

**NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN** FOR **APPLETON WITH EATON**



**Appendix 4
Community
Connectivity
Assessment**

2020-2031



Introduction

Objective 8 of the Appleton with Eaton Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that public access within Appleton with Eaton is preserved for the use of the community and enhanced where possible.

Residents of Appleton with Eaton Parish can access open space around the Parish by way of a network of public rights of way which afford residents the ability to access open space around the Parish. They are identified on the map below. Paths are used for recreational purpose: keeping fit, dog walking, observing wildlife and enjoying nature.

A third of respondents to the September 2016 questionnaire identified access to the countryside as a deficiency with 28% highlighting lack of river access.

The following regional policies support the Parish Plan objectives:

- Core Policy 35, (edited) Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2031
- Saved Policies L10, L17 from the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2011

OBJECTIVES AND CLASSIFICATION	POLICY
<p>Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking.</p>	
<p>The Council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to:</p>	<p>Core Policy 35, (edited) Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2031</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and support measures that enable a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking in the district. ● seek to support the provision of new cycling routes where the policies are consistent with the other policies of this plan. 	
<p>'To record and maintain the existing public rights of way and countryside access network for all users and would-be-users, and where possible improve the extent, facilities, use and understanding of the network, so that public rights of way fulfil their role as a vital part of the County.</p>	<p>Saved Policies from the Vale of the White Horse Local Plan 2011 POLICY L10 Development over public rights of way will not be permitted unless alternative provision can be made that is equally or more attractive, safe and convenient to rights of way users.</p>
	<p>Saved policy from the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 POLICY L17: Developments on sites adjacent to the River Thames will only be permitted where the special environmental qualities of the river and its margins including its value as a nature conservation resource, are protected and where possible enhanced, in particular: i) New buildings for river related development will only be permitted within or adjacent to existing settlements ii) In the Oxford Green Belt, development will be limited to small scale facilities essential for a river related recreational activity, and provided such development does not conflict with the purposes of including land within and preserving the openness of the Green Belt.</p>

Public Rights of Way in the Parish of Appleton with Eaton
(Source: Appleton with Eaton Steering Group)

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The table below identifies the public access routes within the Parish and their condition as assessed by volunteers in Spring 2017. They are reviewed regularly by the Appleton with Eaton Parish Council footpaths warden and are generally in good condition.

No.	Description	Condition
107/1	Right off Eaton Rd past allotments	Poor
107/2	Left off Eaton Rd past West Farm	Need to climb gate.
107/3	Long Close to Osse Brook	Good
107/4	Church to Besslesleigh Woods	Many boggy holes whose edges can be dangerously slippery in wet weather.
107/5	Left off Eaton Rd to Eaton village	Good
107/6	Diagonal across Long Close from 107/3 to 107/4	Good
107/7	Diagonal from Eaton turn to Appleton Rd	Fair
107/8	Netherton Rd to Oaksmere	Fair
107/9	Bottom of Millway Lane to Rainbow bridge (which is in Fyfield and Tubney Parish) <i>public bridleway</i>	One flooded part - very difficult to pass.
107/10	Green Lane to river Thames <i>public bridleway</i>	Good
107/11	War Memorial to Badswell Lane (Pigeon Lane)	Overgrown and muddy.
107/12	Millway Lane <i>public bridleway</i>	Boggy stretch after wet weather. Part used by vehicular traffic.
107/13	From 107/10 to 107/9 <i>public bridleway</i>	One deep boggy hole, two excellent new bridges, parts used by vehicular traffic.
107/14	Millway Lane <i>public bridleway</i>	Used by vehicular traffic.
107/15	Bablock Hythe along Thames towpath	Good
107/16	Field Farm to Tubney	Bridge collapsed - virtually impassable
221/2	Oaksmere to Tubney Manor Farm	Used by vehicular traffic.
221/5	Osse Brook to A420	Fair
221/6	Oaksmere to Tubney Manor Farm	Fair

Key valued access routes

The Steering Group delegated a review of all access routes to a sub-group. This review was based on the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base and Scoping Report, consultation with village residents, and the extensive local knowledge of local people.

In this review, the sub-group took into account access to amenities within the villages, to Green Spaces, to amenities outside the Parish and to public transport.

Every respondent to the September 2016 survey highlighted traffic and transport as a weakness in the Parish and of those 41% also identified access to the A420 as a concern. Since August 2016, the Parish has lost its bus service and the majority of the residents of both villages have to travel more than 1/2 mile to access a regular bus service. A limited bus service to Oxford was reintroduced in September 2020 on a trial basis for 12 months.

The following were identified as key access routes within Appleton with Eaton Parish to the river and which afford residents access to public transport.

Route	Reason
Access to the A420	This is a key route because it affords residents of Appleton village the only access to public transport to Oxford or to Swindon. There is no footpath or lighting. It is a narrow, single carriageway, National Speed Limit road. This makes access to the only daily bus services unsafe. The road surface is uneven and the road edges require repair.



Footpaths through Appleton Common, Colliers' Copse provide access to nature for quiet recreation. Besselsleigh Woods provides longer but off-road access to the A420 for public transport.

Footpaths are key because they provide:

1. Access to nature for quiet recreation and
2. Off-road access (seasonally) to regular public transport to the A420.





Green Lane bridleway

Green Lane bridleway is key because it provides access from Appleton Village to the River Thames at Appleton Landing and to a network of footpaths including the Thames Path via Rainbow Bridge (which is in Fyfield and Tubney Parish).

Aspirations

NEW PATHWAY 1	Footpath to A420 via Oaksmere to provide safe access to daily public transport.
REASON	<p>Since removal of bus subsidies by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) in 2016, no public bus comes through Appleton with Eaton Parish (other than the limited trial service reintroduced in September 2020).</p> <p>People needing to access to Oxford or Swindon on public transport have two options.</p> <p>a) to walk along footpath 107/4, through Besselsleigh Woods and Besselsleigh village.</p> <p>Not suitable during wet weather or dark winter months</p> <p>b) Oaksmere, narrow single carriageway, National Speed Limit road, no footpath or lighting. Unsafe route for daily walking or cycling at any time of day or night and in any weather. Risk is even greater during wet, icy or wintery weather and at dusk/night.</p>
POSSIBLE ROUTES/ SUITABILITY	<p>Lower speed limit from National Speed Limit and move 30mph further out of village towards A420 opposite housing. At present it is on a blind bend over the Osse Brook.</p> <p>Investigate continuous footpath from Village Hall to A420.</p> <p>It is unlikely that OCC will reinstate bus subsidies.</p>

Easier Access from Appleton to the Thames Path (Northmoor Parish).	NEW PATHWAY 2
<p>Access at present is by public bridleways that are often boggy and difficult to pass. See table on page 5.</p>	
REASON	
<p>To enable the community, walkers, cyclists and visitors to access the Thames Path.</p> <p>Giving opportunity to access footpaths to Northmoor, and towards A415 and amenities, The Maybush and Rose Revived public houses.</p> <p>Especially important for less able people to enjoy the countryside, river views and “paddle and rymer weir” and Thames Path.</p> <p>Would allow access to the river and Thames Path for able bodied people.</p> <p>As it is a bridleway the access is uneven and difficult to access with pushchairs, wheelchairs and people with mobility problems</p>	
Option 1 Preferred - via private roadway	POSSIBLE ROUTES/ SUITABILITY
<p>Lock Road off Badswell Lane, the road bisects cultivated farm land.</p> <p>The Environment Agency (EA) have an access agreement with the land owner, for Operational Access to Northmoor Lock and Weir.</p> <p>In March 2013 the tarmac road was repaired by the EA as part of their access agreement to keep the roadway in a good state of repair.</p>	
<p>Option 2 - via Green Lane bridleway to Appleton Landing, new ferry crossing – suggestion put forward by the Parish Council and supported by EA.</p> <p>The Parish Council has submitted a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) from Appleton Landing to Northmoor Lock.</p>	

NEW PATHWAY 3	New public footpath from Englands Lane to FP 107/4
REASON	Until it was closed in 2010, the path provided unhindered access for many decades directly from Eaton Road to Long Close and Besselsleigh Woods.
POSSIBLE ROUTES/ SUITABILITY	<p>Parish Council action. A DMMO was lodged with Oxfordshire County Council in 2010 and is proceeding.</p> <p>Subsequently opened in November 2020 as Footpath 17.</p>

Conclusion

The tables above have been used by the Steering Group identify community access projects which the Parish Council aspires to address:

- i. To provide safe access to daily public transport
- ii. To provide direct access from Appleton to the Thames Path