

**Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Wednesday, 13th May, 2009 at the Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough**

**Present:-**

**LAF Members**

Laurie Tucker (Chair)  
Councillor May Dodds  
Toby Evans  
Malcolm Hellings  
Margery Hitchman  
Ian Houghton  
Margaret Innis  
Councillor Satpal Parmar  
Ken Wright

**Observers**

Councillor Tony Haines

**Officers, Slough Borough Council**

Alex Deans, Principal Engineer, Highways  
Gerald Pleace, Parks Development Officer  
Jacqui Wheeler, Rights of Way Officer

**24. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Dodds advised that she is the Chair of the Planning Committee.

**25. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11th February 2009**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 were approved as a correct record.

**26. Matters Arising**

Nursery Lane Towpath

Jacqui Wheeler (JW) advised that she had taken photos at the end of the lane and had found that there was a 'no through road' sign on the wall. She has spoken to Rhoda Barnett, a consultant in countryside access who had advised that there had been a case judgement that a 'Private Road' sign did not indicate that use on foot or horseback was private and this notice had a similar effect. She suggested that eventhough the sign was not legally misleading members of the footpath from using the footpath, it was certainly discouraging them. It was suggested that the Rights of Way Officer in Bucks

## Local Access Forum - 13.05.09

be sent a LAF recommendation to improve the signage of this path. **Action: JW**

Councillor Haines had observed that there were a number of very large barns in the locality and South Bucks Council should be made aware of this. JW advised that she would be in contact with South Bucks District Council to discuss this and other related matters. **Action: JW**

### Canal

Councillor Haines advised that he had attended a meeting in the previous week with British Waterways who had advised that they owned a 5 metre strip of land for a 2 miles stretch of the canal. Councillor Haines assumed that the stretch extended all the way to Middle Green Bridge and suggested there would be lots of opportunities for moorings or a public walking space in this location.

### Letter to Eton College

JW advised that there had been a delay in sending the letter to Eton College relating to Bridleway No. 17 but this had been sent out in late April and a reply was expected in the very near future. Toby Evans asked whether a survey had been done to assess whether people were in favour of the widening of the path and that people he had spoken to were not in favour of this. Alex Deans advised that people had indicated that they were in favour of the widening of the footpath. Councillor Dodds felt that the pathway was currently a mess and should be widened.

## 27. Canal- Site Meeting with British Waterways

Councillor Haines advised that a piece of art work produced by local school children would be displayed on the Uxbridge Road bridge during the end of June/July. The Friends of the Canal had put in a grant for landscaping and voluntary groups such as the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers were working on the restoration of the towpath. Spading (the turning over of grass to restore gravel) was being carried out by other voluntary groups. It was also hoped that a number of secondary school pupils would be encouraged to assist with the spading and there would be rewards such as boat trips on the canal. It was also hoped that this would be an opportunity to introduce young people to the canal voluntary keepers and the community wardens in the area. It was noted that British Waterways were currently talking with the Iqra School to tidy a section of the Canal on the north side. SBC was currently looking at Canal Basin regeneration scheme and British Waterways hoped to increase the area of the land around the Basin. The scheme was in its infancy at the moment but it was hoped that the Canal would be seen as an asset within the area. It was noted that Property Services were working on the scheme at the moment.

## Local Access Forum - 13.05.09

**Agreed** – That the Slough Local Access Forum would write to SBC to outline its support of the scheme and request that a presentation is made to a future Forum meeting. **Action: JW.**

Councillor Haines advised that there were concerns relating to the riding of bikes along the towpath and this issue needed to be looked at. **Action: JW.**

### 28. Membership Update

There were no changes in membership to report.

### 29. Gating Order- Mildenhall Road to Lerwick Drive

JW submitted a report on the intention to make a Gating Order for the public highway between Mildenhall Road and Lerwick Drive. The Officer advised that following complaints made by residents and Councillors the Community Safety Team undertook an informal consultation of local residents to gauge support for a Gating Order. The police were consulted and were in favour of the gating. Members noted the results of the consultation where over 50% of those responding were in favour of the gating. The Order would stipulate that the gates would be closed at all times and alternative routes along Stoke Poges Lane and Granville Avenue or across Granville playing field, Waterbeach Road and Thurston Road would be used. The success of the gating would be monitored and would be reviewed if necessary.

Toby Evans was concerned that the average response to the consultation was low and only 24% of residents had replied. He was concerned that a copy of the questionnaire was not available and that the questions may have been leading. Councillor Parmar advised that the questions were clear and that there had been many concerns for years in the locality and residents were in favour of the Order. Ian Houghton was concerned that the Gating Order would prevent people from walking through a popular route. The Chair suggested that a vote be taken to determine whether the Forum was in favour or against the proposed Gating Order. The voting was as follows:-

In favour of the Order:	5
Against the Order:	3
Abstentions:	1

It was agreed that this vote was a preliminary one and once the actual notice for the Gating Order was published, JW would circulate this to Members for and official LAF response. **Action: JW**

### 30. SEGRO- Proposals for regeneration of Slough Trading Estate

Alex Deans submitted a detailed plan to the meeting outlining the detail of planning applications for the Trading Estate. JW advised that it was hoped that the Trading Estate would be made more attractive to cyclists and walkers and it was hoped that a meeting could be set up with a few LAF Members to discuss the plans with SEGRO.

## Local Access Forum - 13.05.09

**Agreed** - That Ian Houghton, Toby Evans and Malcolm Hellings would attend a meeting with SEGRO to discuss the plans.

### 31. **LAF Regional Update- SE LAF Members Conference; South East LAF Meeting; and EAF Meeting**

Members noted the content of the report updating Members of the recent meetings and conference that had taken place. The subject of Gating Orders had been discussed and it was clear that there were many problems relating to this issue. A recommendation was made that LAF's should ensure that their respective Highway Authorities had a clear published policy on Gating Orders which should include the involvement of the LAF as required by the Regulations.

**Agreed** - That JW would write to the Highway Authority on behalf of the LAF and request that a clear published policy on Gating Orders be made available. **Action: JW**

### 32. **How the LAF runs- possibilities for Members to take ownership**

A report was tabled to engage Members in discussion about how to run the LAF in the future and ways in which Members could become more involved and take ownership of the Group.

**Agreed** - That Members would consider the report and that the item be placed on the next LAF Agenda for consideration.

### 33. **AOB**

#### Letter to Bucks LAF to consider Cross Boundary Routes

JW advised that John Coombe would like the Forum to have a meeting to discuss cross boundary routes and it was agreed that JW would arrange this. **Action: JW**

#### Articles for South-East LAF Newsletter

JW asked Members to consider whether they had any suitable material for items for the Newsletter.

#### New BR Route - Update

JW advised that the route from Mercian Recreation Ground to the Jubilee River had been upgraded now but there were no funds available yet for the parapets on the motorway bridge to be raised.

#### Beechwood Gardens Modification Order

## Local Access Forum - 13.05.09

JW advised that an Order had been made to turn the route into a public footpath based on historical evidence. It was noted that an objection had been made to the Order by landowners and a response sent to try and persuade them to withdraw the objection.

### Cinder Track linked to Farnham Royal

JW advised that she needed agreement from Bucks Highways Dept to place signs pointing to the Cinder Track on their side and it was agreed that a letter would be forwarded to the Definitive Map team in Bucks to recommend that the public footpath on their side of the boundary be upgraded to a bridleway to create a cohesive network. **Action: JW**

### Cycle Map

A Member had viewed the new cycle map and was disappointed that it showed incorrect information. JW advised that this had been pointed out to Officers.

## 34. **Next Meeting Date**

It was agreed that the next meeting date would be arranged for early September 2009.

**Chair**

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.20 pm)