



THURROCK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Working Group - Minutes (3)

Tuesday 14 August 2018
7pm to 9pm Committee Room 2
Civic Offices, New Road, Grays

Present:

Paula Watts – Projects Leader Highways Information & LAF Secretary - **PW**
 Sue Dobson - LAF Chair and Essex Bridleway Association Representative – **SD**
 Carley Hollands – LAF Member - EBA Member **CH**
 David Fish – LAF Member - Sustran’s Ranger - **DF**
 Bernard Smith – LAF Member - Thurrock Ramblers Walk Leader – **BS**
 Bryan Benton – LAF Member – Thurrock Ramblers - **BB**
 John Lane - LAF Member- Rambler & Cyclist - **JL**
 Jenny Mann – LAF Member & EBA Local Representative – **JM**
 Alison Loveridge - Highway and Public Rights of Way Information Officer – **AL**

Item	Description	Action
1.	Introduction: SD Madam Chair opened the meeting by thanking those present for attending.	
2.	Apologies: Steve Plumb – Thurrock Council Mike Ostler – Vice Chair LAF Brian Hatcher – Thurrock Ramblers	
3.	Minutes of Last Meeting: Public Meeting Minutes of the 5 th June 2018 were approved by members following agreed amendment of ROWIP spelling under item 4.(D)	
4.	Matters Arising (1) Regional LAF meeting held at Natural England Offices at Cambridge: SD Reported on the recently re-formed Eastern Regional Area LAF Chairs and Vice- Chairs meetings which was interesting to find out what other LAF are doing and achieving within the	

eastern region. Representatives from Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge and Hertfordshire were present along with Thurrock.

Despite Thurrock being a small unitary authority, it performs well compared to other areas in relation to access for all users - for example Cambridge aim to provide all non-motorised routes as multi-user with joint verge and hardened tarmac surfaces via new developments. **JL** Cambridge have been able to produce such routes as they have so much open space whereby unfortunately Thurrock is too urbanised. **SD** It is interesting to note that the new A14 road which is currently under construction in Cambridge has a shared access route being created alongside for all non-motorised users for much of its length; it is therefore important that Thurrock ensures that Highways England does the same as far as possible with the Lower Thames Crossing – if the A14 can have this, then so can the Lower Thames Crossing and we can use this example in our negotiation with Highways England.

Access Post Brexit; Each LAF present was asked to continue pushing and approaching our MP's for public access to be part of any new Agricultural Bill once the UK leaves the EU, plus as many LAF members should also write on individual basis. It was stressed that this is a unique opportunity to increase public access across the country but we must lobby hard to those in power for this. There is a template letter on the British Horse Society website which could be used

Huddle: Is an online forum which is available to all Local Access Forum members. It is run by Natural England. **PW** To find out about access onto Huddle for our members.

Secretarial Support: It would appear we are lucky at Thurrock to still receive secretarial and administrative support where as other LAF's have lost this service through cut backs.

Members agreed that the meeting was very useful forum and another one was arranged for the 16th January 2019

(2) Thurrock LAF Brexit Letters to MP's

PW Provided members with copies of MP's responses.

(3) Cycle Infrastructure

PW Informed the meeting that Transportation and Highways are proposing to install a drop kerb to cover the width of cycleway situated on the south side of A1306 Arterial Road east of Junction J31. It is hopefully this work will be included as part of crossover works being undertaken in London Road Purfleet.

The developer of St Cleres Golf Course should have the required traffic signals at Buckingham Hill Road junction Stanford Road in place by November. if not installed by January

	<p>at the latest the Council will use the money held within a bond they hold whereby they will install the required signals.</p> <p>Highways England have informed PW they are aware of the access issues reported by JL along St Andrews Road between the Dock Gates and Thurrock Park Way and hopefully works will take place soon to clear and provide a safer route</p> <p>4 (A) Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan</p> <p>PW Unfortunately SP was unable to attend this meeting though he still continues to try and bring together many rights of way issues. In particular the Council's Local Plan which is still looking around 2021 before the Plan is ready for publication.</p> <p>4 (B) Lower Thames Crossing</p> <p>PW Anna Eastgate is the Council's newly appointed as Asst Director for the Lower Thames Crossing. Anna is trying to arrange a meeting with Highways England to provide them with PW & SP knowledge of what is needed for Thurrock's rights of way. PW also informed the meeting that Matt Kiely has been appointed as Transport Development Manager. Matt having previously worked within this team will be a much welcomed asset when working with Highways England.</p> <p>It was agreed by those present to invite Highways England to one of future meetings along with Cllr Watkins the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways.</p> <p>4 (C) Network Rail Closures – Public Enquiry</p> <p>PW Had no further update to report on.</p> <p>BS Informed the meeting Ramblers Nationally are going out to check if any gates are being locked at level crossings. especially where the intended diversions are going to be routed over private land as the issue in lack of notification to affected landowners is one of the main reasons why the enquiry was adjourned. SD It would appear the locking of gates by Network Rail is quite common where they intend to close a crossing. It is reported that Network Rail are quite happy to divert pedestrian out and along 60 mph roads SB and that is when NR say it is not their problem as it then becomes a highway problem.</p>	
	<p>4 (D) Natural England- Coastal Path</p> <p>PW Giles Merritt has now been moved to another stretch of coastal path in Suffolk therefore his colleague Roy Read will be picking up on the Coastal Path surveying within Thurrock. They have met most of the key stakeholders in Thurrock and mapped out a draft route though they are not quite certain of the final alignment in the Fobbing / Corringham areas. Roy Read would like to come to October's meeting and it was agreed by those present to invite him to our October meeting.</p>	

PW provided the following information supplied by Fiona Taylor from Natural England:-

Access authorities can claim for 100% of the establishment costs associated with implementing the England Coast Path. This includes payment for workforce, plant and materials for any work (e.g. surfacing, installation of gates, way markers, and officer's time at site visits etc.) A recent introduction of new funding schemes has opened up the potential for other individuals, groups or organisations to bid for the establishment works,

Once the path is open and rights commence, the access authority can claim up to 75% of the maintenance costs from Natural England via "The New Deal", as determined by a funding formula. The annual sum is worked out on the basis of a number of criteria including:

Length of trail not on a hardened surface, up-lifts for lengths of trail within or next to EU designated sites and up-lifts for stretches prone to high rates of erosion. The resultant figure is currently available for access authorities to claim every year.

We work with access authorities each year to establish our likely spend on developing or establishing the ECP and agree a budget for which they claim back their agreed costs at the end of that financial year.

It is uncertain how the funding will continue into the future with the drive for reduced government spending but it would seem pragmatic to make preparations for how we might address potential shortfalls. For now however, most access authorities believe the current system of funding represents a good deal.

4 (E) A13 Widening Scheme

PW Preparation works are continuing though at present one parcel of land is still being contested which needs to be clarified before works can fully get underway.

AL Re -confirmed the widening scheme will affect
FP 104 School Lane Junc Rectory Road to Orsett Cock Interchange.
FP 12 and 81 Saffron Bridge over A13 to Stanford Road Including FP 224
BW 48 Horndon Road over A13 to Stanford Road
FP 37 Stans Walk west of Stanford Interchange.

FP 81 The Harbour Empowerment Act allows for the A13 to be moved some 5m back. On safety grounds this is not liked for those using this route so Kier's are looking to negotiate with the adjacent land owners for an agreement to divert the path to go round the back of the Service station.

FP 37 Following reporting the new haul route was crossing footpath 37 gates and appropriate signage was installed.

FP 37 Kiers have also discussed the idea of providing additional steps to link FP 37 up to and onto existing steps already in place which are aligned with a splitter island on the B1007. This would create a safer method of crossing rather than the present route leading you out at the top of the up slip from the westbound track of the A13.

JM Ideally it would be good to upgrade Footpath 11 from Pump Street through to and as well as FP 12 down to Stanford Road as a Bridleway then provide a new BW along Stanford Road to Buckingham Hill Road where the St Clere's bridleway has been created. **JL** The introduction of signals would be of great use at Buckingham Hill Road.

4 (F) Thurrock Rights of Way Footpath leaflets:

PW Reported that is highly unlikely leaflets will be printed in the future and it may be an App be created for use by mobile phones.

Planning Applications / PROW:

AL Both Footpaths 85 between Tyelands Farm, North Hill Langdon Hills and Horndon and Footpath 116 St Johns Road to Biggin Lane have been illegally blocked off due to re-development. These and other recent planning applications have failed to capture these issues therefore it has been agreed that the following condition is included within any future planning consents affected by Public Rights of Way.

Planning Conditions:

The condition has been added to the planning manual under H37 - Public Right of Way (PROW) which states no development shall be carried out which obstructs any part of the public right of way Footpath number XXX [shown on the Definitive map or on a Planning application drawing) which shall be kept open for use at all times.

Reason: Unless an Order under Section 257 has been made and confirmed or the right of way otherwise extinguished under an order of the Magistrates' Court it is a criminal offence to obstruct a public right of way. Planning permission alone does not authorise obstruction.

PW A Pre Application has been received for possible development affecting Footpath 74 (between Linford Road and Turnpike Lane, Linford. As this is a Pre App no further information can be provided to members at this stage other than PROW gains have been requested.

PW Footpath 121 to the rear of Rookery View.. A request has been received for purchase of land laying between the end property No. 36 and the route of Footpath 121. In principal PROW have not objected as long as at least a 2m wide Footpath width is retained.

Footpath / Bridleway Issues:

CH / EBA Bridleway list of Bridleway Issues

Due to the amount of issues it was agreed **AL & PW** to speak with **CH** and **JM** at the end of the meeting to discuss the items listed.

Davy Down Bridleway Bridge

PW Continues to report further delays in providing the new bridleway bridge.

BW 161 Green Lane Stifford Clays Road Orsett and at the start of Bridleway 219 junction North Stifford Hill

PW Please to report new bridleway and kissing gates have been ordered as the existing ones have been destroyed by illegal off roaders.. It is hope they will be installed by October's meeting.

BW 187 Coal House Fort, East Tilbury.

Site visit undertaken by **PW & AL** required signage now identified just need to consult with Coalhouse Fort Ranger

Ramblers Pathwatch Reports:

PW Thurrock continues to receive good reports regarding our PROW..so far Foot Paths 10, HOTH 102 Orsett and 61 East Tilbury have been reported as blocked by crops. We have acted as best we can with regards to land owners and their corporation .

Capital Funding for Public Rights of Ways

Footpath 162 up-grade to Bridleway has commenced. Letters have been hand delivered for alleged owner/s to come forward. Notices also placed on site now needing to allow 6 weeks for their response

Footpath 129 Bradleigh Avenue to Cresthill Avenue, Grays Consultation underway for the extinguishment of Footpath 129. So far 2 objections from the same person have been received.

Any other business:

PW presented on behalf of **BS** copies of a document titled Goodbye Summer Walking which details a complaint regarding Essex County Council non maintenance of Footpaths, paying for Ramblers to carry out maintenance works along with Local Access Forums allegedly not taking any interest.

PW presented **Veolia Environment Trust – Funding letter** on behalf of **SD** which offers grant funding between £10,000 to 70,000. **JM** enquired if such funding could be used to provide a bridleway bridge from Bridlway 219 into Grangewaters linking

	<p>into Mollands Lane. SD advised this is the type of project which may achieve funding as long as the land owners are in agreement.</p> <p>JL wanted to thank PW for the news under items 4 Cycle Infrastructure re the drop kerb issue, Buckingham Hill Road Signals and St Andrews Road.</p> <p>JL wondered what the probability is to extend the east bound down slip from the Stanford Interchange along the verge line to meet the access road of Green Acres Farm as this would make a good cycle link to and from Basildon. PW said she would put this possibility to our Traffic Team.</p> <p>JL reported that FP 38 has been ploughed over between Wharf Road and Rainbow Lane, Stanford le Hope.. PW & AL to investigate..</p> <p>PW Although not clarified as yet additional money may be made available for future PROW Capital schemes.</p> <p>PW & AL It is our intention to try and undertake the creation of a PROW Policy for Thurrock which will allow more enforcement powers and hopefully re-charge whereby the land owner fails to carry out the works required.</p>	
7	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Public Meeting Tuesday 9th October 2018 Working Group Meeting Tuesday 4th December 2018</p> <p>Committee Room 2 @ 7pm</p>	