

REPORTS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM JUL 2019**NATIONAL FOREST ACCESS & RECREATION GROUP**

A lot of their endeavours continue to be the Charnwood Forest project and there has been no recent meeting to report on

Roy Denney, Representative

CHARNWOOD FOREST REGIONAL PARK

I continue to serve as a member of the board of the regional park which will continue whatever the outcome of the current bid for lottery support. I am also on the steering group of the Local Nature Partnership which is fronting that bid for funds to protect, promote and enhance the park.

There have been a series of workshops with the new independent chairman Atul Patel hopes to attend our next meeting and can give an update. We are working to complete the bid document and submit it by September

We have provided the team with a map of the park marked up with desirable links for the rights of way network to be targeted as part of the 'better access' element of the project

Roy Denney, Representative

NETWORK OPPORTUNITIES / UNRECORDED WAYS

The Ramblers, the Open Spaces Society and the British Horse Society have recently written to the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, setting out our position that the 2026 cut-off date should be postponed (in England) setting out reasons why including the delay of the Deregulation Act (which is designed to improve the process for claiming historic rights of way) and the lack of time now to review and improve processes associated with the Deregulation Act. No response has yet been advised but the ministers have more pressing things on their minds at the moment
The URW sub group has identified unrecorded and therefore unprotected routes. There are still about 60 of these classed as priorities from which volunteers can pick things of interest or convenient locality.

We have 15 volunteers working on cases to varying extents and I continue to try and visit most of them in small groups and this is more fruitful than trying to get them all to one meeting although we have scheduled a full meeting in September which has been booked and the provisional date advised to them. This may need changing if key members are not available.

We are now alternating our meetings in the afternoon and the other early evening to allow those working to participate and the June meeting created a [pdf of top priority targets which will be sent to volunteers together with an explanatory key.

We still await the outcomes of our claim for Barrow/Cotes and another at Islay Walton
MG has been working on the master index as time permits and we have agreed its final format
There is nothing else to report on Network Opportunities at this stage.

Roy Denney

PLANNING AND TRAVEL COMMITTEE REPORT

We were represented at the hearing about the Barrow crossing early June by our Chairman as I was out of the country and he can update the meeting but it does not look promising.

There have been several large matters progressing over the last two months The Rail Freight Terminal near Hinckley is moving towards an actual planning application and we continue to monitor the process having made recommendations to the developers.

HS2 is out for consultation again and we will be considering the proposed changes around Ashby during our meeting. A possible extension to Croft Quarry is also on the table and we have made observations re that (attached)

After several years delay and a number of advices from ourselves the Broadnook Garden Village is again on the agenda. At the end of May I attended an all parties meeting at Charnwood BC offices together with VA and EMcW was there representing LCC. Between VA and myself the Ramblers Association, The Leicestershire Footpaths Association, The British Horse Society and the Leicestershire Bridleways Association were represented. Along with members /officers from Charnwood and the affected local parishes, the developers were represented by Will Antill project architect and Steve Lewis-Roberts planning consultant with the Pegasus Group

I found it a not entirely satisfactory meeting. It was ill prepared and helpful documentation was not available. However a lot was covered in respect of rights of way

We discussed inconclusively a proposed new light controlled roundabout on the A6 to provide vehicular access and to be sited near the present farm access. The lights will be phased to allow walkers and riders to safely access the rights of way network either side of that road. No detailed plans were produced. Bridleway J100 will run from this new roundabout past the sewage works but we suggested and it was generally accepted that that the southern end should be diverted to meet the road to Wanlip village opposite the cattle tunnel to then continue to the bend in the Wanlip to Birstall road.

As regards the existing PRoW network there are a number of proposals some of which satisfy our earlier suggestions. J54, currently running along the A46 embankment, will be moved to a better route broadly parallel with that road but within the development Path. This path links in with the wider network but we flagged up the desirability of further links to the Beaumont shopping area and the Castle Hill and Watermead country parks,

Rothley Park Golf Club asks that the bridleway J59, which splits the course, should be diverted along path J57, and nobody seemed averse to that. There was talk of a possible new link between J59 and J55 where it meets the A6 as it is a very attractive scenic rural route.

LCC had asked for a surfacing contribution for certain paths but those representing users and residents wanted them to largely remain of a rural nature. One path where this was suggested was J55 which will certainly become a major walking route into Rothley. From memory I felt this attractive green corridor should not be spoiled and in any event was not wide enough to allow for this. The day after our meeting I walked it again and confirmed my view.

VA quite understandably asked that a number of footpaths within and beside the development should be upgraded to bridleways but I made the point that we advocate twin routes, either horse and pedestrian/cycling routes running alongside each other or a bridleway and a footpath going from A to B by differing routes. Unfortunately this takes up space and is not often possible and J55 is certainly one such. It is a lovely walk. It runs between the two new developments but still retains a superb rural feel.

Effectively it is a narrow green corridor with all sorts of wild flora. It also passes through an area of beautiful meadow with veteran trees of some magnificence. Unfortunately as it will provide the only off-road link into Rothley it will be even more walked than it is now which will not be popular with some of the new houses alongside it as it runs along the bottom of their gardens within a few feet of their windows at points. There is no sign of any maintenance and the very narrow actual path is obviously only maintained by footfall. If it is to be made safe for buggies and prams it would require an actual surfaced path wider than at present which will destroy the rural nature of the path and cost a small fortune. It would also remove the green curtain hiding the children playing in the school grounds.

Chairman - Roy Denney