

Minutes of the Meeting of the Waverley Cycle Forum 23rd January 2013

Website: <http://cycleforum.org.uk/waverley/>

Present:

David Moxon (DM)	Chair
Chris Meeks (CM)	Friends of the Earth, Waverley Group
Myra Newnes-Smith (MNS)	Witley Parish Council
Thomas Lankester (TL)	Transition Town Farnham
Maurice Byham (MB)	Waverley Councillor
David Munro (Cllr DM)	SCC Councillor
Ian Capon (IC)	My BikeStation Ltd
Roland Seber	
Matthew Ellis	Waverley Borough Council

1. DM said that Ralph Holmes had moved to Dorset and would no longer be involved with the Forum. He would be much missed in view of his intimate knowledge of the Cranleigh area and it was hoped that a suitable replacement could be found.

Action: DM to approach possible candidates

2. Election of Chairman

Cllr DM proposed David Moxon. MNS seconded

All agreed that DM should be chairman for another year which DM accepted but indicated that he would not wish to serve beyond that.

3. Review of Progress on Tasks & Schemes prioritised for 2012/13

Godalming Marshall Road – Jane Bowden had tracked down the 1930's byelaw prohibiting bicycles using the path and it is hoped that the SCC are now dealing with it to get it changed. There was some discussion about the legal requirements for doing this: the cycle path would be additional to the footpath, using the Jewsons land, and the legal status of the footpath would not necessarily be affected. Cllr DM reported that the SCC local committee has confirmed it as a priority. Some surveying work has started. It is understood that John Hilder at SCC is still waiting for Atkins to produce the land plan. The exact scope of the work and associated costs and timetable can then be established. CM had consulted The Ramblers Association and they are happy with the proposals.

Catteshall Lane/Wharf Street toucan crossing – No further progress, approved as part of the Key site and waiting for the developers.

Godalming High Street contraflow - DM sent a note to Steve Cosser after the last meeting, summarising the arguments in favour of the scheme. In subsequent correspondence it has been ascertained that Godalming Together has been given some funds by the Town Council to look at pedestrianisation and related issues in the High Street. Suzie Gortler is Godalming Town Projects Coordinator and has said that Godalming Together

have received some funding to engage the services of a "de-cluttering" expert. There will be a consultation exercise and it is hoped that the results of this report will impact on safety issues within the high street. Suzie commented: "I hope the cycle forum will find the new TiCL Godalming Phone application useful in engaging new members and spreading news."

Action: RS and CM to contribute to the discussion through their involvement with the relevant Godalming Together Safety Group

Wurth House development, Catteshall Lane – Now received planning permission for 147 homes. Includes the provision of cycle infrastructure and storage. The Forum needs to consider whether the infrastructure should be included in the list of priority schemes in the Cycle Plan.

Milford Hospital development – DM and CM had spoken with Kathy Smyth of FOE about the need for safe cycling routes linking the site to facilities including Milford Station and Rodborough School. MNS said that Witley Parish Council have supported Rodborough School's campaign to improve road safety on routes to the school following a spate of accidents in recent months. The problem will be exacerbated when the development of the hospital site generates more traffic. Rake Lane and Station Lane are both too narrow to accommodate a dedicated cycle lane, although there is a good path between Tuesley Lane and Milford Station though grass has encroached and needs to be cut back. The hospital site development could bring improvements to the footpath to Milford Station and make it a shared use path.

One option worth investigating for the route from the station to Rodborough would be the possibility of creating a path across the fields to avoid Rake Lane, such as been done across Tuesley Farm (which enables cyclists to avoid part of Station Lane).

The most effective ways of lobbying SCC and WBC through the planning application for improvements were considered. The approach should be to hook cycle improvements to health, education and transport. The collection of information about how students travel to school would be valuable and it would be worth finding out whether the school had this information or would be willing and able to collect it. Cllr DM suggested that the Forum should contact Cllr Peter Martin to help bring about improvements. MB assured the Forum that Waverley will be considering all these points when the application is considered.

Cranleigh/Ewhurst cycle path, Swallow Tiles development – A report on the path was published in Get Surrey.
http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/s/2126089_cycle_footpath_to_open_up_villages_for_residents Substantial funding has now been earmarked for the scheme, including £75k from the Swallow Tiles development. However, significant work has yet to be done, including finalisation of the route involving protracted negotiations with landowners.. SCC Cllr Alan Young has been much involved and is working hard to move things forward.

Shared use cycle route north of Cranleigh High Street & central Cranleigh – No further progress but Alan Young supports the scheme.

Scholars Greenway – TL reported that there was a write up about the Greenway in “Round and About”. There are still some nagging problems that are slowly being sorted out such as signs and overgrowing vegetation on the paths. Both TL and Cllr DM have been chasing the relevant SCC officers but appreciate that in the winter there are other priorities and that the actual work can only be carried out after it has been through the chain of command. Again it was discussed how linking the merits of cycling to health and promoting routes for pedestrian use as well is an effective way of getting work done. It was mentioned that the Farnham Rugby Club has relocated to Monkton Lane and could also be involved as they run health walks from there. This illustrated the importance of correct signage.

Weyside Greenway – TL reported that as the NCR does not pass through the centre of Farnham the Weyside Greenway is proposed to connect important locations in the town. There are also opportunities to link it to NCR and the North Downs Way which run to the south of the A31. However the creation of the route will require overcoming some difficult issues and will depend on developer contributions. CM suggested that in order to secure access to developers’ contributions this should be done quickly. TL said that they have decided to be more proactive about securing funding in the future including getting it from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This will be done by setting out an active vision for the Greenway based on transport, health and tourism and through the preparation of a plan. They will also continue to work with Waverley and the railway station to promote the use of cycling through the provision of better cycle storage facilities.

National Trust Permissive Paths

DM had contacted Rob Fairbanks of the Surrey Hills AONB Unit. He was very positive about liaising with the Forum about possible developments in respect of routes in the Hindhead/Witley area, which are likely to include making better use of NT permissive paths.

Action: DM to take forward discussions with Rob Fairbanks

Website Development

Alex McCalden (currently based in Utrecht) is still working on the technical side of the website and is happy to stay involved. IC explained that its development will depend on how the Forum wishes to use it and he set out the matters that need to be considered under his “AFRO”:

Audience. What is it and how do we want to engage them

Frequency. How often do we want it used

Role (or mission). What are we saying to them – can we pass on good practice

Organization. How good is the organization at managing the website

IC graphically described how a website could be set out : a front half that allows discussion and ideas as well as suggesting rides etc and a back half that informs users of the work of the Forum and other information. The Forum were very positive about IC’s suggestions and asked him to continue to develop them.

Action: IC to further develop how the website will work and will further liaise with AMcC about presentation. Forum will submit ideas for rides etc.

Bikes on Buses – As Chris Peck could not make the meeting this will be revisited at a later meeting.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Two Parks Project – Deferred to the next meeting.

Cycle Parking in Haslemere – Deferred to the next meeting

Revision of Waverley Cycle Plan – It has been hoped that the SCC Cycling Strategy would have been completed by now. However, unless it is imminent the revision of the Cycle Plan can probably proceed as the broad thrust of the Strategy is clear. It was considered that a day should be set aside for Forum members with a particular interest in this work to thrash out a revised version. Authors should think about how best to set out the Plan, including use of graphic, maps, pictures etc – anything that would strengthen its appeal to a wider readership and so help raise the profile of cycling in the Borough.
Action: DM, TL and RS to meet to work on the revision and others to be invited to contribute

4. Frequency of Future Meetings

DM presented his paper looking at possible options. A rethink of the pattern of meetings and communication had been prompted by the fact that Jane Bowden would no longer be able to support for the two meetings she presently attends on behalf of Waverley. MTE said that a representative of Planning Services will be able to continue with servicing the two hour meetings twice a year but would not be able to increase its involvement beyond this. However, it is up to the Forum to decide and if it was felt that more than two plenary meetings were still needed, then the Forum should formally approach the Council to discuss how this could be arranged. Although ways could be found to continue with things in much their present form it was felt the opportunity should be taken to consider other approaches. The following ideas emerged in the course of discussion.:

- It would be possible to reduce the number of plenary meetings to two (or possibly even one) a year, interspersed with smaller quarterly meetings bringing together people who were taking the lead on individual projects.
- Meetings did not have to be confined to Godalming. This would enable meetings to be combined with visits to look at specific schemes in the spring or summer when evenings were light.
- Regardless of what was decided in respect of meetings, the website should be developed in ways which would encourage wider participation and discussion. This would, among other things, help keep things moving between plenary meetings and could make the Forum a more dynamic body.

The consensus was that the Forum should experiment with two plenary meetings a year with two intervening meetings comprising the smaller group of members who were taking the lead on specific schemes, plus other

individuals as appropriate. It is envisaged that this sub-group would also meet before the plenary meetings though details have yet to be worked out. Plenary meetings would then be rather different in character and would focus more on issues of general relevance, often with external speakers. There would be less discussion of the details of individual schemes which tend to be of narrower interest. It is recognised that sharing experience across the borough can be very helpful, and it is thought that this could survive changes such as those suggested above.

No one knows for sure whether the new arrangements would work better. But it was agreed that it would be worth giving it a try and, in a year's time, reviewing how it was working in practice.

5. Matters arising from the meeting on 25.10.12

None

6. AOB

i) Hankley Common – DM said there was still an issue regarding cycling on army tracks. The Parish Council had reached an agreement in February 2012 that cyclists could use army tracks in addition to public bridleways. There were some caveats, in that certain tracks should be avoided for (unspecified) conservation reasons and cyclists should take a different route if requested to do so to avoid getting in the way of army exercises. However, the army's agents, Landmarc, are continuing a policy of strict enforcement of the byelaws which prohibit 'vehicles of any kind'. MoD/Landmarc have been advised of the deep concern about the discrepancy between what was agreed and the behaviour of wardens on the ground. Elstead Parish Council has a further meeting with MoD scheduled for early March and have been told that this issue needed to be resolved then if further involvement of Ministers was to be avoided.

Action: DM to continue to liaise with the Council and others as appropriate

ii) The Waverley Cycle Route on Frensham Common has been removed, largely because its legality has been challenged by a local resident and the signs were damaged or destroyed. However, advice from CTC in a comparable case suggests that the establishment of the track was perfectly legal. Steve Webster, who manages Frensham Common for Waverley, has invited ideas for creating a new route. This is being pursued by a cyclist who knows the area well and lives close to the common.

Action: DM to liaise with Steve and other interested parties

7. Date of Future Meetings

Wednesday 15 May at 6.30 in Farnham. Details to be circulated later.