



Meeting of the West Sussex Local Access Forum Wednesday 30 October 2024

A meeting of the West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) was held at **10.30am, Wednesday 30 October 2024**, at County Hall Chichester.

Minutes (Unconfirmed)

Present

Graham Elvey (GE) – Chairman
Tricia Butcher (TB)
Monica Collingham (MC)
David Green (DG)

Phil Miles (PM)
Carol Montgomery (CM)
David Purcell (DP)

WSSC Officers

Ami Dye(AD)	Interim Forum Officer, WSSC
Neil Vigar (NV)	Countryside Services Manager
Kevin Dewitt (KD)	Project Officer – King Charles III England Coastal Path

1. Apologies and welcomes

- i. Welcome to Ami and Kevin
- ii. Apologies received from Geoff Farrell, Nicol Beard. Roy Allen is a potential new member who was due to attend this meeting as an observer before formally joining the Forum.

2. Minutes of the Forum held 17 April 2024

a. Minutes of formal meeting of 17 April 2024

- i. The minutes of the formal meeting held on 14 April 2024 were approved as a correct note.
- ii. Items relating to actions have all been completed.

b. Minutes of informal meeting of 7 February 2024

- i. Items relating to actions and matters arising are either on the agenda, have an update in the General report or have been completed other than:
 - Item 2 Website updates - Underway. AD to follow this up and ensure website is up to date.
 - Item 6 Bluebell Railway - PM to contact WSSC. AD to follow this up with the local Access Ranger.
- ii. The notes of the informal meeting on 7 February 2024 were approved as a correct note.

3. Any urgent matters to be considered not on the agenda

No urgent items raised.

4. King Charles III England Coastal Path - KCIIIECP

Kevin Dewitt, Project Officer – King Charles III England Coast Path delivered a presentation to update the forum on implementation of the KCIIIECP. He began by confirming that the South Hayling to East Head section of the path had been approved by the Secretary of State on 16th July 2024.

He confirmed that works along the KCIIIECP will be starting shortly. This includes surfacing of a section of footpath 1 at West Wittering together with some small access improvements such as replacing plank bridges with wider/longer structures, installing steps, some small surface patching and replacing the last stile on the KCIIIECP with a gate. The plan is that the bulk of the establishment works will take place next spring/summer.

Kevin detailed that the implementation of the route opening has not been without challenge, mainly due to issues in respect of wildlife and ecology, sites falling within SSSI and landowner consents. One of the main challenges on the section from South Hayling to East Head is dealing with issues of coastal erosion resulting in realignment of the trail before it is officially opened. In locations such as Bosham, footpath 230 and most recently Chidham, footpath 224 (and other locations) they are having to roll back the route and this may cause a delay in opening the final section of the KCIIIECP.

Currently the proposed full implementation date is September 2025, although it is possible that this will slip to the end of autumn 2025.

Kevin detailed that overarching management of the KCIIIECP will likely be managed by a Trail Partnership formed up of New Forest National Park Authority, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Hampshire County Council and WSCC. The intention is that the authorities pool together their maintenance grants and appoint a lead partner, who will then hire a trail officer to undertake strategic management of the KCIIIECP. The day-to-day practical maintenance of the trail will still reside with the individual access authorities. Until the trail partnership is formed, WSCC retains all responsibility for managing its sections of KCIIIECP. The KCIIIECP is a National Trail and as such will be managed to a set of quality standards that applies to all UK National Trails. Maintenance grants will be provided by Natural England for on-going improvement works.

5. Public Rights of Way Asset Management System Migration.

NV provided an update on the asset management system migration currently being undertaken to move the PRoW and Access Ranger team across from CAMS (Countryside Access Management System) to Confirm. Confirm is the system currently used by Local Highway Operations and Countryside team.

The project, being led by Jane Noble, the Business Assurance team and Brightly, the providers of the software is going well.

Key benefits to the system include the ability for Access Rangers to work remotely using a mobile device to update existing issues, log defects and send works to the contractors.

As well as the ability to work remotely, IT support for the system is provided by a team whereas previously Jane Noble was the single point of contact for CAMS.

All staff have been provided with extensive training and it is hoped that the system will be fully live shortly.

NV confirmed that the public facing system will still be the same and there will be no change to the way the public report issues. In the long term, reports will automatically feed into the system, providing customers with unique references to allow them to track and trace their reports.

6. Consultations and advice

a. Current consultations

- i. [A259 – Chichester to Bognor Regis Corridor Scheme](#) - WSCC. Closing date 11/11/2024

NB attended the drop-in session regarding the improvements and has fed back to all members via email.

The scheme aims to provide improvements on the A259 corridor between its junctions with A27 at Chichester and Charles Purley Way (Felpham Relief Road) junction (and north to Shripney Lane).

The proposals include:

- Junction improvements at the A259 Bognor Rd/Drayton Lane junction and the introduction of traffic signals to manage conflicting traffic flows at the A259 Chichester Rd/A259 Gladius Way junction.
- Providing bus lanes on approaches to the A259/A27 Bognor Road, A259/B2144 Drayton Lane, A259/B2259 Chichester Road/Gladius Way, A259/A29 Oldlands Way and A259/A29 Shripney Road junctions as well as bus gates where buses receive their own signal to give them priority over other traffic, at the A259/A27 Bognor Road and A259/A29 Oldlands Way junctions.
- Improvements to bus stops along the corridor such as new shelters, electronic real time information displays and better access paths and crossings.
- Two-way segregated cycle tracks alongside separate footways, new signal-controlled crossings, and safer side road crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists. Where space is limited, in order to provide a continuous route, some sections of shared use (i.e. walk/cycle) paths and some sections of on-carriageway route via less busy roads, are also proposed.

The consultation provides a response tool via an online survey and GE agreed to try and respond via this. If unsuccessful, a letter will be sent.

Action: GE to respond to consultation

b. Consultation responses, advice given.

Members noted the responses sent since the last formal meeting – listed below.

- i. Smarter regulation: proposed changes to legislation for electrically assisted pedal cycles – DfT.

- ii. Upper Shoreham Active Travel Improvements consultation – WSCC
- iii. Coxs Farm Level Crossing Public Footpath 325 Diversion – Network Rail

7. **WSLAF matters**

- a. **Websites including Members' Interests** – GE thanked CM for producing the list of members interests which shows that there is a good spread amongst current members. This information will be used to populate the members interests on the website.
- b. **CAPS (Countryside Access Position Statement)** - GE has made some changes to the statement and circulated to all members for comment. All agreed that it is very useful as a reference and guidance document when responding to consultations. CM raised a couple of amendments relating to terminology. GE agreed to revise the statement and circulate to all members for approval before sending to AD for formatting and placing on the website.

Action: GE and AD to complete agreed Statement and return to WSCC

- c. **Recruitment** - GE informed the Forum that Sue Wotan has now left the forum and thanked her for her contribution.

Roy Allen, a new member will attend the next formal meeting.

GE noted that Jason Lavender has not attended for quite some time therefore will write to him to confirm whether he still wishes to be part of the forum.

Agreed by all members to look at recruitment options. Those put forward were an advert in the WSCC connections publication and reaching out to Parish Councils. TB and MC also raised the issue regarding website alerts and the ability to sign up for this.

Action: GW to contact JL on his Membership if the Forum

- d. **Members priorities**

Suggestions put forward for future guests or speaker as follows:

- Update on capital works and other projects across the network
- Network Rail (NWR)
- Representative from NFU/CLA
- Representative from Forestry England
- Representative from one of the large Estates in West Sussex

Action: AD to contact Emily Delicata (Capital Projects Officer) and Network Rail

8. General Report

The General Report was noted.

9. Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the general meeting in April 2025. GM advised that next year is likely to be his last year as Chairman. The forum is still without a vice chair and GE invited members to consider whether they wish to step forward into this role. GE confirmed that being vice chair does not automatically mean that will become Chair if the current chair steps down.

10. Dates of Next Formal Meetings

- Informal: Wednesday 5 February 2025 - Horsham
- Formal: Wednesday 23 April 2025 - Chichester

11. AOB

TB asked whether anyone was aware if the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) still referenced PROW. DP agreed to look at this and raise at an upcoming Ramblers meeting.

PM confirmed that the Mid Sussex District Plan Currently under consideration with the examination having commenced on 22 October 2024.

The meeting finished at 12.20pm