

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Roads, Footpaths and Commons 19/10/2023

Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2023-2033 Consultation

Agenda item 23/018 5: To receive the draft ROWIP and agree the method for responding to the consultation.

BACKGROUND

West Berkshire Council (WBC) is responsible for around 1,190 kilometres (740 miles) of public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways. Most of these (61%) are public footpaths. Around 18% are bridleways and 21% are restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOATs). These all create a network that is an important asset for West Berkshire and provides many public benefits. They enable people to access and enjoy the outstanding countryside and natural areas of the district, as well as being important to health, mental wellbeing, travel and the economy. WBC wants public rights of way to be available for everyone, regardless of where they live.

Under the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, as a local authority who is responsible for PROW, WBC have a duty to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) that explains their goals and priorities, and which they have to review every ten years. Their current ROWIP [[ROWIP Adopted 27 May 2010 \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#)] was adopted on the 27 May 2010.

Further information regarding how the draft ROWIP was developed and evidence gathered may be found at [Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan \(ROWIP\) 2023-2033 - West Berkshire Council](#)

From the evidence they have drawn all the information together and are proposing that they focus their resources on the following four themes, under which sit priorities and actions to help them maintain and improve PROW in West Berkshire, now and in the future:

- looking after the network
- an evolving network
- health and prosperous communities
- effective delivery

The draft ROWIP contains a summary of an assessment of their public rights of way, an evidence review, and their statement of action.

VIEWS, SURVEY AND NEXT ACTION

They would like views on their draft ROWIP, specifically on their proposed themes, priorities and actions, but also to know if there is anything they've potentially missed.

To comment on the draft ROWIP, the survey at [Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2023-2033 Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#) needs to be completed by 5pm on Thursday, 23 November 2023.

All the feedback received will be used to shape the final ROWIP and a detailed action plan, which will be considered by elected members by spring 2024.

Following this, the final strategy will be published on WBC's Strategies, Policies and Plans webpage and on their ROWIP page.