

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

		Paper Number
1.	3.00 <b>Welcome, apologies and housekeeping</b>	
2.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>	LAF 12/16
3.	<b>Declaration of interest</b>	
4.	3.10 <b>Membership update</b>	
5.	3.15 <b>Ipswich Waterfront – Traffic Management Update</b>	LAF 12/17
6.	3.35 <b>Huddle</b> <b>Anna Mangini, Regional LAF Coordinator</b> <b>Chair Meeting</b>	LAF 12/18 Presentation Verbal – AM
7.	3.55 <b>Suffolk Road-Rail Partnership</b>	LAF 12/19
8.	4.05 <b>Local Nature Partnerships</b>	Verbal – MA
9.	4.15 <b>Babergh Green Infrastructure Study</b>	LAF 12/20
10.	4.20 <b>Paths for Communities</b>	LAF 12/21
11.	4.25 <b>Review of Definitive Map Prioritisation Policy</b>	LAF 12/22
12.	4.35 <b>SLAF Annual Report – August 2011-July 2012</b>	LAF 12/23
13.	4.45 <b>Correspondence/updates:</b> <b>NICE Consultation</b> <b>Broads LAF Invite</b>	LAF 12/24 Verbal – DF
14.	4.50 <b>Any Other Business</b>	
15.	4.55 <b>Public question time</b>	
16.	5.00 <b>Dates &amp; Venues of Future Meetings</b>	

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Minutes of meeting held in Walberswick Village Hall – 12 April 2012</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Jill Christley</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East meeting room, Ipswich waterfront.</b>

**1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping**

Present: David Barker (Vice-Chair) (DB), Barry Hall (BH), Margaret Hancock (MH), Ann Langley (AL), Gordon Merfield (GM), Monica Pipe (MP), Norman Southgate (NS), Cllr Jane Storey (JS), John Wayman (JW), Anthony Wright (AWr).

SCC Officers Present: Jackie Gillis (minutes), David Falk (DF), Annette Robinson (AR), Andrew Woodin (AW).

Apologies: Melinda Appleby, Bryan Collen, Alan Moore, Cllr Sandy Martin

Guest: Lynda Foster, Natural England

**2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed to be an accurate record.

Item 2 – SCC Countryside Sites (Dedication of Public Rights of Way). AW updated forum on the transfer of the countryside sites; the transfers are going through and the ROW have been dedicated with footpath status with the proviso of Sudbury to be upgraded to a cycle track. The lease agreements are still to be signed. All significant structures along the railway lines and water courses are currently in a good condition and safeguards have been put in place for the future concerning their upkeep.

AWr expressed that he was happy with the Sudbury Valley Walk.

Item 10 – Ipswich Waterfront update. AW advised that the working group is meeting in two weeks to discuss vehicular traffic along the northern quay and how to address the situation. The results will be reported back at next SLAF meeting. SCC would investigate getting the misleading sign near Pizza Express moved.

Item 11 – Paths for Communities. DF advised of potential schemes to present to NE; proposals are still being worked on. BH expressed concern at having to pay upfront and then claiming the money back. LF advised that NE were meeting 13 April 2012 to ascertain how the scheme will actually work. Best schemes will be those that are simple and community user friendly.

**Action: ALL** Any suggestions for Paths for Communities funding to be passed to DF.

**3. Declaration of interest**

AWr expressed interest in railway crossings because of National Cycle Routes.

**4. Lynda Foster, Lead Advisor (Essex and Suffolk), People and Partnerships, Natural England**

DB welcomed Linda Foster (LF) to the meeting.

LF introduced herself explaining her wider remit, which covers Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex and which includes LAFs.

LF gave a presentation on Coastal Access and provided handouts.

The first stretch of coastline at Weymouth was approved by the Secretary of State in January 2012. The next five stretches will be in Cumbria, Durham, Kent, Somerset and Norfolk. It is estimated that it will be another 4 – 5 years before Suffolk will be started.

The experience so far is that caravan/holiday sites have proved difficult but the way landowners are approached has proved important; for example, explaining the economic potential of walkers passing by and that dogs could be kept on leads.

LF advised that ROWIPs should include coastal access.

AW stated that coastal access was a key priority in Suffolk's ROWIP. BH questioned problems with estuary crossings. LF advised there was no legal obligation to go to the first bridge; a ferry could be the first crossing point, although such issues would be identified early on in the consultation process. AW noted the importance of continuing the trail up estuaries when there were towns like Ipswich at the start of them, when the trail might be their only means of accessing the coast on foot.

AWr commented that ferries are seasonal and believed a pedestrian crossing should be the first crossing point. LF reiterated there was no legal obligation.

GM questioned how cost effective the Coastal Path would be and whether many people would use the path in some locations. LF said it was about giving people the opportunity to use it. Currently ROW are lost to the sea, coastal access with roll back will ensure this no longer happens. Advised that documentation is available on the website ([www.naturalengland.org.uk/coastalaccess](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/coastalaccess)).

AW raised practicality of delivery and questioned whether it would be the same team working around the coastline. LF advised that there will be a separate team for each area, employed by NE but on secondment to the local authority. Norfolk already has a team in place, led by Sally Fishwick.

AW stated it would be beneficial for Suffolk to be aware of the lessons learnt by Norfolk.

LF also discussed the Paths for Communities project, a rural development grant scheme NE is managing on behalf of DEFRA. Projects need to be 'light touch' and mainly rural, enhancing access for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other users, simply delivered but innovative.

DB questioned where the funding was from.

JS and AWr asked whether projects could be used to link communities/parishes, such as missing short links in ROW. LF replied that it is a competitive grant scheme so all potential projects would go before a grant panel.

DB said it was a good opportunity for Suffolk but was concerned it had not been well advertised. It was posted on Huddle.

**ACTION:** LF to advise on lessons being learned in Norfolk.

## 5. Coastal Guidance for Land Managers – Total Environment

LAF 12/08 refers.

Guidance on Coastal Change Affective ROW was handed out and AW advised it was published on SCC website.

DF described the morning site visits to view a pilot project on the river wall at Orford and a new bridleway at Southwold. Trazar Astley-Reid, Estuary Officer at Suffolk Coasts and Heath AONB had explained how the community led project had come together. The footpath along the sea defence wall was due to reopen in June to allow the structure to bed down and grass to grow. The trial period was expected to go on until Spring 2013, so it was too early to know if it had been successful.

The new bridleway at Southwold had proved very popular with cyclists and created a circular cycling route. The project was completed at the end of 2011 and had come in under budget.

GM expressed concern for cyclist safety where they exited the bridleway on to the busy road, suggesting warning signs could be erected.

AWr also agreed signing was important but within reason.

DF said a small amount of remedial work was required and there was still the possibility of interpretation panels and benches being provided. Discussions are to be held with Southwold Town Council concerning further requirements, including signage.

## 6. National LAF Conference

LAF 12/09 refers.

BH attended conference in Newcastle and gave feedback.

LF confirmed her role is to co-ordinate with the Regional co-ordinator.

NE had advised that 75% of LAFs had signed up for Huddle but there were issues with the system; the system is used by DEFRA and modified for LAFs. DF, JC and MH had received training with JC provided with a password and login. It would be useful for all members to have access, even if only read-only.

**ACTION:** DF to feed back concerns to Rob Leek and copy to SLAF and LF.

**7. Babergh Green Infrastructure Framework**

LAF 12/10 refers.

There is a workshop on 25th April about managing green space, being led by Babergh District Council and facilitated by Peter Holborn and DF. AWR is attending on behalf of Sustrans. A representative from SLAF is invited to attend to represent access.

JS commented on the importance of the Chilton Woods development; Suffolk County Council owns most of the land and it will be part of the discussions at the workshop. JS agreed to attend the workshop as SLAF representative.

The group were advised that St Edmundsbury Borough Council had been through a similar process, the results of which were fed into the local development framework. £100k was secured for SCC to improve access around Bury St Edmunds as a result.

**ACTION:** DF to advise BDC of Cllr Storey's attendance and request full details of event.

**8. Independent Forestry Panel – visit to East Anglia**

LAF 12/11 refers.

AW fed back on the visit, stating the presentations were good and there were lots of championing for horse riders in the forest. Felt it was a useful session. It was the last visit of the forestry panel, who appeared to have taken on board access requirements.

MT commented horse riding through the Forest Estate was covered by a concordat.

DB thought the consultation was in light of the proposed sale of forests but the scope was much wider and including the remit of access.

BH asked when the panel would make its recommendations and was advised summer time.

**9. A11 Underpass**

LAF 12/12 refers

DB attended the meeting at Endeavour House chaired by Cllr Guy McGregor and reported to the forum. Construction is due to start next year.

The County Council are meeting the Highways Agency 19th April 2012 at Elveden.

**10. Correspondence/updates**

LAF 12/13 refers – for information only, no action.

LAF 12/14 refers – AW advised the county council had a meeting with Network Rail on 30th March 2012. The meeting was to seek suitable safe alternatives or improvements to rail crossings.

SCC need to balance public safety with maintaining public access and economics, whereas NR are heavily concerned with public safety and economics.

DB stated it was important for SLAF to be made aware of NR proposals so they could be commented upon accordingly.

AWr mentioned a couple of crossings with cycle routes involved and ramps need to be considered not just for cyclists but also disabled users. Queried whether parishes were aware of Network Rail's proposals

**ACTION:** AW to write to Network Rail requesting SLAF be consulted on each proposed closure.

LAF 12/15 refers – DF handed out leaflet on LNPs. A SLAF representative is invited to attend at Ickworth Park on 16th May 2012 to address public access and conservation in partnership. DF is attending. LF remarked Natural England would like to see local access forums represented.

**ACTION:** DF to send out invite to all SLAF members.

Alde & Ore Futures has ended and is now replace with the Alde & Ore Estuary Partnership. Richard Benyon MP will be attending a meeting on 17th May, 2.30 at Orford Town Hall.

**ACTION:** DF to send invite to all SLAF members.

DF handed out the Suffolk Walking Festival brochure. The festival runs from 19th May to 10th June 2012 consisting of 39 walks, including a 5 day challenge walk from Flatford to the Fens.

**11. Any Other Business**

Mary Norden has resigned from the group due to a change in employment and location. DB has written and thanked her for all her work.

AL raised issue of old ROW claims and tidying up the network.

**12. Public question time**

No members of the public were present.

**13. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings**

12 July 2012 - Ipswich (with morning site visit to Ipswich Docks) – Dance East

18 October 2012 - Beccles/Bungay – venue to be confirmed.

24 January 2013 - Bury St Edmunds – West Suffolk House.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Ipswich Waterfront – Traffic Management Update</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Steve Kerr</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

### Traffic Management

1. At its meeting on 12 January 2012 SLAF considered a report analysing the public consultation responses received in respect of one of two traffic management options being proposed at Ipswich Waterfront.
2. Since that meeting officers have attended the Waterfront Business Forum on 23 January 2012 and the Ipswich Docks Working Group (IDWG) has also met twice (8 February and 9 May).
3. At its meeting on 9 May the IDWG recommended the following:
  - i. to make a TRO for the length of Restricted Byway 36 between Old Foundry Lane and Coprolite Street, excluding the short section of quayside road opposite the OCH, that has the effect of reinforcing the prohibition of public motor vehicles (including parking), whilst allowing private motor vehicle access and parking for loading and unloading purposes (Option 1); and
  - ii. to provide a taxi rank outside Pizza Express on Key Street West; and
  - iii. to introduce a restricted parking zone with dedicated bays for loading and unloading along the northern quays, between the OCH and Coprolite Street; and
  - iv. to place on record the group's view that agencies/stakeholders should aspire in the future to seek to pedestrianise the northern quays, to reflect public demand; and
  - v. to make a TRO for the remainder of Restricted Byway 36, between Coprolite Street and Shiplaunch Road, that has the effect of reinforcing the prohibition of public motor vehicles (including parking), whilst allowing access for those exercising private rights; and
  - vi. to use the TRO consultation process to inform any action on the street furniture and potential improvements to the current National Cycle Route 51 contraflow cycling arrangement; and
  - vii. to upgrade the section of RB 36 opposite the OCH to a full vehicular highway and investigate removing the quayside parking in front of OCH,

subject to IBC discussing alternative parking around the OCH with leaseholders; and

- viii. to revise the existing Vehicle Movements TRO for RB 38/Byway 38 Ipswich (New Cut West) so as to allow bi-directional access for cyclists along RB 38. This will also require an exception for cyclists wishing to gain access to the quay from Bath Street; and
  - ix. the effectiveness of the above TROs and the parking enforcement strategy be monitored and reviewed during 2013.
4. Officers reported the above to the Cabinet Member for Roads and Transport on 31 May 2012. He agreed in principle with the Group's overall recommendations but requested that a further meeting be held with the whole Group to discuss its findings. That meeting has been scheduled for 9 July 2012 and a verbal update will subsequently be provided at SLAF's meeting on 12 July.

### Next Steps

5. Once the Cabinet Member has formally endorsed the IDWG's recommendations, the decision will need to be communicated to stakeholders, users and the general public. No decision has yet been taken on the most effective method in disseminating this information but it is likely a press release will be issued. It is anticipated officers will also attend future meetings of the Waterfront Business and Waterfront Residents' Forums to explain the rationale behind the Group's decisions.
6. A report will then be brought before the Borough Council's Executive Committee for authority to dedicate the stretch of RB 36 in front of the OCH as a vehicular highway. IBC are the owners of the OCH and the land fronting it.
7. Consultations will then begin on the proposed TROs. The draft orders will then be advertised and any objections or representations (both at consultation and order making stages) will need to be reported to the Rights of Way Committee and its views then presented to the Cabinet Member.
8. The street furniture (including existing or new bollards) will require authorisation, through via both the TRO process and s115B of the Highways Act 1980.

### Further considerations

9. The resurfacing work of the eastern quays is now well under way and the works for Orwell Quay have been completed in time for the arrival of the Olympic Torch on Thursday 5 July. The Neptune Marina gate has now been replaced with telescopic bollards. The next phase will address the section between the southern extent of Orwell Quay and Shiplaunch Road and a set of telescopic bollards will also be erected along this stretch. The bollards are



considered necessary as a means of physically preventing unauthorised vehicles from accessing the eastern quays.

10. The draft Harbour Revisions Order (HRO) has been objected to and is the subject of late representations from the new owners of the tent building, who are setting up a restaurant business from that site. SCC has negotiated a 1.5 metre wide pedestrian alternative with Anglo Norden that will allow access for wheelchair users. This follows an objection from Mr Turtill regarding a pinch point on the current permissive alternative which is promoted when the route is subject to a temporary closure, approximately every fortnight. The permissive route is at least 1m wide, except at the pinch point, where it is restricted to approximately 80 - 90cm.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Huddle</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

Below is correspondence with Natural England regarding the use of Huddle and expressing reservations SLAF had about the system.

From: Suffolk Local Access Forum  
 Sent: **16 April 2012** 18:28  
 To: Leek, Rob (NE)  
 Cc: Foster, Lynda (NE); Andrew Woodin; Jill Christley; Jackie Gillis (E&T)  
 Subject: Huddle and Suffolk LAF

Dear Rob

The Suffolk Local Access Forum (SLAF) met last week.

I was asked to forward you their comments regarding Huddle.

The key issue regarded access. It was stated that for the Huddle system to work most effectively it should be open to all LAF members. A good example where this could have been helpful, was the recent visit by the Independent Panel for Forestry to East Anglia. The SLAF member who attended the meeting represented all of SLAF but was unable to log-on to Huddle. If they had been able to, they could have read discussion threads from other LAFs on IPF visits elsewhere.

There will be many instances where LAF members attend meetings but will not be able to view Huddle beforehand, or indeed afterwards, when participating in a discussion could be beneficial to other LAFs.

Therefore, SLAFs view is that Huddle should be available to all LAF members, even if read-only.

Regards

David

David Falk  
 Countryside Access Development Manager Rights of Way and Access Team  
 Economy, Skills & Environment  
 Suffolk County Council

From: Leek, Rob (NE)  
 Sent: **17 April 2012** 11:48  
 To: Suffolk Local Access Forum  
 Cc: Foster, Lynda (NE); Andrew Woodin; Jill Christley; Jackie Gillis (E&T); Anna Mangini  
 Subject: RE: Huddle and Suffolk LAF

Hi David

Thanks for your feedback regarding Huddle for LAFs.

*The SLAF member who attended the meeting represented all of SLAF but was unable to log-on to Huddle.*

Sorry to hear that. There are currently 2 Suffolk LAF people on Huddle and the membership allowance is 3 so if they'd like to become a member, please ask them to contact Anna or myself and we can arrange it.

*Therefore, SLAFs view is that Huddle should be available to all LAF members, even if read-only.*

Natural England are currently discussing with Defra the possibility of increasing membership on Huddle and I'll keep everyone informed of any developments. The main issue with opening Huddle up to all LAF members is whether we've got the staff resource to appropriately manage a workspace with potentially up to 1000 members - there's about 150 members currently. We're aiming to have something agreed and in place this quarter and as I said will let everyone know as soon as I can. Any other questions or problems, please contact me.

Regards

Rob Leek  
Lead Adviser  
Access and Rights of Way Delivery  
Local Access Forums  
Natural England  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Subsequent to this exchange, Rob Leeks added

'As of yesterday we've had approval to extend the LAF Huddle membership allowance from 3 per LAF to 5 - more details about this will be posted on Huddle soon. Re read only access, this isn't currently possible with the present system as Huddle is designed specifically for users to actively interact and work with others on the workspace.'

The additional licenses are available until 1st October 2012, after which, any unclaimed licenses will be offered to LAFs who require more than 5.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Suffolk Road-Rail Partnership</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Steve Kerr</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

This update follows the officer report presented at the Forum's last meeting on 12 April 2012.

The next meeting of the Suffolk Road Rail Partnership Sub-Group (SRRPG) is scheduled for 18 July 2012.

At the beginning of May Network Rail (NR) consulted SCC with initial bridge design proposals for three ROW crossings in Suffolk. NR have recently supplied the following updates for these cases, amongst others.

**Gipsy Lane (FP 39 Needham Market) and Willow Walk (FPs 36 Creting St Mary/6 Needham Market)**

Willow Walk is currently temporarily closed due to insufficient sighting. Site constraints mean only a stepped footbridge could be provided at Gipsy Lane, so the feasibility of a step-free subway at Willow Walk is being investigated.

**Great Barton (Bridleway 12 Great Barton)**

A bridleway bridge is proposed. This has not yet been designed.

**Cattishall (FP 17 Great Barton)**

Originally, a stepped footbridge was proposed. However, an alternative route which would be suitable for cycles etc. has been identified through a disused under-railway bridge to the west. Negotiations with the relevant landowner have commenced and the site has been visited with SCC's East Area Officer.

**Broomhaughton (FP 34 Wherstead)**

A footbridge here would not be possible, due to overhead services. We are looking at the possibility of diverting to the nearby road bridge.

**Broomfield (FP 12 Barham)**

This crossing is near to an under-railway bridge that appears to serve as a reasonable alternative, also on Route 12.

**Island (FP 18 Bentley)**

Exploring possibility of diversion to nearby road over-railway bridge.

**Brantham High Bridge (FP 6 Brantham)**

The site has been investigated and a stepped footbridge is proposed. However, the crossing has recently been improved so this may be taken off our schedule in favour of one with a higher risk ranking.

**Weatherby, Newmarket (not on Definitive Map)**

We are still considering the options for this crossing. It is understood there is insufficient room on site for a ramped footbridge.

**Keeper's Lane (Bridleway 22 Trimley St Mary)**

A bridleway bridge is proposed, but this cannot be delivered until the private rights have been extinguished. Negotiations have commenced.

**Hawkes Lane (FP 31 Felixstowe)**

A stepped footbridge is proposed.

**Sea Wall (FP 13 Brantham)**

We are on-track to reopen by the end of July, following installation of new crossing furniture.

Officers will continue to liaise with Network Rail on all their priority crossings and will discuss the recent updates described above at the forthcoming meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

Further considerations

Appendix 1 below was included in the update at the Forum's last meeting. At the meeting SCC also intends to inquire why non high risk crossings (highlighted blue) are being put forward for closure/diversion and why no risk mitigation measures (such as those being introduced for the Brantham Sea Wall crossing but also, for instance, installing MWLs ) appear to have been investigated.

END

## APPENDIX 1

## Proposed Level Crossing Closures

High risk/non high risk/LXMP	Crossing Name	ELR (Engineers Line Reference)	Mileage/Chain	Footpath number (for council)	ORCC area (Operations Risk Control Co-ordinator)	TOP 55 crossing	County	Action	If closure-priority number
HRX	Sea Wall FPS	LTN1	60M 46CH	FP13 Brantham	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Closure	1
HRX	Cow Creek FP	LTN1	85M 24CH	FP18 Bacton	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure via diversion	2
NHRX	Bunkers Hill FPS	ESK	97m 58ch	FP1 Bramfield	GE-Outer		Suffolk	Closure	3
NHRX	Broomfield FPS	LTN1	74m 14ch	FP12 Barham	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Closure by Diversion / Bridge	4
NHRX	Island FPS	LTN1	64m 4ch	FP18 Bentley	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Closure	5
HRX	Willow Walk FPS	LTN1	77m 54ch	FP36 Creeting St Mary/FP6 Needham Market	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Closure via diversion	6
HRX	Trimley FPS	FEL	81m 57ch	FP29/30 Trimley St Martin	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure	7
HRX	Gun Lane FPG	FEL	82m 01ch	RB 28 Trmley St Martin	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure	8
HRX	Grove Farm FPS	CCH	33m 71ch	FP No 11 Thurston	WA-Central		Suffolk	investigate closure with Suffolk CC. There is a simple diversion either via Barrell's crossing to the west, or via construction of a new right of way to the south of the railway to the Grove Farm over bridge.	9
NHRX	Kelsale Red House Farm FP	ESK	92m 54ch	FP26/27 Kelsale	GE-Outer		Suffolk	Closure	10
NHRX	Claydon CCTV	LTN1	73M 47CH	N/A	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure	11
NHRX	Greens Farm FPS	LTN1	90m 15ch	FP12 Thrandeston (through underpass?)	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure	12
NHRX	Lords No.29 FPS	CCH	37m 58ch	FP No 9 Elmswell	WA-Central		Suffolk	Closure via diversion	13
HRX	Hawkes Lane FP	FEL	83m 33m	FP 31 Felixstowe	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure via diversion	14

HRX	Stowmarket Station MCB	LTN1	80M 54CH	N/A	GE-Central		Suffolk	Discuss with Suffolk CC how the road traffic will alter as a result of the new relief road, and what potential there is for closure	16
HRX	Thorpe Grove FPS	FEL	81M 31CH	FP1 Trimley St Martin	GE-Central		Suffolk	Investigate closure as the preferred option via diversion due to close proximity to other level crossings.	17
NHRX	Brandon MCB	ETN	86m 26ch	N/A	WA-Outer		Suffolk	Forest heath District Council has proposed closure and a bypass (JJ 13/2/12)	18
NHRX	Buxton Wood FPS	LTN1	63m 24ch	FP22 Bentley	GE-Central		Suffolk	Closure via diversion	20
NHRX	Grimstone Lane FPW	FEL	81M 48CH	FP33 Trimley St Mary	GE-Central		Suffolk	Close with diversion via Thorpe Lane AHB.	21
NHRX	Barhams FP	ESK	96M 70CH	FP9 Bramfield	GE-Outer		Suffolk	Closure via negotiation	24
NHRX	Fordly Hall FPS	ESK	93m 49ch	FP22 Middleton	GE-Outer		Suffolk	Closure	25

## APPENDIX 2

## Proposed Level Crossing closures and installation of bridge

High risk/non high risk/LXMP	Crossing Name	ELR Engineers Line Reference)	Mileage/Chain	Footpath number (for council)	ORCC area (Operations Risk Control Co-ordinator)	TOP 55 crossing	County	Action	Funding approved
NHRX	Brantham High Bridge FPS	LTN1	61m 74ch	FP6 Brantham	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Bridge or subway proposed (JJ 8/2/12)	Yes
NHRX	Broomfield FPS	LTN1	74m 14ch	FP12 Barham	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Closure by Diversion / Bridge	Yes
NHRX	Broomhaughton FPS	LTN1	65m 69ch	FP34 Wherstead	GE-Central	YES	Suffolk	Bridge or diversion (JJ 8/2/12) 27/2/12 - footbridge not possible due to overhead power lines. MWL or diversion now proposed.	Yes
HRX	Cattishall FPW	CCH	30M 49CH	U6318	WA-Central		Suffolk	Bridge with steps and cycle gutters proposed (JJ 8/2/12)	Yes
HRX	Gipsy Lane FP	LTN1	77m 64ch	FP39 Creeting St Mary	GE-Central	Yes	Suffolk	Bridge or underpass	Yes
HRX	Great Barton FPW	CCH	31m 76ch	RB19 Gt Barton	WA-Central		Suffolk	Bridge with ramps proposed as a bridleway crossing (JJ 8/2/12)	Yes
HRX	Keepers Lane FP	FEL	82m 32ch	BR 22 Trimley St Mary	GE-Central		Suffolk	Bridge with ramps proposed	Yes
HRX	Grove Farm FPS	CCH	33m 71ch	FP11 Thurston	WA-Central		Suffolk	investigate closure with Suffolk CC. There is a simple diversion either via Barrell's crossing to the west, or via construction of a new right of way to the south of the railway to the Grove Farm over bridge.	No



<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Babergh Green Infrastructure Study</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

A workshop on Green Infrastructure in Babergh was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April and attended by parish, town and county council members and officers, Dedham Vale AONB, Environment Agency and Sustrans. SLAF was represented by Cllr Jane Storey.

The meeting focused on identifying existing green infrastructure and highlighting desired green infrastructure for improved connections, recreational use, health and quality of life benefits and biodiversity.

Babergh plan to develop a comprehensive green strategy in preparation for approval of their Core Strategy in 2014. At that time, Babergh is expecting to set the level of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

CIL is a new levy that local authorities can decide to charge on new developments in their area. In some circumstances it will be used in place of Section 106 developer contributions to fund improvements to, or provide new, local infrastructure. This includes public rights of way.

This meeting focused on green infrastructure in and around Sudbury, Chilton and Great Cornard. In groups, existing green space was mapped with areas of need highlighted. These included:

- The need to preserve and enhance access along a green corridor beside the River Stour
- A green belt around the town to complement the development of the Gainsborough Trail
- The creation of new green space to the north east to accommodate need from the planned development at Chilton
- Improved parks and allotment provision within the town

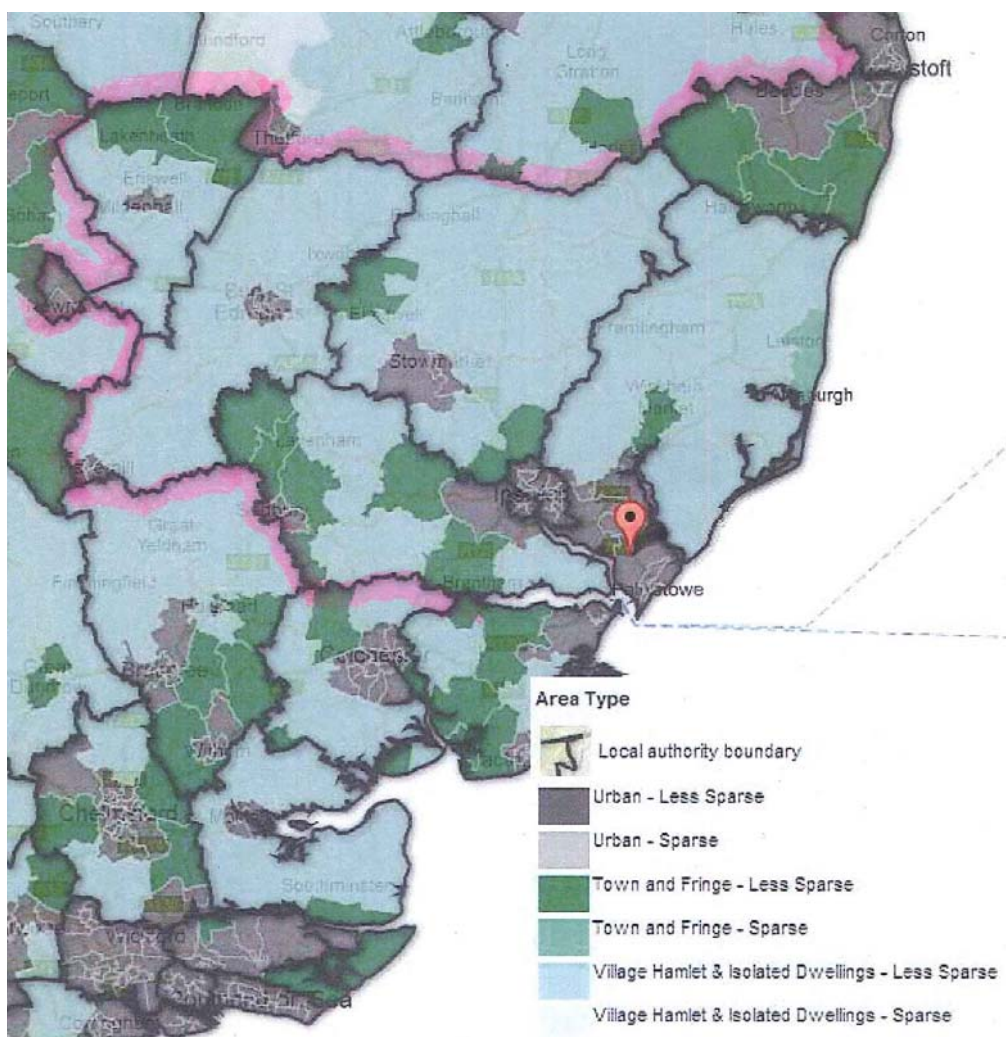
Babergh are currently pulling together all of the points raised to map the GIS need in the area.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Paths for Communities</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

[Paths for Communities](#) (P4C) is a funding scheme managed by Natural England (NE) under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

The scheme has been set up to develop and enhance the public rights of way (PROW) network to deliver benefits to rural areas. The scheme is restricted to rural areas as defined by the Office for National Statistics. Within Suffolk those areas eligible for funding are depicted on the following map in blue and green.



The objective of the funding is to encourage and support local communities to work with land owners to improve the PRow network. The scheme will operate over the 2 year period from May 2012 to March 2014, with a total fund of £2m.

Projects **must** include some element of new PRow creation. In most cases this will include an element of new bridleway creation; either creating a bridleway where there was none previously, or upgrading a footpath to bridleway status to broaden its use. Projects should also include promotion to support local businesses and services.

All schemes needs to be genuinely community driven. The applicant must be able to handle cash flow, have a bank account and a written constitution.

Applications will be received on a rolling programme until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013, with a Grants Panel meeting monthly.

Grants will be awarded between £5,000 and £150,000 with all payments made retrospectively. Eligible expenditure will be limited to 75% of actual costs. Public funding cannot be used as match funding.

In some circumstances the community group could partner their local authority and the local authority could play the role of applicant to bank roll the process.

The grant process requires potential applicants to complete an Expression of Interest Form, which will be looked at by a NE Local Grants Officer who will then assist with a full application. Successful applications will be notified in 6 weeks of submitting their application.

To date Natural England has received much interest in the scheme but no applications.

Further details about the scheme are available through the [P4C Applicants Handbook](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) factsheet.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Review of Definitive Map Prioritisation Policy</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>Andrew Woodin</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

### Background

Recently, two areas of concern have been expressed in connection with the way the backlog of definitive map work is processed.

The first relates to an application by Mr JD Andrews of the Ramblers to judicially review the county council's non-determination of two of his applications to modify the map and statement and the county council's policy on processing applications which might result in byway status. The Secretary of State subsequently expressed some concerns on the way the county council prioritises the backlog of formal applications, including those which might result in byway status.

The second relates to concern expressed by some members of the Rights of Way Committee at its meeting in March 2012 on whether the Committee should continue to accept informal applications for claimed rights of way.

These concerns were duly considered by the county council's Constitution Working Party in April.

To put the two concerns in context, the definitive map backlog of cases which may require some form of order making is as follows:

467 cases, comprising:

- a) 52 formal applications to modify the definitive map based on evidence it is in error,
- b) 102 informal applications to modify the definitive map,
- c) 53 Public path and other orders e.g. traffic regulation orders or licensed path agreements. This category includes creation and diversion orders to achieve improvements to the existing network in line with objectives set out in the county council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2006-16, and also some orders to resolve problems with existing routes,
- d) 260 cases where the definitive map is believed to require modification. Most of these are probable or potential rights of way to be added to the Ipswich definitive map.

Note – the backlog does not include definitive map anomalies.

Currently, officers periodically review the backlog and new cases and, unless there is a pressing reason to process a case, prioritise them according to improvement plan priorities (an approach the Secretary of State has broadly supported). The county council has a policy for dealing with claims which might result in byway status, which acknowledges their contentious nature and aligns work on them with the council's wider rights of way improvement plan priorities

### Addressing the Concerns

In April, the Constitution Working Party (CWP) considered how the county council processes elements of its definitive map work. The CWP acknowledged the complexities and constraints involved in dealing with the different types of order making and supported the following approach to reviewing these processes:

- a) Officers would review how the backlog of formal and informal claims and other definitive map work is prioritised, to reflect both the concerns of the Rights of Way Committee, and comments made by the Secretary of State in recent correspondence. Officers would ensure as far as possible that only informal claims where the outcome would be in the clear public interest are taken forward, and have regard to the transparency of the process. In the case of formal applications, including those which might give rise to byway status, the concerns of the Secretary of State will be addressed.
- b) The review would also address the timescales within which the county council would deal with both formal and informal claims and would consider resourcing implications arising from any changes to policy or procedures.

### The Review

Officers have started work on the review. Broadly speaking, the review will consider:

1. The extent to which there should be changes to the process for dealing with formal applications and all other order making work, including informal applications.
2. Whether there should be a limit on the length of time a formal application should remain undetermined,
3. How other councils regionally deal with their definitive map backlogs,
4. A new draft process – which will be tested using existing cases,
5. A risk analysis of the draft process (include resource implications),

before reporting back to the CWP later in the year.

From responses so far to the regional benchmarking exercise, criteria for prioritising the backlog tend to range from the purely chronological (i.e. when an application was submitted) or geographical (i.e. parish by parish), to a selection of factors, similar to the approach SCC has been taking:

- Threats to an existing route – whether on definitive map or not,
- Level of public interest and support,

- Financial - positive eg enables budget savings elsewhere or external funding is available,
- negative eg high cost of processing an order (HA only),
- Network improvements ie ROWIP,
- Safety,
- Strength of evidence (DMMOs),
- Age of application,
- Directions from the Secretary of State,
- Political expediency,
- National priorities,
- External time constraints.

The last 4 points may override the other factors, and discretion would still be required to process cases where one factor overwhelmed the others.

The Local Access Forum is welcome to comment on where it sees the priority for definitive map work.

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>SLAF Annual Report – August 2011-July 2012</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

Below is the draft of the SLAF Annual Report covering the period August 2011 – July 2012, inclusive.

The report covers the key activities of the past year. SLAF members are invited for the following:

1. Comment on the report's content.
2. Suggest the key highlights and issues during this period.
3. Suggest areas SLAF should focus on in looking ahead.

Regarding these areas, SCC officers suggest SLAF could consider highlights and priorities as being:

- Contesting the Highways Agency's proposal to reduce the height of the NMU underpass in the A11 dualling scheme.
- Challenging Network Rail's proposals to close public rights of way across railways.
- Influencing the outcome of the Independent Panel on Forestry's review of the future direction of forestry and woodland policy in England.
- Influencing access in Babergh District Council's Green Infrastructure Framework.
- Ensuring representation on the proposed Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Partnership.
- The value for money provided by investment in public rights of way, both maintaining the network and small scale improvements, where modest expenditure can reap considerable benefits to the public.

## **SLAF Annual Report – August 2011-July 2012**

### **Introduction**

1. As required by the Local Access Forum (England) Regulations 2002 I have pleasure in submitting the ninth Annual Report of the Suffolk Local Access Forum to Suffolk County Council as the highway authority.
2. The Suffolk Local Access Forum (SLAF) was formed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) in 2003. SLAF acts as an independent body to advise the Council on matters relating to rights of way and access to the countryside. It is also a statutory consultee for Natural England on mapping of open country and plans and policies produced by a wide range of organisations. The forum is administered by Rights of Way and Access, Suffolk County Council.

3. The forum is made up from those interested in access to the countryside and rights of way including users, landowners, land managers, members of community organisations and those with conservation interests.
4. Full membership for 2011/12 is listed in Appendix B.

#### **Our Work**

5. The forum met four times during the past year at quarterly intervals to discuss a range of issues that have arisen from consultations, presentations, papers, reports and site visits from amongst others, Suffolk County Council, DEFRA, Natural England, Highways Agency, Network Rail, the Independent Panel on Forestry, Babergh District Council, Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership and the Forestry Commission.
6. Members of the public are able to attend meetings and have the opportunity to raise items or comment on issues discussed or related to countryside access.
7. Local parish councils are alerted to SLAF meetings in their area and invited to attend.
8. Members of SLAF attend regional meetings and conferences and neighbouring local access forums to improve access in Suffolk.

#### **SLAF Cost**

9. SLAF have their own identity to ensure they are clearly recognisable as an independent body with letter heading with PO address box, an independent email address and a dedicated website on the One Suffolk platform - <http://publicrightsofway.onesuffolk.net/suffolk-local-access-forum>.
10. The cost for servicing SLAF for 2010-2011 was approximately £2000.00. This includes secretariat, room hire and member travel expenses. To place this in context, the overall budget for Countryside Access is £1.2M.

#### **Investment in Rights of Way**

11. We congratulate officers on delivering improvements to public rights of way and countryside access in partnership with Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB through the BALANCE Project. BALANCE is a £500k (approx) European match-funded project to manage visitors in environmentally sensitive landscapes. Rights of Way and Access have £100k (approx) of funding to deliver access improvements within the AONB. The key BALANCE access project is improving the Sailors Path (a long distance footpath between Aldeburgh and Snape) for accessibility, including wheelchair users.
12. The forum congratulates officers in delivering significant improvements to access in partnership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council Growth Area Funding. This funding has delivered improvements along the Lark Valley Path, north of Bury St Edmunds, for safe, off-road cycling.
13. The forum congratulates officers in delivering Natural England Community Funding to improve access and awareness of open access sites.
14. The forum welcome investment in public rights of way through Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3), although are concerned this concentrates resources in urban locations.
15. The forum are concerned that within a predominantly rural county access improvements are difficult to fund in rural locations. The forum suggests that relatively low cost solutions can be delivered with rights of way improvement schemes providing a positive impact on people's quality of life, health benefits and the rural economy.
16. The forum are encouraged that officers are proactively working with community groups to develop ideas to bid to NE's new fund, Paths for Communities. This fund will enable the creation of new rights of way and promotion of countryside access.

#### **Rights of Way Severance**

17. SLAF are pleased that the needs of non-motorised users were incorporated into designs for the dualling of the A11.
18. However, the forum were very concerned about the intention to reduce the height of the brideway underpass near Elveden Monument, adversely affecting its use for horse riders.



19. The forum pressed the Highways Agency on this and is delighted that they have altered the underpass design to accommodate horse riders, without the need to dismount.
20. The forum are very concerned with Network Rail's (NR) approach to rights of way level crossings and the lack of coordination by NR with a policy of closing crossings as a first option. SLAF question this approach when alternative, more suitable options may be available to improve public access.
21. SLAF received a presentation from NR on this policy and pressed the case for improving public access, not losing access.
22. SLAF supports the work of officers, especially with the Suffolk Road Rail Partnership, to improve access at a number of key crossing points.
23. The forum continue to support SCC and Sustrans' efforts in securing and improving access at the location of the Ipswich Chord.

#### **Future of the Public Forest Estate**

24. The forum remain concerned about the future of the Public Forest Estate (PFE) and the opportunity it offers the public for improved quality of life, health benefits, learning and contribution to the local rural economy.
25. The role of the Independent Panel on Forestry (IPF) is crucial to future decisions about the PFE and SLAF were keen to be invited to a visit by the Panel to East Anglia. This took place on 28 March 2012 and SLAF were able to make representation to the panel.
26. The forum worked closely with Norfolk LAF on this issue, attending a NLAF meeting to discuss a joint approach.
27. SLAF look forward to receiving IPF's full report in summer 2012 and trust they have taken on board the comments made by SLAF and other user groups supporting future public access to the PFE.

#### **Babergh's Green Infrastructure Framework**

28. The forum welcome the opportunity to participate in developing Babergh's Green Infrastructure Framework to preserve and enhance countryside access in the district and play a role in helping the district decide on the level of its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

#### **Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Partnership**

29. The forum are encouraged to be involved at a very early stage in the consultation process to develop a Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Partnership (LNP). This ensures countryside access is a key issue for the new partnership. The LNP is proposed to replace the Norfolk and Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership, which did not focus on public access.

#### **Open Access**

30. SLAF congratulates the Council in obtaining funds and delivering improvements with NE's Community Funding to develop signage of open access sites across the county. This project involved working with partners including National Trust, RSPB and volunteers to raise awareness of sites.
31. SLAF support the retention of extended restrictions on 5 OA sites beyond the standard March-July period to keep dogs on short fixed leads in the month of August to protect ground nesting birds.

#### **Other Issues**

32. Communication between LAFs: The forum were concerned with the loss of the England Access Forum as a national voice for LAF's and expressed these concerns to NE. SLAF welcome the continued role of a Regional LAF Coordinator but have expressed their reservations to NE about replacing the EAF with 'Huddle', an on-line resource. Access to Huddle is restricted to 5 members per forum and SLAF are concerned this places an unnecessary, additional burden onto those members whilst limiting the scope for other members to be aware or involved with other LAFs on key issues.

33. Coastal Path: The forum are interested in the progress of a Coastal Path nationally and very interested in the lessons being learned developing coastal access in Norfolk. SLAF remain concerned that a key feature of Suffolk's coastline, its estuaries, will prevent a continual coastal route and SLAF will press NE to enable the Coastal Path to continue along estuaries to the first permanent crossing point.
34. Ipswich Waterfront: SLAF support the work of officers in securing public access along Ipswich Waterfront.
35. Countryside sites: The forum are pleased with the progress of dedicating rights of way on countryside sites previously managed by SCC.

### Consultations

36. SLAF has been consulted on:
  - a) SCC's Budget Consultation.
  - b) Future of the Public Forest Estate (DEFRA/Independent Panel on Forestry).
  - c) Local Nature Partnerships (Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership).
  - d) Review of Open Access Restrictions (Natural England).
  - e) Draft National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government).
  - f) Consultation on Town and Village Green Registration (DEFRA).
  - g) National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) developing guidance on walking and cycling (Department of Health).

### Meetings

37. SLAF members have attended meetings on:
  - a) 20 July 2011 – Norfolk LAF, attended by Bryan Collen (Chair) to discuss a shared approach to the visit to East Anglia of the Independent Panel on Forestry.
  - b) 22 November 2011 – East of England LAF Chair and Vice Chair meeting, Cambridge, attended by Bryan Collen (Chair) to raise issues that SLAF have focused on and to develop closer working relationships with other LAFs.
  - c) 20 January 2012 – A11 Dualling, attended by David Barker (Vice Chair) to press case for design of new underpass to accommodate horse riders.
  - d) 28 February 2012 – National LAF Conference, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, attended by Barry Hall.
  - e) 28 March 2012 – Independent Panel on Forestry visit to East Anglia. SLAF were represented by Alan Moore. The visit took place at Green Light Trusts offices in Lawshall.
  - f) 25 April 2012 – Babergh Green Infrastructure Framework, Sudbury, attended by Cllr Jane Storey.
  - g) 28 May 2012 – Local Nature Partnerships, NT Ickworth House, Suffolk, attended by Melinda Appleby.

### Presentations

38. SLAF received presentations on:
  - a) 20 October 2011 – Local Nature Partnerships, Gen Broad, Biodiversity Officer for Suffolk.
  - b) 12 January 2012 – Rights of Way Crossings on Railway Lines, Steve Day, Liability Negotiations Advisor, Network Rail.
  - c) 12 January 2012 – Future of Public Forest Estate, Mike Taylor, Forestry Commission.
  - d) 12 April 2012 – Natural England presentation on Coastal Access, Huddle and Paths for Communities provided by Lynda Foster, Natural England.

- e) 12 July 2012 – Natural England presentation on use of Huddle on-line forum, provided by Anna Mangini, Regional LAF Coordinator.

**Site Visits**

- 39. 12 July 2012 – Orford Quay, to see pilot scheme on sea wall to address erosion on a sea defence which carries a public footpath.
- 40. 12 July 2012 – Southwold, to see development of new bridleway adjacent to a river wall to provide a route for cyclists travelling between Southwold and Walberswick.
- 41. 12 July 2012 – Ipswich Waterfront to see issues regarding public access along quayside.

**Training**

- 42. 26 January 2012 – Huddle. Margaret Hancock attended training on the use of Huddle, an on-line resource for LAF members provided by DEFRA and administered by NE. Training was provided by the Regional LAF Coordinator at Constantine House, Ipswich.

**Membership of SLAF**

- 43. During the past year there have been four meetings, all of which were very well attended.
- 44. DEFRA guidance advises LAF membership can be between 10 and 22 members.
- 45. At the start of this year SLAF membership was 16 members. One member resigned during the year and 7 members renewed. Membership currently stands at 15 members.

**Looking Ahead**

- 46. The practice of making site visits to complement meeting agendas, meet key partners and see issues relating to access in situ, will continue.
- 47. Priorities for SLAF over the coming year include;

Bryan Collen  
Chair of Suffolk Local Access Forum

David Barker  
Vice Chair of Suffolk Local Access Forum

END

<b>Suffolk Local Access Forum</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>NICE Consultation</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>12 July 2012</b>
<b>Author/Contact:</b>	<b>David Falk</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Dance East, Ipswich</b>

The Department of Health asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce guidance on walking and cycling. The consultation took place between 24 April and 19 June 2012.

SCC responded on how the draft report focused on modal shifts from car journeys to walking or cycling but could equally have emphasised the importance of developing leisure routes for walking or cycling, linking points of interest or tourism destinations along safe, off-road and well developed and connected networks.

The report made no reference to public rights of way, although they can often be the most obvious means of enabling safe off-road linkages in rural and peri-urban environments.

There was a focus in the report on travel habits in urban environments, ignoring predominantly rural counties, such as Suffolk.

In addition to this consultation, Public Health staff have recently been integrated with Suffolk County Council in Endeavour House. Rights of Way and Access have already met with staff to discuss the relevance of countryside access for the health agenda.

It is suggested that SLAF may want to invite a representative from Public Health to a future meeting to discuss the role of walking and cycling to the health agenda.

END