

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Agenda
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Jill Christley
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

		Paper Number
1.	3.00 Welcome, apologies and housekeeping	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting	LAF 11/41
3.	Declaration of interest	
4.	3.10 Rights of Way Crossings on Railway Lines Presentation by Steve Day, Liability Negotiations Adviser, Network Rail	Presentation
5.	3.40 A11 Underpass	LAF 12/01
6.	3.50 Future of the Public Forest Estate Presentation by Mike Taylor, Forestry Commission	Presentation
	Independent Panel on Forestry	LAF 12/02
7.	4.15 East of England LAF Chair & Vice Chair Meeting	LAF 12/03
8.	4.25 Huddle	LAF 12/04
9.	4.35 LAF Representation on Local Nature Partnerships	LAF 12/05
10.	4.40 Ipswich Waterfront – update	LAF 12/06
11.	4.45 Paths for Communities	Verbal
12.	4.50 Any Other Business	
13.	4.55 Public question time	
14.	5.00 Dates & Venues of Future Meetings	

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Minutes of meeting held in Assington Village Hall on Thursday 20 October 2011
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Jill Christley
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping.

Present: Melinda Appleby (MA), David Barker (DB), Bryan Collen (Chairman) (BC), Barry Hall (BH), Margaret Hancock (MH), Ann Langley (AL), Sandy Martin (SM), Gordon Merfield (GM), Mary Norden (MN), Monica Pipe (MP), Norman Southgate (NS), Mike Taylor (MT), John Wayman (JW), Anthony Wright (AWr).

SCC Officers Present: Jill Christley (minutes), David Falk (DF), Andrew Woodin (AW).

Apologies – Alan Moore, Jane Storey.

Guest – Genevieve Broad

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

3. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Local Nature Partnerships

See LAF 11/24. BC welcomed to the meeting Gen Broad (GB), Biodiversity Officer. GB's role is to facilitate communication between different bodies involved in protecting and managing areas of natural environment in Suffolk.

In her presentation GB outlined some of the problems facing the environment in Suffolk: the decline of native clawed crayfish, the loss of orchards in Suffolk, and the threats to Suffolk specific species.

The Government has produced The Natural Environment White Paper which describes their vision for the natural environment. It outlines 3 initiatives to achieve their goals:

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) will be made up of businesses, organisations and individuals who will work together to develop a plan of action to enhance and protect the natural environment. There will initially be £1m available from DEFRA to cover setup costs, thereafter the LNPs will be self-funded. It is expected there will be 12 LNPs in England. An application for a joint Norfolk-Suffolk LNP has been submitted.

There will be an event to launch the LNP and SLAF will have the opportunity to be involved.

Biodiversity offsetting would allow for beneficial biodiversity activities to compensate for biodiversity losses in a measurable and effective way.

Nature Improvement Areas are to be established and will aim to improve the management and increase the size of existing wildlife sites, increase the number of wildlife sites, improve connectivity between sites to create wildlife corridors.

Applications are due to be submitted for the Brecks and Suffolk Coastal AONB to become Nature Improvement Areas.

The forum discussed the effect that recent changes to the Government's planning guidance will have on the environment, and expressed concern that there was now less protection than had been provided under previous guidelines.

ACTION GB undertook to keep SLAF updated and to send an invitation to join.

5. **Future of the Public Forest Estate**

See LAF 11/25, 11/26, and 11/27.

Future meetings are scheduled to take place on 31 October, 17 November, 21 December, 18 January, 1 February, 23 February 21 7 22 March and 18 April.

When the Forestry Panel visit East Anglia they will be focussing on wood fuels, however it was felt that SLAF should take the opportunity to press LAF interests. MA suggested that a briefing pack could be given out. Previous Forestry Panel visits had been well structured, including workshops, in view of this AW suggested waiting to see what format the visit will have before deciding on the approach SLAF should take.

ACTION MT offered to give a presentation on the Forestry Commission to SLAF at the next meeting.

6. **SLAF Annual Report**

See LAF 11/28, 11/29, and 11/30.

BC thanked DB for delivering the SLAF annual report to SCC Committee. Councillors had been interested in the work of SLAF and DB's presentation prompted a good deal of debate, raising the profile of SLAF.

7. **SCC Budget Consultation**

See LAF 11/31.

BC reminded members of SCC's budget consultation, and suggested that they could complete the survey on-line. Results of the survey will influence Councillors in setting the 2012/13 budget.

8. **SCC Countryside Sites (Dedication of Public Rights of Way) – Progress Report**

See LAF 11/32.

AW presented report and noted sites where PROW were to be dedicated. Maps detailing the dedication of public rights of way listed in LAF 11/32 were circulated. Once dedicated, the cost of maintaining these rights of way will be met by SCC (and Essex county council where Valley Walk, Sudbury is in Essex).

9. **Rights of Way Road and Rail Crossings**

See LAF 11/33.

A11 Dualling. The forum discussed the change of specification for the underpass. They will not be objecting to the reduced height of the underpass, but are disappointed and noted the A14 Rookery Crossroads underpass was similarly reduced in specification when it came to construction. AL pointed out that dismounting and remounting introduces a higher safety risk than being able to ride through, and the forum asked that the Agency or Mouchels liaise with the BHS on the specification.

ACTION SCC to advise Highways Agency: A) SLAF will not be objecting. B) Point out that specification had been changed on A14 Rookery Crossroads. C) Ask that Mouchells liaise with BHS on specification of mount/dismount areas.

Rail Crossings. AW presented report LAF 11/33 and explained SCC is waiting for Network Rail (NR) to confirm the number of high risk ROW crossings in Suffolk, and to supply a co-ordinated programme to include roads and ROW for the forthcoming year. SLAF were very concerned to learn of ROW closures and the lack of coordination by NR. They requested SCC ask for a NR representative to attend the next meeting and explain their policy and programme.

ACTION SCC invite NR to next meeting.

Ipswich Chord. MH queried whether the ROW is to be closed during works

ACTION SCC advise MH on this

10. Ipswich Fit for the 21st Century

See LAF 11/34 and 11/35. AW pointed out an amendment to paper LAF 11/35, page 2, OPTION 2 paragraph should begin 'A TRO banning all motor vehicles between...'. The Forum discussed the options for traffic management put forward by SCC. MH, GM and SM expressed their support for option 2. BG accepted this was the general view of the forum.

11. Correspondence

NE review of OA restrictions. See LAF 11/36. Helen Bamber at Natural England had asked for SLAF view on proposed restrictions. These are unchanged from previous years. The forum discussed the proposals.

ACTION DF to let NE know that SLAF have no objections.

National Planning Policy Framework. See LAF 11/37.

DEFRA consultation on registration of town and village greens. DF advised SLAF that there was an easy-to-read summary of DEFRA's consultation on their web page.

Management of Commons. See LAF 11/38. GM expressed concern about a person who claims to own the common land at Knoddishall, he queried how an individual could own common land, and asked why SCC had not challenged him. AW suggested that GM take this up with the parish council.

LAF Chair and Vice Chair meeting. DB is not able to attend the meeting which will be held on 22/11/11, members were invited to let JC know if they would like to attend in his place.

Herts LAF case study. See LAF 11/39. SLAF agreed that they would like to see more members of the public at the meetings.

ACTION JC to notify local parish councils of future meetings being held locally.

East of England LAF meeting dates. See LAF 11/40.

12. Any Other Business

EAF Regional Coordinator. Since the EAF was lost there has been very little means of liaising with other LAFs nationally. The 'Huddle' website has been set up, to address both this and the pending termination of the regional coordinator role. Huddle will allow groups to share ideas and concerns with other groups. This will provide a direct line to MP Richard Benyon. Natural England will offer training and support on using the website. Anna Mangini will set up a training session. SCC asked for volunteers.

ACTION ALL interested members. Contact JC to arrange training session.

13. Public Question Time

No members of the public attended.

14. Dates & Venues of Future Meetings

3.00pm on Thursday 12 January 2011, SALC meeting room, UNIT 11A, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 0AJ.

3.00pm on Thursday 12 April 2012. Venue – Walberswick Village Hall, subject to availability.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	A11 Dualling Between Fiveways and Thetford – NMU Underpass
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

1. As previously reported to SLAF, the Highways Agency is working to reduce costs of the scheme and this includes reducing the height of the underpass at the monument near Horn Heath from 3.7m to 2.7m. The lower height would save an estimated £100,000 but still be compliant with highway design standards provided suitable facilities for the riders to dismount and remount are provided.
2. At a meeting between the county council, the Highways Agency and its agents on 24th November, the county council noted it will be Guy McGregor, the portfolio holder for roads and transport, who will have the final decision on the county council's position on the design of the new road, including proposals to amend the design.
3. Since the last meeting of the forum, David Barker and Bryan Freemantle (formerly a SLAF member and closely involved in the discussions which resulted in the inclusion of the underpass in the scheme) have made separate representations to the Highways Agency that the height of the underpass should not be reduced and challenging the assertion by the Highways Agency that reducing its height would avoid the need to pump the underpass by allowing the floor to be raised above the water table. Further comments were made to the Agency to the effect requiring equestrians to dismount was discriminatory against those with disabilities, and that there were other safety considerations to be taken into account in reducing the height.
4. In order to address these concerns, and other matters relating to scheme design, the county council is convening a meeting later this month between officers, the portfolio holder, Matthew Hancock MP and other stakeholders. It is the intention to receive a report from the Highways Agency on the proposed changes to the A11 Fiveways to Thetford Improvement scheme and confirm SCC's agreement (or otherwise) to these changes. David Barker, Bryan Freemantle and Elizabeth Barrett of the Suffolk branch of the British Horse Society will be invited to the meeting.
5. An article in the Eastern Daily Press on 17 December included the following statement *"A spokesman for the Highways Agency said the proposed height of the underpass had been changed because of the water table, but officials would be making further investigations following talks with the Elveden Estate and consultants."* It is to be hoped the Highways Agency will be able to confirm the results of their further investigations before or at the proposed meeting in January.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Independent Panel on Forestry – Visit to East Anglia
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

Update on Independent Panel on Forestry (IPF)

To date the Independent Panel on Forestry have visited:

- Forest of Dean – 12th & 13th June 2011
- Northumberland – 25th & 26th July 2011
- Kent – 15th & 16th September 2011
- Nottinghamshire – 7th November 2011
- Yorkshire – 6th December 2011

The Panel are due to visit:

- Devon – 26th January 2012
- Wyre – 17 February 2012
- New Forest – 28 February 2012
- Cumbria – 7 March 2012
- East Anglia – 28 March 2012

A Progress Report is available <http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/2011/panel-launch-progress-report/> (54 pages)

42,000 responses were received to the Call for Views, with the public expressing a passion for forests as a place for recreation, to connect with nature and as a vital source of resources. The progress report reflects this response highlighting how forests benefit people, nature and businesses.

The Panel sees a continuing role for a national public forest estate in England and in the progress report set out a broad vision of providing a wider range of benefits. The Panel have also identified that recommendations should extend to the future of all woods and forests, not just the one fifth managed by the Forestry Commission.

The Panels' recommendations will be made in their final report to Government in spring 2012.

Visit to East Anglia

The emails and attachments below summarise the latest position regarding the panel's proposed visit to East Anglia.

From: Andrew Woodin

Sent: 22 December 2011 07:33

To: 'forestrypanel@defra.gsi.gov.uk'

Cc: David Falk

Subject: INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY VISIT TO SANTON DOWNHAM

Importance: High

Dear Sir,

Please could you update me on the forest panel's forthcoming visit to Santon Downham. Suffolk's Local Access Forum (who expressed a wish to meet with the panel in their letter of 16/6/11 to the chairman) meet on 12th January and would very much appreciate an update.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew Woodin

From: Andrew Woodin
Sent: 03 January 2012 14:12
To: 'forestrypanel@defra.gsi.gov.uk'
Cc: David Falk; Jill Christley
Subject: INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY VISIT TO SANTON DOWNHAM (FAO MIKE SEDDON)

Mike – thank you for your time just now, you will respond to my email of 22/12/11 in time for our local access forum meeting next Thursday, with a copy of the progress report.

To summarise our conversation, there is no firm detail yet for the March visit, but the theme may involve access. I would reiterate the local access forum would very much welcome an invitation to send a rep to the visit to contribute their thoughts on maintaining and improving public access in England's forests and woodland.

From: Andrew Woodin
Sent: 03 January 2012 14:16
To: David Falk; Jill Christley
Subject: RE: INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY VISIT TO SANTON DOWNHAM (FAO MIKE SEDDON)

For SLAF next week, please can you include as papers the latest newsletter from the panel (their email 12/12/11), the itinerary of forthcoming visits and the progress report dated 8/12/11 on their website. I will then give a verbal update after Mike's presentation unless I get something from the panel in time for the papers to go out.

Thanks,

Andrew

From: Forestry Panel [mailto:forestrypanel@defra.gsi.gov.uk]
Sent: 03 January 2012 16:02
To: Andrew Woodin
Cc: David Falk; Jill Christley
Subject: RE: INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY VISIT TO SANTON DOWNHAM (FAO MIKE SEDDON)

Dear Andrew

Thank you for your call and emails of today and 22 December. I am sorry you have not had a reply before now due to the office being closed between Christmas and New Year.

As we discussed, there are no fixed plans yet for locations or topics to be discussed when the Panel visit to East Anglia on 28 March, and it may or may not include Santon Downham. As with all visits, we have received expressions of interest in the visit from a number of

organisations and we will need to consider these alongside the Panel's own needs. I would expect us to start to plan the visit towards the end of this month.

I can confirm that the visit will be by a sub-group of 2-3 Panel members and could be expected to run between approximately 1030am and 3.30pm. On recent visits the Panel members have tended to focus their attention on one or two topics of interest, spending time on both indoor discussion with a limited number of relevant stakeholders, and with a site visit to a couple of locations. The notes from both the Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire visits provide an indication of how this has worked <http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/meetings/>

We will certainly keep in mind the interest of your local access forum in the visit. In addition, and notwithstanding arrangements for the visit, if there are particular further points your Forum wishes to make, in addition to those in your response to the Call for Views dated 16 June 2011, then please do feel free to let us have these at any time.

I will send to you in a separate email a pdf of the Panel's Progress Report. It is a 7MB file and some IT systems block the message – if it doesn't get through let me know and I can post a hard copy to you.

Kind regards

Mike Seddon

Below is the second issue of the IPF Newsletter

December 2011
Issue 2

Independent Panel on Forestry Newsletter

The Independent Panel on Forestry was set up to advise the government on the future of forests and woods in England. Welcome to their second newsletter which focuses on the release of the progress report.

Contact us

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Nobel House,
17 Smith Square,
London, SW1P 3JR.

Email:
forestrypanel@defra.
gsi.gov.uk

Web:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/>

Twitter:
@ForestryPanel

Panel launch their progress report

The work of the Panel is well underway now, and in the spirit of continuing a conversation they wanted to share where they have got to in their thinking in advance of the final report and recommendations next spring.

So, after visiting the forests and woods of England and analysing the many passionate responses to the 'call for views', the Panel are pleased to release their progress report this month.

The Panel's chair, The Right Reverend James Jones Bishop of Liverpool, said: "Although our Panel was born out of fierce debate over the future of the public forest estate, what has become apparent through our work so far is that we must look at the future of all woods and forests, not just the one fifth managed by the Forestry Commission."

The report says the Panel are working towards recommendations that will increase the benefits generated from all forests in England – to the people that enjoy them, to nature and to the businesses that rely on them. Of the

woods which are not in the public estate, 80%, only about half of them are managed. The Panel wants to see more woods created and more woods managed.



Bishop James Jones

The report also makes clear that the Panel believe there is a role for a national public forest estate. It also says how this tremendous asset is managed and used should evolve to reflect people's aspirations and wider challenges like climate change.

The report notes that while looking over a landscape of different types and ages of trees in the Forest of Dean, the Panel were told this was "a political landscape"

shaped by the national politics at the time of planting. The Panel has said in the progress report that future forestry policy should reflect the economic and ecological timescales of woodlands.

Progress report headlines:

- Panel believe there is a role for a national public forest estate
- The Panel want to see more woodlands created and more woodlands managed
- Future forestry policy should reflect economic and ecological timescale of woodlands
- Further work exploring how more woodlands in England can deliver more for society, the environment and the economy.

A full copy of the progress report can be found on the website:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/reports/>.

Snapshots from the Panel's visits to Northumberland, Kent and Nottinghamshire



The Panel continue visiting England's forests

Some of you may have met the Panel on one of their visits. During their visits the Panel hope to build up a good picture of the varied nature of forests and woods, and the role they play in our communities and the economy. Details of all the visits can be found on the website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/>

Next steps ...

In the next steps of the Panel's journey they are keen to look deeper and wider into the issues.

An example could include how the Forestry Commission is held accountable and how benefits, such as access, can be sustained over a long timescale.

They will explore whether the current set up for the Forestry Commission is the right one whilst looking at all of England's forests and woods. The Panel are keen to develop

recommendations that encourage more people to tend and manage woods in the interests of conserving and enhancing nature, to connect people with nature and to support green jobs.

In addition to drawing on the call for views and lessons learned from the visits around the county the Panel have commissioned a variety of research reports and workshops, which will cover history, ecology and economics. The long term sustainability of the forest

and woodland sector is a particular concern. A review of work on access and community engagement has also been commissioned. The Panel continue to meet with different groups and test out their ideas.

The Panel are not specifically seeking comments on the progress report, but as ever, remain open to ideas and suggestions that may stimulate their work.

Thousands share their views with the Panel

Back in May the Panel launched its 'call for views'.

Huge numbers of individuals, clubs, charities, organisations and businesses putting pen to paper, keyboard to computer, or in one case paintbrush to card, to express their opinion.

Bishop James said: "We have been struck by the heartfelt connections between the forests and woods of England and the people who live, work and relax in them.

"More than 42,000 people responded to the Panel's call for views. They overwhelmingly expressed their passion for the public forest estate, and woods

more generally, as places of recreation, a way connect with nature and as a vital source of resources."

The call for views was featured widely online and picked up by numerous organisations including the Woodland Trust and the campaign group 38 Degrees.

In total the Panel received 42,159 responses to the call for views. There were 223 letters, 7063 emails and 34,873 responses received via 38 Degrees.

Of the emails received directly, 3841 responses came from individuals via the facility on the Woodland Trust website, and over 262 were based

on a template response issue by the Motor Sports Association.

From the very first response received to the last it was clear that each and every response represented a person's, or number of peoples, time, effort, interest and passion.

The Panel will continue to use the information everyone has provided as they work towards their final report due in Spring 2012.

A detailed analysis of the responses to the call for views can be found in Annex 2 of the progress report.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	East of England LAF Chair & Vice Chair Meeting
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Margaret Hancock
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

EAST OF ENGLAND LAF CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS MEETING CAMBRIDGE – 22ND NOVEMBER 2011

Welcome from Linda Foster, Lead Adviser Natural England (Essex & Suffolk).

LAF Updates

Cambs (Mary Sanders) – small number of members; meets 4 times a year. Has support from County Council but there are threats of cutbacks. External secretariat maintained after intervention of leader of the Council. Achieved £25K funding to improve Roman Road. Uses different volunteers to deal with seemingly endless form filling. Letters sent re. lack of Definitive Map for Toll Road. Also working on lost highways.

Borough of Bedford (Bob Wallace) – Set up 2 years ago. 12 members with 8 -10 attending each meeting. Keen to improve ROW, enhance network and improve community use. Concerns about impact of cuts. Priority is given to maintenance, understandable but not ideal. Also has problems with Definitive Map officer post. Feels that LAF should be advising on policies but focus is now on cuts. Would like more positive work.

Suffolk (Bryan Collen) – establishing useful links with Norfolk particularly on Forestry issues. Looking at access to Ipswich Waterfront, keen to establish solutions to benefit pedestrians & cyclists without detriment to business operators. Some funding received from Bury St Edmunds and a charity for improving selected ROWs to make them more accessible to those with disabilities and for families with prams/pushchairs.

Broads (?Peter Nedhurst) 16 members, mostly long standing, and meetings well attended. Meet 4 times a year – 2 office based and 2 in village halls within area. Cuts in funding from Broads Authority and Norfolk CC. ROW Improvement Plan is about 50% completed. Difference of opinions between officers and LAF over maintenance priorities. Officers put emphasis on long distance routes, LAF prefer focus on circular routes based around car parks/toilets hubs. Currently have 2 officers dedicated to ROW and secretariat support. Officers now required to focus on all types of access i.e. water and land.

Central Beds & Luton (Steve Bumstead) Meetings well attended by 20 members. Currently have 2 vacancies for younger person and tourism/rural business representatives. Now have land agent representative on LAF and this is useful. Sub groups tackle consultations including Beds Improvement Plan 2012 -2017, Local Transport Plan (including walking & cycling) & Luton Borough Council Transport Plan. Issues discussed include ploughing and cropping, gating orders in Luton which were causing a stir, and Local Nature Partnership. Most members have signed up for Huddle training.

Herts (Debbie Houghie & Roger Thomas) – meet 4 times a year in Hatfield with informal meetings between as & when required. Winter field trip traced course of River Ver through countryside and town, worked with Management companies. One meeting had standing room only in public area. Have looked at vacancies in skills – need cyclist & disabled person. Support from secretary and officers. Many requests for input into consultations. Individual members take on responsibility for representation at various Forums. LAF gives advice where no policy – this has resulted in a Gating Policy for Herts. Looked at grazing issues on ROW. Cutbacks at local authority have been very professionally handled though there has been reduction in cutting grass & hedges. Trunk road crossing for horses on major road is now included in the plan. The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) refuses to communicate with LAF over access issues before, during and after the Olympics. Also looking at access to coast & local woodland trust. Have tried providing free food to attract university students to take an interest in LAF matters. Many young people do attend meetings in the public gallery.

Peterborough (Steve Horner) – now meet in pub as this found to be more convenient. 6 – 10 members at each meeting with wide ranging interests. Working on renewal and improvement of bridges on ROW, also verge improvements working with Parish councils. Crossing on A1 obtained on closing of central gap by HA. A16 highways improvement schedule completed with horse/bike crossing as part of Peterborough Green Wheel of cycle routes. ROW officer about to retire. Unitary authority entering into Service Level Agreement with Cambridge instead of replacing officer. Cutting grass/verges now sub-contracted and this makes it more difficult to get things rectified where there are problems. Mixed reaction to Huddle – concerns about lack of consistent broadband coverage despite being in a relatively urban area.

Thurrock (Margaret ?) – original 22 members now down to 6 – low membership is a problem. Proposal to build very large port in Borough. Wanted Pegasus crossing – provided with horse bridge. Working with Essex CC.

Essex (Robert ?) – 12 members with broad range of interests. Sporadic public attendance but 1 rambler regular. Meet in Chelmsford and have many P3 groups. Issues include shoreline management plan, various highway creations including A133. Problems caused by lack of digital on-line map for Essex, have been waiting 2- 3 years for this. Also interested in land terrier maps particularly for land in LA ownership. Have some reservations about Huddle, some members have no computer, but some have agreed to be trained in January. Frequent difficulties with ROW disrupted by planning applications. Colchester BC grant applications with no regard to ROW. Also need Highway authority to work with local planning authorities. Supplementary

Planning Guidance produced re planning/development & ROW. Colchester is a cycling town and now seems to be promoting cycling without regard to other users.

Norfolk (Chris Allhusen?) – full-ish membership. Councillors keeping low profile since cuts. ROW team has suffered drastic cuts and as a result only token work will be done. Maintenance is sub-contracted with minimal funding – will only be done after complaints. LAF & NCC organised a conference to look at different ways forward. This was attended by representatives from businesses, tourism, health and education and brought out some good ideas. E.g. Advantages of long distance routes based on a business model. Spin off was a mini conference to focus on benefits of ROW for health and alternative funding available. NCC is looking for European partner (a region in Northern France) for sustainable transport bid. Coastal access also under consideration.

LAF Membership on LNP & NIA (Fiona Taylor NE) – success on sell off of forest and local nature partnerships. LNPs encompass all aspects – natural environment, health, economic – and are at strategic level so it is essential to have LAF involvement and volunteer input. Cambs is a good model except LAF chair wrote and was told LAF input was not needed at strategic level.

There is a Norfolk/Suffolk LNP. Some concern that these are a re-invention of local biodiversity partnership but it is hoped to make them more diverse and balanced groups. It was felt that the hierarchy does not understand the role of LAFs & should be told of the need for LAFs to be involved. LNPs are a DEFRA led initiative so future funding may be an issue. Cambs felt that previous grants had been allocated to nature groups to the exclusion of access. LNPs should address this.

Remaining Agenda Items – time was now very short and allowed only brief discussion of the following items:-

Young People involvement – start young with toddlers, Sure Start groups, buggy walks. Fit with NHS health training. 4 – 11 year olds – get schools involved in walks etc. 11 – 18 year olds – chance for non-academic pupils to gain experience in rural skills, not just footpath clearing, but hedging, wood sculpture etc.; there is a good example of this at South Walsham. LAFs should act as co-ordinating partner with other groups e.g. health, education.

Rail Crossing Closures – increasing pressure from Railtrack on land owners and councils to close crossings on safety grounds. Need reminding of statutory obligation to maintain crossings and make them safe for use.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) – access now removed from Entry Level Stewardship though education has remained. Landowners have to be careful as environmental strips cannot be opened up for permissive access. Advised to liaise closely with County Councils.

Funding – for LAFs from NE & DEFRA. Co-ordinators contracts end on 31st March & are not renewable. Concern over lack of central organisation after 31st March. Is use of Huddle an attempt to replace co-ordinators? There may be just one national co-ordinator.

Date and location of South East Conference not yet confirmed but should be early March 2012. People and Partnership team may provide support to LAFs but the whole team is under review.

Margaret Hancock
30th November 2011

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Huddle
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	David Falk
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

Huddle is a website for LAF members. Through the site members can access information and exchange views between forums. It also provides a direct link to the DEFRA Minister, Richard Benyon.

NE have agreed to support 3 Huddle 'champions' per LAF. The champions would be able to share documents between forums and contribute to on-line forum discussions. Each champion would need to access Huddle on a regular basis to keep abreast of any new information and any exchanges of views.

Huddle has been well used by DEFRA staff over some time to good effect, and will be launched to LAFs at a conference in Feb/March (to be confirmed).

At the Chair meeting and subsequently, there has been considerable discussion about how the site will work. Key points raised include:

- Funding for training and of the site,
- access to the site by all LAF members,
- a 'read only' facility for every LAF member,
- the amount of work involved for each Huddle champion.

At the Chair meeting it was requested that a letter be sent to NE or the minister to cover these concerns, sent by the regional co-ordinator. The regional co-ordinator has requested comments from each LAF for this letter.

SLAF training on Huddle has been arranged for Thursday 26th January 2012 at 10.30 a.m. at Constantine House. Margaret Hancock and Melinda Appleby are due to attend this training.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	LAF Representation on Local Nature Partnerships
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	David Falk
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

At the previous SLAF meeting, Gen Broad, Biodiversity Officer for Suffolk, gave a presentation on the development of Local Nature Partnerships. LNPs are a recommendation of the Government's Natural Environment White Paper.

Since that presentation, DEFRA/NE announced that Norfolk and Suffolk had been awarded £31,000 to support preparatory activities to develop an LNP.

Funding will facilitate activities such as:

- Approaching and organising workshops for potential new members from the key sectors of health, tourism, education, farming and business.
- Creating a Business and Biodiversity Forum.
- Identifying opportunities for landscape-scale ecological restoration.
- Preparing a draft environmental vision and action plan for Norfolk and Suffolk.
- Organising a final consultative workshop with members to agree the structure and objectives of the proposed LNP.

All of these activities will be completed by June 2012.

There will be a series of workshops/events to form the new LNP. Events will take place in February through to the end of May 2012. SLAF will be invited to attend these events.

It has also been announced that the Norfolk and Suffolk Local Enterprise Partnership (New Anglia), with whom the LNP will work closely, has been designated by government as the National Lead for a Green Economy Pathfinder.

This initiative involves developing a long term vision for the Green Economy in Norfolk and Suffolk. There are three strands to the Green Pathfinder; Energy, Low Carbon Innovation and Finance, and 'Natural Capital'.

This will provide an opportunity for the conservation sector to forge partnerships with the corporate sector to the benefit of the environment and people, for example, through landscape, tourism and local food.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	A11 Ipswich Waterfront - Traffic Management Consultation Feedback
Meeting Date:	12 January 2012
Author/Contact:	Andrew Woodin
Venue:	SALC meeting room, Unit 11a, Hill View Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0AJ

1. SLAF received a paper on traffic management along the Ipswich waterfront at its last meeting and discussed the options put forward by Suffolk County Council. Some members expressed their support for option 2, the effect of which would be to pedestrianise the Northern Quays.
2. The public exhibition on the Ipswich Fit for the 21st Century scheme, which included the traffic management options along the waterfront, ran between 12 and 19 October, with the consultation period running for a period of six weeks, ending on 25 November. The associated questionnaire was also posted on SCC's Have Your Say website and the public were encouraged to complete it, either online or in hard copy format. Businesses local to the waterfront, Associated British Ports, who own much of the waterfront, and local residents have also been consulted on the options.
3. 686 people attended the exhibition and to date 215 have completed the waterfront questionnaires. Analysis of the responses received so far indicates 34% (73) expressed a preference for Option 1, 31% (67) for Option 2 and 35% (75) indicated no preference. There were also various comments made to officers by those attending the exhibition but of these, only 20 individuals expressed a preference on the options being presented. 6 preferred Option 1, 12 preferred Option 2 and 2 suggested a combination of both options, with the more restrictive option in force at the weekends only. If these statistics are added to the survey results, the percentages break down as follows:
 - Total responses (including those taken by officers at exhibition) – 235
 - Option 1 – 79 (34%)
 - Option 2 – 74 (32%)
 - Options 1&2 – 2 (1%)
 - No preference – 75 (32%)
4. 130 questionnaires also included additional comments. The main themes (other than comments on the preferences expressed for either option) that are emerging include the following:
 - a. The provision of convenient taxi ranks (on both the northern and eastern quays).
 - b. Allowing access for disabled users and quayside parking provision for blue badge holders.

- c. The provision of safe and locally accessible car parking areas for visitors.
 - d. Weekday and weekend requirements are very different and Option 2 could be applied at the weekends only.
 - e. Cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles do not mix and the contra flow cycling arrangement is unsatisfactory.
 - f. The current access arrangements for pedestrians and cyclists between Suffolk College and the waterfront needs improving. Consideration ought to be given to the provision of a 'walk over'.
 - g. Whatever option is introduced will require active and regular enforcement against those who contravene the terms of the TRO.
 - h. Use of the waterfront by all users works well and adds to the attractiveness of the area.
 - i. It would be good if it were possible to undertake a circular walk via the lock gates onto the island site or the wet dock crossing proposal becomes a reality.
5. 5% (10) of all the responses came from the business community, of which there are between 75 and 100 individual businesses in that area. Of these, 6 (60%) preferred Option 1 with only 1 expressing a preference for Option 2 and the remaining 3 choosing neither option. One of the principal landowners, ABP, objected strongly to Option 2.
 6. Officers have been aware for some time that the contra flow cycling arrangement between Coprolite Street and OCH has its problems, in part due to the way the shared space was originally designed. It is suggested removing the heavy chains along the whole length of RB36 (between Foundry Lane and Coprolite Street) would help to reduce cycling/pedestrian user conflict, particularly on the section between OCH and Coprolite Street. There is also scope for making the NCR signing clearer and for investigating a revision to the contra flow arrangement for the above section, by securing an exemption to the current one way system for cyclists, from the DfT. This would be included as part of the request for the exemption for cyclists from Bath street onto Byway 38 (New Cut West).
 7. The county council working group, chaired by Councillor Debman, considered traffic management at its meeting on 1/12/11 and asked that further consultation be undertaken with local businesses and how option 2 in particular would affect them.

Ipswich Waterfront Traffic Management

The waterfront is a vital and thriving part of Ipswich, enjoyed by visitors, residents and businesses, and contribute to the economic and social life of the town.

Occasionally, conflict arises between different types of user of the roads around the waterfront, for example in connection with the loading and unloading of ships in the working part of the dock, and between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists on the northern quays.

Until recently, there has been some uncertainty about the status of the roads around the waterfront, but this situation changed earlier this year.

Following a public inquiry in December 2010, the Secretary of State confirmed a Restricted Byway between Foundry Lane and Shiplaunch Road, and a Byway Open to All Traffic between Dock Street and Bath Street on New Cut West, with a smaller section to the south of Bath Street as Restricted Byway.

Public byways are open for all types of user, including motor vehicles, but public motor vehicles are not allowed to use restricted byways, except for those exercising a private motor vehicle right.

Now that the status of the roads has been confirmed, and the county council is looking at transport connections in the town as part of the Ipswich major scheme, this gives a good opportunity to have another look at how traffic is managed around the waterfront, and to seek the views of residents, businesses and the public.



The county council can regulate who is allowed access to the public highways around the waterfront, including motor vehicles exercising a private right by means of something called traffic regulation orders, and there are already some in force around the waterfront.

Some users would like the current and relatively unrestricted access, with its mix of motorised and non-motorised vehicles to continue, whilst others would like to see the area pedestrianised, at least around the shops, bars and restaurants along the northern quays.

The two adjacent maps show two alternative options, one showing less restricted vehicular access, and the other showing more restricted access around the waterfront.

In both options, public motor vehicles will continue to be able to use Byway 38, but the current traffic regulation order will need to be revised to allow cyclists to travel in both directions and to access the route from Bath Street.

At the moment, the area known as St. Peter's Dock between Bridge Street and the junction of Restricted Byway 36 and Foundry Road has no legal status as a highway, even though it is in regular public use. The county council is currently considering the best way to make part of this area a public highway.



To keep up to date with the latest information about the scheme, or to let us know your views visit www.suffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich Waterfront Traffic Management Option One

Option 1: Allowing Relatively Unrestricted Private Motor Vehicle Use

All of Restricted Byway 36 will be subject to a traffic regulation order that reinforces the prohibition of public motor vehicles (including parking), whilst allowing private motor vehicle access. Bays will be left for motor vehicles exercising a private right for loading and unloading, and parking for short periods.

Benefits: road signing will make it clear there is no general right of public motor vehicle access, whilst still allowing residents, businesses and visitors to access the road in motor vehicles.

But for those looking for minimal use by motor vehicles, this option is unlikely to make a significant difference to the current amount of motor traffic.

Public Rights of Way at Ipswich Waterfront

To keep up to date with the latest information about the scheme, or to let us know your views visit www.suffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich Waterfront Traffic Management Option Two

Option 2: Preventing Private Motor Vehicle Use on the Northern Quays

Northern quays (highlighted in red) - to be subject to a traffic regulation order that prohibits ALL motor vehicles, including those exercising private rights. Loading and unloading only will be permitted between certain hours, and parking bays will be provided for this purpose.

The more restrictive traffic regulation order can be implemented on a trial basis and could include variations to allow, for example, loading and unloading for planned events.

Southern quays (highlighted in blue) - would be subject to a traffic regulation order to reinforce the prohibition of public motor vehicles, including parking, whilst allowing the exercising of private rights for those with access.

Benefits: This option will significantly reduce motor traffic on the northern quays, and therefore possible conflict with pedestrians and cyclists, in the busiest part of the waterfront. But for those wanting to drive along the northern quays to homes and businesses and park on it, there will be very limited opportunity, and then only to load and unload.

Public Rights of Way at Ipswich Waterfront

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