

DRAFT

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

Annual General Meeting

Billingshurst Village Hall, West Sussex

7th December 2004

Meeting Minutes

Present

Members:

Andrew Shaxson (AS)	Janyis Hyatt (JH)
Ben Perkins (BP)	John Rennie (JR)
David Brookshaw (DB)	Jon Willis (JW)
Derek Cleaver (DC)	Nigel Sloan (NS)
Glynn Jones (GJ)	Paul Millmore (PM)

SDAF co-ordinator:

Keith Tyrell (KT) : South Downs Access Forum Officer

Observers:

Rosemary Pugh (RP): West Sussex CC
Nicola Redwood (NR) : Strategic Access Officer for the South Downs
Phil Belden (PB) : Countryside Manager – Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Andrew Whitnall (AW) : East Sussex Local Access Forum Officer
Cath Hart (CH) : Hampshire Countryside Access Forum Officer

Public:

Six

Apologies

David Ashcroft (DA)	Leo Hickish (LH)
David Taylor (DT)	Kuljit Randhawa (KR)
Craig Thomas	Malcolm Walford (MW)
James Sharpe (JS)	Sue Montila (SM)
John Godfrey (JG)	

Item	Minutes	Action
1	<p><u>Introductions and apologies</u> There were no introductions, apologies were received from nine members (see above)</p>	
2	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p><u>AOB</u> No issues were raised for discussion</p>	
4	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</u> PM asked for an update on the funding for Open Access infrastructure and the Access Management Grant Scheme Bid. KT informed the Forum that the Sussex Downs Conservation Board had received a letter from West Sussex CC offering the full 25% funding to match the Countryside Agency's offer of 75% of the cost of new infrastructure on Open Access Land in West Sussex. AW told the Forum that East Sussex CC had verbally confirmed to the Board that it will also be offering 25% to match the Countryside Agency's offer of 75% funding for East Sussex Access Land. CH revealed that Hampshire CC is in the process of preparing its bid to the Agency, but the HCC has indicated it will be finding the match funding – the new rights of Open Access do not come into force until 19th December in Hampshire.</p>	
5	<p><u>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</u> Glynn Jones was unanimously elected as Chair for a further 12 months. Paul Millmore was unanimously elected as vice-chair for a further 12 months.</p>	
6	<p><u>Dates for 2005 meetings</u> The following dates and venues were agreed for meetings in 2005:- 10.30am Friday 11th February – SDCB HQ, Ford 10.30am Friday 6th May – SDCB HQ, Ford 10.30am Friday 15th July – SDCB HQ, Ford 10.30am Friday 23rd September – SDCB HQ, Ford 7.00pm Thursday 1st December – venue TBC</p>	
7	<p><u>2005 Work Plan</u> The Forum discussed the draft work plan. BP felt that it was important for the Forum to be proactive and not just respond to requests for information and consultations. PM felt it was also the role of the Forum to encourage authorities to take action – for example in providing sufficient funds to implement to recommendations for their RoWIPs. This view was supported by JR.. DB said it was urgent that the Forum work on RoWIPs as Local Transport Plans (which will be a major source of funding) will be completed by July 2005. It was important for the Authorities to have something to go into the LTPs by then. The Forum asked KT to write a letter to the mother forums asking them to urge their authorities to include some form of RoWIP in their LTPs in July. NS asked that the work item on Open Access be amended to include signage and publicity. The work plan was approved. KT to forward the work plan to the mother forums for their comments and input.</p>	<p>KT KT</p>
8	<p><u>Annual report</u> The forum considered the draft annual report. KT informed the Forum, that the report will be placed on the SDAF website and will be sent out with the South Downs Focus. The next edition of the focus will be published early in the new year. JR said he felt the annual report was too short and missed out some of the context of the Forum's work. AS asked that the report highlight some concrete actions – for example by identifying some new areas of open access land that are open. This</p>	

	<p>was echoed by other members. BP reminded members that the report was there to inform the public of what we have achieved, it is not a substitute for other information campaigns around the issues the forum works on. The Forum asked KT to expand the report identifying concrete examples of achievements such as new areas of open access which are open now. The forum approved the report subject to these modifications.</p>	KT
9	<p><u>RoWIP Feedback</u> See documents 4 and 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Feedback on Hants. RoWIP meeting.</u> The Hampshire RoWIP working group for the South Downs met on 3rd Nov. KT presented a paper summarising the meeting. PM pointed out that it is important that the SDAF work to ensure a consistent approach to RoWIPs across the Downs. GJ pointed out that the SDAF cannot dictate what the authorities do in their RoWIPs, but he agreed that consistency was desirable and that the SDAF should be providing advice to help ensure this. NR revealed that she has been in discussions with the access authorities about consistency and that this has been acknowledged by the authorities, but it has to be recognised that each area is different and has different issues to address, so there has to be flexibility. PM emphasised that when looking at RoWIPs and providing advice, the SDAF should be aspirational and concentrate on securing long-term improvements to the network. BP also said that RoWIPs should not be restricted to the RoW network, but should look at access to the countryside in broad terms – licensed and permissive paths are useful tools. NS expressed concern that much non-CROW open access land has not appeared on OS maps. There are many areas of land where the public has the right to use, but are not aware of – for example local authority land. This should be a key area of work for the Forum next year. • <u>Feedback on West Sussex RoWIP meeting.</u> The RoWIP working group of the Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex met on 4th Nov. PM attended on behalf of the SDAF and gave feedback. PM revealed that the chair of the CAFWS has drawn up a list of issues to be considered when providing advice on RoWIPs. This list was drawn up to help subforums in providing advice. Different subforums have approached the task differently. PM has taken this list and provided some more information and context. KT was asked to circulate this list to SDAF members. PM revealed that there was a problem with trust – many access authorities have lists of claims for improvements to the RoW network going back many years which have not been acted on. This makes it difficult to encourage users to provide information – many have done so in the past, but nothing has happened. PM thinks that RoWIPs should specifically address these outstanding claims. BP was concerned that RoWIPs might get bogged down in the failure of authorities to progress claims and maintenance, while he thought it was important, he did not want to prevent other worthwhile activities from moving forward. <p>DB asked that the B&H subgroup be reconvened as soon as possible and that it join with the RoWIP working group of the B&H LAF to provide advice to B&HCC, and to ensure consistency across the Downs. KT to organise a meeting of the B&H subgroup.</p>	KT
10	<p><u>Authorities' policies on TROs</u> Hampshire, East Sussex, and Brighton & Hove gave presentations on their TRO policies. West Sussex will give a presentation at the next meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Brighton & Hove.</u> KT presented Brighton and Hove's policy. There are only four BOATs in the city area. This means that each case is considered 	

	<p>independently and there is no formal policy. There are three TROs in place at the moment. 2 have been in force since 1992, and the third came into force a couple of years ago. The need for a TRO is judged on a case-by-case basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hampshire</u>. CH presented Hampshire's policy – see document 8 of meeting 6 (attached). • <u>East Sussex</u>. AW presented East Sussex policy – see document below <p>JW felt that motorised vehicle users were unfairly singled out by TROs – he pointed out that walkers and horseriders damage paths too. He asked why TROs were not regularly placed on these user groups. BP said he felt it was important for there to be a consistent approach to TROs across the Downs – at the moment there is a great deal of variation, particularly in the use of temporary TROs.</p>	
11	<p><u>Agenda items for next meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of local distinctiveness in the South Downs • Inclusion of non-CRoW access land on OS maps • Feedback from RoWIP sub-groups • West Sussex policy on TROs 	
11	<p><u>Dates for next meetings</u></p> <p>The forum agreed the meeting dates for a year in advance. The dates agreed were:-</p> <p>Friday 11th February – SDCB HQ, Ford Friday 6th May – SDCB HQ, Ford Friday 15th July – SDCB HQ, Ford Friday 23rd September – SDCB HQ, Ford Thursday 1st December (AGM) – venue TBC</p>	

Summary of Actions from AGM

<i>No.</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Who by</i>
AGM.1	KT to write a letter to the mother forums asking them to urge their authorities to include some form of RoWIP in their LTPs in July	KT
AGM.2	KT to forward the work plan to the mother forums for their comments and input	KT
AGM.3	KT to expand the annual report identifying concrete examples of achievements such as new areas of open access which are open now	KT
AGM.4	KT to circulate PM's list of issues to consider in RoWIPs to SDAF members	KT
AGM.5	KT to organise a meeting of the B&H subgroup.	KT