

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.

13th October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum would like to invite a member of your parish council or organisation to join a working group of volunteers taking part in historical research towards achieving more joined-up public access on the rights of way network.

Section 53 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 outlined the government's intention to close the definitive map on 1st January 2026 to certain claims for new footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways, so as each year passes, the urgency to start work becomes greater. The aim will be to review historical rights to see if these can be useful, or potentially useful, to today's walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers. It will also join missing links to the adopted highway network where recording these might have been omitted in the past. Routes could be recreational, in order for people to seek fresh air and exercise near to where they live, or as a means of sustainable transport, such as travelling to work or accessing local shops and services. Either way, the proposed new routes will help to complement existing access and try to fill gaps in the rights of way network before time runs out and potentially useful paths are lost.

If you would like to nominate a person from your parish or organisation they should ideally have some knowledge of historical map evidence for claiming new rights of way and a commitment to spending time on the project, in particular researching evidence in the county archives. If experience is limited then training can be provided.

Please register an interest at the reply address below and if possible provide contact details of the selected volunteer.

Yours sincerely,

John Elfes

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