



Hertfordshire Local Access Forum



The 43rd Local Access Forum held at Ramada Hotel on 17th September 14

LAF Members Liddy Lawrence, Chair; Norman Jones; Robert Bolt; Ian Gregory; Diana Collingridge; Lynne Myland (LM); Mark Mills Bishop.

Officers Present Richard Cuthbert – Team Leader Access & Rights of Way, Bob Fenton, Countryside Access Team Leader. Julian Thornton (JT) Countryside Access Officer (St Albans area).

Apologies Kavita Gooch; Debbie Hougie; Rosemary Gilligan; Roger Thomas , Tony Ferrari, Mike Hartley.
• also Regular public attendee Ken Peak sent apologies

1. **Welcome** Jez Cox HertsCC, Year of Cycling Officer.
Dan Flitton, St Albans District Council.

2. **Presentation By Jex Cox on Herts Year of cycling**

Year of cycling focus on sport and recreation; to then feed-in to cycling to work as an ancillary outcome.

-integrating cycling into life

-Herts only has very few cycle racing circuits compared to other LA's so looking to develop more.

-promoting off-road, traffic-free routes (including RoW/Ashridge etc). with police and LA's.

2015 events

-women's tour and tour series

-Town centre tour series less than 1Km.

-Town and Country circuit series festivals.

-County show

Herts wide cycling map

-whole county one side.

-Town centre maps other side.

Herts wide cycling on referral scheme.

-4 or 5 centres across county

-cycling instructors linked to health centres

-5/6 progressive sessions, including on and off tarmac routes and open spaces.

Development of off-road mountain biking (unsurfaced).

-Panshanger (contact Jez Cox about possible locations in Herts; Ashridge, SRFI site, Aldenham CP, LVRPk, Colne VRPk, Sherrardswood, Therfield Heath, Chorleywood Common, Mardley Heath, Broxbourne Woods, Bricket Wood etc). [c/f Wendover Woods].

Holistic approach to multi-use centres, including road circuit surrounded by off-road motor bike & bicycle area and centre for GP referrals etc.

Triathlon idea of Horse-ride/cycle/walk.

Lynn M recommended communication with BHS on how to cycle safely past horses – use bell or call @hello' etc to warn of presence in a friendly, informative way. **JC & LM to talk further.**

Bikeability courses are run by HCC & Sustrans volunteers.

(Informal MTB area exists at Digswell by A1(M).

3. Minutes

- **NJ** - Oakridge Lane Public Inquiry lasted less than one day.
 - Email from NE re format of LAF Annual report & content of National Survey, if anything missing contact LL.
- Query over date of final budget sign off? - RC confirmed 22 Sept 2014. Comments that the report presented to the Panel might have been misleading inasmuch as the use of the term “Complaints” referred to formal complaints to the county in regard to procedural or maladministration type matters and not “reports” which related to the state or condition of the highway. Therefore this did not represent a true picture of the workload and deterioration of the network due to the previous cuts and therefore mislead in such a way as to say that there had been no reduction in the quality of the network where in fact it had started to deteriorate. RoW budget cuts panel report clearly said budget reduction of 2011 has led to no great rise in formal complaints. Lynn does not think it is a true reflection. ***RC** to check what report said on ‘Fault Reports’ and feed-back. Circulate Panel Report and information note (stats) to all. ***Key Performance Indicator** (KPI) of 75% reports resolved needs to be presented as effective use of CA officer / Countryside Access Team Leader resources available.
- Page 4 Huddle. NE pushing the use of Huddle but not well used, due to it not being experienced as user friendly. Reading reports on Huddle was reported to be easier now.

4. Dan Flitton - Code of conduct on multi use routes in St Albans District.

Code of practice being formulated for all users. Arising from introduction of cycling to Verulamium Park. Re-drafting bylaws at same time to correspond and signs (like Peak District example) proposed at entrances to parks.

LM - Introduce horse-riding on Alban Way - allow it and manage it.

Publicity / information - Possibility of using district newsletters to get this into every household.

Repeater signs planned in Verulamium Park to remind users.

5. LM / JT – P4C Project update

Sandridge path proposed by STAAF

STACC were ‘applicants’. Project had to have rural benefit and be community led with high partner engagement including Sandridge PC and Wheathampstead PC, plus LAF endorsement. Upgraded FP to BR so was supported by cyclists and riders. 25% match funding was required, which came from cyclists group and riders group and the Woodland Trust plus HCC RoWIP funds and officer time. “Destination management” meaning how to promote visitors to the area, e.g. linking bridleways, bus routes and stops etc.

RoW produced specification, oversaw tender and contract arrangements, all project managed as part of JT’s day job which equates to a valuable contribution and part of match funding input.

Bad weather led to 2 extensions of the initial deadline. Complications with private drive caused a safety audit and re-negotiation to point where occupiers are happy. Mike H (STACC) had to register with RPA, in order to claim funding. 1.1km multi-user path, 5.0/5.7m wide at widest point, un-segregated shared use links Nomansland Common to Sandridge Village. Crushed concrete sub-base under granite dust top surface. Links to Heartwood Forest car park drive and on to wider bridleway network.

Woodland Trust volunteers keen to put platted hurdles alongside hedges and maintain the hedges (as they own it). HCC Right of Way to maintain grass half. 12 month maintenance period in contract to make good some minor fencing issues and surface low spots.

Next Steps; dedication, publicity, permissive drive crossing agreement, opening event, final report (c/o LM) and thoughts of further extension. This will be around the car park, behind the bund to BR8. Woodland Trust are very keen.

Considering extending northwards to Wheathampstead; perhaps less than 400m.

LAF thanked LM/MH/JT and RoW for the project.

6. **Matters Arising**

- Members to read officer reports separately.
- Next Business meeting (now confirmed as 10th November).
- NE is changing its officers and districts – new NE chair and 14 new area teams, annual LAF meeting planned, coast path funding increased.
- Discussion on locations of next meetings; Univ of Herts or Ramada? Little difference in overall costs, free accommodation at UH but refreshments dear. Higher fee at Ramada but refreshments included. Decision to remain at Ramada for next meeting at least. Paul Z to be contacted to cancel next booking at least at UH. **[KG]**
- Secretarial support (NE rules) - **LL** to write to **SA** re ongoing secretarial support as this is needed and the overall cost of the LAF is only about £3k
- Members to forward comments on Dog walking consultation asap to **LL** (for return to NE) but individual members may also wish to reply with a personal response. **DC** reported serious problems with dogs damaging crops in her area.
- **LM** Pointed out that there appeared to be poor representation on LNP. **LL** to approach Tony Bradford to investigate stronger representation on access by LAF and a potential meeting with Tony.

7. Agenda Item 9; Access & Rights of Way News

Report received – Members to read and raise any questions directly, via email.

DONM: 10th Dec 19:30 Ramada, Hatfield

Meeting closed 10:00pm