

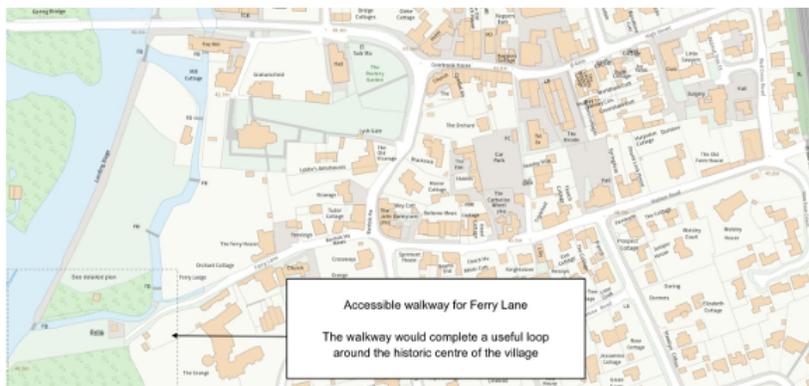
Appendix B Update on the Ferry Lane path project

TT, supported by NM, Teamed with Janet Tuppen (MtG project support officer) to hone in on the specific elements required by the MtG grant steering committee. She gave us some useful advice about considering community outreach and legacy.

Text of submitted Mend the Gap grant application:

We are seeking to resurface an existing path to improve accessibility. The path is located in the centre of Goring village and runs across the open space between the river and the end of Ferry Lane. The path connects the highway at Ferry Lane to the Thames Path beside the river.

On the definitive map it is path 227/3a/10, Grid Ref SU 5961 8053, defined as a “restricted byway, leading to footpath only” (non-motor traffic). The route runs down the southern boundary of the open space. In recent years, the path has become overgrown and as the open space is muddy in winter, this prevents access for many people such as wheelchair users and buggy pushers. The council holds legal responsibility for the land, and wishes to re-establish an accessible surface on the legal line of the right of way.



This proposal would also complete a short accessible circular route around the centre of the village, creating access for all at a flat location.

The Goring-on-Thames Open Spaces Strategy report (Thirlwall Associates, December 2022) recommended that the council should create this accessible path across the Ferry Lane site.

The Mend the Gap Access Improvement Report, Jan 2025, also makes the same recommendation. Page 21: “Although environmental sensitivities may exist due to the proximity of the river, it is felt that surface improvements, along with the provision of other facilities would be of significant benefit to a large number of users, given the proximity to population and high footfall of this attractive location.”

The right of way follows the left-hand edge of the greenspace (view facing towards the river) as shown by the red dotted lines below. A path of desire has been created by some walkers in the middle of the open space, cutting this area in half. This informal path is often muddy and prevents access for all. It also prevents enjoyment of the full open space.

The proposal is to create a path of length 90m, width 3m, made of sustainable materials to make a permanent surface that is appropriate for the semi-rural riverside setting. The Riparian Specialist contractors Greenford Ltd have recommended the following:

- *100mm of Type 1 imported primary aggregate, overlaid on Terram 1000 Geotextile.*
- *Timber edging to both sides of Path, with 50mm x 50mm pegs, at 900mm centres.*
- *50mm of self-binding hoggin (likely to be coxwell gravel).*

The contractors were chosen by an evaluation group from the Parish Council from a shortlist of four bidders, all of whom were given a tour of the site prior to submitting their tenders. Greenford Ltd were the unanimous winners of the contract.

In addition, the completed path could provide improved access to the Thames Path, via Ferry Lane, to enable further repairs downstream along the Thames Path by other stakeholders.

Hannah Gutteridge (Hannah.Gutteridge@Oxfordshire.gov.uk) is fully aware and has commented:

“Greenfords are excellent and have delivered many successful projects on the Thames Path. When we carry out the full repair at Goring, our only realistic access will be via Ferry Lane. We’re still at the design phase and it’s unlikely we’ll receive EA permission or funding in time for repairs this year, but I’m staying positive.”

SODC Active Communities Team have visited the site and are keen to integrate the path into Heritage Trail walks (Nathan Bevan) and buggy walks (Emma Watson) in conjunction with Blaze Trails.

<https://www.blazetrails.org.uk/>

In addition Heritage trees provided a very detailed report (Appendix C) on the trees in the affected area. NM spoke to the Tree Conservation Officer at the Didcot event. He reminded the PC team that all decisions are based on the individual circumstances and drip lines, even in Conservation areas, were not always the dominant factor in decisions. We still await responses to our enquiry about planning application requirements from SODC, and about trees from OCC.