

Secretary to the Forum

(01243) 753542 (Direct)
(01243) 753522 (Fax)
fiona.macleod@westsussex.gov.uk

www.westsussex.gov.uk

**Countryside
Access Forum
for
West Sussex**

County Hall
West Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RQ
01243 777100

If calling ask for

Our reference

Your reference

Fiona MacLeod

31st January 2008

Dear Andy

Draft South Downs Way (SDW) Management Plan

Further to your presentation at our meeting on 23rd January 2008, I am writing 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, in response to relevant consultations. The Forum is keen to contribute to this process to ensure that proposed changes meet the needs of local people and that the chance is taken to improve opportunities for countryside access for present and future users. As a result, some new routes may be necessary and existing paths upgraded.

Before commenting on the document, CAFWS would like to emphasise the importance of considering the needs of the main users of public rights of way (prows):

- **Walkers** – the need is to access the countryside, especially using circular routes of various lengths. Routes need to link up with the wider network of prows and other means of accessing the countryside (i.e. open access land and permissive access). Areas for dog walking must be accommodated.
- **Cyclists** – using cycle tracks and bridleways – cycling off-road is becoming more and more popular routes such as the SDW offer a long distance challenge or links in shorter circular routes.
- **Horse riders and carriage drivers** – riding and carriage driving are becoming more and more important recreational activities around both the open countryside and urban fringes and contribute to the local economy.

In addition, attention must be given to recreational access for all types of mobility impaired user groups, and Government initiatives highlighting the benefits of walking for health.

The general comments from the Forum members, as provided at the meeting on 23rd January and by a member who was unable to attend the meeting, are attached to this letter and I understand that individual members may also be sending a response. It is also my understanding that members of the South Downs Access Forum, a sub-forum of CAFWS, will be sending you their responses individually rather than as a group response via CAFWS.

In closing, may I emphasise that the Forum is keen to continue to contribute to the process to ensure the South Downs Way Management Plan delivers the needs of all users. We look forward to future similar consultations and hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Fiona MacLeod
Secretary
Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex

www.westsussex.gov.uk/cafws

Attachment – CAFWS comments

To
Andy Gattiker
South Downs Way National Trail Officer
Victoria Barn
Victoria Business centre
Ford Lane
Arundel
West Sussex BN18 0EF

CC
Ronnie Perrin – Chairman, CAFWS
Peter Brown – Vice Chairman, CAFWS
Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Group Manager, Rural Strategy, WSCC
Louise Goldsmith – WSCC Cabinet Member for Environment & Economy
Jane Noble – Senior Access Officer, WSCC
All members of CAFWS