

Note: Subject to approval at next meeting

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 22 NOVEMBER 2017

Present: Trevor Payne (Chair)
Brian Caffarey (Secretary)
Julian Saunders (Treasurer)
John Coulter
Andrew Osborne
Anne Salmon
Nick Williams
Marion Shoard (present for discussion of items at paras 21-23)

WELCOME

1. Trevor Payne welcomed Nick Williams to his first meeting following his election as a Member of the EC at the recent AGM. He also welcomed Marion Shoard, who had kindly agreed to assist the EC with its consideration of the project to preserve footpaths at risk from legislative changes and who had been invited to attend for the discussion of this item.

MINUTES OF EC MEETING ON 19 OCTOBER 2017

2. The minutes were approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA

(i) Recent and forthcoming walks (para 3)

3. The EC expressed its thanks to Linda Harrison for organising and leading a very enjoyable walk on 19 November in the Newnham/Doddington area. The next walk would be on Sunday 14 January 2018.

(ii) Website hits (para 4)

4. Brian Caffarey said that he had not yet found time to join and access the new arrangements which the website host had set up.

(iii) Social media etc (para 5)

5. The website was fully up-to-date and a number of Facebook postings had been added.

(iv) Proposal for a path from Jubilee Way to the Rec (para 6)

6. There was no new information to pass on: the possibility of a path linking the Eurolink site with the Rec remained under consideration.

(v) The bund on the Front Brents (para 7)

7. Andrew Osborne said that he was still pursuing various issues with the Environment Agency and Swale BC.

(vi) Planning application in respect of former Oil Depot at Standard Quay (para 9)

8. Anne Salmon said that the Environment Agency had withdrawn its objections to the proposed residential development subject to some minor technical points. Other aspects remained under consideration, including the Group's representations regarding a Creekside path and the need to ensure connections with Standard Quay and Provender Walk.

(vii) Redevelopment of Standard House (para 10)

9. As agreed, the Group had submitted comments on the planning application, drawing attention to the need to make improvements to the footpath running from Standard Quay through to Iron Wharf.

(viii) Expansion of East Kent Recycling Ltd at Oare (para 11)

10. Brian Caffarey had circulated a note setting out recent exchanges with Uproare, the residents' protest group, and the Kent Law School, who had been advising the residents, regarding the track at Oare which formed part of the Saxon Shore Way and the proposed England Coast Path route and which was used by lorries going to and from the recycling plant. As agreed at the last meeting, he had submitted comments on the planning application to the effect that any planning approval would be unacceptable unless it contained a requirement to construct a 1.5 metre path alongside the roadway. He had also written to local representatives to advise them about the process of obtaining a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) in order to have the track added to the Definitive Map.

11. It seemed that, in conjunction with Kent Law School, the residents would be taking forward an application for a DMMO. (It was noted, in passing, that the track came within the Faversham parish, so it might be appropriate for Faversham Town Council, rather than Oare Parish Council, to make any application.) Andrew Osborne said that it appeared that Bretts, who owned the track, had sought in 2012 to make it clear that they did not regard it as a public right of way, but it was thought that this would be of little consequence since it seemed clear that the track had been used for many years before that without let or hindrance. It was agreed that there was no need for the Group to be further involved in a DMMO application unless our advice or assistance was sought.

12. It was noted that Natural England had commented on the planning application, referring to their and KCC's plans to provide pedestrian refuges and warning signs as part of the England Coast Path

implementation process. Brian Caffarey had written separately to NE about this but had not received a reply to date.

(ix) Proposed diversion of public footpath ZF26 at Macknades (para 24)

13. The Group had written to KCC to say that the proposed diversion was acceptable subject to clarification of some of the proposals for fencing the path. A reply had just been received which indicated that the plans had been modified to reflect the Group's concerns.

(x) Planning application in respect of 36 Woodside (para 24)

14. As agreed at the last meeting, Brian Caffarey had written to object to the application, which would involve obstructing a public footpath.

TREASURER'S REPORT

15. Julian Saunders said that he was making progress with the intention to reclaim gift aid. He had also submitted a claim to Bensted's Charity to meet some of the Group's printing and postage costs.

ACTION: JULIAN SAUNDERS

16. He and the Secretary would be meeting separately to discuss the arrangements for seeking renewals of membership for 2018.

ACTION: JULIAN SAUNDERS/BRIAN CAFFAREY

AGM 2017

17. It was agreed that the arrangements for the Group's recent AGM had gone well. It was particularly pleasing that so many members had attended.

CREEKSIDE PATH AT FAVERSHAM REACH AND WATERSIDE CLOSE

18. The meeting noted that the Group's Statement of Case had been submitted as planned and expressed thanks to the many members and others who had written in support of the footpath Orders. Copies of other Statements of Case had just been received, along with copies of some of the other individual representations. It was understood that the remaining representations would be circulated with Proofs of Evidence after the 19 December deadline for the latter. Brian Caffarey, Andrew Osborne and John Coulter would meet as soon as possible to consider what the Group needed to say in Brian's Proof of Evidence and what points might be more suitably followed up by other parties.

ACTION: ANDREW OSBORNE/BRIAN CAFFAREY/JOHN COULTER

ENGLAND COAST PATH

19. Brian Caffarey reported that NE hoped that the Inspector who was considering representations regarding the proposed route for the Whitstable to Iwade section of the England Coast Path would make decisions in December.

20. The meeting welcomed the fact that NE had submitted a planning application to remove part of the wall between Provender Walk and the Quayside Buildings. The Group would write in support of the application.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

DESIGNATION OF FOOTPATHS BY 1 JANUARY 2026/LOST WAYS INITIATIVE

21. The meeting considered the Group's role in Kent Ramblers' Lost Ways initiative, on which Neville Machin had given a very helpful presentation at the AGM. It was agreed that the Group should offer to undertake any preliminary field surveys in Faversham and its surrounding parishes. It appeared that there would not be a huge number of surveys to undertake and it was thought that it might be appropriate for each survey to be conducted by a couple of people. Brian Caffarey would write to Neville Machin to confirm the Group's involvement and to ask for details of all the surveys to be undertaken. John Coulter mentioned that, as agreed at the last meeting, he had suggested to Neville that a Tankerton survey which we had been sent would be more appropriately followed up by the Canterbury Ramblers branch.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

22. Marion Shoard said that, while it was extremely helpful to ensure that 'route anomalies' were investigated as proposed in the Lost Ways project, she hoped that it would be possible to go beyond this to examine whether there were paths which did not show up at all on maps but which had been lost at various stages, including when the initial proposals for the Definitive Map were being drawn up. It was clear that there had been misconceptions in some instances about what should or should not be included. It was also the case that landowners and land managers had been powerful figures on the old county councils and on parish councils and that they were not likely to have proposed paths for the Definitive Map if their status had been in doubt. She had also carried out work in Hampshire and discovered paths through very attractive countryside which were not on the Definitive Map. It was possible that the existence of such paths as rights of way could be confirmed by examining old maps and records. It was agreed in discussion that, when the information had been received from Kent Ramblers about which 'anomalies' had been identified in the Group's area, a meeting would be arranged with Marion at which consideration would be given to the issue which she had identified. Attention was also drawn to the fact that there were some paths which were regularly walked but which were not registered as public footpaths. Attempts should be made at the same time to identify these.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

PROPOSAL TO BECOME AN AFFILIATE MEMBER OF RAMBLERS

23. In conjunction with the discussion of the previous item, the meeting also considered a proposal that the Group should affiliate to Ramblers. It was recalled that, when the Group was first mooted, it was decided, in order to ensure its independence, that it would not be a formal Ramblers group. It was agreed in discussion, though, that there now seemed to be a good case for affiliating the Group to Ramblers, at least on an initial basis. The Group would remain fully independent, but affiliation would mean that the Group and its members would be able to benefit from the wider advice, support and services which Ramblers could provide. Other arguments for affiliation included the Group's involvement in the Lost Ways project; the possibility that this could lead to the Group representing Ramblers in considering footpath proposals in the Faversham area; the merit in supporting the main national body representing walkers' interests; and the fact that affiliation at a

cost of £62 a year was something which the Group's finances now made feasible. Accordingly, Brian Caffarey was asked to proceed with an application for a one-year affiliation.

ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY

REPLACEMENT SWING BRIDGE

24. Andrew Osborne and Brian Caffarey had had a useful site meeting with Cllr Antony Hook at which they had briefed him on the Group's concerns about the proposed width of the footway on the bridge and about the forthcoming public inquiry concerning the Creekside path. On the former. Cllr Hook had now arranged a meeting with a KCC engineer on 11 December, which Andrew Osborne would be attending. Andrew would report back.

ACTION: ANDREW OSBORNE

CLEVE HILL SOLAR COMPLEX

25. It was noted that the first public consultation meeting about the proposed solar complex would be held on 6 December. The Group would wish to comment in due course on the footpath aspects.

LOG OF ISSUES RAISED

26. The Committee noted a revised version of the log of issues raised with, or pursued by, the Group. This would be updated as necessary following the meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. The following matter was raised:

- Perry Court – it was noted that the proposals for residential development included retaining the existing network of public footpaths and some upgrading/improvements. It was suggested in discussion that there was a need to provide safer pedestrian routes from the Abbey School but it seemed doubtful if this could be funded as part of this development.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. The next meeting will take place at 7pm on Thursday 11 January 2018 at 130 Athelstan Road.

25 November 2017