

**Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Thursday, 17th July, 2008 at
Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough**

Present:-

LAF Members

David Coe
Councillor Dodds, Slough Borough Council
Margery Hitchman
Ian Houghton
Margaret Innis
Councillor Parmar, Slough Borough Council
Parish Councillor Laurie Tucker, (Vice-Chair)

Observers

None

Officers, Slough Borough Council

Savio De Cruz, Principal Engineer Transport
Bruce Hickman, Community Parks Projects Officer
Nahid Moghul, Community Parks Projects Officer
Gerald Pleace, Parks Development Officer
Clare Robinson, Sustrans Bike It Officer
Vinay Vyas, Community Safety Project Officer
Jacqui Wheeler, LAF Secretary

Apologies for Absence:- Toby Evans, Malcolm Hellings and Ken Wright

1. Election of Chair

Laurie Tucker was elected as the new chair of the Slough Local Access Forum. His term of office will be as set down in the Terms of Reference.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Ian Houghton was elected as the new vice chair of the Slough Local Access Forum. His term of office will be as set down in the Terms of Reference.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

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4. Minutes of the last Meeting held on 26th February 2008

The minutes of the last meeting held on 26th February, 2008 were approved as a correct record with the exception that the meeting ended at 08.15pm rather than 10.15pm.

5. Matters Arising

Bridleway

Jacqui Wheeler referred to the report in the meeting papers updating the position with the new bridleway. A site meeting to visit the route took place in April 2008. Works were subsequently ordered to deal with surface issues, vegetation clearance, vandalism/graffiti and signage. **JW** will visit again soon to check the works and assess any further remedial works. A letter is to be sent chasing the Highways Agency about raising the height of the M4 bridge parapets and thereafter publicising the route to members of the public will be the focus of this project. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

Cycle Training

Clare Robinson the Sustrans Bike It Officer explained that Bike It is the Sustrans training scheme which aims to encourage schools to improve the cycling awareness and ability of children through playground training, events, and assemblies. **Laurie Tucker** asked if the scheme was for both primary and secondary schools. **CR** advised that it was and that she was provisionally accredited to deliver off road and on-road cycle training.

Ian Houghton asked if there would be any training provided for adults. **CR** answered yes, training was to be provided for council employees in the future. Several members felt that Police Community Support Officers would benefit from cycle training. **Cllr Dodds** suggesting that the police could be asked about this. **Laurie Tucker** volunteered to contact the police on this matter. **Laurie Tucker to note.**

Cinder Track

Jacqui Wheeler referred to the report in the meeting papers, the updated list of ongoing works for the Cinder Track. The main points to note were as follows; a new inspection of the track needed to be arranged soon, an upgrade of the route was being planned this year as part of the walking and cycling strategy (See agenda item 7 – Savio Decruz) and graffiti removal was being progressed. **JW** would circulate a date for the visit to members and invite officers from Environmental Services, Housing and Community Safety (including the relevant Community Safety Wardens). **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

Several members expressed their concerns about the state of the Cinder Track with rubbish, dog fouling and fly tipping being cited. **JW** indicated the

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importance of the Cinder Track as a major off-road thorough fare was recognised by the LAF and that is why it is a rolling item on the work programme with regular inspections by members. Community Wardens were now issuing Penalty Charge Notices to any persons caught allowing their dogs to foul. The wardens are aiming to target the Cinder Track in the near future dependant on resources. The lack of any substantial budget to improve the route was also acknowledged by the Forum. Members felt strongly that the budget for maintenance of this route in particular ought to be increased.

Concerning graffiti removal, **JW** advised that disclaimer letters would be sent to all properties backing onto the Track between Cumberland Avenue and Sheffield Road with a month for any responses. The painting over of graffiti would then be due to start at the beginning of September 2008.

Checking Accessibility – Canal Tow Path

Gerald Pleace told the meeting that at a recent site meeting along the towpath, British Waterways had been referring to the list of problems forwarded to them by the LAF as a result of the previous LAF audit. It was agreed this was a positive outcome that British Waterways were taking notice of the LAF's advice.

It was also agreed that the other section of the towpath between Goodman Park and Langley would be walked in the summer and a date would be circulated to all Members. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

Discovering Lost Ways

Concerning the possible claim of a route in Poyle, **Laurie Tucker** advised that local residents were still interested in completing an application for a Modification Order to be made to add the path to the Definitive Map and Statement. A meeting with the Developers whose hoarding is currently blocking the route resulted in them agreeing to move the hoarding but within no fixed timescale.

Gating Orders Update

There is no further update on the Weston Road Gating Order proposal.

Vinay Vyas and **Nahid Moghul** introduced themselves as newly appointed Community Safety Officers and **VV** went on to explain that there is a proposal for a gating order on the path between Mildenhall Road and Lerwick Drive, due to anti-social behaviour and a serious stabbing incident recently at this location. Local residents seem to be in favour and a consultation will be carried out to gauge support as per the Gating Order Regulations.

Cllr Dodds reported an issue in Bunton Meade and Summerlea, Cippenham, where a short cut used by a local pensioner through a garage site has recently been gated off preventing access. She asked if the man could be

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given a key. **Vinay Vyas** agreed that he would investigate this issue with **Anne Farmer** on her return from leave. **Vinay Vyas to note.**

Walking and Cycling Interactive Map

Jacqui Wheeler informed the meeting that up to date OS aerial photography is now available for this project. Most of the data required had now been digitised and work is progressing on putting together the text info. It is anticipated that the map will be completed by the end of the summer.

6. Membership Update

Malcolm Hellings, Toby Evans and Ken Wright have been officially confirmed as members of the Slough Local Access Forum. This means that the current membership total stands at 10. The contact list will be updated and circulated to all members. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

7. Baylis to Town Centre Walking and Cycling Route

Savio Decruz advised the Forum about the implementation of a walking and cycling route from Baylis to the Town Centre. Route M from the Walking Strategy forms part of this larger walking and cycling route that will provide links to several schools and green open spaces in the area via substantially off road access.

SD described the route leading from Canterbury Avenue in the north along the Cinder Track south through Godolphin Playing Fields and Baylis Park, then linking to the Town Centre via Salt Hill Park and the Bath Road. It is intended that a secondary route is also implemented from the train station along the A4 to the junction with Upton Court Road, then linking with the Linear Park via Upton Court Road and the Castlevue entrance to Upton Court Park.

The size of this scheme dwarfs previous projects that the Council has completed, such as; the route from the Train Station to Lascelles Park and the streamside route through Windsor Meadows leading to Montem Primary School. This scheme has been submitted to Sustrans a national charity which manages large amounts of government funding for projects which fulfil the aim of encouraging more children to walk or cycle to school. Sustrans have made it clear they are willing to provide 160,000 funding which has to be matched.

Schools that will be reached by this scheme are; Penn Primary, Baylis Court Godolphin Primary and Junior, Herschel Grammar and Castlevue. **SD** explained that through targeting children, new habits could be created that would stay with them into adulthood, which is a good investment for sustainable transport. **Clare Robinson** commented that she is already working with Godolphin School who have signed up to the Bike It scheme and this project will provide further encouragement for them.

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SD advised that the Cinder Track faced several ongoing problems that would need to be tackled with the backing and involvement of the local community. He explained that a major part of the project would be consulting with the local community with the aim of getting them onboard to claim ownership of the route for the sake of ongoing maintenance and the overall success of the scheme .

One of the major problems is the broken fencing of several properties backing onto the Track. **SD** advised that direction was needed on what to do about this issue. The Council may set a dangerous precedent if it repairs and puts up new fencing along this route, however, the current state of the fencing lets the route down.

Graffiti along the Track is another recurring issue and one that has to be tackled. A new product is currently being trialled that could reduce the ongoing removal costs of graffiti. It is a water based nano technology that coats a surface so that future graffiti can be removed easily with soap and water.

SD explained that getting young people to take ownership could be achieved by the proposed improvements to the subway tunnel between Baylis Road and Salt Hill Park. These include murals to cover the facade of the tunnel, painting the inside and new lighting to create a feeling of lightness. It would be necessary to get Network Rail approval for all works but **SD** stated that they were already happy with the general principle.

To have this scheme done properly local residents would need to invest their ideas and enthusiasm in it. **Ian Houghton** asked if the North Slough Forum had been contacted. **SD** said that Cllr Swindlehurst will be consulted and the scheme would be taken to the Baylis and Stoke ward NAG (Neighbourhood Action Group). Letter drops to local residents will also be carried out to ask about problems.

It was thought that Residents Associations and other local groups would feed into the NAG groups. For future consultation purposes **Margaret Innis** informed the meeting that in the Chalvey area the Chalvey Community Forum is the Neighbourhood Action Group for that area. This is recognised by the Police.

JW explained that the Cinder Track as a public footpath would be upgraded to a public bridleway status to legalise the cycling use of this route. The LAF would be consulted on this in due course.

8. **Public Path Extinguishment Orders- BR6a, FP22, FP18, Slough and FP4 Colnbrook with Poyle**

With reference to the report on this matter in the meeting papers, **JW** informed members that for each of the Orders, the Forum had to decide whether or not to object to the making of the Order and if so, what the reasons are for objecting.

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A vote was taken to decide the issue after a discussion on each of the Orders. **Laurie Tucker** stated that a majority decision would be accepted.

Bridleway 6a Slough

In favour = 5 Against = 0 Abstention = 1

The LAF decided in favour of the making of the Order for Bridleway 6a Slough

Footpath 22 Slough

Ian Houghton argued that the alternative route for this footpath through the park ought to be protected, as there were no guarantees that it might not be developed in the future.

There was some discussion surrounding the maintenance liability for the path should it be extinguished as the ownership would be in question, however these did not constitute legally relevant objections to the Order. The vote results were as below.

In favour = 3 Against = 1 Abstention = 2

The LAF decided in favour of the making of the Order for Footpath 22 Slough with a recommendation that the footpath is diverted along the alternative route through the park.

Footpath 18 Slough

There was some discussion surrounding the question of whether or not the path could still be of use to the public even as a dead end. The vote results were as below.

In favour = 4 Against = 1 Abstention = 1

The LAF decided in favour of the making of the Order for Footpath 18 Slough.

Footpath 4 Colnbrook with Poyle

Laurie Tucker and **Dave Coe**, residents of Colnbrook both agreed that the path was not needed or used by members of the public. **DC** stated that the surface of the small link path between the Crown Meadow estate and Springfield Road, just north of the entrance to this path required some attention. **JW** is to speak to **DC** and arrange a site visit if required. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

Ian Houghton stated that it goes against the grain to close footpaths.

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In favour = 5

Against = 1

Abstention = 0

The LAF decided in favour of the making of the Order for Footpath 4 Colnbrook with Poyle.

9. Future Work Programme

It was agreed that the work programme has to be relevant and reflect the issues that members want to look at. **Laurie Tucker** advised that all members need to go through the work programme and if there's anything they feel ought to be added they should contact **JW**.

All to note.

JW stated that a member survey will be sent out to all members to find out views on how the meetings are run and how things could be improved. Results will feed into the work programme. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

10. AOB

Bridleway 17 (Wood Lane) to Eton Wick

Jacqui Wheeler suggested that the Slough Local Access Forum send a letter to Eton College requesting them to agree to dedicate extra land to increase the width of this path. It was agreed that **JW** would draft a letter to this effect and also one to ask the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's LAF to do the same. **Jacqui Wheeler to note.**

English Access Forum (EAF)

JW explained that the EAF has been established as a national forum designed to feed local issues up to national level and vice versa. The EAF is due to meet on 23rd September 2008.

Bikeability

Clare Robinson explained that Bikeability is the new version of the national standard. Schools she is currently working with under the Bike It scheme will be offered Bikeability first. **CR** has desk space at SBC and is funded for four years. She intends to trial cycle training with Level 1 being on the playground and level 2 being on road training. Parents would be expected to pay £5 as the scheme is subsidised.

Art @ the Centre (new High Street layout)

Ian Houghton raised concerns over the level of cycle parking stands that will be available in the new design of the High Street. Cycle stands have previously always been full so the need for extra ones is evident. **Savio Decruz** stated that the Council was committed to improving cycling facilities in the High Street and he will raise concerns about the lack of cycle stands with Joe Carter, Head of Transport.

IH had spoken to Cllr Swindlehurst and understands that cycle stands have to be concentrated in certain areas. The new High Street is due to be finished in March 2009 so there is still time to alter the scheme. **Savio Decruz to note.**

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Dave Coe raised concerns about cyclists riding in the High Street which is not allowed. It was suggested that signage is needed outside Wilkinson's to make it clear that cycling is not allowed in the High Street.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Two new meeting dates have been agreed since the meeting.

Wednesday 12th November 2008 at 5.30 p.m.- Venue- Mayors Conference Room, Town Hall, Slough.

Wednesday 11th February 2009 at 5.30 p.m.- Venue- Committee Room 2, Ground Floor, Town Hall, Slough.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.30 pm)