

1. WSCC Walking and Cycling Task and Finish Group

- 1.1 Andy Ekinsmyth,, West Sussex County Council provided this update on The Cycling and Walking TFG has its next meeting on 20th January 2016. This meeting will be looking at the broad content of a revised walking and cycling strategy for West Sussex. Officers will then create a draft document for Members to consider at its next meeting. In addition key stakeholders will be invited to enter routes onto the GIS map base provided by Sustrans. This will then be analysed and a single, prioritised list of potential schemes produced that will sit alongside the revised strategy. Stakeholders will have 4 weeks to complete their entries of potential schemes once invited. It is expected that the revised draft strategy and single list will be open for consultation once they are available; this is expected to be in March 2016.

2. Dog Walking Advice – Consultation feedback

- 2.1 Dog Walking Advice - Natural England (NE) consulted with stakeholders, including Local Access Forums, regarding Dog Walker Advice. WSLAF sent a response in September 2014. NE apologies for the delay in providing this response:
- 2.2 'Thank you to all the Local Access Forums that commented on the Draft Dog advice leaflet. The working group really appreciated your feedback. The Government has issued new guidelines regarding the publication of information and advice by its departments to ensure that the public has a clearer understanding about who to go to for information and what is statutory advice. They are keen that information is not duplicated and that there is a statutory obligation to provide that information.
- 2.3 The Countryside Code fulfills Natural England's statutory obligations to provide a code of conduct for visitors to the countryside and a dog advice leaflet could have been seen as a duplication of that. Therefore Natural England has taken the decision not to go ahead with its publication. We have continued to work alongside stakeholders and have been involved in drafting a set of priority messages for dog walkers that can be used as a basis for local and site based information. Natural Resources Wales however has produced a leaflet using the Countryside Code branding and it can be downloaded here:
<https://naturalresources.wales/media/4862/the-dog-walking-code.pdf>

3. LAF Conference

- 3.1 **Regional Conference** - This year due to funding constraints there is no South East LAF Conference.
- 3.2 **National Conference** – To reduce travel time and costs there are two national conferences. As previously circulated to members the LAF National Conference (South) is to be held on Tuesday 23rd February 2016 from 10.30am until 4.30pm in Bristol. There will be talks from Defra, the Disabled Ramblers, the British Horse Society and a presentation on alternative sources of funding as well as a variety of workshops. There is one place per LAF.
- 3.3 From 11-30 September 2015 NE ran a short online survey of LAF members and Officers regarding the national LAF conferences. There were 138

responses to the survey. The survey showed that LAFs would value national conferences being held in 2016.

4. South East LAF Coordinator

- 4.1 From 1st February Jonathan Clarke will no longer undertake the South East LAF co-ordination work. This role includes assisting arrange LAF conferences, providing regular updates to SE LAF Officers and organising regular LAF officer meetings to share best practice. If a volunteer is not found from local LAF Officers to replace him support will be reduced to updates from Rob Leek, Natural England.

5. LAF Huddle or alternative?

- 5.1 The LAF Huddle workspace has been open to all LAF members for a few years now and currently has just over 200 LAF representatives registered. In response to queries about it NE ran an on-line survey in 2015 NE to find out if Huddle is the best way to communicate with LAFs or if an alternative such as facebook or google-drive would be better.
- 5.2 The feedback received suggests that the majority of Huddle users would prefer to keep using Huddle rather than move to an alternative. However improvements are needed and NE plan to:
- Further promote directly to LAFs that Huddle is currently open to all LAF members
 - Turn off some of the features to simplify the workspace interface
 - Produce new guidance documents and videos on how to get the most out of Huddle

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7. Beautiful Outdoors

- 7.1 Progress is being made to deliver schemes through the Beautiful Outdoors Programme. Two schemes have been completed (400m of surfacing on BW13P in Poynings and some 20m of rut repairs in Cocking). Further schemes are in progress on site including work to improve the Downs Link north of Shoreham.

8. Digital walks mapped out on new app

- 8.1 From last November walkers can “go digital” now ten routes have been added to a new app designed to help users access the countryside. Each walk has a storyteller who gives a personal insight into the walk and their experience of it. The ten walks are all different lengths, and there’s something for all levels of walker. Walkers can print the maps as a PDF for free or download the iFootpath App (£1.49), which gives a smarter walking experience with live GPS powered maps that show your progress as you walk. Visit the website for details: www.ifootpath.com
- 8.2 This can also be accessed from the West Sussex Weekends website launched last summer as part of the Beautiful Outdoors campaign, to help boost tourism in West Sussex and to support the local economy. The campaign also has a local focus and aims to encourage residents to discover the West Sussex countryside on their doorstep and further afield, as well as share their favourite walks and cycle routes with those who may not know West Sussex so well. Discover the walks and much more at West Sussex Weekends at: www.west-sussex-weekends.com

9. WSCC Rights of Way IT system (CAMS) web portal

- 9.1 The new rights of way web map and reporting system is expected to go live in the next month or so. This will:
- Replace the current iMap. The public will be able to view all paths managed by the rights of way service (including rights of way, permissive paths and G-roads). The public will also be able to view all problems that are logged in CAMS. It is hoped this will reduce duplication of reporting problems.
 - Enable the public to report a problem based on a map location (email updates on progress will be sent to the reporter)
 - Enable volunteers to report back on one-off problem inspections and input routine inspection findings. Most volunteers have now undergone CAMS training.

10. WSCC Rights of Way Report to Parish Councils

- 10.1 Reports will be sent out in late Jan / early Feb to Parish Councils. The report will feedback on all work WSCC has arranged that it is responsible for and will include all works carried out by the routine maintenance contractor, by volunteers, A draft copy of the report will be circulated to members with the meeting papers.

11. WSCC Rights of Way (ROW) Committee

- 11.1 A meeting of the ROW Committee was held on 20 October 2015. Items of interest to the Forum include:

- **Petworth, The Welliggers to Hallgate Farm** – The Committee approved the making of an order for a new length of bridleway at Petworth. This will provide a very useful off road link and we are hoping that the order proceeds without objection.
- **Ardingly, Standgrove Wood** - the order for a new footpath was rejected by the Secretary of State’s inspector, following a public inquiry. He was not convinced that the evidence of use before him was sufficient.
- **Southwater, Christ’s Hospital** – The Committee gave approval to make orders to divert and extinguish paths at Christ’s Hospital School, in the interest of improving school security.

11.2 All papers can be found www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/committees-and-decision-making/statutory-committees/rights-of-way-committee

12. Centurion Way Extension

12.1 The new section of the Centurion Way multi-user path, from Binderton to West Dean Tunnel, was opened in December 2015. The route will be a permissive path (not a Public Right of Way) providing access for pedestrians, cyclists and less-able users. Private equestrian rights will remain unaltered. This has been achieved by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) working closely with The Edward James Foundation. SDNPA will take on maintenance. In addition the Lavant to Binderton section has been widened to 3m and upgraded to a self-binding limestone dust surface.

12.2 The permissive path ends at the West Dean tunnel. There is currently no access from the path at this point into the village. The long-term aspiration is to extend the route to the South Downs Way and beyond to Midhurst, providing car-free access into the South Downs, linking rural communities and showcasing the beautiful countryside of the Lavant Valley.

13. Rights of Way and Land Searches

13.1 The mandatory question regarding rights of way on land searches, as reported to WSLAF previously (on the Con26 form).From 4 July 2016 there will be

14. Rights of Way Circular 109

14.1 Defra’s Rights of Way Circular 109, which gives advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing rights of way, is to be revised in 2016. The current version can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/rights-of-way-circular-1-09

15. Agenda Item 12: WSLAF Future Meetings

15.1 All meetings are start at 10.30am (tea/coffee at 10.15am) and are followed by lunch for members and speakers. Dates, venues and items in italics are suggestions to be confirmed at the meeting.

Date	Venue	Proposed Topic / Speaker to include
Wed 20/04/16	Chichester	WSCC PROW Annual Report – Jon Perks WSCC PROW volunteers – Volunteer Coordinator <i>* WSCC CAMS web demo – Jane Noble</i>

Wed 13/7/16	Horsham	* Deregulation Act – Laura Floodgate, WSCC Legal Services
Wed 19/10/16	Chichester	To be decided by Forum
Wed 25/1/17	Horsham	To be decided by Forum

* CAMS demo suggested as Deregulation Act has slipped to a later meeting.

Other suggestions; Forestry Commission, Highways Agency, Network Rail, WSCC Officer to explain Infrastructure Project delivery and role of CLCs.

16. Neighbouring LAFs

- 16.1 South Downs Local Access Forum
<http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/get-involved/local-access-forum> - agenda and minutes from the last meetings have been circulated to members.
 WSLAF link member Tricia Butcher / Glynn Jones
- 16.2 Brighton & Hove Local Access Forum
<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1238738>
- 16.3 East Sussex Local Access Forum
<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/rightsofway/localaccessforum/default.htm>
- 16.4 Hampshire Countryside Access Forum (HCAF)
<http://www.countrysideaccessforum.hants.org.uk>
- 16.5 Surrey Local Access Forum (SLAF)
<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/countryside/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/surrey-countryside-access-forum>

Jane Noble, Forum Officer