

Cllr P Seeley (Chair), Cllr M Keller (PC Chair)
Cllr P Hill (EDFPC)
Cllr S Shing (ESCC)
Ian Johnson – Traffic and Safety Manager (ESCC)
Thomas Lee (Highway Steward) (ESCC)
David Lockyer – East Dean Roads company
Corinne Black (ESCC Customer Services)
Luke Gillman (ESCC Customer Services)
Katrina Larkin - Parish Clerk
Debbie Picknell – Admin Officer



STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

East Dean & Friston Parish Council Liaison Meeting

2nd March 2021 at 2.30 pm

By remote means (Zoom platform and phone)

DRAFT Minutes Case Number 00559676 (Draft Minutes of SLR meeting - 2nd March 2021 -)

1. **Apologies for absence:** - Sophie Coleman (ESCC Rights of Way)
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2020:** - Agreed
3. **Matters arising:**
 - a) **Friston build-out** – the installation was now complete and had been judged a success. The parish council particularly appreciated the financial contribution of ESCC and the work done by Mr Heasman
 - b) **Blocked drain** – this drain on the south side of the A259 below Upper Street had caused water to come up through the footway where tarmac had recently been laid. Repairs to the footway were completed on 26 June and the gully was cleaned and jetted. The problem appeared to have been resolved.
 - c) **Debris at Upper Street/Friston Hill junction** – this problem persisted: rainwater flowing down the hill missed the drains due to the slope of the road surface, and deposited debris across the junction. The drains could also become blocked. The parish council suggested a mini tarmac bund could redirect the flow. **ACTION: TL to investigate and report back.**
 - d) **Sign and safety barrier on Footpath 24** – the missing footpath sign and safety barrier had now been replaced by the ESCC Rights of Way team, and this was appreciated.
 - e) **Request bus stop at Downsview Lane** – the parish council had emailed Brighton and Hove Buses to ask for the bus stop to be reinstated in the old location, having been advised by Highways that this was the best location after all, and that the bus company was responsible for reinstating the stop at the approved location. As yet there had been no response. The parish council was advised to contact the Passenger Transport team at county hall for assistance. **ACTION: KL to send details to SS and to contact Passenger Transport.**
 - f) **Tactile paving on N side of A259** – the fault that had allowed water and silt to collect had now been corrected. This was much appreciated.
 - g) **Complaint about overgrown verge at Friston Pond** – the parish council had had clearance work done in November 2020 and visibility for drivers on the A259 had been restored.

- h) **Footpath repair** – the broken handrail at the Old Willingdon Road end of Footpath 8 had now been repaired by a councillor charging only for materials.
- i) **Footpath 26a/27** – this path had been informally diverted away from the driveway of Birling Manor. Two issues now arose: (i) the diversion should be either officially sanctioned or the path reinstated in its old position; and (ii) the surface of the diverted section was no longer tarmac but soft ground, and this was exacerbated by the fact that all the rain falling on the roof of an adjacent barn discharged directly onto the path, which had become impassable. The Rights of Way team had advised the SDNPA that the diversion should have a tarmac surface, and be made official, as conditions of the planning consent for reconstructing the driveway, but neither of these things had happened. ESCC officers were currently investigating safety, and if the situation were not rectified then walkers would be entitled to follow the official public right of way along the driveway of Birling Manor.
- j) **Footpath signage** – (i) a resident had asked whether footpath signage could be made more informative, to encourage walkers and promote sustainable movement. This might include stating the destination of the path and the distance involved. ESCC officers advised that the South Downs National Park Authority should fund signage on paths in their area, and the county council was unlikely to object to such signage. Alternatively it was noted that grid references were now being placed on signposts in the National Park which would enable walkers to access more information via their phones. (ii) On the Downlands Estate there was no consistency in the signage of rights of way, some being marked and others not, possibly due to the fact that most verges were privately owned and not all householders would consent to have signs on their property. It was suggested that small concrete signs might be an acceptable alternative to the standard signposts. **ACTION: KL/DP to liaise with ESCC Rights of Way**

4. Speedwatch Signs

The parish council had set up a Traffic Management Working Group which was now partly trained, but had yet to meet. Training would be completed with the help of the Seaford police, as soon as government restrictions allowed. The parish council would also like to obtain one or two radar speed signs and requested advice on how to proceed. IJ advised that the purchase of the equipment must be done by the parish. This type of signage could not be permanent and must only stay in place for three weeks (i.e. one moveable sign would be all that was required). The signs must be kept within the 30 mph and 40 mph zones. Within the 30 mph zone they could not be placed within 30m of a junction, and in the 40 mph zone they could not be placed within 45m of a junction. The signs could be mounted on street furniture but not on telegraph poles. Alternatively sockets could be provided in the verge to accommodate moveable posts, and capped when not in use. Someone would then need training on how to move the equipment. The costs would be approx:

- Section 115 Licence for installation on the highway verge - £60.14 each location
- 2 verge sockets (for the posts) £270.00
- 2 posts £178.56 (£89.28 each)
- Traffic Management during installation work (day rate) £1,654
- Excavation Licence £399.61 (per location)
- Cost of the actual sign and fixing kit £2,700

ACTION: PS/PH/MK to carry this forward and report to the parish council; photos of chosen locations to be sent to IJ for checking.

5. Trees on Friston Hill

The felling of diseased trees had recently been undertaken by ESCC's contractor, but had allegedly crossed the boundary into a resident's property, giving rise to a complaint. The ESCC Dutch Elm Disease officer had checked a Land Registry plan which appeared to show that the resident's boundary came right down to the tarmac of the path, but there was some doubt over this as the flint boundary wall of the next property was 4' away from the path. A further problem was that some diseased trees remained which were clearly within the boundary of a private property. The parish requested an update. **ACTION: SS to ask when the remaining diseased trees would be felled.**

6. Problems caused by closure of Friston Hill

Some residents had asked for a sign to be installed on Micheldene Road indicating that the top part was not a through road. This was intended to stop vehicles pouring through the Estate when Friston Hill was closed, only to have to turn around at the end. IJ advised that this could not be done officially, as the Estate roads were classified as 'un-adopted public highways'. He also noted that Micheldene was not strictly a 'no through road'. DL responded that many residents believed the roads to be private. IJ advised that ownership and maintenance were private but that access was public. KL stated that the presence of a registered village green and a number of historic rights of way on the Estate meant that public access could not be prevented. However, this could be checked again with the Highways Land Information team at county hall. The Estate roads could not be adopted by the county without considerable upgrading which would need to be paid for by residents.

7. Request for temporary traffic lights at Exceat during Polegate roadworks

Maria Caulfield MP had advised that temporary lights would be provided soon and would remain in place until the new bridge was open. They would be provided by the county council **ACTION: SS to check this information.**

8. Drainage on Downs View Lane

In January 2021 the Highways maintenance team had constructed a small ridge across the slope into Downs View Lane from the A259, to prevent rainwater run-off from flooding the Lane and the adjoining Close, sometimes running on into Sussex Gardens. In addition, the blocked gully pots on the main road had been cleared. However, these gulleys discharged down the bank into an adjacent field, and whilst this system could cope with normal rainfall, residents were concerned that it did not cope with occasional heavier downpours. The outcome could be dependent on the height of the water table in the field where the gulleys discharged. It was agreed that if there were further problems, photos should be taken and supplied to Cllr Shing, the Highway Steward, and Corinne Black **ACTION: all councillors/TL/CB**

9. Closure of Jevington Road

The parish councillors requested that notice should always be given, however short, when the Jevington Road was closed for works. CB stated that unfortunately whenever work was done by utility companies there was no legal requirement for them to give advance notice to the parish, nor any residents apart from those living on that road. They simply had to provide signage on the road. However, she would check the regulations and report back **ACTION: CB**

10. Cleaning road signs

Complaints had been received that some of the village road signs needed cleaning and had become difficult to read. This applied particularly to the brown sign to Birling Gap at the junction of the A259 and Gilberts Drive. There was no information as to whether this was done on rotation or in response to need. **ACTION: PS to draw up a list for attention and send to TL/SS**

11. Any other business

The following were discussed:

- a) Speed limit sign at the entrance to Micheldene Road from the A259 – this sign had been dislodged by contractors and reinstalled facing the wrong way. IJ confirmed that the 40 mph side should apply to motorists joining the A259. **ACTION: PS to check the need for remedial action**
- b) Collection of speed data – it was confirmed that the parish council would appreciate a contribution from ESCC to the collection of speed data in the summer. This should be done once the lockdown restrictions were ended. **ACTION: DP to advise ESCC of suitable dates in due course.**
- c) Yellow lines – councillors requested an update on the additional yellow lines approved for installation in the parish many years ago, but never supplied. IJ advised that ESCC could not justify the expense as there was no police enforcement of parking restrictions within the Wealden district (in contrast to Eastbourne where there was civil parking enforcement). Exceptions could only be made where there was an established safety issue, or on the basis of Community Match funding.
- d) Provision of charging points for electric cars – councillors asked whether ESCC Highways had any influence on such provision. IJ advised that they probably did not: there would be no suitable locations on the highway verges controlled by the Highways department. The same question was raised in relation to the village car park, owned and managed by Wealden District Council. IJ offered to make enquiries but did not expect to have influence over this. **ACTION: IJ to make enquiries; DP to ask District Cllr Lunn about Wealden's policy.** It was noted that planning policy now required new developments with 10 parking spaces to provide at least one charging point.

12. Next meeting

To be held in October 2021 in the village hall, date and time to be confirmed **ACTION: DP to book the Small Hall.**