

1. WSLAF England Coast Path Working Group Meeting with Natural England (Agenda Item 6)

- 1.1 The WSLAF Working Group of Geoff Farrell (GF), Nicol Beard, Derek Whittington, Val Rawlings (and Bob McLellan) and Graham Elvey, met with Tim Hall (TH) Natural England (NE) on 14 February 2017 to consider the route of the England Coast Path through West Sussex. GF gathered the following notes from attendees:
- 1.2 *Geoff Farrell - We were shown the route bit by bit, together with an explanation of the 'tricky bits'. These are because of landowner issues or simply poor access because of the topography. There was also an explanation of the 'rules of the game' when landowners objected. Similarly, the legal position where a preferred route intends to use a privately maintained road. Where there were choices to be made as to whether the path took route A or B, we were told the reasoning behind their choice. There was ample opportunity to feed in our local knowledge - for example requests to take out specific inhibitors such as steps that are difficult to negotiate with prams, pushchairs, and so on. Personally, I came away confident that the route is deliverable (at least this section), and will be delivered pretty much on schedule.*
- 1.3 *Graham Elvey - NE expect objections to their preferred route in a small number of locations but they are confident their route is in accordance with the requirements of the legislation. At present NE are on target to open the West Sussex sections by late Summer 2018. Government funding for the project and future maintenance is OK at the moment but as with all such funding there are no guarantees in the long term that it will continue.*
- 1.4 *Nicol Beard - I too came away confident this path will be delivered as promised and with due care and consideration. The only other point I picked up was funding (in the future) as a National Trail. I was unaware of this and it was a promising indication of how path furniture could be repaired or improved on going.*
- 1.5 *Val Rawlings & Bob McLellan - We found the meeting very interesting and learnt a lot. The proposed route for this section needs to be in by the end of May and so far there are only 2 objections from landowners etc. that they hope can be resolved. Much of the path will be on existing tracks and where new routes have to be found they will be as near as possible to the coast, but due to impossible situations presenting themselves these may have to be on leisure and private roads for short distances. Some parts of the coastal path will be affected by the tide and alternative routes will be put in place when this occurs with adequate signage provided. As representatives of disabled people we asked that due thought be given to providing ramps, taking out stiles and no steps if possible. However, we understand that some of the coastal path will not be accessible for us due to soft shingle etc. but we hope to be able to do quite a lot of the sections on our mobility scooters in the future.*
- 1.6 Updates on the progress of the England Coast Path can be viewed on the [Government's website](#).

2. WSCC PROW maintenance contract

- 2.1 Following a procurement process, County Tree Surgeons have again been successful in winning the contract to carry out routine maintenance on West Sussex Rights of Way. The contract runs for four years from 1st May 2017, and includes work for which WSCC is responsible including signage, surface vegetation clearance (outside the Summer Clearance Programme), small bridges and steps.

3. WSCC PROW Communication with Parish Councils

- 3.1 David Barling, WSCC Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, has written to all Parish Councils (copied to the local member, BHS and Ramblers) with a report of all works carried out on Rights of Way by WSCC. A report detailing the paths on the Summer Clearance Programme (surface vegetation) was also sent and PCs have been asked to check if there are other paths that should be considered for inclusion in the programme.

4. WSCC PROW Staffing

- 4.1 WSCC PROW Staff changes are:
- Kevin Dewitt started as an Access Ranger covering Area 3 (Midhurst and surrounding parishes down to Bognor) on 3rd April 2017.
 - Darryl Hobden has transferred as an Access Ranger from Area 3 to Area 4 (Petworth and surrounding parishes down to Littlehampton).
 - Charlotte Weller will be going on maternity leave in June 2017. Jo Dixon will take on the role of Countryside Services Manager in her absence.

5. South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework

- 5.1 The Technical Working Group for the South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework met on 19th April 2017. Derek Whittington attended on behalf of the Forum (Tricia Butcher the usual Forum rep was unable to attend). He reports that papers, including presentations, will be with participants in a couple of weeks' and can then be circulated to WSLAF members.

6. Guidance on procedures for considering objections to definitive map and public path orders

- 6.1 The Planning Inspectorate updated its [Guidance on procedures for considering objections to definitive map and public path orders](#) in February 2017. It describes the procedure for rights of way orders made by English local authorities under the Highways Act 1980, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which have been sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for a decision because people have made representations or objections; or because an order requires modification.

7. A27 – Chichester – Safer crossing for pedestrians

- 7.1 Pedestrians will find it safer to cross near a major roundabout on the A27 in Chichester. West Sussex Highways is extending a footpath in Whyke Road so people no longer have to cross the road so closely to the A27. The path will take people further away from the busy roundabout, where they can use new dropped kerbs and crossing point. The extended path connects to the A27 Whyke Roundabout footbridge. West Sussex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Bob Lanzer, said: "This improvement will

make people feel much less exposed when crossing Whyke Road. "By extending the footpath, there will be no need for pedestrians to be so close to such a busy roundabout. It will also be a superior link for the footbridge across the roundabout too." Work started on Monday, February 6 2017.

8. Changes at the Ramblers

- 8.1 Judith Taylor has replaced Graham Elvey as the West Sussex Footpath Secretary.

9. Ramblers Pathwatch re-launched

- 9.1 Ramblers have re-launched their [Pathwatch app](#) for everyday use to be able to log items regarding PRoWs, both positive and negative (Note: please still report any problems on West Sussex Rights of Way to via the Council's [website](#)).

10. Rampion Off-shore Windfarm and Cabelling Works

- 10.1 The first turbine has been installed and works to install the on-shore cables are progressing. Information on this and affected PRoWs can be found on the [E-On website](#).

11. WSCC Rights of Way (ROW) Committee and Definitive Map Changes

- 11.1 The last meeting of the WSCC ROW Committee was on 14th March. The next meeting is scheduled for 11 July 2017. 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.

- Petworth Bridleway 3762 – A new bridleway has been secured at Petworth linking the A382, by the Welldiggers PH, to Byworth Road, by Hall Gate Farm
- Upper Beeding Bridleway 3766 - Smugglers Lane to the A2037 has been confirmed as Bridleway
- Stoughton Restricted Byway 3764 and 3405 - following confirmation of DMMOs two restricted byways have been added to the map. 3405 (Monument Lane) was formerly recorded as a Bridleway. 3764 provides a useful link from 3405 to other bridleways to the north.

12. WSLAF Future Meetings

- 12.1 All meetings will start at 10.30am (tea/coffee at 10.15am) and are followed by lunch for members and speakers. Dates and venues for the coming year are shown in the table below.

Date	Venue	Proposed Topic / Speaker to include
Wed 26/4/17	Chichester	WSCC Annual Report
Wed 19 /7/17	Horsham	To be decided by Forum
Wed 18/10/17	Chichester	Shared use of Public Footpaths?
Wed 30/1/18	Horsham	To be decided by Forum

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

13. Neighbouring LAFs

13.1 South Downs Local Access Forum (SDLAF)

Next meetings:

- 25 April 2017 – South Downs Centre, Midhurst
- 26 July 2017 – South Downs Centre, Midhurst
- 30 November 2017 – South Downs Centre, Midhurst

<http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/get-involved/local-access-forum>.

WSLAF link member Tricia Butcher / Glynn Jones

13.2 Brighton & Hove Local Access Forum

Next meetings:

- Thursday 6 July 2017 at 6pm
- Thursday 5 October 2017 at 6pm
- Thursday 11 January 2018 at 6pm

Further dates have not been published on their website

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1238738>

13.3 East Sussex Local Access Forum

The next meeting:

- 25 April 2017

Further dates have not been published on their website

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/rightsofway/rights-of-way-in-east-sussex/local-access-forum/east-sussex-local-access-forum/>

13.4 Surrey Local Access Forum (SLAF)

- Monday 24 April 2017 - Kingston Upon Thames
- Monday 17 July 2017
- Monday 16 October 2017

<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/countryside/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/surrey-countryside-access-forum>

Jane Noble, Forum Officer