

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Draft Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

Consultation April 2022

Response from the Colne Valley Regional Park



Context/Summary

- In theory this is a good initiative, but in practice the draft plan appears very 'transport' focused (functional journeys).
- There is little or no recognition of the importance of walking and cycle routes for improving access to the natural environment - with the proven physical and mental health & well-being benefits that this brings.

Opportunities to improve 'active travel' in Horton & Wraysbury parishes are not taken:

- With reference to figure 13 and figure 16 it is good that the bridleway passing Berkyn Manor Farm to Horton is identified - but nothing is noted to address the extensive problems that exist in terms of landscape quality and attractiveness - due to development and enforcement issues. In addition, this route must be set within its context with neighbouring authorities as a good opportunity to improve active travel opportunities for local residents (after all: RBW&M is not an island). Arrows should be added to show opportunity for connections to the north beyond Colnbrook and the east: to the north of Wraysbury Reservoir to Stanwell Moor then heading south towards Staines and the Thames Path.
- The maps of walking and cycle routes fail to pick up the extensive opportunities associated with minerals restoration schemes in Horton and Wraysbury, there is little evidence of joined up thinking across council departments.
- As an example of this: the restoration scheme for the minerals site between Horton and Wraysbury includes a new path to the west of the Colne Brook that will create a circular walk around the restored site, this should be connected to Wraysbury station to allow improved access to the restored site and improve connectivity as part of the (currently extremely poor) network of footpaths and bridleways in Horton and Wraysbury parishes.
- Another example where connectivity in this area could be significantly improved is through creation of a new path alongside the Colne Brook between Colnbrook & Horton and a bridge over the river to connect Arthur Jacob LNR into the rights of way network. This was subject to a S106 agreement but has not been implemented.
- Linked to the above we need to see recognition of the role of Councils responsibility to "plan positively" to improve access to the Green Belt (Para 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework) and the particular challenges

Colne Valley Regional Park

Registered Office: c/o Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre, Denham Court Drive, Denham,
Buckinghamshire, UB9 5PG
www.colnevalleypark.org.uk

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President: Rt.Hon. the Lord Randall of Uxbridge Kt.PC.

faced within the urban fringe and the benefit of improving connectivity of routes - particularly relevant in the Horton/ Wraysbury area.

Links to other initiatives and call for vision for active travel to green space/ natural environment

- Appendix A (Policy context) must include reference to the 2019 Colne & Crane Green Infrastructure Strategy - which RBWM were party to. This should be included as the policy documents listed include non-statutory ones. See <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/project/green-infrastructure-strategy-colne-and-crane-valleys/>
- Standing back from the plan - it's so far from what would serve to positively improve countryside recreation routes in Horton and Wraysbury for the benefit of local residents that we call for the Council to progress a parallel initiative that addresses active travel through the natural environment, addressing areas where particular challenges or opportunities exist.

Stewart Pomeroy

Colne Valley Managing Agent

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Appendix: About the Colne Valley Regional Park

The Colne Valley Regional Park exists to maintain and enhance the Colne Valley as the first taste of countryside to the west of London for the benefit of more than three million people who live within 10 miles of the Park. The Park covers an area from Rickmansworth to Staines, across parts of Herts, London, Bucks, Berks and Surrey.

In the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead this includes the whole of the parishes of Horton and Wraysbury and part of the parish of Datchet.

The six objectives of the Park are:

1. **To maintain and enhance the landscape**, historic environment and waterscape of the Park in terms of their scenic and conservation value and their overall amenity.
2. **To safeguard the countryside** of the Park from inappropriate development. Where development is permissible it will encourage the highest possible standards of design.
3. **To conserve and enhance biodiversity** within the Park through the protection and management of its species, habitats and geological features
4. **To provide opportunities for countryside recreation** and ensure that facilities are accessible to all.
5. **To achieve a vibrant and sustainable rural economy**, including farming and forestry, underpinning the value of the countryside.
6. **To encourage community participation** including volunteering and environmental education. To promote the health and social well-being benefits that access to high quality green space brings.

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