Meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
To be held on Tuesday 19 May 2015
1.15pm at Yoredale, Bainbridge

Meeting to Commence at 1.15pm

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies
3. Approval of minutes, and matters arising (not on the agenda)
4. Public Question time – three minutes per speaker (those wishing to speak should make themselves known to the Secretary at the start of the meeting or in advance of the meeting)
5. Future Forum Meetings
   - Agenda Items
   - Dates
6. Report back from Advisory Groups:
   - Access for All
   - Bridleways and Restricted Byways (verbal)
7. Commons Registration
8. Deregulation Bill
9. Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership
10. Secretary's Report (Items for note and consideration by Forum Members)
11. Update on members' activities (brief reports of activities relating to the Forum)

Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum
Held on Tuesday 27 January 2015
Yoredale, Bainbridge

Present: Jon Beavan (JB), Andrew Colley (AC), Mark Corner (MC), David Gibson (DG), Kevin Lancaster (KL), Alex Law (AL), Vickie Orton (VO), Jerry Pearlman (JP), Mike Pryal (MP), John Richardson (JR), Stephen Ross (SR), Jonathan Smith (JS), Alistair Thompson (AT).

YDNPA Officers present: Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB) – LAF Secretary, Mark Allum (MA), Kathryn Beardmore (KB).

The meeting started at 1.15pm.

1. Election of Chair

KB began the meeting by explaining the process for the election of a Chair.

DG proposed AT. The nomination was seconded by JP. No further nominations were received.

AT was elected as Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

2. Election of Vice Chair

AT began by thanking DG for taking on the role of Vice Chair for the past four years.

AT asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

AL nominated JR. The nomination was seconded by DG. No further nominations were received.

JR was elected as Vice Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

3. Welcome

AT welcomed Mark Corner (MC), Vickie Orton (VO) and Stephen Ross (SR) to the meeting, as new members of the YDAF.

Tim Allen was also introduced as an observer to the meeting.

Everyone round the table introduced themselves for the benefit of the new members.

4. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jocelyn Manners-Armstrong (JMA), Stuart Monk (SM), Heather Thomas-Smith (HTS), Peter Bridgstock (PB) and Nick Cotton (NC).

5. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

6. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

7. Future Forum Meetings

Dates of meetings

The next meeting of the YDAF will be on 19 May 2015.

Future Agenda Items

Suggested future agenda items put forward by members include:

- AT has asked David Butterworth, Chief Executive of the YDNPA, to come to the next meeting to talk to members. It is hoped that this will become an annual agenda item.
- Deregulation Bill – DG and JP agreed to give a short presentation on the Bill.

8. Review of nominated LAF members on groups linked to the Forum

AT went through each of the groups listed in the report and the YDAF reviewed the representatives for each group in turn.

Access on Foot Advisory Group

AC said he would stand down from the Access on Foot Advisory Group to allow someone else to take his place. MC and MP both expressed an interest in the group and it was agreed that their input would be beneficial.

MC, MP, AT, HTS to represent the YDAF on the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

Access for All Advisory Group

VO expressed an interest in the work of the Access for All Advisory Group and it was agreed that her input would be useful.

VO, PB, HTS and AC to represent the YDAF on the Access for All Advisory Group.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

SR expressed an interest in the work of the Bridleways and restricted Byways Advisory Group with his background in mountain biking. It was suggested that NC be asked if he would like to join the group. RB agreed to contact him.

SR and AL to represent the YDAF on the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group.

Air Sports Advisory Group

Members kept the current membership of JB representing the YDAF on the Air Sports Advisory Group.

Water Sports Advisory Group

Members kept the current membership PB and AC representing the YDAF on the Water Sports Advisory Group.

Caves and Crags Access Advisory Group

AL stood down from the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group.

JB and PB to represent the YDAF on the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

KB explained that this group was different to the other advisory groups, as the membership of this group is balanced between recreational motor vehicle users (3 reps), other recreational users (3 reps) and other interests (2 reps) and partly determined by the YDNPA. The LAF are asked to first appoint four members, with YDNPA then co-opting others to ensure the balance is maintained overall. Currently there was one vacancy available. However, KB explained that the YDAF should decide who they wanted to represent them and the YDNPA would co-opt other members would fill the gaps. KL, SR and JR all expressed and interest in the group. After further clarification, due to the fact that some members of the group were also LAF members (but not on the group representing the LAF) and some discussion, it was agreed to leave the 3 existing members from the LAF unchanged and that SR would join as representative of the YDAF as a mountain biker.

SR, JB, SM and DG to represent the YDAF on the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, as well as their individual interests.

Dales Tourism Steering Group

KB explained that this group, had been disbanded so an YDAF representative was no longer required for this group. It was noted that both JB and JS were both on the exec of the newly formed Destination Dales Group and attend the meetings with their 'professional' hats on. JB suggested that feedback from them on the work of the group would be a good agenda item at a future meeting.

Destination Dales to be an agenda item at a future meeting.

9. Report back from the Yorkshire Dales Advisory Groups

Access on Foot Advisory Group

DG presented the minutes of the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

The following issues were discussed:

Lickber Lane, Coverdale

DG told members that the North Yorkshire LAF had sent a letter to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) asking for Lickber Lane to be restored (see Appendix 4 of the Secretary's Report). To date, no response has been received.

AH said that NYCC are progressing the matter. He added that officers of the YDNPA support NYCC in seeking to restore the lane to its previous state.

Greenfield Forest

AH gave a brief background into the site at Greenfield Forest where, as part of the planning agreement for the timber extraction, there will be increased public access within the forest – with approximately 7km of new bridleway established along existing forest tracks and a new section of footpath which solves a long standing issue of a cul-de-sac route. The section 106 for the creation of the rights of way is with the owner's solicitor at the moment. It has been agreed to postpone the creation of some of the routes for 2 years until the felling has been completed.

VO asked if the site will be suitable for disabled access. AH confirmed that disabled access was being considered, but that the main issue was getting vehicles close to the site as it is in a fairly inaccessible area of the park mainly served by single track roads. AC asked that potential parking places be looked at.

JP noted that public rights of way were, yet again, a top priority work programme for the YDNPA. He asked for his thanks to be passed to YDNPA for recognising their importance.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

AL noted that the attached minutes had already been discussed at the last meeting of the YDAF.

Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group

JB presented the minutes of the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group.

JB asked that item 5 of the minutes be amended to read:
'An independent legal opinion from a QC was commissioned by independent cavers'
And, 'The LAF would be prepared to get involved in renegotiating current access agreements, but only if requested to do so by the Council of Northern Caving Clubs'.

Threshfield Quarry

JB asked members of the YDAF if they would support the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) in asking for access to climb some of the faces at Threshfield Quarry. Members were happy to write a letter of support. JP suggested looking at the original planning report for the site to see if any provision was made for climbing.

MA and JB to draft a letter of support for access to climb some of the faces at Threshfield Quarry. AT to send the letter.

Cave Access

There had been discussion about access to caves on access land as the CROW Act is not explicit in its description as to what is classed as 'open air recreation'. JB and Tim Allen (public observer to the meeting) explained that clarification had been sought from Natural England who had said that caving was a permitted activity whilst you could still see daylight from within the cave, but once in the dark it was no longer a permitted activity under the CROW Act (see **Appendix 1**). Tim Allen said that the British Caving Association (BCA) have since polled their members to seek their endorsement to ask government to clarify and/or amend the CROW Act to include caving in the 'twilight' zone. Members were in favour of an amendment to the Act.

10. Developing the Local Access Forum

AT presented the paper on developing the YDAF and asked members if they had any comments.

JP began by saying that he thought that public rights of way and open access were still big issues within the YDNP and should, therefore, remain important to the YDAF.

MC suggested trying to engage with landowners more, especially considering the results of the recent survey where only 37% of landowners were aware of the LAF.

JR though that the beauty of the YDAF was that they were able to react to issues coming in from the advisory groups, such as the caving issue, and he felt this worked really well.

VO thought that it might be good to link more with the Cumbria LAF. All agreed that more cross boundary working would be beneficial to all.

AT thanked members for their input and asked them to carry on thinking about anything they think the YDAF could help the YDNPA with.

11. Grid References on Public Rights of Way

AH presented the paper on the issue of providing grid references on public rights of way (PRoW) adding that this had been raised previously at the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

JB said that, as a member of the Cave Rescue Organisation (CRO), he had spoken to his colleagues who had all agreed that there weren't any instances in the Yorkshire Dales where the provision of grid references on PRoW would have helped a rescue. North Yorkshire Police don't use grid references and it would only help those users that already know what a grid reference was. He added that good local knowledge of team members of the CRO and mountain rescue (citing the yellow-bucket gate on the flanks of Ingleborough) and modern technology was used to locate people. JB could, however, think of a few specific locations where an identifiable symbol on a piece of right of way furniture could be an advantage to the CRO team.

MP thought that is was a useful education tool and that users of PRoW would only learn about grid references by seeing them around.

AC said that the issue had been raised by him, as a resident of the Grassington parish had asked him to bring it up as an issue. He thought that the case study of Snowdonia NPA was very good and he suggested it be trialled in the YDNP.

KB explained that the YDNPA had established short routes from National Park Centres for those people who were not used to walking long distances with the aid of a map, and YDNPA also provide pathfinder courses for those wishing to learn basic map reading skills. She added that the YDNPA did not have the resources to undertake this work when budgets were so tight.

JB said he would identify specific sites where a sign could be useful, and discuss with MA

12. Secretary's Report

RB presented a report of items for Members' consideration and information. These were:

- Authority Meeting Dates and Venues.
- Yorkshire Dales Access Forum membership.

    - RB welcomed the three new members as well as JB, AL, JP, JR, HTS and AT who had been reappointed for a further three years. Unfortunately, Pat Whelan was not successful in her application to continue on the YDAF. She has been thanked for her input on behalf of the YDAF and the YDNPA.
- Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional LAF.
    - RB asked for two members to attend the meeting in Leeds on 6 March. AT and JR agreed to represent the YDAF. DG said he would try to attend on behalf of the North Yorkshire LAF.
- Yorkshire and Humber regional LAF Annual Report.
- National LAF Annual Report.
- LAF News.
    - RB asked members to think about any news items they could submit for the next newsletter.
- Lickber Lane (see minutes of the previous meeting).
- Turbary Road.
    - DG gave a brief summary to the background of Turbary Road in Kingsdale. NYCC have sent out a consultation on the 'stopping up' of a section of the Turbary Road. There was some discussion and members agreed that the status of the route needed to be established before the route could be stopped up. KB, MA, JR and DG said they would discuss the route after the meeting and all agreed that a letter would be sent, signed by AT as Chair.
- Common Land Registration.
    - Forward item for the next meeting.

15. <u>Update on members activities</u>

JR said he had been doing some work on the Deregulation Bill.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm

Item No. 6

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum – 19 May 2015

Report Back from Yorkshire Dales Advisory Groups

Advisory Group Meetings

At the May 2007 meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum, a paper was presented on the establishment of advisory groups to look at individual recreational activities. The remit of these groups is to:

- exchange information, and provide a formal mechanism for communication and raising issues of concern amongst users, the YDAF, and other interests;
- advise on the management of specific matters.

The following arrangements have been made for the meetings of the groups:

Access on Foot Advisory Group

The last meeting of the Access on Foot Advisory Group was on 22 October 2014. The next meeting of the Access on Foot Advisory Group has yet to be confirmed.

Access for All Advisory Group

The last meeting of the Access for all Advisory Group was on 5 February 2015. The unapproved minutes of this meeting are in **Appendix 1.** The next meeting of the Access for All Advisory Group will be on 6 August 2015.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

The last meeting of the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group was on 6 May 2015. The unapproved minutes of this meeting will be circulated at the meeting in September. The next meeting of the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group will be on 14 October 2015.

Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group

The last meeting of the Cave and Crag Advisory Group was on 18 November 2014. The next meeting of the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group will be on 12 November 2015.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

The last meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group was on 19 August 2014. The next meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group has yet to be confirmed.

Air Sports Advisory Group

The next meeting of the Air Sports Advisory Group has yet to be confirmed.

Water Sports Advisory Group

The next meeting of the Water Sports Advisory Group has yet to be confirmed.

Rachel Briggs
Access Development Officer
April 2015

Appendix 1

Unapproved Minutes of the
Access for All Advisory Group meeting
Held on Thursday 5 February 2015
Yoredale, Bainbridge

Present:	
Heather Thomas-Smith (HT)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Vicie Orton (VO)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Peter Bridgestock (PS)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Mike Stephenson (MS)	
Phil Woodyer (PW)	
Bob Emmerson (BE)	Dales Volunteer
David Shaftoe (DS)	Open Country
Geoff Pardoe (GP)	Bendrigg Trust
Rachel Briggs (RB)	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Nigel Metcalfe (NM)	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Apologies:	
Nicola Brown (NB)	Independus
Emmeline Butler (EB)	National Trust
Roy Emmerson (RE)	Independus
Andrew Colley (AC)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
John Loader (JL)	Dales Volunteer

1. Welcome and Apologies

Round the Table Introductions were carried out.

For the benefit of the Group RB passed round the Priorities Programme to highlight where Access for All (A4A) sits. DS – will the leaflets be reprinted this year? RB explained that the individual Dales leaflets will not be reprinted but may become available on the website in the near future. The Miles without Stiles leaflets are now chargeable, so generating in income for A4A.
BE queried how Outreach fits under our remit – RB to be discussed under Agenda item 4, but briefly covers Young people, black minority and ethnic groups.

RB to check terms of reference in relation to broader remit of the Group.

2. Election of Chair

MS chaired the previous meeting. All agreed BE will chair next 2 or 3 meetings. To be reviewed at a later date.

3. Approval of minutes

PW asked to have spelling corrected, also HT.
BE – item 5 asked for update on Northern Young Ranger Group. Catherine Kemp has applied for funding to include a job vacancy as well.

RB to invite Catherine Kemp to next meeting to update the Group.

BE – website update. Stuart Willis has left the Authority. YDNPA are currently appointing a Website and Social Media Officer. The new website is WIP and is due for launch in March 2015. RB explained there will be a new interactive map on which Miles without Stiles routes can be viewed by switching layers on and off, making it easier to view.

RB to invite Website & Social Media Officer to give demonstration.

BE – Good Practice Guide feedback. It is not too late to provide feedback.

RB to add Good Practice Guide as an agenda item.

Mobile App Miles without Stiles. This project is currently on hold as Leeds University have limited funding to complete the app.

The Group discussed training opportunities for Dales Volunteers. Question was raised as to whether disability awareness should form part of the induction, or be more of an option rather than obligatory. DS offered a day to help train people and for the Group to look at his volunteer pack for training ideas. VO offered to put a training package together.

RB to look into and provide feedback.

4. Membership of Group

The remit of the Group was discussed. RB raised the question if the Group are to cover more outreach work should Catherine Kemp be invited to attend more often. All agreed. Clarification of the new remit should be sought.

The Group discussed accessing information to see the visitor profile to the YDNP, in order to ascertain types of users.

RB to gather visitor survey responses and feedback to Group.

The Group discussed a variety of projects they are individually working on, as examples of working with different user groups - VO starting project between Upper Wharfedale schools and young people in Seacroft. HT through BMC is looking at hillwalking to improve communication. Richmond Schools are working on a project to compare National Parks. VO- has access to list of contacts for Leeds children centres to explore the option of promoting health agenda through children centres and pre-school.

All agreed there are many projects happening which we do not know about and that we are limited due to funding. RB stated that even though budgets are shrinking, work is still going on.

5. Updates

Malham Tramper is being used now.

RB to organise site visit to Malham for the Group to look at the tramper. RB to find out how successful it has been so far.

The Disabled Ramblers will not be coming this year. They will be visiting bi-annually now.

The Ingleborough cave route and Loup Scar route are both more accessible now.

RB to find out the route lengths/ start & finish points of each.

Grassington path update. North Yorkshire Highways would not fund the roadside section. Possible project for this year.

RB to get update.

6. Projects

Grimwith
RB-Yorkshire Water is currently in discussions with YDNP Rangers about improving the missing link and potential costs. Looking positive as a project for this year.

Grinton – Parksfield.
RB-The section from the bridge to the bike centre at Fremington is to be improved. All barriers to be removed and surface to be improved. YDNPA will be funding this project.

Swale Trail
RB-A possible new mountain bike route from Grinton to Keld, which will hopefully be Access for All. The route will follow existing bridleways and tracks. This will be a two-stage project, the first section being Grinton to Gunnerside. This project is currently being worked up and is funding dependent.

Greenfield Forest
NM explained the location. Potentially a creation of 7km of bridleways through the forest, using existing forest tracks. The current extraction is expected to finish in 2 years, when the creation work will then begin. All agreed there is possibility of a variety of things on site including a red squirrel view point and parking. Suggestion by PW was made for possible access from Gearstones side, which follows the

Pennine Bridleway National Trail. Access suggestion from the northside – Fleetmoss and Cam Houses.

NM to provide update at next meeting.

Twitter/Social Media

Twitter accounts have been set up for various YDNPA departments now. Members of the Group are invited to send news through to RB if they have anything to re-tweet in relation to Access for All.

Long Preston Flood Plains

DS visited recently and was disappointed with the site, not very accessible and not much to see. In contrast the lake at Hellifield in front of Waters View House has a huge array of birdlife and was easy to access. Notice on site for planning application.

RB to enquire what the planning application is and report back.

Good Practice Guide

MD started re-writing and condensing. RB continuing with the work. VO offered to provide suggestions on the revamp.

RB to liaise with VO with regard the Guide revamp.

7. Member Round Up

BE- Wild Wednesday and Terrific Thursdays went well last year and will continue with these in 2015.

VO- Putting funding bid together for the urban/rural schools project. Involved with Otley walking Festival in June/July.

HT-Now on the BMC Walking Group. As county walking advisor for girl guides, she recognises there could be better links between the girl guides and YDNP.

MS- nothing to report.

8. Any Other Business

RB to circulate date for next meeting

Item No. 7

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum – 19 May 2015

Commons Registration

Background

The original Commons Registration Act 1965 allowed for the registration of commons and defined commons to include the 'waste of a manor'. In 1978 the Court of Appeal, in the 'Box Hill' case decided that the waste must still be in the ownership of the lord of the manor. This was frequently no longer true and many applications were withdrawn or dismissed because of this.

In the 'Hazeley Hill' case in 1991 the House of Lords decided that 'Box Hill' was wrong and that land could still be the waste of a manor even if it was no longer in the ownership of the lord of the manor.

The 1991 decision came after the cut off date for registration and thus completed applications that had been withdrawn or cancelled could not be reinstated.

The Commons Act 2006 allowed, among other things for the applications that were wrongly decided or withdrawn to be reinstated as applications where the commons commissioner did not actually consider whether the land qualified as waste land of a manor.

Present Position

The Commons Register has now been re-opened in certain areas and on the 1 October 2014, North Yorkshire and Cumbria were included. In these areas there are large areas of land where commons registration was applied for amounting to hundreds of hectares which can now be reapplied for registration. The need for registration is not as great now as it was in the 60s as we now have open access but many commons are outside open access land and if registered will have all the benefits of open access.

Why Register Commons?

- If it is not already included in open access land registration it will be mapped as such in the next review of open access.
- Common land cannot be encroached on or developed without the consent of the Secretary of State for defra, although he can give permission for common land to be exchanged for other land.
- If the land was in a former borough or urban district area before 1974 it may have additional rights such as horse riding and will probably immediately become open to the public on registration.

- Land registered as common is automatically access land whilst open country is defined by vegetation and in theory could be lost on review if, say, it had been ploughed up or planted with trees although this might also prevent the common being registered as it might cease to be undeveloped and unimproved but once it is registered it remains a common.

Should the YDAF be involved?

Apart from points 3 and 4 above, registration does not give any additional protection or benefit to open access land.

There is a historical benefit in ensuring that the many swathes of land on the OS maps that are called commons are registered as such.

It will be a matter for the YDAF to decide whether it wants to get involved in the process or just ensure that it is publicised so that other people know it is now available again.

Land eligible for registration

The definition is land which 'is the waste land of a manor'. In legal terms 'the open, uncultivated and unoccupied lands parcel of a manor' although grazing the land does not count as occupation.

The land must be undeveloped and unimproved.

It must be of manorial origin but it need not be land 'of a manor' at the present time ie it could have been sold off.

It must also have been **provisionally registered** as common land under the Commons Registration Act 1965 and there must have been an objection to the registration and one or more of the following apply:

- The registration was cancelled by the commons commissioner solely because the land had ceased to be connected with the manor
- The registration was cancelled because the land was not subject to rights of common and the commissioner did not go on to consider whether the land qualified as waste land of the manor or
- The registration was cancelled or withdrawn at the request or with the agreement of the applicant because of the Box Hill case.

Finding the details of the provisional registration

The registration authority is the County Council who hold the Register of Commons. This can be inspected for provisional registrations. It will show the application and the objections. The land section will show the register map number. Further details may be held and may include the decision letter and details of the manorial status.

- Other information may be available elsewhere.
- The decision letter will state how the case ended and whether it came within para 5d unless the application was withdrawn.
- The details will also supply the original applicant and it will be worthwhile trying to contact them to see if they are still interested and able to help.

How to get a provisionally registered common permanently registered

- The applicant must complete the application form from the registration authority in full and provide the evidence required.
- Send a notice to people having an interest in the land ie owners and tenants.
- The registration authority will advertise the application and forward objections for comment.
- If there are objections they will be referred to the Planning Inspectorate and there will be a public inquiry.
- The application must be lodged before the 18 December 2018.

The Open Spaces Society is the leading expert on this and can supply a fuller fact sheet. Defra has also issued guidance and it can be downloaded from their website.

A list of all provisionally registered areas in North Yorkshire can be provided to members but the places are not immediately identifiable unless you know the name. There is a possible 39,100 ha of provisionally registered commons in North Yorkshire in 340 parcels. How many come within the criteria is not known.

David Gibson
Member of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
February 2015

Item No. 8

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum – 19 May 2015

The Deregulation Act

Background

The Deregulation Act received Royal Assent at 11:00hrs on the last day of sitting of the last Government. The Act attempts to reduce the burden of requirements on a whole raft of different legislation, ranging from statues in London to headwear for Sikhs on building sites, and many more varied topics.

Public Rights of Way and the Deregulation

The existing legal processes for recording public rights of way (PROW) are, as we are well aware, complex, slow and resource intensive. DEFRA believes that the reform will make improvements to benefit owners of PROW, landowners, local authorities and developers by creating a simpler system for mapping, changing and extinguishing PROW. The proposals are a balanced package and are supported by a stakeholder working group (SWG) representing the full range of interests in PROW. They make procedures more streamlined and flexible but also give local authorities more scope to use their judgement in dealing with insubstantial or irrelevant applications and objections and enable the development of locally negotiated solutions.

The stakeholder working group was formed some time ago to advise the Government (DEFRA) on appropriate wording. The body comprised representatives of landowners, highway and other authorities and users including the British Horse Society, Cyclists Touring Club, The Ramblers, Open Spaces Society, Land Access and Recreation Association and others.

That they produced a concise document of agreement was in itself (in my view) a remarkably successful exercise and this group will continue to meet and/or exchange correspondence to advise the new Government of requirements for secondary legislation and guidance to go with this Act. This is hoped to be completed within the next twelve months.

<u>Recorded Rights of Way</u>

Recognising that the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW Act) remains a confusing piece of legislation, amendments included here are intended as a safeguard for ‘protected rights of way’, by barring orders to alter a path’s status in certain circumstances.

Unrecorded Rights of Way

The Stakeholder Working Group's report set out a wide ranging set of issues and recommendations as to which unrecorded rights of way should be protected from automatic extinguishment in 2025 and how that can be achieved. It is anticipated such detail will be within the secondary legislation and guidance.
These will include:

1) Where definitive map modification orders have been submitted ahead of 2025.
2) Where an historical unrecorded right of way, which would fall to be extinguished if not otherwise saved, is in use by the public as a right of way.
3) Where the existing CROW Act saving provision for vehicular highways shown in the 'list of streets' is extended to footpaths and bridleways shown in the list of streets.
4) Where ways are shown in the 'Street Works Register'. This is particularly relevant to urban paths and ways, where it can be difficult to make evidential map modification orders.

Conversion of Public Rights of Way to Private Rights of Way

This is a further attempt to address landowners and property owners access, where their access is by public right of way that will be extinguished by the CROW Act or, by extension, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) via the CROW Act.

Application by owners for public path orders

The 'right to apply' for owners and occupiers, for diversion and extinguishment orders will come into force. The scope and detail will appear in the secondary legislation.

Highway authorities will be empowered to charge-back the costs of making these orders (part, at least) and DEFRA believe this will lower the burden on highway authorities.

Gates

Gives provision for landowners and tenants to apply to highway authorities to erect gates for stock control on restricted byways and BOATS. This is where PROW are 'open sided' and is intended to assist stock control. This does not include PROW which are bound by hedges, walls or fences. There will be guidance on this in secondary legislation.

Public Rights of Way Procedure

Contains amendments to the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 for applying for, making and determining orders to add rights of way to the definitive map and statement, or modify rights already shown there. Similarly, changes are made to the Schedules to the Highways Act 1980 regarding public path orders. The intention is to improve and streamline the definitive map modification order process. The

Stakeholder Working Group will be working on the required secondary legislation and guidance.

Additionally, the Deregulation Act includes clauses which will permit Closed Roads Racing and Trials of Speed (hill climbs & sprints) for motor vehicles.

This legislation will be similar to that enjoyed by Northern Ireland, The Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey who have had the ability to promote such events for over a century, as has much of Europe and other parts of the world. A small number of events within the UK mainland have also had such ability, by means of Private Members Bill's secured within the last thirty years.

Much secondary legislation is required on this subject and it is clear that only by agreement of highway authorities, strict regulatory control being applied and permits issued by the current Motor-Sport Governing Bodies, The Auto-Cycle Union (ACU) for two and three wheeled vehicles and the Motor Sports Association (MSA) for four wheeled vehicles, may such events be promoted by established organising clubs.

John Richardson
Vice Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
May 2015

Item No. 9

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum – 19 May 2015

Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership Annual Forum

Background

The Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (LNP) was established in 2012 (as were others throughout the country) as a result of securing capacity building grants from DEFRA following the Natural Environment White Paper published in July 2011.

The Northern Upland Chain extends from Yorkshire to the Scottish Border, including the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Yorkshire Dales National Park, The North Pennines AONB and the Northumberland National Park.

The aim is to develop a shared local vision for a healthy natural environment and to co-ordinate action across organisations, making best use of resources, sharing best practice and undertaking linked projects across a wide area for maximum benefit.

The stated aim is that the LNP will provide the opportunity for interested individuals, businesses and organisations to develop a shared vision for the natural environment within the LNP and to agree priorities that improve social and economic benefits of a healthy natural environment.

Annual Forum – 15 March 2015

Attendees to the LNP annual forum (around forty) were welcomed by the Chairman, David Hill, and a presentation was made by Chris Woodley-Stewart of the North Pennines AONB updating the assembly on activities within the LNP, including the recent absorption of the Forest of Bowland AONB into the Northern Upland Chain LNP. This is all clearly aimed at co-operation in every aspect of rural activities including farming, natural history, environment etc. by all bodies, authorities and individuals for the greater good of all involved.

A presentation by a hill farmer discussed what he referred to as High Nature Value (HNV) farming. This is based on low intensity farming systems which are particularly valuable for wildlife, the environment and people. Low intensity does not mean low maintenance as, for instance, managing livestock, meadows and thousands of miles of dry stone walls requires high levels of skill and knowledge.

The Northern Upland Chain LNP has over 180,000 hectares which have been designated as national and/or international importance including huge areas of blanket bog and heather moorland and most of the UK's upland hay meadows & limestone pavements. Iconic species like red squirrel, curlew, yellow wagtail, otter,

rare orchids and most of England's remaining black grouse population can also be found here.

HNV farming and land management in the LNP area helps to manage the flow rates of major rivers, conserves vast areas of peat and other soils that store huge amounts of carbon, maintains over 300,000 hectares of land which is available and accessible by the public for recreation and manages the beautiful landscapes that support a multi-million pound industry.

This is a very difficult industry to maintain as finances are poor. Despite the various grants of public money for a raft of purposes, the hill farmer has low income and regular turnover of staff. Young people often move away being unable to afford property, and the business does not have the finances available to invest in efficiency measures often required by environmental requirements forced upon them. This issue is particularly acute for tenant farmers. (None of these are new issues, but they are not being addressed sufficiently.)

Part of the collaboration created by the LNP with farmers is to explore ways of securing a more robust economic future for the farming community to work together to support HNV farming within this LNP.

It was stated a number of times throughout all the presentations that "there is no money forthcoming from DEFRA!"

A particularly interesting presentation was made by Nick Mason, the Project Manager of Red Squirrels Northern England, talking about progress in nurturing red squirrels. Progress is being made in 'managing' red squirrel habitats and numbers within the LNP area are increasing. This is partly by culling of grey squirrels within the areas of red squirrel habitat. Interestingly, it does appear that the presence of polecats sees an increase in the reds and decrease in greys! Nick did advise that this is an interesting development though they can't yet determine why.

Chris Woodley-Stewart returned to address the group on "A natural capital investment plan for the LNP and work to develop a national approach." Most of his sentences ended with the suggestion that "there is no money coming from DEFRA" though he did acknowledge one small slice of income (not detailed) from DEFRA to promote contact between all LNP's.

The meeting broke up into various group sessions and I happened to be in one which was looking for examples of activities which indirectly benefitted others. Very few were offered, though I raised the care of rights of way and of red squirrels on the Cam High Road forest extraction programme, determined by the YDNP Planning Authority.

I also offered Potteric Carr, which is an area south of Doncaster very close to the town which some time ago was a real 'blot on the landscape', being a disused quarry

area of flooded swamp. With a joint operation of local authorities, River Trusts, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and others, this now is a thriving nature reserve with excellent access for cyclists, walkers and disabled people with high visitor numbers annually and increasing.

A short Q&A session followed. Jerry Pearlman had posed a question, but this was not taken?

I judge that while there is enthusiasm for this operation, finance is a major problem in this particular period of economic difficulty. One might question why it takes a body such as a LNP to get adjacent authorities working together for the greater good of all, but maybe that needs further discussion elsewhere.

Further information, (some a bit dated) can be found at:-
www.nuclnp.org.uk
www.northpennines.org.uk/highnaturevaluefarming.aspx

John Richardson
Vice Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
April 2015

Item No. 10

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum – 19 May 2015

Secretary's Report

Purpose of the Report

The following report brings together, in one place, a collection of items for Members consideration and information.

Authority Meetings

Any member of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum can attend Authority Meetings as a member of the public. Please contact Rachel Briggs for a copy of the agenda and supporting papers. Please note, it is not a requirement for members of the YDAF to attend Authority meetings, so it is not an 'approved duty' and LAF members cannot claim expenses for attending such meetings.

Authority Meeting Dates and Venues for 2015:

Date	Venue	Time
30 June 2015	Yoredale, Bainbridge	10.30
29 September 2015	Yoredale, Bainbridge	13.00
15 December 2015	Yoredale, Bainbridge	13.00

Meetings of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for 2015

YDAF Meetings Date during 2015:

Tuesday 19 May 2015, 1.15 pm @ Yoredale, Bainbridge
Tuesday 22 September 2015, 1.15 pm @ Yoredale, Bainbridge

Review of long-term open access directions

There are five long-term directions in place in the National Park and these are due to be reviewed.

During the review the relevant authority must, having regard to the interest of the public in having access to the land, consider:

• whether the restriction is still necessary for its original purpose; and
• if so, whether the extent and nature of the restriction is still appropriate for the original purpose

Before reviewing a long-term direction, the relevant authority must consult publicly including with the Local Access Forum. We are planning to start consultation at the end of May.

England Coast Path update

Work is well underway on the England Coast Path - a new National Trail around all of England's coast.

For the first time people will have the right of access around all our open coast. This includes – where appropriate – any land, other than the trail itself, which forms part of the coastal margin and which has public rights of access along the way. This is known as 'spreading room'.

The Government is putting additional funding in place over the next five years, to ensure that the England Coast Path is completed by 2020.

This will significantly speed up the programme of work so that people will be able to walk around and enjoy the entire coastline of England much sooner. This will mean that the benefits to local communities and the economic opportunities that will arise will be realised more quickly too.

Proposed fencing of open access land

Natural England has been informed of a potential application to fence open access moorland at Ellerton Moor, Swaledale (approximate gird reference NZ060963). Fencing is proposed for both sides of the road for both husbandry and road safety issues as the farmer's sheep are known to stray down the road towards Leyburn. The land is a Site of Special Scientific Issue (SSSI) and has historic mining remains on it. The fence will cross at least two public rights of way.

Natural England wish to seek the views of the YDAF on the potential application, especially in relation to access.

Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Access Forum

The last meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Access Forum was on **Friday 6 March 2015.** The minutes can be seen in **Appendix 1**.

LAF News

See **Appendix 2.**

Rachel Briggs
Access Development Officer
April 2015

Appendix 1

Unapproved Minutes
Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Local Access Forum
Held on Friday 6 March 2015
Oxford Place, Leeds

Present:

Didy Metcalf (DM)	Bradford Local Access Forum
Pam Allen (PA)	Bradford Local Access Forum
John Harker (JH)	Doncaster/Rotherham Local Access Forum
Hazel Armstrong (HA)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Stephen Richardson (SR)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Jerry Pearlman (JJP)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Mike Willison (MW)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Steven Wood (SW)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Suki Jackson (SJ)	North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
Catriona Cook (CC)	North York Moors Local Access Forum
Muriel Mitchell (MM)	North York Moors Local Access Forum
Roma Haigh (RH)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Rachel Connolly (RC)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Paul Sherwood (PS)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Peter Cogill (PC)	Rotherham Local Access Forum
Alistair Thompson (AT)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
John Richardson (JR)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
David Gibson (DG)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Alistair Thompson (AT)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Philip Robinson (PR)	Natural England
Andrew Macintosh (AM)	Natural England
Co-ordinator: Rachel Briggs (RB)	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

1. Welcome and introductions

JP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given.

2. Unapproved minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

P2 should read ‘Trans Pennine Officer’.
P4 should read ‘Tramper’.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising

Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

There was a discussion about LNPs and how the work of the LAFs could influence the LNP.

RB began the discussion by explaining that an external speaker was due to attend the afternoon session to talk about the work of the Northern Upland Chain LNP but that, due to workload, had cancelled. JP asked for the invite to be repeated.

PR to invite someone to the next meeting to talk about LAFs involvement in LNPs.

PR explained that he had written a letter to JP, as chair of the Regional LAF, outlining the role of LAFs and how they fit into LNPs and that this may be a useful document for members to see (**appendix 1**).

AM was asked if there was a list of official duties for LNPs? He said that, although LNPs are not statutory, they will work to some terms of reference and that he would find them and circulate to the LAFs.

AM to find a list of duties of the LNPs and circulate to all LAFs in the region.

PR added that a whiteboard had been set up on Huddle looking at LNPs and urged members to look at it.

Multi-user Routes

JP told members that he had not yet had a response to the letter he had written to Dan Rogersom MP with regards to multi user routes. HA suggested writing a letter to the main political parties asking what their policies will be regarding access to the countryside for all non motorised users. CC agreed to write the letter on behalf of the Regional LAF, to be sent in JP's name.

CC to draft a letter to be sent to the main political parties with regards to their access policies. (Appendix 2)

Inheritance Tax

JP was asked to provide an explanation on the issues surrounding inheritance tax. JP explained that a list had been circulated of all the sites in the region that had access rights provided via inheritance tax rules. JP had asked members to look at the sites in their areas to see what the access opportunities were and whether these were been provided. JP was asked to recirculate the list.

JP to recirculate the list of access rights due to inheritance tax.

Network Rail

HA expressed a concern about the potential closing of rail crossings and asked that Natural England speak to Defra so that they can to talk to ministers about the issue in an attempt to stop the closures.

Natural England staff to look into the issue of rail crossing closures.

3. and 4. Update from the Yorkshire and Humber Regional LAF

Regional Co-ordinators
RB informed members that this would be her last meeting as Regional Co-ordinator due to lack of funding from Natural England. However, it was hoped that the region would continue as it was doing but that support would come directly from Natural England. A further discussion on this would take place in the afternoon session.

AM said that, from a Natural England perspective, although there is no budget for a Regional Co-ordinator, there is still a central LAF unit which will be managed by AM. Area teams will work much more closely with the LAFs. PR told members that consistency wouldn't be an issue in the Yorkshire and Humber Region and that he would take the reins.

Newsletter
Natural England will still be providing a LAF newsletter of good news stories from LAFs nationally and RB asked members if they could think of a story to be included in a future edition since the region had never been included.

LAF Conference
A national LAF conference is looking very unlikely due to budget cuts at Natural England. However, If there is an underspend later on in the next financial year then it could happen. RB asked members to contribute to the agenda and workshops if Natural England do announce it is happening as it is hard work for their staff, alone, to organise the conference.

Coastal Access
AM informed members that coastal access had been given a £5 million budget from the cabinet office for 2015/16. This is positive news and they are looking to finish the route by 2020. The programme of works will be in the public domain very soon. HA asked about the Humber route. PR said he would find out and circulate to members.

PR to find out the route of the coastal path through the Humber region (Spurn Point).

www.gov.uk
AM told members that the Natural England website www.gov.uk was still work in progress. The deadline is to have all corrections made to the site by the end of March. Natural England staff will then take over the editorial rights over the access pages.

5. Common land registration

DG presented his paper on common land registration and asked members if they had any questions. He added that, although the current areas open for registering are North Yorkshire and Cumbria, he thought that other areas would come into force in the future.

JP thanked DG for his informative paper and added that the important cases were those that were already claimed but not confirmed. DG said he had this list already and asked RB to circulate it.

RB to circulate the list of unconfirmed common land in the region.

6. Paths for Communities

PR told members that a copy of the final report for Paths for Communities had been included in the papers and asked for any comments or questions.

PR was asked if there will be another scheme in the future. PR said that it was unlikely at this time due to funding.

HA suggested looking into lottery funding for a similar project and others agreed that it was a great scheme.

JP asked members if they thought that it should be suggested to Natural England that funding be sought for a future scheme. Due to the conflict in the issue it went to a vote. Those that thought funding should be sought were 5, those that thought funding should not be sought were 6.

7. Access for All

HA asked if members had used any specifications for making public rights of way accessible for people with impairments, such as people using wheelchairs. She added that North Lincolnshire had approached the Fieldfare Trust who didn't know of anything.

RB said that a document called 'By All Reasonable Means' had been issued by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) some years ago and this was a really useful toolkit. She said she would circulate it to members.

RB to circulate 'By All Reasonable Means' to members.

8. Anti-social Behaviour

JP presented his paper and noted the two main outcomes that may be of interest to members:

1. There is a change to Gating Orders. These are now called 'Public Spaces Protection Orders'.
2. Community protection notices – the document makes specific reference to obstructions to PRoW and it could be that community protection orders are another way to get them dealt with.

DG asked if any LAFs had used the powers outlined in the document. Leeds LAF used the new powers for a public spaces application and it helped the resolve the issue.

JP said he would circulate a useful powerpoint presentation he had seen on the issues outlined.

JP to circulate the anti-social behaviour presentation he had seen.

9. National Planning Framework

RC from the North Yorkshire LAF raised the issue of planning application forms as they appear to have been standardised. North Yorkshire CC used to include a question in the pre-application stage that asked whether the application would extinguish, divert or change a PRoW. The new standard form has omitted the word **change.**

JP suggested that RC draft a new question for the standard form and bring it to the next meeting for members to discuss.

RC to devise an alternative question for the pre-planning application stage with regards to PRoW.

JH said that there used to be a regulation in the planning framework that notice must be given within the local press if a planning application is to affect a PRoW. JP said he would find out if this is the case and bring to the next meeting.

JP to find out if there is a requirement to advertise planning applications in the local press that affect a PRoW.

11. Minutes from other Regional Meetings

Members found it useful to see minutes from the North West and North East Regions and were pleased to see areas of commonality. Members asked if the area to the south could be included in the future (to include the Peak District NPA).

PR to look at providing other regional minutes at future meeting.

12. Good news items from LAFs

Bradford
Engagement with Bradford Council continues to be poor which makes it difficult to move anything forward. The LAF still has no Chair in place.

North Lincolnshire

The LAF has been working on a walk in the Scunthorpe area that was funded through the Paths for Communities scheme. They are at the signage stage at the moment and are encouraged to see large numbers of people using the route.

East Riding and Hull
The LAF have been looking at the possible upgrading of the Wolds Way National Trail but Natural England staff are unwilling to consider. PR said he would check this with the National Trails Team.

PR to ask the NE National Trails team about the possible upgrade of the Wolds Way.

North Yorkshire
The North Yorkshire LAF has been working on a series of local maps to go into each school in the area to enforce the links between access and health. All agreed that this was a really positive project for the LAF to be involves with.

Doncaster
The Doncaster LAF have been working on the redraft of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and making it much more compact. They have also been looking at making improvements to the Doncaster and North Lincolnshire boundary area and getting better access.

Sheffield
The Sheffield LAF are working on getting Sheffield Council to dedicate all their green open spaces in an attempt to prevent them been built on.

Yorkshire Dales National Park
The Yorkshire Dales LAF has had some interesting discussions around caving and open access.

Rotherham
The Rotherham LAF is losing their current Chair, Ken Whetter, who has been instrumental in the success of the LAF over recent years. Rotherham Council has employed a Definitive Map Review Officer.

North York Moors National Park
The North York Moors LAF has set up a couple of new sub groups which are working well:

- Unsealed Routes Group – involving landowners, horse riders, walkers and vehicular users.
- Potash Mine Group – has recommended a bridleway to be incorporated into the plans to go right round the site and through the middle.

Leeds
The Leeds LAF has helped to secure £25k for the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the provision of a bridleway on the 660 at Golden Acre Park. They have also been consulted on the Linton draft neighbourhood plan which includes three villages' aspirations for local PROW.

12. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional LAF will be on 25 September 2015 and will be held at a venue in Beverley.

Afternoon session on the future of the Regional LAF and PROW staff cuts

The Future of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional LAF

PR opened the discussion on the future of the regional LAF by saying that, although Regional Co-ordinators will no longer be provided by NE, the NE business plan remains the same. Therefore, there will still be some support for the LAF but with a reduced amount of time and money input. Meetings will still happen but free venues will need to be sought and lunches will no longer be provided. PR will host and organise the meeting. He will also provide the papers and will be the central contact for the region. He won't, however, provide any level of secretariat.

It was agreed, unanimously, that members would like the LAF to continue. JP asked members if they could think about venues and each ask their local authority if they would be willing to provide a space. RB added that a central venue close to public transport was preferable.

Members to speak to their local authority about providing a free venue for meetings of the Regional LAF.

There was a discussion about the secretariat of the meeting. PR said he was happy to maintain an email contact with the secretary and chair from each LAF. He would also continue to forward items from meetings. However, it was suggested, and agreed, that any letters resulting from a discussion within a meeting should be sent from the person initiating it. JP asked if anyone would be prepared to take minutes for the meetings. DM offered. JP suggested asking each local authority for a small amount of money to help with the servicing of LAF and agreed to write a letter to be sent by RB.

JP to write to all local authorities asking for a donation of money to service the Regional LAF.

PROW staff cuts

JP asked for everyone round the table to give an indication as to how the budget cuts have affected staff within their local authority.

Bradford

- There is no longer a definitive map officer.
- There is only a small number of PROW staff.
- Planning applications are now being carried out by PROW staff.

North Lincolnshire

- Lost one area officer.

East Riding and Hull

- Still same staff levels as before.

North Yorkshire CC

- Staff levels are continuing to reduce.
- Have taken the definitive maps back from the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Park Authorities.

Yorkshire Dales National Park

- Definitive map has gone back to North Yorkshire.
- Reduced budget for PROW work.
- Reduction in staff.

Doncaster

- Have lost a definitive map officer post.

Rotherham

- There is a new definitive map officer in post.
- Rotherham LAF has managed to keep control of their £15k budget.

Sheffield

- Many staff are going part time.

North York Moors National Park

- Have had a 40% cut in their budget.
- PROW staff have gone down from 18 to 9.

Leeds

- Losing an enforcement officer.

JP thanked everyone and asked what, as a Regional LAF, members can do to help. Members had various thoughts and it was suggested they be taken back to individual LAFs for them to take forward as they wish. Suggestions were as follows:

- Write to the Times who had printed an article suggesting National Parks are managed by local communities.
- Write to Dan Rogersom MP.
- Try to take on volunteers from parish councils to carry out PROW work.
- Ring fence funding.

The meeting closed at 3.00pm

Appendix 1

Dear Jerry

Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships

Thank you for your letter dated 19th December 2014 requesting contact details for all LEPs and LNPs in the region.

It has been previously suggested by Natural England that the best way for LAFs to influence LEPs is through the LNPs which have representation on the LEPs.

I would like to remind you that there is a Huddle Whiteboard dedicated to **Best Practice and LNPs** which includes the location and contact details for all the LNPs in the country as well as advice on how to contact/interact with them. All the information you are requesting can be found on the Whiteboard and I would like to suggest that you encourage those LAF members who have access to Huddle to disseminate this information to their respective LAFs.

If you feel you would wish to contact LEPs directly please see below for their respective websites where you will find their contact details.

http://www.lepnetwork.net/leps/

Hull & Humber
http://www.humberlep.org/

Leeds City Region
http://www.the-lep.com/about/lep/

Sheffield City Region
http://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/about/overview/

York and North Yorkshire
http://www.businessinspiredgrowth.com/

The second point in your letter was a request that Natural England write to LEPs and LNPs informing them of the existence and the role of LAFs. I would like to inform you that a letter on this subject is being prepared, and due to go out to LNPs via Natural England's Regional Managers by the end of this month (January 2015). We will keep you updated on this through your Regional Co-ordinator. At this stage it is still undecided as to whether a letter should be sent to LEPs as Natural England's position is that the best way to influence LEPs is through the LNPs.

I hope the enclosed information has adequately addressed your concerns. If you have any queries regarding any of the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Philip Robinson
Lead Advisor
Access and Engagement
Yorkshire, the Humber and North Links.

Appendix 2

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing on behalf of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Local Access Forum, which consists of representatives from thirteen Local Access Forums form different Local Authorities. At our last meeting there was much discussion as regards there being all inclusive access for all non-motorised users when using both roads and the off road network of pubic rights of way. The feeling was that where and when appropriate projects benefiting from public money should be multi-user; that is for walkers, people who ride or drive horses, cyclists, pram pushers and the less able using buggies.

The rights of way network is not comprehensive, particularly for higher rights users (those users who are not walkers) and everybody has to use the roads for connectivity between off road rights of way. The present Walking and Cycling Strategies of the Department of Transport take no account of other users, which means that infrastructure to aid these two groups can be detrimental to other users, which is discriminatory.

The Forum would therefore like to know your party's stance and policies as regards multi user routes being considered in all future government policies concerned with roads, rights of way, railways and other development projects.

Yours faithfully

Jerry Pearlman
Chair of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional LAF

Photograph of Derbyshire by Jim Milner

LAF NEWS

2014/15

Issue 6

Welcome

Welcome to Issue 6 of the LAF newsletter and a personal hello from me as I step into Martin's shoes in helping to oversee our work with LAFs.

This newsletter comes at a challenging time for the organisation as we adapt to, and plan for, an increasingly stringent financial regime which has necessitated redefining many of our relationships with partners and stakeholders, including LAFs.

In February, it was with regret that we had to inform the LAFs that from April 2015, due to organisation-wide budget cuts, Natural England would no longer be able to fund the Regional Coordinator posts. LAF Regional Coordinators have been funded by Natural England (and previously the Countryside Agency) for 10 years including the original pilot project. Over that time they provided excellent support for the LAFs; gathering and disseminating information, organising and running regional meetings and conferences; cementing good relationships across boundaries and producing regional reports (available on Huddle) which in turn were used to better inform the National LAF Annual Reports.

We would like to thank the Regional Coordinators for all of their hard work in supporting LAFs over the years and hope that, in the future, LAFs can forge strong working relationships with their local NE Area Team contacts.

I am looking forward to working with LAFs over the coming months

In this issue...

Moving on thoughts

Footbridge at Colwick Country Park

Self-guided walk leaflets

Campaign to improve safety for vulnerable users on rural roads

Adding collective value

Getting out and about together

Finding the missing link

Black Environment Network

Annual reporting and survey

What's hot on Huddle

to help create these new relationships and would also like to take this opportunity to thank Martin for all his hard work with you over the past few years.

Andy Mackintosh
Natural England

Moving on thoughts

By Martin Shaw, Senior Advisor, Access and Engagement Team

For the last three years I've had the privilege of helping to oversee and steer Natural England's involvement in the work of Local Access Forums. A lot has happened in this time. We've produced the first National Report to Defra featuring the work of LAFs, up and down the country. We've held National Conferences that have brought the LAF family together, providing outlets to share good practice and stimulate debate. We've improved the way we share information and expertise around the LAF family through regular newsletters and a vibrant, informative hub on Huddle.

We've faced and continue to face challenging financial times, but the work of LAFs, at the heart of the Access agenda, has never been more important. LAFs need to continue to find ways to engage in partnership with local organisations who share a common agenda, be they Health & Well Being Boards, Local Nature Partnerships or Natural England Area Teams.

My role will now be focussed on achieving the challenge of delivering the England Coast Path by 2020. This is an exciting move for me, but I also realise that this is one of many areas in which LAFs will have a part to play over the coming years. I look forward to the vital role that LAFs will be able to play, bringing their experience, knowledge, advice and partnership working as we seek to define the lines of the path around the country.

It's been a pleasure working with you, and I wish the LAFs every success in the future.

Footbridge at Colwick Country Park

By Hugh McClintock, Nottingham Local Access Forum

In 2010 the Nottingham LAF were asked to look at small scale projects to improve the local rights of way network by creating a missing link. As well as improving the network, the aim of the project was to give the LAF an insight into the design and build elements, associated costs, applying for statutory consents, consulting local residents and landowners, giving them an appreciation of a scheme from the initial idea through to completion, and how long these things take!

One member suggested building a timber footbridge across a minor watercourse known as "the Loop" (around 5m wide and 2

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LAF News

feet deep during low water levels and 7m wide and 4 feet in flood) which is the old course of the River Trent, down-stream of Colwick Sluice Gates. The footbridge (20m in length) would link Colwick Country Park in Nottingham City to a large housing estate in Gedling Borough, Nottinghamshire. To cross the Loop, at the point where the footbridge would be built, there were (and still are) a set of “stepping stones” which were OK for the more physically mobile to use but proved difficult, and in some cases dangerous, for less mobile and elderly, especially during icy weather, plus when the main river flooded the stones were underwater. As can be seen

from the photo, the stepping stones (and now the footbridge) linked directly to well-worn desire lines on either side of the Loop, showing it was a key access point to and from the Country Park. A joint site visit was arranged with the Nottinghamshire LAF and all agreed that this scheme had merit and should be progressed.

Following the approval of funding from the Local Transport Plan in 2011, the project gained momentum and a design was prepared and submitted to the Environment Agency. The land on the Nottingham City / Country Park side was owned by Nottingham City Council so the footbridge didn’t need planning permission under Permitted Development rules, but planning consent was required on the Gedling Borough side. This delayed things but finally, following receipt of all the statutory consents, wildlife surveys, and landowner agreements, construction started September 2014 and the footbridge was opened 2 months later in November.

Due to problems with access to the site for delivery, the footbridge was delivered in components parts and hand built in situ, which reduced the need for heavy lifting machinery and therefore reduced costs, disturbance to the nearby houses and those enjoying a peaceful day at the Country Park. A number of responses to the public consultation asked that the stepping stones were left in place because the local kids like playing on them.

This project shows that LAF’s can and do make a difference to the

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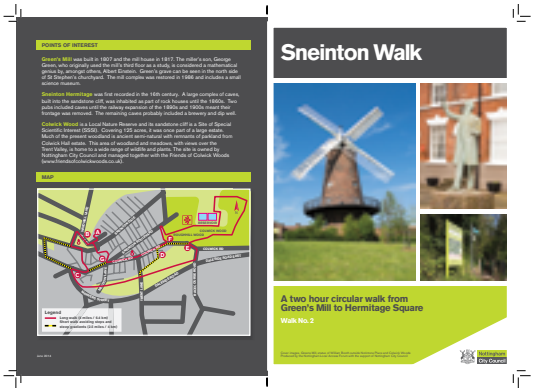
local rights of way network and hopefully the Nottingham LAF now have a better understanding of how these projects develop over time, and perhaps more importantly, the art of patience, having taken the best part of 5 years to complete!

Self-guided walk leaflets

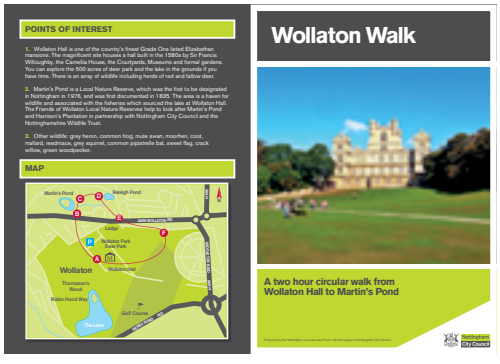
By John Lee, Public Rights of Way, Nottingham City Council



Over the last 2 years the Nottingham LAF has been developing a series of self-guided walk leaflets. The intention is to create one walk per Ward across Nottingham (depending on budgets) which range from moderate and easy to use, cover urban areas, green areas, parks and other open spaces and include a short history of the area, any local characters and places of interest.

So far two walks have been published covering Wollaton Park and Martin's Pond (a nearby LNR) and Sneinton and Colwick Woods (another LNR), with a 3rd walk in the pipeline.

This is an excellent way of raising the profile and valuable work of the LAF while at the same time encouraging more exercise, improving health and wellbeing, while getting people out and about in Nottingham to discover what's on their doorstep.



Links

A Walk in the Park

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LAF News

Campaign to improve safety for vulnerable users on rural roads

By Carole Bentley, Cheshire East Local Access Forum

Cheshire East Local Access Forum (CELAF) has won the support of several parish councils for its campaign to improve safety for vulnerable users on rural roads. The Forum organised a meeting in Mobberley (on January 14th) for parish councillors from the areas through which promoted long distance routes Laureen's Ride and the Cheshire Cycleway pass.

It was the first event of its kind organised by CELAF. Three Forum members - Linda Rose, John Handley and Carole Bentley - gave presentations on the dangers faced by horse riders, cyclists and walkers respectively in areas where they are forced to use country roads which generally have a 60mph speed limit. The meeting also heard from Kevin Skillings of Cheshire East Highways Department about the road safety challenges faced by the Department.

The impetus for the meeting came from Linda Rose, who is a horse rider and carriage driver. She said: "The number of accidents on rural roads is alarming so, with the help of parish councillors, CELAF wants to identify 'danger hotspots' and to come up with practical and attainable ideas for improvements. The response of so many of the parish councillors at the meeting was heartening and I do hope we can make some headway with this very difficult topic. We will be following up the meeting later in the year and looking into the possibility of organising similar events in other parts of Cheshire East."

Among the various issues raised by councillors in the general discussion were driver attitudes and training, speed limit

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consistency, reduced road maintenance and verge obstruction enforcement.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the parish councils of Chorley; Rainow; Hulme Walfield and Somerford Booths; High Legh; Great Warford; Twemlow; Cranage; Over Alderley and Birtles; Nether Alderley and by Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC).

Adding collective value

By Ian Jackson, Northumberland Joint Local Access Forum

I suspect it may not be an isolated thought, but the question about how much value LAFs genuinely add as a collective was one that became a recurring theme to several members of the Joint Local Access Forum for the County of Northumberland and its National Park. Without doubt a few individuals on this Forum were adding considerable value in their contributions to specific local access issues and sometimes across a whole domain; e.g. mountain biking. But the nagging questions, especially to members who were relatively new, were: how can I make a difference; how much value is the whole JLAF adding; and is that whole greater than the sum of its parts?

At a regular JLAF meeting in July 2014 the question surfaced again and was translated into an action. Devise a new strategy and plan that not only allowed the day-to-day local specific access issues to be addressed, but come up with objectives which could engage a majority of JLAF members. Articulate a set of actions that recognised current access issues in Northumberland and at the same time better utilised the time and talents of JLAF members. Could (and should) we move JLAF from what several thought to be an ad hoc way of working to a more structured one?

A small working group of four took on the task. They first reviewed past strategies and action plans going back 6 years. That review revealed that the challenge was not just the need for a practical set of actions; it was also about whether JLAF had the appetite to discharge them. Nonetheless the working group looked at the access issues and produced a number of draft high level objectives and circulated these as a “strawman” to JLAF as a whole. A two hour session was then devised as a major item at the next JLAF meeting.

That meeting took place in December 2014. It opened with an introduction to the exercise and a resume of the issues and state of play. We then divided JLAF into two breakout groups and asked each to come up with no more than five practical objectives. They could use or adapt the strawman the working group had provided, or ignore it. The resulting objectives were then reconciled into one list and we asked JLAF to prioritise that list using post-it notes and a simple scoring system.

It was inevitable that an initial two hour session could only deliver agreement on high level objectives. The next task was to put practical flesh on those bones. This is the point we are at now. Via

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email each JLAF member has been asked to detail specific tasks, desired outcomes and timescales, which contribute to delivering the objectives. These tasks will be worked up into a draft prioritised action plan which we hope to agree at the next scheduled meeting in April.

As I write the responses from JLAF members are coming in and, ever the optimist, I'm hoping for a better than 66% response. Will we succeed in agreeing and delivering an effective action plan? I hope so. But at the very least we will have confronted a subject that was without doubt an elephant in the room and engaged a greater proportion of JLAF members in the work of the Forum than before. Given the importance of access and the potential contribution those members could make if well harnessed, surely that has to be good.

Getting out and about together

By Rachel Connolly – Chair, North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

North Yorkshire LAF are busy developing a project to encourage primary schools to get children out of their classrooms and into the countryside.

The idea is to produce a resource pack, which would include OS maps and other useful information regarding the local ROW network, that teachers could use to inform "outside the classroom" activities.

Teachers would use the resources to get pupils to explore the local footpath networks and learn about their importance. Activities could include nature studies using the hedgerows, learning how to read a map and learning about citizenship by adopting a path and keeping it tidy through litter picking.

Back in the classroom children could learn, using OS maps, about local history, the landscape changing through time and the origin of local place names. Children would learn why paths matter today and benefit from healthy outdoor activities.

North Yorkshire LAF are looking to work in partnership with Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Health and Well Being Boards to help fund the initiative.

Other than the obvious educational and health benefits North Yorkshire LAF see the project as a means of promoting the rights of way network and its importance to the next generation.

Finding the missing link

By John Harker - Ex-Chairman, Rotherham Local Access Forum

Public bridleway networks generally are often poor in terms of length of mileage, and in connectivity of the network for higher rights users. Rotherham metropolitan borough is no exception to that rule.

When I was Chairman of the LAF a number of years ago, the

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mysterious case of Bridleway 18, parish of Aston cum Aughton, was well known to me. It runs north-east south-west in countryside to the east of the M1 motorway near Junction 33. At its southern end it 'dead ends' at a junction with Public Footpath 16. There is no way through for horse riders or cyclists. Public Footpath 16 has stiles on it, so "unofficial" use was not feasible either thus preventing any claim to upgrade Footpath 16 on the basis of user evidence.

The obvious answer, at least to me, was to upgrade that part of Footpath 16 through to Hardwick Lane by means of a Public Path Creation Order on the basis of a clear need. Officers were concerned about the implications of such a course of action in terms of the compensation liable to be paid to a landowner under section 26 of the Highways Act 1980. The LAF pressed for a land valuation to give us a clearer idea of the scale of the financial cost. Eventually a Valuation Officer was taken out by the rights of way staff to walk 2 possible options – Footpath 16 and the unmade track past Vessey Close Cottages from Vessey Close Farm. The answer that came back was revealing to say the least.

£900 to upgrade a section of Footpath 16; £0 to upgrade the private access track to Vessey Close Cottages and farm. This gave the project massive impetus. Rights of Way staff could now 'sell' the project to senior officers and councillors. Protracted negotiations with the 2 landowners involved to try & reach a compromise agreement without the need for the risk of a contested public inquiry eventually failed, but the owner of Vessey Close Farm where the bridleway currently passes through his yard did reluctantly offer a compromise solution.

In return for a legal diversion which removed the bridleway from the working farmyard, he offered a brand new public footpath which would connect from the bridleway to the bridge crossing of the M1 motorway. This would maintain the link for walkers between the bridleway and the bridge over the M1 without having to walk a large detour. Riders and cyclists would now have a through route from Brampton to Hardwick where other bridleways and unclassified roads can be accessed.

The proposed routes of diverted bridleway & new footpath have been walked & given the OK by LAF members from walking and horse riding backgrounds. All that is needed are the Public Path Orders under s.25 & s.119 to bring them into effect. One hesitates to say it's all over bar the shouting, but we are closer now than we have ever been. Surely no one is going to object to the Orders are they? Watch this space.

Black Environment Network

By Kathy Miles, North West Regional LAF Coordinator

On 12th February the Northwest Regional LAF Chairs welcomed to their meeting Saleem Oppal and Max Ghani from the Black Environment Network (BEN). Each has in excess of 30 years' experience of working with ethnic communities and this was certainly apparent from the many examples and anecdotes related over the course of their interesting presentation on "Positive Engagement" which was well received and resulted in some good discussion, with attendees relating some very relevant anecdotes

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Black Environment Network

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from their own experiences.

Changing the name has been thought about – but everyone knows them as BEN. They are also now thinking about international work; and the training element of their work is becoming more sought after as interest in this area increases. Access and Engagement Lead Advisor David Jeffreys first contacted BEN and then made a successful bid for funding so that a training event could be organised for the Northwest LAFs. This is now to be held shortly, in early March in Manchester, with a number of LAF members attending from all over the region. The training will relate more closely to the role of LAFs and it is hoped will benefit those LAFs represented. It should prove particularly relevant for the many essentially urban LAFs in the southern half of the Northwest. However, there are minority groups and communities as well as individuals living throughout the region, and also visitors and migrant workers from around the world.

We hope to include a followup article on the training event in the next issue of LAF News.

Annual reporting and survey

By Rob Leek - Lead Adviser, Natural England

A new version of the Annual Review Form for LAFs to use when reporting to Natural England was recently circulated to all of the LAFs via the Regional Coordinators. Completing this form enables Natural England to receive information from LAFs in a consistent format which assists when preparing the LAF National Annual Report which will be submitted to Defra. Any feedback about the form or if it's required in a different format, please contact LAF@naturalengland.org.uk.

For the last couple of years, Natural England has organised an online survey for LAF Chairs and Secretaries to complete which aims to capture information from LAFs that is not always received via the annual reporting process. Natural England are aiming to run the survey again this year in April and information from it will, as before, be used in the National Annual Report. Details about the survey will be circulated to all of the LAF secretaries nearer the time.

What's hot on Huddle

By Rob Leek - Lead Adviser, Natural England

A spreadsheet has recently been uploaded to Huddle which contains current links to local authority rights of way and ROWIP webpages. The spreadsheet also has ROWIP start/end dates, where known, and whether it is an initial or subsequent plan. It is hoped it will be of use for information on local plans and as an overview of the wider national ROWIP picture.

The spreadsheet is work in progress and not all the links or dates may be live or 100% accurate but we will update it periodically and would welcome any corrections or additions.

Links

Huddle specific links

Annual Review Form
Survey Results 2014
Survey Results 2013

National Annual Reports

Huddle specific links

ROWIP List

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