



SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 14 September 2017

AGENDA ITEM 03

WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Question 1: David Bellchamber

Local Committees can make decisions about public rights of way, including footpaths. Those exist for the mobility of residents and increasingly for leisure and healthy lifestyle. Surrey County Council has cut its annual budget for the maintenance of footpaths from £290,000 to £100,000 and according to the council's 2017/8 countryside review, this means that "some rights of way may have to be closed until funds can be found to repair them" and that "structures in need of repair on a right of way are most likely to cause paths to be closed". Can the Committee urgently consider a task force to consider the implications for the Borough of Elmbridge and allocate funds from a part of its budget for the maintenance of local footpaths?

Officer Response:

There is currently one path closed in Elmbridge due to an unsafe bridge. There are always lots of minor maintenance tasks, particularly vegetation clearance which need to be done and many of these will not be addressed as quickly as we would like due to the reduction in the funding for the maintenance of these paths. Should the Committee wish to consider allocating some of its budget to the maintenance of these paths in the next financial year, the budget for this year is already fully committed, a list of priorities could be drawn up that the committee could consider.

The Countryside Access team also welcome help from volunteers to help maintain routes and further details of how to get involved can be found on the website.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/environment-housing-and-planning/countryside/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/find-out-about-rights-of-way/getting-involved-with-rights-of-way>

Question 2: David Bellchamber

At the Local Committee meeting in June 2015 a question was raised about whether, during building operations in Cedar Road, Cobham by Sunly Homes, there would be preservation of public rights of way over Footpath 97 (Esher), a path running between the High Street and Cedar Road. Assurances were given.

At the Local Committee meeting in June 2016 I was told, in response to my own question, that a new route for the path had been created by an Order dated 1st June 2016 but that it was necessary for the new path to be legally closed to the public for reasons of safety. I was told an order to that effect under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1964 had been extended to 17th June 2017.

ITEM 3

As at 7th September 2017, the footpath remains closed and is still depicted on the Surrey Interactive Map as following the former route. I would ask what action Surrey County Council have taken or will take to secure the immediate safe opening of the path and to publicise the existence of the same, whether the Council is satisfied that Footpath 97 is depicted as starting on the boundary of the new development rather than at the High Street and when it is intended to rectify the Surrey Interactive Map to reflect the new route.

Reponse:

The temporary closure has been extended until June 2018 or until the works are completed. However, the developer has advised that the route will be reopened at the end of this month.