

- 4.4 Penny said that the BHS and Hampshire LAF are looking at alternative routes to the Basingstoke Canal for equestrians for the proposed new route around MoD land on the Hampshire /Surrey border.
- 4.5 Pamela has looked at the easy access routes on the Surrey County Council website and thinks that a visit to all the sites would be useful, but doesn't have the time to do that herself. She suggested using a tool such as the Ramblers use to rate how accessible each route is.
- 4.6 David visited one of the routes near Esher and says that the parking was inadequate for disabled parking.

Action – Pamela and Rosie to come up with a checklist of what requirements there should be for an accessible route / find out if one already exists.

- 4.7 Gail hasn't been able to find out any information if Travel Smart has anything relevant to offer to SCAF so suggested not carrying this forward.
- 4.8 Joanne hasn't contacted the Surrey Hills AONB yet.

Action – Joanne to contact the Surrey Hills AONB to invite them to nominate a possible Forum member.

5. Matters dealt with since previous meeting

5.1 The following matters were acknowledged:

- Letter to Surrey Police regarding use of Police off-road motorcycles
- Surrey's new tree strategy consultation response

6. M25 / A3 junction update

6.1 Steve Mitchell provided the following update:

M25 Junction 10 Highways Improvement scheme – As Highway Authority managing the PRow network and landowner of Ockham & Wisley Commons around the proposed scheme site, SCC has been heavily involved in discussion with Highways England who are promoting the scheme.

The scheme will result in significant benefits to the PRow network. A new Non-motorised User (NMU) route will be created along the A3 corridor, with the status of Public Bridleway, forming a continuous route for walkers cyclist and equestrians. The NMU route will link into existing and new PRow's on the common and will link with four new non-vehicular bridges over the M25 and A3.

The four quadrants of the common will be linked together via the new bridges and access around the whole site will be easier and safer. Details of the routes are shown on the scheme plans. Additional 'exchange' land will added to the common to mitigate the loss of land due to the scheme land take. Around twice as much land will be given to the council to add to the common as is taken.

Extensive nature conservation mitigation works to the SPA will be undertaken and maintained.

- 6.2 David explained the plans further, showing where the potential new routes would run.

Action – David said he would send around a plan showing the proposed access improvements.

- 6.3 Penny raised concerns about the design and safety of the new All User bridges for equestrians. She was particularly concerned about the height of the sides of the bridges. Penny said she would send bridge specifications to Steve.

Action – Penny said she would send bridge specifications to Steve.

- 6.4 Avril is concerned that the exchange land from the original building of the M25 may not even now been sorted out.

- 6.5 Gail is concerned that carriage drivers have not been considered as a user of the new non-motorised route.

- 6.6 Gail suggested that all new Rights of Way should be restricted byways. There is always a chance in the future that the restricted byway could be connected to other new / upgraded routes.

7. Surrey County Council Update

- 7.1 Steve Mitchell provided the following update:

- 7.2 Car park charges – The County Council Cabinet agreed to cease car park charging at its Countryside car parks from 1st April 2020. Members agreed that a voluntary donation scheme would be investigated. This is likely to be along the lines of keeping parking meters in place with some altered site signing allowing visitors to donate using the meters or by other means.

- 7.3 Management of the SCC Countryside Estate – The County Council is currently discussing with Surrey Wildlife Trust amended arrangements for managing the estate. Although not finalised and agreed, these are likely to include SWT focussing on nature conservation/biodiversity/woodland management across the estate and SCC leading on visitor services. This would include: public access issues, car parks, site information etc.

- 7.4 PRow funding – Additional capital funding has been allocated for work on the PRow network over the next 2 years. The work is likely to include replacement of infrastructure such as bridges and path furniture such as signs. The council remains under pressure for revenue funding, but it is expected that the capital funding will go a long way to reducing maintenance backlogs.

- 7.5 Avril is concerned that revenue funding hasn't been increased as there won't be enough staff to manage the works.

- 7.6 The Surrey Countryside Access Forum appreciate the increased capital funding, although it is concerned about what will happen when it runs out.

- 7.7 Rosie said that any new gates provided should be large mobility gates.
- 7.8 Pamela said that Surrey County Council should maintain structures on rights of way such as dams and not landowners.

Action – Steve Mitchell to provide an update on how the money is planned to be spent at the next meeting.

8. Cycling UK plans for Surrey

- 8.1 Cycling UK have worked with the Surrey Hills AONB on schemes in the past
- 8.2 Cycling UK also works on schemes at a national scale as well
- 8.3 Cycling UK are currently working on a new long distance route that goes through part of Surrey called King Alfred's Way.
- 8.4 Sophie distributed a plan showing the proposed route.
- 8.5 The route takes in well know landmarks such as Winchester and Salisbury Cathedrals, Stonehenge, Avebury Stone Circle, Farnham Castle and The Devils Punchbowl (Surrey) and is targeted at family bike users,
- 8.6 Sophie explained that most of the route is on bridleways, but in some cases it isn't such as the Basingstoke Canal towpath
- 8.7 Cycling UK are negotiating with landowners in places where there is no bridleway link, or are considering applying for an upgrade to bridleway / restricted byway status.
- 8.8 Pamela was concerned about illegal access by motorbikes. Gail said that that isn't a reason not to do it.
- 8.9 Gail asked if the new route would be consulted on
- 8.10 Sophie said that a consultation will take place
- 8.11 Avril was concerned that promoted routes will become an excuse to race on Strava.
- 8.12 Sophie said that it is an exploring the countryside family route.
- 8.13 Ian said that education of the users is very important
- 8.14 Gail was concerned that cyclists on this route would be able to access adjacent areas where they can cause damage and take part in anti-social behaviour.
- 8.15 Paul said that it is difficult to educate people that carry out this sort of behaviour as they are generally won't be the type of person to belong to a user-group where they can be educated. For example night riding is generally organised by word of mouth among friends and not via forums.

8.16 Sophie said that the proposed route connects with the North and South Downs National Trails, the Ridgeway and Thames Path.

Action – Sophie will circulate information about the King Alfred's Way.

9. Annual Review

9.1 The format of the annual review form that was circulated before the meeting was discussed. The form was based on one distributed by Natural England several years ago.

9.2 The forum agreed that a section referring to the 2026 cut-off date should be reinstated.

Action – Joanne to amend the form and then fill it out with data from 2018-2019

10. Forward Plan

10.1 David asked if the County Council has a list of Resident's Associations go with Parish Council's

10.2 Joanne said that she only has a list of contacts for Parish Council's

10.3 Pamela would like to discuss the difficulties of being a landowner that has rights of way crossing their land.

10.4 Issues include lack of respect for the landowner and property and misuse of land adjacent to the right of way.

10.5 Pamela is concerned that if the Surrey Hills AONB becomes a National Park this will mean an increase in visitors to the Surrey Hills and more facilities would have to be provided for them.

Action – Joanne to put an issue on the forward plan relating to the issues that landowners face.

10.6 Avril said that she is preparing a map for the BHS that shows all the gaps in the bridleway network. She is happy to share this with SCAF, although it won't show footpaths.

10.7 Penny would like to discuss the Hampshire Equestrian Planning document that the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum contributed to alongside the BHS. Penny wondered if it was something that could be put together for Surrey.

10.8 Penny suggested inviting someone from the Hampshire BHS could come and do a presentation about the document.

Action – Joanne to update forward plan to include inviting Hampshire BHS representative to talk about planning document.

11. Outstanding Consultations

11.1 Details of outstanding consultations were noted.

12. Any other urgent business/public questions

12.1 Penny raised the issue of the Environmental Land Management Scheme that is proposed to be implemented after Brexit. Official consultation hasn't started on this yet, but there could be implications for access and cross-compliance.

12.2 Gail raised the subject of the Surrey Tree Strategy consultation. Gail thinks that there could be an opportunity for increased access.

12.3 Andrew said that the trees that are proposed to be planted would not necessarily be planted by Surrey County Council, and that it would take place over a 10 year period.

12.4 Andrew said that there is a new Surrey Hills AONB management plan.

Action – Joanne to send a link to the management plan.

12.5 Penny suggested that members should look at the DMMO register to see if there are any applications to change the definitive map in their area.

12.6 Avril suggested re-sending the letter regarding the 2026 to the new Environment Minister.

Action – Joanne to re-send the letter to the new Environment Minister

12.7 Ian said that a member of the Byways User Group is concerned about motorised users and mountain bikers conflicting at the Devil's Punch Bowl. Ian thinks that education is important.

13. Date of Next Meeting

13.1 It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held on:

- Monday 27 April 2020 13:30
Committee Room C, County Hall, Kingston-Upon-Thames