



**Devon Countryside Access Forum
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Transport Planning team
Devon County Council
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30 September 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Heart of Teignbridge Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

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...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes county and district councils.

The DCAF currently has fifteen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

Comments

The Devon Countryside Access Forum notes proposals to improve opportunities for sustainable travel in and around Newton Abbot, Kingsteignton and Kingskerswell. Such plans would accord with the aspirations in the Forum’s Position Statements on Local Development Frameworks and Major Developments and Disability Access. These are attached. Devon County Council and Teignbridge District Council are advised to cross-reference the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan against these.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum strongly supports the statement “*Focussing on inclusive “All Ages and Abilities (AAA)” design and ensuring cycling is accessible*”

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.

for everyone are core design considerations when developing and delivering schemes through the LCWIP process.”

At its meeting held on 21 September, members expressed an ambition to promote wider links from existing trails. It is therefore encouraging to see the stated desire to see an off-road link from the Stover Trail to the proposed Teign Estuary Trail, thereby enabling people to experience a longer recreational or sustainable transport route. The link to the Wray Trail to the north-west offers further opportunities.

The proposals mention a new bridge over the River Lemon or using the existing Heathfield bridge. In considering these options and designs, it is vital that the requirements of people with disabilities are factored in so that this growing group of people with wheelchairs or mobility scooters can also access this route. The DCAF trusts the DfT Walking Route Audit Tool, used to assess the walking routes within the towns, will be used for the Stover Trail extension as this *“considers the needs of all people who use walking routes, including the elderly, people with visual, mobility or hearing impairments, with learning difficulties, people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters, and children.”*

The Trail and any improvements should be designed to encourage responsible and considerate use as it is likely to be a very popular trail used by different types of users. The DCAF’s Advisory Note on Trails is attached.

The extension to this trail will enable more people to enjoy the trail and also to access green space at Jetty Marsh Nature Reserve and Stover Country Park without using cars.

The DCAF would support modest improvements to the Stover Trail, as indicated in the document, as these would encourage more use of the trail.

The Forum would welcome feedback on its comments.

Yours faithfully



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum
Chair: Sarah Slade
Vic Chair: Chris Cole*