

Notes of the Sandwell Local Access Forum (Meeting 44)

Wednesday 9th July 2014, 5.30pm

Annex 2, Sandwell Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

<u>Present:</u>	John Scott (Chair)	Walking (Sandwell Ramblers)
	Councillor C Tranter	Rowley Regis Ward
	Councillor D Hosell	Canals and Rivers
	Tony Fowler	Living Streets
	Peter Beasley	Sandwell Road Safety
	Terry Stanley	Cycling in Sandwell
	Andy Thorpe	Transportation Planning SMBC
	Stephen Leigh	Transportation Planning SMBC
	Gurdip Nagra	Transportation Planning SMBC
	Reiss Graham	Transportation Planning SMBC
	Roy Jones	Community Ambassador Yew Tree & Great Barr
	Michael Nicholls	Development Manager
	Richard White	Healthy Urban Environment Officer

23/14 **Welcome & Apologies**

Beverley Stevens, Angela Smith, Barry Jordan, Cllr S Hosell

24/14 **Members to declare any interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting**

None

25/14 **Edwin Richards Quarry**

MN was welcomed by the LAF and discussed the current situation at Edwin Richards Quarry. MN explained that the ownership of the site was not fully known but Tarmac and Hanson had some ownership of the site. MN informed the group that there are two initial proposals:

Proposal 1 - would seek planning permission for 280 houses on the southern part of the site

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Proposal 2 - would infill part of the site with hardcore material.

The group expressed concerns over the types of waste and wanted to ensure that nothing hazardous would be used to infill. MN reassured the group that a permit from the Environment Agency would be required to control the type of waste.

MN advised the group that consultation would be very wide to cover all interests and initial plans show that additional footpaths will be created and link with Portway Road.

Cllr Hosell asked MN if a site visit could be undertaken. Cllr Tranter and SL informed the group they had seen the site from the perimeter and would also welcome a site visit at some point in the future.

Cllr Hosell advised that a lot of money is made when sites are quarried and asked if there is scope to use this money for the local community. MN ensured that a S106 agreement would be required for the site and there is potential to create public amenity spaces etc. RJ gave an example in Pensnett where monies from a quarry were re-allocated to the local community. Cllr Hosell said if any money was available from the S106 funds then this should be spent on the local community, ie walking, cycling etc. GN and SL informed the LAF that all the public rights of way over the site have been emailed to MN and joint working was in place to ensure that the best access outcomes could be achieved.

26/14 **Sandwell Walking Strategy**

Richard White was welcomed to the group and thanked members for the invitation. RW (Healthy Urban Environment Officer) explained that he was new to the post and was looking to update the 2001 Walking strategy with measureable outcomes, as requested by Cllr Moore, in order to encourage healthy alternatives to using the car. TF and Cllr Hosell asked when the report would be ready for publication. RW suggested a provisional date of around December 2014 and would look to gain ideas from members of the group. JS and Cllr Hosell asked if a display of the draft walking strategy could be presented to the LAF at the next meeting (8th October 2014)

27/14 **Minutes of the Last Meeting (April 16th 2014)**

Minutes of the last meeting agreed but to include the following alterations:

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Item 42/13 to read - Cllr Hosell to raise the issue of litter on Birchfield Way, Yew Tree (near Shustoke Bridge) with Neighbourhood Town Officer to arrange clearance works.

Item 19/4 to read - JS informed the group that way markers are only laid out on one side (Birmingham side) and asked if the same can be done on the Sandwell side to show where the paths should lead.

Item 32/12 to read – The lack of footway on Forge Lane is to be raised at the Sandwell Valley Trails Group.

Cllr Hosell advised the group that he is listed as having an interest for Canals and Rivers but has never received any news or updates. JS explained British Waterways held a canal forum for users and JS would try to add Cllr Hosell to the list.

28/14 **Matters Arising**

Item 39/12 - Any Other Business

Forge Lane

AT informed the group that Birmingham City Council and Sandwell MBC are still developing a scheme to reduce the speed limit along the road.

In terms of the associated walking route and a potential link to Sandwell Valley, Cllr Hosell asked AT if money was available from Centro's LSTF programme. AT advised that no funding would be available from Centro as Forge Lane is not within one of the LSTF corridors. In addition, Cllr Hosell asked the group for Forge Lane to be put onto the agenda for the LAF and Sandwell Trails Group as an urgent priority, so when money is available for scheme it can be progressed. The LAF agreed to this and JS will also progress this at other forums.

Item 11/13 Any Other Business

Maple Drive, Yew Tree

RJ told the group that fridges were being dumped near this route and Cherry Tree Drive. JS said keeping on top of the rubbish should ensure it does not build up or attract further fly-tipping. Cllr Hosell advised that any issues like this can be dealt with by Town Officers.

Eastwood Road

JS noticed that the new slabs need to be relayed as they were uneven. GN to progress this.

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Item 38/13 Sandwell Walking Strategy

Item dealt with by RW's presentation.

29/14 Natural England Update

SL provided an update (see attached briefing note).

30/14 ROWIP Monitoring Survey

RG presented the midpoint results from the annual ROWIP report (see attached report).

31/14 Updates from Sandwell Council (Written and Verbal Reports)

Rights of Way Proposals

The following routes were discussed:

- Bury Hill Park waymarkers – works have been scheduled and due to commence in the coming weeks.
- Dartmouth Golf Course – still ongoing.
- WB9 Footpath from Birmingham Road through Sandwell Park Golf Course into Sandwell Valley - Works have been scheduled and due to commence in the coming weeks.

ROWIP Schemes

Updates were provided about physical and legal work currently being progressed by SL and GN in relation to the following ROWIP schemes:

- WB2 – Hallam Street to Church Vale at present no works are required and the route is in a good repair.
- WB24 Spouthouse Lane to Ennerdale Road, Hamstead – Not discussed.
- WM29 – Pennyhill Lane to Charlotte Road.
- WM34 – Newton Road to Churchfields Estate works complete and legal works to proceed.
- WED7 Hydes Road to West Bromwich via Bescot – Bescot Station area improvements planned for the route. Also, Network Rail have commissioned the replacement of the bridge deck and Sandwell MBC will resurface this once completed.
- RR5 – Harlech Close, Tividale to Dudley – Not discussed.
- WB27 Newton Close to Newton Road, Great Barr – Not discussed.

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- WED 5 - Bannister Road to Charlotte Road. This route has been resurfaced earlier in the year. Following the resurfacing works a trial of new solar powered cats eyes has been installed at this location. 36 units were installed which should delineate the route during the hours of darkness. LAF members were encouraged to visit the route and give feedback at the next meeting. Suggestions were sought for the use of such lights on other surfaced routes.

The general state of PROWs in Sandwell has also received positive comments from people who have participated in the “Six Towns Walk”. Reports and emails can be found on the Ramblers’ website. (This year the “Six Towns Walk” event will grow to include three self-led walks of 26, 18 and 14 miles and also a led walk of 7 miles, which will start from the Sandwell Show at 10.30am.)

Gating Orders

JS informed the group that objections were made against the two gating order reports which were brought to the last meeting (St Andrew’s Drive, Rowley Regis and Newcomen Drive, Tipton). JS asked GN if these could be chased up as only an acknowledgement letter had been received. GN advised JS that a full response should have been sent with the letter addressing the concerns raised. Since this has not been done, a follow up letter should be sent asking for a full response in order to address the concerns raised.

32/14 LAF Agenda Items

The LAF have advised the group that Cllr Horton will no longer be able to attend the LAF meetings due to ill health.

The “Walking in Sandwell Strategy Review” is to be a standing item on the agenda for future LAF meetings.

33/14 Any Other Business

None.

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34/14 **The date for the next meeting will be Wednesday 8th October 2014 at 5.30pm, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury. (Attendees to gather at the Council Chamber reception area and be met by officers.)**

(Meeting ended at 19.20pm)

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