

## AGENDA

### WESTERN AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, 9 June 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Hartlip Village Hall, The Street, Hartlip, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7TH

#### Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock, Monique Bonney, Roger Clark, Nicholas Hampshire, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Richard Palmer, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen (Vice-Chair) and Corrie Woodford (Chair).

Quorum = 3

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	Pages
1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure	
<p>The Chair will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures. The Chair will inform the meeting that: there is no scheduled test of the fire alarm during this meeting. If the alarm does sound, please leave the building quickly without collecting any of your possessions, using the doors signed as fire escapes, and assemble outside where directed. Await instructions before re-entering the building. Should anyone require assistance in evacuating the building, please make the Swale Borough Council officers aware of any special needs so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.</p>	
2. Apologies for absence	
3. Declarations of Interest	
<p>Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships. The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:</p>	
<p>(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is</p>	

provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

**Advice to Members:** If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the meeting.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 March 2022 (Minute Nos. 645 - 655) and the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 May 2022 (to follow) as correct records.

5. Youth provision in the Western Area

6. Swale Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

7. Matters arising from previous meetings 5 - 16

8. Update on work plan 17 - 22

9. Public Forum

10. Local issues to be raised

11. Matters referred to Area Committee by Service Committees

12. Matters referred to Service Committees by Area Committee

**Issued on Monday, 30 May 2022**

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**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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## Western Area Committee meeting: Progress on Matters arising – 9 June 2022

No.	Item	Background	Progress on actions
1.	Youth provision in villages	<p>At the June 2021 meeting the lack of youth provision was raised as an issue.</p> <p>At the March 2022 meeting it was agreed to invite a Kent County Council (KCC) representative from the Youth Service and the KCC Community Warden to the June 2022 meeting.</p>	<p>Amanda Turner the KCC Youth Hub Delivery Manager, Swale Integrated Children's Services and Rebecca O'Neill, the commissioned provider of Youth Provision for KCC will both be attending the June 2022 meeting. This will be discussed under item 5.</p>
2.	Bredgar and Hartlip Conservation Area Reviews.	<p>The Area Committee requested that quotes be obtained for Conservation Area Reviews for Bredgar and Hartlip for consideration at the June 2022 meeting.</p>	<p>The ballpark estimate for undertaking the two Conservation Area Reviews is between £5500-£7500.</p> <p>The officers have approached three consultants to provide us with their cost estimates to undertake the work and the costs are awaited. It is anticipated that we will receive fee proposals back from the consultants by the end of June and the relevant amounts will then be reported to the next meeting of the Area Committee for information.</p>
3.	Heritage issues	<p>Cabinet adopted a Heritage Strategy and Action Plan on 18 March 2020. The Action Plan contains a programme of Conservation Area (CA) reviews.</p>	<p>Updates for ongoing CA reviews will be provided at the September 2022 Western Area Committee meeting.</p>

		<p>The Area Committee agreed to fund CA reviews for the areas below which are outside of the planned programme of reviews in the Action Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rodmersham Church Street</li> <li>• Rodmersham Green</li> <li>• Milstead</li> <li>• Tunstall</li> </ul>	
4.	The Agricultural Bill	<p>A Parish Councillor asked if the Area Committee could advise where guidance can be found on the Agricultural Bill so that parish councils can engage with land-owners.</p> <p>A Tunstall Parish Councillor had done some work on this and said that as the Bill could impact on Planning, if any suitable training was identified for Members, she will advise the Area Committee.</p>	No officer action requested at present.
5.	Changing Places Toilets	<p>A Parish Councillor for Bobbing brought the Committee's attention to the Government Fund Changing Places Toilets. Local Authorities were invited to submit expressions of interest to install larger accessible toilets. This was also raised at the Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting.</p>	<p>The Head of Environment and Leisure advised that Swale Borough Council has been provisionally awarded funding of £133,750 for three Changing places facilities. We are awaiting final terms and conditions prior to announcing further details.</p>

6.	Charging of electric cars at home where there is no driveway.	<p>A Parish Councillor for Bobbing raised the issue of residents in the future needing to charge electric cars at home when they had no driveway. There needed to be a policy change to allow for a wire to be run either under or over the pavement <a href="https://chargearm.com/">https://chargearm.com/</a></p> <p>The Area Committee were advised the EV policy was being drafted and it will pay reference to this type of issue and point to Kent County Council guidance as it is their responsibility.</p>	Parish Councillor Graham Addicott provided contact details of an expert in Brighton who could advise on this matter. Officers have attempted to make contact but so far had no response. They will keep trying.
7.	Conservation issues including ponds.	the Chairman suggested the Pond Warden be invited to a future Western Area Committee meeting.	David Carey, the Chair of the Kent Tree and Pond Wardens has confirmed he will attend the Western Area Committee meeting on 1 September 2022 for a discussion on the maintenance of ponds.
8.	Prohibition of HGVs on the A2.	<p>A Member advised that councillors representing Rainham South were seeking to progress with Medway Council and KCC the prohibition of HGVs on the A2. He said this would affect Upchurch, Hartlip and Newington along with other areas. It was agreed by the Area Committee that the Chair would write to KCC and Medway Council to highlight the implications for SBC.</p>	<p>The Chairman of the Western Area Committee wrote letters to Medway Council and KCC, highlighting the implications of implementing the proposal to prohibit HGV's on the A2.</p> <p>Medway Council have responded to say they will take the Area Committee's comments into account when they discuss the matter further.</p> <p>The response from David Brazier the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is attached to this update, Appendix 1.</p>

9.	Rose Hill & Meads Woodland Management & Work Plans.	<p>In March 2021 the Area Committee allocated funding to develop management plans. These had now been completed by an external consultant and there were £2,158.00 of funds remaining.</p> <p>The plans indicated if the tasks should be carried out by a contractor or a volunteer group.</p> <p>Members agreed that SBC seek volunteers to set up Friends Groups and to assist them in that process as well as helping them to report progress back to the Western Area Committee.</p> <p>The Area Committee agreed that known potential volunteers be contacted by Members to see if they were interested in forming Friends Groups and report back to the June 2022 meeting.</p> <p>It was also agreed to adopt the Management and Work Plans for Rose Hill Woods and The Meads Community Woodland and the remaining funding to be split 50/50 between the two Friends Groups once established.</p>	<p>Cllr Mike Baldock reported that a Friends of Rose Hill Woods Group has formally been founded with requisite officers and the paperwork is currently being processed.</p> <p>Cllr James Hunt advised there are 5 residents who are interested in forming a friends group for The Meads Community Woodland and they hope to meet soon. The Aspire School are progressing with a Forest School and have a copy of the management plan to assist with some of the work. Cllr Hunt met with the Greenspaces Manager on site with one of the teachers to discuss an area that could be made secure for the children and this is being progressed with legal to see if work is possible to do within the restrictions of the lease. The school have funding for a forest school teacher who will be able to work with the friends group once up and running.</p>
	Walking and Cycling Project	At the March 2021 meeting, the Area Committee awarded £13,000.00 in funding for a walking and cycling project.	An update has been prepared by the Active Travel Coordinator (Appendix 2).





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Cllr Mike Baldock  
Chair Western Area Committee  
Swale Borough Council  
Swale House  
East Street  
Sittingbourne  
ME10 3HT

**Members' Desk**

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E-mail: [members.desk@kent.gov.uk](mailto:members.desk@kent.gov.uk)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 28274844

Date: 26 May 2022

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2022 in relation to a proposal to implement a Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) restricted zone on the A2 from the A249, Key Street Roundabout, Sittingbourne to the A278 (Tesco/Bowaters roundabout) Hoath Way, Gillingham.

Some concerns from residents living near to the A2 have been highlighted to us in the past and I am, of course, acutely aware of some of the negative issues HGVs can have on local communities, particularly when they use unsuitable routes, such as the inappropriate use of narrow, country lanes. However, the road in question is the A2 which, as you have identified in your letter, is a classified 'A road', intended to provide the most-direct large-scale transport links between areas and therefore, is suitable for all types of traffic.

I can confirm that we would not support the introduction of an HGV restriction on the A2 as this is a local distributor road. I would be concerned that the introduction of any restrictions placed would encourage HGV's to use alternative, inappropriate rural routes, such as through Lower Halstow and Hartlip. Implementing restrictions such as HGV bans does not cause the vehicles to disappear, they just end up being displaced often to less suitable routes. The A2 has a vital function in the area, and is the designated diversion route for all classes of vehicle when there are maintenance works (or incidents) taking place on the M2.

On a strategic level the council has adopted a Freight Action Plan that has a specific objective to try and tackle the routing of HGV's. The intention is to

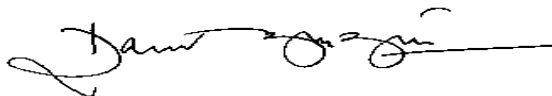
encourage the use of strategic roads for the transportation of goods across the county to minimise the impact on all communities. This document is available to view at [Freight-action-plan.pdf \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

Officers are being asked by residents and elected officials to investigate weight limit bans on the various rural roads located between the A2 and the A20 / M20 (within Maidstone Borough). These routes in many cases are unsuitable for HGV's, and officers are having to look at this in an holistic way which will be difficult. Any weight limit proposals on the A2 will likely have a detrimental effect on these investigations and attempts to reduce HGV movements through the rural villages located between the two east/west motorway corridors.

In terms of the A2 at Newington in particular the KCC Schemes, Planning and Delivery (SPD) Team have recently installed a highway improvement project which includes a new 20mph speed limit running through the centre of Newington on the A2 and its surrounding side roads, and a right turn ban from the A2 into Bull Lane. These measures should have a positive impact on air quality in the area by reducing vehicles emissions and the amount of stop start traffic caused by having to give way to traffic entering Bull Lane off the A2. This scheme has only been installed in the last month and officers are continuing to monitor this site. This scheme was funded via the crash remedial measures budget in response to a cluster of injury related crashes at the Bull Lane junction.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Brazier', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Brazier  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Project	Walking & Cycling Project
Lead Councillors	Cllr Sarah Stephen and Cllr Monique Bonney
Lead Officer	Adrian Oliver, Active Travel Co-ordinator
Objective	Use South-West Swale resources, the Villages, historical sites, food producers, ancient woodlands, nature reserves and war graves to name some, and create walking and cycling experiences similar to those created for Faversham
Budget	£13,000
Status	In Progress

Work has started on this project.

Four circular walking trails have been sketched out using Public Rights of Way and Open Street Map's walking layer. These are desk-research concepts at this stage and could alter significantly or even not be pursued.

A circular risk assessed cycle trail has been sourced from British Cycling.

Trail	Start / Finish	Distance / Duration
Meads & Milton Walk	Sittingbourne Station	6 miles / c.3 hours
Rodmersham Green Walk	Sittingbourne Station	4.5 miles / c.2.5 hours
Tunstall Borden Walk	Sittingbourne Station	5 miles / c.2.5 hours
Newington Hartlip Queen Down Warren Walk	Newington Station	6.5 miles / c.3.5 hours
West Swale Villages & Hamlets Ride	Newington Station	12.5 miles / c.1.5 hours

The Historical Research Group of Sittingbourne are kindly reviewing the trails to see whether there are any historical merits, points of interest (visible or now hidden/gone) and stories or themes that we could develop to add interest & character.

We will liaise with Ward Members so that we can enhance the trail narratives with local knowledge.

An external tourism expert is being consulted to work on each route and:

- Physically ground truth providing feedback
- Liaise with businesses
- Create step by step guides
- Create route stories and themes built on the natural & cultural heritage
- Write copy

A photographer will be commissioned to provide appropriate imagery.

The next phase will be to move on to design (preferably in-house) with the aim to produce a marketing leaflet (Swale House Print Room), low ink downloadable pdf and GPX file for each route.

A meeting has been arranged with Explore Kent to ensure that the trails can be adopted into their portfolio and uploaded to KAMS. This will also enable marketing through Visit Swale and Visit Kent. Marketing through national & regional walking and cycling trail providers will be explored.

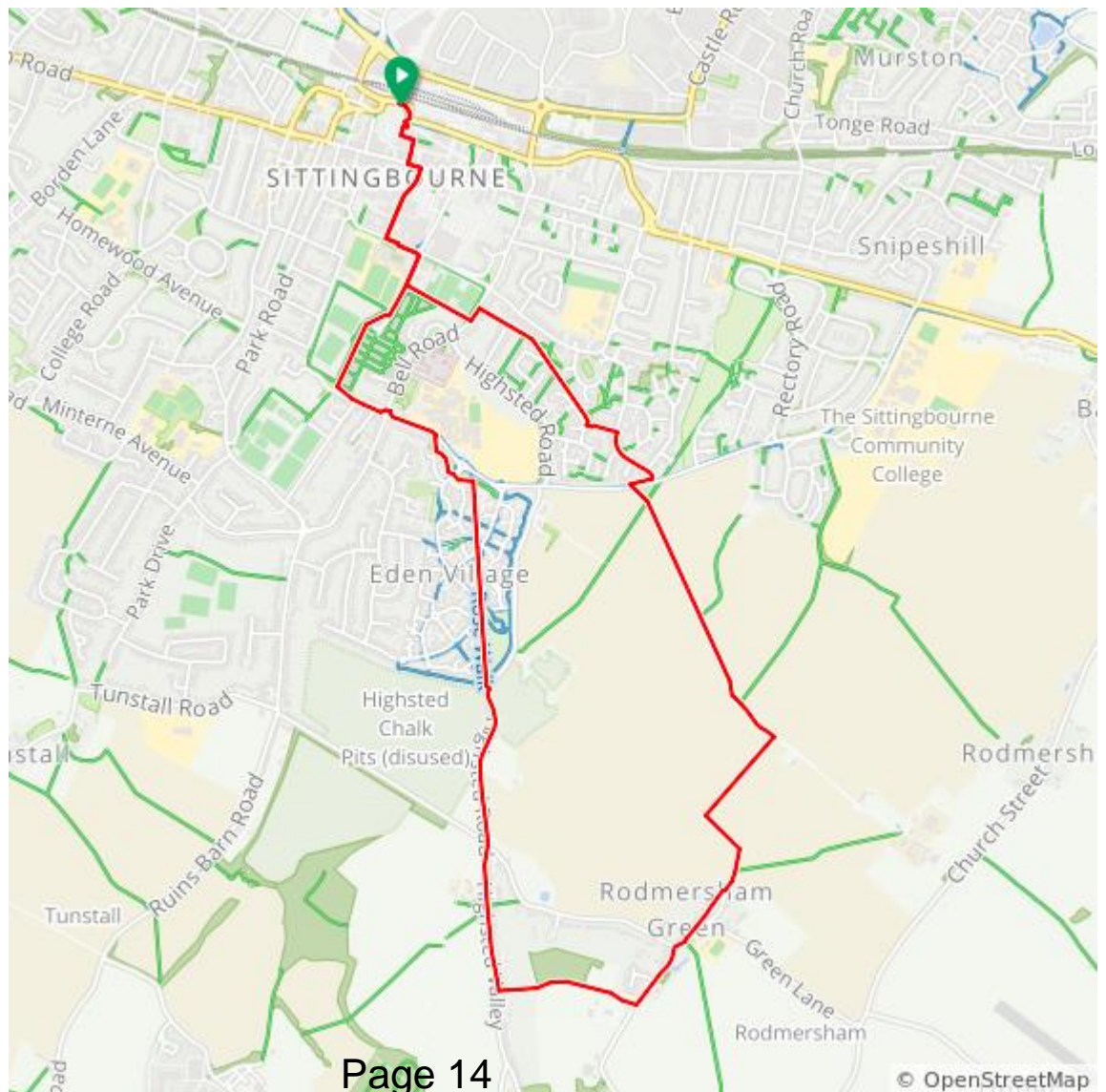
Provisional Timeline

- Development: May - July
- Design & Production: August – September
- Launch: October

Note

Separately, the Linking Coast to Downs project has developed: a c.9 mile circular route through Sittingbourne, Rodmersham Green & Bredgar; two linear routes Borden to Milton Regis and Borden to Milton Creek

Meads & Milton Walk

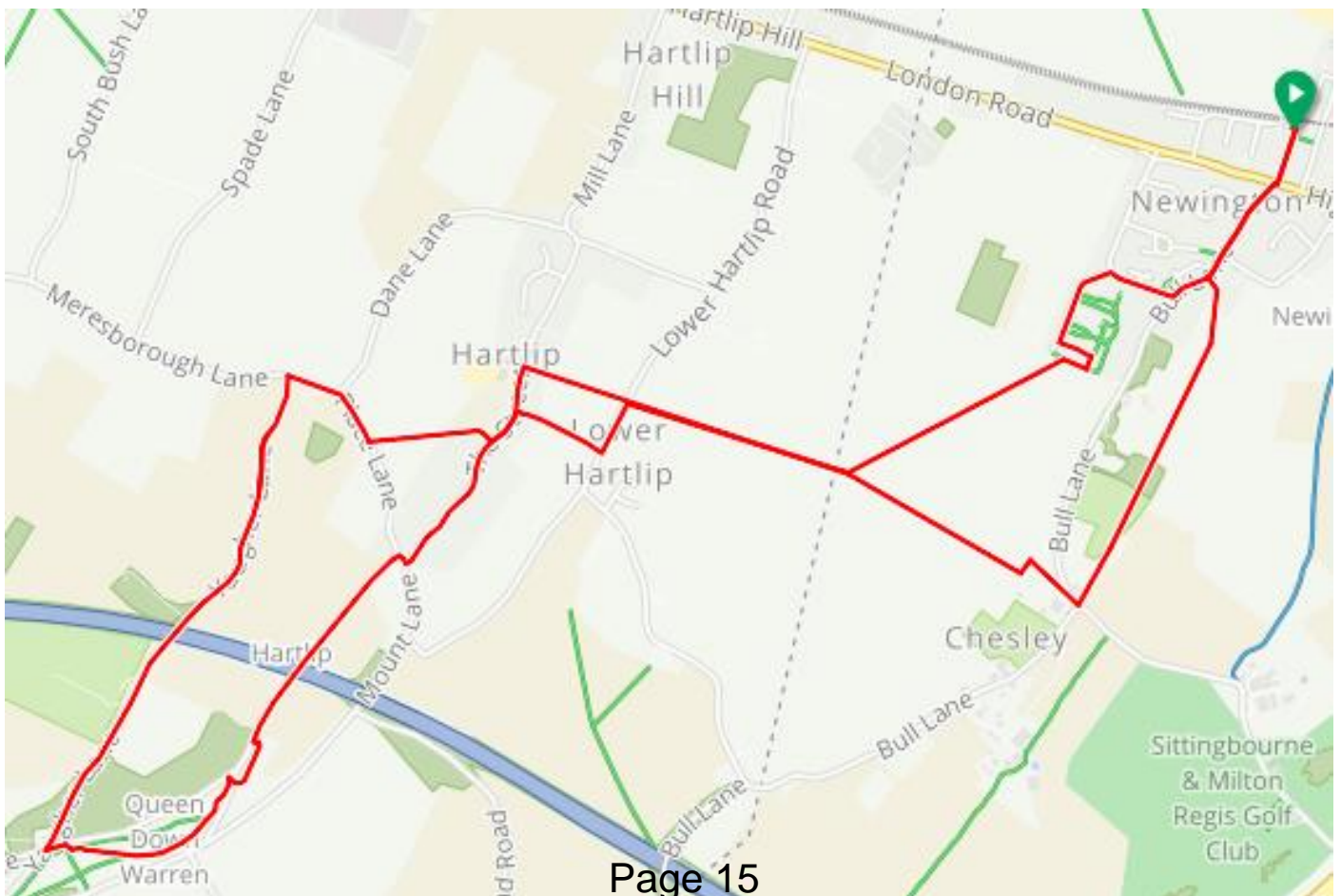


Rodmersham Green Walk

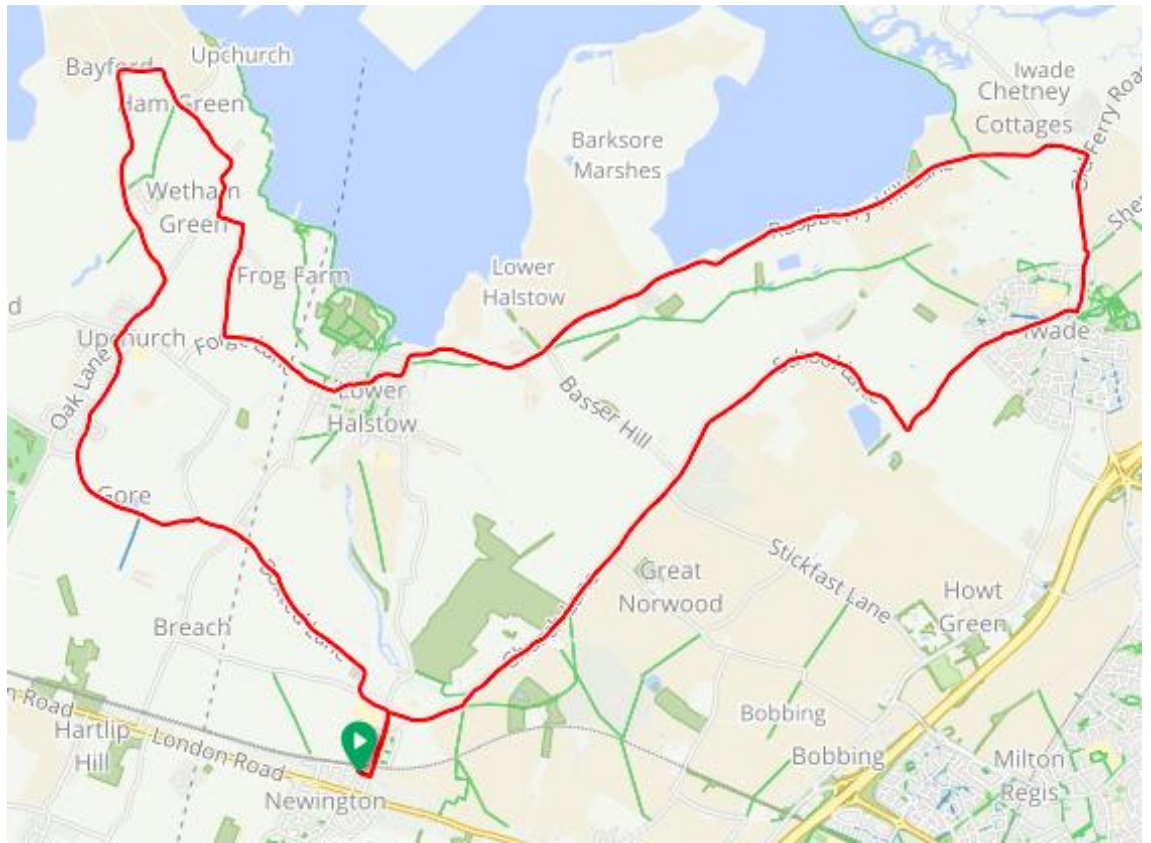
Tunstall  
Borden Walk



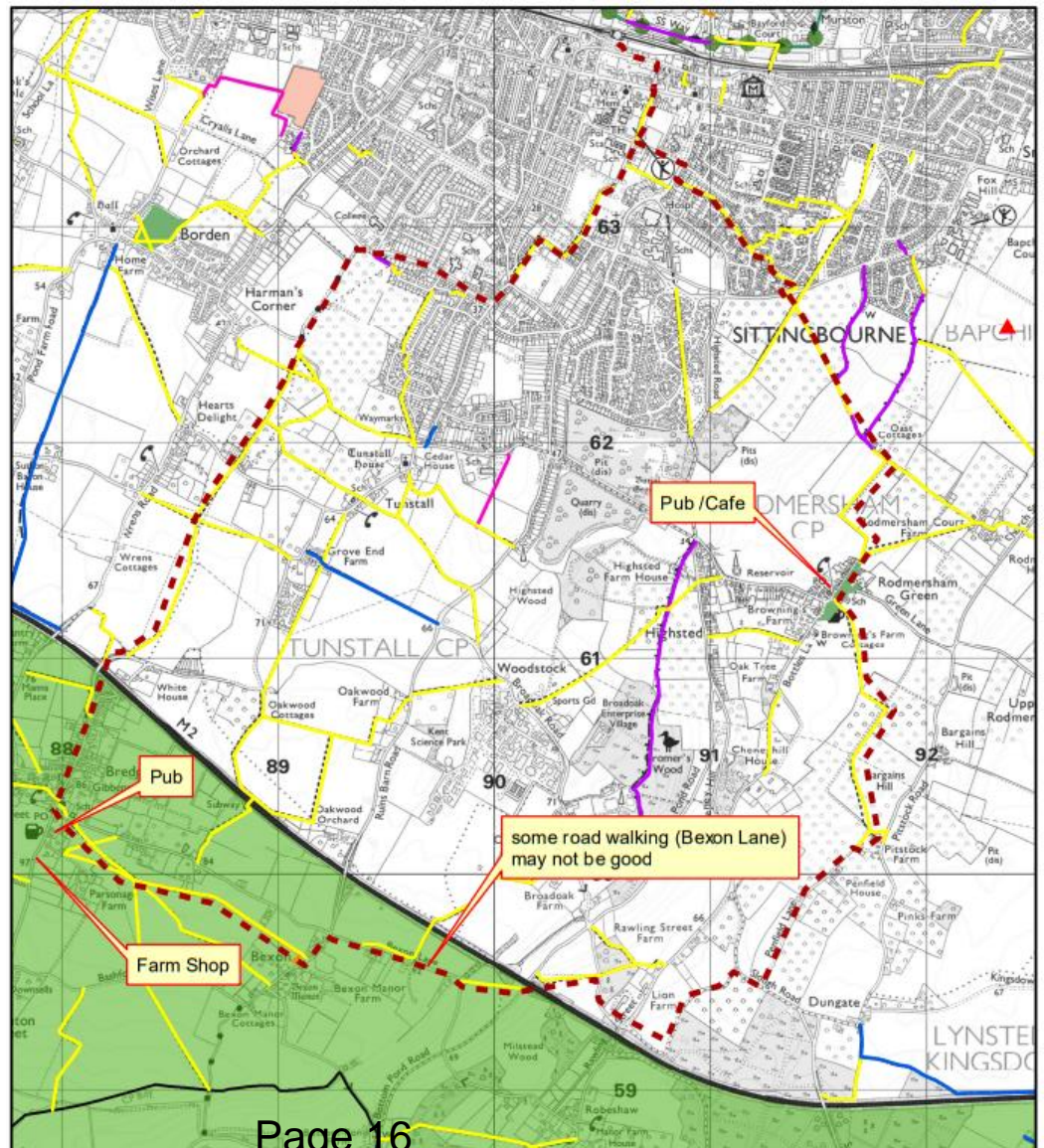
Newington Hartlip Queen Down Warren Walk



West Swale Villages & Hamlets Ride



Kent Downs AONB  
Sittingbourne  
Circular Route





<b>Western Area Committee Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	9 June 2022
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Western Area Committee Work Plan proposal for 2022/23</b>
<b>EMT Lead</b>	David Clifford, Head of Policy, Governance & Customer Service
<b>Chair of Area Committee</b>	Councillor Corrie Woodford
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Janet Dart, Interim Area Committees Coordinator
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Western Area Committee to discuss and agree their priorities and ambitions for 2022/23.</li> <li>2. The Western Area Committee to discuss and agree the criteria which any bids for funding will need to meet.</li> <li>3. The Western Area Committee to discuss and agree what publicity should take place to promote the funding scheme.</li> </ol>

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Western Area Committee (AC) have worked with officers to put a proposal together for the Western AC to consider which will set the work plan and criteria for funding bids for the year 2022/23. Once a final list of priorities and criteria have been agreed, the funding application form and guidance notes will be updated ready to launch the bid application process on Friday 1 July 2022. The deadline for bids will be Monday 1 August 2022 after which a thorough assessment process will take place by officers before being taken to the September 2022 round of AC meetings for consideration.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 In June 2021 the AC Review Working Group and Committee Chairs agreed a process for operating ACs and part of that was for each AC to agree a Work Plan at the June meeting each year. This would set out each Committee's priorities and ambitions for that year and would link in with how the funding should be allocated. Once the priorities/ambitions have been agreed, the Committee will need to set criteria which any bids for funding would need to meet.
- 2.2 The Committee can decide to use the funding exclusively for a proactive theme/ambition or open the scheme up for external organisations to make bids or a combination of the two.

### 3 Proposals

3.1 **Priorities/ambitions for 2022/23** - the AC Review Working Group met in April 2022 to reflect on how the AC's processes worked during the year 2021/22 and to consider what changes would be beneficial going forward.

3.2 One of their recommendations was that Heads of Service be consulted to see if there are any existing projects that each AC could use part of their funding to accelerate without requiring much more than minimal officer involvement. This would help to achieve completion of projects earlier as well as benefit the area. Below is a list briefly outlining some potential projects that Committee Members may wish to consider prioritising for 2022/23.

- Active Travel – consultation events (necessary to support the development and adoption of the borough-wide and area-based Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans);
- Active Travel – infrastructure improvements. This could be for example new or improved cycle storage on SBC land, or following engagement with partners such as Network Rail;
- public toilet refurbishments;
- tree planting above the current plans;
- support for interventions around the Cost of Living Crisis – Food banks and VCS support such as debt advice etc.

3.3 **Criteria for funding applications** - The Chair and Vice-Chair propose that the criteria set by Western Area Committee for the year 2021/22 should be carried forward to 2022/23 as they are still relevant for the area. Therefore, bids for funding submitted to the September 2022 meeting should demonstrate they will have a positive impact on the appearance, environment and facilities in the Western Area and benefit residents across the area.

3.4 Bids will also be considered that can demonstrate how the initiative or project will contribute to Swale's strategic priorities 2 and 3 as set out in the Corporate Plan as listed below:

3.5 **Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges;**

2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.

2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.

2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.

2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.

2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

### **Priority 3: Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone:**

3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.

3.2 Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.

3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.

3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.

3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

3.6 **Publicity of funding scheme** – The AC Review Working Group recommended that each AC agree how widely their funding scheme should be publicised. This decision will directly relate to the Work Plan and priorities that are agreed at the June 2022 meeting. The options for the AC to consider are:

- Publicise widely, putting out press releases, social media posts and email local organisations including parish/town councils;
- Limited publicity, email the parish/town councils within the area and any local organisations that may have schemes which Members believe would assist with achieving the AC's ambitions; or

- No publicity, AC Members to advise organisations/parish/town councils themselves if they feel they may have a scheme that would assist with achieving the AC's ambitions.

## 4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Western Area Committee Members could agree not to have a Work Plan with set priorities and criteria for funding. However, officers would advise against this as it will be difficult to adhere to the three-step process recommended by the AC Review Working Group and the AC may find themselves in a position where members will need to vote on individual bids, and any member with an interest which could give them an apparent bias, would have to recuse themselves from all such votes. In addition to unnecessarily disenfranchising members, this also runs the risk that meetings becoming inquorate for these agenda items.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair have been consulted to gain a steer on what they recommend the Work Plan and criteria should be for 2022/23. Officers have also been consulted to seek advice on potential projects Area Committees may wish to prioritise in their Work Plan and to ensure there are no resource implications. No external consultation has been undertaken or is proposed. However, Western AC will be consulted at the June 2022 meeting when a final proposal will be agreed and voted on.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposals report provides senior officers the opportunity to check the Work Plan does not conflict with the Corporate Plan priorities.
Financial, Resource and Property	The proposals report provides senior officers the opportunity to check the Work Plan has no Swale Borough Council financial /officer resource implications.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No specific implications identified at this stage.

Health and Wellbeing	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No specific implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific implications identified at this stage.

## **7 Appendices**

7.1 There are no appendices.

## **8 Background Papers**

8.1 There are no background papers.

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