the public, which are linked by and also supplement public Rights of Way.

4.4 Definitive Map and Statement

The Bracknell Forest Definitive Map and Statement of public Rights of Way has a relevant date of 1st January 2013. This is the second consolidated map for Bracknell Forest and required a thorough review of the previous map and statement dated 1st January 2000. During the review, several modification orders were made deal to with inconsistencies discovered, and to up date descriptions in the Definitive Statement.

4.5 Network maintenance and enhancements

Scheduled maintenance works programme

The scheduled work programme has been devised and over many years and has proven to be cost efficient and effective.

Mechanical flailing of verges and overhanging hedges and scrub is undertaken along 15 km of PRow, twice a year in late May and August;

Strimming is undertaken along approximately 15 km of PRow, twice a year in June and September.

Hand hedge trimming occurs along approximately 2 km of hedge, twice a year in June and September.

The Highway Authority has a duty to maintain the surface of Rights of Way, with vegetation being the responsibility of the landowner. There are Rights of Way that are on land owned by Bracknell Forest Council, and also Rights of Way on ancient highway, for which there is generally no registered landowner. In some areas where vegetation is overhanging from privately owned land, the council will attempt to follow up with the landowner to maintain that vegetation in order to facilitate use of the Right of Way. In some cases however it is more pragmatic for the council to carry out maintenance itself and then – depending on circumstances – recharge the cost of work to the landowner.

Prioritised maintenance works

Additional strimming or flailing is undertaken as and when needed, for example when footpath inspections reveal overgrown vegetation, or ‘fault’ reports are submitted by the public. Surface maintenance is mainly carried out in the summer months when supplies of road planings were traditionally available as a free resource from the highways maintenance department. In recent years, alternative materials tend to be sourced, as planings have become a form of recycled aggregate with a financial value. Weather and ground conditions are more significant factors determining when work is programmed, as sites will need to be reached by machinery.

Gates, stiles, fences, barriers and signs

A programme of works takes place to repair furniture on Rights of Way. To conform with the Equality Act 2010, and the principles BS5709:2006 Gates, Gaps and Stiles, new bridle gates and mobility kissing-gates are being installed along Rights of Way. Climb over stiles and squeeze stiles are considered to limit accessibility to those with mobility impairments and so are gradually being replaced with gates with level thresholds where practicable. The Council is grateful for the valuable work carried out by South East Berkshire Ramblers in assisting with costs and volunteer labour involved in the installation of a significant number of stile/gate conversions.

Waymarking public Rights of Way

Carrying out waymarking is a simple and very practical way in which the council helps to look after Rights of Way.

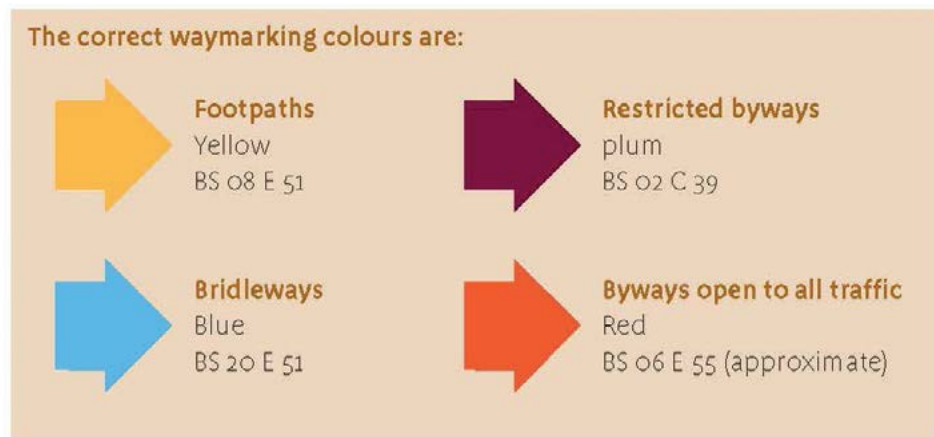
The term waymarking means marking objects along a route. On Public Rights of Way it complements signposting, which shows where a path leaves the metalled road and indicates its initial direction.

Waymarking enables users to follow a path accurately and confidently at points where they might otherwise have difficulty. This helps to increase users’ enjoyment of the countryside

Waymarking not only benefits users of Rights of Way but also farmers and landowners as it prevents unintentional trespass.

The recommended system in England (and Wales) uses small coloured arrows to show the direction of the path and also to act as a target when viewed from a distance.

Figure 5 Appropriate colours and styles for PRow waymarkers



See References for a weblink to the full guidance from Natural England

Funding

The maintenance and improvements to Public Rights of Way are funded by a combination of means including revenue budgets, parish/town council contributions, funding and in-kind work by organisations such as The Ramblers Association and via money secured from development in the area, such as s106 funding.

Current financial constraints mean that funding improvements to PRow is more constrained and schemes will need to demonstrate that they provide clear value for money and contribute directly to the policies set out in this Plan.

It is also important to ensure that appropriate policies to protect and enhance the PRow network are included in planning frameworks in order to provide for PRow improvement and protection through the development control process. This includes the creation of s106 legal agreements.

By investing in the PRow and greenspaces network, and ensuring that it 'provides opportunities for open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area' as set out in the vision, this will in turn have financial savings or generate income, e.g.

- Reduced car use reduces the costs associated with congestion, pollution and climate change
- Local people and visitors able to walk/ride in more pleasant environments are more likely to use and sustain local services – shops, pubs and restaurants, public transport etc.
- Health care savings associated with increased outdoor activity – physical and mental wellbeing.
- Improved PRow and greenspaces network boosts the local economy through Tourism.

Inspections

Volunteer Path Wardens (currently stands at 22 in number) are allocated specific Rights of Way, with a watching brief to feed back information about vandalism and graffiti, fly-tipping, flooding, fallen trees/branches and other issues. In addition they undertake biannual formal inspections of their allocated Rights of Way.

In Sandhurst, councillors are allocated specific paths and ways to keep an eye on and the Town Council organise regular litter picks, including some on Rights of Way. This provides another level of feedback to the Borough Council, as well as helping to deal with some issues at a local level.

4.6 Network condition surveys and audits

The Best Value Performance Indicator 178 (BVPI) was a mandatory indicator used to provide statistical data on the condition of PRow network, and enabled benchmarking comparisons with other local authorities. In 2008 it ceased to be compulsory, but a number of authorities including Bracknell Forest have continued to collect and share this data, allowing for benchmarking across the local region.

Over the past 6 BVPI surveys, 135 PRowS were surveyed with a 97.3% pass rate. There were only 2 fails:

Binfield BR23a (north of the motorway on Mare Lane). Consideration is being given to the most appropriate course of action for the future status and maintenance of this bridleway. See section 6.9 for further detail.

Winkfield FP6. This issue of reduced accessibility of this FP caused by seasonal waterlogging has now been addressed via a S106 funded project to improve the path's surface condition.

See BVPI audit form in Appendix E.

4.8 Land ownership

All land is owned by someone, whether an individual, organisation, trust, local authority, the state or the Crown. As a result responsible use of the countryside is essential for maintaining appropriate and beneficial public access.

Maintenance

Public Rights of Way are maintained by both the borough council and landowners whose land they cross; responsibility for the surface of the path lies with the council as the local highway authority and responsibility for gates, stiles and vegetation clearance lies with landowners. In many cases Bracknell Forest Council works with landowners and land managers to manage items of path furniture on their land, such as stiles and gates. It is important that the council continues to maintain this relationship; helping to raise awareness of the landowner's duties and providing help where appropriate

4.9 Responsible use of the countryside

The general public should be aware of their rights and responsibilities, as set out in the Countryside Code:

Respect other people:

- consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment:

- leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors:

- plan ahead and be prepared
- follow advice and local signs

Refer to Appendix F for the full wording. Information for landowners and land managers is also provided in the code under the following headings:

- Know your rights, responsibilities and liabilities
- Make it easy for visitors to act responsibly
- Identify possible threats to visitors' safety

Trespass

The law allows the public to 'pass and repass' along public Rights of Way, in accordance with the classification of the right, for example walking on a footpath or riding a horse or cycling on a bridleway. In addition, other acts that are considered reasonably incidental while using a Right of Way are permitted, such as stopping for a rest or to admire a view.

Users may not stray from the Right of Way, and if this happens, trespass is committed against the landowner. Similarly if the Right of Way is used for purposes other than those for which rights exist – for example riding a bicycle on a footpath or driving a motorised vehicle on a bridleway or restricted byway – then trespass is committed (unless it's with the express permission of the landowner or other private rights of access).

If trespass occurs, this is a civil wrong, not a crime. The landowner can apply to the courts for an injunction prohibiting future trespass, and/or apply for damages. If a person commits trespass and refuses to comply with a request by the landowner or his/her agent to leave the land, reasonable force may be used to compel the trespasser to leave. However if more force than is reasonably necessary is used, a civil wrong is committed against the trespasser.

Liability

If injury occurs to a user of a Right of Way as a result of failure to maintain the surface of the way in a proper state of repair, then the highway authority could be held responsible. Manhole access covers are the responsibility of the statutory undertakers that the underground services belong to. A proper state of repair has to be reasonable in relation to the surroundings, the topography and prevailing ground conditions. For example a raised tree root in an unsurfaced path through woodland would not be unreasonable and shouldn't be unexpected, whereas a sudden change of level of a similar height on a tarmac surfaced urban path might be considered an unexpected hazard.

If injury occurs to a user due to the condition of a stile, gate or fence, then the landowner is likely to be liable. The Highways Act 1980 section 146 imposes a statutory duty on the landowner to maintain any 'stile, gate or similar structure' across a Right of Way in a safe condition.

The Occupier's Liability Act 1957 states that a stile or gate on a highway is not part of the highway, and so liability rests with the landowner.

Statute 1 of the Occupiers' Liability Act 1984 deals with the occupier's responsibilities for taking such care as is reasonable in all the circumstance of the case to see that the person does not suffer injury on the premises. The duty owed may be discharged by giving appropriate warning of the danger, that no duty is owed in respect of risks willingly accepted, and no duty is owed by virtue of the Act to persons using the highway.

The duties and application of the Acts to individual cases; the distinction between visitors invited onto land and those using public Rights of Way; the effect of the age of persons; and other factors are too extensive to detail within a RoWIP and other reference sources should be investigated.

Dogs

Dogs are permitted on public Rights of Way when accompanied by an owner. This entitlement only applies on the line of the Right of Way, and only while the dog is accompanying its owner or keeper. Dogs can pose a danger to livestock and other users if not kept under proper control.

Six steps from the Countryside Code

1. By law, you must control your dog so that it does not disturb or scare farm animals or wildlife. On most areas of open country and common land, known as 'access land,' you must keep your dog on a short lead between 1 March and 31 July and all year round near farm animals.
2. You do not have to put your dog on a lead on public paths as long as it is under close control. But as a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on its obedience. By law, farmers are entitled to destroy a dog that injures or worries their animals.
3. If a farm animal chases you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead – don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it.
4. Take particular care that your dog doesn't scare sheep and lambs or wander where it might disturb birds that nest on the ground and other wildlife – eggs and young will soon die without protection from their parents.
5. Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections – so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly. Also make sure your dog is wormed regularly to protect it, other animals and people.
6. At certain times dogs may not be allowed on some areas of open land or may need to be kept on a lead. Please follow any signs.

Within Bracknell Forest, particular attention should be drawn to the control of dogs on Rights of Way and access land in and around the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA). This area was designated under EC Birds Directive in 2005 for its internationally important ground nesting birds, specifically Woodlark, Nightjar and Dartford Warbler. These ground nesting birds are particularly susceptible to disturbance from dogs, with adults prevented from settling, or scared from their nests and neglecting their chicks.

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is thus an offence, with certain exceptions, to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

See References for a weblink to the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership, where further information can be found about the TBH SPA.

4.10 Cross-border opportunities

Bracknell Forest borough is one of six unitary authorities which make up the area of the County of Berkshire. The borough has shared boundaries with two of these unitary authorities and also with two county councils:

Wokingham Borough Council manages a network of Rights of Way totalling 230km in length. The borough borders the majority of the western edge of Bracknell Forest and there are a number of Rights of Way that cross the border.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has a network of Rights of Way covering 290km. The borough borders most of the north and eastern edges of Bracknell Forest. Some Rights of Way in the north of Bracknell Forest are jointly managed between BFC and RBWM,

who work in cooperation to carry out, surface repairs and Traffic Regulation Orders.

Surrey County Council manages a network of over 3200km of public Rights of Way. The shared boundary with Bracknell Forest extends for 10km in the south of the borough, predominantly within Crown Estate owned land, and some Ministry of Defence land.

Four Rights of Way in Surrey stop at the county boundary where they continue as permissive paths in Crown Estate land.

Hampshire County Council has the largest neighbouring network at over 4800km in length. There is a 5km long shared border formed by the River Blackwater in the south west of the borough. Two public footpaths in Hampshire are within public open space owned by Bracknell Forest at Shepherd Meadows in Sandhurst.

Local Access Forum liaison takes place on a sub-regional basis, since Natural England withdrew funding for a South East Regional Co-ordinator. The chairs and/or officers from LAFs within old Berkshire county area, plus Surrey and Buckinghamshire county councils regularly attend meetings.

The longer distance designated routes (see 4.11 below) cross borough and county boundaries. Some of these have waymarkers that are used throughout the route, providing consistency irrespective of which local authority area is being walked. This consistency could be applied to other cross-boundary Rights of Way, and also connected path networks in open spaces that cross boundaries. Local authorities and landowners need to be aware of the need maintain signage and waymarking when making changes, for example replacing gates, stiles or posts with waymark discs attached.

4.11 Designated and promoted routes

Several designated and signed routes exist across the borough and provide important short, medium and long distance routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

The Three Castles Path is a 96.5 km long route inspired by the 13th century journeys of King John between Windsor and Winchester via the castle he built at Odiham. The route follows Rights of Way and permissive paths through Crown Estate land, and in total uses less than 8 kms of trafficked roads. Within Bracknell Forest there is section of the route from Englemere Pond in the north east to Horseshoe Lake in the south west.

Blackwater Valley Path is a 37km long path running from near Aldershot in the south to near Swallowfield in the north. The path follows the River Blackwater for the majority of its length, linking nature reserves, country parks, water sports centres, woodland and species rich meadows. Parts of the path pass through Bracknell Forest. In Sandhurst the path currently has to follow road based links away from the river valley, and there is a long standing ambition to remedy this in the future through land agreements and through opportunities arising as a result of planning applications.

The Bracknell Forest Ramblers Route is a 42km long walking route that circles the borough and follows footpaths, bridleways, woodland tracks and stretches of road. A leaflet is published to promote this popular route, which can be walked in stages, using the four sections described in the leaflet. The shortest of these is 4.5 miles (7.2 km) and the longest is 8 miles (12.9 km). To help people find their way, distinctive waymarkers (a black arrow on a white background) signpost the route in a clockwise and anti-clockwise direction.

Wokingham Way, promoted by Loddon Valley Ramblers, is a circular route that weaves across the Wokingham/Bracknell boundary taking in Caesar's Camp, land near Broadmoor Hospital, skirts Wellington College and passes through Ambarrow Court.

Binfield Bridle Circuit is a 16km long signposted horse riding route in the parish of Binfield. The circuit is made up of green lanes, bridleways and country roads, and has two loops. A map of

the route is provided as a leaflet which is available on the council's website.

There are 3 Accessible Rural Routes which are free of stiles and other obstacles that might make rural paths difficult for the less mobile. The routes, which are listed below, are not specifically adapted for wheelchairs or scooters, but for the most part they do have adequate surface conditions. The guides have up until recently been available on the council's website, but have been removed as the information contained in them needs to be reviewed and updated.

- Jock's Lane and The Cut
- Frost's Folly and Warfield Church
- Larks Hill, West End and Woodhurst Greenway

4.12 Information and marketing

Public Rights of Way information is provided and routes are marketed in a number of ways:

Council website

The borough council website has information on public Rights of Way including

- Interactive PRow map
- Pages from the Definitive Map and Statement
- Printable leaflets
- Information on rights and responsibilities
- Registers of Modification Orders and Deposits of Statement
- Local Countryside Access Forum
- An online PRow fault reporting form
- Information on how to apply for diversions and alterations
- Information on open access land.

The Rights of Way pages are managed by the Parks & Countryside service, who also provide information on outdoor events and recreational activities such as walking, cycling for leisure (including BMX) and horse riding in the borough.

Leaflets

A range of leaflets are available online or as hard copies, that contain information about promoted routes, public Rights of Way, responsible dog ownership, parks & countryside events and guided walks. A leaflet is also available that details the work of the Local Countryside Access Forum and gives people the opportunity to submit expressions of interest about coming a member.

Social media

The What's On in Bracknell Forest Facebook page is used to market the Borough as a major recreational resource and tourist destination. 'Posts' by the Parks & Countryside Service focus on advertising outdoor events and activities, promoting membership to LCAF and consulting residents and visitors about management of public Rights of Way and greenspaces. BFC also use an Instagram and Twitter account as means of communication with residents and visitors.

Events

‘Volunteers and the Bracknell Forest Rangers lead a number of walks in the borough’s parks and countryside each month, which are open to the public and are promoted via the means described above. There are walks with 3 levels of difficulty including ‘Leisurely’ – up to 2 miles (1 hour); ‘Moderate’ - up to 4 miles (up to 2 hours) and ‘Rambler’ – up to 7 miles (up to 3 hours). These walks help to promote key strategic themes in the Council’s Plan including ‘people live active and healthy lifestyles’.

4.13 Conclusions

- The following conclusions can be drawn from consideration of the current Bracknell Forest public Rights of Way network:
- Walkers have the greatest access to public Rights of Way and are able to access 100% of the network;
- Cyclists and horse riders have access to 31% of the network;
- Carriage-drivers have access to 17% of the network. This includes some bridleways that previously had RUPP status, where carriage driving takes place via agreements with landowners;
- Motorised vehicles have access to just over 10% of the network, although in practice some of these are restricted by Traffic Regulation Orders, including 1.6m width restrictions on three byways which effectively precludes cars, vans and lorries from using them.
- Winkfield has a lower density of public Rights of Way, partly due to the large size of the parish and the area of Crown Estate lacking PRow;
- The majority of byways and restricted byways are found in the north of the borough in Binfield and Warfield;
- Results from BVPI 178 and volunteer surveyor reports indicate that the network is in good physical condition;
- Opportunities exist for closer working with neighbouring authorities, particularly Wokingham Borough and Surrey County Council. There is a good working relationship with The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Hampshire County Council.



Walkers in Bracknell Forest, photo by Ian Harvey-Brown.

5. Use and demand

Each type of user of the Rights of Way network is considered below, and this is key to understanding how the network can be improved, as described in chapter 6, Evaluation and Assessment.

5.1.1 Walking

The most popular form of countryside access, walking is important for exercise and recreation. In Department for Transport surveys, walking is divided into walking for recreation and walking for utility purposes. The latter includes walking to work, to shops, to visit friends, etc. and is more prevalent in urban than rural areas.

Latest walking and cycling statistics from the Department for Transport

The latest figures for the year ending mid-October 2015 show:

- the proportion of people walking frequently increased for the second consecutive year with a 6.9 percentage point increase in people walking 5 times a week
- growth in frequent walking occurred mainly due to an increase in walking for utility purposes
- about 15% of adults in England cycled at least once a month remaining at a similar level to previous years

The department's local-level walking and cycling statistics are derived from the Active People Survey, an annual household survey which is administered by Sport England.

86% of adults in England walk at least once per month for any purpose, which is unchanged from 2013/14 and equivalent to 38.3 million adults.

The proportion who walk for recreation (54%) is slightly lower than the proportion who walk for utility purposes (60%). 17% of adults reported having a disability which limits their ability to walk or cycle.

Local levels of walking by local authority areas show Bracknell Forest as being fairly typical for the south east region.

In terms of walking with and without a dog, the Natural England 'Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment' national survey for 2015/16 provides the following statistics:

1.51 billion visits Walking with a dog (48%)*

869 million visits Walking, no dog (28%)*

* as a % of 3.1 billion estimated visits Mar '15 to Feb '16

The survey relates to engagement with the natural environment. By natural environment the survey means all green open spaces in and around towns and cities as well as the wider countryside and coastline.

5.1.2 Cycling

As well as being a popular form of local transport, cycling has increased in recent years with the growth of recreational mountain biking and greater countryside access for cyclists.

Nationally, cycling on roads has increased recently:

‘Traffic counts suggest that the number of miles cycled in 2016 - 3.5 billion - is around 23% above the figure ten years before, and 6.3% more than the miles cycled in 2015. The figure for 2016 is about the same as in 2014, which was the highest since 1987.’

(Source: Cycling UK’s Cycling Statistics, Cycling UK website)

These figures do not unfortunately include off-road riding and riding on bridleways and byways.

Cycling on roads is perceived as too dangerous by 64% of those surveyed for the Department for Transport British Social Attitudes Survey 2015: Public attitudes towards transport.

It is not surprising that cyclists seek out safe, attractive and varied routes of sufficient length for recreational cycling. In Bracknell Forest, slightly less than one third of public Rights of Way are available for cyclists to use. It is important that the needs of cyclists are considered both for commuting (utility) cycling and recreational bike riding.

As a new town, Bracknell town incorporates a network of purpose built cyclepaths which are away from trafficked roads, provide convenient routes between key locations, with underpasses to minimise road crossings. These are maintained as public highways, and complement the recreational routes that are available on bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. Some cyclepaths pass through public open spaces, adding to the attraction of travelling on these routes. The borough promotes its urban cycle routes through a series of leaflets, and by identifying routes with clear signage, such as the red, blue and yellow routes.

Since the 2006 RoWIP was published, there has been a significant development of off-road mountain biking provision in Swinley Forest, which attracts riders from a wide area.

5.1.3 Horse-riding

Horse riding is a popular form of recreation nationally. The most recent British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) National Equestrian Survey (2015) indicated that nationally:

- There has been a decline in regular riders, from 1.6 million in 2011 to 1.3 million in 2015
- There remains a strong gender bias, with females representing 74% of the riding population
- In 2015, there are an estimated 962,000 female regular riders compared with 348,000 males.

Sources (correct as of February 2015)

In the local Bracknell Forest context, there are significant numbers of stables, particularly in the north of the borough within the traditional agricultural landscapes of Binfield, Warfield and Winkfield. There are private stables, commercially run riding stables, livery stables, studs and many active polo establishments in addition to a premier polo club. The eastern boundary of the borough is close to Ascot racecourse.

A permit is required to ride at Swinley Forest, which is home to 2,500 acres of landscaped Scots Pine woodland and which is owned by The Crown Estate.

The network of bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic mainly within Binfield and Warfield parishes provide routes away from trafficked roads (although motorised vehicles may be encountered on BOATS). Horse riders are vulnerable road users, and as a result they seek routes that are largely free of traffic, circular, four to five miles in length and

easily accessible. Access depends on where horses are stabled in relation to the safer routes, but if horses need to be transported to the start of a route, parking of horse boxes can become a problem. More and more car parks provided to serve public open spaces are being equipped with height barriers to combat fly-tipping, but this has the unfortunate side effect of preventing horse boxes parking safely off the highway.

Highway 'improvements' can also disadvantage horse riders, for example where traffic lights are added to an existing road junction. Horses may not be sensed by the traffic loops, and waiting a long time at a junction can lead to horses becoming restless and increasing danger to the rider and other road users.

In relation to the population, horse riding may be a relatively low percentage, but horses require regular exercise, which means users are often much more active on a daily basis.

5.1.4 Carriage drivers

Carriage driving does take place within the Bracknell Forest area. As non-motorised vehicles, carriage drivers can use restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. They are not allowed on bridleways as of right, but there are instances where carriage driving is permitted on bridleways by agreement with the landowner, particularly on RUPPs that were reclassified as bridleways. Restricted byways often have gates or other barriers in order to prevent illegal use by motorised vehicles, and there can limit access for carriage drivers. Local arrangements can sometimes be made to issue keys for gates or retractable bollards to allow carriage drivers access to these routes.

5.1.5 Motorised vehicle users

Motorised vehicle use on public Rights of Way in Bracknell Forest made up 2.7% of the consultation responses. They will consist of a mixture of recreational users and those who have to use byways (or have private rights over other types of PRow) to access their homes or businesses, e.g. farmland, farm shop, paddocks or stables.

In the borough a total of 4.02 km of byways open to all traffic (BOATs) are accessible to motorised vehicles. The remaining 3.98 km are subject to Traffic Regulation Orders, either restricting motorised vehicle use or imposed width restrictions.

Figure 6 PRow with TROs

PARISH	TYPE	NAME	LIMITATIONS_AND_CONDITIONS
Binfield	RB	Part of Pendry's Lane	TRO
Bracknell	BOAT	Quelm lane	TRO no vehicles or horses
Crowthorne	BOAT RB	(blank)	TRO
		Devil's Highway	TRO
Sandhurst	BOAT	Part of Scotland Hill	TRO
Warfield	BOAT	Hawthorn Lane & Berry Lane	TRO 1.6m width restriction
		Hogoak lane	TRO 1.6m width restriction
		Pendry's Lane	TRO
		Quelm lane	TRO
		Snipes Lane	TRO
Warfield	BOAT RB	Part of Hogoak Lane	TRO 1.6m width restriction
		Sandy Lane	TRO

5.1.6 People with reduced mobility, sensory disability and additional needs and vulnerable children and adults

The CROW Act 2000 requires local highway authorities to assess the accessibility of local Rights of Way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems. This can include disabled users, the visually impaired, elderly, or even those with children or pushchairs.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) that was referred to in the 2006 RoWIP, and the abbreviation DDA is still in common usage to refer to responsibilities to comply with the Act.

The Government publishes guidance from Natural England 'Public Rights of Way: local highway authority responsibilities'.

'Improvements:

You should make improvements to public rights of way so they are accessible to all users, e.g. stiles should be replaced with gaps or gates, wherever possible.

Before making improvements you should consider the:

- historical character of existing structures and the landscape
- needs of other users, e.g. parents with children in pushchairs
- accessibility of the route as a whole
- needs of the landowner - you should negotiate with the landowner to make improvements to existing structures

New structures

When creating a new public right of way or diverting an existing one you should:

- keep the number of structures to a minimum - there must be a reason for each one
- use the most accessible type of structure available, eg a gap or gate rather than a stile
- detail each type (standard and design) of structure clearly in the legal documentation - you might need to refer to this in future if the use of the land changes or if you need to prove why certain structures were used

You must record any new structures on the definitive map and statement.

Policies

You should develop a policy about structures on public rights of way either as part of your Rights of Way Improvement Plan or as part of a wider policy on the Equality Act. Make sure that the policy states that structures on public rights of way must be built to the most accessible standard possible.'

Various other organisations such as the Sensory Trust and provide helpful information for improving access, and BS5709:2006 Gates, Gaps and Stiles provides details of gaps gates and stiles that are considered compliant with acceptable standards, and emphasises the sequential preference for removing unnecessary structures to create gaps, then gates, then kissing gates, and finally stiles if unavoidable.

Even kissing gates designated as 'medium mobility', which describes a certain set of dimensions, can be very difficult or impossible for large mobility scooters to negotiate, and may prevent disabled users accessing paths or even entire public open spaces without a long and inconvenient detour.

Apart from the physical factors affecting paths – including stiles and gates, steep slopes, steps, narrow paths, bridges and other barriers – information about the Rights of Way network needs

to be accessible for all. This includes signage on the network, leaflets, website information, maps and walk guides.

There is increasing availability of technology that enables recorded messages to be played as part of site interpretation, which can be powered by solar panels or even by winding a handle. Information could be provided for blind and partially sighted users in this way, as well as being entertaining for children and other users.

5.2 Bracknell Forest public consultation and feedback

A description of the consultation process can be found in section 2. A copy of the results from the RoWIP survey can be found in Appendix A and the feedback from the public consultation on the draft plan can be found in Appendix C.

5.2.1 General findings to Survey

A total of 328 responses were received to the questionnaire carried out between May and June 2017. From these responses, 317 were existing Rights of Way users and 11 were non-users. The non-user respondents were given a number of different options about why they didn't use Rights of Way and were asked to select those that were appropriate to them. Not knowing where to find them was given as the top reason, closely followed by 'I don't know what they are' and 'I don't need to' given as other reasons why people didn't use PROW.

In some of the questionnaire feedback received it became apparent that there might have been some confusion about what constituted a public Right of Way and it was likely that the respondents were referring to a permissive SANG route or adopted footpaths / cycletracks.

Figure 7

12. If you don't use public rights of way, then why not?

Question responses: 11 (3.35%)

12. If you don't use public rights of way, then why not?



Table .1

	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
I don't know what they are	0.90%	18.75%	0.91%	3
I don't know where to find them	1.20%	25.00%	1.22%	4
I don't want to	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
I don't need to	0.90%	18.75%	0.91%	3
Lack of time	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0
Poor condition of paths	0.30%	6.25%	0.30%	1
Accessibility of paths	0.60%	12.50%	0.61%	2
Disability limits my use	0.60%	12.50%	0.61%	2
Other	0.30%	6.25%	0.30%	1
[No Response]	95.20%	--	96.65%	317
	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	333

Table .2

18.29% of respondents were from outside Bracknell Forest borough. Most of the respondents lived in Bracknell (42.38%) with Crowthorne and Winkfield being the least lived in with 3.66% and 4.88% respectively.

5.2.2 PRow use and demand

When?

The majority of respondents use public Rights of Way in Bracknell Forest once per week (just under 40%), with just under 29% using them once per day. This is similar to the findings from the survey carried out in 2006.

Most respondents use PRow for 1-2 hours (49.09%), with an even split between those who use PRow for less than an hour (21.65%) and 2-3 hours (21.34%). Only a small percentage of respondents use Rights of Way for more than 3 hours (4.57%).

How?

The main way people use Rights of Way is by foot (just under 59.48%), followed by bicycle (22.01%) and horseback (10.54%). It should be noted that these are the user groups that were targeted as part of the Facebook publicity of the questionnaire. There were only 2 responses for wheelchair and horse/pony drawn carriage. The only other forms identified were use of a motorised scooter and 'kick' scooter.

Compared to the 2006 survey, there were just over 10% less people who used the Right of Way by foot and approximately 2% more who used PRow by motor vehicles. Just less than 1% of people used wheelchairs on PRow, which was a new category.

Why?

Leisure and recreation (30.32%) is given as the main reason for using Rights of Way, closely followed by exercise / health and wellbeing (23.87%). 'Dog walking', 'Getting around' and 'Access to nature' all had similar response rates at 10-15%. Examples of some of the other reasons given include horse riding / hacking, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and as shortcuts / alternative routes.

There were more categories for this survey compared to the one carried out in 2006, which makes it difficult to compare feedback between the 2, however it is clear that PRow continue to be considered as an important leisure/recreation resource.

People choose to use Rights of Way for a number of reasons. The biggest 2 are that they are near to home and it's their favourite area/route (both 28.28%). Being easy to get to closely follows (21.14%), with the quality of paths following (14.14%). The most popular other reasons given mostly relate to the safety of using routes away from roads / traffic and the fact that the PRow are near to work / stables.

The 2006 survey also had the same top 2 reasons for choosing to visit PRow, but with slightly reduced percentages for each. There's a 3% increase in the number of people who choose PRow as they're easy to get to and a 7% increase for the quality of the paths.

Where?

Bracknell was the most popular area for public Rights of Way use (27.77%). There was fairly even coverage between the remaining parishes, with Sandhurst having the lowest (11.08%) and Warfield having the second highest (18.27%). There was less use in Crowthorne and Sandhurst, but more in Winkfield compared to the findings in the 2006 survey.

5.2.3 Network condition

Respondents were also asked their opinions of the condition of the public Rights of Way network. The questions were broken down into the following 4 categories; Furniture, Vegetation, Surface and Signs.

Figure 8 Perceived overall condition of PRow, 2006 and 2017

Rating	Perceived % score of features				% average score in 2017	% score in 2006
	Furniture	Vegetation	Surface	Signs		
Very good*	7.32	12.08	7.62	8.54	8.89	10
Good	42.38	42.99	36.59	35.67	39.40	49
Fair*	32.01	27.44	41.16	35.06	33.91	31
Poor	4.57	6.01	4.57	10.37	6.38	9
Very poor	0.61	3.35	4.88	2.44	2.82	1
Don't know	8.84	3.05	1.52	3.66	4.26	N/A
No response	4.27	4.27	3.66	4.27	4.11	N/A

* For the purpose of comparing the results between both surveys, 'excellent' is being classed as 'very good' and 'average' is being classed as 'fair'.

Just under half (49.7%) considered the furniture to be good or very good. Only 5.18% considered the furniture poor or very poor.

There was a similar picture with the rating of the vegetation on PRow, with good and very good accounting for over half the respondents (55.07%), but with a slightly higher poor and very poor rating (9.36%) than for furniture.

Surface condition was mostly rated as good / very good (44.19%) and fair (41.16%), with poor and very poor (9.45%) similar to the response received for vegetation.

PRow signs had a good / very good rating (44.21%) which was similar to the score received for surface condition, but the poor / very poor condition was slightly higher (12.81%) than that received for surface condition.

Compared to the last survey in 2006, there has been a perceived reduction to the overall condition of PRow (Good and Very good has gone from 59% to just under 49%. Having more categories in this survey may have led to a slight skewing of the scores,

5.2.4 Ease of use

The majority of respondents (80.49%) said that they usually found it easy to use Rights of Way. Of those who found it difficult (11.28%) some of the responses given as to why included:

- Lack of routes, connections and links
- Surface condition that's not conducive to easy use
- Overgrown vegetation in places impedes access
- Lack of clear and consistent information and signage
- User conflicts

5.2.5 Suggestions for improvements

'New routes and links' came out on top (31.75%) of suggestions to improve Rights of Way, followed by 'Better information and marketing' (27.78%) and condition of paths (23.61%). These were the set categories that people could select. The most popular suggestions for other improvements to Rights of Way included:

- Clearer / more signage on PRow and cycleways
- Address overgrowing vegetation, particularly that which is overhanging
- Improved surface condition of PRow
- More shared footpaths / cycleways
- More furniture including benches and dog poo/litter bins
- Better information online and in leaflets which will allow people to make more informed choices about the suitability of the paths for their needs.
- Better promotion of responsible dog walking on PRow and in parks and open spaces
- More linked routes, which allow for better movement between Rights of Way, open spaces and residential areas
- Better access for wheelchairs to more remote sites
- Greater availability of attractive countryside routes for users, particularly horse riders

5.2.6 Other forms of recreation

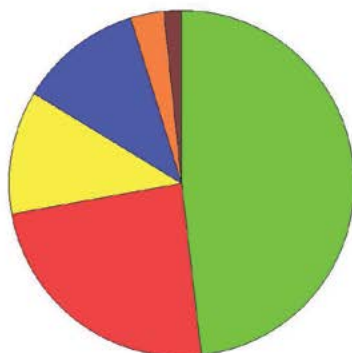
In order to develop a wider picture than just Rights of Way use, the questionnaire asked people to confirm what other forms of recreation they participated in.

Figure 9

14. Do you use any of the following? Please tick all that apply.

Question responses: 328 (100.00%)

14. Do you use any of the following?



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Parks/open spaces	48.17%	48.17%	80.18%	263
Cycle paths	23.99%	23.99%	39.94%	131
Horse riding tracks	11.54%	11.54%	19.21%	63
Mountain bike trails	11.54%	11.54%	19.21%	63
None of these	3.11%	3.11%	5.18%	17
Other	1.65%	1.65%	2.74%	9
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	546

Table .2

Parks and open spaces came out on top (48.17%), followed by cyclepaths (23.99%). Horse riding tracks and Mountain bike trails had the same response rate (11.54%). Other forms of recreation that doesn't include Rights of Way, included using forest tracks, tennis courts, wild trails and walks along local riverside / lakes.

5.2.7 Wider interests and knowledge

In order to be able to effectively publicise and market public Rights of Way and the wider green infrastructure network, we first need to know where there are gaps in knowledge that need to be 'plugged'. Questions 2 and 12 looked at Rights of Way and people's awareness of them. Question 15 expanded on this by asking people if they'd heard of other key PRoW / recreation related information.

Figure 10

15. Have you heard anything about the following?

Question responses: 228 (69.51%)

15. Have you heard anything about the following?



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Local Countryside Access Forum (LCAF)	9.21%	11.64%	13.41%	44
Binfield Bridle Circuit	16.95%	21.43%	24.70%	81
Definitive Map and Statement	5.65%	7.14%	8.23%	27
Bracknell Forest Ramblers Route	28.24%	35.71%	41.16%	135
Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs)	12.55%	15.87%	18.29%	60
Bracknell Forest Park User Survey	6.49%	8.20%	9.45%	31
[No Response]	20.92%	--	30.49%	100
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	478

Bracknell Forest Ramblers Route was the most 'heard about' item in the categories listed (28.24%), with the Definitive Map and Statement (5.65%) being the least heard about.

5.3 The Local Countryside Access Forum

The Bracknell Forest LCAF was formed in March 2003 as a Statutory Requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The forum consists of members each with an interest in access issues either as a user, landowner or other interest.

The Forum advises the council on securing more and better access to the countryside for open-air recreation within the borough. It is governed by the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2002.

The LCAF and ROWIP are intrinsically linked, with forum members providing advice on individual matters and projects, and being consulted at all stages of the ROWIP production.

See Appendix G for a leaflet detailing the work of the Forum and Appendix C for feedback received from members as part of the consultation on the draft plan.

5.4 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the use and demand of the current Bracknell Forest public Rights of Way network:

- Just under one fifth of users were from outside the borough.
- The majority of respondents use public Rights of Way in Bracknell Forest once per week.
- Walking continues to be the most popular form of countryside access.
- Motorised vehicle use made up 2.7% of the consultation responses.
- As well as being a popular form of local transport, cycling has increased in recent years with the growth of recreational mountain biking and greater countryside access for cyclists e.g. Swinley Forest Mountain Bike Trails.
- Horse riding may have received a smaller response to the way people use PROW than walking and cycling, but users are often much more active on a daily basis as horses require regular exercise.
- Feedback received highlights the value that people place on the Rights of Way and greenspaces network for access, recreation and health and wellbeing benefits
- Having easy to get to, good quality paths continues to be of high importance to Rights of Way users.
- There were more people completing the survey who used motorised vehicles on PROW since the last survey.
- The perceived quality of the overall condition of public Rights of Way has slightly declined since 2006.
- There is a demand for greater availability of attractive, well connected countryside routes; this applies to all users, but horse riders proved to be the strongest voice in the survey feedback.
- Only a small percentage of those surveyed had heard about the Definitive Map and Statement, the Park User Survey and LCAF.



Public Footpath along Nine Mile Ride in Bracknell.

6. Evaluation & assessment

Although the Rights of Way network in Bracknell Forest has been shown to be popular and in good condition, possible improvements and some deficiencies have also been identified.

6.1 Walkers

While there is a good level of satisfaction with the condition of Rights of Way in general, there does seem to be a need for improved information about the network. In some cases walking on Rights of Way is limited not so much by lack of provision as by lack of knowledge.

Improvements can be made through completion of circular routes, reducing the need to use road based sections. In some areas, permissive paths may be an option to fill in 'missing links', or for example, to provide alternatives to public footpaths across polo pitches when these are in use, or areas regularly susceptible to winter flooding. Improved signage will help promote the proper use of footpaths and address where there is perceived conflict between certain users.

More Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) are being provided in Bracknell Forest to protect the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) from the effects of increasing residential development. A new network of public open spaces, and links between these spaces, are being opened up. Some of these SANGs are on land that wasn't previously accessible to the public, and most incorporate circular walking routes of 2.3km in length or more. These new paths are not generally dedicated public Rights of Way, but they are available for all to use, and are in public greenspaces protected in perpetuity (at least 125 years). These are significantly adding to the options for walkers and help to provide longer walks with little or no need to use or even cross roads.

6.2 Cyclists

Cyclists use public Rights of Way for many different reasons; from recreational use and commuting to and from work or school, to off-road mountain biking.

Cyclists have access to just under one third of the Bracknell Forest PRow network. As Bracknell developed as a new town, it has a purpose built network of Highway Authority managed cyclepaths linking key locations around Bracknell town, enabling cyclists to avoid trafficked roads. Underpasses under major roads and through roundabouts minimise the need to cross roads. The cyclepath network compliments the PRow network, providing the urban equivalent of the network of byways and bridleways in more rural areas.

Large new residential developments in Bracknell Forest incorporate strategic and recreational cycle routes as a planning requirement. Strategic cycle routes are tarmac surfaced with concrete edges and lighting, and include a combination of cyclepaths away from roads and cyclepaths next to highways. Recreational routes are generally surfaced with unbound materials (self-binding gravel/hoggin), with timber edges and are unlit. These developments help to extend dedicated cycle routes beyond the new town area, for example into Crowthorne and Warfield.

Some key sections of the cycle network benefit from colour coded signage to make them easy to follow. The red, blue, green and yellow cycle routes are all classed as 'traffic free' and are designed to cover different areas of the cycle network. Bracknell Forest Council advertises these routes with signage, leaflets, and information on the council website. See references section.

It is a fact that cyclists also use public footpaths, although technically this is trespass against the landowner, unless the landowner specifically allows permissive access. It is very difficult to enforce no cycling rules on footpaths, though signage should be used to combat incorrect assumptions about where cycling is allowed. In some locations it may be appropriate to investigate the possibility of permitting cycling on footpaths. Paths would require improvements such as widening or providing passing-places, and the landowner would need to give permission. Paths that would provide a safer alternative to riding on busy roads should be prioritised. There would need to be certain conditions in place to protect the right of pedestrians if permissive access was allowed to continue. For example, cyclists would have to give way to pedestrians and users would need to demonstrate courteous behaviour.

However this approach would not be appropriate in all locations, and in many places walkers want to use footpaths without worrying about meeting faster moving bikes around blind bends or being surprised by bikes silently appearing right behind them. Equally cyclists would like to be able to use cyclepaths without encountering pedestrians, and it has been suggested in consultation feedback that there should be signs telling pedestrians not to walk on segregated cyclepaths. Segregated facilities are generally used where there is expected to be a high demand by either pedestrians or cyclists that may obstruct the other user. The segregation gives the pedestrians and cyclist a better opportunity to avoid conflict, but it is not expected to prevent them from having to look out for each other and take appropriate actions when they do meet.

Mountain biking is well catered for in Swinley Forest, with off-road routes provided with different levels of difficulty and challenge. This area owned by The Crown Estate attracts mountain bikers from a wide area, well beyond the boundaries of Bracknell Forest.

The public Rights of Way network available to cyclists would benefit from extensions and additional links to create circular routes. In addition, marketing of routes and surfacing improvements would help to increase usage and attract new users.

6.3 Horse riders

As with cyclists, horse riders have access to just under one third of the PRow network, and also large areas of Swinley Forest and Swinley Park by permit. Byways and bridleways are concentrated in the north of the borough in Binfield and Warfield, and further links to create circular routes away from trafficked roads would improve safety and increase usage.

Unlike provision for cyclists in new developments, horse riders do not always benefit, and in some cases the construction of new roads and junctions, and building on green field sites can result in more undesirable conditions for horse riders. For example, if traffic light controls are added to an existing junction, the sensors don't recognise horses, leading to longer waits to exit junctions.

Where new development takes place in areas already frequented by riders using quiet lanes and perhaps with informal arrangements with landowners, the needs of horse riders, particularly in regard to road safety, should be taken into account in the planning process.

Horse margins alongside roads should also be considered as a way of providing further linkages between ways and improving route networks.

6.4 Carriage drivers

Principle improvements can be made by extending the percentage of PProW currently available to carriage drivers which currently only extends to approximately 17% of the network. Some of this additional provision could be achieved by further permissive agreements with landowners, enabling carriage-driving to take place on bridleways, particularly those that were previously RUPPs.

Carriage drivers can have trouble accessing Restricted Byways and Byways Open to All Traffic (RBs and BOATs) controlled by Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict motorised vehicle use. Local arrangements can be made to allow carriage drivers to have keys to gates / retractable bollards, giving them access to longer traffic free routes.

6.5 Motorised vehicles

Minority users of the PProW network, motorised vehicle users have access to the smallest proportion of the network, at just over 5%.

Access by motorised vehicles falls into two main types, 1) recreational use where driving off-road is an end in itself, and 2) using Rights of Way to access a residential property or business, such as farms, farm shop, stables, etc.

Responsible use of motorised vehicles on byways should not cause conflict with other users, should not cause damage to surfaces of ways, and should not be used to illegally access private land. Unfortunately when vehicles are used irresponsibly on BOATs and RBs then seasonal damage to the surface can be significant and extensive.

Setting aside access to property, which is a necessary function, there is undoubtedly a demand for recreational opportunities to drive off-road, generally in 4x4 vehicles and also trail bikes. This type of use can lead to surface damage, although farm machinery can also be responsible for causing deep rutting and churning up muddy areas.

There needs to be a balance between maintaining the legitimate vehicular access and enjoyment of the countryside against the damage caused to surfaces, the cost of repair, and inconvenience caused to other users. In line with the definition of a byway, or a restricted byway that's used as an access route to private land, Bracknell Forest Council will prioritise maintenance to benefit non-motorised users. Any proposed maintenance or improvements will also be balanced on a case-by-case basis with other local considerations that may exist – e.g. maintaining the natural character of a route.

Vehicle access in more remote areas can also lead to illegal activities such as fly-tipping, which proves costly and difficult to address.

6.6 Inclusive access and design

The PProW network must be improved to enable use by the mobility impaired and sensory disabled users as far as practicable. It has to be accepted that this will not be possible for the entire network, due to a range of factors such as the existing landform, narrow ways that can't be widened, agricultural requirements, steps where there is no space for a ramp, and so on.

Improvements to gaps, gates and stiles are being made progressively, and in places old bridges with awkward steps have been replaced with wider bridges with ramps and handrails. Surfacing also has a big influence on accessibility, and this is most significant in periods of wet weather. Kissing gates can be fitted with RADAR key locks that enable the gate to open fully, providing a straight line path through the gateway, which helps wheelchair and mobility scooter users.

For all PProWs and other paths, information and marketed routes will seek to be as clearly

described as possible, so as to allow users to decide for themselves which routes are most suitable for their own needs and abilities.

There can be a tendency to concentrate on impaired mobility, and perhaps to take less account of other limitations, for example visual impairment. Strong tonal and colour contrasts are important to mark changes of level and other hazards, and for route location, but can be difficult to incorporate in natural areas.

Bracknell Forest Council should undertake access audits with disabled user groups to assess the effectiveness of access improvement projects, and use feedback to make further improvements where practicable.

Provide events similar to 'Woods on Wheels'. This was held at Lily Hill Park a few years ago and attracted over 20 wheelchair users and push chairs; the idea could be adapted for suitable Rights of Way.

Opportunities should be provided for voluntary conservation work with a range of groups of differing abilities.

6.7 Non-users

In order to consider the future needs the network has to meet, it is important to consider why those who do not use PROW don't and what can be done to encourage greater use. Non-users of Public Rights of Way are perhaps the most difficult group to target, as there could be a multitude of reasons why people aren't using PROW.

Some cultural groups are less likely than others to go walking for recreation in the countryside. Some non-users will be put off using Rights of Way by perceived risk to safety and perceived social exclusion. Something as simple as removing overgrown vegetation is considered important to reduce the fear of crime and make the natural environment less intimidating.

Whilst it can be assumed that many non-users choose to be so, there will be other reasons why people aren't using Rights of Way, such as not knowing what they are or what's available to them, some of which could be addressed through a range of actions.

6.8 Landowners and land managers

Landowners and land managers are a vital component in the management of the PROW network and access to the countryside, particularly in the maintenance of vegetation, fences and furniture on and alongside Rights of Way.

Landowners with Rights of Way or areas of Open Access Land – designated under the CROW Act 2000 – therefore require support in how best to manage public use of their land. This support may come in the form of providing information to increase public awareness of rights and responsibilities.

Promotion of responsible use of this access would include correcting common misconceptions, or guiding people away from activities that are not within the public rights conferred by the relevant acts and regulations.

Promotion of responsible use of this access could include for example: There is a common misunderstanding that Open Access implies a general right to roam across the countryside, whereas the CROW ACT 2000 introduced specific and limited public access to defined areas identified on maps originally published by the Countryside Agency, and now by Natural England. These areas are now depicted on Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps. Landowners could be supported with the provision of notices and signs providing information and interpretation to the public.

Another example is control of dogs in relation to livestock on farms, and to the bird nesting season in Open Access Land.

6.9 Inconsistencies in Rights of Way

Dead ends, mapping errors, inappropriate use

Binfield Bridleway 23a is a short length (170m) of previous RUPP (Mare Lane) that was isolated from the rest of the lane by the construction of the M4 motorway. There is little or no use of the Right of Way, which has nowhere to go. The land is unregistered and as assumed ancient highway, the local authority is responsible for the surface and the overgrown vegetation.

This bridleway cannot be connected to any other Rights of Way, and a consultation should be held about extinguishing the Right of Way.

There are other dead ends that are the result of changes to classification along a route rather than a physical barrier like a motorway, for example where a restricted byway leads to a footpath, making it a dead end for cyclists, horse riders and carriage-drivers. An example of this is Binfield Restricted Byway 23 (Mare Lane) leading to Binfield Footpath 1, again next to the M4 motorway.

Pendry's Lane (Warfield BW17 – a Byway which ends at its western end in a Restricted Byway (Binfield RB17) with a ford across The Cut, and also joins a bridleway (Binfield BR19), making it a dead-end for motorised vehicles.

Crowthorne Byway 13 only leads to Crowthorne Footpath 17 at Caesar's Camp.

Sandhurst Byway 16 is a private residential road (Brookside) that is blocked to through traffic in the middle.

Winkfield Byway 14 has been subsumed in development, leaving sections under highway roads and junctions (Heathway/Druce Wood), crossing a large tarmac car park, and a portion as a tarmacked urban path with barriers preventing vehicle access. Once an old lane leading to Ascot Heath, it no longer resembles a byway and its classification has become inconsistent with its function and appearance.

The western end of Crowthorne Restricted Byway 12 (The Devil's Highway) continues to be a problem due to the amount of motorised traffic using it to reach a car park providing access to Crowthorne Woods (Open Access Land), and due to parking of cars on the surfaced section of the RB which is a private road. In this case, the duty to maintain the surface to the standard required for an RB is insufficient to deal with the amount of wear and tear caused by the large number of vehicles using it on a daily basis.

In some places, footpaths have been physically converted in to cyclepaths, but with no record of cycle track orders. Where there is a cycle track order, the path ceases to be a recognised classification of public Right of Way and has to be removed from the Definitive Map. This is inconsistent with protecting and enhancing the network, as paths disappear from other maps derived from the Definitive Map. Where there is no order, the footpath remains, but is used by cyclists as well as pedestrians, and yet does not accommodate horses as a bridleway would.

Housing development in Warfield will make Warfield Byway 8 (Avery Lane) inappropriate for continued vehicle access due to a new link road parallel to it, a new road crossing the line of the byway and a traffic light controlled junction where it meets the classified road at the Three Legged Cross junction.

6.10 A more joined up network

A more joined up network, with better linkage between routes will allow for better movement between Rights of Way, open spaces and residential areas.

Local knowledge of public Rights of Way, examination of the Definitive Map and Statement and specific suggestions from the RoWIP2 public consultations may help to highlight where connectivity can be improved in the Rights of Way network for users. These could include improvements to the condition of existing paths, status upgrades to Rights of Way, new linkages via the existing road network and finally, the creation of new paths in some cases.

There are several actions in RoWIP2 that are concerned with improving linkages in the PRow network (ref no's. 10, 22, 38, 49, 50 and 51).

6.11 Key issues from previous RoWIP mid-term review

There have been significant changes to the policy context since the previous 2006 RoWIP was published.

There have been significant improvements to the network to make PRow more accessible by removing barriers such as stiles, steps and unsuitable bridges.

See Appendix H for the list of improvement recommended in the RoWIP Mid Term review.

6.12 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the evaluation and assessment of the current Bracknell Forest public Rights of Way network:

- Walkers have the greatest access to public Rights of Way and are able to access 100% of the network;
- Cyclists and horse riders have access to 31% of the network;
- Carriage-drivers have access to 17% of the network. This includes some bridleways that previously had RUPP status, where carriage driving takes place via agreements with landowners;
- Motorised vehicles have access to just over 10% of the network, although in practice some of these are restricted by Traffic Regulation Orders, including 1.6m width restrictions on three byways which effectively precludes cars, vans and lorries from using them.
- Winkfield has a lower density of public Rights of Way, partly due to the large size of the parish and the area of Crown Estate lacking PRow;
- The majority of byways and restricted byways are found in the north of the borough in Binfield and Warfield;
- Results from BVPI 178 and volunteer surveyor reports indicate that the network is in good physical condition;
- Opportunities exist for closer working with neighbouring authorities, particularly Wokingham Borough and Surrey County Council. There is a good working relationship with The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Hampshire County Council.
- There's a need to raise awareness about Rights of Way in order to encourage responsible use and avoid confusion with other forms of access provision.
- There is also a need to raise awareness of the total path and open space network within the borough and not make too strong a distinction between PRow and other access.



There are plenty of local cycling opportunities for all the family.

7. RoWIP Policies

These policies have been drawn up in consideration of the Vision for RoWIP2 and so they meet strategic themes in Bracknell Forest's Council Plan, policies in the Comprehensive Local Plan and LTP3, key themes in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, projects identified in the POSS Study and Actions in the new BAP.

Policy RoWIP 1 Rights of Way for All

Increase accessibility of the Rights of Way network.

- 1.1 Identify and remove hindrances to using Rights of Way, such as stiles, unclear signage, poor surface condition, overgrown vegetation, etc.
- 1.2 Increase the availability of Rights of Way to all users.
- 1.3 Increase accessibility of online information about the PRow network.
- 1.4 Increase the number and promotion of easy access routes, including access for wheelchair users.
- 1.5 Seek to provide accurate information on the characteristics of routes to enable people to decide if a route is suitable for their personal circumstances.

Policy RoWIP 2 Fulfil Legal Duties

Deliver statutory functions of Rights of Way.

- 2.1 Maintain the Definitive Map and Statement of PRow in Bracknell Forest Borough and keep copies available for public inspection.
- 2.2 Maintain the surface condition of Rights of Way to a level that's appropriate for its type of use.
- 2.3 Ensure footbridges and culverts on Rights of Way are maintained.
- 2.4 Ensure that paths are free from obstructions and misleading signs or notices.
- 2.5 To signpost and waymark Rights of Way where they leave metalled roads.
- 2.6 Ensure that all Rights of Way affected by ploughing or disturbance are reinstated within the legal timeframe.
- 2.7 To assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy Rights of Way.
- 2.8 Maintain byways to a standard suitable for the 'ordinary traffic of the neighbourhood'.
- 2.9 Respond to reports of faults with Rights of Way in a time appropriate fashion.
- 2.10 To prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan and review this after 10 years.

Policy RoWIP 3 Routes and Links

Provide additional PRow network linkages and safe circular routes, expanding this to a wider Green Infrastructure network.

- 3.1 Provide safe links between Rights of Way along roads and improvements in standards of safety where paths cross the road and rail network.
- 3.2 Improve the promotion of permissive access where it enhances existing Rights of Way provision and additional use can be sustained.
- 3.3 Provide a more joined up and useable network by identifying and addressing missing links and gaps in the network which will enhance existing access provision.
- 3.4 Improve access to and from Open Access land, recreation sites, SANGs and other public open spaces.
- 3.5 Improve routes between urban areas and the countryside.
- 3.6 Develop off-road bridle and cycle routes with suitable surfacing to link to existing network.

Policy RoWIP 4 Information and Marketing

Provide access information on Rights of Way and promote the network to encourage use.

- 4.1 Encourage use of Rights of Way via events, publicity and marketing.
- 4.2 Promote Bracknell Forest as a prime destination for walking, cycling and horse riding.
- 4.3 Current online BFC route guides / maps to be reviewed and updated where appropriate.
- 4.4 Provide adequate waymarking on Rights of Way
- 4.5 Explore using mobile phone technology to promote the use and enjoyment of outdoor recreation and Rights of Way.
- 4.6 Promote long distance routes such as the Bracknell Forest Ramblers Route, the Blackwater Valley Path and The Three Castles Path.

Policy RoWIP 5 Responsible Use

Promote and publicise legal and responsible use of Rights of Way and access to the countryside, supporting landowners and land managers regarding public use of their land.

- 5.1 Work with landowners to secure improvements to Rights of Way and ensure their legal obligations are being maintained.
- 5.2 Reduce conflict between cyclists, walkers and horse riders on multi-use routes.
- 5.3 Reduce the vulnerability of the PRow network to fly-tipping.
- 5.4 Encourage better understanding of users' responsibilities regarding Rights of Way and Access Land.
- 5.5 Facilitate legitimate use of byways by recreational motor vehicles where this does not cause unacceptable surface or environmental damage and is unlikely to conflict with the enjoyment of other users.

Policy RoWIP 6 Preserve Rural Character

Protect the rural character of Rights of Way in the countryside.

- 6.1 Where a path is presently earth or grassed it shall not be surfaced with tarmac or aggregate unless there is a demonstrable strategic need, or to address issues such as erosion or flooding.
- 6.2 Protect hedgerows that are on or next to Rights of Way.
- 6.3 To use the full extent of the planning process to maintain the rural character of Rights of Way, where appropriate / applicable.

Policy RoWIP 7 Sustainable Benefits

Manage a countryside and access network that delivers benefits to health and well-being, economy and biodiversity.

- 7.1 Identify and promote the potential of the network to promote health and well-being.
- 7.2 Protect and enhance environment and biodiversity on PRow network.
- 7.3 Improve and enhance the traffic free Rights of Way network around urban areas to increase the use of sustainable transport for accessing work, schools and services.
- 7.4 Promote a more joined up approach to managing cycle routes and Rights of Way, including linking these routes with the public transport network.
- 7.5 Manage and promote a Rights of Way network that benefits the local economy.

Policy RoWIP 8 Working in Partnership

Develop volunteer initiatives and partnerships with other organisations to help make resources go further; collaborate with neighbouring authorities to deliver solutions to cross-border maintenance, legal and improvement issues.

- 8.1 LCAF to offer advice to the borough council and to help deliver actions in the RoWIP.
- 8.2 Provide an integrated approach to highways, housing development and Rights of Way management.
- 8.3 Recognise existing support and encourage increased future parish /town council involvement in the management of public access.
- 8.4 Make greater use of volunteers/ user groups' involvement in management of public access.
- 8.5 Work with neighbouring authorities to tackle issues and take advantage of cross boundary opportunities.
- 8.6 Work in partnership with landowners and the local Police to address issues such as fly-tipping on PRow and the illegal use of footpaths and bridleways

Policy RoWIP 9 Raise Strategic Profile

Increased awareness of organisations and policy and decision-makers about the importance of Rights of Way and the wider green infrastructure network will enable better planning and development of neighbourhoods.

- 9.1 Promote the key role that Rights of Way play in maintaining Bracknell Forest's high quality of life within other strategies e.g. health and well-being benefits.
- 9.2 Raise profile of LCAF and the important role it performs.

- 9.3 Improve the enhancement and protection of the PRow network through the planning process. Ensure RoWIP2 is quoted as a reference during planning applications affecting public Rights of Way.

Policy RoWIP 10 Monitor and Review

Monitoring the condition of the PRow network and assessing progress made with RoWIP actions

- 10.1 Monitoring the condition of Rights of Way and benchmark this data against that obtained from other neighbouring Local Authorities.
- 10.2 Review progress made with completing actions in the RoWIP.
- 10.3 Work with LCAF to carry out annual reviews of the Forum's work.
- 10.4 Monitor and respond to faults reported with Rights of Way and other paths within the total path network



The Binfield Bridle Circuit provides good opportunities for horse riding.

8. Action plan

Prioritisation of RoWIP actions will be made against the extent to which they fulfil RoWIP2 priorities.

Where BFC are identified as the lead partner:

- ✓ actions that can be carried out within current staffing and budget resource (base 2017 – 2018)
- ✓ ✓ actions which require Bracknell Forest Council resources to be reprioritised and/or involve external funding or in-kind contributions.
- ✓ ✓ ✓ actions requiring planned investment. This funding may be wholly through external sources or require support from identified partners.

Potential sources of funding include, Local Transport Plan 3, Local Authorities, East of England Development Agency, Local Strategic Partnerships, Development Agency, Central Government, Sustrans, Lottery, Sport England, s106 planning gain.

Encourage use of PRow via events, publicity and marketing					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation / Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
1.	Review and update the circular countryside walking routes available on the council's website. Also review circular cycling routes on Rights of Way and with links to adopted highway cyclepaths and permissive route in public open spaces.	4.3	✓	BFC LCAF Highway Authority	Number of PDF routes / maps updated and available on BFCs website by 2021
2.	Review and update the 3 Accessible Rural Route guides	4.3	✓	BFC LCAF Disability Groups	A minimum of 4 articles / events publicised each month
3.	Use social media and press releases to advertise PRow, events and other outdoor recreation opportunities e.g. the annual WOW Week of Walks led by the Bracknell Forest Society	4.3	✓	BFC Bracknell Forest Society Bracknell Forest Natural History Society Thames Basin Heaths Partnership The Crown Estate Town / Parish Councils NHS	A minimum of 4 articles / events publicised each month
4.	Organise guided countryside/ park walks for the public each year	4.1	✓ ✓	BFC SE Berks Ramblers Bracknell Forest Society	A minimum of 10 walks held each year
5.	Support existing healthy walking and green exercise schemes and back the development of new initiatives	4.1, 7.1	✓	BFC – Parks & Countryside Service and Public Health NHS Jealott's Hill Community Landshare	Publicise initiatives and schemes including 'Sandhurst Health Walks'

6.	Explore using mobile phone apps to promote the use and enjoyment of outdoor recreation and Rights of Way. Make GPX routes available on council website available to download.	4.5	✓	BFC	GPX routes available on BFCs website by 2021
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Mapping and cataloguing the network					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
7.	Keep the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) up to date by processing Modification Order applications	2.1	✓ ✓	BFC	Up-to-date copy kept of the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS)
8.	Ensure a hard copy of the last consolidated DMS is available to view by the public	2.1	✓	BFC	Copy available at Time Square office
9.	Produce a third consolidated DMS of PProW in Bracknell Forest, which identifies and addresses anomalies in the current DMS	2.1	✓ ✓ ✓	BFC LCAF Natural England Town/Parish Councils Neighbouring LAFs and LAs	Completed by January 2023
10.	Provide and maintain an up-to-date online web-based map service showing PProW, open access land, cycleways, 24 hour accessible defibrillators and public transport hubs. Include detail of potential impediments to access such as gates and stiles. Give consideration to mapping quality of the network examining factors such as fragmentation.	1.3, 1.5, 8,2	✓ ✓	BFC	PProW map available to the public on BFCs website by 2018 Expand on this map to include impediments to access and other key information to promote a safe and accessible wider green infrastructure network by 2021.

11.	Carry out an audit of PRow signs, from metalled roads	1.1, 2.5, 5.2, 10.1	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer path wardens	By January 2021, to have a GIS dataset / map of PRow signs, which details location, type and condition.
12.	Catalogue all stiles and gates on PRow	1.1, 1.2, 10.1	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer path wardens	By January 2021, to have a GIS map of PRow stiles and gates, identifying the location, type, condition and those that need removing/ replacing

Maintaining the network, its legal status and condition					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
13.	Inspect the condition of path network annually, using the 'ease of use' criteria (formerly Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178).	10.1	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer Path Wardens	% of the path network audited each year
14.	Ensure that footbridges and culverts on PProW, that cross natural obstacles, are safe.	2,3, 10.1	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer path wardens Bracknell Conservation Volunteers	Footbridges pass inspection as part of the monitoring using BVPI 178.
15.	Replace PProW signs that are identified as falling below the standard set out in NE guidance and provide new signs where there are gaps	2.5, 5.2	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer path wardens Bracknell Conservation Volunteers	New signage provided when required
16.	Case Officers consult P&C Rights of Way team on planning applications where the proposed development is likely to directly impact on a PProW e.g. requires diversion, closure. RoWIP2 should be quoted in planning responses to add weight to comments. A new process linked to planning needs to be explored whereby LCAF are kept informed and are consulted on these types of applications	6.3, 9.3	✓ ✓	BFC Parks and Countryside and Planning Authority LCAF	A more robust process whereby LCAF can easily comment on planning applications with a direct impact on PProW
17.	Respond to reported faults and issues with PProW; including enforcing removal of illegal obstructions and re-instatement after ploughing or secure removal of crops	2.4, 2.6, 2.9	✓ ✓ ✓	BFC	Percentage of PProW network that is considered 'easy to use' according to the former BVPI 178.

18	To process notices for removing hedgerows and enforce instances where they have been removed illegally	6.2, 7.2	✓	BFC - The Local Planning Authority	Response provided within 42 days of receipt of written notice. Enforcement carried out where an offence is committed under The Hedgerows Regulations 1997
19.	Process temporary closures of PRow where required	2.1	✓ ✓	BFC Applicant for TTRO	PRow legally closed for a temporary period of up to 6 months and appropriate diversion route and signs provided

Creating new routes and links

Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation / Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
20.	Encourage and investigate suggestions for routes to be added to the DMS or through permissive agreement	1.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5	✓	BFC Landowners LCAF	Reports to LCAF on findings or progress of the investigations
21.	Identify possible shared cycling routes and continue association with partners to develop possible routes in the borough.	3.3, 3.6, 7.3, 7.4, 8.2	✓ ✓	BFC – Parks & Countryside Service and Transport Development LCAF	To feed suggestions into the BFC Infrastructure Delivery Plan
22.	Provide links to circular / multi use routes in existing and future Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) with the public Rights of Way network	3.4	✓ ✓	BFC	To feed suggestions into the BFC Infrastructure Delivery Plan and feed into site specific planning applications

23.	Undertake an audit of missing links and develop proposals for the creation of new PRow in priority locations	1.2, 3.3	✓✓✓	BFC LCAF Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership	Annual review of missing links to update BFC Infrastructure Delivery Plan
24.	New routes or improvements to existing routes should be designed to minimise conflict, for example, by ensuring widths, surfaces, furniture (including way marking) and sight lines enable permitted users to use the path in harmony and with confidence	1.2, 2.7, 5.2	✓✓	BFC LCAF	New routes or improvements to routes are of an accessible design to the intended users

Improving access to PRow					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
25.	Replace stiles with gaps, staggered barriers, bridle gates or kissing gates and carry out surface improvements to PRow where accessibility is impeded by seasonal waterlogging	1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.7	✓✓	BFC LCAF SE Berks Ramblers Ramblers Bracknell Conservation Volunteers	To report to LCAF on an annual basis the percentage of PRow where access has been improved by removing stiles and improving surface conditions. Cross reference with BS5709:2006
26.	Explore with landowners and PRow users opportunities for the diversion of PRow to remove the need for the public to use busy stretches of highway to reach a connecting path	3.1	✓✓	BFC Landowners LCAF Ramblers British Horse Society Cycling UK	To feed suggestions into the BFC Infrastructure Delivery Plan
27.	Identify and promote existing PRow that are suitable for users with reduced mobility	3.3, 3.6, 7.3, 7.4, 8.2	✓	BFC Local Disability Groups	See action no. 2 and 10.

Working in partnership and cooperation					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
28.	Work with neighbouring LAFs and highway authorities to identify and address cross boundary Rights of Way anomalies and explore opportunities for promoting PRow and circular routes. Explore ways of improving consistency in signage and waymarking on cross-boundary routes.	8.5	✓ ✓	BFC LCAF LAFs – RBWM, Slough, Mid and West Berks, Hampshire, Surrey LAs - RBWM, Slough, Wokingham BC, Hampshire CC, Surrey CC	LCAF member attendance at neighbouring LAFs / local Chairs meetings – at least one per year
29.	Maintain a good working relationship between BFC and LCAF, with the Forum providing advice to promote PRow and outdoor recreation	8.1	✓ ✓	BFC LCAF	At least one BFC officer from Parks & Countryside to attend the x3 LCAF meetings each year
30.	Recognise and encourage increased participation of each Town/Parish Council through regular communication and reporting.	8.3	✓	BFC / LCAF Towns / Parishes	Invitations sent to Towns / Parishes to appoint a path champion as the key contact with LCAF and the Highway Authority, by 2018 (NB Sandhurst Town Council and Warfield Parish Council already do this)
31.	Share information about the work of the BFC PRow Ranger to promote continuing financial support for the post	8.3	✓	BFC Towns / Parishes	Information provided to Towns / Parishes each year

32.	Ensure appropriate policies to protect and enhance PRow network are included in planning frameworks	6.3, 9.3	✓	BFC	<p>Policies included in the POSS Study by end of 2017, the Comprehensive Local Plan when finalised, and Neighbourhood Plans as these are developed.</p> <p>Money secured for PRow improvement and protection through the development control process e.g. s106 legal agreements.</p>
33.	Work with disability groups to identify routes linked to settlements or popular countryside destinations in Bracknell Forest which can be improved to facilitate access for all	1.2, 1.4, 3.3, 3.5	✓	LCAF Bracknell Forest Access Group Disability Groups to be identified	Identify and contact local disability groups and update Infrastructure Delivery plan
34.	Develop and reinvigorate the network of volunteers working on PRow, providing them with the training and tools to better maintain local paths	8.4	✓ ✓	BFC Volunteer path wardens LCAF Bracknell Conservation Volunteers	Percentage of maintenance carried out by volunteers on PRow reviewed annually at LCAF meetings.
35.	Monitor illegal use of footpaths and bridleways by other PRow users and take action to address this	5.3, 8.6	✓ ✓	BFC Landowners Local Police Community Safety Team	Reduction in illegal use of PRow

36.	Work with road safety organisations, the Community Safety Partnership and user groups to raise awareness of the need to protect PRow users, particularly those more vulnerable	8.2	✓	LCAF Safer Roads Partnership BFC British Horse Society Ramblers Cycling UK	A campaign developed that ties in with actions 3 and 27
37.	Work with the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership to encourage responsible use of PRow in the SPA e.g. adhering to paths and keeping dogs on lead during ground bird nesting season	5.4, 7.2	✓	Thames Basin Heaths Partnership BFC Natural England SPA Wardens	Publicity issued between March-July, 2018-2027. Linked with actions 3 and 46
38.	Work with Blackwater Valley Partnership on links to sections of the Blackwater Valley Path in Bracknell Forest, and to assist in the target of filling-in the 'missing links' in the riverside path through Sandhurst	3.3, 3.4, 4.6, 8.5	✓✓	Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership	Representative of Blackwater Valley Partnership invited to LCAF meetings periodically to discuss and review actions relating to missing links in BFC

Raising awareness of PRow and profile of LCAF					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation / Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
39.	Integrate RoWIP with other policies and strategies e.g. BAP, Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, POSS Study, LTP3. See Chapter 3	8.2, 9.1, 9.3	✓	BFC	POSS - 2017 BAP and Tree Strategy – 2018 New Parks and Open Spaces Strategy - 2019
40.	Develop landowners / managers awareness of their responsibilities for maintenance and the importance of public Rights of Way and public access to land	2.4, 5.1, 7.1,	✓	BFC	A new page added to BFCs website by 2018 detailing landowners responsibility relating to PRow on their land
41.	Promote membership to LCAF	8.1	✓	BFC LCAF	Standing LCAF agenda item of 'New members' to maintain a minimum of 10 Forum members
42.	Review List of Streets and DMS to assess whether paths need to be added or removed	8.2	✓ ✓	BFC LCAF	To report progress at LCAF meetings
43.	Identify key tourism hubs in the Borough where enhancements to PRow would deliver benefits to the local economy	4.1, 4.2, 7.5	✓ ✓	BFC	By 2021
44.	Extend links between LCAF and Town /Parish Councils	8.3	✓	BFC LCAF Town/parish councils	LCAF Chair to contact T/P Clerks to request an invite to a Parish, Parks and Public Realm Forum meeting

Encourage responsible use of PRow					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
45	Give consideration to including 'No Cycling' signs on footpaths where there's a perceived conflict between users	5.2,	✓	BFC	Reduction of reports of cycling on footpaths
46.	Promote the Dog Walking Code of Conduct and consider including anti dog fouling signs on PRow	5.4	✓	BFC Thames Basin Heaths Partnership	Leaflet available on BFCs walking / PRow web pages and promoted via social media Signs are made available on PRow where there's an issue with dog fouling

Monitoring and review					
Action ref.	Proposed Actions	RoWIP Policies	Resource Requirements	Key Organisation Lead Partner(s) in Bold	Performance Measures / Timescales
47.	Review progress with actions carried out in RoWIP. Report monitoring outcomes to Departmental Management Team	10.2	✓✓	BFC LCAF	A traffic light system used to assess progress with actions each year. First review to be carried out in 2018 with a mid-term review in Jan 2021

Additional action plan items expected following public consultation.					
48.	Applicable actions will be added prior to publication of the final plan				25th October 2017
New Paths and Linkages					
49.	Seek to complete the 'missing' sections of the Blackwater Valley Path in Sandhurst Town	1.2, 3.3, 4.6	✓✓✓	BFC Blackwater Valley Partnership	
50.	Seek to provide a safer cycling route parallel to Nine Mile Ride by enabling a permissive cycle route on Bracknell Footpath 22	1.2, 8.2	✓✓	BFC	
51	Seek to create a bridleway link from Warfield development area north and west to Hazelwood Lane, and east to Warfield Bridleway 26	1.2, 3.3	✓✓	BFC Developer contributions	

See separate document for Appendices, References and Glossary.

The Second Bracknell Forest Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP2)

Appendices, References and Glossary

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

RoWIP Survey and Results

Rights of Way Improvement Plan survey

Rights of Way Improvement Plan survey

We need to understand your views about the borough's public rights of way to help us assess how the network is presently meeting needs and how we might improve it over the next 10 years to make it accessible for all.

This questionnaire can also be completed online at <http://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/portal/leisure/rowip> where the results will also be published after the survey closes on 25 June.

1. Do you live inside or outside of Bracknell Forest Borough?

(please select one answer)

In ☐ Out ☐

If you've selected that you live in the borough, please specify which area you live in?
(please select one answer)

Binfield ☐

Bracknell ☐

Crowthorne ☐

Sandhurst ☐

Warfield ☐

Winkfield ☐

2. Do you use public rights of way* in Bracknell Forest Borough?

If you have answered 'No/don't know', please go directly to Q12

(please select one answer)

Yes ☐ No/don't know ☐

*A public right of way is a route which the public has a legal right to use. They can be broken down into 4 categories – Footpaths (can be used by foot), Bridleways (can be used by foot, horse, pedal cycle), Byways (can be used by all, including motorised vehicles) and Restricted Byways (can be used by all, except motorised vehicles).

3. Where in the borough do you mainly use public rights of way?
(please select all that apply)

- Binfield ☐
- Bracknell ☐
- Crowthorne ☐
- Sandhurst ☐
- Warfield ☐
- Winkfield ☐

4. Approximately how often do you use public rights of way in the borough?
(please select one answer)

- More than once a day ☐
- Once a day ☐
- Once a week ☐
- Once a month ☐
- Less than once a month ☐

5. On average, how long do you tend to use public rights of way for?
(please select one answer)

- Less than 1 hour ☐
- 1 to 2 hours ☐
- 2 to 3 hours ☐
- More than 3 hours ☐

6. What is the main way you use public rights of way? Please select no more than 2.

- On foot ☐
- By bicycle ☐
- On horseback ☐
- By motorcycle ☐
- In a wheelchair ☐
- By horse/pony-drawn carriage ☐
- By motorised vehicle ☐
- Other ☐

Rights of Way Improvement Plan survey

Please specify other

7. On average how many people do you use the path with?

8. What are your main reasons for using public rights of way?

(please select all that apply)

Leisure/recreation ☐

Dog walking ☐

Getting around ☐

Access to home/house ☐

Exercise/health/wellbeing ☐

Access to nature ☐

Other ☐

Please specify other

9. Why do you choose to use public rights of way?

(please select all that apply)

Near to home ☐

Favourite area/route ☐

Easy to get to ☐

Quality of paths ☐

Other ☐

Please specify other

10. Please rate the overall condition of the following public right of way features.

(please select one answer for each question)

	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
Furniture (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vegetation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Surface	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Signs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(1) For example, stiles, gates, footbridges

(2) For example, grass trees, hedges

11. How easy do you find it to use local public rights of way?

(please select one answer)

Usually easy ☐ Difficult ☐ No opinion/don't know ☐

If you have answered 'Difficult' please explain why.

12. If you don't use public rights of way, then why not?

(please select all that apply)

- I don't know what they are* ☐
- I don't know where to find them* ☐
- I don't want to* ☐
- I don't need to* ☐
- Lack of time* ☐
- Poor condition of paths* ☐
- Accessibility of paths* ☐
- Disability limits my use* ☐
- Other* ☐

Please specify other

13. What do you think could be improved about public rights of way in the borough?
(please select all that apply)

Condition of paths ☐

New routes or links needed ☐

Better information and marketing ☐

Don't know ☐

Nothing ☐

Other ☐

Please specify other

We're also interested in learning about other forms of outdoor recreational pursuits.

14. Do you use any of the following?
(please select all that apply)

Parks/open spaces ☐

Cycle paths ☐

Horse riding tracks ☐

Mountain bike trails ☐

None of these ☐

Other ☐

Results

1. InOutBorough

Question responses: 328 (100.00%)

1. Do you live inside or outside of Bracknell Forest Borough?

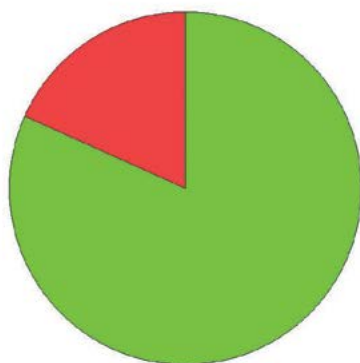


Table .1

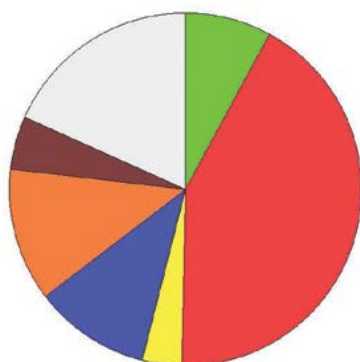
	% Total	% Answer	Count
In	81.71%	81.71%	268
Out	18.29%	18.29%	60
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .2

Inborough

Question responses: 268 (81.71%)

Which area of the borough do you live in?



2. Do you use public rights of way in Bracknell Forest Borough?

Question responses: 328 (100.00%)

2. Do you use public rights of way in Bracknell Forest Borough?

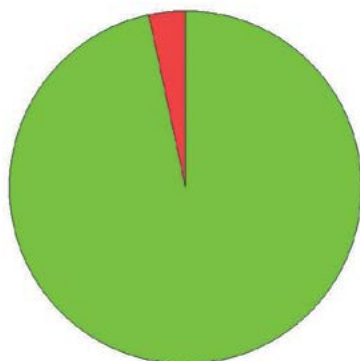


Table .1

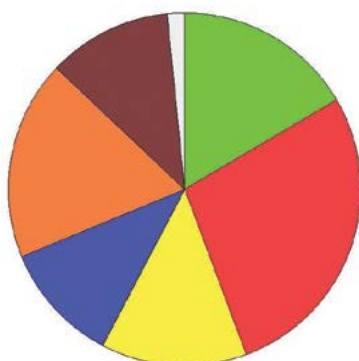
	% Total	% Answer	Count
Yes	96.65%	96.65%	317
No/don't know	3.35%	3.35%	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .2

3. Where in the borough do you mainly use public rights of way?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

3. Where in the borough do you mainly use public rights of way?



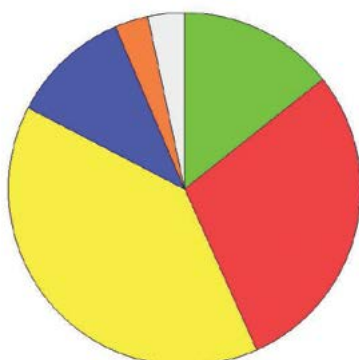
	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Binfield	16.55%	16.81%	35.06%	115
Bracknell	27.77%	28.22%	58.84%	193
Crowthorne	13.38%	13.60%	28.35%	93
Sandhurst	11.08%	11.26%	23.48%	77
Warfield	16.27%	16.57%	38.72%	127
Winkfield	11.37%	11.55%	24.09%	79
[No Response]	1.58%	--	3.35%	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	695

Table .2

4. Approximately how often do you use public rights of way in the borough?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

4. Approximately how often do you use public rights of way in the borough?



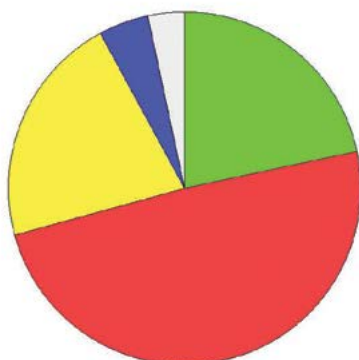
	% Total	% Answer	Count
More than once a day	14.33%	14.83%	47
Once a day	28.96%	29.97%	95
Once a week	39.33%	40.69%	129
Once a month	10.96%	11.36%	36
Less than once a month	3.05%	3.15%	10
[No Response]	3.35%	--	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .2

5. On average how long do you tend to use public rights of way for?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

5. On average, how long do you tend to use public rights of way for?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
Less than 1 hour	21.65%	22.40%	71
1 to 2 hours	49.09%	50.79%	161
2 to 3 hours	21.34%	22.08%	70
More than 3 hours	4.57%	4.73%	15
[No Response]	3.35%	--	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

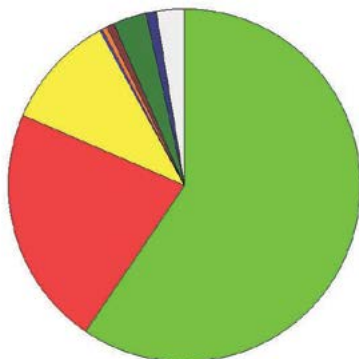
Table .2

Table .1

6. What is the main way you use public rights of way?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

6. What is the main way you use public rights of way? Please select no more than 2.

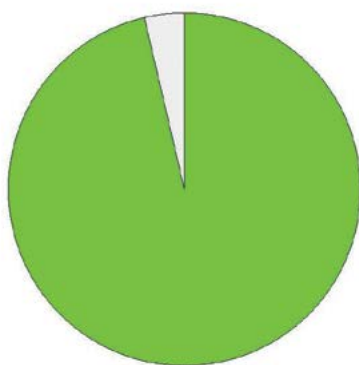


	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
On foot	59.48%	61.06%	77.44%	254
By bicycle	22.01%	22.60%	28.66%	94
On horseback	10.54%	10.82%	13.72%	45
By motorcycle	0.23%	0.24%	0.30%	1
In a wheelchair	0.47%	0.48%	0.61%	2
By horse/pony-drawn carriage	0.70%	0.72%	0.91%	3
By motorised vehicle	3.04%	3.13%	3.96%	13
Other	0.94%	0.96%	1.22%	4

7. On average how many people do you use the path with?

Question responses: 316 (96.34%)

7. On average how many people do you use the path with?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
[Responses]	96.34%	100.00%	316
[No Response]	3.66%	--	12
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

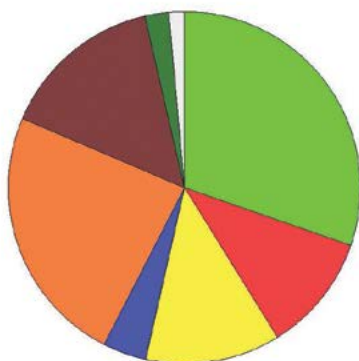
Table .2

Table .1

8. What are your main reasons for using public rights of way?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

8. What are your main reasons for using public rights of way?



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Leisure/recreation	30.32%	30.76%	71.65%	235
Dog walking	10.84%	10.99%	25.61%	84
Getting around	12.39%	12.57%	29.27%	96
Access to home/house	4.00%	4.06%	9.45%	31
Exercise/health/wellbeing	23.87%	24.21%	56.40%	185
Access to nature	14.97%	15.18%	35.37%	116
Other	2.19%	2.23%	5.18%	17
[No Response]	1.42%	--	3.35%	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	775

9. Why do you choose to use public rights of way the most?

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

9. Why do you choose to use public rights of way?



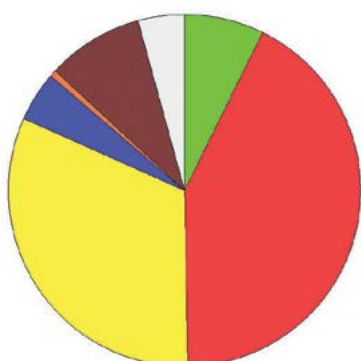
	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
■ Near to home	28.28%	28.74%	59.15%	194
■ Favourite area/route	28.28%	28.74%	59.15%	194
■ Easy to get to	21.14%	21.48%	44.21%	145
■ Quality of paths	14.14%	14.37%	29.57%	97
■ Other	6.56%	6.67%	13.72%	45
■ [No Response]	1.60%	--	3.35%	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	686

Table .2

10. Overall condition rating

Question responses: 317 (96.65%)

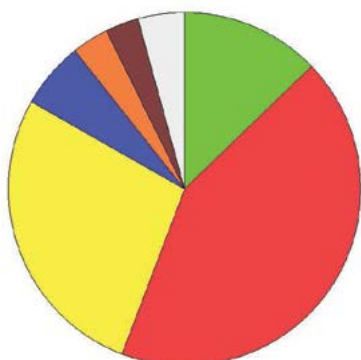
Furniture (1)



	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Very good	7.32%	7.64%	24
■ Good	42.38%	44.27%	139
■ Fair	32.01%	33.44%	105
■ Poor	4.57%	4.78%	15
■ Very poor	0.61%	0.64%	2
■ Don't know	8.84%	9.24%	29
■ [No Response]	4.27%	--	14
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .2

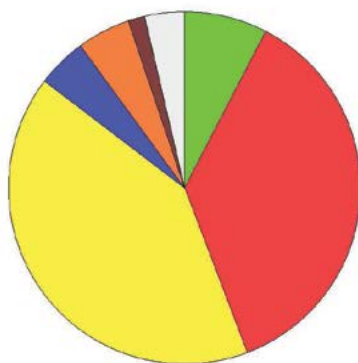
Vegetation (2)



	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Very good	12.80%	13.38%	42
■ Good	42.99%	44.90%	141
■ Fair	27.44%	28.66%	90
■ Poor	6.10%	6.37%	20
■ Very poor	3.35%	3.50%	11
■ Don't know	3.05%	3.18%	10
■ [No Response]	4.27%	--	14
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .4

Surface



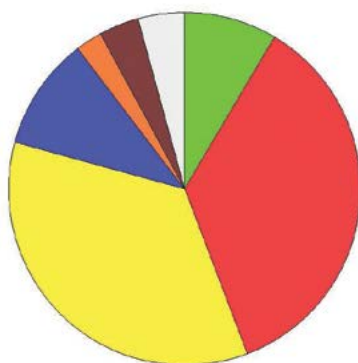
Question responses: **316 (96.34%)**

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Very good	7.62%	7.91%	25
Good	36.59%	37.97%	120
Fair	41.16%	42.72%	135
Poor	4.57%	4.75%	15
Very poor	4.88%	5.06%	16
Don't know	1.52%	1.58%	5
[No Response]	3.66%	--	12
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

Table .6

Table .5

Signs



Question responses: **314 (95.73%)**

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Very good	8.54%	8.92%	28
Good	35.67%	37.26%	117
Fair	35.08%	36.62%	115
Poor	10.37%	10.83%	34
Very poor	2.44%	2.55%	8
Don't know	3.66%	3.82%	12
[No Response]	4.27%	--	14
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

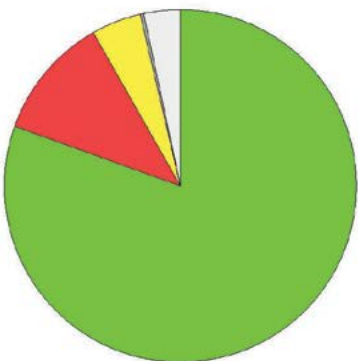
Table .8

Table .7

11. How easy do you find it to use local public rights of way?

Question responses: **317 (96.65%)**

11. How easy do you find it to use local public rights of way?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
Usually easy	80.49%	83.28%	264
Difficult	11.28%	11.67%	37
No opinion/don't know	4.57%	4.73%	15
[Unknown Value]	0.30%	0.32%	1
[No Response]	3.35%	--	11
Total	100.00%	100.00%	328

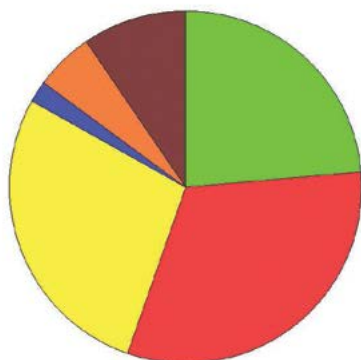
Table .2

See figure 5. in main document for pie chart 12.

13. What do you think could be improved about public rights of way in the borough?

Question responses: 328 (100.00%)

13. What do you think could be improved about public rights of way in the borough?



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Condition of paths	23.61%	23.61%	36.28%	119
New routes or links needed	31.75%	31.75%	48.78%	160
Better information and marketing	27.78%	27.78%	42.68%	140
Don't know	1.98%	1.98%	3.05%	10
Nothing	5.36%	5.36%	8.23%	27
Other	9.52%	9.52%	14.63%	48
Total	100.00%	100.00%	0%	504

Table .2

See figures 7 and 8 in main document for pie charts 14 and 15.

16. Further comments

10. Vegetation rated as Very good, when not scattered with litter or too clipped and mown. 13. New routes and links needed especially on new, stark housing estates. We really appreciate and use any off-road routes (pavements are increasingly polluted). Peace, greenery, bird song, a good walk, fresh air, freedom, etc. hooray! Thanks for protecting our local rights of way, which are much loved, used and appreciated.
- A marketing campaign on routes / walking paths in the borough would be great.
- Access is becoming the biggest problem for horse riders, having to use main roads to get to bridleways. As housing increases in the area, so does the traffic with road layouts being altered and traffic lights being added (which often are not triggered by a horse), It is becoming more and more dangerous to ride on our roads. Not only this but horse riders are often made to feel that they shouldn't be riding in these areas by others, such as dog walkers and pedestrians.
- All our fields were taken away on.... We were promised use of the new fields but once again, they have been closed off to horses. With that many fields, why can we not have 2 we are allowed to use to enable us to exercise our horses and stay off the roads.
- Any further riding tracks would be hugely appreciated, especially now with the amount of new houses being built in the area the country lanes that have always been reasonably quiet are getting ever busier with increasingly more people failing to slow down for horses and a rise in road rage incidents directed at riders just for being on the road (country roads not main roads) Bottle Lane is especially bad now.
- As a ramble I like to walk a route so any area of open space should have an entry and exit point - not just one entrance, to make a circuit of a 'park' the only option. Snaprails is ideal. Responses reflect my views as an individual, but also as a walk leader for Sandhurst Walking for Health scheme.
- As part of a large community of local runners I'd like to see running routes with mile/km markers/ posts such as have been seen in other areas. Also more dog waste bins to keep the rights of way clean, especially around Peacock Meadows in Jennetts Park.
- Bracknell Forest is a very liveable area. Swinley Forest & South Hill Park are the big attractions of course but the ease of getting around on foot & by bicycle - & by car when necessary - makes ordinary day-to-day activities, shopping or just going for a walk, easy & pleasant.
- Compared to some rural areas of UK, BFC paths are very easy to follow. There are almost too many waymarkers / signs, etc!
- Consideration needs to be given regarding the extreme risks facing horse riders in the area given all the new hazards that have been introduced as a result of the new building development as the

- access to safe areas has now diminished
11. Country corridor is excellent route to connecting all small parks. Congratulations on all improvements to footpaths and parks.
 12. Cycle path facilities are very good within the town centre and the central estates. Beyond that it gets difficult to use safe, traffic free routes. I'd like to see routes extending to out lying areas, ie. Ascot, Windsor, Reading etc to be able to extend my range without danger of death.
 13. Don't stray from the path
 14. Essential in way more built up area.
 15. Few paths for horses and fast roads in between
 16. Footpaths are frequently spoiled by inconsiderate dog owners leaving mess on paths and allowing unruly animals to barge into people. It would help if there was a limit to the number of unrestrained dogs that could be exercised together.
 17. For horses, the ground shouldn't be covered with stones surfaces as it is not good for their feet and therefore doesn't make the path very nice to use.
 18. Have not used route maps, have found paths from maps. Looking forward to using paths on Larks Hill.
 19. Heavy rain causes many paths to get muddy especially at either end of boardwalk's.
 20. Horses use footpath - No Horse signs could be erected.
 21. I feel lucky to live in such a wonderful area. It is a hobby of mine to seek out public footpaths I've never explored before and see where they lead. I also love using my OS map to devise new routes!
 22. I feel the bridal ways are very poor - the surface on the binfield bridal way is more so you can only walk or get a trot it's not a surface for a nice canter!!! It needs to be a nice soft surface & I understand over time with the weather it changes but it could be better looked after especially as more and more green space & bridal paths are being taken away from us. And we are having to ride on the roads more which can be dangerous with how impatient drivers are these days!! It's such a shame you couldn't have put a bridal path in the new woodhurst development shame it's all for dog walkers who leave their dog poo everywhere!!!
 23. I'd like to know more. If we could access more local pathways/cycle paths, we would definitely use them
 24. I'm grateful that Bracknell has retained a considerable amount of green space in its early development but disappointed in the increasingly high density of new housing areas with the consequent loss of gardens and public open spaces.
 25. In general I am very happy with the number and state of the footpaths and cycle paths in Bracknell. However I have the following comments. 1. Cycle routes e.g. Red and Yellow routes, would benefit from better signage. I often reach a T junction with no sign. 2. I believe that it would be beneficial to educate pedestrians and cyclists about the sharing of paths. 3. I lead a 3 mile health walk from South Hill Park every Saturday and nearly all participants are impressed with the footpaths that we use. 4. Keep up the good work!
 26. Car park near Muzzy's is too small.
 27. More seating needed, but 'natural' seating e.g. when trees are felled / fall down in storm, use them.
 28. Section of Devil's Highway is small and boggy (near upper star)
 29. Stop cutting down trees in the forest.
 30. Pendry's Lane water issue (Thames Water).
 31. The Definitive Map and Statement is not obvious or easy to find.
 32. It's a shame that Berkeley Homes have prevented horse riders from using the Open Space at Cabbage Hill. A meeting with is scheduled for Monday 5th June at 2pm to discuss issues.
 33. It's a shame the signs on the old round Berkshire cycle route are falling into disrepair. The cycle paths, bridleways and other shared use paths are really good around Bracknell Forest in general though.
 34. Like I said previously would be nice and a lot safer if more bridal tracks were placed around bracknell with decent surfaces
 35. Lots of houses going up so more green spaces and quite walk ways needed. I like to walk my dogs and ride my horses safely away from busy roads.
 36. Love the amount of woodland, parks and walks around Bracknell and crowthorne. We use these a lot with our three children
 37. Many public rights of way don't show on a map. I can understand from a security point of view why this could be necessary, but it does mean you can't plan a walk very well.
 38. More good quality cycle paths are needed to link local areas especially Owlsmoor to Bracknell in a

more direct route.

39. More pedestrian crossings are urgently needed especially near schools
40. More routes for horses needed. All our green space is being built on and the roads are dangerous
41. Most of the coloured cycle routes need better signage a few places where you come to a junction and no indication as to direction to go.
42. Need better links to Maidenhead as the roads are so dangerous
43. Need more access to Barossa and stop building houses without building roads!
44. New developments in the Bracknell forest area have caused over population of roads which has made them become fast and dangerous. Very little in the way of speed measurements (e.g. Cameras, speed bumps) have been put into place to make it safe for horses, cyclists or walkers. There is a serious need to consider developing off road tracks that can be used by horses especially.
45. Not enough bridleways this side of binfield it's too far to hack to for us to use them
46. Not enough safe bridle access in the Warfield area, signs up on the new build at cabbage hill saying no horse riding why is this? Please
47. Not strictly relevant, but children's play areas in Bracknell are excellent, both quality and quantity.
48. On the whole Bracknell Forest footpaths, bridleways, etc are well maintained but surfaces could be improved especially where bridleways are churned into mud baths by horses in wet weather. Binfield green lanes are most in need of surface dressing because of horse damage. The rights of way are a valuable amenity and bring great pleasure to many walkers and walking groups in the Borough. Please keep up the high standard set by previous administrations.
49. Please can we have more bridle ways that link together rather than risking my life and my horses life dodging fast cars and frustrating vehicle users on the road
50. Please could there be some changes made to allow horse riders to ride safely around the West End area of Warfield? Not being able to ride around Woodhurst Park and the traffic lights outside the estate not able to sense horses is making it difficult to enjoy our sport.
51. Refer to question 13. i.e. better information and marketing. Additional comment under question 11. I have a navigation package on my phone with all footpaths.
52. Right of way between Stevenson Drive and Terrace Road North needs to be made safe and the damaged street lights repaired before Autumn
53. Roads are horrendous too with surfaces
54. Stop putting loose chippings on newly surfaced roads as these increase the risk of punctures for cyclists, increase the severity of injury if one falls off and damage the paintwork of cycles.
55. The access to paths and greenspaces is the best thing about bracknell
56. The path from Sandhurst Council to Blackwater needs building up particularly from river to trees in middle of field as in winter walkers have to turn around half way along from Raeburn Way roundabout and bridge near lake.
57. The paths used and most of the routes are good, except Hog Oak which is already noted. Would like to see more off road riding access available and more linked up routes as roads are very busy around Bracknell
58. The Public Footpaths in Bracknell are in excellent condition, well maintained, and well used. I hope that the Council will be able to continue to maintain the path network to this high standard. A BIG THANKYOU
59. The quality of bridle/footpaths varies hugely. I'd like to see a more holistic strategy applied to ensure these paths join up. Why does the path at Warfield Chase suddenly stop at the entrance to Hayley Green wood? Once in the wood that part of the path becomes almost impassable for 5 months of the year with the thickness of mud and poor drainage. What about the bridle ways that should provide a scenic route from Fernygrove Farm to Drift Road? Again impassable for most of the year due to the terrible condition of the path. What about Frost Folley? Full of dog mess, an overgrown path to Warfield church and too few dog waste and litter bins. Just a bit more thought and investment could make a massive difference to the quality of our walking routes.
60. The unsurfaced bridleways are an important access network that should be retained and protected. I would welcome more routes being introduced
61. There are very few areas for horse riders, the roads are dangerous and drivers ignorant and ill educated. More open spaces need to be provided for safe access for horse riders, horse riders should have access to SANGs
62. Under question 12. a note is made that poor condition of paths limits their use of PROW.
63. Vegetation very overgrown where I walk, in places the paths are becoming obscured
64. We have a town with a golden opportunity to replicate the ease of use of Danish and Dutch towns

- for pedestrians and cyclists. Invest in it.
65. We have so many new developments in these areas we need the bridleways maintained a little better..and kept open..even increase safer bridleways for us....the developments are huge around binfield and Warfield and there are a lot of horse riders here.....and a lot of impatient drivers...we don't particularly enjoy riding on busy roads...give us some more bridleways links please...
 66. We need more horse friendly tracks to help keep us off the roads, where possible.
 67. We need places to ride our horses due to the building of new houses. We are forced onto main roads which is unsafe for us, our horses and drivers that simply do not care for us at all.
 68. We need to stop 4x4 car owners using some of the paths e.g Hogoak lane and damage to surrounding vegetation!
 69. We walk in Wildmoor Heath and more board-walks are needed in some places. Also, I think it is a shame that this area is not really accessible to wheelchair users.
 70. Whilst Bracknell is probably better than some local councils , we still have to brave some busy roads . Whilst most driver are considerate there is a substantial minority who are dangerous. (on and off road).
 71. Would like it be be easier to find the paths and know who to contact when they are in a poor condition and can not be easily walked
 72. You have taken away all the land for housing, but haven't thought about the horse riders, i find this very upsetting.
 73. You keep taking away or making access to bridle paths difficult. As a horse rider I don't want to be on the road all the time. However thrisnis becoming more frequent as the countryside gets less and less with all the developments. It's only a matter of time before serious accidents happen because of more horses on the road. Horses are animals and they need to be exercised everyday. Please give us access to areas to ride in that keep us safe as well as motorists.

Appendix B

Consultee List

Bracknell Forest LCAF

Landowners / land managers

Wellington College

BBOWT

The Crown Estate

The National Trust

Farmers

Equine businesses – studs, polo clubs, etc.

Royal Military Academy

The Royal Farms

Conservation organisations

Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership

Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership

Bracknell Forest Natural History Society

Natural England

Bracknell Forest Council

Planning

Transport Development

Parks and Countryside

Environment and Public Protection

Leisure

Public Health

Neighbouring local highway authorities

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Hampshire County Council

Wokingham Borough Council

Surrey County Council

All 6 Town and Parish Councils – Binfield, Bracknell, Crowthorne, Sandhurst, Warfield and Winkfield

User groups

Ramblers Association - SEBR

British Horse Society (local)

Bracknell Forest Society

Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

TRF - Trail Riders Fellowship

Cycling UK

British Driving Society – carriage driving

Residents / visitors

Appendix C

Feedback from second public consultation

Date received	Consultee	Comment No.	Feedback	Response to feedback	Action taken
04.08.2017-27.09.2017	LCAF Member 1	1	Action no. 10. Would like to see the location of 24 hour accessible defibrillators added to the map.	Agree with the suggestion. This is a topic that has been discussed at previous LCAF meetings.	The need to map 24 hour accessible defibrillators, along with PRoW, open access land, cycleways and public transport hubs has been added to the action plan table.
		2	Action no. 21. about 'identifying possible shared cycling routes and continuing association with partners to develop possible routes in the borough' Would like to be rather more ambitious than just 2 more in 10 years.	Initially agreed to suggest that 5 routes might be more appropriate, but then reconsidered, as we don't have the power to deliver a certain number of routes, if we are working with partners.	Performance measure / timescale of action amended to read: To feed suggestions into the BFC Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
		3	Action no. 26. As we are including other national bodies we should add "Cycling UK" in col, 3.	Agreed.	Cycling UK added to the list of key organisations.
		4	Action no. 30. Change the wording in col, 4 to either put "invitations" or drop "sent to".	Agreed.	Text amended to read 'Invitations'.
		5	Action no. 34. Request to include LCAF in col 3, as members should be informed and become more involved in the work.	Agreed.	LCAF added to list of key organisations.
		6	Action no. 36. Same point as No 26.	Agreed.	Cycling UK added to the list of key organisations.
		7	Action no. 45. In addition to providing clearer signage for cyclists on footpaths where there's a perceived conflict between users, we should consider providing other signage too. For example, signs geared for dog walkers to remind them of their responsibilities.	Agreed in principle. We don't want cyclists to feel targeted and there has been other consultation feedback received which relates to pedestrians inappropriately using cyclepaths and dog fouling on footpaths. This is something that we've addressed in the plan.	Action no. 46 amended to include also considering including anti dog fouling signs on PRoW where there's a reported issue.

LCAF member 2	8	Action no. 5. Change reference to 'South Hill Health walks' to 'Short, Easy Taster Walks from South Hill Park'.	Agreed.	Wording updated.
	9	Query regarding reference to DMS in the Action Plan table.	Agreed, that an explanation is needed about what this acronym stands for.	Acronym and its meaning added to the Glossary and description provided in the Action Plan table.
	10	Suggested asking volunteer path wardens to report what is needed for Action no. 13, or signage could be included in 23.	Agreed about adding volunteer path wardens to list of key organisations under action no. 13, which concerns cataloguing all stiles and gates on PRoW. Some shuffling around of the action points required to address these points. Auditing signage to be kept separate as it will be easier to report against.	Volunteer path wardens added. Actions relating to auditing PRoW signage and cataloguing stiles, gates moved to sit under the section about Mapping and cataloguing the network.
	11	Action no. 44. Query if LCAF should approach the Parish, Parks and Public Realm Forum (PP&PRF) to attend one of their meetings, or if we invite T/P Councils as observers to a future LCAF meeting?	Both could be achieved provided that PP&PRF and LCAF are amenable to the idea. The first approach would need to be from LCAF.	Action point changed to show that LCAF would approach the PP&PRF to see if they'd be happy for the Chairman to attend one of their meetings.
LCAF member 3	12	Action no. 5. Include Jealott's Hill Community Landshare, as they are already doing walks for Dementia patients and are running a variant of the Green Gym.	Agreed.	Jealott's Hill Community Landshare added to the list of key organisations.
	13	Action no. 14. Recommended caution about the wording used in this action point about making Footbridges 'accessible'. There are very many 'plank bridges' that are fine for walkers but would be very expensive to upgrade for wheelchairs, buggies etc.	Agreed.	Text changed to say, 'Ensure that footbridges and culverts on PRoW, that cross natural obstacles, are safe.'

	14	Action no. 11. Wanted clarification about the type of signs to be audited i.e. those from metalled roads or waymarkers.	Agreed that better distinction is needed between signs from metalled roads and waymarkers.	Text now focuses on auditing PRoW signs from metalled roads. Providing these signs is listed as a policy in RoWIP (2.5).
	15	Action no. 17. Suggest that Fly tip issues are kept separate from 'maintenance'. One rogue Fly tip can use up the total budget & is outside the control of Parks & Countryside.	Agreed.	Ref. to fly-tipped rubbish removed from the description.
	16	Action no. 21. Fully agreed with this action point. Identifying possible shared cycling routes and continuing association with partners to develop possible routes in the borough can triple usage - Walkers, Cyclists & Horse Riders be considered.	N/A.	N/A.
	17	Recommended altering the wording used in action no. 26. relating to carrying out an audit of crossing points or sections of the road network used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists to reach connecting paths.	Concerns about who would fund and audit this work. Focus instead should be to identify potential enhancements if required, which is covered under Action. No. 26.	Action point removed.
	18	Action no. 30. The suggestion was made that Warfield Parish also has a 'PRoW Champion' by one of the members who sits on the forum.	Agreed.	Text updated to reflect this.
	19	Action no. 35. Point was raised that we shouldn't limit this action point to reviewing the illegal use of FPs by motor vehicles?	Agreed. All users of PRoW need to be treated fairly. There are other instances of illegally using FPs and BRs that need to be taken into account.	Reworded to be more general and not single out any particular user i.e. 'Monitor illegal use of footpaths and bridleways by other PRoW users and take action to address this'.
	20	Comments on some repeats of actions.	Agreed.	Actions refined to take this into account.
	21	More general feedback also provided on the rest of the draft plan.	Most points taken on board. Text edits not carried out where they were quotes / extracts from other plans/ strategies.	Feedback and comments incorporated into the plan. Text being quoted from other strategies / plans was made more obvious.

27.09.17	LCAF member 4	22	Action no. 1. Do we want to limit this to walking or develop family cycle routes in conjunction with The Crown Estate or other partners?	This is an action that was specific to the 4 walking routes our website, but it could be expanded to include ref. to cycle routes that are already publicised on our website.	Action updated to include ref. to cycle routes i.e. 'Also review circular cycling routes on rights of way and with links to adopted highway cyclepaths and permissive route in public open spaces.'
		23	Action no. 6. Add date to timescale and potentially remove Strava Metro, having done some research there are a number of apps that could be used to fulfil this function. Make GPX routes available on council website available to download.	Agreed.	Timescale provided and ref to Strava Metro updated to encompass all relevant mobile phone apps. Action added about making GPX routes available to download from BFC website.
		24	Action no. 26. Is it definitely Sustrans that conduct this or is it Cycling UK?	Agreed.	Replaced Sustrans with Cycling UK.
		25	Action no. 28. Perhaps could be expanded to include identifying opportunities for PRoW or Circular Routes?	Agreed, we should focus on opportunities as well as addressing issues.	Action point amended to: 'Work with neighbouring LAFs and highway authorities to identify and address cross boundary rights of way anomalies and explore opportunities for promoting PRoW and circular routes.'

10.08.17	Member of public	26	Request to put a cycle path parallel to Old Wokingham Road and Peacock Lane as this road as it is heavily used by cyclists commuting to Bracknell from Crowthorne. Concerns expressed over safety of cyclists on this bendy road.	<p>The comments expressed by the respondent will be taken on board. However, cycle paths are not a type of public right of way, and creation would be a matter for the council's Transport Development section.</p> <p>As with all aspects of transport related improvement works, the council needs to prioritise its limited funds into areas of most need across all modes of transport.</p> <p>Alternative traffic-free cycle routes connecting Crowthorne with Bracknell do exist, but we will ensure your comments are considered by officers when considering improvements to the borough's cycle route network.</p>	Consulted LCAF Referred onto Transport Development Team, as doesn't relate to PRow or routes through open spaces – highway matter.
11.08.17	Member of public	27	The respondent would like to see Murrellhill Lane recognised as a right of way, as they observe that 'the main traffic on this road are pedestrians and cyclists' and it is well used by people (including children travelling to Binfield School) as a safe route to walk, cycle, jog, dog-walk.' They anticipate that the numbers using this lane will increase once the learning village is operational and express concern over the lack of a footpath for walkers and cyclists to use.	<p>This is an existing ancient highway and as such can't be dedicated as a public right of way.</p> <p>Matter to be raised with BFCs Transport Development Team.</p>	Consulted LCAF.

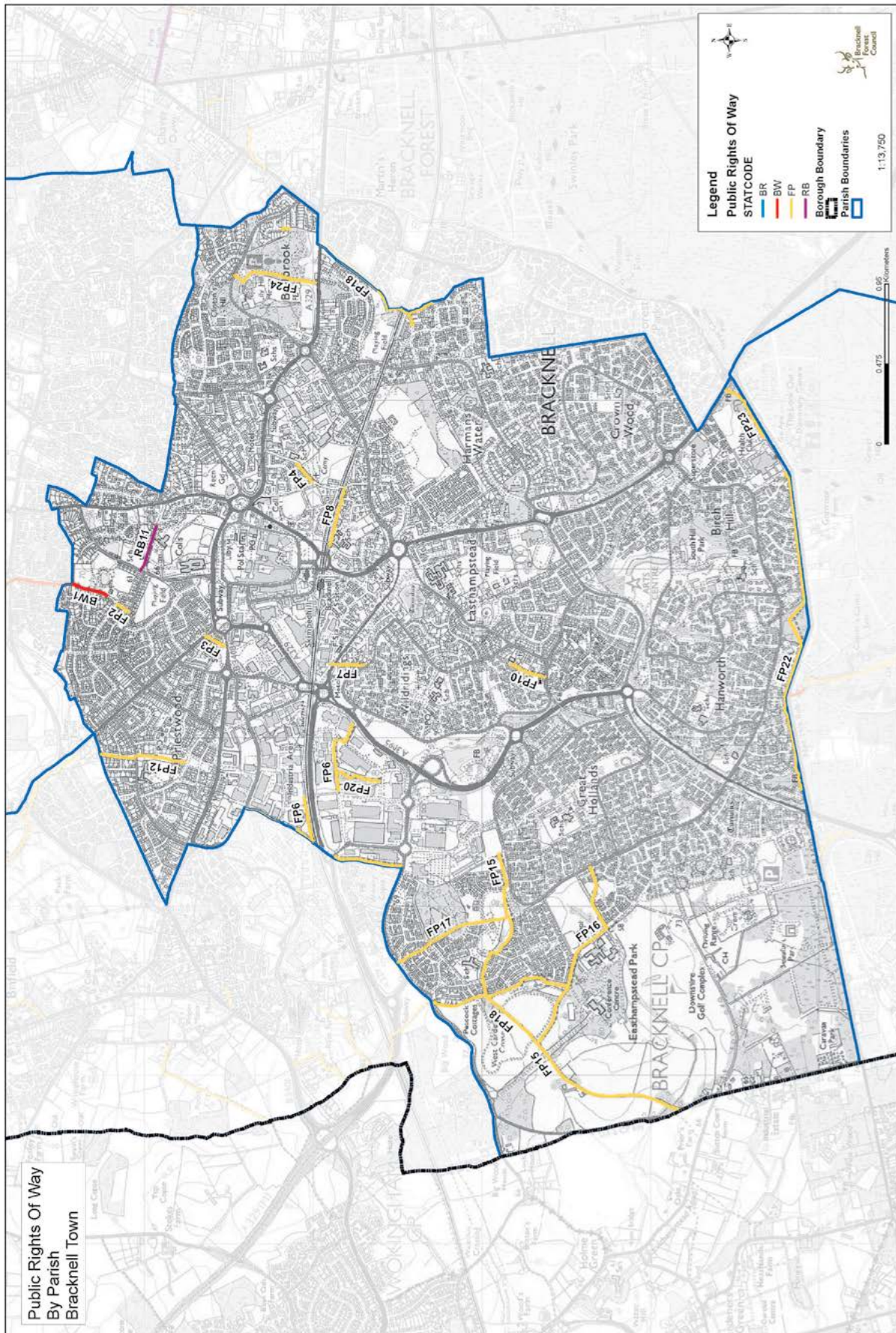
16.08.17	BVCP	28	<p>They welcome the mention of the Blackwater Valley Footpath and the support to secure a better route in the Bracknell DC area. It is one of their aims to get the Blackwater Valley Path dedicated as a PROW, in particular stretches not protected by other mean such as SANG. They would support a statement to that effect in the plan.</p>	Agreed.	Consulted LCAF and a map produced and included in the RoWIP appendices which shows rights of way, green spaces, Open Access Land and SANGs.
		29	<p>Overall the plan would better serve the public if it took a wider approach to analysing the access network. Although access on non public rights of way is mentioned it is not mapped. By mapping SANG, open access areas and cycleways the gaps in the usable network would become apparent, an essential first step in an improvement plan.</p>	Agreed.	Consulted LCAF and a map produced and included in the RoWIP appendices which shows rights of way, green spaces, Open Access Land and SANGs.
		30	<p>It would also be useful to map the priority projects you have identified.</p>	<p>It is hoped that the project descriptions provided in the plan and the 7 maps already provided in the appendices can be used to determine the location of the few projects where there's a physical location. A more detailed project map will be provided as part of the work to catalogue all stiles and gates on PROW (see action no. 12).</p>	Consulted LCAF. Work started to catalogue gates and stiles on PROW.
		31	<p>The plan could be more specific as to how will interact and be implemented through the planning process, to avoid missing opportunities or having weak conditions applied to planning permissions that do not achieve the desired outcome.</p>	<p>This is a good point, and RoWIP2 should be used as an authoritative plan in planning application consultations.</p>	Consulted LCAF and BFC Planning. Action ref 16 expanded. Policy RoWIP 9.3 expanded.
16.09.17	Member of public	32	<p>The commentary on cyclists on p.31 addresses the use of pavements by cyclists but could equally apply to pedestrians on cycle lanes. A statement on the use of cycle lanes (as opposed to cycle paths) also needs to be included. Raises the point that very few people understand that lanes are essentially the same as roads and you would not walk / push a pram / use a mobility scooter on a road (unless obstructed).</p>	<p>Agree regarding the point about needing to also address the misuse of cycle lanes.</p>	Consulted LCAF Text updated to also include a statement on the use of cycle lanes (as opposed to cycle paths) in section 6.2.

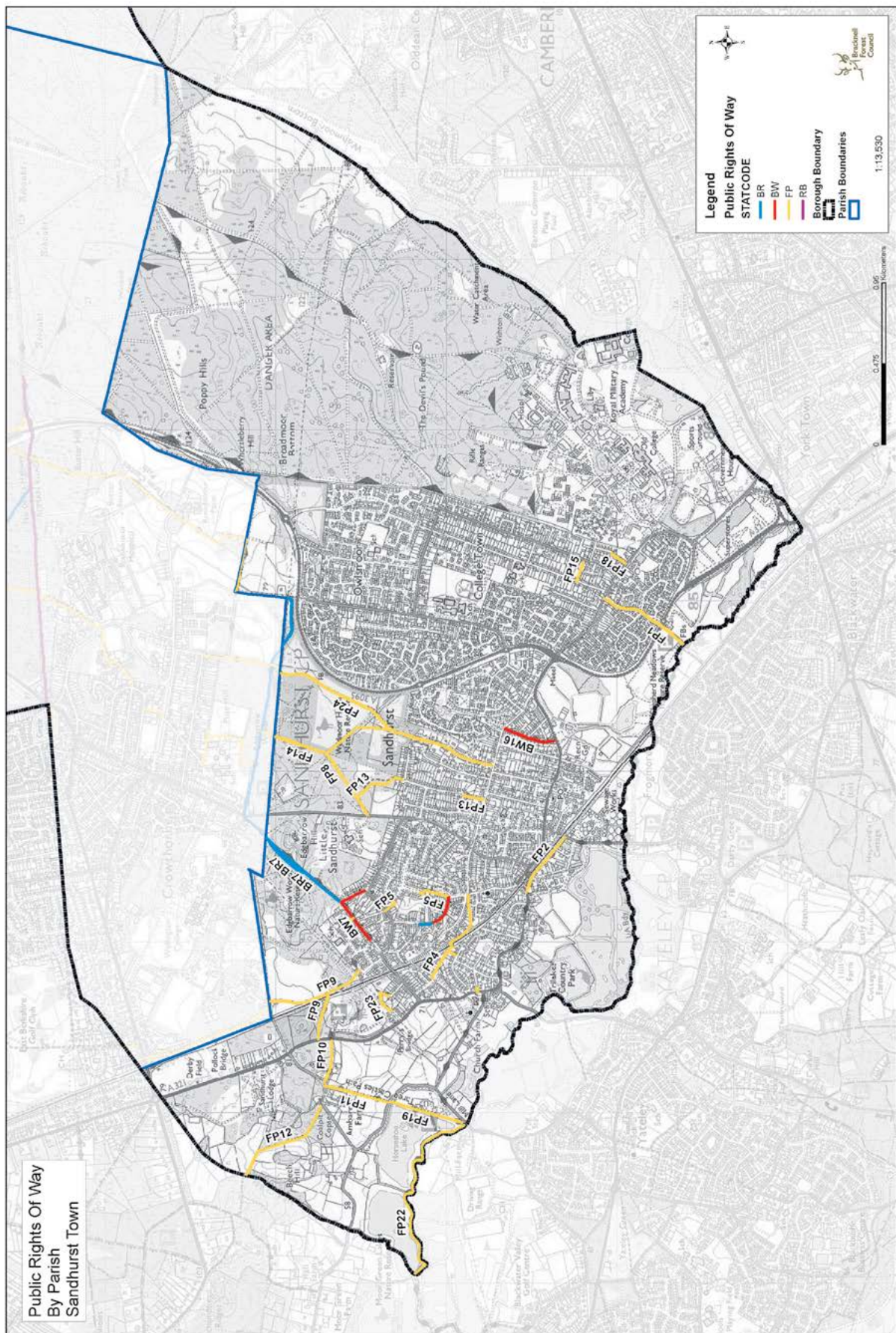
		33	<p>An action would be to promote the distinction between cycle paths and cycle lanes and to ensure that road / on road signage is put in place not just at the start or end of cycleways, but also at points where pedestrians are most likely to enter onto cycle lanes.</p> <p>A new action 45 b might also read: Give consideration to including 'No Pedestrians' signage on cycle lanes where there's a conflict between perceived usage.</p> <p>"In many places CYCLISTS want to CYLE without worrying about meeting SLOWER moving PEDESTRIANS around blind bends or being surprised by PEDESTRIANS STEPPING right INFRONT OF them."</p>	<p>At the conference there was little perceived conflict between user groups. Need to review if the signage is clear enough? Segregating a footpath might actually give rise to greater conflict, as it increased the perceived division between the 2.</p>	<p>Consulted LCAF Text updated in section 6.2.</p>
		34	<p>Suggestion to add the Statutory health and wellbeing plan in the list of strategies where there is a shared commitment to healthy living between the council and health services.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Strategy added to section 3 i.e. "Seamless Health" Bracknell Forest Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020.</p>
		35	<p>The Sustainable Community Strategy is no longer a statutory document and the Bracknell Forest Partnership does not exist in its original capacity.</p>	<p>The strategy runs until 2018 and is still available on BFCs website, but it's worth checking with BCFs Performance and Partnerships team to confirm the point raised in the feedback.</p>	<p>Email sent to BFC to confirm this point. Removed reference to the strategy from section 3.</p>
		36	<p>Missing Key to explain the tick system in resource requirements in the action plan.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Key to tick system included at the start of the Action Plan</p>
		37	<p>Action 4 - partners - there are a lot more groups that would be keen to be involved in promoting walking in their local communities - speak to the Bracknell Forest Public Health team on this. Suggestion to mention the "WOW Week of Walks" and perhaps a commitment to make this an annual promotional event.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Consulted LCAF WOW Week of walks added as an example in the Action Plan.</p>
21.09.17	Member of public	38	<p>Positive feedback about it being a 'sound and well laid out plan. Please keep up the good work in maintaining the many rights of way. (Main use personally is running/walking).'</p>	<p>Grateful for the positive feedback.</p>	<p>Feedback passed to our rights of way team.</p>

02.10.17	Hampshire Local Countryside Access Forum	39	<p>Response as being from HCAF as the statutory Local Access Forum for Hampshire (excluding the South Downs and New Forest National Parks), as defined under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The HCAF discussed the draft at its recent quarterly meeting on 12 September, and would like to commend Bracknell Forest on the positive approach set out in this second RoWIP, particularly in regard to the maintenance and upgrading of existing routes, installation of gates in place of stiles and engagement with the Bracknell Forest Local Access Forum and other volunteers.</p> <p>This Forum is pleased that the plan recognises cross-border linkages and especially (from the point of view of the Hampshire interest) the Blackwater Valley Path which provides a 23-mile route passing through Bracknell Forest and forms a direct link into other areas. It is important to acknowledge, however, that many people do not undertake linear journeys of this magnitude on foot, nor where it is possibly by bicycle or horse. There are many good shorter circular routes in and through Bracknell Forest which combine use of part of the Blackwater Valley Path with other rights of way. The report recognises the promoted circular routes, but many people choose to make their own routes and rely on a rich network of inter-connecting rights of way both within and across the boundaries of any one local authority area. It would be useful to see this idea given greater emphasis, e.g. at section 5.3.</p> <p>This Forum would also wish to see mechanisms in place for cross-boundary communication between authorities to ensure consistent standards of maintenance, with the user ideally having no perception of where the boundary may lie.</p>	<p>HCAF comments welcomed.</p> <p>It is difficult to make specific references to routes that people are devising for themselves. This was discussed at BFC LCAF.</p> <p>An appropriate revision to section 5.3 is difficult to compose.</p> <p>Agreed. Initial ideas for increased liaison at officer level have been discussed.</p>	<p>Consulted LCAF.</p> <p>Email thanking the Chair sent.</p> <p>Intend to invite Hampshire County Council officer(s) and HCAF Chair to join sub-regional LAF Chair meetings with Berkshire, Surrey and Buckinghamshire based LAFs.</p>
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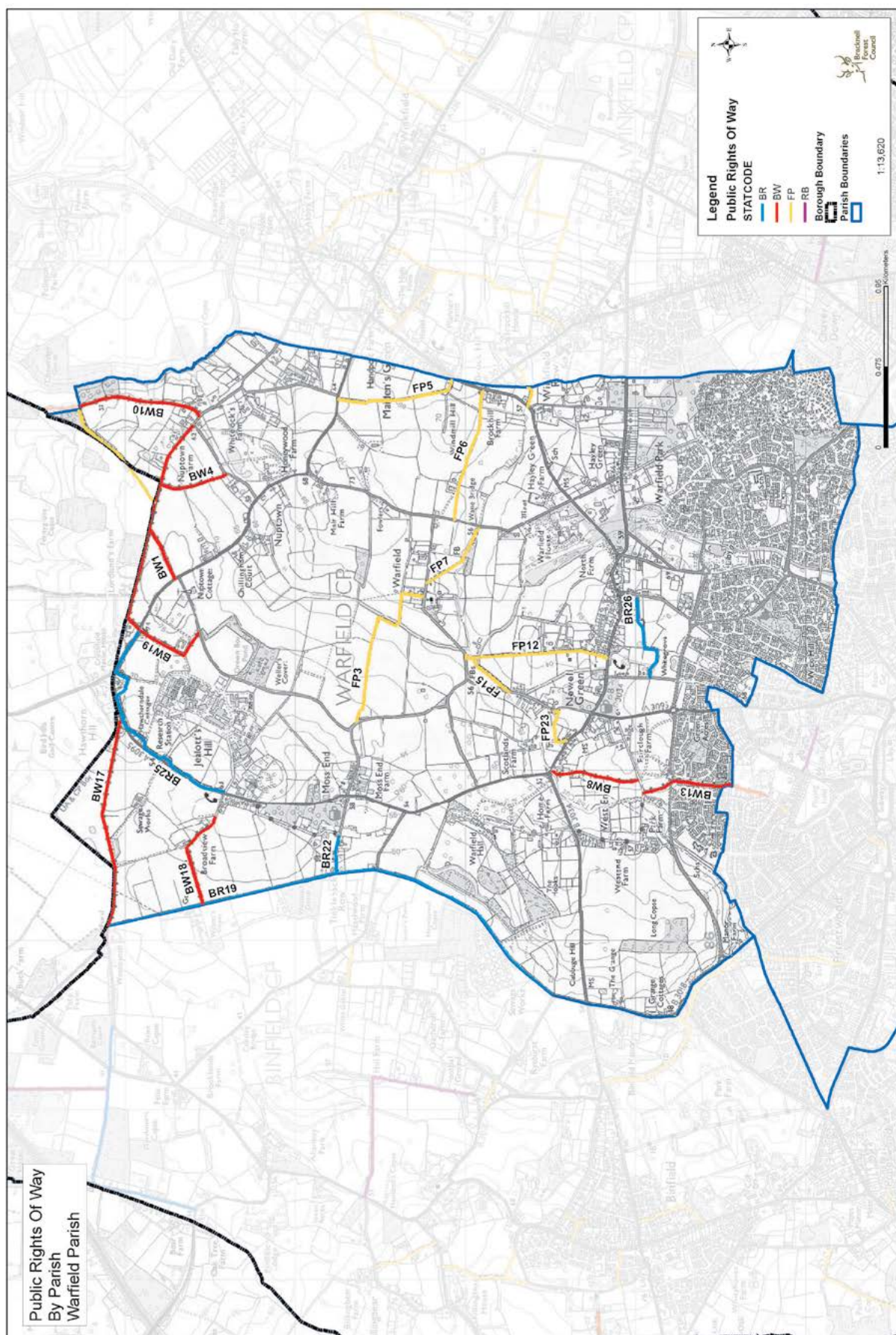
04.10.17	Binfield Parish Council	40	Section 3.4 – no mention of Neighbourhood Plans as an area of policy. The Binfield NP includes policies (TC1 and TC1.1) which concern provision for cycling and walking – both providing new and protecting/enhancing historic provision. As more areas add Neighbourhood plans it would be good to see these recognised as an important area of policy.	Agreed that the town and parish neighbourhood plans should be referenced	Reference included under 3.11 Policy Context to Binfield Neighbourhood Plan which forms part of the development Plan for Bracknell Forest, and relevant policies quoted. Reference to other Neighbourhood Plans that are being produced and are at various stages.
		41	Section 4 talks to the volume of rights of way by classification and then by area. Binfield has high density (km of ROW by km2 of parish) but this section doesn't identify the quality of the volume – including the element of pathways which are fragmented. Certainly, in Binfield there are sections of pathway which are rights of way but are not connected to any other pathway and will therefore continue to drop in usage because they are not circular or accessible walks. (this is referenced in section 6.9)	The quality of the volume of PRoW, particularly in parishes like Binfield is worth examination. This is in part picked up on in section 6.9 where we examine inconsistencies in Rights of Way, with one example being in Binfield (i.e. Mare Lane). Quality of PRoW is also flagged up via the BVPI inspections (action no. 13) and as part of the work to catalogue all gates and stiles on PRoW (action no. 12).	Action point 10. Give consideration to mapping quality of the network including factors such as fragmentation.
		42	BPC in a joint activity with their local (and newly formed) Binfield Environment Group want to restart annual inspections as local activities so that there is input from local people into the quality and usage of rights of way. They'd look to work with the rangers team on the best way to implement this activity	This is encouraging news and the rangers team would be keen to work with Binfield Environment Group to restart annual inspections of PRoW as local activities	Flagged this up with the rights of way ranger and LCAF.
		43	Signage - BPC would wish to improve the signage its RoWs/Footpaths showing old names as noted in Robin Mosses booklet of 1976 updated in 1986, liaising with BFC department where found to be relevant.	Rights of Way can be named if they are not formal streets with residential, business or other property addresses. Parish Councils can be involved in the process of naming paths.	Consulted LCAF. Members supported the idea, and recent successful examples in Sandhurst and Binfield were referred to.

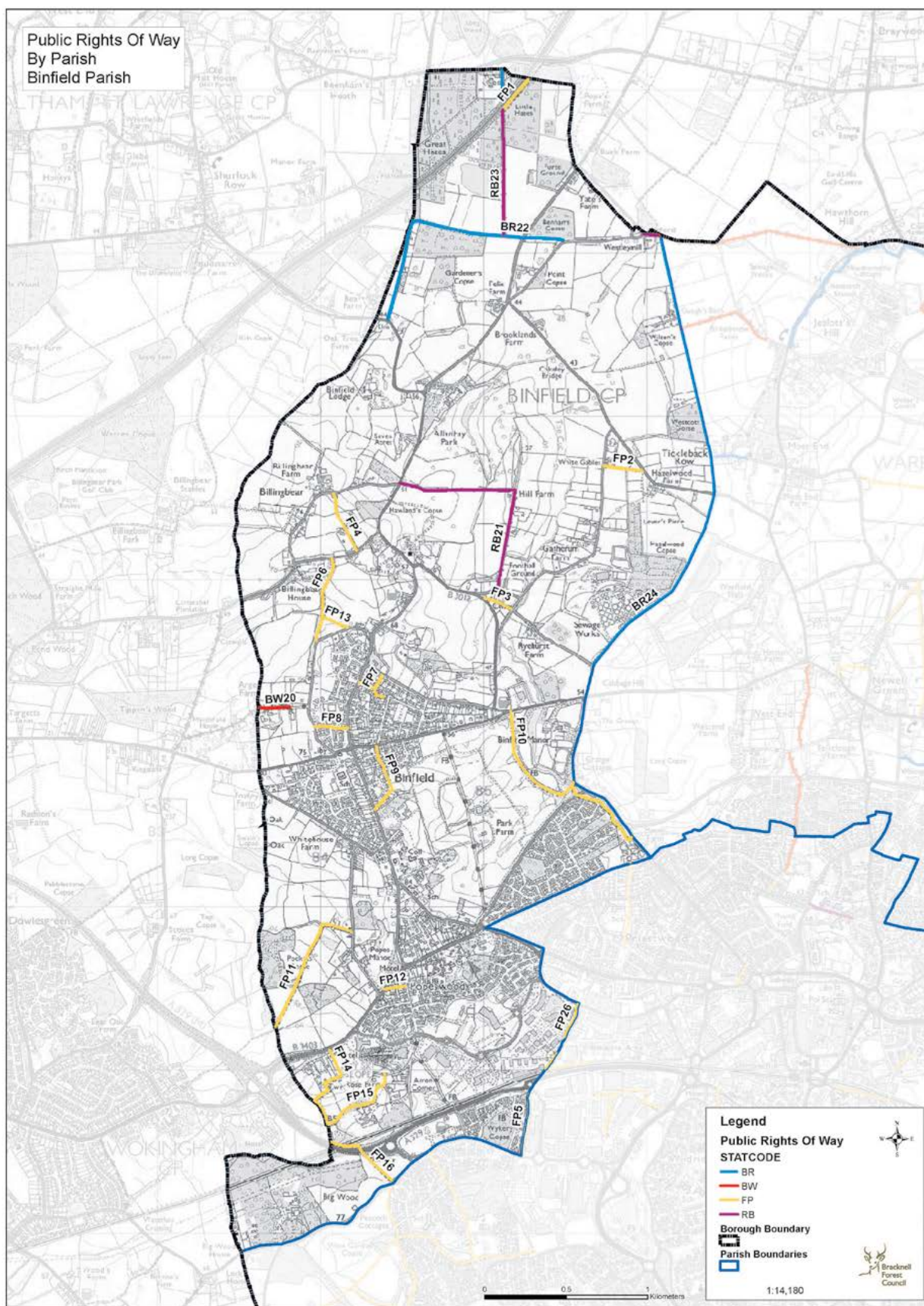
Appendix D Rights of Way Maps

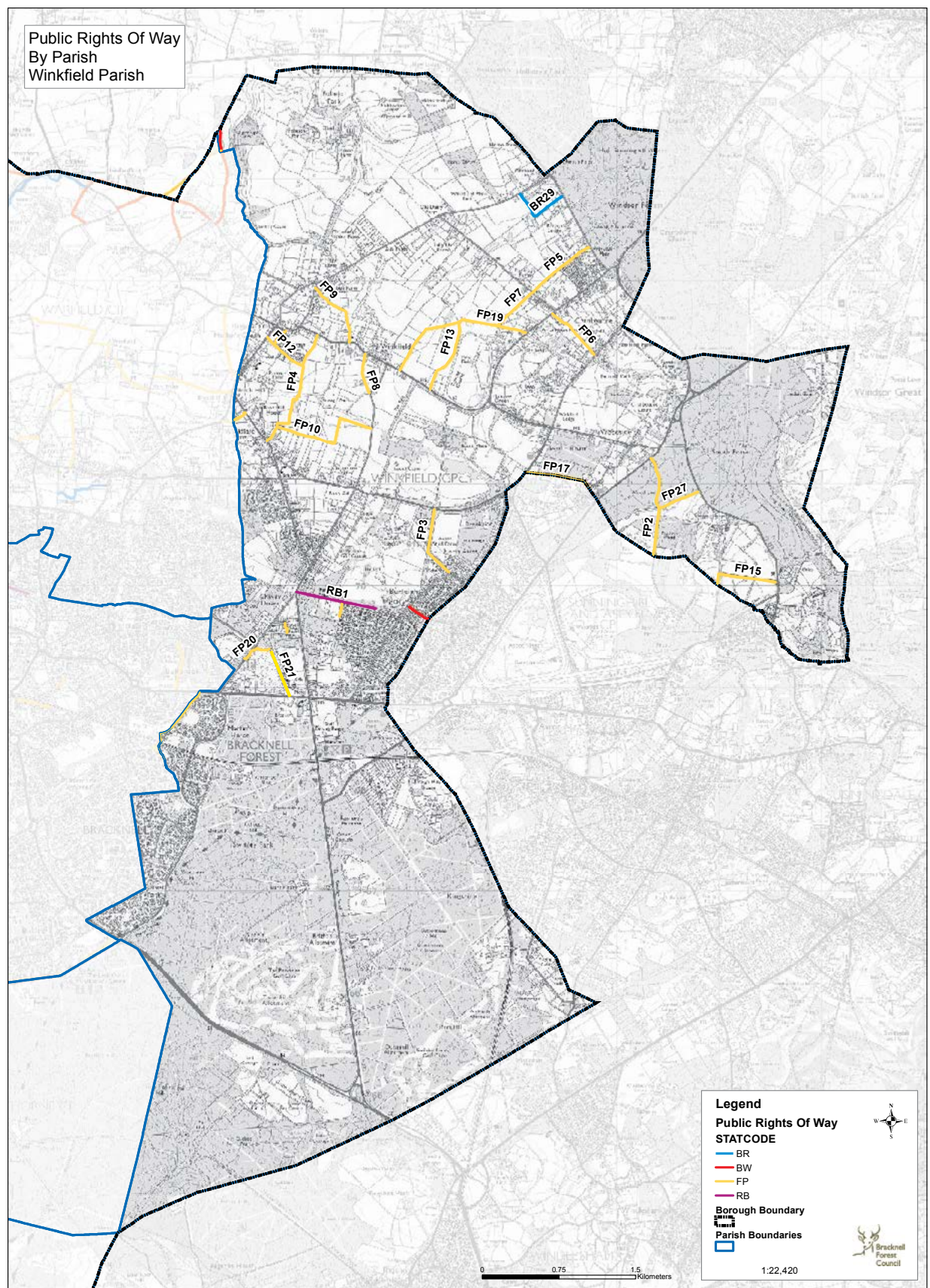




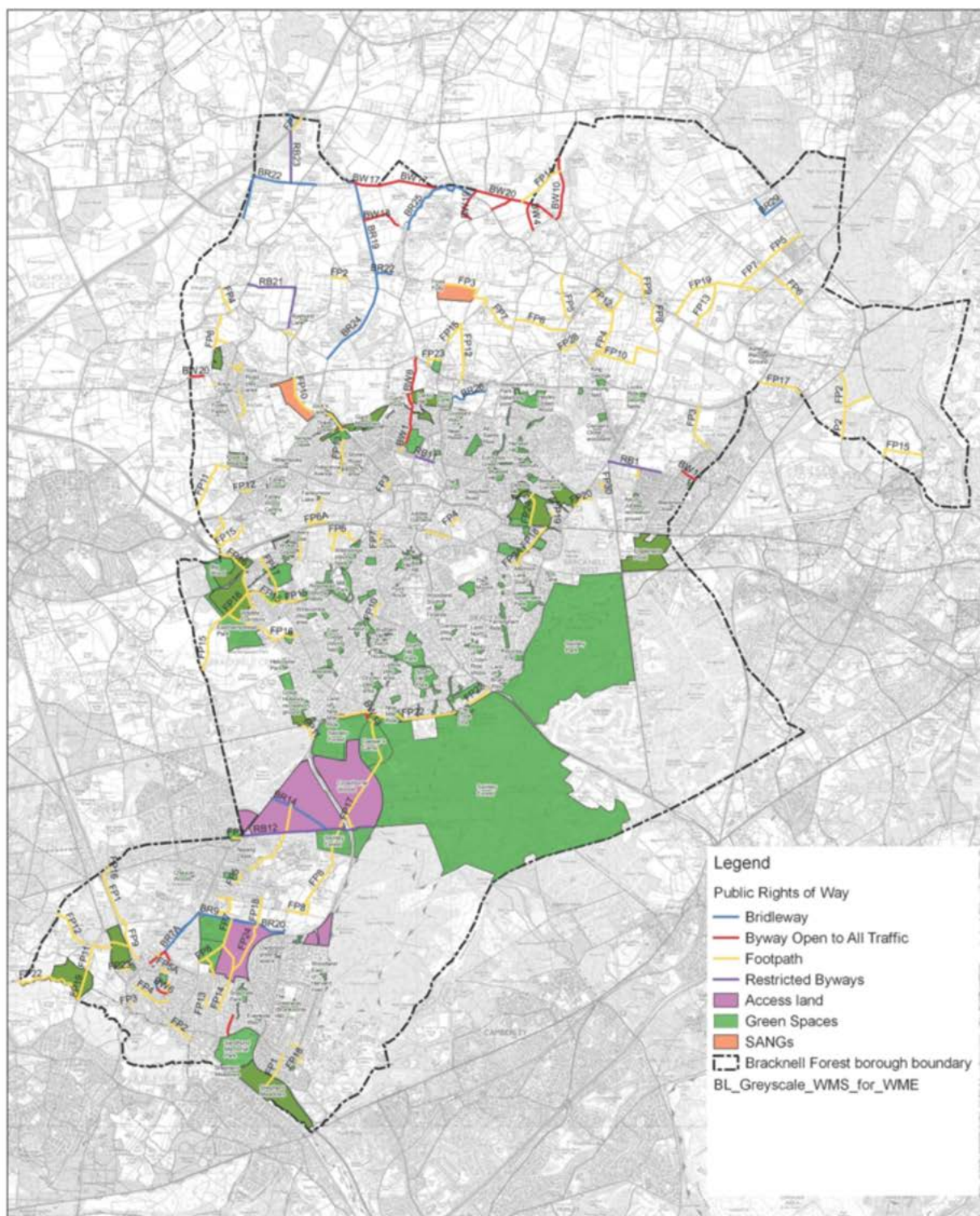
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Bracknell Forest PRow and Open Spaces Map



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Ordnance Survey 100019488

0 1 2 3 4 5 km

Appendix E BVPI Form

BVPI (2)

rear page

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SURVEYOR			
PAGE	OF		
PATH REFERENCE:			
PARISH:			
STATUS:	FP	BR	BOAT
	RUPP	RB	
SURVEYOR:			
DATE:			
OFFICE USE ONLY			
LENGTH:			
PROMOTED ROUTE:	Y	N	PART
P3:	Y	N	
OTHER H.A. DATA			

FP = Footpath. BR = Bridleway. BOAT = Byway Open to All Traffic. RUPP = Road Used as Public Path. RB = Restricted Byway.

6. Best Value Performance Indicator	
EASE OF USE - to be completed by all surveyors	
The following headings should be individually assessed and marked by a circle to denote a PASS or FAIL. A failure in any one category will automatically mean that the whole path will fail. Do not record a pass or fail where the heading is not relevant (e.g. bridges neither present nor required)	
Signposting note: A path wholly within a built-up area, with a hard surface throughout and with a clearly defined route may PASS the signpost test with a missing or defective signpost/waymarker but must FAIL if it shows the incorrect status. On all other paths, signposts/waymarkers must be in place, show correct status, be properly aligned and clearly visible to pass 6.1 below.	
Additionally, entries 1.3, 1.4 (if R), 1.5 (if M or R), 1.6 & 1.7 (if R) and 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 5.2, 5.4 & 5.7 would also fail a path. M = Missing and R = Replace or Repair Immediately.	
6.1	Signpost/waymarker (road) (1.1)
6.2	Waymarking along path (1.2)
6.3	Bridges (1.5)
6.4	Stiles, Gates, Steps & barriers (1.3, 1.4, 1.6 & 1.7)
6.5	Obstructions (2 & 5)
6.6	Ploughing/cropping (4.1 & 4.2)
6.7	Surface Condition (4.3, 4.4 & 4.5)
6.8	OVERALL

OTHER NOTES AND DATA

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BVPI (2) RIGHTS OF WAY STANDARD SURVEY FORM											front page		
FULL SURVEY (use continuation sheet and renumber from 11)											SUMMARY SURVEY		
DATA BY REFERENCE POINT											DATA BY TOTALS		
1: FURNITURE											Total	Defective (M/R)	
G M A R	1	Signpost/waymark (roadside)											
	2	Waymark/other signpost along path											
	3	Highway Authority Barrier (Safety/amenity)											
	4	Steps/revetment											
	5	Bridges (inc. culverts)											
	6	Stiles											
	7	Gates											
T i c k	2: OBSTRUCTIONS - POINT												
	1	Wall/fence/elec fence/hedge/other barrier											
	2	Tree/bough											
	3	Temporary deposit(e.g. straw bales)											
	4	Illegal or misleading sign											
	5	Building											
	6	Muddy/boggy/hole localised (eg in gateway)											
N u m b e r r e l e v a n t c o l u m n s	3: SURFACE TYPE												
	1	Cross arable field											
	2	Arable Headland											
	3	Natural (inc. set-aside excl arable headland)											
	4	Surfaced (eg tarmac, stone)											
	4. OBSTRUCTIONS - LINEAR (surface)												
	1	Crossfield not reinstated											
N u m b e r r e l e v a n t c o l u m n s	2	Headland ploughed											
	3	Surfaced path out of repair											
	4	Flooded/Muddy/Boggy/Rutted											
	5	Upgrowth (incl arable headland)											
	5: OBSTRUCTIONS - LINEAR (other)												
	1	Overgrowth (i.e. hedge, not upgrowth)											
	2	Standing Water (eg Pond/Lake)											
	3	Barbed wire/electric fence adjacent											
N u m b e r r e l e v a n t c o l u m n s	4	Intimidating beast/person											
	5	Collapsed Wall											
	6	Encroachment (not ploughing)											
	7	Quarry											
	8	Plantation											
LINK INFORMATION													

For Link extents: extend lines in the row above to indicate junction with another right of way/highway
Surveyors are to complete EITHER the columns in the FULL SURVEY section (using additional pages if necessary) OR the SUMMARY SURVEY section on the right hand side of this page. If the SUMMARY SURVEY columns are being used, the left hand columns may be used as a check list.

Appendix F Countryside Code

Respect - Protect - Enjoy

Respect other people:

- consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment:

- leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors:

- plan ahead and be prepared
- follow advice and local signs

Respect other people

Please respect the local community and other people using the outdoors. Remember your actions can affect people's lives and livelihoods.

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

Respect the needs of local people and visitors alike – for example, don't block gateways, driveways or other paths with your vehicle.

When riding a bike or driving a vehicle, slow down or stop for horses, walkers and farm animals and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horse-riders on bridleways.

Co-operate with people at work in the countryside. For example, keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.

Busy traffic on small country roads can be unpleasant and dangerous to local people, visitors and wildlife - so slow down and where possible, leave your vehicle at home, consider sharing lifts and use alternatives such as public transport or cycling. For public transport information, phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.traveline.info.

Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

A farmer will normally close gates to keep farm animals in, but may sometimes leave them open so the animals can reach food and water. Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. When in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.

Follow paths unless wider access is available, such as on open country or registered common land (known as 'open access land').

If you think a sign is illegal or misleading such as a 'Private - No Entry' sign on a public path, contact the local authority.

Leave machinery and farm animals alone – don't interfere with animals even if you think they're in distress. Try to alert the farmer instead.

Use gates, stiles or gaps in field boundaries if you can – climbing over walls, hedges and fences can damage them and increase the risk of farm animals escaping.

Our heritage matters to all of us – be careful not to disturb ruins and historic sites.

Protect the natural environment

We all have a responsibility to protect the countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees and try to leave no trace of your visit. When out with your dog make sure it is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, horses, wildlife or other people.

Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home

Protecting the natural environment means taking special care not to damage, destroy or remove features such as rocks, plants and trees. They provide homes and food for wildlife, and add to everybody's enjoyment of the countryside.

Litter and leftover food doesn't just spoil the beauty of the countryside, it can be dangerous to wildlife and farm animals – so take your litter home with you. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.

Fires can be as devastating to wildlife and habitats as they are to people and property – so be careful with naked flames and cigarettes at any time of the year. Sometimes, controlled fires are used to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between 1 October and 15 April, but if a fire appears to be unattended then report it by calling 999.

Keep dogs under effective control

When you take your dog into the outdoors, always ensure it does not disturb wildlife, farm animals, horses or other people by keeping it under effective control. This means that you:

- keep your dog on a lead, or
- keep it in sight at all times, be aware of what it's doing and be confident it will return to you promptly on command
- ensure it does not stray off the path or area where you have a right of access

Special dog rules may apply in particular situations, so always look out for local signs – for example:

- dogs may be banned from certain areas that people use, or there may be restrictions, byelaws or control orders limiting where they can go
- the access rights that normally apply to open country and registered common land (known as 'open access' land) require dogs to be kept on a short lead between 1 March and 31 July, to help protect ground nesting birds, and all year round near farm animals
- at the coast, there may also be some local restrictions to require dogs to be kept on a short lead during the bird breeding season, and to prevent disturbance to flocks of resting and feeding birds during other times of year

It's always good practice (and a legal requirement on 'open access' land) to keep your dog on a lead around farm animals and horses, for your own safety and for the welfare of the animals. A farmer may shoot a dog which is attacking or chasing farm animals without being liable to

compensate the dog's owner.

However, if cattle or horses chase you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead – don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it. Your dog will be much safer if you let it run away from a farm animal in these circumstances and so will you.

Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly – 'bag it and bin it'. Make sure your dog is wormed regularly to protect it, other animals and people.

Enjoy the outdoors

Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where and when you can go. For example, your rights to go onto some areas of open access land and coastal land may be restricted in particular places at particular times. Find out as much as you can about where you are going, plan ahead and follow advice and local signs.

Plan ahead and be prepared

You'll get more from your visit if you refer to up-to-date maps or guidebooks and websites before you go. Visit Natural England on GOV.UK or contact local information centres or libraries for a list of outdoor recreation groups offering advice on specialist activities.

You're responsible for your own safety and for others in your care – especially children - so be prepared for natural hazards, changes in weather and other events. Wild animals, farm animals and horses can behave unpredictably if you get too close, especially if they're with their young - so give them plenty of space.

Check weather forecasts before you leave. Conditions can change rapidly especially on mountains and along the coast, so don't be afraid to turn back. When visiting the coast check for tide times on EasyTide - don't risk getting cut off by rising tides and take care on slippery rocks and seaweed.

Part of the appeal of the countryside is that you can get away from it all. You may not see anyone for hours, and there are many places without clear mobile phone signals, so let someone else know where you're going and when you expect to return.

Follow advice and local signs

England has about 190,000 km (118,000 miles) of public rights of way, providing many opportunities to enjoy the natural environment. Get to know the signs and symbols used in the countryside to show paths and open countryside. See the Countryside Code leaflet for some of the symbols you may come across.

Advice for land managers

Know your rights, responsibilities and liabilities

People visiting the countryside provide important income for the local economy. Most like to follow a visible route, prefer using proper access points like gates, and generally want to do the right thing - but they need your help.

The Ordnance Survey's 1:25,000 maps show public rights of way and access land. These

maps are not 'definitive'. If in doubt you can check the legal status of rights of way with your local authority. You can find out which areas of open access land are mapped under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 on the open access web pages.

For guidance on your rights, responsibilities and liabilities, contact your local authority or National Park authority. The Country Land and Business Association on 020 7235 0511 and the National Farmers' Union on 0870 845 8458 can also offer advice.

For specific queries about open access land, check the open access pages on GOV.UK, or contact the open access contact centre, on 0300 060 2091.

By law, you must keep rights of way clear and not obstruct people's entry onto access land - it's a criminal offence to discourage rights of public access with misleading signs.

Trespassing is often unintentional - for advice on tackling trespass contact your local authority.

Make it easy for visitors to act responsibly

Most people who visit the countryside are keen to act responsibly and problems are normally due to a lack of understanding. There are a number of ways you can help them to realise their responsibilities:

- keeping paths clear and waymarks and signs in good order and up to date will help people stick to the right routes and access points. Contact your local authority or National Park Authority to find out what help is available
- where there is public access through a boundary feature, such as a fence or hedge, create a gap if you can – or use an accessible gate or, if absolutely necessary, a stile. When installing completely new gates and stiles, make sure you have the permission of the local authority
- encourage people to respect your wishes by giving clear, polite guidance where it's needed. For example, telling visitors about your land management work helps them to avoid getting in your way.
- rubbish attracts other rubbish – by getting rid of items such as farm waste properly, you'll discourage the illegal dumping of rubbish and encourage others to get rid of their rubbish responsibly

Identify possible threats to visitors' safety

People come to the countryside to enjoy themselves. They have the first line of responsibility to keep themselves and their children safe while there, but you need to ensure that your activities do not knowingly put them at risk:

- consider possible man-made and natural hazards on your land and draw any 'hidden' risks to the public's attention
- try to avoid using electric fencing or barbed wire where people may accidentally touch it, particularly alongside narrow paths and bridleways
- if electric fencing is used, ensure warning signs are visible
- use and store any chemicals or poisonous substances responsibly on your land. They may kill wildlife or cause harm to people or pets. Any pest control you undertake must be planned with this risk in mind
- animals likely to attack visitors should not be allowed to roam freely where the public has access – you may be liable for any resulting harm
- your duty of care under the Occupiers' Liability Acts of 1957 and 1984 depends on the type of access right people have – so it's important to know what rights, if any, apply to your land. By voluntarily dedicating land for permanent public access you may be able to reduce this liability

Out and about in Swinley Forest

In June 2016 we were fortunate to be given a guided tour of Swinley Forest by The Crown Estate. The visit, which started at The Look Out, was an eye opening experience! We were interested to learn just how complex the site is to manage, as it fulfils an enormous variety of roles.

The forest, which covers 3,000 acres, is a mecca for dog walkers and a major attraction for thrill seeking mountain bikers. It contains internationally important wildlife habitats, being part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. We also saw one of the historic redoubts, which are military fortifications from Napoleonic times.

Managing the large numbers who visit what is primarily a commercial forest so effectively has been a triumph for the foresters, particularly if you take into account the need to protect the rare ground nesting birds (Nightjar, Woodlark and Dartford Warbler) that can be found there.

Planting a variety of trees has helped to promote the forest's long term resilience against factors such as forest fires and pests and disease. It was an intriguing visit of which we are most appreciative.

Foreword

We are an independent group of walkers, cyclists, horse riders, local Councillors and landowners who meet three times a year to progress issues about the countryside and the rights of way network.

We work with the Local Authority and other key landowners in the Borough to promote open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area. Our main goal is to have a countryside and rights of way network that is accessible to all.

We are looking for enthusiastic people to join us who are passionate about the countryside and promoting access for all.

Working with Bracknell Forest Council we have produced this leaflet, in the hope that in taking the time to find out a little more about our work, that you'll consider joining this small friendly team.

Peter Radband, Chairman.



Expression of interest

Please complete this form and return to us (below) if you'd like to express your interest in joining the Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum.

Name:

Contact no. / email:

Area of interest:

The information you provide will be used for the purpose of this service only.

Contact

Parks & Countryside Service Bracknell Forest Council, Time Square Market Street, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1JD
T: 01344 352000
www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/local-countryside-access-forum-lcaf/about-lcaf

Copies of this document may be obtained in large print, easy read, Braille, on audio tape or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format, please telephone 01344 352000.

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Discover ...

Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum



Help us to shape the future of parks, open spaces and public rights of way.



About us

The Bracknell Forest Local Countryside Access Forum was established in 2003. Bracknell Forest Council, as the Borough Highway Authority, has a duty under section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to establish and facilitate a Local Access Forum (LAF).

LAFs can comprise up to 22 members who represent a broad range of interests, including landowners, councillors, those who earn their living in the countryside, users of public rights of way and other relevant interests, such as nature conservation.

Who should apply?

These are unpaid voluntary positions. No formal qualifications are needed to become a member, but interested people will ideally have a broad range of knowledge, interest and experience relevant to countryside access.

Why apply?

- Contribute to the debate - share your experience and expertise from your specific field.
- Keep informed about access law, policy and legislation.
- Meet and work with other like-minded people at forum meetings, site visits and national and regional LAF conferences.
- Help make a difference - influence local and UK policy and advise Bracknell Forest Council on access management strategy and policy.



Find out more

A person specification and an application form is available to download from our website. Contact us for an informal chat or use the expression of interest form over the page.



Appendix H Mid Term review PRow improvements

Table 6.5 Proposed Improvements to the Network as of 2011					
No.	Proposer	Suggestion	How?	Benefits	
				Routes and links	Users
1	BFC	Sandhurst FP14 – BBOWT could offer path for dedication where legal line of FP is not passable due to rising water level.	Discuss with BBOWT about possibilities for new path dedication.	It will keep a legal line of footpath that is passable.	Walkers
2	LCAF	Official route through Little Hazes woods linking Mare Lane to Drift Road.	This will need to be a cross boundary effort with RBWM.	It would be best to achieve this through the toll scheme with Allanby Estates (see No. 10)	Walkers Horse riders Cyclists
3	LCAF	Gain permission to cross the top of the B3034 Forest Road (Cabbage Hill)	Gain permission from Thames Water to cross their land.	This will allow horse-riders safer passage onto Hazelwood Lane avoiding the junction of Forest Road/Hazelwood Lane/ Binfield Road close to the Wyevale Garden Centre and Thames Water Sewage Works.	Horse riders
4	LCAF	Make a horse margin of the grass verge adjacent to Honeywood Farm in Nuptown on the Ascot Road leading into Kingscroft Road in Warfield for horse-riders and walkers.		This could be a safer option when coming from Nuptown Lane heading towards Maidens Green passing the Malt Hill junction	Walkers Horse riders
5	LCAF	Upgrade Warfield Footpath 3 to a bridleway across Frost Folly from Weller's Lane S of the junction with Bowyer's Lane to Church Lane and/or Malt Hill.	Would have to work with Syngenta who own the lane. (Frost family)	Would make a nice circular route so that the Ascot Road/Kingscroft Road/Malt Hill junction could be avoided when horse-riding the land?	Horse riders Cyclists
6	LCAF	Upgrade Warfield Footpath 12 to a bridleway from Warfield Street to Church Lane via Gibbins Lane in Warfield.	Examine the physical works needed to achieve this and if deemed feasible a reclassification order will need to be done.		Horse riders Cyclists

7	LCAF	Upgrade Warfield Footpath 5 across Windmill Hill from Cocks Lane in Maidens Green to Bracknell Road in Brockhill. (currently private BR rights only)	There are already horse gates in place.	This would enable horse-riders to extend the Warfield bridle circuit and cut out the busy Cocks Lane/Bracknell Road crossing.	Horse riders Cyclists
8	LCAF	Gain permission to use Chawridge Lane in Winkfield for horse-riders	Cross boundary effort with RBWM.	This will give another route option in Winkfield linking from Winkfield Road to Drift Road.	Horse riders Cyclists
9	LCAF	Approach land owners to see if they are willing to offer 'Toll Ride' options or riding permits for using their land (Stokes Farm, Binfield Road, Wokingham allow this).	People to approach could include Allanbay Park, Thames Water, Billingbear Park, Emmet Brothers. (would need to be joint project between Emmet Brothers and RBWM)	If these land owners are members of the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, it may pay them to provide access/improvements and access links.	Horse riders
10	LCAF (Richard Mosses)	Provide an off-road link between West Road and Bracknell FP18	Along edge of golf course	Avoid busy road.	Walkers

References

Plans and Strategies

Community Safety Partnership

<https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/documents/s107598/7.a%20CommunitySafetyPartnershipStrategicAssessmentAnnex.pdf>

The South East Plan

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/development-plan/south-east-plan>

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

The Council Plan

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-plan/council-plan>

Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2026 (LTP3)

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/transport-policy>

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2012

<https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/documents/s107598/7.a%20CommunitySafetyPartnershipStrategicAssessmentAnnex.pdf>

Biodiversity Action Plan 2012-17 (BAP)

https://files.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/bracknell/documents/biodiversity-action-plan-2012-2017.pdf?IN_2vh7QEv2lZQXEnx6uTc_AZOu6utJN

“Seamless Health” Bracknell Forest Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020

<https://files.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/bracknell/documents/seamless-health-2016-2020.pdf?VbHtb6FT0hPqbPRCL2RPD9jMojnYt52q>

PRoW Information Sources

Bracknell Forest Definitive Map and Statement

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/parks-and-countryside/public-rights-way/definitive-map-and-statement>

RoWIP 2006-2016 and Mid-term review

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/strategies-plans-and-policies/strategy-and-policy-documents/parks-and-countryside-strategies-and-policies>

The Countryside Code

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code>

Guidance for waymarking PRoW

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414626/way-marking-rights-of-way.pdf

South East Berks Ramblers

<http://sebr.org.uk/>

Trail Finders
<http://www.trf.org.uk/>

Cycling UK
<http://www.cyclinguk.org/>

British Driving Society
<http://www.britishdrivingsociety.co.uk/>

Local Access Forums

Bracknell Forest
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/local-countryside-access-forum-lcaf/about-lcaf>

HCAF
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/countryside/hcaf>

RBWM
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200938/local_access_forums

Surrey
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/countryside/footpaths-by-ways-and-bridleways/surrey-countryside-access-forum>

Mid and West Berks
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/article/27480/Local-Access-Forum>

Regulations
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2007/268/contents/made>

Guide on the role of Local Authorities
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-access-forums-role-of-the-local-authority>

Other

Thames Basin Heaths Partnership
<http://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk/about-us/>

Bracknell Forest Society
<http://www.thebracknellforestsociety.org.uk/>

The Crown Estate
<http://www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk/en>

Glossary

BFC	Bracknell Forest Council
BPC	Binfield Parish Council
BTC	Bracknell Town Council
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
CLA	Countryside Landowners Association
CPC	Crowthorne Parish Council
CROW Act	Countryside and Rights Of Way Act
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DMS	Definitive Map and Statement
EA	Environment Agency
IPROW	Institute of Public Rights Of Way
LCAF	Local Countryside Access Forum
NFU	National Farmers Union
POSS study	Play, Open Spaces and Sports study
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RBWM	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
RoWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
STC	Sandhurst Town Council
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
TTRO	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order
WaPC	Warfield Parish Council
WiPC	Winkfield Parish Council
SANGs	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces

If you need this in an alternative format please contact the
Parks and Countryside Service on 01344 354441