

THE DUDLEY BOROUGH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM (DBLAF)

If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help.

Contact: Kim Buckle
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for any queries relating to this Agenda or if you wish to submit an apology.

DUDLEY BOROUGH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM AGENDA

The next meeting of the Dudley Borough Local Access Forum will be held at 3:00pm on Tuesday 11th April, 2017 in Meeting Room 1 at 3 – 5 St James's Road, Dudley to consider the business set out below:

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st February, 2017.
4. Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Future Maintenance Programmes.
5. Planning Applications
 - (a) Consultation on two new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs): draft Shopfront and Advertisement SPD and draft revised Historic Environment SPD.
 - (b) Pottery Farm Barn Conversions
6. Access/Rights of Way Issues and Updates
 - (a) H13 Monarch's Way, Halesowen – Flood Work – S Yeadon
 - (b) Path 56 Lapal House, Halesowen – Tree blocking the right of way – A Radford
 - (c) H25 Coombeswood – Surfacing Work Phase two
 - (d) Monarch's Way Signs – S Yeadon
 - (e) Snowdon Rise Path No. SED0016

The DBLAF is an advisory body established under Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land in the Dudley Borough for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area. Its views do not necessarily represent those of the Council.

(f) Illey and Lapal Footpath Maintenance Funded by 106 Receipts from PO8/1373 and potential future CIL Funding.

7. Volunteers Accreditation and Associated Licences

8. Pottery Farm/Coombeswood Footpaths Allocation of Section 106 Funding.

9. Leasowes Four Footpaths Granted Permissive Status

10. Future Meeting Times of the Forum.

11. Any Other Business

It is requested that Members e-mail Kim Buckle at the address shown on the Agenda cover at least seven clear working days before the Meeting, details of any issues that they would wish to raise under this Agenda Item.

12. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings:-

(All Meetings to commence at 3pm in Meeting Room 1, 3 – 5 St James's Road, Dudley)

- Tuesday 4th July, 2017

TO: All Members of the Dudley Borough Local Access Forum namely:-

D Bates	Mrs T Boothroyd	R J Brooks	R Burgess
Cllr C Elcock	P Greenaway	Ms S Nicholls	Cllr G Partridge
T Pritchard	N J Williams	Ms S Yeadon	

Minutes of the Dudley Borough Local Access Forum

Tuesday, 21st February, 2017 at 3.00pm in Room 1 at 3-5 St James's Road,
Dudley

Present:

T Boothroyd (Chair)
R Brooks (Vice-Chair)
R Burgess, P Greenaway, A Nicholls, T Pritchard and S Yeadon.

Officers:

D Jacobs – Project Engineer (part), D Keeley – Countryside Manager –
A Radford – Maintenance Manager (All Place Directorate) and M Johal –
Senior Democratic Services Officer (Chief Executive's Directorate).

24. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of D
Bates, N Williams and Councillors C Elcock and G Partridge.

25. **Declarations of Interest**

R Burgess declared an interest in Agenda Item No 5 (a) to (i) –
Access/Rights of Way Issues as he was a Member of Halesowen Abbey
Trust.

S Yeadon declared an interest in Agenda Item Nos 4(a) Pottery Farm
Planning Application for Barn Conversions and 5 (a) to (i) – Access/Rights
of Way Issues as she was the Chair of Friends of Coombeswood Wedge

26. **Minutes**

Arising from a comment in relation to Members receiving an agenda only
and no previous minutes being attached the Senior Democratic Services
Officer undertook to investigate the matter.

Agreed

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December, 2016 be
approved as a correct record.

27. **Planning Applications**

The Project Engineer updated the meeting on the following applications:-

Planning Application No P16/1321 – Ye Olde Saltbrook Public House, Hayes Lane – Erection of offices workshop unit and dry storage unit following demolition – The requests made at the previous meeting on the need to ensure the potential diversion of the right of way was wheelchair compliant and placed above the flood plane had been granted. The new development would comprise a wider path enabling disabled access, it would push out over the existing line of the footpath and the path would generally conform to a better standard.

Holt Road – Halesowen – The meeting were informed that the current path was very narrow and it was intended that the new development would connect the cul-de sac with a new wider lit footpath. As the proposed path was classed as a “hard” footpath this would also be better for maintenance purposes.

Mill Close – The Project Engineer referred to the Stopping Up of a Public Footpath Order. The path had been used by people engaging in anti social behaviour and was generally unsafe. It was indicated that there was now a safer footpath to gain access to the park and therefore the existing path was redundant and there were no reasons for retaining it.

Agreed

That the information contained in the verbal update provided, as set out above, be noted.

28. Planning Application – Pottery Farm Barn Conversions

R Burgess referred to Pottery Farm Barn Conversions and queried progress on drafting the legal agreement with regard to part realignment of Footpath H26A. Also, the proposed plans had included a small pedestrian gate to be installed at the Mucklow Hill entrance so that footpath users would have clear indication as to full access. At the moment the present gates appeared locked and a sign should have been displayed on a side gate notifying footpath users. Progress on the matter was queried.

The Chair undertook to speak to the Project Engineer in relation to the matter.

Agreed

That an update on the matter be provided to the next meeting of the Forum.

29. Access/Rights of Way Issues and Updates

(a) H13 Monarch’s Way, Halesowen – Flood work

S Yeadon indicated that she had spoken to R Morgan and the grill had now been affixed. The work had been completed to a

decent standard and the grill would prevent rubbish seeping through. Consideration was also being given to clearing the rubbish currently at the site and it was debated whether a digger would need to be used given the extent of the problem. If the task could be undertaken manually a volunteer weekend would be arranged to clear the rubbish. It had been decided to continue to use and shift the sandbags to alter flow of water given the costs involved in using alternative methods.

With regard to the application for funding to the relevant Community Forum for constructing the steps to the culvert, it was reported that this had not as yet been submitted as topographic costs were still awaited. The proposed steps would enable easier access to the culvert and following installation the steps would be maintained by Severn Trent as part of their maintenance programme.

In response to a comment from the Chair, S Yeadon indicated that alternative methods of funding were being explored and details were given on an event to be held on 11th March, 2017 with a view to raising funds.

Agreed

That the verbal update given regarding flood work on H13 Monarch's Way, Halesowen, be noted.

- (b) Path 56 Lapal House, Halesowen – Tree blocking the right of way

The Maintenance Manager reported that the matter was being pursued and costs associated with removing the tree were awaited. It was indicated that permission had been granted for the removal of the tree and volunteers could be provided to assist with the work.

Agreed

That an update on the matter be provided to the next meeting of the Forum.

- (c) H26 Coombeswood – Surfacing Work Phase two

The Countryside Manager indicated that surfacing work to footpaths would commence in April.

S Yeadon mentioned discussions with a view to stock piling 20 tonnes of material at Lister Road Depot and queried whether there had been any progress. The Countryside Manager indicated he would speak to relevant Officers, including Iain Povey to determine the position given the current levels of stock already retained in the yard.

With regard to allocation of Section 106 funding of £10,000 it was queried whether progress had been made to carry out further footpath surfacing with the residual balance.

Agreed

- (i) That the Countryside Manager liaise with Iain Povey in relation to the request to stock pile material at Lister Road.
 - (ii) That the Countryside Manager be requested to ascertain the position with regard to funding further footpath surfacing from the Section 106 allocation.
- (d) Path H69 Lye Close Lane, Lapal, Halesowen

R Burgess referred to the signs that had been erected and suggested that they be displayed in a more prominent position such as on the stile.

Agreed

That the Project Engineer be requested to conduct a Site Visit with R Burgess with a view to reaching an agreement on the positioning of the signs and that the matter be recorded as completed.

- (e) Tack Farm

R Burgess informed the meeting on an application made by the Halesowen Abbey Trust to the Belle Vale, Hayley Green and Cradley South Community Forum in January, 2017 whereby a grant of £1100 had been awarded towards the cost of purchasing a bridge. An allocation of £640 had also been made by public highways and discussions were taking place with the Maintenance Manager in this regard.

Agreed

That the information contained in the verbal report be noted and the matter be recorded as completed.

- (f) Monarch's Way Signs

The Vice-Chair referred to the previous meeting about discussions on footpath signs to distinguish Monarch's Way.

S Yeadon undertook to speak to John Tenant with a view to exploring funding and to ascertain alternative mechanisms for signage.

Agreed

That S Yeadon be requested to speak to John Tenant in relation to signage for Monarch's Way with a view to providing an update to the next meeting of the Forum.

(g) Snowdon Rise Path No SED0016

Reference was made to overgrown nature reserves and that consideration was being given to organising a volunteer group to assist in clearing areas. However, clarification was sought on whether volunteers were able to perform these tasks as it had been indicated that volunteers required accreditation and should possess certain licenses.

The Maintenance Manager explained obligations to serve notice of intention on the Local Authority when undertaking street works and further confirmed that there was a requirement for all workers, including volunteers to be accredited and possess a relevant license. The Maintenance Manager indicated that as more and more streets were included in the gazetteer of streets there would be more challenges and he undertook to investigate the seriousness of the matter.

The Chair indicated that accreditation would affect volunteers and place a burden on the Local Authority as costs would increase for the Council. It was suggested that consideration be given to applying for funding from Community Forums to pay towards costs associated in acquiring the license and accreditation for volunteers.

Agreed

- (i) That the Maintenance Manager be requested to liaise with the relevant officer with a view to ascertaining capacity to assist in clearing the footpath.
- (ii) That the issue regarding Volunteers Accreditation and associated licenses be included as a standing item on future agendas of the Forum.

30. **Pottery Farm/Coombeswood Footpaths Allocation of Section 106 Funding**

R Burgess referred to the allocation of Section 106 funding in the sum of £10,000 and on previous discussions to use this funding. Mention was made of a Site Visit where related discussions had been held and on an agreement to pay the landowner for undertaking works to fencing to divide the right of way. The Countryside Manager indicated that he had retained receipts and the Cabinet Member Environmental Services had requested an audit trail to show agreement to allow reimbursement.

In response to a query it was confirmed that the timber had been ordered and the metal frame for the proposed signboard was ready.

Agreed

That the Countryside Manager be requested to clarify the position with regard to reimbursing the landowner for erection of fencing to divide the right of way.

31. **Leasowes Four Footpaths Granted Permissive Status – Progress Update**

R Burgess indicated that four footpaths had been granted permissive status and it had been agreed that these would be added to the Definitive Map, however this had not been done. Reference was also made to the remaining balance of £46,000 Section 106 money to undertake work at Leasowes Park and the process involved in accessing the money.

Agreed

That the Maintenance Manager be requested to liaise with the Project Engineer with a view to discussing the matter and the issue be included on the next agenda for an update.

32. **The Statutory Requirements of the Local Authority in Respect of Footpath Maintenance**

The Maintenance Manager reported that the Council had a legal duty to maintain highways, however, there were budgetary implications that prevented work being undertaken on a regular basis. There had also been a reduction in staff and health and safety was paramount given possible negligence claims that could be made should footpaths not be maintained.

The Chair commented that if budgets were diminishing then support should be given to volunteers to undertake tasks to ease the burden on the Council.

Agreed

That the information contained in the verbal report be noted and the matter be recorded as completed.

33. Future Funding for Footpaths and other Matters and Volunteers Involvement

This matter had been discussed and amalgamated in earlier agenda items.

34. Any Other Business

Work Programme and Maintenance

The Maintenance Manager reported on the current programme and indicated that work had been completed on Priory Close and Gorge Road, Dudley and work on Dudley Road, Kingswinford, the last project, would be completed shortly.

The Chair requested that, owing to the amalgamation of ROWIP and the Local Access Forum, an agenda item to discuss ROWIP issues (to include discussions on future maintenance programmes), be included as a standing item on future agendas.

Local History Media

S Yeadon referred to an article on a media site that made reference to a listing incorporating all canals and history relevant to Dudley and on the need to extending this to a Black Country wide level.

The Countryside Manager indicated that a Geopark application had been made through World Heritage and he suggested that the relevant person contact Graham Worton (Keeper of Geology) with a view to working collaboratively.

Redundant Stiles

T Pritchard indicated that the redundant stiles, as referred to at the previous meeting, had now been cleared of rubbish.

National England Conference

The Countryside Manager referred to a conference organised by National England on 21st March, 2017 and requested that Forum Members interested in attending should email him and he would make arrangements on a first come, first served basis.

A Member requested that clarification be sought on whether travelling expenses could be claimed to attend the Conference.

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

Noted, that future meetings of the Forum would take place at 3.00 pm in Meeting Room 1, 3-5 St James's Road, Dudley on the following dates:-

- Tuesday 11th April, 2017
- Tuesday 4th July, 2017

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm