



Vanessa Griffiths  
Chief Executive  
Ramblers  
2nd Floor, Camelford House  
87-90 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7TW

*Culture, Communities and Business Services  
Three Minsters House, 76 High Street,  
Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UL*

Telephone 01962 841841  
[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

*Enquiries to*

Karen Murray

*My reference*

*Direct Line*

01962 847831

*Your reference*

*Date*

2 May 2018

*E-mail*

[karen.murray@hants.gov.uk](mailto:karen.murray@hants.gov.uk)

Dear Ms Griffiths,

Thank you for your letter of 29<sup>th</sup> March addressed to the Chief Executive.

I was pleased to hear that you were impressed with our rights of way bridges programme, the feedback received from local communities and ramblers was very positive. Our Countryside Service continues to work closely with your membership in Hampshire, with the Access Group Manager attending the Area Secretaries Quarterly meetings and the support from the Ramblers Volunteers growing from strength to strength.

You are correct that Hampshire and its rights of way network is facing some substantial challenges linked with the scale of development in the county. The particular case (Botley Fp2) that you have identified has been challenging for our Access Team, but has resulted in a real shift in our approach to working with developers and planning authorities, with a number of pieces of work in progress / development:

- Development of a new policy for authorisation of Temporary closures
- Development of a guide for planning authorities and developers
- The Access Team received dedicated training on enforcement by the Institute of Public Rights of Way Managers.
- Development of a new enforcement policy

We believe that this is evidence of our intention and when adopted, the guidance and policies will put the Access Team in a robust position to work with both planning authorities and developers to ensure that rights of way effected by development are effectively managed.

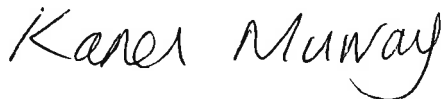
With specific reference to action on Botley Footpath 2. In early January 2018 the Countryside Service Access Group Manager, Jonathan Woods, made an inspection of the footpath, this was followed up by a letter sent to the developer on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 requesting that the blocked path be reinstated. This letter resulted in the blocked path being opened up by the developer, but on an alternative alignment (i.e. not on the definitive line). This was a positive step but not what was requested.

Following meetings with the developer, I understand that the proposals for the diversion of the Botley 2 and an additional dedication area reaching final stages and should be submitted to the planning authority shortly. I can clarify that the authority has not entered into an informal agreement with the developer as you suggest in your email.

You will note, from the approach outlined above, that the County Council, understands the risks to rights of way posed by development and is taking proactive measures to put guidance and enforcement practices in place. I have asked the Access Group Manager to review the current situation on Botley Footpath 2 and take appropriate action to drive forward the diversion proposals and to safe guard the public's rights now and during the development.

I hope that this provides you with confidence that this matter is addressed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Murray".

Karen Murray  
Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services