

BEECH ROAD SAFETY AND FOOTPATHS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting 9th March 2026, 2:30-3:45 pm

Attendees:

Charles Cockburn (CC)
Kim Eakers (KE)
Graham Webb (GW)
Tony Ransley (TR)
Ian Dumelow (ID)
Malcolm Ward-Close (MWC)

Apologies for absence:

None

1) Minutes for 6th February 2026

Approved.

2) Declaration of interest:

(in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils Model Code of Conduct adopted July 2018) Councillors and Working Group members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. You must withdraw from the room or chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.
No interests were declarable.

3) Actions from Last Meeting (see Appendix 1: Schedule of Projects for details)

No.	Subject	Action	Who?	Outcome and New Actions
1	Scope Statement	Prepare draft	MWC	Draft Approved by BRSFWG Copy attached (Appendix 1)
2	HCC interactions	Contact Tracy Webb about cycle/footpath between Beech and Alton, next to A339 and to request bridleway	MWC CC	CC has made contact with Ms Webb on subject of cycle path but no response on bridleway signs. ACTION MWC to follow up.

		warning signs for Medstead Road.		
3	Medstead Road Crossways		MWC	a) Bridleway/footpath finger - signs are to be replaced - in progress. b) Roadside warning signs for drivers are required at the bridleway crossings. Waiting for HCC reply (see Item 2 above)
4	Access points into Ackender Wood and Bushy Leaze Wood and connections with existing Beech footpaths and bridleways.	Investigate southern access routes from Chawton Park Road and Alton Sports Centre.	MWC	Initial contact made with Ackender Hills management company. See items 12 and 16 in Appendix 2. Schedule of Projects.

4) New items discussed in meeting

None to report

5) *Date of next meeting*

Monday 13th April 2026, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, West Dene House (CC's).

Malcolm Ward-Close, Secretary BRSFWG – 10/3/2026

Appendix 1:

Beech Road Safety and Footpaths Working Group BRSFWG*

Scope, Objectives and Strategy

19th February 2026

BRSFWG SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

- i. To monitor the travel and transport infrastructure in Beech and to provide advice and strategic planning to Beech Parish Council for the development and management of these facilities for all users, including walkers, joggers, cyclists, equestrians and where appropriate, motor vehicles. The remit includes roads, footpaths, tracks and bridleways and other rights of way within Beech and their links to adjoining areas, for the healthy enjoyment of Beech residents and for residents of adjoining areas to gain easy non-vehicular access to Beech and its surrounding woods and countryside.
- ii. To, as far as possible, preserve and enhance the peaceful setting and rural nature of Beech.

STRATEGY

- iii. Continue to monitor the on-road footway and other improvements put into effect as part of the Road Safety Improvement Project stated in 2020 and if necessary, indicate when repairs or alterations are required.
- iv. Monitor footpaths, tracks, lanes and bridleways within the parish and work with other interested parties, such as rambling, cycling and equestrian groups and landowners to ensure that these rights of way remain open and in good repair.
- v. Consider walking, cycling and riding links with recently built and planned housing developments bordering Beech, seeking the agreement and cooperation of relevant management companies and estate owners for safe walking and, if appropriate, cycling and riding access to Alton facilities such as the sports centre and Alton shops and community facilities and, in the other direction, from surrounding areas into Beech woods, Beech village and beyond.
- vi. Work with EHDC and HCC to obtain funding and other support for ongoing projects.
- vii. Continue to monitor vehicle speed, traffic volume and driver behaviour within the village to help inform decisions on traffic management and to deter speeding through visual reminders and warnings.
- viii. Continue to provide traffic data to Hampshire Police and Hampshire County Council if requested.
- ix. Continue to promote road safety through a strategy of improved road layout and signage, road user education and warning signs, while respecting the privacy and rights of all road users.
- x. Continue to campaign for a reduction of the speed limit in the built-up parts of Beech, noting that a reduction to 20 mph was approved by most participants in the 2020 village consultation and which is, in any case, the only option currently available.

Approved by BRSWG meeting 9th March 2026

*BRSFWG is an advisory group to Beech Parish Council composed of Beech parish councillors and other Beech residents, currently seven in number.

Appendix 2: SCHEDULE OF PROJECTS – AS AT 6 MARCH 2026

Changes since 6 February in red

	Project Name	Description	Objective	Status	Actions
1	Ongoing road & footpath maintenance	Maintenance and improvement of village traffic calming and road safety schemes, including road markings, signage and speed cameras.	Maintain, and enhance if possible, existing village road safety.	Signage (warning traffic) at two bridleway/pedestrian crossing points. But no suitable poster mounting positions have been identified. The parish clerk has sent a letter to HCC requesting the installation of Highways warning signs. Steel Bridleway 712 finger post on Medstead Rd is illegible. Parish council has agreed a £400 annual budget for clearing vegetation from its signs and cameras. No vacancies on HCC lengthsman scheme.	Await response from HCC. New HCC wooden finger post to be installed by Alton Ramblers. PC will need to arrange removal of the existing steel sign and post. PC to approve approaching contractor at Easter 2026.
2	Bus bay clearance and enhancement	Clearance and landscaping of the bus stop bay outside the Village Hall.	Make the footway alongside the bus bay a usable part of the pedestrian route through the village; also cosmetic.	Bus bay and pavement cleared. Quotes have been received and accepted by the PC for clearing the bank above the bus bay and for ground cover plants. Planting to be done by volunteers. EHDC has approved £1300 S106 funds to	Awaiting cultivation license from HCC, then start final preparation work. Periwinkles can be planted at any time. GW to have contractor trim the hedge at the corner of the bus bay to improve visibility.

				cover costs. Application made to HCC for a cultivation license.	
3	20mph zone	Introduce a 20mph zone in the village centre and on Wellhouse Rd.	Further reduction of traffic speeds through the village.	HCC have approved in principle; costs established (c.£30k). CIL money cannot be used. Application for a £25k grant under the PCC's road safety funding scheme refused.	Identify alternative funding stream. CC to liaise with '20 is Plenty (Hants)' on lobbying HCC to reduce its fees.
4	Road drainage improvement	Refurbishment/maintenance of, and/or construction of an improved, highways surface water drainage system in Beech village.	Reduce unimpeded surface water flow down Medstead & Wellhouse Rds.	The grips on Abbey Rd have recently been cleared by HCC, but not on Kings Hill & Medstead Rd. HCC has advised that unspecified drainage work is planned at some later date. A contractor has advised TR that it would cost £20k - £40k to carry out comprehensive clearance work similar to that periodically done by HCC.	Await HCC works. GW getting quotes for cheaper minor works on the grip mouths, for decision at 16 March PC meeting.
5	Basingstoke Road cycle path	Improve the existing roadside footway & cycle path on the north side of Basingstoke Rd, including adding signage re cycles, and clearing areas where overgrown.	Establish clear, well maintained, mixed use pathway. This is part of LCWIP Route 210, which runs from Alton High St to Medstead Rd.	The developer of 'Land Nth of Basingstoke Rd' is proposing to improve the path from Will Hall Farm half way to Medstead Rd. PC has asked the developer to extend improvement of the path all the way to Medstead Rd, or provide S106 money to do so. CC has asked Tracey Webb (HCC Highways) to visit to	Await outcome of 'Land Nth of Basingstoke Rd' outline planning application.

				review the condition of the path in Beech parish (and also conditions for cyclists along the Basingstoke Rd to the New Odiham Rd roundabout).	CC to provide evidence that this is or has been a shared use path.
6	Bridleway 712 improvement	Improve Bridleway 712 (Pertuis Ave – Medstead Rd via Ackender Wood), especially the surface at the 712/769 junction.	A well surfaced bridleway of adequate width, clear of obstructions.	HCC will receive £7,000 in S106 money towards bridleway improvement as a condition of permitting development at ‘Land at Whitedown Lane’ (having asked for £115,000). PC has suggested to HCC Countryside Services that they apply for funds from the c.£203,000 pot held by EHDC (see Item 12).	Await decision from HCC Countryside Services (Peter Miles).
7	Footpath 714 improvement	Improve Footpath 714 (Basingstoke Rd – Medstead Rd via Wyards Farm), including replacing stiles with kissing gates.	A well surfaced footpath of adequate width, clear of obstructions.	Not being considered as part of the ‘Land at Whitedown Lane’ development proposals.	Await any EHDC proposals for development of LAA sites to the east of the Beech village SPB (due by summer 2026).
8	New Basingstoke Road footway	A new roadside footway on the south side of Basingstoke Rd, from proposed new housing development ‘Land at Whitedown Lane’ to the junction with Medstead Rd.	Provide an accessible, lit pedestrian route from the new development to Beech Village Hall facilities.	Not being considered as part of the ‘Land at Whitedown Lane’ development proposals. Alternative routes are via Footpath 714 or via the footway on the north side of Basingstoke Rd.	Await any EHDC proposals for development of LAA sites to the east of the Beech village SPB (due by summer 2026).
9	Upgrade existing Medstead Rd path	Widening, and providing a more durable surface for, the roadside footway running along Medstead	Provide an accessible, lit pedestrian route from the new	Not being considered as part of the ‘Land at Whitedown Lane’ development proposals.	Await any EHDC proposals for development of LAA sites to the east of the Beech village SPB (due by summer 2026).

		Rd from the A339 towards Beech village.	development at 'Land at Whitedown Lane' to Beech Village Hall facilities.	Path has narrowed at the Basingstoke Rd end,	Parish clerk to instruct PJ Grace to clear to full width next time.
10	Basingstoke Road pedestrian crossing	Moving the pedestrian crossing point on Basingstoke Rd further east (from Medstead Rd junction) to improve pedestrian sight lines. Plus a short length of new footway on the south side of Basingstoke Rd.	To provide a safer point for pedestrians and cyclists crossing from Medstead Rd to the path on the north side of Basingstoke Rd.	Could be part of any improvement of the existing Basingstoke Rd cycle path.	Pursue as part of Item 5 – Basingstoke Road Cycle Path. Will also be influenced by any EHDC proposals for development of LAA sites to the east of the Beech village SPB (due by summer 2026).
11	Bridleway 704 improvement	Improve the surface and drainage of Bridleway 704 (Wellhouse Rd - Thedden), especially the southern section.	A well surfaced bridleway of adequate width, clear of obstructions.	Have established with HCC that this can be done only with funds sourced by the PC. The PC has approved in principle to fund the surfacing of the full length of the bridleway in FY 2026/7 on the following basis: - Neighbourhood CIL c.£7k - PC reserves c.£6k - EHDC CIL c.£13k Path specification agreed with HCC and landowner. Quote for £24,200+VAT (for full length) provisionally accepted.	GW finalising Strategic CIL application, and getting sign off from HCC, before submitting to EHDC (following EHDC preliminary comments). The result will be known in July/August 2026.
12	Ackender Wood paths improvement	Improve informal paths in Ackender Wood, close to the Ackender Hill housing development (in Alton), including the creation of a new	Mitigate increased wear and tear to the informal paths; create a formal pedestrian footpath linking the Ackender	EHDC holds c.£203,000 S106 contributions for improving these informal paths. But Forestry England will not agree to any improvements as they have no budget for	These funds could be potentially used for (In order of priority): - Bridleway 712 improvement (Item 6);

		public right of way from that development to Pertuis Ave.	Hill development with the 'Land at Whitedown Lane' development.	increased path maintenance costs. Alton Town Council is now aware of these funds.	- Possible new PROW in Ackender Wood from Pertuis Ave to Ackender Hill; - Extending footpaths around Alexandra Wood (Item 16).
13	Railway line path	A new footpath/bridleway/cycle path along the route (through Beech parish only) of the old Alton-Basingstoke railway line.	A level, accessible route from the proposed 'Land Nth of Basingstoke Rd' development northwest to the wider public right of way network.	PC has requested a financial contribution for this purpose in its comments on planning application 'Land Nth of Basingstoke Rd'. HCC Countryside Services are aware.	Await outcome of 'Land Nth of Basingstoke Rd' outline planning application.
14	Kings Hill off-road footway	A new roadside footway from the on-road footway at 72 Kings Hill to the entrance to Alton Abbey.	Provide a safe pedestrian route west out of the village, including to any new development at Alton Abbey.	Provision of funds would be a potential condition of permitting development at Alton Abbey, should the site be allocated for housing. Alton Abbey is in the process of being sold to new owners (unknown).	Awaiting the results of EHDC's evaluation of potential housing sites (due summer 2026). GW to ascertain sale progress from Carter Jonas estate agents in the new year, with a view to making contact with the new owners. (Enquiries in January 2026 revealed slow progress on the possible sale).
15	Beech Copse Footpath	Reinstate a public right of way from Snode Hill to Wellhouse Rd via Beech Copse and 35 Snode Hill (a potential housing allocation site).	A short cut from Snode Hill to Beech Village Hall.	Outline planning permission for development on the Beech Copse site has now been granted on appeal.	Parish council will comment on any future detailed planning application for development at Beech Copse and/or 35 Snode Hill. Then try to ensure that Highways land is retained for a footpath between the two sites.
16	Pedestrian route to Sports Centre	Create a signed foot route along the western edge of the Ackender Hill development,	Create an accessible direct pedestrian route from Beech	Paths exist along the western edge of the Ackender Hill development, but no defined	MWC is in contact with the site management company about their plans for making Alexandra

		then north through Alexandra Wood to join existing permissive paths on the crest of the ridge in Ackender Wood.	village to Alton Sports Centre	path through or around the developer-owned Alexandra Wood.	Wood safe, and in particular about completing paths through or around Alexandra Wood and signage.
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