

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Agenda
Meeting Date:	20th April 2017
Author/Contact:	Sophie Morling
Venue: Orwell Room, Kesgrave War Memorial Community Centre, Twelve Acre Approach, Kesgrave, IP5 1JF	

			Paper Number
1.	14.00	Welcome, apologies and housekeeping	
2.		Minutes of previous meeting	LAF 17/07
3.		Declarations of interest	
4.		Coastal Access Update (paper)	LAF 17/08
5.		Network Rail Level Crossings (paper)	LAF 17/09
6.		Planning and Development	Verbal
7.		Working Groups	Verbal
8.		National Conference 21st June 2017	Verbal
9.		Any Other Business	
10..		Public Question Time	
11.	16:00	Next meeting – 20 July 2017, Venue: Leiston Community Centre	

Suffolk Local Access Forum	
Title:	Minutes of meeting held at Brightspace on 26 January 2017
Meeting Date:	20 April 2017
Author/Contact:	Sophie Morling
Venue:	Kesgrave War Memorial Community Centre

1. Welcome, apologies and housekeeping

Present: Barry Hall (BH) (Chair), David Barker (Vice Chair) (DB), Margaret Hancock (MH), Roland Wilson (RW), Monica Pipe (MP), Anthony Wright (AWR), Cllr Jane Storey (JS)

SCC Officers Present: Sophie Morling (SM) (minutes), Claire Parker (CP), Andrew Woodin (AW)

Member of the Public: Gordon Crosby (GC)

Apologies: Diana Kearsley (DK) John Wayman (JW), Gordon Merfield (GM), Jane Hatton (JH), Steve Kerr (SK)

2. Minutes of previous meeting (LAF16/19)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2016 were reviewed and confirmed to be an accurate record.

It was noted Network Rail acknowledged SLAF's stage two response letter.

3. Declaration of interest – JS advised that next Tuesday 31 January 2017 is Suffolk County Council's Cabinet meeting.

4. Sizewell C

BH advised that he had produced a response on behalf of SLAF with regards to Sizewell C after a successful working group meeting with EDF Energy on 12 January 2017. There are concerns with 1) Eastbridge Road and the closure and the new proposed road 2) Retaining bridle and cycle ways.

AW advised that Suffolk County Council's response was being presented at Cabinet later this month. Similar comments were being put forward, including serious impact on Bridle 19 and Lovers Lane, which crossings are going to be controlled and not controlled and making any new heathland open access. AW also mentioned that a lot of consideration has been given to the coastal path.

RW asked at what stage are proposals for the Sizewell C legacy agreed and when will this be. AW advised this will be at stage 3 and an important part of the legacy would be to include a cycle link to Aldeburgh.

At the meeting of the working group earlier in the month, EDF offered a site visit for SLAF, to visit Aldhurst Farm. Members welcomed this offer.

SLAF members agreed they were all happy with BH's response.

ACTION: SM to send letter, once BH and AW added some points to BH's draft, and accept EDF's site visit offer, to be arranged for the April or July meeting.

5. Network Rail Level Crossings Paper Gypsy Lane

AW presented an update paper covering main crossings of interest, and the progress on the regional Transport and Works Act order.

A further meeting was held on 3 November 2016 with the design panel. GC spoke as a member of the public and explained Network Rail will have to submit a planning permission for the path. GC also mentioned that 50 people attended the exhibition held by NE in November. GC is unable to track down the 2 people who complained about the Creting St Mary bus route, but Creting Parish Council advised that 2 new bus stops should be created.

There were still concerns over the tunnel to be used and would a floor with a void underneath allow water to flow through and thus reduce the level or frequency of flooding. Network Rail advised that a model that was done of both with and without the void was very small in difference, even though no one outside of Network Rail has seen this model and the outcome. Flooding is estimated at 5-6 times a year and lot of detail is still to be worked through, including the tunnel approach ramps.

AWR asked if it will remain a footpath or be upgrade to a bridle path. AW responded by saying that Suffolk County Council continue to work with Network Rail to upgrade the diverted footpath to facilitate cycling. Network Rail has expressed its willingness to meet the cost of the upgrade, as mitigation for the substandard tunnel.

AW also advised that Suffolk County Council expects Network Rail to pay a commuted sum for clearing the tunnel when it floods. BH asked if this money would be ring-fenced? AW said it should be.

AWR asked if the new path would be a cycle track, would it be restricted to any equestrian use and if so land owners need 1.97 metres, minimum of 2.1 metres, cycles need 2.3 metres and horses 3.4 metres. And mounting blocks would need to be used each side and have dismount signs for both cycles and equestrian users. AW responded saying cycling could be facilitated by either the landowners to agreeing to convert the footpath to a cycle track or by making an order to create a bridleway and then prohibiting equestrians, as the route was not suitable for them. This would need talking through with equestrian groups.

Halesworth Station – Meeting with local MP had an desired effect and gates and safety warnings have been installed by Network Rail.

Felixstowe Branch Line – This is going much quicker than others. Trinity College's agent's Bidwells still have issues with the bridge that Network Rail want to build. AW advises that

Suffolk County Council are trying not to be involved with this, as we don't want to detract from what we are trying to achieve. Steve Kerr had a meeting with Bidwells and Network Rail on site to discuss this further, with Bidwells wanting to replace the bridge with a canal type bridge to take agricultural traffic. Discussion took place regarding agricultural traffic and pedestrians.

AW advised that SK went to the public consultation that was attended by 185 people, with different views on the safety and underpass and diversion via Keepers Lane.

AW mentioned that Network Rail have rejected Bidwells offer of a canal bridge and will be presenting the proposal to Secretary of State in March 2017. AW noted concerns that Network Rail want to have temporary closures of a year to construct the line with AW finding this unacceptable and will keep pushing that only sections will be closed at a time.

General/Countywide – 30 crossings in total and SCC submitted its stage 2 response before Christmas. About half of the crossings have been rejected for a number of reasons, including the length of diversions. AW said that SCC will expect Network Rail to pay a commuted sum to maintain the new highway assets and regional work is taking place with Hertfordshire, Cambridge and Essex for a common approach.

AW went to a meeting in Bury St Edmunds with regards to Cattishall, where developers have been in negotiations for 2 years with Network Rail for a stepped bridge, which the developers are paying for the footbridge, but all this is being held up by protracted negotiations. SCC have made it clear they expect the level crossing should remain open until new bridge is opened.

Network Rail draft audit will be finished in March and published in Summer 2017.

GC asked AW about Stacpool and concerns that pedestrians will now have to walk along the B1113 and through a field nature reserve, with restoration of west side of the railway. AW advised he would look into this.

RW gave an update on what the Ramblers Association have been doing. They have arranged a meeting with NR CEO Mark Carne. The RA is also in touch with Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity Lord Gardiner and a 7 page response to the TWAO has been sent to NR from Anglia region Ramblers. The RA has written to the ORR letter stressing risk to pedestrians on local roads and NR going against sustainable development policies. A petition has been set up by the Ramblers and RW asked everyone to sign it, hoping that if enough people sign it, it could be discussed in Parliament. RW mentioned Suffolk Ramblers had written to all MP's in Suffolk and the MP for Waveney was sympathetic.

ACTION: CP to tweet link to petition.

6. Coastal Access Update

AW summarised the meeting that took place on 10 January 2017. Natural England continue to walk the route and talk to landowners and land managers. NE will start work on the remaining Suffolk stretches later this year and are working with SCC on a new collaborative agreement this year to pay for SCC officer time. AW noted Natural England has announced it is reducing its contribution for trails from 75% to possibly under 50%,

talks are still on-going. AW has written to the Access Director of Natural England with his concerns.

AW gave an update on promoting the England Coast Path which need some political involvement and is meeting with Cllr James Finch next month to discuss a regional approach to maintaining and promoting the trail.

7. Planning and Development

AW and BH said that they had discussed planning and wondered what the thoughts of SLAF thought and point options forward.

A discussion took place around this with AW mentioned about Jackie Gillis circulating the consultations for larger developments to either to everyone or just the Working Group. BH mentioned about getting another planner to come and meet everyone and discuss their area, possibly Coastal area. Members discussed what size of development they would be interested in, and AW noted only limited support would be available from SCC, but consideration could be given to training members.

After a stimulating discussion on the benefits of improving green access around new developments for health, wellbeing and sustainability, the following was resolved:

ACTION:

- Planning applications of over 500 dwellings would be copied to the planning working group, with other members ccd. SCC to consider training for all SLAF members
- Jackie Gillis to pull out all current developments of 500 and over (Kennett, Woolpit, Martlesham, Ipswich Garden Fringe)
- Invite a planner from east Suffolk to the April or July meeting.

8. Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

AW noted the formal former consultation this winter and to log on to website for more information. Whether SLAF supports this or not. BH supports this in principal.

ACTION: AW and BH to liaise regarding this

9. Recruitment

The meeting discussed recruiting new members, following the stepping down of a number of members over the last two or three years. Interests not covered as well as they might be potentially include health, education, the natural environment and conservation, land management, disabilities, and black and ethnic minorities.

DB advised that whoever is recruited need to attend meetings on a regular basis. AW said it was also important new members support the overall principle of improving access to the countryside. There was agreement that the forum should not expand beyond 16 people and would welcome another 4-5 people.

The following was agreed:

- SCC as appointing authority is responsible for recruiting and intends to do so later in the year,

- The opportunity will be given to members to step down,
- Members should consider how they can feedback work of SLAF to interest groups they are involved with,

Actions: 1. Members to return their interest forms to SM,
2. SCC to commence the recruitment process later in the year.

10. Any Other Business – AW briefed the meeting that Highways England is reviewing pedestrian access over Orwell Bridge, due to its use as a suicide location. SCC is resisting this closure and MH noted she uses the bridge to cycle across the Orwell.

11. Public Question Time – No questions from the public.

12. Dates of Next Meeting – 20 April 2017 Venue – Kesgrave, then 20th July 2017 venue tbc.

END

Suffolk Local Access Forum
Title: The England Coast Path
Meeting: 20th April 2017
Author/Contact: Andrew Woodin
Venue: Orwell Room, Kesgrave War Memorial Community Centre, Twelve Acre Approach, Kesgrave, IP5 1JF

1. Progress on Establishing The England Coast Path (ECP)

Natural England (NE) will start work on all the remaining stretches of the ECP in Suffolk by the summer, and the first reports, for the Harwich to Shotley and Aldeburgh to Hopton sections, are expected to be published in the late summer. NE have offered to attend SLAF's July meeting to give an early overview of the reports.

NE lead officers are shown in the table below.

Stretch	NE Coastal Access Officer and Support
Hopton to Aldeburgh	Fiona Taylor and David Waldram
Aldeburgh to Bawdsey	Jonathan Clarke and David Waldram
Bawdsey to Felixstowe Ferry	Kim Thurlby and Tracy O'Shea
Felixstowe Ferry to Shotley Gate	Laura Chellis and Tracy O'Shea
Shotley Gate to Harwich	Kim Thurlby and Alice Silk

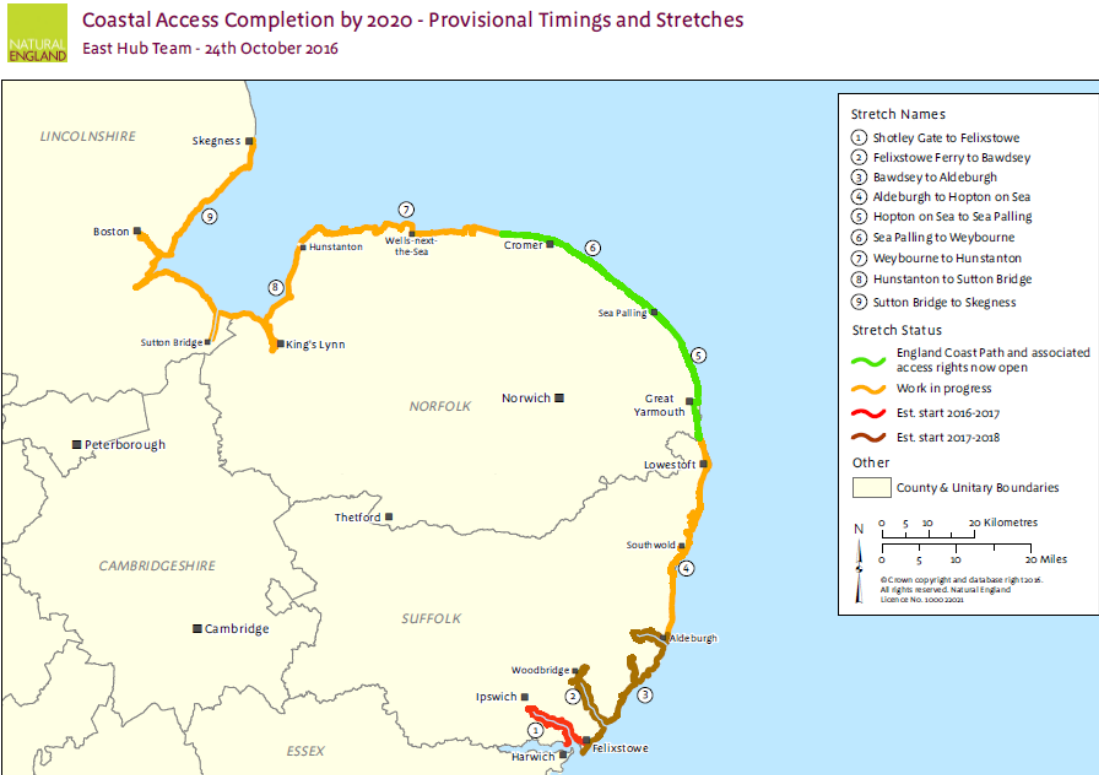
Sally Fishwick, Natural England's Senior Adviser England Coast Path Delivery, met Andrew Woodin and Annette Robinson on 27th January 2017, the day after SLAF's January meeting. Sally noted NE staff will have much to do to familiarise themselves with the coastline and especially the estuaries. She expressed her thanks for all the help NE has been given by Annette Robinson in scoping the ECP, and it was noted ramping up work on the new stretches will put considerable strain on SCC resources to offer the same level of advice. For the same reason, Sally explained there may be a delay in agreeing the collaborative agreement to fund SCC's advice for 2017/18. On a more positive note, NE are not now intending to reduce its funding contribution to National Trails in 2017/18 (see comment in January's paper).

2. Future Management of the England Coast Path in the East of England

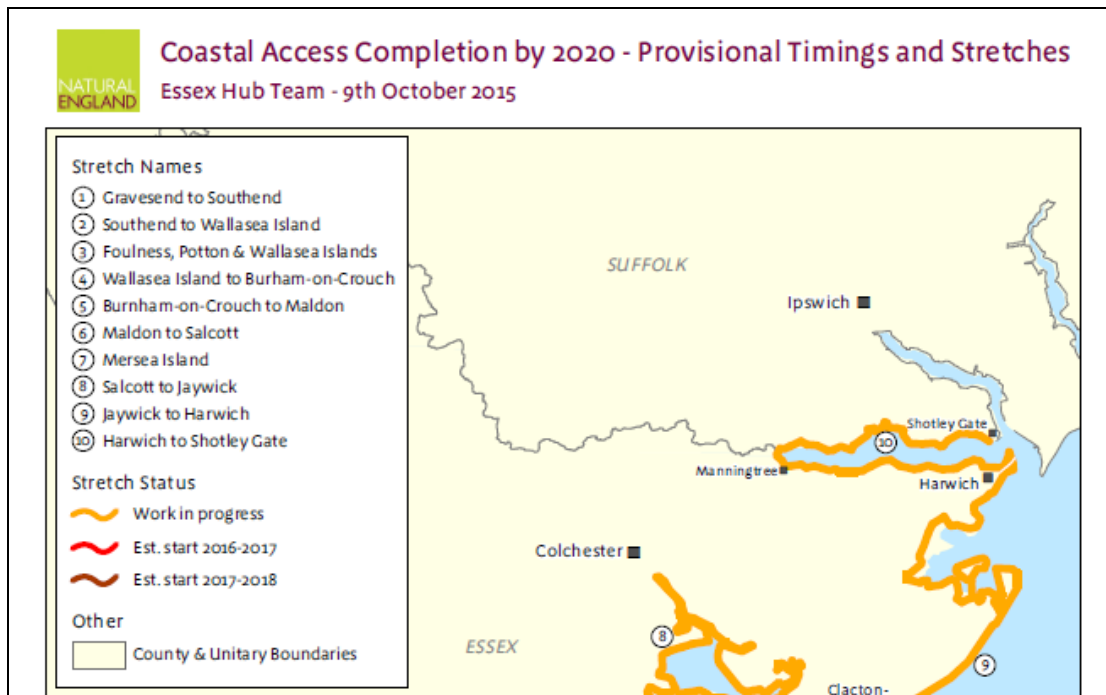
Officers from Natural England, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex met again on 5th April 2017 to discuss forming a partnership to manage the ECP in the three counties. All have political agreement to investigate this option further, with the intention of reaping economies of scale and maximising the economic return. NE also expect National Trails to be managed as partnerships, and Ralph Barnett, NE Team Leader (Statutory Access National Trails and Open Access), invited those at the meeting to a national workshop in May to meet NE's National Trails' team and other managers of National Trails. There will be group sessions on the current funding and reporting processes and a

presentation on the National Trails' website which has recently been enhanced to take into account the promotional needs of new sections of the ECP as it develops.

Coastal Access Map – East Coast



Coastal Access Map – The Stour



Miscellaneous

Further information on progress can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-in-the-east-of-england>,

and the Scheme (methodology) for establishing coastal access can be found here:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5327964912746496?category=50007>

END
AW/SCC Apr 2017

Suffolk Local Access Forum

Title: Network Rail – Public Rights of Way Level Crossings

Meeting: 20th April 2017

Author/Contact: Steve Kerr

Venue: Orwell Room, Kesgrave War Memorial Community Centre, Twelve Acre Approach, Kesgrave, IP5 1JF

Introduction

This paper updates the Forum on the main level crossings being addressed by Network Rail (NR) and Suffolk County Council (SCC), and progress on their Transport and Works Act proposals.



Needham Market Gipsy Lane and FP6

There has been limited progress on this case since the Forum were last updated in January. SCC has not yet seen the detailed design for the culvert structure, nor has it been consulted on the planning application to Mid Suffolk District Council, which NR are required to submit. It would appear delays have been principally caused by a lack of

progress with the landowner negotiations. In view of this, NR have previously asked the county council whether it would be prepared to exercise its compulsory diversionary powers, should no agreement be reached with the landowners. SCC is considering exercising these powers, which would also allow for statutory compensation to be claimed by the landowners, on the understanding all order making costs are borne by NR.

Halesworth Station - Barrow crossing



The county council is unaware of any subsequent update on this crossing since the Forum were last updated in January.

Felixstowe Branch Line Improvements – Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)

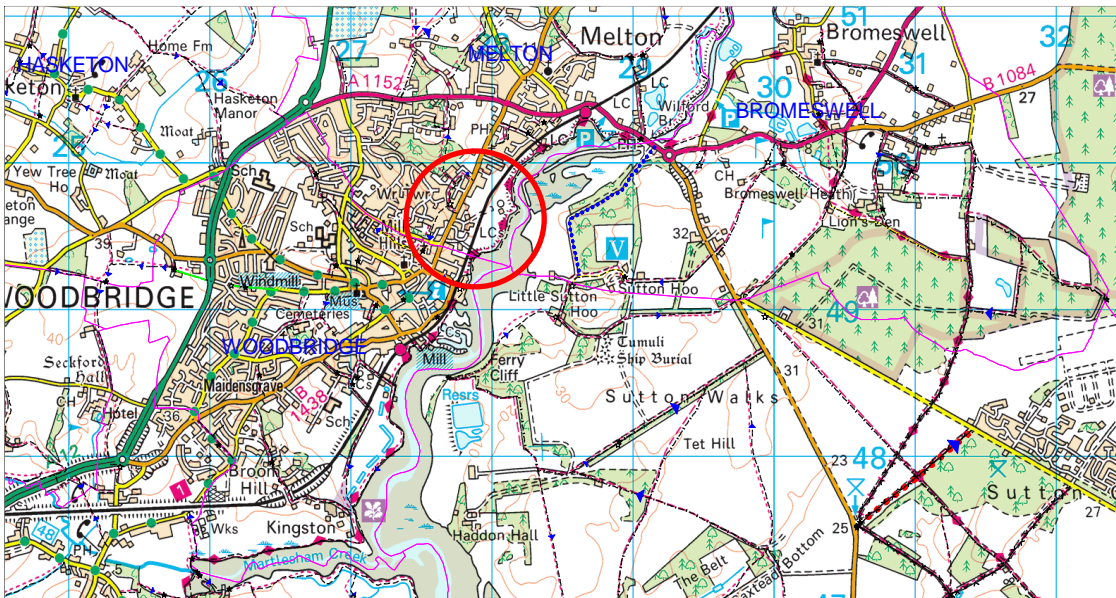


The draft Order was submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport (SoSfT) on 6 March 2017. The deadline for the submission of any objections or representations is 19 April 2017. The county council is submitting a corporate response which includes PROW comments. It is acknowledged the large brideway bridge structure will have a significant aesthetic impact but its design is in accordance with recognised standards for equestrian bridges and its impact will, to some degree, be mitigated by tree screening. The package of PROW

changes was agreed in advance with the Rights of Way and Access team. Corporately, SCC supports the overarching aim of the project, which is to allow for the future dualling of the branch line, thereby improving its capacity and increasing the amount of rail freight movements to the Port of Felixstowe. The Order includes both permanent diversions and upgrades but also a package of temporary closures/diversions.

Lime Kiln Quay/Sun Wharf Level Crossings

On 27 March the county council was contacted by a NR Project Manager seeking to upgrade various crossings in the Woodbridge area.



According to NR:

'this would involve the upgrade of Sun Wharf, Ferry Lane and Haywards level crossings to full barrier crossings that utilise radar technology to detect obstructions on the track. NR consider this the safest type of crossing on the railway.

'The project would also look to close Lime Kiln Quay crossing. This is due to its close proximity to Sun Wharf level crossing which is approximately 30 metres north of Lime Kiln Quay. Road access to Lime Kiln Quay would be re-provided by a diversionary link road from Sun Wharf on the coastal side of the railway. Discussions with local residents regarding potential land purchases to support this scheme have begun, but are in their early stages.'

Lime Kiln Quay crossing is served by Public Footpath 4 Woodbridge. In view of their aspiration to close this crossing, NR wish to meet SCC officers to discuss its potential diversion on to the Sun Wharf crossing. No site meeting has yet taken place but residents have already begun to air their concerns – see article in the East Anglian Daily Times (EADT) dated 3 April.

http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/crossing_closure_would_lead_to_dangerous_blind_corner_and_pinch_points_1_4960228

General/Countywide

NR's Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Strategy - Transport and Works Act Order

Further to the Forum's last update, NR applied to the SoSfT on 24 March 2017 to close/divert 24 crossings within Suffolk, via a TWAO (known as the Suffolk Level Crossing Reduction Order). Following further investigations on the part of NR and its consultants, a further 4 cases have been dropped from the scheme. The deadline date for receipt of objections is 5th May 2017 and officers are currently undertaking onsite assessments of the proposals to inform its corporate response. The county council is likely to object to some proposals, whilst also seeking a commuted sum for the future maintenance of the whole of the resultant network. Officers do not have delegated authority to respond to the Order, this authority rests with the Cabinet Member for Roads and Transport. Officers intend to submit a holding objection to the Order before the deadline date, which will allow officers to complete the assessments, whilst also allowing enough time for the Cabinet Member to properly consider the county council's response.

This item will be considered in more detail at the meeting.

END – SK & AW/SCC April 2017