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West Sussex Local Access Forum



24th May 2018

Sent by email to:
mike@silviculture.co.uk

Dear Mr Chapman

WSLAF response to Rosier Wood Management Plan

I am responding to the above consultation on behalf of the West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF).

West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) is an independent advisory body, established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to give access advice to local authorities, statutory organisations and non-government organisations. In giving that advice, the Forum's main objective is to ensure the existing network of public rights of way (prows), as well as the wider access network, is protected and where possible enhanced. The Forum has a balanced membership of knowledgeable and experienced users (walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers), landowners and other interests (including conservation, disabled access, landscape). For further information about the Forum please visit www.wslaf.org.

The Forum welcomes the opportunity to comment on this Plan, and Members are generally supportive of the aims and objectives proposed, which are compatible with the Forum's main objective set out above, as regards PRowS.

Members were particularly interested to read on page 7 under "Public Access" that the footpaths are very well used as they are so close to the town, and that other routes are also followed, the property being criss-crossed with paths. We very much welcome the opportunities offered by the Wood for residents informal recreation, which is undoubtedly highly valued.

In view of this, Members pointed out during discussion that it is a Management Intention of the Plan to "seek to improve access infrastructure through track upgrades and creation of a loading area", and it was suggested in line with our remit of enhancement of PRow, that we should explore with you the possible provision of a bridleway link.

The link would be between Billingshurst BW 1918 which joins the A272 from the north a short distance from FP 1934 (shown as being partly upgraded on your map), to join FP 1926 (also shown as being partly upgraded), before running south along the eastern edge of the Wood to join Marringdean Road to the south, which provides access to BW 2300 running south to Gay Street.

The Forum has become increasingly aware of the difficulties faced by non-motorised users (NMUs), as the speed and volume of traffic on local roads and lanes increases, due to the large amount of housing development taking place in the county, and the growing demand for on line deliveries.

PRoW, especially bridleways available to all NMUs (walkers, cyclists and equestrians), are generally fragmented, and can only be linked by the use of local roads and lanes. As these have now become unsafe for vulnerable road users, PRoW are becoming more fragmented, and there is a great need for more off-road links where possible for NMU safety.

This letter constitutes formal advice from the West Sussex Local Access Forum. The Forestry Commission is required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this Local Access Forum in carrying out its functions.

Members would like to thank you for considering our comments, and look forward to hearing your response to our proposal in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Noble', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jane Noble, Forum Officer
West Sussex Local Access Forum

Copy for information to: All WSLAF members