

## **Route 403 Cross Council Working Group Update to Calne Area LHFIFG – July 2023**

The Working Group was established in 2022 to “preserve and enhance the 403 Sustrans Route between Chippenham and Avebury as a multi-user route for active travel and leisure, well-being and commuting purposes, and to promote its use to, and care by, the local community.”

The Group now comprises representatives from Calne Town Council, Calne Without Parish Council, Bremhill Parish Council, Cherhill Parish Council, Chippenham Town Council, Wiltshire Council’s Rights of Way Team, Sustrans, Sustainable Calne and the Chippenham Cycle Network Development Group.

Progress since the previous update (January 2023) includes:

- Additional and replacement signage has been installed along the length of the route between Chippenham and Avebury to improve waymarking for users.
- Sustrans have approved the proposed diversion of the route to the east of Yatesbury, from a field margin onto a parallel byway, offering an improved surface. New signage has been ordered to waymark this diversion on the ground.
- A site visit has been undertaken with Hills Waste Management to review maintenance and surface on the section through their land. Hills have undertaken to cut back overgrown hedges following the end of the nesting season.
- The Group is trying to make contact with the new owner of the meadow immediate east of Low Lane (Valencia Waste Management), with a view to promoting surface improvements.
- The Group has worked with Wiltshire Council’s Rights of Way team to improve the track surface at two of the muddiest sections along the disused railway line, near Black Dog Halt and the Hazeland Overbridge.
- The section between Calne and Chippenham has been inspected for barriers to wheelchair or mobility scooter users. Wiltshire Council’s Rights of Way team have filled in a cattle grid at the exit from Castlefields Park, which represented a significant barrier. Additional work has been undertaken to address sharp drops at four locations – Black Bridge, Stanley Bridge, Millennium Bridge and Castlefields Park.
- Information boards are being developed to help promote the route to potential users.

Sustrans have completed the Feasibility Study onto possible alternative route options for the NCN Route 403 between Calne and Chippenham. The Working Group has not had sight of the Feasibility Study Report, although we understand that the recommendation is to retain the current alignment along the old railway line.

This section remains reliant on leases with eight landowners, seven of which are five-year leases due for renewal in March 2024. The Working Group is mindful that securing longer-term leases might open up the possibility of longer-term investment into improvements in track surface.

Cllr John Barnes  
Calne Without Parish Council