

**Seminar to discuss 'Green Routes for New Urban Growth' held at  
County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday 26 March 2008.**

PRESENT:

Leicestershire Local Access Forum:

Ms. V. Allen  
Ms. R. Camamile CC  
Mr. R. J. Denney (In the Chair)  
Ms. L. Forman  
Ms. T. Kirby  
Mr. G. Mabbitt

District/Borough Council Representatives:

Ms. E. Bentick	North West Leicestershire District Council
Ms. S. Eden	Charnwood Borough Council
Ms. H. Gregory	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Ms. R. Kennerley	North West Leicestershire District Council
Mr. A. Killip	Blaby District Council
Ms. A. Leyshon	Blaby District Council
Ms. T. Parker	Blaby District Council
Ms. S. Pointer	Harborough District Council
Ms. S. Ruane	North West Leicestershire District Council

Parish/Town Council Representatives:

Mr. R. Boby	Glenfield Parish Council
Mr. J. Brown	Earl Shilton Town Council
Ms. P. Crane	Desford Parish Council
Ms. C. Dale	Twyford and Thorpe Parish Council
Mr. W. J. A. Daly	Ratby Parish Council
Mr. R. Ellis	Earl Shilton Town Council
Mr. T. Fletcher	Bringham, Drayton and Nevill Holt Parish Council
Mr. C. Grimwood	Bitteswell Parish Council
Ms. A. Hollingsworth	Stoughton Parish Council
Ms. I. Hopwood	Stoughton Parish Council
Ms. C. Measures	Ratby Parish Council
Ms. K. Newman	Quorn Parish Council
Mr. M. Parker	Anstey Parish Council
Ms. S. Parker	Bringham, Drayton and Nevill Holt Parish Council
Mr. I. Proctor-Blain	Thrussington Parish Council
Mr. B. Rowlinson	Anstey Parish Council
Ms. L. Swinfield	Quorn Parish Council
Ms. S. Taylor	Anstey Parish Council
Mr. T. Yarwood	Groby Parish Council
Mr. R. Younie	Thurcaston and Cropston Parish Council

Local Authority Representatives:

Mr. W. Bexton  
Mr. S. Crook  
Ms. L. Guest  
Mr. S. Jones  
Mr. N. Lewis  
Mr. A. Savage  
Ms. S. Slade

Derbyshire County Council  
Rutland County Council  
Leicester City Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Leicester City Council

Representatives of other bodies:

Mr. L. Almond  
Mr. R. Appleby  
Ms. E. Barnicott  
Ms. N. Cossa

Mr. D. Cotterill  
Mr. W. Cross

Mr. R. Dickinson  
Mr. R. Fitzsimons  
Mr. P. G. Freeman  
Ms. K. Gould  
Mr. M. H. Harrison  
Dr. D. L. Harwood  
Mr. P. Horsby  
Mr. B. Jenkinson  
Mr. G. Keeping

Mr. D. Tyne  
Mr. R. Malquand  
Mr. J. Marshall  
Ms. S. Meikle  
Ms. M. Mills  
Mr. B. Montgomery

Mr. M. Parr  
Mr. G. Phillips  
Mr. M. Rahman

Mr. D. C. Reeson  
Mr. C. Smith

Mr. J. Smith  
Mr. P. Tame  
Ms. J. Tilsley  
Mr. A. Tokeley

British Heart Foundation  
Trail Riders Fellowship  
Natural England  
Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife  
Trust  
British Driving Society  
Country Land and Business  
Association  
Leicestershire Footpaths Association  
British Waterways  
Bradgate Park Trust  
Natural England  
Bradgate Park Trust  
Ratby Local History Group  
Leicestershire Orienteering Club  
Leicestershire Footpaths Association  
South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local  
Access Forum  
Leicester City Access Forum  
Greenspace East Midlands Forum  
Natural England  
Leicester-Shire & Rutland Sport  
Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum  
South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local  
Access Forum  
Ramblers Association  
River Nene Regional Park  
Leicestershire County and Rutland  
PCT  
Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum  
South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local  
Access Forum  
Braunstone Community Association  
National Farmers' Union  
Natural England  
Leicester Spokes

Leicestershire County Council officers:

Richard Bye, Access Officer, Rights of Way  
William Carter, Team Leader, Rights of Way  
Sam Forster, Stepping Stones Project Officer  
Carolyn Holmes, Assistant Keeper Natural Life (Community)  
Sam Ireson, Access Officer (Charnwood), Rights of Way  
Andy Jackson, Stepping Stones Project Officer  
Piers Lindley, Access Officer (Southern Leicestershire)  
Tony Lockley, Team Leader, Environmental Action  
Edwin McWilliam, Policy Officer, Rights of Way  
Andrew Poole, Access Officer, Rights of Way  
Michael Thompson, Team Leader, Community Development  
Sam Weston, Committee Services  
Peter Williams, Head of Environmental Management

*Mr. Marshall (Natural England) delivered a presentation entitled in 'The Natural Environment: Our Natural Health Service'. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is attached as **Appendix A**. There then followed a general discussion during which the following points were raised:*

- (a) There were ongoing issues with parents who drove to school to drop off their children. This was one issue that would require a more strategic approach;
- (b) Natural England was keen to ensure that young people were engaged with green spaces and this would require a local approach initially;
- (c) The local farming community was keen to ensure that everything was being done in order that young people were involved in their local environment;
- (d) There was concern expressed that organisations should not be the deciders of how young people are engaged in green spaces. It was important that consultation took place with young people;
- (e) Some concern was expressed that small areas of rough land were being lost in the planning process. It was felt that these areas of rough greenery were places where children could go to explore the countryside. It was hoped that parish councils would do everything possible in the planning process to ensure that these areas of land were preserved;
- (f) It was highlighted that the perception of crime in the countryside was far worse than the number of criminal incidents that actually took place. It was felt that Natural England should do more to increase confidence in the potential users of green spaces;
- (g) Natural England were planning to engage children through education authorities in order that they could speak to children directly about the benefits of the countryside;
- (h) Concern was expressed regarding the lack of information on local walks at Libraries and Service Shops in the County. It was highlighted

that leaflets and guides on local walks were more widely circulated than ever before with information available at all County Council front-of-house service locations, as well as from people's homes via the internet. It was questioned why, with more access to this information than ever before, there appeared to be less demand for it than ever;

- (i) Some local walkers were daunted by the potential length of some walks and it was felt that by adding an approximate time for walks to way markers, some people may be more encouraged to go on shorter walks;
- (j) It was felt that the British climate was one potential reason why people did not engage with their local countryside, though those with pets were more likely to go out on walks;
- (k) Cycling routes appeared to end abruptly. It was highlighted that, as opposed to other European countries, Britain's cycle-ways were developed at a time when the main infrastructure provided primarily for cars and buses. Planning issues needed to be overcome in the coming years to ensure that cycle ways were made more of a priority.

*Mr. Phillips (River Nene Regional Park) delivered a presentation entitled 'River Nene Regional Park and Green Infrastructure: An Introduction'. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is attached as **Appendix B**. There then followed a general discussion during which the following points were raised:*

- (a) Subsequent to questioning, Mr. Phillips assured attendees that land owners were being contacted in an effort to open up their land for use as much as this was possible;
- (b) The company worked with developers at planning level to ensure that greenspaces were given adequate consideration throughout the planning process. Some developers were increasingly placing greater importance on ensuring that home buyers had access to green spaces;
- (c) The company was involved in planning schemes across neighbouring authorities, despite some emerging plans not sufficiently including green spaces in emerging plans and strategies;
- (d) Mr. Phillips highlighted that a partnership approach was essential in giving authorities the best opportunity to make successful bids for funding.

*Mr. Almond (British Heart Foundation) delivered a presentation entitled 'Energising Lives: In Natural Environments'. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is attached as **Appendix C**. There then followed a general discussion during which the following points were raised:*

- (a) It was stressed that active people were more productive in their work lives and that this could represent significant cost savings for companies and organisations if their was progress made in engaging people with local green spaces;

- (b) There were ongoing issues surrounding levels of obesity in people with more access to the countryside. There was more work to be done in convincing people about the health benefits of the countryside;
- (c) A series of walks was organised between mosques in Leicester by the British Heart Foundation which had proved a success, though a more targeted marketing campaign needed to be devised to convince people of the benefits of being active to stay healthy, rather than going on diets to lose weight;
- (d) The British Heart Foundation would be increasing its focus on local authorities and parish council to try and encourage them to take the benefits of active life seriously.

*Mr. Williams (Leicestershire County Council) delivered a presentation entitled 'The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for Leicestershire: 2006-2011'. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is attached as **Appendix D**. There then followed a general discussion during which the following points were raised:*

- (a) The cycle ways network was growing, but there needed to be more work done on encouraging its use;
- (b) There was concern expressed at the amount of use of the ROW network and whether the County Council should be promoting other forms of exercise. The ROW network continued to be used, though how much it was used was hard to measure. The Leicestershire countryside was considered an asset and something that should continue to be promoted;
- (c) The ROWIP allowed the County Council to focus on the weaker areas of the ROW network;
- (d) The issue of travel would continue to be a focus in order to ensure that travel was made more sustainable.

*All four speakers were thanked for their informative presentations.*

9.45am – 12.45pm  
Wednesday 26 March 2008