

FOLKESTONE/SHEPWAY CYCLE FORUM

Minutes of a meeting held on 24 March 2010 at the Civic Centre, Folkestone

Present: Jean Baker (Chair), Rhona Hodges (Shepway FoE), Alan Joyce (Sustrans Liaison Ranger), Brian Turner (Sustrans), Cllr Malcolm Dearden (SDC Secretary for Economic Development and Transport), Dave Kesby, Sara Barnes, David Taylor, Steve Burton (Activ Sports), Hugh Robertson-Ritchie, Mark Tuson (WCCP), Tony Gilbert, Ian Baker and Gregory Williams (Spokes)

1 Apologies for absence were received from Elizabeth Lonkhurst, Stephen Fawke (Spokes), Paul Rees (Sustrans Ranger) Chris Ainsworth, Mike Baker, Colin Hacker and Anne Chamberlain.

2 Minutes of the meetings held on 8 October 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes of 8 October 2009:

(Minute 2.1). Dave Kesby reported that, following discussion with KCC's PROW Officer, he had been authorised to paint out the "No Cycling" sign on the bridleway alongside Folkestone Sports Centre. **ACTION: DK**

(Minute 2.3) Tony Gilbert confirmed that Folkestone Academy was encouraging pupils to cycle to school, using the Kingsmead entrance.

(Minute 2.5) David Taylor had contacted Jeremy Whitaker of SDC but no further plans had been made to improve Tontine Street.

(Minute 2.7) Speed bumps beside the Hythe Canal and in the Lower Leas Coastal Park continued to destabilize cyclists and disabled people. Malcolm Dearden agreed to suggest to SDC officers that one section of the obstacle might be removed in both locations. **ACTION: MD**

(Minute 4) Rhona Hodges agreed to discuss publicity for cycle parking and a publicity event on 8 May with Folkestone Town Centre Manager. **ACTION RH**

Greg Williams would update the town map to show cycle parking. **ACTION: GW**

(Minute 6) At the recent meeting of the Joint Transport Board, Cllr Love had promised to support the Forum's efforts to ensure the provision of cycle stands under cover at Folkestone West station and David Barton of Kent Highway Services had reported that better facilities for cyclists would be included in the improvements still to take place at the station. One suggestion from the Forum was to relocate the un-covered stands on the down platform to the covered section of the platform. **ACTION: JB**

(Minute 7) Thanks to Spokes, the Forum had a page on their website: (www.spokeseastkent.org.uk). Greg Williams agreed to arrange for a link with Discover Folkestone website. All members were encouraged to send news items to Greg for inclusion on his blog (gregorywilliams@purplegeodesoftware.co.uk) **ACTION: ALL**

Tom Weatherley and others had managed to get letters published in The Herald.

(Minute 8) Sustrans and KCC had finalised plans for the route between West Hythe and Aldergate Bridge, and gained approval for resurfacing of the route between Lydd and Jury's Gap.

(Minute 9) Malcolm Dearden had invited Jean Baker to speak to the Joint Transportation Board, where several members were supportive of the Forum's activities and requested they be informed of the Forum's response to the first draft of the Strategy. Jean and Rhona had held a briefing meeting with Cllr Tim Prater. Malcolm Dearden invited the Forum to suggest Street

Furniture to the value of £3000 in New Romney, £6000 in Hythe, and a larger amount in Folkestone. *(Members are invited to send suggestions to Jean or Rhona).* **ACTION: ALL** (Minute 10b) Dave Kesby agreed that the suggestion for upgrading the footpaths alongside the A260 at Selsted and the A20 at Sellindge should be included in the Forum's responses to the Draft Strategy.

4 Shepway's Cycling Strategy 5 Year Plan

Copies of the Strategy had been circulated on the morning of the meeting and reaction was therefore limited to broad impressions. Members agreed that much of the rhetoric of the Strategy was unarguable, but that the routes shown on the maps (still not sufficiently clearly shown) paid scant regard to the submissions made over the years by members of the Forum who had carried out practical surveys and provided explanatory descriptions of routes, all of which conformed to the stated priorities of KCC's policy on cycling. Tony Gilbert regretted that routes to schools did not appear to be prioritised, and members compared the draft proposals unfavourably with the published Strategies of Tonbridge and Ashford etc. These and other Kent Cycling Strategies can be viewed at www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/transport_policies/cycling_strategies.aspx

The "problem areas" listed in Paragraph 6 of Shepway's draft Strategy appeared to be arbitrarily chosen, and in fact the route through Seabrook was already adequately provided for. Members suggested that Tontine Street and the road to Hawkinge should be included on the list. Blackbull Road, Canterbury Road and Cherry Garden Avenue could all be made safer through the imposition of lower speed limits, while the obvious alternative to Sandgate Road was The Leas. It was agreed that the various survey documents should be retrieved from KHS and that the Forum's preferred routes be mapped prior to a meeting with Donna Rixson to present the Forum's response. *(Any other Members' responses should be sent by 7 April to Rhona)* **ACTION: ALL**

5 Seafrost Promenade

Alan Joyce reported that officers at SDC appeared unwilling to progress the scheme for using the "maintenance gangway" for use by cyclists and pedestrians. Folkestone Town Council had indicated that they would provide funds for a demarcation line. Alan hoped to meet Sandgate Council to address their concerns, and had asked KCC's PROW officer for support. It was agreed that the promenade route should be included in the Strategy. **ACTION: AJ, SB**

6 Cheriton Road Sports Ground

Letters of objection had been sent to SDC when a planning application for improvement to the Recreation Ground included no provision for a cycle path of cycle parking. Ben Geering of SDC had promised to ask the applicant to safeguard the Forum's proposed East-West route through the recreation ground. The lack of a strategy once again hampered responses to planning proposals, but members had noted an application from Sage for a cycle shed, and proposals to revamp the Sports Centre.

Alan agreed to monitor planning applications affecting cyclists. **ACTION: AJ**

7 Tontine Street and the Creative Quarter

Members agreed to monitor progress on the development of this area, to include the redesign of Tram Road and the route from Tontine Street up to the town centre. **ACTION: DT, IB**

8 Sandgate and Hythe

Members continued to liaise with councillors on Sandgate Town Council to progress the promenade route. Once the route was established, Hythe Town Council might be asked to approve the continuation of this route, and the controversial route on the north side of the Canal beside Waitrose. **ACTION: AJ**

9 Cyclists and the Police

Following local media publicity about draconian fines imposed on cyclists for riding on pavements, Jean Baker had sent an open letter to Inspector Hogben hoping for greater involvement of the police with the work of the Forum. She agreed to invite Chief Inspector Martin Bradley to attend a meeting to discuss a more helpful relationship. **ACTION: JB**

10 Sandgate Cycle Shop

Sara Barnes told members that her new shop was now open for the sale of cycles, repair and cycle hire, together with a coffee shop aimed at people interested in cycling.

Next meeting to be with Donna Rixson in the daytime – date to be arranged.