

101484387

Revision 01

RIGHTS OF WAY WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	12 th March 2025, 10:00-12:00
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	Andrew Woodin (SCC)
Attendees:	SZC – Richard Bull (RB), Daniel Piercy (DP) – (Observer), Rebecca Quigg (RQ), Caitlin Murphy (Secretariat) – (Observer) ESC – Sarah Potter (SP) SCC – Andrew Woodin (AW), Annette Robinson (DAR), David Falk (DF) – (Observer), Benjiman Grapes (BG) – (Observer)
Apologies:	

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Meeting Notes:

Actions:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
13/08/2024	1	SZC to come up with draft comms plan outlining core principles, technology to be utilised, and methods to keep the general public informed to ensure transparency accuracy	SZC	Next meeting
13/08/2024	2	DAR to engage with Paul Lennon and Daniel Piercy on practicalities of signage and strategies for its optimisation. Paul Lennon is the SZC Senior Comms Manager	SCC	Next meeting
13/08/2024	3	SZC to report technical solution for continuously updating the status of public rights of way and the functionality of this system. Additionally, they are to explain how this system will interface with the project's road closures and whether a combined approach is feasible	SZC	Next meeting
04/12/2024	4	RQ and DP to discuss communications plan on regional and wider levels, as well as how to ensure information is easily accessible for visitors. Additionally, need to decide if the plan should stand alone or be part of a larger package on road network and disruptions	SZC	Next meeting
12/03/2025	5	SZC to scope the key objectives, work through the details and document the next steps of the Communications Plan, including creating an interim status update to maintain a live record of the status of public rights of way. SZC to provide an update on Communications Plan strategy within the next month	SZC	Next meeting
12/03/2025	6	SCC to review the suggestion regarding the PRoW network extension along Fen Lodge Road.	SCC	Next meeting
12/03/2025	7	SCC to keep SP informed on key PRoW works they are aware of, that they believe would be likely to generate queries from members of the public	SCC	Next meeting

Action 1: ongoing. New SZC RoW officer will spearhead and help take this forward.

Action 2: ongoing. DAR will liaise with when new SZC RoW officer when they are in post.

Action 3: joined with action 1 and 4.

The minutes of the group's meeting on 4/12/24 were agreed, and they can be published.

Recruitment

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- New SCC SZC Green Access Delivery Manager recruited this is Benjiman Grapes, who was at this meeting. He is aiming to commence on 1st of May.
- New SZC rights of way officer (John Pelham) will commence work on 17th of March.

Requirement 10 Implementation Plan Updates & Friday Street Roundabout Footpath Diversion

- Requirement 10 submissions:
 - Bridleway 19 Diversion: expected Technical Approval (TA) in March 2025
 - Sizewell Link Road: expected TA in April 2025
 - Two Village Bypass: expected TA in April 2025
- Friday Street PRoW diversions:
 - SZC has engaged with SP and DAR regarding the Friday Street PRoW diversions. They submitted a Section 119 PPO application at the end of 2024 and are pursuing a diversion of the route.
 - Based on feedback from SCC colleagues, SZC will make minor adjustments to the attenuation pond design, but changes to the alignment of the permanent and temporary diversions are not expected.
 - DP will send SP the revised drawing of the diverted route. After this, they will conduct informal consultations following SP's internal review and then submit the Article 19 temporary diversion application.
- Bridleway 19:
 - SZC has been in communication with SCC regarding several issues related to the existing bridleway and will be submitting additional Article 19 applications for short-term temporary diversions.
- Sizewell Link Road:
 - Several temporary haul road crossings and diversions are necessary to facilitate archaeological work, and discussions are currently underway with SCC.
 - The aim is to reach an agreement on the crossings soon, followed by Article 19 submissions for the proposed diversions.

PRoW Fund Governance Membership

- Group reviewed the RoWWG membership. Sarah Potter was highlighted as the main ESC representative.
- SZC Co clarified Rebecca Quigg represents the Transport Review Group, rather than SZC Co.

PRoW Fund Spend Period

- AW raised that the DoO states that the proposed spending period for the PROW Fund is five years, despite the ten-year construction timeline. SCC is looking to clarify this timeline.
- AW noted the five year timescale is to spend *or commit* the PRoW fund, which does, however, give some flexibility.
- RB emphasised the importance of spending the funds quickly to enhance public rights of way, and advocated for a coordinated strategy for all mitigation efforts. He stated that if funds remain after five years, continued use could be approved.
- RB suggested developing a comprehensive plan that aligns with the strategic overview of the PRoW and a delivery strategy. Once new officers are settled, it would be beneficial to outline the delivery plan for the PRoW fund, including procurement and timelines. BG's role will account for the planning and scoping of these schemes, assessing projects and costings.
- RB stated SZC Co is not looking to claw back any of the PRoW Fund.
- DAR highlighted that Leiston walking and cycling projects are being managed by Steve Merry's team, and that project plans for these initiatives exist already.
- SP expressed interest in reviewing a list of PRoW projects along with their respective timelines.

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Approaching the delivery of improvements in the PRoW Fund and Leiston Walking and Cycling Projects

- AW outlined the approach that officers will take in managing and spending the fund, with the first priority being to engage key stakeholders at SCC, SZC, and ESC,
- DF and DAR will continue to consolidate the fund schemes, and BG will be brought in to help with the delivery.
- The team will review the fund projects to assess their suitability, determine the sequencing, establish priorities, and ensure coordination with SZC activities and other local works.
- AW emphasised the importance of bringing the right people together, to begin planning the delivery of these projects. Once the project delivery strategy is established, involving local communities and other stakeholders will be crucial, as they may wish to influence the details of the projects within the fund.
- RB highlighted the need for flexibility throughout this process, as new opportunities may arise that could enhance the PRoW work. If funding, including other SZC funds, is available, it should be utilised to explore these possibilities.

Communications Plan

- RB identified two key elements for the Communications Plan. First, highlighting the need for collaboration with the Leiston communications team to ensure that any impacts on public rights of way are effectively communicated through their standard processes. This includes maintaining a BAU link with the team to ensure outreach to the wider community, including parishes.
- Recent efforts have focused on improving communication regarding planned road closures and construction activities. It is crucial to integrate PRoW impacts and upcoming work statuses into this communication framework.
- The second element involves creating an updated and accessible list of PRoW impacts, including road closures, diversions, and their durations. This will provide the public with a reliable source for current PRoW status.
- RQ suggested that this initiative could be coordinated with the new tourism representative at ESC, viewing it as a collaborative effort. RB noted that tourism representatives will need access to information about open routes to serve their customers effectively.
- RB stated that the aim is to establish an efficient and effective system, potentially linking to GIS to display the locations of various impacts on an aerial map. This will allow users to see which routes are closed and identify alternatives.
- AW highlighted the need for positive messaging, reassuring visitors that access to roads, PRoW and other green access remains available with only occasional diversions.
- RB stated that SZC will scope the key objectives of the plan, work through the details, and document the next steps, including creating an interim status update to maintain a live record of the status of PRoWs. This needs to be done promptly due to the significant impact of upcoming offsite infrastructure construction on linear PRoW routes. DP and RB will work with new SZC RoW officer to develop a cohesive strategy to pull together the Plan. will outline the key objectives of the plan and document the next steps,

Action – SZC to scope the key objectives, work through the details and document the next steps of the Communications Plan, including creating an interim status update to maintain a live record of the status of public rights of way. SZC to provide an update on Communications Plan strategy within the next month

Horizon Scanning

- RB emphasised the importance of horizon scanning and effectively incorporating suggestions from the public or council representatives into the PRoW strategy, highlighting the need to remain open to new ideas and consider how these could fit with existing DoO commitments.
- RB shared a suggestion from a councillor to enhance the PRoW network by improving the access on the public byway/U road from the B1125 along Fen Lodge Road towards Dunwich.

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- AW mentioned that BG will review this suggestion to explore potential actions.

Action – SCC to review the suggestion regarding the PRow network extension along Fen Lodge Road.

- RB added that if this enhancement could be delivered, it would align well with the overall strategy for connectivity and off-road recreational routes in the region.
- Regarding horizon scanning, DP reiterated that various diversions will be forthcoming in the next couple of months, primarily related to Bridleway 19 and the Sizewell Link Road.
- SP requested to be kept informed about SCC PRow matters, as she frequently receives inquiries from the public regarding PRow maintenance. Being updated on diversions and their timings would enable her to address these questions directly.

Action – SCC to keep SP informed on key PRow works they are aware of, that they believe would be likely to generate queries from members of the public

Author: Caitlin Murphy (SZC)