



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

MINUTES

3rd March 2009
2pm – 5pm

Present

Members:

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| Mick Brash (Chairman) | David Corke | Norman Hunt |
| Alan Adcock | Edward Dixon | Robert Johnstone |
| David Anderson | Bob Drane | |
| Kevin Ascott | David Eagle | |

Observers: Judith Rossiter – Cambs LAF

Apologies: Karen Fulcher, Charles Gooch, Hazel Jarrold, Richard Tattersall, John Victory, Ed Woods

The following Officers were present in support:

Michelle Gardiner – Rural Community Council of Essex
 Sarah Sapsford – Rural Community Council of Essex
 Christine Allman – ECC PROW and Rural Network Manager
 Charlotte Fellingham – ECC PROW Officer
 Garry White – ECC Definitive Map Manager

| | | ACTION |
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| 1 | Welcome and introductions | |
| | <p>MB welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the 2 new members: David Eagle and Robert Johnstone. All members introduced themselves to David and Robert.</p> <p>MB informed members that Charles Gooch has resigned from ELAF. MB will write to Charles to thank him on behalf of all members.</p> <p>MB explained that John Victory was unable to attend the meeting because he was representing ELAF at the SE LAFs conference and that Hazel Jarrold was unwell. Members wished Hazel a speedy recovery.</p> | <p>MB MG</p> |

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| 2 | Minutes of previous meeting | |
| | The minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting held on 2 nd December 2008. All agreed. | |
| 3 | Public questions | |
| | There were no public questions. David Corke suggested that updating the website will encourage members of the public to attend the meetings. Cambs LAF has appointed liaison contacts for their neighbouring LAFs. Judith Rossiter is the liaison contact between Cambs and Essex LAFs and will be attending some of ELAF's meetings. | |
| 4 | Roadside margins | |
| | Michelle Gardiner had previously circulated a report from John Victory about a potentially high value link near Barleylands in Billericay. MB reminded members that roadside margins had been discussed at the previous meeting and those present had been keen that this could be an interesting project for ELAF. He explained that he felt the first step is to identify some problem areas as case study examples to understand the issues and then assess the value of rectifying some of the problems with the help of ECC. Various questions were raised and discussed by members. It was noted that this issue covers safety/access, recreation and wildlife considerations – recreation being the remit of ELAF. Links between existing ROWs is one of the key considerations. Linkages could use the verge or go behind the hedgerow. Case studies need to be identified where there will be a visible/tangible benefit to justify the extra resources/expenditure which will be needed for improvements. Local Ramblers groups might have some good suggestions. MB will write up a report for the A133 Little Clacton bypass area that he has been investigating. David Anderson and Ed Dixon agreed to form a working group with John Victory to progress the Barleylands idea. MB read from a letter that all LAFs had received from Suffolk LAF about severance of routes along the A14 and suggesting that LAFs should work together on this matter. It was agreed that ELAF should reply to Suffolk LAF to confirm that members do share their concerns. This issue is currently being discussed by the England Access Forum. It was also a concern regarding the Chelmsford NE bypass and members agreed that Michelle should contact Deborah Gallantree in order to find out if there has been any progress with this scheme. | MB JV DA ED MB MG |
| 5 | Commons and village greens | |
| | Michelle Gardiner had previously circulated Jacqueline Millward's response to questions raised by members at the October and December | |

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| | <p>meetings. This included details of how to access information about registered commons and greens, and the list of current applications held by ECC.</p> <p>David Corke will be attending a training course on this subject in April and will therefore report back to members at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that Michelle should now accept Jacqueline Millward's offer to attend a future meeting as there is still interest about this subject and some questions to be answered.</p> | MG |
| 6 | ROWIP update | |
| | <p>Christine Allman reported that she is currently working to complete an Executive Decision form so that the ROWIP can be passed to the Cabinet at ECC for approval. She is still on target for finalising the ROWIP by the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Michelle Gardiner had previously circulated the weblink for Southend Council's draft ROWIP which is out for consultation until 6th March. Members did not identify any modifications or comments to be suggested to Southend Council.</p> | |
| 7 | Online reporting system update | |
| | <p>Christine Allman explained that it is not possible to add a tick box to the system to ask fault reporters if status updates are required. Updates on status will however be sent to fault reporters if an e-mail address is given. The Highways reporting system has a facility to show when the fault is resolved and this feature could also be included in the ROW system.</p> <p>David Corke explained that he is still not happy with the system because it is not clear whether faults will be dealt with straight away or left to be picked up through the rolling programme. David also had some concerns about the way faults reported to West Area are acknowledged. Christine clarified the content of an e-mail David had received explaining that the Uttlesford Ramblers Association (through Alan Goffee) maintain a database of faults which is sent to West Area at regular intervals, updated by Officers there and then sent back to Alan.</p> | |
| 8 | Structure consent process | |
| | <p>Christine Allman circulated copies of ECC's draft Structure Authorisation Process. Christine explained that this guidance should simplify the process and help with enforcement. The draft document contains an example of a specification drawing rather than all of the diagrams. The document will need to go to the Cabinet to be approved as policy.</p> <p>MB commented that there is also Defra guidance in draft format at present. Members agreed to read the ECC document and send any</p> | |

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| | comments to Michelle Gardiner to be passed on to Christine. | |
| 9 | Taking ELAF forward | |
| | <p>MB reported that he and Michelle Gardiner have met with Rosemary Welch and Christine Allman to discuss the future secretariat arrangements and other ELAF issues. ECC would like RCCE to continue providing the secretariat for ELAF and Michelle is preparing a proposal for this work. Michelle discussed some ideas regarding a possible name change, a new logo and training options with the members to help with future planning.</p> <p>Members did not want to change the name of the forum to Essex Countryside Access Forum as had been suggested at the December brainstorming session but felt that a strapline might help other people to understand the ELAF remit.</p> | |
| 10 | Correspondence | |
| | <p>The CLA has put forward Alexander Creed as a potential ELAF member now that Charles Gooch has resigned. Michelle Gardiner has sent the application form to Mr Creed.</p> <p>Letter received from Cambs LAF about the loss of permissive pathways arising from the ending of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Members were not aware of any such loss in Essex. MB will respond to Cambs LAF.</p> <p>Letter received from the Department for Transport acknowledging the ELAF response to the Sadlers Farm junction improvement scheme.</p> <p>E-mail received from Natural England encouraging LAFs to contact their highway authority about responding to the consultation on Local Transport Plan guidance. MB agreed to send Councillor Hume ELAF's recommendations (as outlined in the Natural England e-mail) and request that he pass them to the appropriate Officer.</p> | <p>MB MG</p> <p>MB MG</p> |
| 11 | Dates of future meetings | |
| | <p>The Central Baptist Church has been booked for ELAF meetings on the following dates:</p> <p>Tue 5th May 2009 Tue 7th July 2009 Tue 1st Sep 2009 Tue 3rd Nov 2009 Tue 5th Jan 2010 Tue 2nd March 2010</p> | |
| 12 | Any other business | |
| | Alan Adcock reported that he will be appearing on the BBC programme "Inside Out" on 11 th March talking about litter issues. | |