

South Downs Local Access Forum

Members Update July 2018

1.0 Purpose of this Report

This report is to update South Downs Local Access Forum Members on activity since the last SD LAF meeting and to provide information on projects and activities that may be of interest to LAF Members, but do not require debate or discussion time within the meeting. This is to provide maximum time to LAF Members during the LAF meetings to discuss and conclude important issues.

There will always be a standing item on each LAF agenda to allow Members to raise any issues as a result of these updates

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2.0 Chair's Update

- 2.1 Following an approach from Chris Todd of Brighton Friends of the Earth on 21 June 2018, I drafted a letter to go to Adur and Worthing District Councils expressing concerns about the closure of the "Sussex Pad" crossing of the A27. This was circulated to LAF members for approval, and opinions sought on whether we should object formally or (as is more usual for the LAF) offer advice. The letter was sent to AWDC on 5 July 2018 making a formal objection.
- 2.2 I attended a public hearing at Winchester on 3 July to hear objections to the Rights of Way Inspector's interim finding that the present route for non-motorised users (NMUs) through Junction 9 of the M3 interchange with the A34 could not be added to the Definitive Map in its entirety. This is currently a very important access point into the National Park from Winchester. The legal position with respect to the current route is extremely complex and its history is mired in mystery. The junction is being extensively redeveloped and plans for the new junction include comprehensive provision for NMUs. If the plans come to fruition, all will be well, but this will not be until 2023, and there is a concern that the intended provision could be sacrificed for financial reasons. (This is why it was felt important to establish a right of way on the Definitive Map.).

3.0 Other Access updates.

3.1.0 Consultations on cuts to public bus services affecting the National Park

- 3.1.1 Richard Johnson (LAF member – Public Transport), has highlighted two public consultations, one, live and one pending on Local Authority spending cuts which could affect public transport services within and to the South Downs National Park. The first of these is from Hampshire County Council and is currently live. **The closing date to give your views is 5th August 2018.** Details of the consultation and background information can be found below. The SDNPA will be submitting comments. Does the LAF wish to submit a response?

<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/consultation/streetlightandbusconsultation-infopack.pdf>

- 3.1.2 The second consultation is expected from West Sussex County Council sometime in the autumn.

4.0 South Downs Way National Trail Update (1st Quarter 1st April–30th June 2018)

4.1.0 Staff, Administration & Business planning.

- 4.1.1 The National Trails national partnership has been working to secure funding for 2019-2020. Following several meetings with Natural England and DEFRA we are hopeful of a secure offer of funding by the end of July 2018.

- 4.1.2 The national “On the Right Path” HLF Resilient Heritage project has started with 2 consultancies being awarded contracts to look into and advise on models of for a national trails representative group. One stakeholder workshop has been held in Birmingham. The project is due to be completed by the end of March 2019.

4.2 Trail Maintenance

- 4.2.1 Our Countryside Access Management System, that allows us to keep track of all our maintenance issues, has not been operation correctly since we had software update. Exegisis (software developers) have been unable to rectify the problem. There for this quarters reporting does not reflect all the work carried out over the quarter and also a higher number of outstanding issues.

22 issues have been resolved this quarter, comprising of: -

- 4 New bridleway gates installed
- 7 bridleway gates repaired or serviced
- 1 finger posts repaired.
- 5 finger posts replaced
- 3 vegetation issues.
- 2 Other

As of 28/03/18 the following issues were unresolved.

- 1 issue against stiles
- 25 issues against gates
- 0 issues against bridges
- 3 issues against waymark posts
- 20 issues against fingerposts.
- 1 issues against missing directional signage
- 16 issues against terrain
- 3 issues against steps.
- 8 issues against other.

No High priority Issues outstanding

- 4.2.2 The SDNPA has invested in a new database system to manage and report on volunteer activity across the National Park. Due to the transferring from one system to another again we are unable to give an accurate report on the total number of volunteer days achieved at this time. However we estimate that 15 work parties were undertaken along the SDW and we do know 18 days of survey / wardening has been achieved this quarter.

4.3.0 Trail improvements and Route changes

- 4.3.1 Further work to investigate possible route options for the SDW improvements around Winchester have been carried out. It has been agreed that irrespective of the eventual route

of the SDW, connectivity between M3 and the Highcliffe estate and the South Downs for cyclists should be improved and the SDNPA access team are working on this.

4.3.2 Tenders have been sent out for 5 improvements, 4 are SDW works and 1 is a Gatwick funded easy access project. The SDW works are: -

- Surface improvement along Plumpton plain, East Sussex
- Repairing and rebuilding steps at Charleston Bottom, East Sussex
- Surface Repair on Edburton Hill and Fulking Hill, West Sussex
- Surface Repair on Penn Hill, West Sussex.

4.3.3 Specifications for other major improvement works have also been drawn up and will be tendered for in 2019. These include Hyden Lane, Hampshire and Old Winchester Hill, Hampshire.

4.4.0 User feedback & Stakeholder engagement

4.4.1 User feedback

111 people completed the on-line feedback survey. (See comments attached)

73% rated the SDW as “Excellent”, 26% “Good”, 0% “Not Good” and <1% Poor

LAF and user groups

4.4.2 There are no SDW specific comments or recommendations from the SD LAF at this time.

4.5.0 Press, Promotion & Web

4.5.1 The website received 61,714 users and 243,914 page views between April and end of June. Twitter now has 5300 followers. This quarter we generated 24,412 impressions (Views of official SDW tweets)

4.6.0 Trail corridor & added value projects

4.6.1 New bespoke signs have been made for Amberley Station directing people to the SDW. These will be installed during the coming quarter.

4.7.0 SDW Budget & Income generation

4.7.1 Current budgetary position.

Detail	Income	Expenditure to date	Budget Remaining
Natural England core grant	£86,983.00		
Local Highway Authorities funding	£13,000		
SDNPA Core funding	£34,500.76		
SDNPA additional funding			
Donations	£6000 (estimated)		
Mend Our Way campaign	£50,000		
Sales	£2000 (estimated)		
Other Grants			
Staff		£20,400.00	£61,200.00
Materials		£10,889.00	£4428
Equipment		£475.00	£2,524.00
Payments to Contractors		£170.00	£86,398.00
Publicity & Marketing		£2400.00	£1550.00
Other		£1053.00	£996.00
Totals	£192,483.00	£35,387.00	£157,096.00

4.8.0 Priorities for the coming quarter

- Complete Trail surfacing works
- Update Website, inc. camping and horsebox info.
- Develop proposed improvements between M3 and Chilcomb.

5.0 South Downs National Park Authority Update

5.1 Planning application for a new NMU path between Coombes Road and the River Adur has been submitted (SDNP/18/00434/FUL).

- 5.1.1 An application has been submitted to the SDNPA for the creation of a Non-Motorised Users (NMU) shared use path between Coombes Road and the west bank of the river Adur (Footpath 2049). This application is separate to the main New Monks Farm Application (AWDM/0961/17) to which the SD LAF sent an objection letter. The application is specifically for the creation of a new 3.0 wide shared use path running from Coombes Road to the west bank of the River Adur. It does not include the upgrade and continuation of the route along the River Bank or the continuation of the route west along Lancing College access road. These connections are included in the main New Monks Farm application.
- 5.1.2 The application has received a number of objections from cyclists and cyclists groups, due to parts of the route not meeting Sustrains design standards. The application is supported by the SDNPA Access team as a way of securing the best possible guaranteed NMU access to / from the Park. The application is due to be heard by the SDNPA Planning Committee on the 12th July 2018.

6.0 Natural England & DEFRA Updates

6.1 Glover Review of Protected Landscapes

- 6.1.1 At the end of May the government announced the launch of the Glover Review. This review is looking at the current suite of ANOB's and National Parks, and in particular: -
- the existing statutory purposes for National Parks and AONBs and how effectively they are being met
 - the alignment of these purposes with the goals set out in the 25-Year Plan for the Environment
 - the case for extension or creation of new designated areas
 - how to improve individual and collective governance of National Parks and AONBs, and how that governance interacts with other national assets
 - the financing of National Parks and AONBs
 - how to enhance the environment and biodiversity in existing designations
 - how to build on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks and to connect more people with the natural environment from all sections of society and improve health and wellbeing
 - how well National Parks and AONBs support communities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-parks-review-launched#history>

National Trails has been calling for their inclusion in the review as they are the third and only element of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act that is not included in the review. The full terms of reference for the review can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review/terms-of-reference>

7.0 Rights of Way Orders received by SDNPA since the last LAF Update.

Path / Location	Type of Consultation / order	Date received	Order Making Authority
Farringdon 1	TCPA 1990, Diversion	30/05/18	HCC
Bramdean and Hinton Ampner FP 19 and Warnford FP8	Diversion Pre-order consultation (HA1980)	08/06/18	HCC
Kingston, Nr. Lewes	DMMO. Pre Order (WCA 1981)	13/06/18	ESCC
Quellwood Common, Lurgashall	Application to deregister (Part)	18.06.18	WSCC

8.0 Updates from Neighbouring LAFs

8.1 Please see links below for dates & minutes of the neighbouring LAFs

East Sussex LAF

Minutes from 21st February 2018 <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/10684/minutes-february-2018-draft.pdf>

Minutes from 20th June 2018 – Not yet published.
Next meeting 7th November 2018

West Sussex LAF

General update report from 31st January 2018.
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/10915/wslaf_item_13_general_report.pdf
Minutes from 31st January (Unconfirmed)
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/11124/wslaf_310118_minutes_unconfirmed.pdf

Date of next meeting: Not yet published.

Brighton & Hove LAF

Minutes from 11th January 2018. <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/BHLAF%20Minutes%2011-01-2018.pdf>
Minutes from 12th April 2018: not yet published.
Date of next meeting: 12th July 2018 , 11th October 2018

Hampshire Countryside Access Forum

Unconfirmed minutes from 20th march 2018
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/ccbs/countryside/HCAF20181Minutes.pdf>
Minutes from 19th June: Not yet published. Papers available here
<http://documents.hants.gov.uk/countryside/HCAF20182AgendaandPapers.pdf>
Date of next meeting: 11th September 2018

Surrey LAF

Minutes of meeting from 16th April 2018 (Unconfirmed).

https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/170233/16.04.18-draft.pdf

Date of next meeting: 16th July 2018, 15th October 2018