

The Surrey Countryside Access Forum

Minutes of the Interim meeting of the Surrey Countryside Access Forum

held online via Zoom

Monday, 23 November 2020

Present:

Members (and their primary interests):

- Ian Russell, Chairman (Motor Vehicles)
- Rosie Norris (Mobility vehicles)
- David Bellchamber (Walking)
- Pamela Lyman (Land management)
- Penny Carey (Equestrian)
- Sophie Gordon (Cycling)
- Paul Marshall (Mountain biking)
- Avril Sleeman (Equestrian)
- Elliot Cairnes (Walking)
- Jonathan Hurkey (Local Government)
- Thor Simpson (Walking)
- Romy Jackson (Farming)

Officers:

- Joanne Porter, Countryside Access Assistant
- Debbie Jones, Senior Countryside Access Officer Legal Definition

Observers:

None

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from Andrew Povey (local government)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 will be confirmed at the next meeting in January after amendments are made.

4. Matters arising/action points

- 4.1 David said that he has still to speak to Dave Page at Elmbridge Borough Council about the parking issue at Esher Common

Action – David to speak to Dave Page

- 4.2 Avril said that the issue the BHS had with the new bridge over the A3 was the height of the sides of the bridge. Highways England have finalised their plans now so don't know what sending the BHS specification to Steve Mitchell would achieve.
- 4.3 Joanne has sent the letter to the Secretary of State.
- 4.4 Joanne has sent the link to the Surrey County Council webpage outlining who can use a public footpath.
- 4.5 Surrey Wildlife Trust said that they don't allow cyclists to use footpaths on land they manage.
- 4.6 Penny will check if she has sent the route map for the Pirbright Memorial Loop around

Action – Penny to check if the map has been circulated.

- 4.7 Joanne hasn't been able to put the annual reviews on the website as the documents don't meet new accessibility standards so need some work before they can be published.
- 4.8 Sophie commented regarding the King Alfred's Way cycle route around Waverley Abbey that there was nothing new to report but thinks there will be a claim from the British Horse Society for a new route.
- 4.9 Avril said that the planning application for a crematorium in Tandridge has been rejected.
- 4.10 Avril asked what Surrey County Council's policy regarding electric scooters is. Ian said that he circulated an email from Surrey Police saying they are illegal to use on pavements and roads. Debbie said that they are illegal to use on Rights of Way without the landowner's permission.

5. Forward Plan (including brief presentation from Pamela Lyman)

- 5.1 The Forward Plan was discussed

Action – Update the Forward Plan as discussed

- 5.2 Avril said that the list of potential gaps in the rights of way network was discussed and looked into and it appears that there is only one real possibility

for a claim for a bridleway. Avril has sent the list of footpaths to Surrey Ramblers to look at, but thinks they'll come to the same conclusion as her, that there are very few gaps in the network in Surrey.

- 5.3 Where there are gaps in the network, Avril is confident that the links are being used.
- 5.4 Pamela outlined some of the landowner and rights of way issues that she is concerned about.
- 5.5 Active travel is being encouraged and this will cause an increase in use of rights of way that could cause more conflict with landowners. There is also the possibility that electric vehicles could be used on rights of way in the future.
- 5.6 The Surrey Nature Partnership's Natural Capital programme is encouraging an increase in access to the countryside as part of their plans
- 5.7 The Surrey County Council climate change paper encourages the increase in access to Hydrogen fuel in the future which will impact on the countryside. The paper also looks to use rural networks and infrastructure more in the future.
- 5.8 The Local Enterprise Partnership Coast to Capital programme gave money to Surrey Wildlife Trust to increase access to countryside.
- 5.9 The Surrey Hills AONB / Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) is going to give money to landowners to increase access.
- 5.10 Pamela has concerns about the impact of these schemes on landowners.
- 5.11 Penny said that there is a trial project in the Surrey Hills regarding ELMS.
- 5.12 Proposals for access are not forced onto landowners.
- 5.13 Romy said that she would see if she could find someone who could present about ELMS to SCAF.

Action – Romy to find a suitable person to present to SCAF

- 5.14 Ian to invite Roger Geffen, Policy Director of Cycling UK to attend a meeting in early 2021 as promised for April 2020, but never achieved due to COVID

Action - Ian to invite Roger Geffen to a meeting

6. Date of Next Meeting

- 6.1 Monday 18 January 2021 1.30pm
Meeting to be held online

Monday 26 April 2021 1.30pm
Venue to be confirmed

Monday 19 July 2021 1.30pm
Venue to be confirmed

Monday 18 October 2021 1.30pm
Venue to be confirmed