

SOUTH DOWNS ACCESS FORUM

A sub-forum of the Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex, the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum, and the East Sussex, and Brighton & Hove Local Access Forums

Sussex Downs Conservation Board HQ, Ford

15th July 2005

Meeting Minutes

Present

Members:

Ben Perkins (BP)	Jon Willis (JW)
David Ashcroft (DA)	Nigel Sloan (NS)
David Brookshaw (DB)	Paul Millmore (PM)
David Taylor (DT)	Sue Montila (SM)

SDAF co-ordinator:

James Ort (JO) : South Downs Access Forum Officer

Observers:

Jane Noble (JN) : West Sussex CC
Angie Gardiner : West Sussex CC
Nicola Redwood (NR) : Strategic Access Officer for the South Downs
Phil Belden (PB) : Countryside Manager – South Downs Joint Committee
Andrew Whitnall (AW) : East Sussex Local Access Forum Officer
Veronica Perrin (VP) : Chairman for the Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex

Other attendees:

Mike Franklin : The Arun Valley Rail Partnership co-ordinator
Simon Culpin (SC) : Central Area Senior Ranger

Public:

four

Apologies

Andrew Shaxson (AS)	Janyis Watson (JWt)
Craig Thomas (CT)	John Rennie (JR)
Glynn Jones (GJ)	Malcolm Walford (MW)
James Sharpe (JS)	Derek Cleaver (DC)

	<p>was any money left over that could be put towards this. PM suggests that costs of completing this job be estimated and a proposal brought back to the forum.</p> <p>JO to request that Julian Graey put forward a brief costed proposal of what would be needed to get the open access data submitted to the OS (10.04).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW asked for amendments to be made to Item 8 – WSCC’s Traffic Regulation Order policy. JW stated that not all makes of quadbikes can get through the Kent Gap 952. JW also wanted it noted that the costs of the TRO (quoted at £5,784.84) does not include legal costs and officer time. A further objection was raised over the use of the word ‘path’ in the text. It was agreed that RoW would be a more appropriate term • BP requested that TRO’s and Green Lanes be added to the next agenda in order to discuss new developments on the subjects. JO to add TRO’s and Green Lanes to the agenda for the next meeting if possible (10.05). • JO informed the forum that a press release advertising a place in the forum for a Hampshire-based cycling representative had been sent out. • JO gave an update on the possibility of an exploratory meeting between Sport England’s South East Region and the SDAF. Initial dates have been set for either the 16th or 17th of August. JO to establish which date would be best for forum members to attend and liase with Sport England (10.06). 	<p>JO</p> <p>JO</p> <p>JO</p>
5	<p><u>Access Management Grant Scheme 2 (AMGS2) presentation and discussion– Nicola Redwood</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NR started by introducing the South Downs Joint Committee. NR told the forum that the 2005-06 bid had already been submitted and partly accepted by the Countryside Agency. The bid was divided into three distinct projects: wardening and monitoring of access land, promotion and information provision and site development and infrastructure. The three projects were granted money by the Countryside Agency, who agreed to support two of the schemes with 75% of the total bid, as well as a reduced amount for the site development and infrastructure project (on the basis that money was already given to this in the previous years bid). A volunteer parish access ranger scheme is to be initiated where rangers would be responsible for wardening/monitoring and maintenance of all access land within an individual parish. • NR asked that the SDAF actively support the core work undertaken by the AMGS 2, whether by getting involved in the projects that may arise from it or to pass on advice when it may be needed. NS said that he would put information about the AMGS in a ramblers newsletter that he is associated with, particularly with the aim of generating volunteers for the ranger scheme. JO to pass on information about the AMGS 2 to NS (10.07). BP asked whether there were any maps that the forum could look at and perhaps make suggestions from. NR said that the SDJC had permission from the Countryside Agency to use tailored GIS maps for internal use only, but at that current time did not show access infrastructure. It might be possible to get maps for individual sites to which access infrastructure could be added. JO and NR to find maps that may be suitable for use by the forum at the next meeting (10.08). • JN stated that all the money from WSx AMGS bid (directed outside the South Downs area) is to go on information boards that promote small Open Access sites that were used predominantly by the local population, they will include maps showing infrastructure locations. • BP questioned why the forum was not given the opportunity to comment on the AMGS bid before it was sent off. NR replied that the application, put together 	<p>JO</p> <p>JO & NR</p>

	by area staff, had to be submitted before the next SDAF meeting was convened.	
6	<p><u>Furniture and signpost design guidelines presentation and discussion – Simon Culpin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC gave a presentation on the principles of furniture design in the South Downs. He expressed an interest to hear the forum members’ views. SC told the forum of the Parish Path Survey and that two way opening gates were currently being tested across the South Downs (either made of oak or soft wood). • SM questioned the adoption of oak gates, particularly at Linchmere Common, where she felt that heavy oak gates had recently caused someone to be injured (the way it had been hung being partly attributable). DA argued that if hung properly this would not be a problem. He also added that soft wood gates are not as durable and are liable to be stolen. PB requested that DA ask that the National Farmers Union keep the SDJC up to date on infrastructure maintenance of access land(10.09). PB also requested that separate straining posts be used instead of gate way posts when putting up fences. 	DA
7	<p><u>The Arun Valley Community Rail Partnership presentation and discussion – Mike Franklin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Franklin (MF) described the new Arun Valley Community Rail Partnership. He put forward his plans for the project, hoping it would be a ‘positive development, bringing together a wide range of local interests along the railway corridor’. • The forum raised concerns about the position of Southern Railway towards bikes on trains. MF said that this was a problem, simply because there was not enough room on trains for many bikes. MF was looking into the possibility that train companies relax their rules on bikes along that Arun Valley. NR suggested that there could be links with the WSx RoWIP. MF left his contact details. JO to distribute Mike Franklin’s contact details (10.10). 	JO
8	<p><u>Examination of potential for university students to complete research on behalf of the SDAF</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JO suggested that forum members forward him three topic suggestions from which university students could base a research topic on. JO ask that forum members suggest a maximum of three research topic titles that university students could work on and pass them to him (10.11). JO would amalgamate the suggestions to form a ‘bottom draw’ of research topics. Also JO to contact local universities on behalf of the SDAF in order to establish if they would like to take it further. JO to contact local universities on behalf of the SDAF (10.12). 	JO JO
9	<p><u>Examination of potential for online survey of general public opinion on access land.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Countryside Agency have recently sent out an invitation of tender to find a specialist contractor to test an approach for a long-term programme of monitoring public use of access land. BP asked whether it was worth doing a questionnaire with this in mind. NR told the forum that the CRoW Perception Survey is thought to go through an initial 2 year pilot phase, where data would be collected from between 8-10 different sites. The South Downs is being considered as a pilot site. In the mean time though, it would probably be worth carrying out a survey. The data collected may be useful in assuaging the fears of landowners reluctant to install access infrastructure. • JO informed the forum that, as far as he was aware, there had not been any 	

	<p>surveys or questionnaires carried out that had specifically looked at the public's perceptions to access land at that time. Cambridgeshire County Council, the Peak District, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks had all carried out surveys but these were either for RoWIPs or visitor surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC informed the forum that promotional bus leaflets, which encourage access to the countryside via public transport, have a questionnaire section in. It might be possible that the questions be changed to be more in line with the planned survey. 	
10	<p>Minor Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Lost Ways</u> JO informed the forum about the Discovering Lost Ways Project, funded by the Countryside Agency. A deadline has been set for January 1st 2026, by which time all forgotten 'historic' footpaths and bridleways must be registered on the definitive map. Volunteers will be encouraged to help the Archive Research Unit carry out research in Hampshire and Sussex when it happens post June 2007. DA said that the Lost Ways Project would alienate a lot of farmers who have already invested a great deal in maintaining existing RoWs. JN said that Wiltshire and Cheshire had already piloted the scheme, one county submitted very few RoWs, while the other submitted thousands. The forum agreed that it was a case of getting the balance right, where lost ways were no longer practical, alternative routes could be suggested. JN said that the CAFWS may look at the procedures for diversions at a future forum meeting. JN to pass on CAFWS findings on diversions to the SDAF (10.13). PM asked JO to email forum members with more details on the Discovering Lost Ways Project and to try to get a Lost Ways representative to give the forum a presentation (10.14). • <u>LAF training event</u> JO informed the forum that a LAF training event day was to be arranged by Valerie Woodfield (Countryside Officer for the Countryside Agency South East Region), for Wednesday 5 October in Westminster. It was hoped that two members of each forum attend, one hopefully being the chairman. JO to contact forum members, asking that those who express an interest in attending the LAF training event to let him know (10.15). • <u>LAF Research Report</u> JO informed the forum that the research report had not been released in time for the meeting despite reassurances that it would have been. JO to distribute copies of the report and provide a summary at the next SDAF meeting (10.16). • <u>AOB</u> PM informed members of the formation of the South Downs Joint Committee, a merger between the Sussex Downs Conservation Board and East Hampshire AONB Joint Advisory Committee. The South Downs Forum, to be made up of members from wider interest groups is also under establishment, with a small Executive to meet before each SDJC meeting. • PM read an email from AS regarding Telegraph House, which asked whether the single entry point and a lack of a through route from the South Downs Way was reasonable. Some forum members felt that two access points were needed but accepted that this would have to wait a year when the access land is being reassessed. JN felt that it was important that boundaries were settled out of court because WSxCC were not sure that it would have been a good test case to proceed to court with. VP felt that good progress has been made and that the land owner was won over by personal negotiations. PM asked that JO write to the Countryside Agency, asking for a definition of garden parkland under the CRoW Act or ask the mother forums what they use to define garden parklands (10.17). 	<p>JN JO</p> <p>JO</p> <p>JO</p> <p>JO</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The situation at Pitshill was also raised. PB said that nothing could be done by the SDAF. The outcome depends on whether anyone objects, something that seems likely. 	
11	Agenda items for next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RoWIPs update TROs and Green lanes 	

Summary of Actions from meeting 9

<i>No.</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Who by</i>
10.01	JO to write to the mother forums, offering LA's the assistance of DT in contacting reluctant landowners should they feel the need.	JO
10.02	NR & JO to also contact the Countryside Management Service (CMS) asking whether the SDAF could have the list of reluctant landowners.	NR & JO
10.03	JO to add RoWIP updates to the agenda for the next meeting.	JO
10.04	JO to request that Julian Grey to put forward a brief costed proposal of what would be needed to get the open access data submitted to the OS.	JO
10.05	JO to add TRO's and Green Lanes to the agenda for the next meeting if possible.	JO
10.06	JO to establish which date would be best for forum members to attend and liaise with Sport England.	JO
10.07	JO to pass on information about the AMGS 2 to NS.	JO
10.08	JO and NR to find maps that may be suitable for use by the forum at the next meeting.	NR & JO
10.09	DA ask that the National Farmers Union keep the SDJC up to date on infrastructure maintenance of access land.	DA
10.10	JO to distribute Mike Franklin's contact details.	JO
10.11	JO ask that forum members suggest a maximum of three research topic titles that university students could work on and pass them to him.	JO
10.12	JO to contact local universities on behalf of the SDAF.	JO
10.13	JN to pass on CAFWS findings on diversions to the SDAF.	JN
10.14	JO to email forum members with more details on the Discovering Lost Ways Project and to try to get a Lost Ways representative to give the forum a presentation.	JO
10.15	JO to contact forum members, asking that those who express an interest in attending the LAF training event to let him know.	JO
10.16	JO to distribute copies of the LAF Research Report and provide a summary at the next SDAF meeting.	JO
10.17	JO write to the Countryside Agency, asking for a definition of garden parkland under the CRoW Act or ask the mother forums what they use to define garden parklands.	JO