

**Minutes of the Cumbria and Lakes Joint Local Access Forum meeting
held on Thursday 24th January 2019 at CFRS HQ, Penrith**

Attendees:					
Charles Ecroyd (Chair)	CE	Jonathan Brooks	JB	John Crosbie	JC
Geoff Davies (LDNPA)	GD	Mohammed Dhalech	MD	Richard Fox (LDNPA)	RF
David Gibson (CCC)	DG	Chris Lyon	CL	Ron Lyon	RL
Kathy Miles	KM	Mike Murgatroyd	MM	Malcolm Petyt	MP
Dave Pickup (LDNPA)	DP	Steve Pighills	SP	Ken Taylor	KT
Cllr Helen Wall (CCC)	HW	Sylvia Woodhead	SW		
Apologies:					
Carole Barr (Vice Chair)	CB	Cllr Nick Cotton (CCC)	NC	Ben Mayfield	BM
Geoff Wilson	GW				

1 Welcome

Charles Ecroyd welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending, especially Richard Fox, Fix The Fells Ranger, who had provided members with a presentation on the Fix The Fells Project before the start of the formal meeting.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received as recorded above.

3 Public Participation

No representations or questions had been received from members of the public. However, a letter from Horse Access Campaign UK (HAC) had been received too late to be discussed in detail and would be considered at the April CALLAF meeting.

4 Disclosure of Interest

As a member of the LDNPA ROW Committee, GD disclosed an interest in Tilberthwaite and in Seathwaite car parking.

There was no other disclosure of interest by any member in relation to agenda items other than as disclosed previously.

5 Exclusion of Press and Public

There was no requirement to exclude members of the public or the press.

6 Membership

This would be the last meeting for Malcolm Petyt and potentially for Jon Brooks also. The LAF wished to record its thanks for their commitment and contributions over many years.

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 18th October 2018 meeting were agreed with two changes:

8.4 To amend the last sentence of the first paragraph to read “The draft actually mentions supporting solutions to car parking problems at Seathwaite”.

10.4 To amend the second sentence to “He reported that unfortunately there had been no appetite to provide a secretariat and the group was in abeyance”.

8 Matters Arising

- 8.1 8.1 Logo and Website** – CB had previously been given a steer from LDNPA that some funds were available. DP however advised that with year-end approaching it would be best to delay obtaining quotes until the new financial year.
- 8.2 8.2 Warcop** – DG reported that following the public inquiry a decision was still awaited. However, there was a willingness to talk about moving the footpath. No footpaths would be extinguished. The July meeting had been supportive of Open Access but not in the firing area.
- 8.3 8.3 Grange railway crossing** – DG reported that the Order had been made. Objections could now be raised.
- 8.4 8.4 Seathwaite parking** – KT reported that Remembrance Sunday had passed off without incident as the situation had been well managed. GD had received no further information.
- 8.5 8.5 Tilberthwaite** – Following completion of practical works the route was now open again. There would be ongoing monitoring and two drop-in sessions would be held on: 26th February in Coniston and 5th March at Skelwith Bridge.

A LAF member reported that he had walked there and found the new surface to be very good for all users.

- 8.6 8.6 Access to Water** – DP reported that clarity was awaited from Rydal Estates on access to their water. The leaflet could then be finalised.
- 8.7 15.1 GDPR** – DG and DP had met with their authorities and found to be in contravention of GDPR in relation to the LAF. KM was therefore to be given permission to log on to the CCC system to do LAF work.

9 LAF Work Programme

9.1 Cumbria Access and Recreation Strategy (CARS)

Following the departure of David Robinson and pending the appointment of another officer to the role, CARS was in abeyance, but due for renewal in November 2019 and DG would therefore be talking to both National Parks.

9.2 Fell Fencing Project – update

KT and GW had provided a further paper with the recommendation that LAF Members note the progress. This long paper had one message to take away: that both Tim Farron MP and Rory Stewart MP supported this project. They had respectively agreed to submit written parliamentary questions to Defra (Tim) and to submit a letter to the Minister (Rory). This was the biggest commitment so far on this work.

DP reiterated that another important step forward was that the State of the Park document which is produced every five years will now include this. Part of this process will be to gather the information as it comes in.

9.3 Inspections and recommendations on Rights of Way consultations – Members’ reports

9.3.1 SW had visited four sites and had provided a summary of her reports. Two diversions had been made some time ago and simply needed to be formalised. The footpath diversion at Moat Scar, Aldingham was supported; it would keep to the coast above the cliffs, instead of going across the middle of fields, and would be a better experience for users.

SW asked if there was any information on the application to add a public byway to a slipway on the River Crake, which her report had not supported as the path was currently a quiet traffic-free route for walkers and horse-riders and a Sustrans C2C route. LAF members had questioned how the creation of a BOAT fell within the constraints of the NERC Act 2006. It had a complex history and was discussed at a DCR committee meeting in January. DG reported that the Order had been made and explained that this path had originally been built as a road.

9.3.2 MM had made two site visits. One along the bank of the River Derwent west of Cockermouth at Broughton and Papcastle. As a result of Storm Desmond substantial lengths of river bank and public footpath were completely washed away. The proposed diversion on to a more sustainable line merited approval in ensuring continued accessibility of a popular route.

The second, at Bowness-on-Solway, was also supported. It was a proposal to divert a public footpath from a meadow grazed by cattle on to much drier ground and an easier to follow route with improved views of surrounding landscape.

9.3.3 SP had looked at three routes closed due to storm damage and the necessity for tree removal.

There was to be a public inquiry relating to Mosedale to Carrhead Ford in April 2019. Trail-riders would not contest it.

GD reported that the ROW Committee had made a decision relating to the case at Rosgill: the routes would become bridleways.

9.4 Table of consultations from the previous quarter

This was still work in progress – to be carried over to the next meeting.

9.5 Recent, current or upcoming consultations

9.5.1 AONB Management Plan 2019-24 consultations

The Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB consultation for the period 2019-24 was now finished. The C&LJLAF had not been invited, but a short consultation response was submitted on behalf of the LAF.

Nothing had been heard from the Solway Coast AONB with regard to a management plan consultation [due next year].

An email had been received from Simon Wilson, North Pennines AONB Business Manager and Planning & Strategic Access Officer, inviting the LAF and individuals to respond to the consultation on the NP AONB Management Plan 2019-24.

9.5.2 LDNPA car parking policy consultation

GD reported that vehicle parking for sustainable transport was being considered. There would be another round of public consultation from 8th April to 3rd June 2019 if the LAF or individuals wished to make a response. He suggested the LAF may wish to defer responding until the final plan was published.

9.6 Lake District National Park Partnership – nothing further

9.7 North Pennines AONB Partnership Access and Recreation Working Group

No LAF member had been able to attend the last meeting. However DG reported that there had been a constructive meeting which looked at maintenance of national trails. Much of the maintenance of the Pennine Way is done through the NP AONB. DG had been tasked with fighting for this funding from the partnership and reported that some funding had been won. It appeared that funding for volunteers was to be like for like to the previous year. The other issue raised was fulfilment of the extension of the Pennine Bridleway. Fellfoot Forward would provide one large section and there were others. However, some support is needed from Natural England (NE).

9.8 Annual Review of documents owned by the LAF

The LAF work priorities document needed to be updated.

The C&LJLAF Terms of Reference were still up to date.

The planting guidelines had also been adopted during the past year.

The new Access to Water leaflet was in the process of being finalised.

9.9 LAF annual reports

No annual report had been produced for 2017 and one for 2018 was now also due. Members were requested to forward to DG numbers of local consultations dealt with and responded to. **All**

10 Members News

10.1 HW reported further on the path around Walney. One section was on a very minor road where it could not go on to private land. The solution was to paint white lines on the road. Some people had thought this a good idea; others took great exception. CCC would now wash the lines off again and would probably have to reimburse NE for the works carried out. Coastal access would now be going along an unsafe route and a solution would have to be found.

10.2 SW had, while walking through Hartley, noticed that three footpath diversions did not have signage. DG explained that nothing had been done yet because it was not known who owned the bridges. The public inquiry had been deferred from 18th January.

10.3 JC had the previous week chaired a good meeting of the Biking sub-group of the Mountain Liaison Group. MLG members emphasised that the intention of the meeting was NOT to restrict Mountain Bikes (MTB) or Electric MTB (eMTB) use, rather to understand current and future trends in their use and IF this was likely to increase erosion in fragile environments, how this impact could be managed or minimised pre-emptively as opposed to after such damage had occurred. Management solutions to assist in minimising environmental erosion were suggested and issues with management options considered.

11 News from National and Regional Access Bodies

11.1 National LAF Conference – nothing further to report

11.2 NW Regional LAF – The meeting in November had again considered the question of NE support to LAFs and railway crossing closures. Following the meeting the chair had written a letter to Network Rail.

11.3 Highways England – A66 upgrade (Penrith to Scotch Corner)

CE had not heard anything since the September meeting and found this slightly surprising. They would soon need to make decisions.

Looking back on the High Newton bypass, DP asked if the closures of ROW were being looked at. CE replied that they were, but would ensure that this was the case. DP advised the LAF should be prepared for some to be closed as the more sensible suggestion.

12 Coastal Access update

DG reported that from May NE staff would be carrying out an environmental assessment on Stretch5, Silecroft to Silverdale.

CCC, LDNP and Copeland BC were looking into bridge crossings over the River Irt, River Esk and ‘bridge’ the gaps in the England Coast Path. There was also a lot of local support, especially for the Esk crossing.

Stretch 3 was still awaiting approval.

At present they were focussing on Stretch 5, looking into the alignment of the route prior to the publication of the report.

DG had been speaking to David Hunter, Deputy Head of Land Use at DEFRA. Post the conversation David Hunter had invited himself to Cumbria to see firsthand some of the issues faced when creating a new National Trail.

On behalf of Jim McQueen, SW asked if there was any progress on the Arnside Viaduct. DG reported that CCC members were in favour of the coastal path going up the Kent.

13 Authority Work Programme Updates

13.1 Cumbria County Council – Countryside Access Team

Flood recovery – The RPA flood funding is now fully committed and the claim is due to go to the RPA by the end of February.

ROWIP – going well, £62k funding is committed. The Lancaster Canal project has been held up in the Kendal area by issues out of their direct control. The Canal and River Trust are to support the Sport England funding for further improvements to access in the Crooklands area.

PROW cyclic survey programme – ongoing.

National Trail Maintenance Programme – works are being carried out on a number of Hadrian’s Wall path bridges, funded by the Hadrian’s Wall Trail Partnership. Access has been improved at Dufton on the Pennine Way by surface improvements and new gates, achieved with a mix of funding from the Pennine Way Partnership and Friends of the North Pennines.

Mapping Orders – a 30% improvement on this year’s backlog of outstanding orders had been achieved by how the programme is managed.

13.2 Lake District National Park Authority

DP informed the meeting that the interview process was underway for a replacement for Dave Robinson’s role. There are big pieces of work ongoing on all LDNPA projects.

DP suggested Tim Duckmanton come to speak to the LAF at a future meeting to explain the work that has taken place on the Access and Recreation Priority Projects.

Orrest Head – LDNPA has been working with Windermere Town Council and SLDC with the aim of restoring a Victorian carriageway and creating an accessible Miles without Stiles route to the summit of Orrest Head.

Rusland Horizons – LDNPA have acted as lead on this. The Fourth Greenwood Trail was launched on 17th January. There have been some great trails developed through the project. [<http://www.ruslandhorizons.org/project/the-greenwood-trail.aspx>]

Health & Wellbeing is going up the agenda at county and district council level with a huge amount of work going on. LD have really tried to push the role of the countryside in this.

GD suggested an update could be given on the closure of the Routes to Resilience work. The last few projects are all but complete and will be finished by the end of February.

DG reported that the Canal and River Trust had received £500k for the Stainton Aqueduct but would not finish in time, unless the RPA and EA allow them an extension.

CE raised the damage being done at White Moss to gates, fences and sign-posting.

14 Ongoing Infrastructure Projects

14.1 Thirlmere water pipeline – SP had received no further notifications of ROW closures or diversions in connection with the works.

14.2 Moorside – nothing further. The Anglesey project was also stalled.

14.3 Northwest Coastal Connection – as above.

15 Training Session Feedback

15.1 October 2018 site visit – The Bulfell Beck work was now completed. LAF members had found the site visit to view flood recovery works in progress extremely interesting and instructional. The LDNPA project Manager and Ranger, Jed Acton and Bruce Wilkinson were thanked for this and also the presentation on the LDNPA’s ‘Routes to Resilience’ scheme which had preceded the site visit.

15.2 Fix The Fells – LAF members had been interested to learn about the Fix The Fells project that morning through the informative presentation, followed by a useful question and answer session.

16 Dates of Future Meetings

The dates of the next two meetings were agreed as:
Wednesday 17th April and Tuesday 16th July 2019.