



## JLAF Position Statement on Development and Local Development Frameworks.

### Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

This constitutes formal advice from the Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire.

Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils are required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this forum in carrying out its functions.

**Position Statement on Development and Local Development Frameworks. The wording below was ratified by the JLAF at their meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008.**

#### Planning general

- all developments must adhere to the guidance given in PPG 13 (particularly paragraphs 4, 24 and 75 to 80) and to PPG 17 (particularly to paragraphs 24, 25, 32 and 33);
- the authority should take steps to ensure that all Rights of Way are adequately protected in the event of development proposals;
- attention must be paid to road safety where development is proposed. This is particularly important when pedestrian, cycle and horse routes use or cross vehicular routes;
- recognise that 21.9% of households in the area covered by the Joint Local Transport Plan do not own a car, see page 31;
- ensure that the future for tourism is protected.

#### Functional walking and cycling

- maximise opportunities for walking and cycling within communities This would accord with the Government health agenda and sustainability proposals;
- identify strategic walking and cycling routes within communities and ensure these link to surrounding rural areas and the rights of way network;
- ensure new development proposals include safe and high quality provision for cycling and walking routes linking housing to schools, shops, employment areas and recreational and sports facilities;
- seek to develop circular routes within and around communities and settlements to encourage healthier lifestyles and minimise car use;
- encourage opportunities to develop, facilitate and promote the National Cycle Network and its integration with other forms of transport;
- give adequate consideration to the requirements of those with mobility needs in the design of new walking and cycling routes, and in the improvement of existing routes.

#### Rights of Way

- recognise the contribution of the Rights of Way network to health, tourism and sustainability;
- Adequately protect the rights of way network in the event of development proposals;
- ensure new housing developments link to the rights of way network, where appropriate;

- seek to improve the safety for rights of way users where routes meet or run alongside busy or dangerous roads;
- seek to create a network of circular routes around settlements to increase usage;
- explore the integration of transport links with rights of way, particularly strategic long distance routes;
- seek opportunities to expand provision through the Common Agricultural Policy in rural areas and other funding mechanisms;
- increase opportunities for strategic routes along former railways and canals;
- recognise other routes, such as Unclassified County Roads, and their contribution to recreational opportunities;
- expect that new routes will be multi-user routes, suitable and open for the use of all non-motorised users.

### **Other recreational space**

- Facilitate access to open countryside and registered commons as identified under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and highlight the opportunities this affords for recreation;
- draw attention to permissive and dedicated access opportunities on farmland and in the Forestry Commission woodlands;
- recognise the importance of green space, green linkages, playing fields and other similar areas and protect these from development;
- map and indicate legal lawful uses of green space areas within the plan area;
- seek to develop green recreational areas within new housing and employment sites.

### **Other issues**

- identify, facilitate and promote opportunities for water recreation;
- identify, facilitate and promote opportunities for horse riding.

### **Growth Points and Green Infrastructure**

The JLAF advises that any substantial development in the area, including all development carried out through the West of England Growth Point, should be subject through the Local Development Frameworks to a Green Infrastructure Policy. This can be delivered by the enhancement or development of a PPG17 Green Spaces Strategy. Building green infrastructure into the development is not an option. It is a necessity to create sustainable communities and to reach bio-diversity targets.

A Green Infrastructure Policy should deliver a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features, designed and managed as a multi-functional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability.

The design and management of green infrastructure should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the area with regard to habitats and landscape types. Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently, it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales – regional, sub-regional, local and neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside. The provision of new infrastructure relating to development should mitigate the impact on adjacent areas.

The JLAF advises that Green Infrastructure should provide for travel and recreation, particularly for all non-motorised users, providing new access for all members of the community, to deliver improvements to quality of life such as health, well-being, congestion and air quality. As well as a range of high quality continuous routes through a 'Green Grid' and facilities for non-motorised users, development should provide for access to open space, following Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt). Such Accessible Natural Green Space should include Greenways, Country and Regional Parks and Local Nature Reserves as part of the Forest of Avon Community Forest.