



Devon Countryside Access Forum

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Communications
East Devon District Council
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Dear Sir/Madam

Cranbrook Development Plan: Preferred Approach

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...”

The DCAF currently has sixteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

The DCAF's position statement on planning and local development framework documents is attached. The DCAF is pleased to note the emphasis on sustainable transport, amenity land (including allotments) and green corridor links. It would be appreciated if the needs of people with disabilities could be considered in the design of such routes and spaces and the Forum's disability position statement is also attached.

It would be appreciated if the District Council could consult further with the DCAF about the potential SANGS. Looking at the Masterplan document, it seems that the potential SANGS are sited so as to be accessible from many parts of the development area. As an overprovision has been included at this stage, this gives a slightly misleading impression as to the area that will eventually be allocated, and the way in which this final expanse will integrate with the development and any other access provision. The document would have been more helpful if it had identified precisely the location of the SANGS sites, so that the extent could be accurately assessed.

It would be useful to provide more than one area of SANGS and ensure linkages between them. Land uses of the SANGS site need to be carefully considered to ensure they are pleasant and enjoyable areas to explore. Access should be as open as possible dependent on grazing regimes.



It is also unclear from the document as to how the SANGS and access provision will interact with the new Clyst Valley regional park to the northern side of Cranbrook.

One of the concerns of the DCAF is ensuring adequate SANGS is delivered with appropriate funding for long term maintenance and management from developers so that they can be attractive sites for recreational access for the future. Car parking for SANGS sites is an aspect that may have to be considered, as has been provided at the Dawlish SANGS site.

The Forum appreciates that SANGS sites are intended to mitigate against the impact of access on internationally designated conservation sites, such as the Pebblebed Heaths and Exe Estuary. Dog walkers will be very prevalent, and their requirements will need to be balanced against their possible detrimental impacts within SANGS (for example on ground nesting birds, on farming activities, or simply through dog fouling). The Forum would also encourage specific planning to ensure other user groups, for example cyclists, young people, and those with disabilities, have access to SANGS or appropriate trails across SANGS.

The DCAF would welcome your feedback.

Yours faithfully

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Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

Letter sent on behalf of Devon Countryside Access Forum
Chair: Sarah Slade
Vice Chair: Chris Cole