



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL
COMMITTEE
WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS
May 11th 2007**

1. Question from Mrs Elise Whiteley

“How will Virginia Water/Trumps Green residents access Longcross Station if the owners of the DERA site decide to close the footpath?

Horse riders need access to Chobham Common so may we have some assurance from the County Council that residents will be able to access the Station and Common, without the need for motorised transport?”

Response from Surrey County Council’s Mr Mike Dawson, Countryside manager:

“Unfortunately the Countryside Access officer with local knowledge of this location is on holiday at present, but I can say that, if the footpath is a Right of Way it could not be closed without due legal process and negotiation. If the footpath is not a right of way but a permissive path, then Surrey County Council has no statutory responsibility and it is a matter for the owner.”

Mrs Debbie Spriggs, Countryside Legal Team manager, adds:

“There are no public rights of way shown on the Definitive Rights of Way Map from Longcross Station running north of the railway line towards Virginia Water and Trumps Green. In a southerly direction it appears to be public highway from the station to Burma Road and Chobham Lane. If Mrs Whiteley is referring to the path running from Longcross Bridge parallel to the railway line to the Station that is not a public right of way and we would not be able to stop DERA from closing it. If the land is owned by Crown Estate it might not be possible to claim that the route has become public through 20 years use, although the status would have to be investigated. If Mrs Whiteley would like more information on this please contact Daniel Williams in the Countryside Legal Team”.

2. Question from Mrs Elise Whiteley

“How many young carers are there in Runnymede, and what practical assistance and care do they receive?”

Response from Ms Alison Borg, Surrey County Council’s Children’s Service:

The Locality Team do not have a comprehensive list of young carers within Runnymede. We do have a number of young carers within the borough who are using our services but this would by no means be comprehensive. We provide services for Children in Need as defined by the Children Act 1989 which may include young carers. This includes family support, access to parenting groups, access to holiday 'fun days' and where appropriate, support for young people to access leisure facilities. Unless children are on the Child Protection Register, these services are voluntary and the family must want to work with Surrey Childrens Services.

There is a Young Carers Association in Surrey. They provide individual work with young people including advocacy, groups for young people aged 8 - 12 years and 13+ years. Young carers would advocate for all appropriate support for the adult to be put in place relieving the burden on the young person. In Runnymede, this would include Crossroads who provide support in the home, LinkLeisure and North West Association for Disabled People.

For children with siblings with a disability, there is 'Disability Challenges' and a child with a disability may also be supported by the Complex Needs Team.

In addition, other services with which young carers might be involved include Alanon and Alateen. These are groups for children who have parents who are alcohol dependent. There is a similar group for children with parents who are drug-users. Many children of parents abusing substances are young carers who provide emotional support for their parents and assist with physical chores, for example getting younger siblings breakfast if their parents are incapable through drink or alcohol. Obviously there is also the emotional and 'responsibility' side of this. There is considerable research indicating that young people whose parents have mental health problems or substance misuse problems are emotionally affected, are anxious when separated from their parents and struggle with education. Young children may have poor school attendance as their parents may struggle to get them to school and older pupils may be too preoccupied with home problems to be able to access the curriculum.

Miss Nikki Parkhill, of SCC Youth Development Service adds:

Surrey Young Carers run local support groups on a regular basis at the Methodist Church in Addlestone, including one for children aged under 12 years and another for young people up to 16 years.

3. Question from Mrs Elise Whiteley

“What progress has been made with activities for young people in Runnymede through the Single Group for Services for Young People?”

Response from Mrs Yvonna Lay, County Councillor:

“ The Single Group has initiated a major new partnership event for young people in planning a Youth Festival for September 2007, which will inform and encourage young people to take up sporting, cultural and other activities in the borough by showcasing what is available for them.

There has been recent progress in resolving provision of services in Englefield Green, and plans to open new facilities in Egham Hythe and in Chertsey, although difficulties in recruitment of youth workers is affecting the speed with which these can be put in place.”