

**ANDOVER RAMBLERS' COMMENTS TO TVBC PLANNING POLICY ON THE  
DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2040**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Local Plan 2040. I am responding on behalf of Andover Ramblers.

My overview point is that Public Rights of Way (PROWs) do not seem to be represented at all in the Draft Plan. PROWs provide: access to the countryside; a way of improving public health; and also provide communication links between settlements. TVBC has a wealth of existing PROWs but their coverage is inconsistent; large geographical areas are not being covered by the PROW network. The PROW network has developed haphazardly and paths are not always logically interconnected; there are numerous examples of dead-end paths. Some communities, e.g. Barton Stacey, are PROW islands having little or no PROWs connecting them to other communities. What is needed is an initiative to identify where new paths are required, followed by action to create those paths. Existing legislation allows Councils to do this (s26 HA 1980) and encourages them to do so (Para 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework July 2021).

Looking at the detail of the Plan and associated documentation, I make the following points.

In the Strategic Planning Priorities, the Vision should call for 'improved access to our diverse and outstanding countryside'. The Health and Wellbeing Objective similarly should be for 'improved access to the countryside'. In the Strategic Policies no mention is made of access to the countryside. I suggest a strategic policy should cover this as well as an improvement to the PROW network. Generally, the Plan emphasises Open Spaces but ignores completely PROWs.

Turning to the Draft Local Plan itself I offer the following:

- Para 2.21. There should be 'improved' access to the countryside.
- Page 23. Opening statement should read 'through the provision of open spaces and enhanced Public Rights of Way'.
- Para 2.49. There should be more on PROWs regarding protecting and enhancing them.
- Page 29. There should be 'improved' access to the countryside.
- Page 41(e). It should be made clear the green infrastructure networks includes PROWs.
- Para 1.41. More is needed on protecting and enhancing the PROW network.
- Para 4.53. PROWs should get a mention.
- Para 4.54. This should mention the need for green corridors away from the streets, as encouraged by Government Guidelines (Para 7.8 of Defra Circular 1/09 Version : 2)
- Para 4.107. This should read 'improved access to the countryside through the PROW network'.

Looking at the Health Impact Assessment, once again PROWs with their beneficial health implications are completely ignored. I have the following suggestions:

- Para 2.31. This should cover PROWs. TVBC should be aware of how many miles of PROWs there are and their locations. It should be aiming to enhance the network. If the existing paragraph wants to just concentrate on Open Spaces, then a new paragraph dedicated to PROWs is needed.
- Para 4.7. This should cover PROWs and their ability to connect villages as well as their health aspects. Paths are not just for connecting services, facilities and amenities as is stated but allow citizens to enjoy the countryside and get fit.

In conclusion the current draft documentation completely lacks any reference to PROWs. The Council should have a policy to protect and enhance these. It should be aware of the existing PROW network that exists within the Borough and have plans to improve their coverage.

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