



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

July 2025 JLAF: Background Papers

Some items on the agenda are addressed verbally at the meeting, therefore, papers are not available for every item on the agenda.

B: MAIN BUSINESS

B1: Forest of Avon

The Forest of Avon Plan

- Creating new tree and woodland habitats.
- Caring for existing tree and woodland habitats.
- Offering health and wellbeing activities.

Endorsed by the four unitary authorities, the West of England Combined Authority, and the West of England Nature Partnership, the Forest of Avon Plan aligns our efforts, allowing all partners to work towards the same targets for the benefit of people and nature. This enhances habitats and connectivity for wildlife and provides opportunities for people to enjoy local nature.

Planting trees for the long-term means choosing the right trees for the right places and caring for them alongside our existing woods and trees. The Forest of Avon Plan helps ensure every tree planted has the best chance of survival and maximises its benefits.

The plan has always been crucial in guiding our efforts, and our 2021 iteration presents a collective vision for tree coverage with aspirational goals and an action plan to achieve them.

Western Forest

The Western Forest is the UK's first new national forest in 30 years. Where heritage meets innovation the Western Forest will create greener, more connected landscape that benefits nature, people, and the economy. At least 2,500 hectares of trees and woodland will be created by 2030.

If we want to bring nature back into our landscapes in a meaningful and lasting way, we must think big, and we must work together. Western Forest is where will create a unified landscape through bold ambition and strong

partnerships, delivering large-scale woodland creation and restoration across urban centres and rural communities. The Western Forest will be delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities.

Great Avon Wood

In early 2024, we achieved our biggest land purchase yet: a 422-acre site at Wick Farm between Bristol and Bath. Over the next few years, this will be transformed into the Lower Chew Forest, the South West's largest new woodland in a generation.

Both Great Avon Wood and Lower Chew Forest are part of the Avon Needs Trees organised Landscape Recovery in the Lower Chew project, a collective of landowners planning how to manage our wider landscape for nature.

- Primary Aim: Growing the Forest
- Project Type: Natural Colonisation New Hedgerows Recreation Woodland Creation
- Benefits & Purposes: Carbon Sequestration Flood Mitigation Nature Recovery Wildlife Corridor

C: ITEMS TO REPORT/ FOR INFORMATION



South Gloucestershire Council Rights of Way Update for JLAF 6/11/25

Lindsay Saunders, Senior Public Rights of Way Officer

England Coast Path

No further progress at the northern end of the coast path at present – the position is the same as previously due to various matters causing delays. However progress is being made with Network Rail regarding the rail crossing at Severn Beach where they are agreeing to improve the surface, which is currently large aggregate, and ensure that the gates either side of the line are accessible. This means that the stretch from the Bristol boundary will be accessible as far as Severn Beach. The gates from Severn Beach to Northwick are medium mobility which unfortunately does not allow mobility scooters.

Volunteer work parties have continued every week and since the last JLAF Kingswood and Southwold Ramblers have been busy in Olveston, Rockhampton, Thornbury, Almondsbury, Oldbury on Severn. Winterbourne, Hanham, Horton, Stoke Gifford, Pilning and Westerleigh where they have jointly installed 6 kissing gates, a Bristol gate, a medium mobility kissing gate, repaired two sets of steps and carried out vegetation clearance. The Cotswold Wardens continue to be busy installing gates, doing running repairs and vegetation clearance throughout our part of the AONB.

Legal Orders

Highways Act Path Orders – There are 9 active applications at various stages including the proposed extinguishment of a rail crossing at Charfield which will go to Committee in December. 3 orders have been confirmed and are awaiting works and 3 have orders just made.

Town & Country Planning Act Path Orders – There are 21 applications at various stages; 14 are confirmed and awaiting completion of development before they can be certified and one is confirmed but the PP has expired.

DMMO – There are 10 applications on the book: 4 are waiting for other matters to be resolved, 4 are waiting to be dealt with, of these 2 have been started and 2 may be resolved through planning. The “live” ones date from July 2021 or later. 2 applications are with PINS, one has been there since June 2024 and the other was going to a local inquiry in September but this has been adjourned to January 2026.

Capital works

Works to bridleway in Wickwar where it crosses the Ladden Brook were completed and briefly found fame, as a local rider complained on social media and this was picked up by Horse and Hound. Amidst much criticism from horse riders who lived far away the BHS officer visited and was very complimentary of the work carried out with such tight restrictions. As were many other local riders. Unfortunately H & H did not follow up with the BHS press release.



The reprofiling of another bridleway at Oldbury on Severn to encourage better drainage has still not begun due to unforeseen circumstances.

Bridges

Our Structures team is continuing to replace wooden footbridges with composite ones – this happens when wooden ones reach the end of their life. We are also able to re-use some aluminium ones which have become available due to diversion orders.

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Bath & North East Somerset Council PROW Update for JLAF 06/11/2025

Graeme Stark, Principal Officer: Public Rights of Way

Definitive Map

Consultations – The Authority is currently investigating or consulting on applications to record public footpaths at:

- The Tynning, Radstock.
- Claverton Down, Combe Down and Monkton Combe.
- Combe Grove, Combe Down and Monkton Combe.

Orders made – The Authority has made orders to record public footpaths at:

- Charmydown, St Catherine.
- Candy's Bridge, Bathampton.
- Holcombe Vale, Bathampton.

Orders confirmed – The Authority has confirmed an order to record public footpaths at:

- Somerdale, Keynsham.

Path Orders

Consultations – The Authority is currently consulting on an application to divert public footpath at CL16/23, Paulto' Hill, Paulton.

Orders made – The Authority has made an order to divert public footpath BA27/31 at Bath Road, Keynsham.

Works – The Authority carrying out works to bring the new a line BC16/1 Kelston Road, Newbridge into a fit condition for use by the public.

Dedication Agreements

The Authority is currently considering whether to accept the dedication for a continuation of public bridleway BA19/30 in Peasedown St John.

Volunteers

The BRAM Team have completed weekly work parties which has included:

- A package of 20 access improvements at Wick Farm/Great Avon Wood in Compton Dando including the installation of gates and ditch crossings.
- Surfacing a muddy section of CL4/21 (Two Rivers Way) through woodland in Chew Stoke.

Enforcement

Following the service of a number of enforcement notices, the majority of public footpath BA27/47 in Saltford is once again open and available and the remainder is expected to be unobstructed again once drainage works have been completed this week.

Capital Works

Schemes completed as part of the 2025/26 PROW Capital Improvement Programme:

CL4/25 - Church Lane/ Waterfall Path, Chew Stoke

Surfacing works on well-used 300m section of enclosed path from Chew Stoke village to waterfall feature and beyond.

Before



After



CL20/22 - Burlledge Hill Access Land, Stowey Sutton

Installation of gate, fencing, steps revetement and surfacing works on well-used route up steep slope through Avon Wildlife Trust nature reserve which gets poached by cattle and becomes difficult to use in wet weather.

Before



After





Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way team

November 2025 JLAF report

PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

Town & Country Planning Act

BCC/482 & 478	Brislington Meadows, Brislington East	Order submitted to Planning Inspectorate for determination, as the Order resulted in objections which were not withdrawn. The full submission is now complete and documents are available upon request. All statements of case have been submitted and the council is now awaiting the inspector's decision.	A number of routes diverted over the Homes England site.
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Highways Act

BCC/589	Avonmeads, Lawrence Hill	SU Order received objections which were not withdrawn. Currently with PINS and awaiting determination	Stopping up of riverside route which been lost to the river. The path has always been a dead end.
BCC/512	Scotland Lane, Brislington West	Diversion order to realign path to walked routes. Advertising period completed with no	Diversion of route to more appropriate alignment.

		objections. Awaiting confirmation.	
BCC/486	Geoffrey Close, Bishopsworth	Diversion order advertising period finished 31.10.2025. Awaiting confirmation.	Diversion of route as current alignment runs through properties.
BCC/677	Argyle Place, Clifton	Diversion order to realign confirmed DMMO route confirmed 02.10.2025.	Diversion of route to existing maintained path, following confirmation of a DMMO application.
BCC/151	Park Road, Stapleton (Eastville)	Extinguishment of path blocked by construction of M32. Advertising period ends 07.11.2025.	Extinguishment of a path completely blocked by the M32 with no appropriate diversions available.

2025-27 PROW IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Capital improvement programme

1. Scotland Lane (BCC/512), Brislington West. Design plans for entryway off Scotland Lane in spring 2025. Design scheme completed.
2. Sir John's Lane/ South Purdown, Lockleaze (BCC/227). Surface improvement and drainage work. Seeking external funding sources for large capital scheme.
3. Avon Gorge, Clifton/ Stoke Bishop (BCC/182, BCC/268, BCC/602). Drain and gully clearance and surface improvement. To be scheduled alongside Portway project 2025-2027.
4. Nibley Road, Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston (BCC/544). Extension and completion of surfacing along boundary of PBA Playing Fields. Scheduled 2025/26
5. Canford Cemetery, Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze (BCC/96, BCC/91). Improving surface with scrape of accumulated soil/leaf litter, surfacing (stone-dust), overhead vegetation cut-back, widening where possible, removal of garden waste. To be

scheduled 2025-27 subject to budgets. Our engineering team is currently designing the scheme.

6. Phoenix Grove to Henleaze Park, Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze (BCC128). Surface improvements, possible tarmac resurfacing, removal or alteration of staggered barriers to improve access. To be scheduled 2025-27 subject to budgets. Our engineering team is currently designing the scheme.
7. Strawberry Lane, Hartcliffe & Withywood (BCC/335A). Reinstating of Engineering scheme, installation of enhanced drainage measures and relaying of stone surface. Scheduled 25/26.
8. Aylesbury Crescent, Bishopsworth (BCC/433). Surfacing lane up to allotments entrance, installing bollards to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Our engineering team is currently designing the scheme, scheduled 25/26 subject to budget.
9. Lawrence Weston Road, Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston (BCC/5). Surfacing, repair and replacement of embankment stairs, waymarking. Our engineering team is currently designing the scheme, scheduled 25-27 subject to budget.
10. Ironmould Lane, Brislington East (BCC/483 and BCC/248). Large-scale surfacing, bollards, drainage and vegetation management scheme. Seeking external funding such as S106 through A4 corridor developments.

Externally funded projects

1. Grove Wood, Frome Vale (BCC/153). Renewal of steps, surface improvement, wall repair (S106 funding and Enforcement). *To be scheduled 2024/25 once fallen trees are removed by landowner and engineering team are consulted. Enforcement action underway 2025-26.*
2. Corbet Close, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston (BCC/11). Surface improvement and drainage (S106 funding). *To be scheduled 2025/26 now that the adjacent housing development is complete.*
3. Lawrence Weston Nature Reserve (BCC/11). Extension of board-walked section within nature reserve (S106 funding). *To be scheduled 2025/26 working with Parks and Engineering teams.*

DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER CLAIMS

Claimed footpath at South Hayes and Parkside Gardens, Lockleaze – A report on this application was presented to the Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee in Spring 2024, where Councillors resolved to confirm the Order. The Order was sealed on 10th September 2024. Objections were received and officers have completed full document submission to the Planning Inspectorate for determination.

Claimed footpath at Argyle Place, Cliftonwood - A report on this application was presented to the Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee at their October 2024 meeting, where Councillors resolved to confirm the Order. The Order advertising period terminated on 10/02/2025 with an objection; officers responded to this and it was withdrawn. A related PPO diversion order was confirmed 02.10.2025.

Claimed footpaths at Stoke Lodge Playing Field, Stoke Bishop – This claim has been investigated by the external consultant Robin Carr Associates, and was presented to the Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee in an extraordinary meeting on 27th November 2024 where Councillors resolved to confirm the Order. The advertising period terminated on 10/02/2025 with two objections which have not been withdrawn. The case has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for determination.

Claimed footpath at Ridgehill, Henleaze - Order to add three footpaths at Ridgehill was confirmed 26.08.2025.

Claimed footpaths at Moorgrove Wood, Henbury & Brentry/Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston – This claim is currently under investigation by the external consultant Robin Carr Associates and relates to a network of routes around woodland and fields in north-west Bristol. We are in receipt of the report and intend to bring this to our January 2026 PROW&G Committee meeting.

Claimed footpaths at Woodgrove Road, Henbury & Brentry - This claim is currently under investigation by the external consultant Robin Carr Associates in conjunction with the above investigation at Moorgrove Wood, as the claim route broadly relates to the same landowners and locale. We are in receipt of the report and intend to bring this to our January 2026 PROW&G Committee meeting.

Claimed footpaths at Darley Close, Henbury & Brentry - This claim is currently under investigation by the external consultant Robin Carr Associates in conjunction with the above investigations at Moorgrove Wood and Woodgrove Road, as the claim route broadly relates to the same landowners and locale.

AOB – Long-standing Enforcement Matters

The Bristol City Council PROW team are currently undertaking a review of numerous long-standing PROW enforcement matters on PROW such as historic obstructions. Working with the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET) we are aiming to resolve these cases, where possible, with action against parties responsible for the issue(s), and where all attempts for resolution have failed to put forward Highways Act Sec.118 extinguishment orders.

So far two sites have been surveyed using a drone, providing valuable high-resolution aerial footage of obstructions which aids in identifying responsible parties.

D: ITEMS TO REPORT/ FOR INFORMATION

D2: Access Land mapping review

Review of open access maps

Natural England must review by 31 December 2030 the open access maps of mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common that were issued in 2004 and 2005.

The review must ensure all land of this type is included and there are no errors. There will be a public consultation once the review gets underway.