

Luton Local Access Forum

Minutes, meeting 6

Date and time

Wednesday 10 December 2025, 6.30pm

Venue

Luton Town hall, first floor, committee room 4

Attendees

Russell Cartwright (RC)

Chris Godden (CG), Highway Development Control Manager (Planning), Luton Council

Councillor Javed Hussain (JH)

Mamnun Khan (MK)

Deni Krevesic (DK), Transport Planning and Policy team, Luton Council

Cherry Newbery (CN)

David Oakley-Hill (DO)

Raheed Salam (RS)

Louis Upton (LU)

Secretary

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

Objectives

To agree the minutes.

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

1. Welcome and apologies

MK welcomed everyone and the following members sent their apologies:

- John Mardle (JM)
- Antony Swift (AS), Head of Transport Services, Luton Council

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Forum members agreed the minutes without amendment.

3. Matters arising

SS confirmed that most actions are complete.

Actions discussed:

- CG, SS, LU, JM and CN walked the route of L045 together with a local representative. John Mardle reported that the meeting revealed how misunderstandings arose and how the LAF can help resolve them. SS prepared a sequence of actions for the DMMO and CG will circulate it shortly.
- Chloe Houseman (CG) (River Lea Project Officer) was to share draft character and valued landscape assessment when ready. She sent in a report stating that:
 - The contractors are still working on the Landscape Characterisation Assessment (LCA) and should be able to share a draft soon.
 - There were meant to be stakeholder workshops last month to provide feedback and comments, but the planning team are waiting on government guidance on the local plan which has caused delays.
 - The Valued Landscape Assessment (extended assessment from the LCA) and Designation Options Study (DOS) will follow the LCA. The first drafts of these are due by February.
 - The LCA and DOS will be the focus for the River Lea Linear Park designation.
 - RS asked when the LCA is due.
 - DO reported discussions with Affinity Water regarding the River Lea running dry last year because of over abstraction.
- AS pursued the opportunity for potential members with the disability task force, but we have not yet received any responses.
- CG has requested that the contractor clear any remaining obstructions on path L044. They agreed but we will need to monitor the path.
- CG continues to have difficulties in uploading the map of rights of way to the Council website. This will remain on the agenda.
- RS shared data from young people relating to active travel:
 - Young people aged 11-25 looked at the 2040 net zero framework.
 - 1003 young people completed a survey.
 - Focus groups produced another 39 responses.
 - Two-thirds of respondents were female.
 - More were non-white than white.
 - Climate change and transport are of important.
 - Biggest concerns are travel from A to B; quality and safety of paths; their ability to navigate the route.
 - Their top priority for the net zero roadmap was transport (including the airport).
 - Other concerns include pollution and waste management.

- They want independence over their lives.
- They feel they are not being listened to and assign responsibility for this to the council, a lack of information (so the education sector) and issues in and around transport.
- They looked at net positive benefits for the town.
- Youth Network have run four climate conferences for young people and there is a sense of pain and loss due to the slow pace of change.
- RS agreed to provide the report.

Action: CG to provide the sequence of actions for the DMMO on L045.

Action: CH to provide a due date for the LCA.

Action: SS to keep L044 on the agenda.

Action: SS to keep uploading the map of rights of way on the agenda.

Action: RS to provide the report on young people's perspective.

4. Branding

SS shared two AI generated logos. A discussion followed. The LAF agreed that having a logo would be positive. SS will produce another similar sharp, black and white image with less countryside, but including a walker, cyclist, bus, wheelchair and building as it was felt these best represent Luton's local access environment.

Action: SS to prepare and share an updated version of the logo.

5. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

CG reported that we cannot complete the ROWIP in-house due to its size. A consultant has provided a price, and the Department for Transport (DfT) will fund this.

DO asked if we could look at using Central Bedfordshire Council's ROWIP as a starting point. A discussion followed including:

- Central Bedfordshire Council are also reviewing their ROWIP.
- Bedford Borough Council has recently revised their ROWIP.
- Can Luton use another ROWIP as a framework?
- DEFRA have laid down the process that we need to follow.

6. Public path orders (PPOs)

SS reported that notice of a public path order has been issued by the Department for Transport for a proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to authorise the stopping up of the whole of the network of highways in Wandon Park to enable development as permitted by The Borough of Luton Council, under reference 19/01233/FUL.

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@dft.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, PO Box 1393, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 5FQ, quoting the above reference. The deadline for objections is midnight on **17 December 2025**.

A discussion followed. Key points were:

- CN noted that residents wish to object on various grounds.
- Concerns include loss of access to their back gardens and the safety of children walking to school.
- The LAF can ask for clarification on a safe route.

Action: MK/LU to prepare a letter seeking clarification on S247 order for Wandon Park.

DK joined the meeting.

7. Local Transport Plan (LTP5)

DK, from the Transport Planning and Policy team, gave an update on LTP5. Key points from the lengthy discussion include:

- The plan is long and difficult for the public to digest.
- Why does it include actions that are outside of our control?
- Why does it include actions that we cannot achieve now?
- JH clarified that aspirations need to be in the plan if we are to gain funding for them.
- The draft plan includes all points previously raised by the LAF.

The LAF agreed to look at the draft plan and provide feedback again. The deadline for responses is 19 February 2026.

Action: MK/LU to prepare LAF response to the draft LTP by mid-January 2026.

8. Public spaces protection orders (PSPOs)

CG reported that L103 Beech Hill path and L014 Whitwell Close should have re-opened, but SS then found Beech Hill path locked.

There is a shed on the path between 40 and 42 Leyhill Drive. The council will serve a notice on the owner for its removal.

9. Definitive map modification orders (DMMOs)

SS reported on the following:

- Hertfordshire County Council are managing the DMMO for Selsey Drive to Crawley Green Road (FP045). There were objections. They supplied further information and eleven objectors have withdrawn, so now only two remain. The most recent correspondence related to gates and gaps at Selsey Drive and

Hayling Drive, which are maintenance issues. Hertfordshire Council will contact the remaining objectors to explain that maintenance issues have no impact on the order. They will keep us informed.

- Beech Hill ward: the recommendations report is ready to go to the delegated officer and then we can draft the order.
- Biscot ward: we are finalising the recommendations report.
- Barnfield ward: we have surveyed 45 routes and prepared an evidence report for each. About eight routes still need surveys. The number of routes mean that the informal consultation for this ward will be in four parts.
- The first order will be a significant task, so we plan to survey a small ward next, rather than Wigmore as previously proposed. The DMMO relating to FP045 and the PPO for Wandon Park are separate, so will not be delayed by the sequencing of the wider review.

A discussion followed regarding whether we need additional staff to speed up the process. The aim is to complete the review in 2031, and currently the project is on track.

10. Registers

SS reported that there has been no change in the registers.

11. Planning applications impacting on rights of way

CG is not aware of any new planning applications that impact on rights of way.

12. Ongoing projects and consultations

Apart from LTP5 and the PPO at Wandon Park, there are no current consultations.

13. Any other business

CN mentioned that a new group she is associated with have put in a Community Right to Bid to nominate a small piece of land in Putteridge for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value. They have received no acknowledgement or response despite chasing and CG agreed to investigate.

Action: CN to send details of the Right to Bid to CG and he will investigate.

14. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 25 March 2026, 6:30pm, Luton Town Hall, committee room 4

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

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Actions

CG to provide the sequence of actions for the DMMO on L045.

CH to provide a deadline for the LCA.

SS to keep L044 on the agenda.

SS to keep uploading the map of rights of way on the agenda.

RS to provide the report on young people's perspective.

SS to prepare and share an updated version of the logo.

MK/LU to prepare a letter seeking clarification on S247 order for Wandon Park.

MK/LU to draft LAF response to draft LTP by mid-January 2026.

CN to send details of the Right to Bid to CG and he will investigate.