

MEETING : **CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**
DATE : **13 March 2013**

REPORT OF : Bob Anderson, Chair

REGIONAL CHAIRS MEETING 13 FEBRUARY 2014

The main points of interest were as follows:

- 1. Cycling:** Eleanor Roaf, Sustrans, gave short presentation, answered questions. Explained emphasis on cycling (as opposed to walking, public transport) derived from wish to close gap between UK and other European countries. Leisure cycling does not spill over into daily travel: cycling no more dangerous than walking – need to change perceptions. Pointed out road-engineering expertise in Sustrans specific to cycle lanes, probably greater than in local authorities, and availability of this to support proposals/grant applications. Quietly effective in fielding number of questions/complaints relating to cyclists' behaviour towards walkers/horse-riders. Meeting noted decline in cycling proficiency training in schools, need for adult training (some police forces offering training as alternative to fixed penalties, akin to offer to speeding motorists).

Reference also to suggested cycle route alongside HS2 (actually 2.3 km from it; rather a relief –prospect of people trying to race the train otherwise!). Current feasibility study by Dutch engineers.

- 2. LAFs in Northwest:** Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire East seem to be reasonably well organised/active. Cheshire West, Stockport, not present. But Greater Manchester seems a mess: no LAF in Bolton, Rochdale, Oldham, Tameside. Bury just getting off ground. Wigan, though represented, currently technically defunct – apparently suspended by local authority. Chairman (and possibly others) resigned from Manchester/Trafford/Salford (exact details not known; apparently protest over some action by authority).

Cumbria referred to training days. Lancashire to awaydays. Didn't get details of content or financing; trying to do so, as could be of interest.

- 3. Natural England:** Had to leave before full up-date, but Kathy Miles, Regional Co-ordinator, won't know until new financial year what her position is; great loss if this post is axed.

RECOMMENDED:

That Members note the update.