

**1. RoWIP Schemes**

- 1.1 **Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm** - Tricia Butcher continues to monitor updates regarding this scheme on behalf of the Forum and will continue to circulate useful information as appropriate.

**2. WSCC Highway, Transport and Planning Engagement Hub**

- 2.1 In addition to the consultations on the agenda Members have been made aware of several active travel / sustainable transport corridor consultations. As most of these require local knowledge and often cover utility access rather than recreational access it is not always appropriate for WSLAF to respond, however information is circulated to members for them to respond individually if they wish. These can all be found on the [WSCC Highway, Transport and Planning Engagement Hub web pages](#) and recent ones have included:
- i. Chichester Sustainable Transport Corridors – Improving transport options in Chichester – WSCC (deadline 18/12/23)
  - ii. A259 Chichester to Bognor Regis Corridor Scheme – WSCC (deadline 11/3/24)

**3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Event, Aldingbourne Centre (Neil Vigar)**

- 3.1 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion event held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March at Aldingbourne Trust was organised by WSCC Highways, Transport and Planning department as part of the livelabs project funded by DfT. The aim was to get a better idea of the experiences, views and challenges of residents who would consider themselves to have protected characteristics. Their voice will help WSCC understand how its services could be improved to meet the needs of all residents. Neil Vigar gave a presentation on Countryside Services, including PRoW, and there were also presentations from colleagues in the road safety, active travel, public transport and highway maintenance teams. Each session was followed by Q&A's.

Notes from the Countryside services session were:

- A mobility scooter user went for a walk in the countryside deemed as 'accessible' but was stopped by a kissing gate, and couldn't get through.
- Getting to the countryside in the first place can be really difficult.
- Hard to not know whether somewhere you intend to visit is accessible for you.
- Toilets and parking are key issues those with disabilities consider when planning to go for a walk.
- Participants picked up on the 15-month inspection schedule being long time between visits.
- Gates and stiles pose accessibility problems.
- Paths may be considered 'accessible' for a wheelchair, but not for a cane.
- Screen reader accessibility would be an improvement.
- Can PROW owners be forced to change inaccessible gates? – WSCC offer a gate kit but cannot force the change.
- Reporting tool when come across inaccessible gates.

- Automatic gates would combat the issue of cattle in a field and having to have a stile/kissing gate.
- Suggestion for gates with locks that wheelchair users have a key too.
- 'Countryside isn't very accessible is it?'
- Worth looking at other countryside areas that are prioritising accessibility.
- 'I'd love to go out to walk in the countryside but I can't just do it'.
  - Have to think about where, how to get there, only do essential routes.
  - Defined accessible routes needed and audio described routes.
- Accessibility often talked about in relation to wheelchair users, but other groups, including those with autism, require different safety/ accessibility considerations to be usable.

WSLAF was invited to attend, but unfortunately due to the short notice, no member was able to.

#### **4. Review of open access maps**

- 4.1 As advertised on the Government's [Open Access Land web page](#) Natural England must review the open access maps they issued in 2004 and 2005. The current deadline for this review is 2024 to 2025. The government is now moving toward a unified national deadline of 31 December 2030. Natural England have started initial planning for the review.
- 4.2 Mapping showing Open Access Land maps can be found on [Natural England's Open Access web pages](#). This also shows the England Coast Path and associated spreading room.

#### **5. Green links across the Manhood Peninsula**

- 5.1 Helen Baldwin, a former WSLAF member, continues to attend meetings discussing improving access on the Manhood Peninsula where there is a shortage of bridleways, as she has done for many years. Her notes of the most recent meeting held on 14 March 2024 have been circulated to Forum members. Key points from her report are:
- Public Footpath 50 is being considered for upgrade to bridleway status
  - Consideration of permissive bridleways linking Golf Links Lane and Medmerry bird reserve
  - A safe crossing of Selsey Road, near the RSPB site, which would benefits all user groups, is being looked at
  - It looks like the path from Selsey to the A27 will be a cycle way only and not accommodate equestrians.

#### **6. Report a problem with a Right of Way**

- 6.1 The new WSCC [Report a Problem with a Right of Way form](#) that incorporates a map has been live for several months. This has significantly reduced the extra correspondence required to confirm the location of reported issues. A few comments have been received about the only search being 'Road', as this is not always known when out in the countryside. The search does however work on most places too, so a request has been made to change the text to reflect this.

#### **7. WSCC Rights of Way – Definitive Map changes**

- 7.1 Below is the change made to the Definitive Map since the last formal WSLAF meeting:

- **Wiston Permissive Bridleway P48, overrunning Public Footpath 2704\_1** – This permissive agreement give horses and cyclists access to two kilometres of path, improving off-road access between Washington and Steyning

7.2 Information about the Planning and Rights of Way Committee, including meeting dates and papers can be found on the [Planning and Rights of Way Committee web pages](#).

## **8. WSLAF Future Meetings**

8.1 All formal meetings usually start at 10.30am. Future dates:

- Informal: Wednesday 10 July 2024 - Horsham
- Formal: Wednesday 30 October 2024 - Chichester

## **9. Neighbouring Local Access Forums (LAFs)**

9.1 Meeting papers and other information about neighbouring Forums can be found by following the links below. Any details have been obtained from the websites:

- [South Downs Local Access Forum](#) (SDLAF) – last meeting 23 August 2021
- [Brighton & Hove Local Access Forum](#) – last meeting 19 October 2023
- [East Sussex Local Access Forum \(ESLAF\)](#) – last meeting 17 February 2024. Next meeting due June 2024
- [Hampshire Countryside Access Forum](#) (HCAF) – last meeting 9 April 2024. Next meeting 2 July 2024 (evening)
- [Surrey Countryside Access Forum](#) (SLAF) – last meeting 16 October 2023. Next meeting 22 April 2024.

*Jane Noble, Forum Officer 12 April 2024*