

FOLKESTONE/SHEPWAY CYCLE FORUM

Minutes of a meeting held on 20 October 2008 at the Civic Centre, Folkestone

Present: Jean Baker (Chair), Donna Rixson (KHS Transportation Engineer), Rhona Hodges (Shepway FoE), Alan Joyce (Sustrans Liaison Ranger), Paul Rees (Sustrans Ranger), David Kesby (Ramblers Association), Andrew Register, Cllr Carole Waters (SDC Secretary for Sport and Leisure), Cllr Richard Wallace (Folkestone Town Council), Stephen Fawke (Spokes), Gregory Williams (Events Officer, Spokes) Mike Baker and Tony Gilbert.

Apologies for absence were received from Anne Chamberlain (Go Folkestone) Malcolm Dearden (SDC Secretary for Environmental Services), Terry Conybeare and Steve Burton (Activ Sports).

1. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 12 June 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. **Matters arising:**

2.1 (Minute 2.1) Donna Rixson had consulted PROW officers at KCC about converting Rights of Way for shared use, and reported that any signage must conform to the Cycle Tracks Act. Colin Finch, Countryside Access Improvement Plan Officer at KCC, had indicated that improved signage was being discussed, and Donna agreed to monitor progress of these discussions. She also agreed to investigate the anomaly of the "No Cycling" sign on the bridleway alongside Folkestone Sports Centre. She advised that Forum members should not undertake dismantling and erection of signs. She would organise new sites for NCR 2 signs, and accepted the suggestion of Beach Street as a suitable site.

**Action
by**

DR

DR

2.2 (Minute 2.4) Following a site visit to Sandgate, Donna advised that access to the promenade from the car park was unsatisfactory. Members suggested that the NCR2 route should be changed to follow the promenade from Seabrook to Folkestone Harbour, thereby avoiding the Children's Play Park.

DR
Sustrans

2.3 (Minute 6) Jean Baker agreed to contact Owen Leyshon on suggested routes across the Marsh, following the Marsh Ride.

JB

2.4 Minute 7a) The officer now responsible for School Travel Plans was Jan Wickham. It was agreed to invite her to the next meeting of the Forum.

2.5 (Minute 7b) Cllr Dearden had reported that a Road Traffic Order would be required to prevent lorries from parking at the Kingsmead entrance to Folkestone Academy, and Peter Wignall (SDC Chief Solicitor) had indicated that this procedure would be expensive, and that SDC would shortly consider the whole problem of illegal lorry parking. Tony Gilbert suggested that another access point to the Academy would soon become available in Park Farm Road, and pupils would then be able to use existing paths from Downs Road.

2.6 (Minute 7d) Members were reminded that news of cycling events could be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

All

3 **Donna Rixson (KCC)**

Donna thanked members for their route survey work, and explained that she proposed to prioritise single routes in Folkestone, Hythe and Romney Marsh and to consult

design engineers to prepare schemes during the next year for eventual submission, in competition with other traffic proposals, in November 2009. Members voiced their frustration that schemes in Ashford, Canterbury and Deal had been achieved ahead of proposals for Shepway, and it was agreed that political pressure would be required to realise the Forum's aims.

Details of the Folkestone scheme were discussed. The preferred route from Cheriton to Folkestone would go north of Cheriton High Street, crossing Cherry Garden Avenue at the junction with Cherry Garden Lane using the central reservation as a refuge (and with possibly a Toucan Crossing), then via the Polo Ground to Cornwallis Avenue and on to Radnor Park/Central Station. Members lobbied strongly for a north-south route from the Leas via Earls Avenue and the existing cycle/pedestrian path under the railway line to Cornwallis Avenue. This would link with the east/west route, and at the northern end existing bridle ways would provide a route to the north of the Channel Tunnel. The Academy, Harvey and Pent Valley Schools would all be served by the route, with access on to the Sports Centre and the Rail Stations, and a link would be established between the seafront and the existing paths to the north of the town. The short stretch of cycle path existing in Shorncliffe Road could also be linked to this route. Route proposals from Tesco's to Seabrook were discussed, and the relative merits of Hospital Hill, Horn Street and Underhill Road assessed. Cllr Waters advised that 20mph speed limits on minor roads could be achieved if councillors were lobbied strongly.

All

Routes proposed for Hythe included Blackhouse Hill and Sandling Road, but these were rejected by members as being too dangerous. Alan Joyce suggested using Stone Farm Bridge and Tanners Hill Gardens. He considered that most pupils at Brockhill School would continue to walk from Sandling station, since the school catchment area was so wide. He also advised that the NCR2 route in Hythe and the Palmarsh to Burmarsh roads were adequate for use by primary school cyclists. A cycle path across the Hythe Green was unlikely to find favour, and the use of The Avenue as a shared route would also be controversial. Members agreed that in some instances segregated routes were more appropriate because of the attitude of local residents.

Developers of Nicholls Quarry site on Dymchurch Road had been granted outline planning permission subject to a Section 106 condition that they should construct a cycle route from the site to Palmarsh Avenue. Members suggested that a path near The Gem store to the Light Railway station could be improved as an alternative to the dangerous main road. Other routes on the Marsh under consideration included links to NCR2 at Greatstone and Dymchurch

4 Cycling in Hythe– Princes Parade and Ladies Walk

Donna, Simon Allum and Alan Joyce had addressed a hostile meeting of Hythe Town Council. Members advised that "education" initiatives were needed before that Council would welcome cyclists to use the north side of the Canal and Ladies Walk. Alan suggested that it might be possible to divert NCR2 up St Leonards Road.

5. Folkestone West and Central Station Developments

The scheme for the development of Folkestone West station included suggestions for improving the Beachborough Road/Shorncliffe Road junction, possibly with traffic lights incorporating an advance stop line for cyclists. Donna agreed to ask engineers whether it would be possible to widen Beachborough Road without affecting the

railway bridge. Plans for the station included provision for 200 car parking spaces, but as the scheme enjoyed Permitted Development Rights there was no possibility of using Section 106 for the provision of cycle parking facilities. However, at a recent meeting VinceLucas of SE Rail had promised that cycle racks would be installed at both Folkestone Central and West stations. Members stressed the importance of encouraging cyclists to use the stations in view of anticipated pressure on car parking.

DR

6 Folkestone Town Council grant

Richard Wallace confirmed that Phil Cross, Finance Officer at Folkestone Town Council, had advised that grants of £5000 had been given to fund local schemes. Donna suggested that some cycle stands were available in store at KCC, and that a grant for installation work might be appropriate. She agreed to make the request via Emily Sanger, Chairman of the Town Community Services Committee.. Immediate suggestions for suitable sites included the Sunny Sands Beach and the top of the Old High Street; further suggestions should be sent immediately to Rhona or Donna.

DR

All

7 AOB

1. Design proposals for the development of Tontine Street included no provision for cycle tracks. This issue would be discussed at the next meeting
2. Donna will take maternity leave from mid-January 2009, and will introduce her temporary replacement at the next meeting.

8 Next meeting - Thursday 15 January 2009 at the Civic Centre.