

Jane Noble, Forum Officer
West Sussex Local Access Forum
First Floor, Northleigh
Tower Street, Chichester
West Sussex PO19 1RH
(01243) 777620
wslaf@westsussex.gov.uk

www.wslaf.org

West Sussex Local Access Forum



6 April 2016

Sent by email to: sue.philipson@westsussex.gov.uk

Dear Ms Philipson

Bridleway 3727, Balcombe – High Street to BW 79W via Greentrees Farm

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.

This letter constitutes formal advice from the West Sussex Local Access Forum. West Sussex County Council 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.

The Forum visited the northern end of bridleway 3727 in Balcombe Parish soon after the Order confirming the existence of this historical path had been advertised. Members were very pleased to hear that this ancient bridleway would once again be available for the local community to use, especially in an area where there are very few off-road opportunities for cyclists and horse riders. They noted that this path would provide a much needed safe off-road route once works to open it up were complete. The provision of more routes to get vulnerable non-motorised users (NMUs) off the narrow, winding and increasingly busy country lanes is a key theme in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (www.westsussex.gov.uk/RoWIP) that the Forum had much input in developing.

Since the site visit progress on the clearance and opening up of this route has been regularly reported at WSLAF meetings. Members welcomed news of the volunteer involvement in clearing trees along the route, but were disappointed to hear at their most recent meeting, on 21 January 2016, that a section of the path could not be safely used due to the condition of the surface, other than on foot and by diverting off the path where absolutely necessary.

The Forum therefore requests that WSCC prioritises work to drain and surface this section of bridleway, so that the whole route can become an asset for all users, building on the good work already achieved in restoring this much needed route.

WSLAF would very much appreciate being kept informed of progress on this matter.

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