

# Walking Forum Meeting

**DATE AND TIME:** 19/12/2023 17:00 – 18:30

**LOCATION:** Teams

**CHAIR:** W.S

## **ATTENDEES:**

<b>W.S</b>	<b>T.H</b>	<b>R.S</b>	<b>J.C</b>	<b>J.M</b>	<b>S.P</b>
<b>T.FS</b>	<b>A.C</b>	<b>R.M</b>	<b>R.S</b>	<b>R.H</b>	<b>K.M</b>
<b>B.M</b>	<b>K.H</b>	<b>C.J</b>	<b>N.M</b>	<b>A.B</b>	<b>J.R</b>
<b>J.M</b>	<b>J.W</b>	<b>L.S</b>	<b>D.P</b>	<b>L.F</b>	

## **APOLOGIES:**

S. L	M. G	T. B
T. H	P. P	S. H
A. S	A. W	J. S S. O

## Minutes

### **1. Item: Function of the forum**

After a couple of years without the Forum we are keen to be talking about walking as a key and fundamental element of what we want to do in Sheffield.

Intentions are:

- Finalise the Terms of Reference.
- Select a chair on a yearly basis.
- Get a flavour of programmes of work within Sheffield council.
- Get a flavour of programmes of work being done by other agencies.
- Ideas for topics for future forum meetings.

### **2. Item: Introducing attendees and hopes for the Forum**

- **B. M** This is a really interesting time for us to be talking about walking and bringing people together because there are some exciting things happening across Sheffield. SCC has just launched a Sport & Leisure Strategy for the next 10 years, which really focuses our work on active communities and how we can make it an easier option for people to be able to walk across our city. We also need to look at how we can improve safety. People need to be able to work together, because jointly we need to be able to deliver a better infrastructure for people walking across the city. We all need to deliver better messaging as well to encourage people to be able to walk and get out and enjoy our city and bring the amazing health benefits that that walking can bring for our population.
- **AB** Very often cycling is prioritised for some of the active travel schemes, but I'm really interested to see what ideas/plans people have for promoting walking in Sheffield.



- **TFS** I think we have real opportunities here, at this forum, to build some advocacy around some of the work that we're doing and take it forward in a really supportive way. Walking is one of most important and accessible activities that we need to get right in the city, either by localized or large city-wide improvements. It's about working together providing a Forum and the support through the Forum for us all to work proactively and productively and to challenge each other in terms of how we're thinking about this agenda.
- **CJ** I have been involved getting The Walking Forum up and running again.
- **DP** Would like to know about any plans for improved public transport infrastructure. Especially in the north of the city to improve access.
- **LF** I would like to see safer infrastructure and remove the barriers for walking.
- **JW** I would like to hear about the amazing work that's going on in Sheffield for walking from participants in this group of people and see how we can support it.
- **JC** Involved with a lobby group for walking, and we would like to see safer, better infrastructure. We are data driven and we are looking to focus particularly on schools and school routes.
- **JR** Quite a lot of people walk to college at the moment, but we would like more people to walk to college and our recent travel surveys telling us that people want safer, more pleasant, greener, more attractive streets to walk along.
- **JM** I have a roll with SYMCA working with Ed Clancy, and others as the lead health advocate to the active travel team.
- **KH** Really interested in schools and getting more pupils and their parents to walk to school.
- **KM** As part of the sport and leisure strategy (just released) we are keen to hear about all the great work that's taking place and how we can support some of that work better to help people move more.
- **LS** on the Local Access Forum (relates to Public Rights of Way) and I am also on the executive committee for the South Yorkshire and Sheffield Ramblers. I lead rambles and walks within and outside the city and I'm interested in encouraging more people to walk.
- **JM** here to look at supporting our staff and patients to walk to the trust and particularly looking at a safer crossing on Clarkson St outside the Trust.
- **NM** really keen that walking is a real focus for us in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. As part of Active Travel England our priorities are walking, wheeling and cycling, so just keen to hear what everyone is up to and how we can work together.
- **SP** co-lead the university's Active Travel Research group alongside my colleague Maxine Gregory and I'm really keen to understand how, a set of researchers at the university can help support the forum and the Council. Helping to build the evidence base around walking, wheeling and cycling.
- **RS** It's the CPRE (countryside charity for the Peak District and South Yorkshire) charity's 100th centenary next year.  
So speaking with various organizations looking to partner collaborate, add value to initiatives such as The Walking Festival and relevant campaigns. Reading the terms of reference, it really sits alongside our charity values.
- **RS** I am also a member of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee. I've been on the Council's Cycle Forum for about 9 years. I am keen to support leisure and utility walking and removing barriers to accessibility in our communities.
- **RH** I organise the annual Sheffield Walking Festival, held every September in collaboration with Heritage Open days and I've been a member of The Walking Forum for approx. 7 years.
- **RM** I sit on the Transport Regeneration & Climate Change Policy Committee.  
I really want to do my part to make walking trips top of the transport hierarchy in Sheffield and for walking to be much more enjoyable, more accessible and much safer than it is currently.
- **TH** I've been working with Cate and Allison to start this walking forum back up and I'm really keen to see and hear what's been going on, what your views are to help inform how you run our safety programs, to try and make it safer for walking and also share what we're doing at SCC.
- **AC** I oversee the School Crossing Patrol Wardens and the Bikeability programme throughout the schools of Sheffield. I am the admin officer for the Walking Forum.

### 3. Item: School Streets in Sheffield

School Streets are a council-led road safety initiative where the road outside of school is closed to everyone apart from authorised vehicles at the beginning and the end of the school day when the majority of pupils are going in and out of a school entrance. School streets are legal and backed by TRO (traffic

regulation order), which allows closure of the specified road for the times stated on the TRO. Enforcement is carried out by school staff and volunteers to marshal that closure point.

The aim is to reduce the number of parked and moving vehicles in the very busy area around the school entrance, as statistics show there's about 60% of school kids now being driven to school.

In Sheffield to date, we have 9 permanent school streets. We have 3 trials in place, and we've got 3 more being planned. The next one to be launched mid-January will be outside Astrea Academy.

The process for applying for a school street –

- We work alongside Modeshift Stars, which is the national accreditation scheme for schools to do with road safety and promoting active travel.
- We look at logistics, air quality, accident stats, the type of road, the traffic using that road, we look to see if it is a major bus route.
- For some schools it is not feasible to implement a school street.

So whilst we're creating a much safer school entrance, many parents will still drive and then park inconsiderately further away.

There's still a lot of work to be done about how people are moving generally around the city and to make walking routes for children and pupils across the city a much safer experience.

Questions :

**J C** - Is there a plan for a network of walking routes for children from where they live to school?

**Answer** – Not at the moment. What we would like is for schools, and through the Modeshift Stars programme, to start looking at things in that level of detail. What we are doing firstly, is concentrating on the school entrance, because that is where everybody congregates. We also encourage schools to use the 'Park & Stride' initiative.

**S P** - Has there been any research or any data collected around the extent to which it shifts people's behaviour?

**Answer** – At the moment we only carry out a hands-up survey of the pupils. But their answers are not truly reliable – we need to be asking the parents.

Do you understand what the impact of the school street initiative is rather than it just pushing the problem elsewhere?

**Answer** - It's something that moving forward into 2024, we are hoping to have a look at the monitoring and evaluation of the school streets initiative, and these are definitely questions we are going to be asking, pupils, parents, teachers and residents.

#### **4. Item: BetterPoints – inspiring healthier journeys**

Better Points has been commissioned by Sheffield City Council as a sustainable travel incentive scheme. The scheme was launched in September under the banner BetterPoints Sheffield - inspiring healthier journeys. Better Points is a free app that can be downloaded to your phone where you register in with a Sheffield post code. You can record your journeys with it, and those journeys are rewarded with better points, which are a financially backed digital currency and you can use those to buy things or to donate to charity. There are several local charities signed up. Approx 6,500 people are registered with the app so far, target was 5000 by March. The south and west of the city dominates with walking activities at the moment – we are working to extend better across the whole of Sheffield.

The brief for this programme is to reward people for good behaviours as well as to change behaviour. The app can be used to undertake targeted messaging. Better Points have partnered up with Sheffield BID to make the Sheffield gift card available, this will support city centre business as well as the council

objectives, to get people travelling sustainably into the city centre. The aim is to get plenty of cafes on board including cafes in Parks, and bike shops. Better Points will support the Connecting Sheffield schemes as they are implemented, using geolocation techniques and working with organisations in those communities.

We can use the data out of our program to see where people are actually walking which could be linked in with how to improve the infrastructure for walking .

One of the things that we're keen to share is around dynamic travel/demand management, something that we've been working at, at Northern General Hospital, specifically related to car parking and sustainable access.

If you haven't downloaded the app, please do and encourage colleagues and everyone that you interact with take part and promote walking.

**Action:** Due to lots of different schemes taking place across the city it may be an idea to **hold a future meeting to look specifically at data**. Bring all the data gathered by the various agencies, together to give us a more focused picture of what is happening across the city in relation to walking. Also, for SCC plans & projects we would rather be putting the money where it's going to have the biggest impact in incentivized walking and supporting existing walkers.

## **5. Item: Living Streets**

Nicola Marshall and Wil Stewart have been working together to bring the Living Streets walking summit to Sheffield next year to be held on March 7th.

It's going to be a great program of events, walks around the city, workshops, feedback, learning, best practice understanding from Sheffield.

The summit is open predominantly for professionals from across the UK to come and find out all the brilliant work being done by Living Streets, Active Travel England and their partners and how to support walking.

To promote what is being done in Sheffield, we are really keen to have a variety of 'walk shops' – guided walks from the venue, around various parts of the city showing how the city has worked in greening areas or new infrastructure and how walking and accessibility is being incorporated into the planning process.

Cycling can be seen as the big thing for active travel and SYMCA is keen that we consider walking more. A large focus of the summit is to see how can we demonstrate the value of projects and how do we secure investment in walking and make that something attractive and fully inclusive. We will be looking to involve different community groups for their input into the planning of improvements, including building walking into new developments and making linkages with public transport .

**Action:** Because some Forum members might have some ideas/input for the summit it is proposed that we have a short meeting beginning of Feb, to discuss ideas and how partners can get involved and support the Walking Summit **Date tbc**

## **6. Item: Development of Active Travel Infrastructure Plan**

The Sheffield Active Travel Infrastructure Plan is something that we're gearing up to do quite a lot of work on over the next few months and it's starting in the new year.

Firstly, a bit of background going back a few years. In April 2017, the Department for Transport (DfT) produced documents including **Gear change** - which is about enabling and encouraging much more walking and cycling – and the national cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS) and some technical guidance for local authorities about developing local walking and cycling infrastructure plans (LCWIP). Local authorities who have these are well placed to make the case for increased investment in walking and cycling infrastructure.

Active Travel England (ATE) was then set up as the government's agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everybody to get around in England for short journeys.

For us as a Local Authority, we need to be mindful of what's coming from Government and Active Travel England because they are the key funders of the improvements that we want to deliver. So far we have been able to bid for funding through various funding streams, and we've got quite a lot of projects in development at the moment and in the early stages of delivery.

We are now looking to refresh in order to focus more on walking and wheeling improvements, improving health outcomes by helping people to be more active and encouraging that that for more everyday activities. Which also links with SCC plans for decarbonising transport and a fair transition to zero carbon. In terms of large-scale investment, the plan can then be used to bid into future funding streams and the one that will be particularly significant is the Department for Transport's, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), 2027-32.

The plan will coordinate with SYMCA plans including the forthcoming South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, which will be a statutory plan setting out priorities for transport investment across SY.

Having a plan can also help with where you do small improvements in terms of where you prioritize and to strengthen walking and cycling considerations.

It also means that we have evidence available to assist any other funding bids that might be relevant through regeneration or other funding streams that colleagues can bid for, as well as complementary revenue bids.

Packages of improvements could cover all sorts of things such as, new and improved crossings, reallocating highway space for pedestrians, being step free, calming traffic speed reductions, shelters, seats, et cetera.

The outcomes from plan development will be some network plans for utility walking and cycling which will identify preferred routes and zones for further development in the appropriate timescale as part of a prioritized programme, along with a report which sets out the analysis that we've carried out and provides the supporting evidence.

There are a number of stages to the process as set out in the guidance and we are in the early stages at the moment.

We're starting to develop that evidence base, looking at the existing networks, journey origins and destinations and community engagement.

As part of the information gathering and the network planning there is a possible role for the walking forum and its Members, if people would like to be involved, in terms of spreading information, providing input and helping us along the way. We will keep you informed.

**Question :**

**J C** - Talking about networks and prioritizing - I wondered in terms of prioritizing for walking, whether you thought about prioritizing for children, getting to and from school, because it's one of the first journeys that most parents do and children? It would link up with the school streets that you're doing.

**Answer :** We haven't made any decisions about how we prioritize at the moment. There will be a number of factors to consider and will be a decision for Members at that stage. SCC's commitment is to have open conversations with groups like this as part of the development of the plan. Engagement is key to making sure that it's a 'all encompassing' picture that we're presenting back to DfT or Active Travel England and one that is meaningful to people in the city.

**7. Item: Comments on draft Terms of Reference, nominees for Chairperson and suggested topics for future discussion**

**Chairperson.**

It is the proposal that the Forum will have four quarterly meetings. It is also proposed that the Forum has a rotating chair, with a changeover scheduled for after each Council Annual Meeting (when Councillors roles and responsibilities are agreed).

Action: It was suggested that the Chair should be a one of the elected council representatives and ideally on the relevant Policy Committee, so that feedback from the Forum can be played back into the political structure of the Council. Elected members will discuss this and get back to the Forum members at the next meeting.

#### **Terms of Reference – comments**

R S – Should the ToR include leisure walking & rights of way?

No other comments about ToR.

#### **Topics for future discussion**

**N M – Behaviour Change** - Happy to do a session at a future Forum meeting on SYMCA work across South Yorkshire on thinking about behavioural change.

Action: –email to be sent out requesting permission to have freedom of contact details amongst Forum members (to cover GDPR).

## **8. Item: Any other business**

**J C** – there is a diversity of voices around the city and a disproportionate number of people in less affluent communities rely on walking and public transport for accessibility.

Action: – other groups that should be involved with the Walking Forum - thoughts welcome from all.

**R M**– mentioned the SCC website and the lack of information on the Transport Forum Page for the Walking Forum

Answer – The website will be kept up to date, minutes from meetings will be stored on there as well as contact details and forthcoming events.

Meeting closed at 18:30