

Note: Subject to approval at next meeting

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 4 AUGUST 2015

Present: Trevor Payne (Chairman)
Roy Campbell (Treasurer)
Brian Caffarey (Secretary)
John Coulter
Andrew Osborne
Anne Salmon
Brian Turner

MINUTES OF EC MEETING ON 16 JUNE 2015

1. The minutes were approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA

Para 3 - Arranging walks

2. Subsequent to the meeting, Linda Harrison had kindly offered to organise walks on behalf of the Group. The first walk took place on 26 July but, unfortunately, the weather was very poor, which no doubt affected attendance. Another walk has been arranged for 10.00am on Sunday 4 October. Steps will be taken to publicise the walk. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

Para 5 – Interest from Parish Councils

3. The Secretary had responded to Selling Parish Council to say that membership of the Group was confined to individuals but that one or more members of the Council would be very welcome to join the Group and to report back on matters of interest. (See also item below re meeting with Cllr Martin Webb.) The Secretary had also had correspondence with Ospringe Parish Council and had undertaken to keep the Council in touch.

Para 16 – Proposal for an exhibition on public footpaths at the Fleur

4. The Secretary had been in further correspondence with Clive Foreman, Deputy Chair of the Faversham Society. Clive had kindly agreed to take the lead in arranging an exhibition, with help from the Group. The next step was for the Secretary to meet Clive at the Fleur to discuss how to take matters forward. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

SECRETARY'S REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5. The meeting considered a note setting out the steps taken since the previous meeting and those planned. The following matters were noted:

- Website – The Group's website had been launched in late June and had received many favourable comments. It was suggested that the number of 'hits' might be recorded.
ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

- Social media – a Facebook page had been created, and there was an entry on faversham.org but more needed to be done to publicise the Group and its activities through social media and through notices and posters. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**
- Walking groups – through Linda Harrison contact had been made with the Guided Health Walk groups and it was understood that Antony Millett, who led town walks, had been contacted but further checks would be made to see if there were any other groups whose members might be interested in joining the Group. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**
- Encouraging the designation of footpaths by the deadline of 1 January 2026 – it was noted that existing legislation provided that unless existing footpaths were designated on the official map of footpaths by 1 January 2026 the opportunity to designate would no longer exist. In broad terms, this involved proving – for example, through individual statements of truth – that a footpath had been walked without hindrance for 20 years or more. It was felt that there were at least several footpaths locally which would merit designation. It was agreed that, as a first step, a note should be prepared for the EC setting out the procedure which would need to be followed, after which priorities for action would need to be decided. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY/ANDREW OSBORNE**

TREASURER'S REPORT

6. Roy Campbell said that the Group now had 42 paid-up members: a very satisfactory position only two months after the Group had been formed. There were still a few formalities to be completed before the Group's bank account could be opened. He and the Secretary had had an initial discussion about applying for charitable status. There appeared to be no insuperable obstacle to doing this but progress could not be made until the bank account was opened.

FOOTPATH ZF5 AT FAVERSHAM REACH AND WATERSIDE CLOSE

7. The Group had written to KCC, welcoming their proposals in their informal consultation for a Creek-side path at Faversham Reach and Waterside Close. The Chairman had also had letters published in both local papers. Clearly, a number of individuals had also written to KCC in support of their proposals. It was understood, however, that a number of Faversham Reach and Waterside Close residents had objected to the proposals, some even arguing that the existing footpath should be extinguished – which was not at issue. KCC would be carrying out some further engineering studies before putting the matter to the Regulation Panel to decide whether the proposals should go out for a six-week formal consultation.

8. It was noted that Faversham Town Council had voted, with only one abstention, to express its support for KCC's proposals. This was warmly welcomed.

ENGLISH COAST PATH

9. It was noted that Natural England had made a presentation to Faversham Town Council on 29 June, setting out how it proposed to consult on the route which the coast path would take between Whitstable and Iwade. Natural England had indicated that it planned to put its final proposals to the Secretary of State by the end of 2016. They had also indicated, in connection with the bridge footpath, that there might be scope for them to make a financial contribution towards any works required to ensure a satisfactory coast path.

10. The meeting considered proposals drawn up by Andrew Osborne for the route of the coast path through Faversham. On the town side, a number of changes to the route of the Saxon Shore Way would be needed to ensure that the coast path followed the Creek more closely. Most of these had

already been highlighted in the Faversham Creek Streetscape Strategy and in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted, in connection with Provender Walk, that even if, for some reason, the coast path did not run along that promenade it would appear that the public would have right of access as a result of the 'coastal margin' provisions: the same argument applying as at Faversham Reach and Waterside Close. It was also noted that it would be important to ensure that the new bridge provided scope for public access to footpaths in both directions on the town side. A letter should be sent to KCC to reinforce this point. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY/ANDREW OSBORNE**

11. It was agreed that Andrew's proposals should form the basis of discussion for the meeting which he, the Chairman and the Secretary would have with Natural England on 19 August. The Secretary would write to Natural England to send them the proposals and to alert them to a number of issues on which the Group would wish to have some clarification, including the interaction between work on the coast path route and KCC's consideration of footpath ZF5 at Faversham Reach/Waterside Close. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

FOOTPATH ISSUES IN SELLING

12. The meeting discussed a note by the Secretary of a meeting which he had had with Cllr Martin Webb of Selling Parish Council about a number of footpath issues in and around Selling. It was agreed that the Group should write to KCC to support the case for action to deal with obstructions; to replace stiles by kissing gates, assuming that gates were in fact still needed; and to improve footpath connections between the different parts of Selling. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

13. It was noted that Cllr Webb ideally wished to see a cycleway or continuous footpath connections between Selling and Faversham. Though this was clearly a commendable idea, the Group felt that this needed to be pursued initially by Selling Parish Council, noting in passing that the creation of new public rights of way was a major task.

PROPOSAL FOR A LOG OF FOOTPATH ISSUES

14. The meeting considered a note by the Secretary which discussed a couple of other footpath issues which had been drawn to his attention and which proposed the creation of a 'log' to keep track of issues raised with the Group or which the Group wished to pursue:

- Lakeside Close – Chris Oswald-Jones had raised the issue of the agreement which Redrow had apparently given, and which had not been implemented, to improve footpath ZF3 from the back of the Lakeside development to the junction with footpath ZF4, which leads through to the Bysing Wood Road. At present the route is unsuitable for people pushing buggies etc. It was agreed that the Group should write to Swale Borough Council to follow this up. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**
- Proposal for a path from Jubilee Way to the Rec – Cllr Peter Flower had written to say that there appeared to be a need for such a path and to ask whether the Group might be interested in pursuing such a proposal. In discussion it was agreed that such a path was indeed desirable and it was understood that it had originally appeared in plans submitted for Jubilee Way. The position now was that as part of the proposed improvements to the Rec it was planned to create a vehicular access from the extended Jubilee Way car park through to the parking area near the Faversham Rugby Club – which, if implemented, would provide a route for pedestrians too. The impetus for this was mainly to make it unnecessary for cars to use the route from Whitstable Road into the Rec. It was noted that it would be important to ensure that any route decided upon did not encourage the creation of unofficial paths across the grassed areas of the Rec. The Secretary was asked to convey the Group's support

for these proposals to the Municipal Charities and to reply to Cllr Flower accordingly.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

15. The EC agreed that it would be helpful to create a 'log' as proposed. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16. The following matters were mentioned:

- Court of Appeal judgement – there had been a Court of Appeal judgement relating to paths/bridleways created under enclosure measures early in the 19th century, the effect of which was to make it likely that a number of paths which had hitherto been considered private were in fact public rights of way. It was not known at present whether the judgement would have any implications for paths in the Faversham area
- Ramblers' Big Pathwatch – Ramblers had established this initiative to map the state of the nation's footpaths. More information would be provided to the EC about this initiative.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

17. Further EC meetings have been arranged for Tuesday 1 September 2015 and Wednesday 21 October 2015, both at 7pm at 130 Athelstan Road.

5 August 2015