

## **Neighbourhood Plan Meeting to discuss cycle, walking routes in Herstmonceux Parish**

### **Meeting**

Meeting held at Herstmonceux Village Information Centre on 26 May 2016

### **Attendees**

Mr S. Nash (Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group), Mr M. Bradshaw (Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group), Mr I. Horridge (Sustrans and Rother DC), Mr P. Humphreys (Cycle East Sussex and Bespoke Eastbourne), Mrs S. Burton (Cycle East Sussex), Mr A. Hills (local cyclist), Mrs B. Styles (Parish resident, and Mrs V. Stutt (Parish resident).

### **Comments**

- The residents and cyclists proposed that Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan should include improvements to local paths and bridleways to make them more accommodating for all users, including walkers, cyclists, families with young children in buggies and users of mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
- Independent research as detailed in NHS Choices, iConnect, Sustrans Fit for Life, and many others, report on the health benefits of all physical activity including walking and cycling. An active life promotes well-being and can help prevent serious illnesses such as heart disease, asthma, diabetes and cancer.
- Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council Policies support and encourage travel by walking and cycling.
- A specific problem in the parish is the access from Windmill Hill to Herstmonceux as the footpath is very narrow. It is not possible for two people to walk side by side on parts of the footpath. This causes serious issues for children attending school in Herstmonceux, and walkers, cyclists, families with young children in buggies and users of mobility scooters and wheelchairs residents who wish to access the facilities and services in Herstmonceux. There has already been an incident with a mobility scooter when the user was trapped under the vehicle when it overturned on a narrow and uneven section of the footpath.
- A high number of individual cyclists and cycle groups use the roads through the parish. Use of the C class/minor roads across Pevensey Levels and in other areas of the parish mean that it is possible to link to cycle paths /designated cycle routes such as the Cuckoo Trail to access facilities, services and leisure facilities in Hailsham, Battle, Polegate and other local towns. However, the signage for cycle routes to C Class/minor roads, bridleways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS) for cyclists in Herstmonceux Parish is non-existent.
- Young and cautious cyclists often use footpaths to avoid traffic and thus place themselves in conflict with pedestrians and the law.
- A designated route from Windmill Hill to Herstmonceux would be available to walkers, cyclists, families with young children in buggies and users of mobility scooters and wheelchairs and it could connect to other routes in adjoining parishes.
- The provision of a separate route, which provides clear separation of pedestrians/non-motorised vehicles from traffic on the main road, addresses road safety issue as existing narrow paths place pavement users very close to passing traffic.

- The creation of a new route between Windmill Hill and Herstmonceux will support the aspirations of Public Health England – Working together to Promote Active Travel. Copy attached.
- A copy of a proposed new route between Windmill Hill and Herstmonceux is attached.

### **Key Points and Action**

1. Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan should support a new route between Windmill Hill and Herstmonceux which would be accessible for walkers, cyclists, families with young children in buggies and users of mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
2. Signage should be introduced for cycle routes via C Class/minor roads, bridleways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS) to link with adjoining parishes and for access to nearby towns, tourist sites and leisure facilities.
3. There is clear support from local residents and both points would reflect the aims of Public Health England – Working Together to Promote Active Travel.