

TVBC LOCAL PLAN 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Next Local Plan document. I am replying on behalf of Andover Ramblers and therefore will concentrate on the Public Rights of Way (PROW) and walking aspects of the Plan.

I am encouraged by the Forward and introductory pages. I note that it is arguably the most important document that a local authority can ever produce; that you want to be ambitious looking to deliver truly green benefits; you welcome fresh thinking and new ideas; that you seek to protect our environment. You will also continue to identify opportunities to increase access to the countryside and green spaces. The only comment I would make on the introductory pages is that the final paragraph on **Page 7** seems to ignore the walking aspect of the local environment. I would suggest the addition of a fourth point '*4. Protect and enhance the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network.*'

In **Para 7.35**, the PROW network, although mentioned, is relegated to a supporting role. I suggest it should be given more prominence and the sentence 'These are supplementedrun through the area' should be replaced with '*The Public Rights of Way network, which includes a number of long distance paths that run through the area, is a significant part of the green infrastructure.*'

The above amendment will allow the question of green corridors to be explored. The current approach (**Paras 7.36 – 7.39**) seems to address just playing fields and open spaces. I suggest a new paragraph is needed along the lines of: '*Green Corridors that either incorporate existing PROW within new developments or introduce new ones will provide a green infrastructure and add character to housing developments as well as provide an opportunity to introduce tree cover. It will also provide practical and recreational routes that will take walkers away from estate roads thus improving both health and safety.*' This will be in keeping with: The National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (Paras 69 and 75); Defra Circular 1/09 Version 2 (Paras 7.1 – 7.11); Hampshire County Council Walking Strategy January 2016 (Paras 1.3, 2.2, 3.4.1, 3.5.1).

In **Para 8.9** I am surprised that the cycling networks get an individual mention but no corresponding mention is made of the numerous long-distance footpaths that cross Test Valley. The final sentence could be seen as a throw away remark. In fact, meetings have already been held between the previous CEO of TVBC and Andover Ramblers to discuss enhancing the PROW network and an agreed approach reached. I would suggest an example could be quoted that illustrates a major PROW problem caused by the building of the A303 dual carriageway. Perhaps a sentence could be added at the end of 8.9 along the lines of '*For example, the possibility of linking dead-end PROW that meet the A303*'. If that is not thought appropriate for this document, it should form a major part of the LCWIP.

Paras 8.13-8.15 addresses car parking. Understandably it concentrates on the urban parking requirement. However, if town dwellers are to make the most use of available rural PROWs they will invariably go there by car. There is possibly a need for recognised small rural car parks or pull-offs that can perhaps be added to the OS maps. I suggest a possible new paragraph could be considered: '*The Local Plan will seek to identify discreet rural car parks and pull-offs for a small number of cars that will allow access to the PROW network at various points*'.

Para 8.20 repeats the omission at Paras 7.36 – 7.39 above. I suggest in the second sentence after ‘green open spaces’ you should add ‘*green corridors, the PROW,*’.