

TWO TUNNELS SHARED PATH - MEETING OF THE TTG/BathNES/Sustrans WORKING GROUP HELD AT THE GUILDHALL BATH ON 6 SEP 06 - MAIN POINTS AND ACTIONS

Attendees: BathNES - Cllr Gitte Dawson – Chair
- John Price
Sustrans - Rupert Crosbee
TTG - Nigel Bryant
- Frank Tompson - Secretary
Declines: BathNES - Will Steele

1. Review of main points and actions from the 12 Jun 06 meeting

All actions taken under agenda headings.

2. Feasibility Study

This had now been started by Sustrans and John Grimshaw was personally compiling the report for what is regarded as a flagship project. It would be 'reasonably robust', and include designs sufficient to establish realistic cost estimates based on structural engineering assessments where required checked by Glyn Evans, with tunnel surveys by Simon Ballentine. Certain sections of the study had already been produced, and the completed version was scheduled for issue by 15 Oct 06. A draft would not be published, but the completed version would be subject to dialogue before a way ahead was agreed. A discussion followed on the level of costing detail to be supplied and the anticipated roles of Sustrans/BathNES within the project. An agreed position was reached. **Post Meeting Note:** JP has emailed RC with a proposed change of wording to the Feasibility Study specification to reflect these changes.

TTG and BathNES, with a wide knowledgebase, stand ready to assist in the compilation of the report.

3. Funding

An application for Big Lottery funding had so far been successful with the 'Connect2' bid, of which the Two Tunnels project is a part, having made the final 6. £500k has been made available to Sustrans to help draw up its bid by Jun 07. A TV vote - for one winning project only - will be conducted in Sep 07, with funds following shortly thereafter. Other funding streams are not being examined by Sustrans in case the Lottery bid is unsuccessful, and should not be until land assembly is more advanced and planning permissions are in place. BathNES will seek to secure funding for those parts of the build stage conducted on land that it owns.

TTG and BathNES, with a wide knowledgebase, stand ready to assist in this exercise if they can be of assistance

Sustrans had written to senior council officers, including BathNES, enquiring if they wished to include any projects under Lottery funding. **Action:** GD to ensure a BathNES response and that this does not 'fall between the cracks'.

4. Land Negotiation

Progress was being made. The owner of Tucking Mill viaduct (also the owner of Midford viaduct), having changed address, had now been successfully contacted. Sustrans was willing to accept the viaduct subject to prior completion of essential repair. Likewise, the owner of the land between the southern entrance to Combe Down tunnel and Tucking Mill viaduct had been contacted. The position was somewhat complicated, as it was understood that a variety of small plots had been sold piecemeal and may take some resolution. Wessex Water has confirmed a willingness to transfer the Combe Down Tunnel to Sustrans, and will allow cycle use of the existing footpath on the old railway in their ownership. John Grimshaw is due to meet with the owner of the remaining land. Further detail is not recorded here for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

5. Planning Applications

RC confirmed that there is no reason why planning applications cannot be made in parallel to land negotiations prior to seeking funding and this will be taken forward as a next step.

6. Western Riverside Development

Both BathNES and TTG had submitted responses to the Supplementary Planning Guidance process, including usage of the adjacent bridge (for which Sustrans had already gained access from BR Residuary Ltd). FT had yet to elicit a response from Crest Nicolson (Debbie Applin) with a view to meeting to discuss potential synergies between the two projects and would continue to pursue. **Action:** FT

It was understood that the 'Pennyhalfpenny' footbridge, the Two Tunnels western link across the Avon, was to be rebuilt, but timescale was not know. **Action:** GD to investigate.

7. Bats

In answer to the action placed at the previous meeting, JP reported that Dan Merrit from the Avon Bat Group had conducted an informal survey and established that there are a small number of bats in both Combe Down and Devonshire Tunnels. They were thought to be a satellite group of the large nearby stone mine roost and included Lesser Horse-shoe and Whiskered varieties. RC reported that Michael Woods Associates, independent ecological consultant, was conducting a survey to better define the issue on 12 Sep 06. It was understood that the Strawberry Line has a tunnel containing Bats in which lighting has been installed. TTG intended to investigate and are arranging a ride of the line which other Working Group members are welcome to attend.

8. 1 August walk of the route

This had proved a success in raising the profile of the project, primarily for a variety of BathNES personnel. It had been encouraging that John Grimshaw had personally attended. (A list of main attendees is attached to these notes.) Concerns regarding the pedestrian/cyclist interface were again raised and assurances given that this would be addressed. Another walk/ride had taken place on 5 Sep, with Sustrans Rangers and TTG members covering the ground. Such sessions were proving valuable in widening knowledge of the project and will be encouraged in the future.

9. TTG revised leaflet

A revised draft was tabled by the TTG and discussed. It was intended to reprint as soon as possible with Ralph Allen Press quoting £305 for 5,000 on re-cycled paper. TTG will be happy to supply BathNES and Sustrans with copies when printed. **Action:** JP and RC (via Sustrans Press Office) to raise any final comments to NB by email by Fri 15 Sep 06.

10. Press release for this meeting

GD volunteered to draft. **Action:** GD

Post Meeting Note: An article appeared in the 11 Sep 06 Bath Chronicle as a result of which the TTG website 'hits' rose significantly.

11. AOB

TTG requested that appropriate links be placed on the Sustrans and BathNES websites highlighting the project partnership and linking to the TTG site at www.twotunnels.org.uk: this was agreed. Action: JP and RC

12. Date and location of next meeting

Mon 4 Dec 06 at 10.00. **Action:** GD to book the Dome Room again.

19 Sep 06

Frank Tompson
Secretary

Main attendees at the 1 Aug 06 route visit

Mark	Annand	annand.mark@gmail.com	Two Tunnels	Steering Group
Nigel	Bryant	njb@theraven.org.uk	Two Tunnels	Steering Group
Frank	Tompson	frankie@tompson.demon.co.uk	Two Tunnels	Steering Group
Gitte	Dawson	gitte.dawson@virgin.net	BathNES	Councillor
Ruth	Griffiths	ruth.shr@btinternet.com	BathNES	Councillor
Caroline	Roberts	cmroberts@clara.co.uk	BathNES	Councillor
Denise	Hart		BathNES Officer	Parks Division
Nick	Jeanes	nick_jeanes@bathnes.gov.uk	BathNES Officer	Traffic and Safety Team Leader
John	Price	John_FPrice@bathnes.gov.uk	BathNES Officer	Project Coordinator, Colliers Way Area Traffic Engineer
Alison	Sherwin	Alison_Sherwin@bathnes.gov.uk	BathNES Officer	(Pedestrian and Cycling Issues)
John	Grimshaw	annaw@sustrans.org.uk	Sustrans	Founder and CE
Paul	Hilton	paul.hilton@sustrans.org.uk	Sustrans	
Neil	Butters		BRB (Residuary)	Secretary, Railway Heritage Cttee