

20 December 2023

Clerk
Ewhurst Parish Council

Countryside Access Team
Surrey County Council
Whitebeam Lodge
Merrow Depot
Merrow Lane
GUILDFORD
Surrey
GU4 7BQ

claire.saunders@surreycc.gov.uk

Dear Ewhurst Parish Council Clerk

Subject: Review of Surrey County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Surrey County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) is an important strategic policy document, which the council is required by law to have in place. It sets out how Surrey County Council can make sure the public rights of way network meets the needs of the public, now and in the future. More information on ROWIPs can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-rights-of-way-improvement-plans>

A public right of way is a public highway and is part of, and connects with, the wider highway network. Although they are mainly in the countryside, there are public rights of way in towns and villages too. There are four types of public right of way:

- **Public footpaths** – a public right of way only for pedestrians (including dog walkers, users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters and people with buggies);
- **Public bridleways** – As per public footpaths, and in addition can be used horse riders and cyclists;
- **Restricted byways** – As per public footpaths and bridleways, and in addition can be used by horse-drawn carriage drivers;
- **Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs)** – a public right of way for all users, including motor vehicles.

Surrey County Council is writing to inform Ewhurst Parish Council that the process of carrying out a new assessment and review of Surrey's ROWIP is beginning.

The process of reviewing the ROWIP, and the engagement being carried out before a new ROWIP is drafted, will help Surrey County Council to better understand the needs of Surrey's residents. The ROWIP aims to address the priorities of the area in terms of health and wellbeing, supporting people living with disabilities and mental health issues,

regeneration, growth, transport, climate change, tourism and other priorities. The views of parish and town councils are important to do this. To help us, we'd like the views of Ewhurst Parish Council. The feedback will help to develop the priorities and actions of the new Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which will be produced later in 2024.

I would be grateful if Ewhurst Parish Council could fill in the questionnaire below.

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-and-infrastructure/rowip>

The questionnaire closes at midnight on 10 March 2024.

Please submit only one official response on behalf of Ewhurst Parish Council. This link is for parish and town councils only and should not be shared with the public.

So that you can discuss your answers before filling in the questionnaire, a copy is appended to this letter. It is preferred that you submit your response to this questionnaire through the online link above; however, electronic or paper responses will also be accepted.

If you wish to submit an emailed response, or additional information, please email Sharon Bayne at sharon.bayne@blackwoodbayne.co.uk who is working on behalf of Surrey County Council to support the development of the new ROWIP. Paper copies should be sent to Blackwood Bayne Ltd, 8 Herts Crescent, Loose, Maidstone, Kent ME15 0AX. Please submit your parish response by midnight on 10 March 2024.

Views of Individual Councillors and Members of the Public

The views of individual councillors and members of the public are also important and welcome. To gather these, we have also set up an online public questionnaire. We would be grateful if you could publicise this questionnaire and encourage people to complete it. We have attached a poster to this email which you may wish to display on site or use on social media.

The questionnaire for the public is online at:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-and-infrastructure/rowip-public>

This questionnaire also closes at midnight on **10 March 2024**.

If you need to discuss the process of preparing the new ROWIP or specific questions about the engagement exercise please contact Sharon. She can be contacted on sccrowip@blackwoodbayne.co.uk or 01622 746316. Alternatively contact sccrowip@surreycc.gov.uk.

Visit <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/countryside> for more information about public rights of way and country parks in Surrey. To report an issue on a public right of way, visit Surrey County Council's website at <https://rightsofway.surreycc.gov.uk/>

The draft ROWIP is due to be completed later in 2024. All parish and town councils will be invited to comment on the draft.

Yours faithfully

Claire Saunders
Countryside Access Team Manager