

# West Sussex Local Access Forum

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10.9.22

Sent by email to:  
Ian Sumnall  
cc Jane Cunningham –  
cc Mike Nicholls –

Dear Mr Sumnall

## **GLaM Manhood Peninsular 'mini-Holland' proposals**

I am responding to the above consultation on behalf of West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF).

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. For further information about the Forum please visit [www.wslaf.org](http://www.wslaf.org).

The Forum has always been very supportive of the stated aims of Green Links across the Manhood (GLaM), as set out in their Key Statement, especially as regards supporting and improving PRoW and other pedestrian, cycle and equestrian routes across the peninsula. Members especially welcome the 'inclusive' feel of the Statement in addressing the needs of all NMUs both recreational and utility.

These goals align with the Vision and Objectives set out on page 3 of the current [West Sussex Rights of Way Management Plan](#) (WSRoWMP).

It is well known that there are very few Public Rights of Way (PRoW) on the peninsula available to Non-Motorised Users (NMUs) other than walkers (as clearly illustrated on page 23 of the WSRoWMP). There is an overwhelming need to create a strategic off-road (bridleway) network that can accommodate the widest variety of users. The lack of multi-user routes and support for the protection of quiet roads, greatly restricts the possibilities for all NMUs to access the countryside and rural villages, or commute, safely.

Roads on the Manhood have become increasingly busy and dangerous for all Active Travellers (walkers, cyclists, equestrians, differently abled etc.) and wherever opportunities arise to provide safer facilities such as an off-road network of bridleways (e.g. through plans for new roads or housing development, or agreement with landowners), these should be actively pursued. Green infrastructure is an important and required consideration in new development and can be combined with PRoW (green corridors) to provide off-road routes.

The proposal 'A Plan for Action' from GLaM for a 'mini-Holland' is an interesting idea and radical thinking for the future of Active Travel. The Forum is supportive of initiatives to improve Active Travel. The Plan is a transport and cycling scheme and will promote Active Travel, including travel to school and provide safe routes for cyclists. The Forum supports points made regarding the need to protect existing green links and create safe off-road routes offering "a pleasant and sustainable network of green corridors for recreational and commuter use".

However, WSLAF has a responsibility to represent the interests of all NMUs and our response, therefore, reflects this. Walkers are hardly mentioned in the Plan and equestrians (of which there are very many on the Manhood), who face exactly the same dangers and issues as cyclists, are not mentioned.

The Forum would prefer a more 'inclusive' approach which would benefit all NMUs. Each user group will have specific concerns which we feel need to be considered and understood so everyone can feel engaged in this Plan. This does not mean that every route is made available to all, there are situations where this is simply not practical or appropriate, but other groups should not be made to feel disadvantaged as their safety and enjoyment of off-road routes is also important.

The Key Recommendations (page 1& 4) talk only in terms of 'cycling routes' especially in regard to road crossings and a circular route around the Manhood. We are unclear exactly what is meant by the term and perhaps it is too early in the process for this to be decided, but the effect on other Active Travellers will be dependent on whether they are 'cycle routes' or bridleways or any other type of route.

Most importantly, there is a need to remember that the Manhood area is primarily a rural community and a very active agricultural working environment with many farming and horticultural businesses and lots of agricultural traffic, so mutually respectful realistic plans are needed as the economy relies on both farming and tourists.

The Forum would prefer both new and existing paths to have definitive status, so they are protected in perpetuity, with clear signage indicating the status of a path and information boards where necessary, so that each user group is aware of and considerate of the needs of others. Shared-use paths should be of sufficient width to comfortably accommodate different users and to WSCC standards, with surfacing suitable for year-round use, but suitable for the location.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation and the Forum looks forward to being updated on the progress of the proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Noble', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jane Noble, Forum Officer  
West Sussex Local Access Forum

Copy for information to: All WSLAF members