

## LOCAL ACCESS FORUM CHAIRS MEETING NOTES – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### Attendance List

Local Access Forum	Name
Bracknell Forest LCAF	<i>Colin Bird (Chair) [CB] Graham Pockett [GP]</i>
Mid & West Berks LCAF	<i>Simon Pike (Chair) [SP]</i>
RBWM LAF	<i>Lisa Hughes (Vice-Chair) [LH] Jacqui Wheeler (Secretary) [JW]</i>
Surrey LAF	<i>Joanne Porter (Secretary)[JP] Jonathan Wall [JW]</i>
Oxfordshire CAF	<i>Paul Harris (Secretary)[PH]</i>
Hampshire CAF	<i>Andy Whincup (Chair)[AW] Abby Sullivan (Secretary)[AS]</i>
Buckinghamshire LAF	<i>James Spratley [JS]</i>

### 1. Check in – brief summary of your LAF in 2022

#### **RBWM LAF (Lisa Hughes - Vice Chair)**

Lost one member and gained another since the last meeting  
Appointing authority – has reduced staff resource  
Holds 2 formal meetings a year and sub meetings between these when possible.  
The Borough Local plan has finally been adopted after a decade or more so many large development sites are now coming through as consultations with much community engagement.  
The LAF is welcoming more engagement with the Council's Transport and Natural Environment teams. The LAF's focus is still to push for multi-user routes as the preference.

#### **Mid and West Berkshire LAF (Simon Pike – Chair)**

Combination of 3 authority areas; Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham.

Most significantly since July 2022, SP has shared a LAF working methods document to facilitate the process for agreeing on issues between meetings.  
MWBLAF has commented on 2 x Neighbourhood Plans and West Berkshire Local Plan. Reading ROWIP 2 is currently out for consultation.  
SP offered to share an experimental TRO as an active travel measure on a lane in West Berkshire as an alternative to Quiet Lane status.  
All agreed. **Action SP**

#### **Surrey CAF (Joanne Porter – Secretary)**

JP reported that the Surrey CAF have been involved in a local controversial issue concerning the Wey & Arun Canal. The Canal and River Trust are trying to recreate this waterway, but it is currently a well-used multi user route. Other major issues being looked at are the changes at Jct 10 of the M25 where there will be the largest green bridge in the country.  
JP handing over to JW as officer supporting the Surrey CAF going forward.

### **Bracknell Forest CAF (Colin Bird – Chair)**

Very much locally, site specific focussed LAF meeting online still at the moment. Have recently had a new member join representing the Crown Estate as this is a large landowner in the area. Issues with Royal Berks Polo Fields who tend to ignore the presence of PRoW and illegally obstruct. The LAF has been working on producing leaflets on accessible routes this year.

### **Oxfordshire CAF (Paul Harris – Secretary & Access Strategy Lead)**

An area with 4000km of PRoW.

CAF has been heavily involved in working on “RoW and Climate Change Policy” weaving in climate change adaptation on the PRoW network and gaining developer funding through major planning applications. Has also been giving advice about the impact of HS2 on the PRoW network particularly for disabled and equestrian users. There is a RoW Monitoring Group at Oxfordshire which predates the LAF and has been running for 30 years reporting on targets and objectives for the management of the PRoW network.

### **Hampshire CAF (Andy Whincup – Chair)**

The area includes Portsmouth and Southampton and all the areas that aren't in the New Forest National Park. Are soon to hold an extraordinary meeting to agree how the CAF will operate going forward. The CAF has also been involved in the 2023 version of the BHS Equestrian Guidance and in providing advice on how to make the English Coastal Path as accessible as possible. While trying to be engaged in large housing developments at an early stage.

AS confirmed that the changes due to virtual meetings over the last few years have caused a need to reconnect on how the Forum works.

### **Buckinghamshire LAF (James Spratley – Support Officer)**

JS is supporting Jonathan Clark who is the LAF secretary. A lot of time has been spent with the LAF advising on HS2 and East-West Rail. The LAF meets 3 x a year and operate as hybrid meetings. With 13 members currently they are trying to recruit as several members are due to retire. The desire is to diversify targeting Universities for potential members.

## **2. NE/Defra engagement/communication – Updates**

*Notes from previous meeting - [All agreed that there is a need for engagement with LAFs from central government via Natural England. Previously this had taken the form of dissemination of national and regional issues, hosting LAF meetings/conferences and support from NE Access staff at individual LAF meetings if requested.]*

*Concern was shared that the LAF Guidance updated in 2009 was out of date and not necessarily in synch with how LAFs currently work.*

*Noted that Andrew Mackintosh, Senior Specialist Public Access, Recreation and Rights of Way of Natural England was quite positive that there would be funding for a new LAF support role and replacement SharePoint style site for Huddle at the beginning of 2023.]*

**There is no further news from NE and all agreed this is not acceptable.**

After further discussion it was agreed to ask ADEPT and IPROW for help to find out what's happening in other regions regarding LAF's communicating with each other and what support /resources NE and Defra intend for LAF's going forward. It was felt that central government need to demonstrate that LAF's are not wasting their time. **Action JW.**

It was suggested that a SharePoint style application could be utilised by the LAF Chairs for the region for sharing information between LAFs. AS would share the link to an app called Trello that she's found useful in the past for this type of work. **Action AS.** JW would share email addresses of the LAF Chairs meeting. **Action JW.**

### **3. Cross boundary working**

AW felt this was a problem area with cross boundary issues tending to get lost, and authorities not working together. SP queried the responsibility for signage on paths crossing a boundary. GP confirmed that a DMMO which crossed the boundary between Bracknell and Wokingham had been an interesting project which led to way markers at the boundary showing contact details for the authority who was responsible on both sides.

JW informed the group of the Sustrans funding pot through DfT called "Paths For Everyone" - and Sustrans proposed trial to remove barriers along a section of the Jubilee River which crosses 3 authority areas. It was noted that Sustrans will be looking for removal of barriers across the network nationally.

### **4. AoB**

SP asked everyone how their authorities publicise routes in their area on their websites. All agreed to send details to JW for sharing. **Action All**

**Date of Next Meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10am (MS Teams)**