

Secretary to the Forum

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**Countryside
Access Forum
for
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If calling ask for

Our reference

Your reference

Fiona MacLeod

17th March 2008

Dear Sir Martin,

Extension of the Access Management Grant Scheme

Further to a letter received from Richard Granville, Ramblers Association (RA), I am writing to you on behalf of the Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex (CAFWS), **an independent statutory advisory body** set up to give access advice to a number of bodies, including all levels of government.

The letter, which was sent to all LAF Secretaries earlier this year, was encouraging LAFs to write to Natural England to request the continuation of the Access Management Grant Scheme (AMGS). The letter was discussed at our last Forum meeting and members were of the view that support and funding for ongoing maintenance to, from and within open access land, that came into being through the CROW Act 2000, should come from central Government. This is particularly important in light of the significant amount of infrastructure (gates, stiles, access points with information boards and signage) that was installed to open up and publicise access land by the County Council (WSCC) and the South Downs Joint Committee (SDJC) within West Sussex. Originally funded through the AMGS Scheme and WSCC, much of this infrastructure will eventually need replacing/refurbishing. Neither WSCC nor SDJC will be in a position to fund future maintenance so funding from central government will be vital to ensure these statutory areas remains accessible to the public. Therefore CAFWS urges Natural England to ensure such funds are available when they are needed, either through an extension to AMGS or through some other mechanism.

Yours sincerely,



Fiona MacLeod
Secretary, Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex

www.westsussex.gov.uk/cafws

Copy for information to:

Mr Glenville, Campaigns Officer, Ramblers' Association
Nicola Trafford, SE Local Access Forum contact, Natural England
Ronnie Perrin – Chairman, CAFWS
Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Group Manager, Rural Strategy, WSCC
Jane Noble – Senior Access Officer, WSCC
All members of CAFWS

Sir Martin Doughty
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