

Luton Local Access Forum (LLAF)

Meeting 4, minutes

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Date and time

Wednesday 11 June 2025 at 6.30pm

Venue

Luton Town Hall, committee room 4

Attendees

Russell Cartwright (RC)
Councillor Javed Hussain (JH)
Mamnun Khan (MK)
Deni Krevesic (DK), Transport Planning and Policy team, Luton Council (arrived 6:40pm)
Cherry Newbery (CN)
Raheed Salam (RS)
Antony Swift (AS), Head of Transport Services, Luton Council
Louis Upton (LU)

Secretary

Sarah Smart (SS), Rights of Way Officer, Luton Council

Objectives

To agree the minutes and elect a new vice-chair.

To discuss on-going rights of way and access matters.

1. Welcome and apologies

MK welcomed everyone and the following members sent apologies:

Roy Mccrudden (RM)
David Oakley-Hill (DO)
Graham Simpson (GS)
Michelle Titmus (MT)
Sam Willis (SW)

SS advised that Michelle Titmus had resigned.

2. On-going Projects and consultations

Power Court

MK mentioned that DO had sent a message expressing his disappointment that the River Lea was not going to be opened up completely as part of the Power Court development.

SS advised the members of the appointment of a River Lea Project Officer, Chloe Houseman, who will be working on the River Lea linear park. A discussion followed and RS mention a bid for funding for increasing access to blue and green spaces and in particular signage. SS agreed to organise a presentation by Kat Wysocka on this topic and to invite Chloe Houseman to meet the LAF.

Action: SS to invite Kat Wysocka, who is leading on the bid, and Chloe Houseman to attend the next meeting to update the LAF on this project.

Local Plan

Government uncertainty regarding Local Plans is leading to delays and SS advised that Chris Thom will not have anything to report to the LAF before spring 2026.

Local Travel Plan (LTP)

Deni Krevesic gave a presentation on the Local Travel Plan (LTP5) interventions. Key points were:

- DK held more than 25 workshops with officers, cross-party group, councillors and key stakeholders
- Four schools and a college attended a “Let’s Get You There!” event
- 630 members of the public responded to the survey
- Large local businesses, transport operators and government agencies have been involved
- The Climate Change Advisory Board and Youth Council received presentations and updates
- DK assessed 385 interventions using the Multi-Criteria Assessment Framework
- There are 110 schemes, 22 programmes / initiatives and 253 policies
- Currently assessing and seeking input on the proposed interventions
- The final draft will be ready in mid-August 2025
- Statutory consultation will be from mid-October to the end of December 2025
- Review of comments will follow the consultation and will result in a final plan
- Publication of the final plan is due in Spring 2026

Questions and comments followed the presentation. Key points were:

- There will be further opportunities for the LAF to comment
- The first draft of the LTP and supporting documents will be circulated to all members (expected in the first part of July)
- Statutory consultations will be open to the public and the LAF is welcome to submit further comments at that stage
- DK will respond to the requested further clarifications and comments submitted by the LAF via an additional column on the spreadsheet
- Work to date has focused on engagement
- During the engagement process, over 1500 interventions were gathered and sifted using Multi-Criteria Assessment, resulting in 385 currently being considered
- The response from the public was excellent
- Assessment for interventions is scored using Transport Assessment Guidance, considering the Strategic Case, Economic Case (Economy, Carbon Emissions, Local Environment, and Social Impact), and Delivery Case
- The aim is to align the LTP with Luton 2040 Vision and other local policies plans and strategies documents such as the Local Plan
- The consultation will look at short, medium and long-term goals
- Short-term goals are deliverable; medium-term goals require funding; the long-term goals are aspirations
- JH suggested that the aspirational goals can only be achieved through devolution and being part of a larger devolved authority
- DK agreed to respond to the comments submitted by the LAF via an additional column in the spreadsheet

JH shared a digital tool created by Luton Council as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to help people visualise the transport network. JH noted that further development of the tool could add additional datasets, such as rights of way and healthcare providers.

AS provided hard copies of the existing cycle maps of Luton, but these are out of date and so his team are updating them. He will advise the LAF when new maps are available. He would be glad to receive comments on the cycle maps from the LAF members when they are in draft form. When finalised the new cycle map will be available on the Council website.

Action: DK to respond to the comments submitted by the LAF via an additional column in the spreadsheet.

Action: AS to consult the LAF on the updated cycle network map and advise the LAF once new cycle maps are available.

3. Priorities and areas of special interest

Excluded area

SS gave a presentation on the excluded area project.

The project is now progressing well and the first two wards, Beech Hill ward and Biscot ward have reached the informal consultation stage. The informal consultation includes eight paths in Beech Hill ward and ten in Biscot ward.

Status of the routes can be footpath, bridleway or restricted byway. SS believes that most of the routes are footpaths.

SS requested that forum members complete the online survey for any paths they have used and to encourage other users to complete the survey. An exhibition will be available in the Central Library and paper copies of the user evidence form are available for those who cannot complete the online survey.

The next stage is to start investigating routes in Barnfield ward and once the informal consultation on Beech Hill and Biscot wards is complete, to make definitive map modification orders for the routes in those wards. The council is considering consolidation of the definitive map and statement along with digitisation of the map.

The presentation gave rise to questions and comments; key points were:

- The status of routes in these two wards is footpath
- The status of Bath Road may be bridleway, if sufficient evidence arises to confirm regular use by cyclists
- Can more routes be bridleways so that cyclists can use them?
- Some routes may be too narrow to be bridleways and so available to cyclists, but evidence of use by cyclists may prove that they should have bridleway status
- There was a suggestion that once the routes are recorded on the definitive map the council could convert routes into cycle routes if they wish, however, SS advised that she did not believe this is possible without a new DMMO and sufficient user evidence.
- JH mentioned the new CYLCOPS junction proposed for the New Bedford Road / Austin Road junction. LU had a copy of the CYCLOPS junction which failed to indicate the National Cycle Route 6 (NCR6) correctly. SS agreed to speak to Kieran Franzen about this.

Action: SS to follow up with Kieran Franzen about the consultation material associated with the CYCLOPS junction at Austin Road

4. Election of vice-chair and appointments

The election for the post of vice-chair took place.

Nominee: Louis Upton

Proposed by: Mamnun Khan

Seconded by: Cherry Newbery

LU was elected by default as vice-chair.

There have been no new appointments, but we can increase the membership and JH requested members seek out others to join the forum. SS noted that we have no members representing the horse-riding community. AS agreed to speak to his contacts in the British Horse Society (BHS).

Action: ALL to seek suitable additional members

Action: AS to contact BHS for potential forum members

5. Minutes of the last meeting

Forum members agreed the minutes without amendment.

6. Matters arising

Action completed are as follows:

- MT will continue to seek information from Scouts and Guides about the state of the network
- SS circulated information on training from ADEPT once received
- AS provided hard copy cycle maps to the forum for distribution
- Forum members discussed the draft LP and submitted advice to Chris Thom on 9 April 2025
- SS added election of vice-chair to agenda for this meeting

Actions discussed

The forum briefly discussed the action on platforms for sharing documents. Members of the forum decided to trial Dropbox or Google Drive when we next need to share large files.

Actions carried forward to the next meeting

- CG to upload the map of rights of way to the Council website
- ALL to advise CG of any groups we should contact directly regarding the ROWIP
- RS to share data from young people relating to active travel

7. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)

SS gave a brief update as follows, as follows:

- We are following the programme presented at the last meeting
- We need to identify community groups that we can involve in the RoWIP

8. Public path orders (PPOs)

SS reported that there has been no notable change in PPOs.

LLAF members previously requested the removal of the stile from FP25, as part of its diversion. SS reported that the Parks Officer has commented that this may result in nuisance motorcycles and that

we are currently considering options on this. The council may remove the stile structure, but leave the supports, which results in a narrower gap.

Discussion followed; keys points were:

- Nuisance motorcyclists will find a way onto the common regardless of whether this stile remains in place
- The path at that point is wider than the gap between the stile posts
- Vegetation has overgrown the kissing gate at the other end of the path, so it requires maintenance

Action: SS agreed to follow up on the removal of the stile and the maintenance work at the kissing gate

9. Public spaces protection orders (PSPOs)

SS reported that the council has rescinded the PSPO at Whitwell Close (L014). The gates will remain in place for the present but with the gate locked open.

SS reported that two other PSPOs (or gating orders) are under discussion. One is at Leyhill Drive in Farley Hill and the other is on Beech Hill path between Dunstable Road and Ash Road. These will be the subject of a meeting on Friday 13 June between Rights of Way Officers and the Neighbourhood Enforcement team.

10. Definitive map modification orders (DMMOs)

Stanmore Crescent

SS reported little progress. The obstruction has not been removed and we are proceeding with the enforcement process.

Wigmore ward

SS advised that a report is being presented to the Administration and Regulation Committee to get delegated powers, so that Hertfordshire Council can progress the DMMO for Luton path L197, which runs from Offley 039, via a wooded area to Crawley Green Road, as well as the upgrade in status of Offley path 039 from footpath to restricted byway.

CN requested feedback, on behalf of Friends of Wandon End park, on the issues with the maintenance of Offley 039 and the damage caused to the County Wildlife Site at Wandon End park. SS advised that progress on this had stalled following the death of a key colleague, but agreed to speak to Jane Conway about moving this forward and to update CN.

Action: SS to speak to Jane Conway about Offley 039 path maintenance issues and then update CN.

11. Registers

There have been no changes to the registers.

12. Planning applications impacting on rights of way

There are no applications impacting on rights of way.

13. Other items from the forward plan

Disseminating information to the public

MK led a discussion on disseminating information to the public and members agreed that we:

- Upload any written advice given by the LAF to the LAF webpage

- Create a new concertina on the webpage for the 'LAF position on consultations' to hold any advice
- Post information on social media which signposts to the LAF webpage URL

Action: SS to update the webpage with the LAF position on consultations.

14. Any other business

Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks

SS provided fliers for the Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks, which runs from 6 to 14 September 2025 and asked members to publicise the event and encourage people to participate. SS agreed to send members .pdf versions of the fliers. RS suggested posting the fliers on the Step Forward Luton app and SS agreed to do this.

AS mentioned an app called StreetTag which encourages young people (and schools) to walk more, by creating a competitive concept that rewards walking.

Action: SS to send .pdf copies of the walking festival fliers to LAF members

Action: SS to post information about the walking festival on the Step Forward Luton app

Path at Devon Road

RC asked about the path that runs from the corner of Devon Road and Rutland Crescent to the old Vauxhall site / Armstrong Road. He asked if it is still a right of way. SS confirmed that this path will link through to the new development on Armstrong Road and that the Devon Road end will then be re-opened.

Improving access to green spaces and the countryside workshop

RS mentioned the improving access to green spaces and the countryside workshop, organised by The Chilterns National Landscape on Tuesday 15 July 2025. He invited MK to attend representing Luton LAF. However, MK cannot make that date, so we need another volunteer to represent the LAF. The workshop is at Futures House, Luton.

Action: ALL to notify SS if they can represent Luton LAF and attend the workshop on 15 July at Futures House.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 10 September 2025 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Town Hall, committee room 4.

The meeting closed at 8:40pm.

Actions

SS to invite Kat Wysocka, who is leading on the bid, and Chloe Houseman to attend the next meeting to update the LAF on this project

DK to respond to the comments submitted by the LAF via an additional column in the spreadsheet

AS to consult the LAF on the updated cycle network map and advise the LAF once new cycle maps are available

SS to follow up with Kieran Franzen about the map of the CYCLOPS junction at Austin Road

ALL to seek suitable additional members

AS to contact BHS for potential forum members

SS agreed to follow up on the removal of the stile and the maintenance work at the kissing gate

SS to speak to Jane Conway about Offley 039 path maintenance issues and then update CN

SS to update the webpage with the LAF position on consultations

SS to send .pdf copies of the walking festival fliers to LAF members

SS to post information about the walking festival on the Step Forward Luton app

ALL to notify SS if they can represent Luton LAF and attend the workshop on 15 July at Futures House.

Actions carried forward from the last meeting

- CG to upload the map of rights of way to the Council website
- ALL to advise CG of any groups we should contact directly regarding the ROWIP
- RS to share data from young people relating to active travel