



Leighton-Linslade Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group

4 May 2021 at 10:30 am

1. Introduction and Apologies

Present: Cllr Tony Morris (LLTC) - Chair, Cllr Victoria Harvey (LLTC/CBC), Cllr Clive Palmer (LLTC), Cllr Steve Owen (LLTC), Pauline Hey (Local Access Forum), Jon Balaam (Greensand Trust), Mark Saccoccio (LLTC), Howard Hughes (CBC), Peter Bate (Sustrans/Buzzcycles), Cllr Mark Versallion (CBC), Ian Haynes (LLTC), Mellony Jahn (LLTC).

Apologies: Clive Beckett (Local Access Forum) and Steve Lakin (CBC)

2. Approval of Minutes of 1 February 2021

The notes of the previous meetings were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Water quality had been raised at the Catchment Partnership meeting, and Andrew Selous was aware.

4. Review of action list

See attached updated action list with the latest comments in **green**.

5. Information updates

CBC

HH: regarding public access to Grovebury Road and Water Meadows – seeking technical approval from Highways. Addition of improved picnic site and car park area.

Cllr Harvey asked would further work take place regarding the facilities at Tiddenfoot. HH replied no plan for an alternative scheme at present. The quarry site development would be looked at before moving forward with the Tiddenfoot scheme. A request was made to circulate the Tiddenfoot Masterplan to all members for their information; however, the plan may need updating, and this should be kept in mind.

LLTC

IH: the Tree planting had nearly been completed. Litter is still a problem but seems to be improving slightly. A question was raised regarding ownership of a particular dog bin that was overflowing; IH to contact the relevant person regarding this.

GST

JB: GST were in the process of taking ownership of the Stanbridge Meadows Site. This site could now be managed with conservation management to improve it for visits in June/July.

Project Gateway at the bottom of the High Street was progressing well with artists being interviewed, and the installation of a water bottle filling station is discussed.

Greensand Ridge Project – the parking system had been upgraded at Rushmere Park after a hectic period, and it was hoped this would help solve the problem of queueing traffic in the area. It was felt that the bike routes around this area should be prioritised to encourage people to use sustainable transport to access the Park. The car park price increase was also mentioned as an extra cost for families/people going to the Park, but the short-term parking cost addition was welcomed.

Cllr Versallion informed members that the rise in popularity of the Park during the past months had caused annoyance to local people and felt the area had been promoted as a destination, thus driving traffic problems.

Cllr Harvey asked if MS could follow up the point of cycle access to Rushmere being a priority and the possible installation of toilets at Tiddenfoot with Cllr Stock and Stephen Mooring as this could alleviate the pressure at Rushmere.

The Greensand Country Festival would be running throughout May with covid secure events planned.

GST were liaising with CBC planning regarding residential flats planned for Billington Road to look at the ecological impact of this development.

Buzzcycles

PB: Bike Week was taking place the first week in June, and Dr Bike would be at the market. An audit would be taking place of traffic-free cycle routes. Tom Littlehales had taken over from Esther Clarke, and recruitment for new members would be taking place.

Sustrans – work would be taking place on the towpath between Blackridge and Bletchley as part of the Greenwheel, but this was in the early stages at present.

Clipstone Park cycle path

This was in the hands of Steve Lakin, CBC, to secure funding to deliver the route.

Pollution in River Ouzel

The recent meeting held had been positive, and Andrew Selous had taken note of concerns, and it was hoped to receive feedback from this meeting. The River Ouzel had been used as a local example, but it was felt this was a national issue and needed to be monitored. The response received from Anglian Water stated this could not be investigated at present because of workload but would be held on file. No response had been received from the Canal and River Trust, and a suggestion was made to invite a representative to one of the Group's meetings.

6. The link between countryside access and health

During lockdown, the benefits of access to the countryside had been highlighted for physical and mental health. A new strategy called Physical Activity Strategy was being taken to the Executive in June for approval promoting physical activities targeting groups and organised activities. A suggestion was made for the provision of a map of the area to enable the public to enjoy the local environment. It was confirmed the Ouzel Valley Group had money ringfenced for the Woodman Close Cycle Project. If needed, a proportion of this could be requested from the Grounds and Environmental Committee.

Ownership of the map was questioned, Howard Hughes would ask Steve Lakin and come back to the Town Clerk with the answer. The Group agreed that the provision of maps would be a good idea to assist with countryside access.

7. Any other business

Councillor Owen declared an interest as a member of the Planning and Transport Committee.

Councillor Harvey was concerned about the planning applications on the Pledge Factory site for 146 dwellings and Corbetts Hill Farm for five dwellings. JB would look at the two applications and make his comments on them. Buzz Cycles had already put in an objection to the Pledge Factory development site because of concerns about the increase in traffic.

Concerns should be voiced to the Planning & Transport Committee on these applications although some members thought the look of the area once completed could be an improvement.

JB informed the Group he would be meeting with Linda Bignall, Countryside unit, to inspect the riverbank at the back of the travelling showman site next to Jewsons and the Shell garage. There were concerns that if flooding occurred, the silt would be washed off this site into the river.

8. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be 2 September 2021 at 10.30 am.

The meeting closed at 1156 hours.