

## Rights of Way Service Report

### Budget Updates

The IWP for the next few years has been debated at Committee and currently contains the following recommendations for RoW funding:

- **Revenue (inc staff)** £1,090,000
- **County Capital** £225,000
- **RoWIP Capital** £68,000

The result if this budget position is ratified by Cabinet & full Council will be:

- a 25% reduction in Revenue funding, including a reduction of 4 staff posts, 2 in the Definitive Map Team (1 vacancy deleted and 1 resignation, Paul Reardon) and 2 in the Countryside Access Team (1 voluntary, Eoin Bell and 4 officers cutting 1 day a week each, to work a 4 day week),
- a 36% reduction in County Capital, and
- a 85% reduction in RoWIP Capital.

Future predictions are for more reductions in coming years.

### **Rights Of Way Improvement Plan Review**

- The SEA of the RoWIP is out for public consultation, see the LTP pages at: <http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/transplan/ltp/> and scroll to the bottom of the page.
- As a result of the 25% staff cuts above, Julia Clarke will be returning to her substantive position of Countryside Access Officer, covering the Royston area and there will no longer be a dedicated RoWIP Officer.

### **Major Planning / Development / s106 Cases**

- **LDFs** – all 10 of the Herts district / borough Planning Authorities have been sent the LAF statement on access for consideration for their Core Strategies.
- **Green Infrastructure Planning** – RoW 'historic deficit' and 'future needs' are 2 areas desired to be high-profile elements of green infrastructure planning and RoW are engaged with the emerging district and county plans.
- **Local Sustainable Transport Fund** – a proposed bid focus on St Albans, Hemel Hempstead and Watford, for entry to 'Tranche 3' for a large project plus an early component. Next Steps will be developing the bid over the next months. The key dates are:
  - By 4th March - Finalise draft package details
  - 15th March - Secure Highways and Transport Panel endorsement
  - 18th April - Submission of early 'key component' bid to DfT
  - 6th June - Submission of 'expression of interest' for large projects to DfT
  - End June - DfT announce shortlisted large projects
  - 20th Dec - Submission of 'business case to DfT' for large project
- **Wall Hall** – network improvements are ongoing. Most of the current route proposals should be completed by June 2011, however there are new additions in the offing as well.
- **Heartwood Forest** – the dedication of the new bridleway is being progressed.

- **SRFI proposed site at Park Street** – no updates available on the planning appeal against the refusal for this development; due June 2011.
- **HS2 new railway line** – the attached plan shows the proposed route cutting across the extreme south-west corner of Hertfordshire with 3 crossings of Public Rights of Way to be dealt with (see Appendix 3).

### **Operational Priorities for RoW**

- **Review of Policies & Procedures** – in the light of the imminent cuts, the attached paper is to be taken to the Development Control Committee, who originally set the current policies and good practice guide for the RoW Service in 2001.
- **Other delivery models** – in the future with less internal resources?
- **Prioritisation** – in principle and in practice – discussion for your views please.

### **Maintenance**

The county-wide RoW mowing schedule is out for re-procurement and we await bids from existing and new contractors who may be interested. The contract is worth up to £100,000 per year and cuts approximately one-fifth of the entire network twice a year.

### **TROs**

There is a current proposal for a permanent TRO on Dyes Lane, Langley to prevent use by motor vehicles through a SSSI.

### **Enforcement**

The Enforcement Officer is dealing with the reopening of Shenley footpath 23a and the new footpath 23b; gate issues recurring at Aldenham 31a; and the ongoing case at Tring Rural.

### **Gating Orders**

The new policy is already being requested for two early and quite testing cases, in Broxbourne and St Albans. A further enquiry in Watford has been abandoned.

### **Definitive Map Cases**

Current list attached (see Appendix 1).

### **Village Greens**

- **Oakmere Green, Potters Bar** – an application has been received on land where development has already commenced, is now being advertised.

### **Commons Pilot**

The 70 letters sent to affected parties, as a result of the review of the registers, is still generating some ongoing casework and applications for changes to be made, which are being dealt with as resources allow.

### **National Issues**

- **FC Sell-off of woodlands** – see attached emails & letters. It appears in Herts there is one block near Markyate, a conifer plantation. Also Bramfield Woods has come to the end of its lease to the FC and reverted to its private ownership, causing some access concerns. Outside the county the ones of interest appear to be Chicksands (very popular for MTB users and walkers alike) and Wendover Woods.
- **Countryside Code Review** – 'short version' attached (see Appendix 2).

**R Cuthbert / B Fenton / R Emrys-Roberts**

**Current DMMO cases****Appendix 1**

<b>File Name &amp; Reference</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Application for</b>	<b>Current stage</b>
Raffin Green Lane EH221	East Herts	Add Bridleway	Restricted Byway order made for longer route than application, currently awaiting pins. Steve Vaughan (SV) objected to order, and withdrew objection
Essendon 4 W+H34	Welwyn Hatfield	Upgrade FP to Bridleway	Bridleway Order made, currently awaiting PINs decision
Graveley 11 NH146	East Herts	Amend details of FP	Order made amending details. Awaiting PINS decision
Flauden 8 DAC 112	Dacorum	Add BR	RB Order made, awaiting PINs decision - SV aware
Peatmans Lane DAC89	Dacorum	Add BOAT & upgrade FP to BOAT	BOAT order made and sent to PINs - SV aware of Order
Dene Lane STEV13/ EH137	Stevenage and East Herts	Add BR's	Decision not to make an order being challenged and awaiting result from GO-NE
M1 Bridge HTM81	Hertsmere	Upgrade FP to BR	Decision not to make an order being challenged and awaiting result from GO-NE
Carbone Hill W+H70	Welwyn Hatfield	Add FP	Decision not to make an order being challenged and awaiting result from GO-NE
Blackbirds Lane HTM168	Hertsmere	Add BOAT	Order made for Restricted Byway as HCC considers NERC exemption does not apply; Public Inquiry set for 17 <sup>th</sup> March – SV aware
Fox's Lane W+H67	Welwyn Hatfield	Add BOAT	BOAT order made, objections received, will be sent to PINS – SV aware
Langley 16 NH132	North Herts	Upgrade FP to BR	BR order made, objections received, will be sent to PINs
Oakridge Lane HTM172	Hertsmere	Add RB	BOAT/RB Order made, objections received, will be sent to PINs. SV aware
Ardeley 13 EH54	East Herts	Downgrade BOAT to FP	FP Order made, objections received, will be sent to PINs. SV aware.
Chiswell Green STA113	St Albans	Add FP	FP Order made, objections received, will be sent to PINs
Hockerill College EH350	East Herts	Add FP	FP Order made and objections received, and being discussed
St Edmunds College EH173	East Herts	Add FP	FP Order made and objections received and diversion being discussed
Packhorse Lane HTM118	Hertsmere	Add BR	BR order made, objections received and being discussed
Mutfords EH318	East Herts	Upgrade FP to BR and add BR	Bridleway and Footpath Order being drafted

<b>File Name &amp; Reference</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Application for</b>	<b>Current stage</b>
Hunsdon Airfield EH164	East Herts	Add BRs	RB Order being drafted and SV will be notified
Old St Albans Road HTM144	Hertsmere	Add BR	RB Order being drafted and SV will be notified
Thorley 9 to Twyforbury Lane EH266	East Herts	Amend FP	FP Order being drafted
Knebworth Park NH174	North Herts	Add FP and BOAT	Decision. SV will be notified
Frogmore to St Stephen FP14 STA111	St Albans	Add FP	Decision
Skeggs Lane EH66	East Herts	Add BR	Negotiating dedication
Rickneys EH36	East Herts	Re-grade FP/RB to BR	Negotiating dedication
Panshanger EH70	East Herts	Upgrade FP to BR	Negotiating dedication
Buddleia Fields 3R62&65	Three Rivers	Upgrade FP to BR and add FP and BR	Consultation
West of Sacombe EH347	East Herts	Add FP & RB	Consultation. SV will con consulted
Wareside Environs EH108	East Herts	Numerous adds and upgrades of FP/BR/BOATs	Consultation – SV will be consulted
Northfield Grange DAC62	Dacorum	Upgrade FP to BR	Consultation
Icknield Way NH85	North Herts	Add BOAT with TRO	Consultation - SV will be sent copy of investigation report
Lilley Cassel Hall NH180	North Herts	Add FP	Consultation
Lilley FP1 & Green Lane NH10	North Herts	Add FP	Consultation
Lilley FP2 NH114	North Herts	Add FP extension	Consultation
Geary's Hill DAC103	Dacorum	Add FP	Consultation
Burge End Farm NH175	North Herts	Add FP & BR	Investigation
Eddies Field DAC98	Dacorum	Add FP	Investigation
Widford River Ash EH306	East Herts	Add FP	Investigation
Widford Sewage Works EH307	East Herts	Add BOAT	Investigation - SV will be consulted

<b>File Name and Reference</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Application for</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Widford 18 EH308	East Herts	Upgrade RB to BOAT	Investigation – SV will be consulted
Widfordbury EH102	East Herts	BR	Investigation
Widford Churchyard EH194	East Herts	Add FP	Investigation
Sarratt FP15 3R64	Three Rivers	Upgrade FP to BR	Investigation
The Sportsman 3R57	Three rivers	User evidence	FP Order confirmed
Stort Towpath EH163	East Herts	FP	FP Order confirmed
Cassiobury Drive WAT10	Watford	FP	FP Order confirmed
Stevenage 57 STEV29	Stevenage	BR	RB Order confirmed,
The Old Bourne EH167	East Herts	Amend line of RB	RB line amended, Order confirmed
Morley Lane EH323	East Herts	FP & BR	BR order awaiting confirmation, diversion being discussed
Hook Lane W+H69	Welwyn Hatfield	BR	BOAT and BR order confirmed
Scholars Hill	East Herts	Add FP	FP Order Confirmed
Featherbed Lane DAC113	Dacorum	FP	No order made
Morven Park W+H73	Welwyn Hatfield	Add FP	No order made
Royston Railway Crossing NH199	North Herts	Add RB	No order made
Codicote	East Herts	Add FP	No order made

There are 3 cases started prior to 2007 where orders have been made, objections received and discussions are on-going for diversion of the Modification Order route. These are known as Woodhall Lane (Hertsmere), Albury (East Herts) and Castlebury (East Herts).

- Woodhall Lane was an application for a FP and BR, the order was made for BOAT but following The Winchester Case HCC considers that the order will need to be amended to Restricted Byway
- Albury was an application for BR based on enclosure evidence
- Castlebury was an application for BOAT and a BOAT order was made, but again following the Winchester case HCC considers that the BOAT order will need to be amended to RB. SV aware of case.

## *The Countryside Code - Respect   Protect   Enjoy*

**Respect the working life of the countryside** – leave gates and property as you find them and consider other people

Please respect the working life of the countryside, as our actions can affect people's livelihoods, our heritage, and the safety and welfare of animals and ourselves. Showing consideration and respect for other people makes the countryside a pleasant environment for everyone – at home, at work and at leisure.

**Protect plants and animals - take your litter home and keep dogs under effective control**

We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees.

The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it's every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people

**Enjoy the countryside, and all it offers- plan ahead and be prepared for the unexpected.**

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 while work is carried out for safety reasons, or during breeding seasons. Follow advice and local signs, and be prepared for the unexpected.

