

HUDDLE Hot Topics

February 2014

Key items on Huddle

Please speak to your Huddle representative or ask me if you require more information.

Network Rail Crossing Closures

There have been a number of discussion items about Network Rail and crossing closures, some of which involve public rights of way. It's definitely an area to keep an eye on, particularly to ensure there is adequate discussion and that less mobile people are adequately considered in any diversion proposals.

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/transparency/level-crossings/>

Photographs

A new section on Huddle has been added with Natural England photos (free to use) and links to websites with free images – useful for publications.

National Report to Defra on LAFs

This is now on Huddle, together with the individual regional reports.

Completing the highway record

There is a lengthy post about a logical way forward for completing the highway record. In brief, Peter McKay suggests that:

1. LAFs should ensure that the Local Street Gazetteer is available on-line, for public inspection and completed in accordance with the legislation – a strong recommendation but not a requirement.
2. “The second logical requirement is for Surveying Authorities to be allowed adequate time to make use of the proposed improved procedures, to make any corrections to the highway records that they are aware of as identified in a highway record Evidence Base and/or addressed in the RoWIP, to bring the highway records up to an acceptable and legally compliant standard.”
3. “The third logical step is to encourage parishes, the public and other user groups to inspect the highway records and to make representations regarding errors and omissions.” Cross-boundary routes given different status is an issue in some areas.

With all the above proposals, the suggestion is that LAFs should approach the Secretary of State advising where there is inadequate time to inspect and complete the statutory highway record to a satisfactory standard and to resolve anomalies before the cut-off date in 2026. Mr McKay suggests that the Deregulation Bill will not impact on the process for compiling the Local Street Gazetteer (List of Streets). He also states “Local Access Forums should take care that they do not ultimately get blamed for lost ways through failing to provide appropriate formal advice on these matters.”

No doubt there will be more posts on this matter. My recommendation is to clarify the position and discuss with the public rights of way section in your area.

National Conference presentations and workshop notes will be on Huddle after the Durham event in March.

SW LAFs/HW

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