



## MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 9

13<sup>th</sup> September 2011

### Luton Hoo Estate

<b><u>Members</u></b>	
Steve Bumstead – Chair	Angela Kirby
Jon Balaam	Andy Knight
Tom Chevalier	Brian Golby
Tony Welch	Andrew Pym
Pauline Hey	David Simkins
Jason Jordan	Rosalyn Whisker
Andy Gerrard	John Tyler
<b><u>Secretariat</u></b>	
Caroline Romans - Central Bedfordshire Council	
<b><u>Apologies</u></b>	
Cllr Mrs Angela Barker	Marion Mustoe
Gillian Sharp	Cllr Dave Taylor
Julian Clark-Lowes	
<b><u>Observers</u></b>	
Jonathan Woods – Central Bedfordshire Council	Keith Dove – Luton Borough Council
Andy Burton – Milton Keynes LAF	

		ACTION
1.	<p><u>Public Questions</u></p> <p>Andy Gerrard raised a question from a member of the public who had been stopped whilst cycling along the bridleway in Aspley Woods and asked to pay £18 for a cycle permit. He refused to pay as he was on the bridleway not in the mountain biking area and the person requesting payment did not have any official uniform or paperwork. Jonathan explained that the wood is owned by the Duke of Bedford with the mountain biking area operated on a permit basis in a partnership between the Bedford Estate, Central Bedfordshire Council and Milton Keynes Council. The Greensand Trust deliver the scheme on the ground (see link to pdf for current fees and conditions: <a href="http://www.greensandtrust.org/Aspleypermitap%20bike11.doc">http://www.greensandtrust.org/Aspleypermitap%20bike11.doc</a> ). The</p>	

	<p>member of the public was correct in not paying as use of the bridleway is free. JLAF secretary to raise the issue of 'bogus' wardens with Clive Beckett (CBC).</p> <p>He had also been stopped in Rowney Warren and asked to pay for a permit. This is privately owned and sub let to the Chicksands Bike Park <a href="http://chicksandsbikepark.co.uk/">http://chicksandsbikepark.co.uk/</a> who charge £5 for a day ticket and £60 for an annual ticket. There is a public bridleway which runs through the centre of the wood and a bridleway which runs along the southern edge.</p> <p>A mountain bike area and bike trails will be developed at Rushmere Park which will also only be accessible by permit.</p>	JLAF Secretary
2.	<p><u>Welcomes and Apologies and Thanks</u></p> <p>Andy Burton was welcomed to the meeting as an observer. He is the Rights of Way Officer at Milton Keynes who runs the Milton Keynes LAF and he is also a parish councillor in Hockliffe.</p> <p>For apologies see page 1.</p> <p>The forum thanked Jason for his very interesting and informative tour of the Luton Hoo Estate prior to the meeting and for allowing us to hold the meeting in the wonderful shooting lodge.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting</u></p> <p>3.1. Approval The minutes of the July meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>3.2 Matters arising</p> <p><u>Vacancies on Forum for young people and tourism &amp; rural business –</u> <i>Young people:</i> The next youth parliament meeting will be on 23<sup>rd</sup> October from 10.30am – 4pm at Bedford Square Community Centre in Houghton Regis. Steve offered to attend part of the meeting to explain the role of the forum and to seek their views on issues which are important to them. Jonathan agreed to produce a briefing note to ensure that we make best use of this opportunity.</p> <p><i>Tourism and rural business:</i> No success with livery yard owners or rural B&amp;B's so far. Jon suggested contacting Alexandra Day of BRCC who is working on the Greensand RDPE project (Rural Development Programme England) as a lot of rural businesses are involved in this. He also suggested contacting Robert and Rachel Smith of the Old Piggery B&amp;B in Haynes.</p> <p><u>CBC on-line map</u> – Anomalies are now available for members of the public to view on the online map. <a href="http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/Council_departments/maps.aspx">http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/Council_departments/maps.aspx</a></p> <p><u>Luton Cycle Route map</u> – Keith had posted copies to the JLAF secretary but they had not arrived. Keith to send another set for issue to JLAF</p>	<p>JLAF Chair &amp; Jonathan Woods</p> <p>JLAF Secretary</p> <p>Keith Dove</p>

	<p>members.</p> <p><u>Rushmere consultation</u> – Finalised version of the framework document will hopefully be available for issue once it has been approved by the board on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011. JLAF secretary to forward a copy to JLAF members once it is approved.</p> <p><u>Digital copy of the list of streets</u> – JLAF Secretary had drafted a letter to the portfolio holder and CBC Highways re: the lack of a list of streets which the council is legally required to have. Tom to feedback on its content before the JLAF secretary submits it.</p> <p><u>Mapping of excluded areas</u> – Keith to provide timescale for the mapping of the Luton excluded area at the November meeting.</p> <p><u>Icknield Way trail</u> – meeting notes were sent to JLAF secretary. JLAF secretary to forward them to JLAF members. The first section of the trail was opened for horse riders in 1992 so 2012 will be the 20 year anniversary. Ros and Tom are looking at route improvements – some parts will need the A5-M1 link road to be built. Tom is also on the Icknield Way Association which looks after the Icknield Way path. It is looking for some new members and for the support of the JLAF to increase the profile of the route.</p> <p><u>CBC Rights of Way policies</u> – the sub group fed back comments to Adam on the enforcement, applications and ploughing &amp; cropping policies. They were due to be circulated to user groups before adoption by CBC. JLAF secretary to get an update from Adam on the current status of the policies.</p> <p><u>JLAF Annual report for 2010-11</u> – this was completed and forwarded to Natural England.</p>	<p>JLAF Secretary</p> <p>Tom Chevalier &amp; JLAF Secretary</p> <p>Keith Dove</p> <p>JLAF secretary</p> <p>JLAF secretary</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p><u>Consultations</u></p> <p><u>Richard Benyon MP letter</u></p> <p>The proposals raised in Richard Benyon’s letter were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Virtual forum for LAF members for sharing best practice and exchanging views:</i> the forum is very supportive of this proposal and would like to see this established.</li> <li>• <i>Memorandum of understanding style agreement between LAFs, Natural England and Defra:</i> the forum does not feel that this is an area where significant shortfalls exist. It is also concerned that it would be a lengthy document with little real value to the LAFs. The forum therefore does not believe that this is a priority action.</li> <li>• <i>Annual regional training event:</i> clarification is required as to what this would consist of. If it is a regional networking event for members to share best practice the forum would be very supportive. The forum does not believe that a regional event is the best way to deliver effective training as training tends to work best in small groups.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Seat on the Rights of Way Review Committee:</i> the forum recognises the value of such a seat, but has a concern about how viable it would be. Potentially it could work if each region put forward a person and the seat was rotated between the regions. However it was also suggested that if a virtual forum (as suggested in the first bullet point) was established the minutes from the committee meetings could be shared with LAF members via the virtual forum.</li> </ul> <p>JLAF Secretary to send a response to the proposals by 20<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p>4.2 <u>National Planning Policy framework</u></p> <p>Jon will be submitting a response to the consultation on behalf of the Greensand Trust and is happy to collate a response from the forum if individual members send their comments to him by 30<sup>th</sup> September. Andy G provided a copy of a submission that he has made looking at it from the angle of informal recreation and Tom highlighted that there was only one mention of rights of way in the whole document. It was agreed that the forum response must concentrate on local access to the countryside.</p> <p>4.3 <u>Registration of new town or village greens</u></p> <p>The forum did not wish to comment on this consultation.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Local Nature Partnership bid</u></p> <p>Following concerns from some members of the forum about the lack of deliverables in the local nature partnership bid that was recently submitted, Jon explained in more detail what local nature partnerships are and what they are designed to achieve. Defra will decide in September which bids to award money to and any money awarded will have to be spent by March 2012.</p> <p>In addition there is also funding available for Nature Improvement Areas (new name for Ecology Restoration Areas) focussing on conservation work at the landscape scale. The Chilterns AONB are submitting a bid and the Greensand Trust may submit a bid as well. If they do, the forum may be asked to endorse it.</p>	<p>JLAF secretary</p> <p>JLAF members &amp; Jon Balaam</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Luton Borough Council policy on access barriers and bollards on cycle tracks, footpaths and footways</u></p> <p>The aim of the policy is to try to get all departments to work to the same standards. The forum welcomed the document. The forum's desire is to provide access for all, however if any structures are required, they need to meet with the principle of least restrictive access; don't put anything up unless you have to and if you have to make it as minimalistic as possible. Most structures will not stop motor bike users, they just see them as a challenge – only education and enforcement are effective for the disobedient minority.</p> <p>Andy K to check the standards vs the Sustrans ones and Tom to send links to other similar documents and standards.</p>	<p>Andy Knight and Tom Chevalier</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>OAIP progress meeting</u></p>	

	<p>The sub group met on 15<sup>th</sup> August and reviewed the first draft of the introduction, set up, background, public issues and linkage statements (which cover how ROW and countryside access impact on other areas e.g. health, planning, volunteering). Jonathan has received feedback from the sub group and is working through this. As there has been some slippage on the timeline, it will not be possible to bring the consultation draft to the full forum so the forum agreed that the sub group be given delegated powers to sign off the consultation draft, but documents to be circulated to all JLAF members. The forum reiterated their request for the OAIP to be short and simple! Sub group meeting to be arranged for early October.</p> <p>Jonathan also reported that a work placement is looking at how to include rights of way issues within the Local Area Transport Plans. She is developing a methodology which will be piloted in one area to identify which paths provide important connections to shops, bus stops, schools etc. If this is successful and useful, it will be rolled out over Central Bedfordshire in future years.</p> <p><u>Structures per parish (CBC)</u></p> <p>David had provided a half yearly update on structures per parish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All officers have done a check of CAMS to ensure more up to date</li> <li>- 60 additional structures recorded</li> <li>- 16 stiles removed and replaced in the main by metal kissing gates, although in odd case we have just left a gap</li> <li>- Stile to gap/gate work across CBC but bulk of completed work in Gemma's Central Mid patch</li> <li>- Forthcoming works planned especially in Houghton Regis by Michelle</li> <li>- metre/stile figure has slightly increased to 2,534 [from 2,496]</li> <li>- metre/structure has slightly decreased to 638 [from 675]</li> <li>- In terms of the 'worst' three parishes [by metre/stile] on Tom's amended spreadsheet all three [Stanbridge, Chalgrave and Hockliffe] now have less stiles</li> </ul> <p>The forum welcomed the progress made in this area.</p> <p><u>Proposal that horse riders should be allowed to use cycle tracks</u></p> <p>David has canvassed opinion within CBC Countryside Access and the consensus is that CBC would have no issue with this [i.e. become multi-user tracks] especially if width is 3 metres and more. However, suggest that if the surface is not sealed there is segregation as cyclists find it difficult to use cut up surfaces</p> <p>Sustrans routes are open to all, but where access agreements exist the situation may be different. Restrictions also exist at rail lines and some landowners may not allow horses on their tracks. Cyclists and pedestrians already mix on a number of tracks, but sufficient width is required and a code of conduct such as that on route 51 can also help.</p>	Jonathan Woods
7.	<p><u>Any other notified business</u></p> <p>M1 J10A improvements – Luton Borough and Central Bedfordshire councils have now agreed a preferred scheme which will be determined by the Infrastructure Planning Commission. Pre-order consultation</p>	

	meetings are planned for 14 Oct at Stockwood Park Discovery Centre and 15 Oct in The Mall. Keith to send out information as soon as it is available.	Keith Dove
8.	<p><u>Dates of future meetings</u></p> <p>Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November from 7.00pm – 9.00pm at Priory House, Chicksands. Sandwiches will be available from 6.30pm.</p> <p>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January from 7.00pm – 9.00pm. Venue tbc.</p>	