

DEVON LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Eleventh Meeting – 25 November 2005, Okehampton

Questions received all relate to the proposed bridleway from Thorndon Cross to Halwill Junction.

Question 1 – Mrs Chamness

What is the Forum's view on letting horse riders use our land for a park for horseboxes so they can use the existing bridleway network without going on the road?

Question 2 - Mr Tuke

The PROW Committee of Devon County Council is scheduled to take a decision at its January 2006 meeting on the proposal to create a public bridleway from Thorndon Cross to Halwill Junction. This decision will be based on a report and recommendations now being prepared by the PROW Department of Devon County Council. As a matter of **policy** will the Devon Local Access Forum **advise** Devon County Council that this report should be made available to the general public **ahead of the PROW Committee meeting**, in sufficient time to allow for written comments to be available to members of the PROW Committee **before they make a decision?**

This will assist the County Councillors as "**they sift the information and evidence and come to a decision on the way forward**" The quotation is from Mrs Winter's letter dated 18 November 2005.

Question 3 – Mr Hulls

1. In the DLAF response to Steve Gardner dated 27.10.05 mention is made *that .."the Forum believe the proposed route has the potential to link Dartmoor to the South West Forest at Cookworthy and Roadford Reservoir"*, and is particularly concerned about crossing the busy A3079 at Thorndon Cross.
 - Is the Forum aware that there would be no off-road link of this linear route to Dartmoor without using 3km of parish roads and a major road crossing of the A386 at SX 55059285, as well as negotiating the road-bridge over the A30 dual carriageway?
 - Is not the A386 a more major route, with a larger volume of heavy traffic to and from the A30 junction, Tavistock and Plymouth, than the A3079 at Thorndon Cross? Surely, safe crossing of the A386 is also "*paramount*" to this proposal, yet there has been no reference to it.
 - Is the Forum aware that there is no off-road link to the Forest land from Halwill Junction?
2. The Forum also state that there are *... "no current safe links between bridleways to the north and south of the (A3079) road"*, but continues that the proposal would avoid *... "the whole stretch of the A3079 from Thorndon Cross to Halwill"*.

- Is the Forum unaware of the 8 bridlepaths to the south-east of Thorndon Cross which would still need to cross over the A3079 in order to link into the proposed linear route and also the very dangerous crossroads (across the A3079) at Venn Down Gates and Castle Cross?
Or - would horse-riders from the south-eastern bridlepaths near Bratton Clovelly and Germansweek be expected to ride up to Thorndon Cross in order to travel down the proposed linear route to Halwill?
Or - is this proposal mainly for the benefit of a few riders who live near Thorndon Cross?
3. Is the Forum also unaware that further links to the proposed linear route across parcels of privately owned land will be required in order to connect existing bridlepaths into this proposed linear route. Will these other land-owners/users be consulted?

Question 4 - Mr Tuke

As a statutory body set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to advise Devon County Council on access issues and wider strategic issues will members of the Forum confirm that any advice given by the Forum to DCC must be impartial ?

Question 5 – Mr Kemeny

Is the LAF fulfilling its duty as a LOCAL forum particularly in respect of the proposed bridleway from Thorndon X to Halwill. Although in their qualified approval of the bridleway there is reference to possible diversions around domestic properties, there appears to be no consideration of the farmers and others whose business is their land.

A lot of these people such as myself are going to be severely disadvantaged by the loss of access routes for heavy machinery across the farm. It is all very well to be guided by calls from riders across the country about how they want more bridleways, but surely you must also carefully consider the plight of the LOCAL owners of the land whose property, equity, and privacy you recommend be expropriated. Can you honestly say that their views are fairly represented on the LAF "