

**Minutes of the Cumbria and Lakes Joint Local Access Forum
Meeting held virtually on Friday 29th January, 2021**

Attendees					
Charles Ecroyd (Chair)	CE	Carole Barr (Vice Chair)	CB	David Gibson (CCC)	DG
Emma Moody (LDNPA)	EM	Tiffany Hunt (LDNPA)	TH	Andrew Nelson	AN
Geoff Wilson	GW	Steve Pighills	SP	Sylvia Woodhead	SW
Kathy Miles	KM	Ben Mayfield	BM	Jonathan Brooks	JB
Ron Lyon	RL	Chris Lyon	CL	Mike Murgatroyd	MM
Helen Wall	HW	Rob Bishop	RB	Judith Ruddick (Sec)	JR
Apologies					
Nick Cotton	NC	Mohammed Dhalech	MD	John Crosbie	JC

1. Welcome

CE opened the meeting and welcomed members.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received as recorded above.

3. Declarations of Interest

TH new member said that she wasn't sure if she would have any declarations to make and went onto introduce herself as the new member for the LDNPA and that she was also a Trustee of the Friends of the Lake District. EM then suggested that as there were two new members it might be worth everyone introducing themselves, which members did.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Corrections were made and the minutes of the 14th October, 2020 were approved.

5 Matters Arising

5.1 Grange Railway Crossing – DG told the group that nothing had changed since last time. Still waiting for a decision, some objections had come in.

5.3 Tilberthwaite – CB asked EM if anything had moved on with setting up a working group to look after the management of the route as that would be the next step. EM said that it had been delayed because of everything else going on but hopefully a group would be set up in the spring but as yet no date had been set.

5.4 Access to Water and paddle sports – CB explained that Dave Pickup was dealing with this and EM confirmed that she would need to have a catch up with him regarding this, although she didn't feel there was a lot happening.

Action: EM to get in touch with DP regarding this matter

5.5 GDPR – CB felt this needed to be dealt with and that she, DG and JR would have a discussion and deal with it before the next meeting.

Action: CB, DG, JR to discuss GDPR before next meeting

6. LAF Work Programme

- 6.1** Upland Fencing – GW circulated his papers prior to the meeting. He reported that generally he felt it was difficult to get the Inspectors to pay much attention to ours, and indeed other consultees, advice and concerns. Inspectors tended to take more notice of the applicant/landowners views. A point that CB had noted and felt we must continue to keep making our advice and stronger if needed.

This is one of the reasons to set up a meeting with Julia Aglionby and CB had emailed her but heard nothing back. So she said she would email again.

GW asked that the meeting formally accept the responses he had made on their behalf and this recommendation was agreed by the forum and the responses duly accepted at the meeting.

Action: CB and GW to set up meeting with Julia Aglionby

AN then said that as a new member of the LAF explanations from experienced people like GW were really helpful and he thanked him. He also said that would it be possible for training for new members.

CE then said that training had been mentioned at the pre LAF meeting.

TH wanted to add that the whole issue of fencing was really key and that the LDNPA took a very robust view on this and would only sympathise or support fencing if it was demonstrated as absolutely essential. She felt it was an important thing to track and that the progress of the fencing should be monitored. She had noted that one of the fences was to be removed in 2030 and wondered if the LAF kept an eye on this but felt it was important to do so.

GW said that the point that TH had made was important but is impacted on by the fact that there has been a change in duty for DP because he was leading on the mapping of the fencing which the LAF had taken a lead on promoting through the LDNPP. We have noted previously that some of the early grants of authority have now run out of time and I'm not aware that anybody is really tracking that. We have made the point in the past that there is really no duty on anybody to do the tracking and even if a fence remains beyond the period of authority there's no way of enforcing it. The only way would be for a member of the public to bring a claim against the people who are responsible for the fence. I would just ask the Partnership that this isn't allowed to disappear below the horizon.

TH thanked GW and said she had noted it and would follow it up with EM.

CB said that she slightly disagreed with TH comment about the robustness of the NP and probably the robustness of a lot of people when it comes to these applications because it's always on the sensitive issue of peat restoration or planting more trees and its really easy to be swept along by those good things in the applications and for everyone to stand back and not challenge too much and I think we ought to be challenging more not less and felt it was great if TH could keep an eye on that at the NPA end through being on the board and the Rights of Way Committee.

RB wanted to make sure that we had noticed in the chat section that SW felt there should be a notice on each fence to say when it should be removed and that she didn't agree with the view of CB

6.2 Recent, current or upcoming consultations

Carlisle Southern Link Road – CE informed that this was proceeding apace. DG added that some senior officers had been employed within the council to drive this forward in the coming months.

Portinscale Bridge – CE, CB and AN would put something together on this. CE asked AN if he could draft something for him. AN said there should already be something as three meetings ago this was discussed.

Action: CE to look for previous draft on this

A66 Improvements – CE said that he had emailed everyone before Christmas and that there was a virtual meeting held by Highways England and their contractors. CE said GW had responded to his email. CE also said that he knew everyone on the non-motorised user group and that he was the only Cumbrian based member, there were a lot from North Yorkshire and County Durham. Most users were covered, horse, cycle and pedestrian and that as soon as he had something from HE he would make sure it was circulated particularly to GW, RL, CL and SW.

SW wanted to add her name to the A66 improvement group she hadn't done this previously as she lives in South Cumbria and the A66 is in North Cumbria but now felt there could be some benefits for access to geological sites. CB thanked those who had offered their time.

Action: CE to be made aware that SW and GW would like to join the A66 improvement group

6.3 Lake District National Park Partnership – CB told members that the Partnership was still doing their review and that a meeting was set up for February about Park for Everyone and the Sustainable Transport sub group paper.

EM added that the meeting would be on the morning of 11th February and it would be a chance to get the views of all the LAF and that a few other relevant people would be invited along too particularly on the Park for Everyone theme but also there would be updates on the other key challenges. She thanked CB regarding the amount of work done on the sustainable transport group.

CB asked JR to contact MD to make sure he could attend the meeting on the 11th as he had been doing work with Place Innovations about attracting groups to the Lakes who don't normally come here.

RL asked if there was anything he could have an input on and EM said if he joined the meeting on the 11th they would be interested for his input regarding disability access.

Action: JR to contact MD regarding meeting on 11th February

6.4 Potential Research Possibilities

BM told the group that there was progress and good news more for the access forum than himself professionally. He said that in the present circumstances opportunities had been quite slim but this week he has discovered there is a project by a Professor at Oxford Brookes and a lecturer at Newcastle and they have been given a million pounds worth of funding to look at access to the countryside and the history of access to the countryside and also the future of access to the countryside. So he has drafted an email to the people organizing this project, as long as the members approve, to see if they would like to get involved as I think they are looking at exactly the same things that we proposed we would look at through a Phd student except this is a professor and a senior lecturer. I think they'd be a great contact and be very keen to hear everyone's collective experience and knowledge.

AN said he would be really interested in this and that a couple of groups he is involved with would be helpful to this.

BM then said that the project was called "In all our Footsteps Project" and that press releases were going out.

CB then asked if everyone was happy for BM to progress with a letter on behalf of the LAF. Everyone agreed.

CE rejoined the meeting.

ACTION BM

7. **SWOT Analysis**

AN said that after the last meeting he told everyone about the facebook page which was on hold, the page was called Cumbria & Lake District LAF and that the name is available to use as we see fit and one of the suggestions last time was that we took the SWOT analysis and add that onto the page. He also suggested putting LAF successes on there. He said that he had had some good discussions with CB about the way the SWOT analysis is used and what the group want to do with it next.

CB then said that a lot of work had gone into SWOT and that we need to decide what we are going to do with it and how it may shape our work programme.

AN said that he had seen other SWOT analysis used to show what successes had been achieved as well as to point out where our future efforts may go. So what are the next steps for the SWOT analysis and what does everyone see its use being?

DG felt it had been useful from an authority point of view as some of the issues raised about communication with the authority have already been actioned so they've used it as a tool and found it very useful.

GW said that the analysis gave our strengths and AN answered that it did on a number of different topics which had been chosen but he couldn't find anything in the analysis that he thought the public would look at and think that's great because although it's of interest to us as a group it's not necessarily of interest to the public and that they could understand what we do and what we've done for them.

GW said that was possibly a weakness that should be added to the SWOT analysis.

AN then asked if the group saw the SWOT analysis as being complete or were there next steps going forward.

CB felt there were lots of good things the group did for example the work by GW and the sustainable transport group. She also said that she and AN had had discussions about whether the group need to be more strategic in the advice given and picking up on strategic points. We identified we needed a secretary and now have JR and BM has taken his work forward but we now all have to look what have we done in the last year and question are we doing enough.

DG agreed and said that from an authority point of view they had had a go at doing an annual report and this was like a rolling annual report and for example you could use the facebook page as an advertisement for the LAF so like minded people can see what we're doing and might say they want to get involved.

SW said that she had been walking on the coast and noticed some new gates had gone in and she felt that pictures of improvements to rights of way would be good to go on the facebook page.

AN then asked if anyone had any succinct examples of successes or pictures to send them to him and he would see if he could make them look right to go on the page. He also felt that it would be best to run the page as outward facing so only messages would be received direct so the comments bit would be kept to a minimum.

CE felt this was a wise suggestion.

DG said he could send the annual report to see if there was anything on that which could go on.

AN also asked GW if he had anything and if SP had any photographs that might be useful.

Action: DG to send annual report to AN. All to send articles/information of interest to AN as it arose

8. Keswick to Threlkeld Route

CB said that she had wanted this on the agenda even though it had been discussed in the past with regard to the surfacing and tarmac. Now that the path was open she wanted to discuss access for horses. The route cost over £8 million for people to use and wasn't just about re-opening a path washed away in Storm Desmond but to get vulnerable users such as horse riders off the A66. There have been four horses killed in the last six weeks, one of which was in Cumbria near Clifton so it seems strange that we have a route owned by the National Park that horses currently aren't allowed on. CB then said she had had a discussion with the National Park to see if that could be rectified and they had offered to re-look at the issue in a few months. The main reason she was given that horses can't go on at the moment was health & safety as some of the bridge parapets are not to current guidelines and there was concern that the two tunnels didn't have enough height. She had asked the National Park if she could have a copy of their risk assessment

but there doesn't seem to be one that she could look at. However, one of the members from Cumbria Bridleways Society has walked the route and documented every bridge and tunnel and where the parapets don't make the guidelines it is by a matter of centimetres and the tunnel heights were ok. CB would like CALJLAF to write to the National Park and ask them to consider horse access as a priority.

RB agreed with everything CB had said and didn't understand why a particular user group had been left out. CB said the consultations had been carried out differently in this instance and the NPA say riders did not respond but riders say they did. It isn't possible to go back over that but lessons for future consultations and projects should be noted for the future.

JB said that as a user of the path he felt it would become very overcrowded with horses on there as well as pedestrians and cyclists, horses leave mess and would the tarmac be strong enough.

GW disagreed with JB and couldn't believe there would ever be so many horses on the route to make it overcrowded and regretted that it could be a factor.

CB replied that there are bridleways all over the Lake District rammed with cyclists and walkers and that multi user paths exist all over the country without issue.

EM understood where CB was coming from but said that JB as a local voice was right and that the path was extremely busy and overcrowding was causing some tension especially with social distancing and she felt that at the current time if horses were allowed the situation would become much worse and there would be many complaints. If something was put out to consultation now there would be concerns about it but if we waited until the autumn and see how things have developed there would be a much better chance that horses would be allowed.

CB replied that this was the same everywhere and should that amount of money have been spent on a path that is permissive or should landowners have been encouraged to be putting that down as a definitive right of way?

EM said the amount of interest in this route was well out of proportion to any others. We have already said we will review it in the autumn so it's not that we're not listening we are definitely going to do that and it is in the work programme. CB quoted the example from the recent Orrest Head newsletter about the number of people using that path so K2T was not alone. CB had been told the review would be in the Spring. As landowners LDNPA did not need to consult on allowing horses they could make that decision.

RL stated that cyclists were worse than horses in his opinion and would have no objections to horses being allowed on the route.

AN said this was maybe a good way to highlight the opportunity to agree at a strategic level that if a new Keswick to Threlkeld project came in we would have an agreed stance on it so we would all be aware that we wanted to lobby for full access for all users, i.e. not being a permissive path, or if we didn't have them in place then an automatic discussion starter would be that unless there is good reason we would want to see all user groups represented.

CB asked if there were any more comments on this as she didn't feel we had an agreement and if people wanted to vote on it they could do so in the chat box.

AN then asked EM what the thinking was from the National Park Authority in not letting horses use the route and EM answered that horses never were allowed on the route before Storm Desmond but she wasn't involved in those decisions. There had been a LAF on site visit at the time but there wasn't a lot of requests for horses to use it but in hindsight that should have been considered.

DG then said that with the new DFT regulations that wouldn't happen now.

CB answered AN by saying that when these types of projects were running the National Park would go out to stakeholders but on this occasion there were drop in centres but they were very much focused around Keswick and from the questionnaires sent back the park said that no riders had asked to use the route where as there are some riders who filled it in and asked for it.

MM as a local user of the track I feel the user levels have been incredible and going back to the concept of multi user I think you would not have finished it in tarmac if horses were going to use it as it's the most unsympathetic surface for horses and the width is not very multi user friendly. CB pointed out that with a lack of off road riding horse riders had no choice but to use roads that are all tarmaced so the surface wasn't an issue for riders.

Chat box vote: For: RL, CL, SW, BM

9. New User Impact

CB asked if anyone had any questions or comments on the report from EM that had been sent out prior to the meeting.

SW felt it was very useful and gave a good summary of 2020 and felt that most of the ideas were quite good i.e. to reduce car dependency but is it realistic given there aren't the staff.

CB said there had been a lot of work to deal with the huge influx of people and how they might deal with car parking etc. so a lot of the report was based on what had happened and what had worked well.

EM noted comments.

SW was concerned by the Macmillan Mighty Hike leaflet which wanted to run round Ullswater and felt this was a pity for the route which would be trashed. Do we want to encourage events like this?

GW also picked up on the Macmillan leaflet which invited people to "take on the Lake District" as if it was some sort of competition venue and the message should be just the opposite. It's something we live with and should cosset. With regard to the new user impact, he welcomed the fact that the report took on board that the Lake District is for everyone and we should find ways of accommodating everybody in the best way we can accepting that use illustrates a need and that we don't make judgmental decisions.

RB wanted to pick up on the points made by GW and SW regarding events – when I came into the BMC in September 2019 I was asked to do something about this and I think the best way we can deal with these kind of events is actually working with these groups to educate them on the mess that they leave. One of the things we produce is the Green Guide to Mountains and what came out of that was that our charity is the charity picking up your charities mess and I think that is what we need to get across to the likes of Macmillan or anyone who wants to put on an event like this. Unfortunately they are going to be there and I guess it is our responsibility to make them aware of the damage they cause and to work with them to make better events. Runners are becoming a lot more conscious of the environment they use and we have a link to a guide on “No more barbeques” which I can send round.

CB said that in the past the Lake District LAF had been involved in an Event Management Group but here were so many events to advise on it was onerous for the people who were dealing with the applications.

DG wanted to underline this point and that there were a vast quantity of events coming through and that a lot of the groups used the word “race” and are amazed when they are told there is no right to race on public rights of way and it is just an endurance event that they are allowed to have. They generally are asked to have a staggered start to lessen the impact which helps the organisers as they don’t get queues at gates and stiles but he felt there should be some sort of code of conduct which you can hand out and say this is what we are expecting if you are coming into this area. The only one on board at the moment is the Spine Race and they race along the Pennine Way, we do an ecological assessment of the route beforehand and when they’ve gone if there is anything to mend they pay and work with us to make that race better the following year.

EM said that DG had put it very well and that groups were meant to go through the Cumbria County Council Coordinator but there was a huge difference, some gave donations to repair things some didn’t but this was part of the Visitor Management Plan. She also wanted to pick up on points raised about capacity to deliver the plan but felt she needed to stress this wasn’t the National Parks plan this was something agreed with a lot of public bodies, Cumbria County Council, District Council, Cumbria LEP, National Trust – there are a lot of people involved in this but the good thing is the multi-agency work that’s been going on and that people are aware of the need to work together more than ever.

CB thanked EM and wanted to point out that it’s the Partnerships approach to the issue not just the Parks approach. She felt what RB had said was good and going forward as an agenda item it would be good to look at the Code of Conduct and have more discussion around that, if we could talk about that before the next meeting.

GW said that everyone had been sent a consultation over the revision of the Countryside Code which will try to more fully address some of the issues we’ve been talking about. I responded and a lot of the things said I included in my response, I hope others did as well and that DEFRA picks up on that.

Action: CB to talk to RB regarding Code of Conduct before next meeting

10. LAF Facebook Page

This had already been discussed earlier.

CE asked that if anyone had anything to promote the group as the LAF to send it to AN

11. Report on Shared Access Workshop

CB explained this was a workshop that DG organized a few weeks ago about the new DFT standards on user paths which the key word in that seemed to be segregation.

DG felt the workshop delivered by Mark Brierley was very useful and the basic theme of it was that the standard of segregation that the DFT was looking for that was going to attract Government funding they would now want that level of segregation which is very useful for us because we can then see what we can get in there simply with a tape measure, so there is a standard to work to which is really useful.

CB said that EM had also made the point that if we haven't got enough room then we can't go ahead with things in the Park. I had a look to see if I could find those guidelines but I couldn't find a version that wasn't newer than 2012 so maybe DG could find that for her.

SW also felt the session had been very helpful and had made notes saying that pedestrians needed segregated from cyclists, but the Government was thinking entirely of London and there was no real consideration of rural areas such as Cumbria where our roads haven't got the space for people to walk, cycle or ride. I don't know what we do about that?

CB told the group that EM had put in the chat box how to find the guidelines - google LTN1/20 and that maybe we should come back to this at the next meeting.

12. News from National & Regional Access Bodies

CB said we needed input from CE for that and he had unfortunately left the meeting due to technical difficulties.

13. Coastal Access

DG had sent in his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting but added that the most recent thing was that they had been asked to get all the work they had been asked to do together so a grant could be put in for next year, so expecting some RDP European Funding next year for the work that is still out there.

Unfortunately there isn't that much work because there are still two enquiries taking place at the moment with regard to the line back from the Secretary of State for the sections through Morecambe Bay and the Solway Bay area. So he hasn't heard anything more from them so just looking at doing another short stretch up from Silecroft to Fox Field. A little bit of work on stretch five to see if they can answer some of the objections that have been put in down there. Putting all the grant bids together for the end of the year and hopefully late spring stretch two should be open..

14. Update from Authorities

CB asked if anyone had any questions or comments regarding the report sent earlier by DG – no one did.

DG added that the flood recovery work will be on for a while longer even though they have the money for repairs but wanted to wait and see if there were any more floods over the winter. So late February and through March they would have a big push to get them in and do that work. There is some work they are trying to do at the moment which keeps vanishing under water on the Hadrians Wall Trail just to the east of Carlisle. They've also been inundated with an increased number of enquiries about slightly wobbly stiles, slippery bridges and muddy paths. The other thing we're involved with is the Kendal improvements which is coming along apace and the County Council are trying to tie all the agencies together, so UU changing the outfall on the sewerage works, the EA, the LCWhip and the SLDC. We're creating a new bridleway and there's a bridleway diversion going in at Cocklakes where the gypsum mines are which involves work with our Highways colleagues as we're putting in some new highway crossings.

CB then asked if anyone had any questions or comments regarding the report sent in by EM – no one did.

EM did want to ask that under the projects being undertaken and the fix the fells work that maybe the project manager for that work could come along to the next meeting and explain in more detail.

CB did say that normally once a year Richard Fox did come along and update the group so that would be ideal.

SW mentioned that there had been a temporary car park at Pooley Bridge while the new bridge was being built and on Christmas day the car park was still open so she wanted to ask EM in light of the Visitor Management Plan would that car park be kept open as it was a very useful facility.

EM said this was a live issue at the moment and that planning consent was that the car park should be taken away and it restored to a green field site on completion of the works, but there are ongoing discussions about that and that was all she knew at the moment.

CB added that while we were on with car parks she mentioned that a few meetings ago the group had discussed the car park at Ullock which at the time didn't have a planning application but she thought there was an application in now for that car park, and at the time members had said they would re-visit that issue when the planning application was made so maybe this is an appropriate time to bring this up. She asked the group if anyone had anything to add and if we wanted to make any representation to the planners.

JB told everyone that he lives next to the site and that last week there was a special meeting called by Portinscale people about the car park regarding the pros and cons. It was decided that it wouldn't be discussed by the parish council until the application had been considered by the National Park Authority. He felt it would be a good thing and that the arguments against it by certain people were that it would increase the amount of traffic coming through Portinscale.

MM felt there should be a longer term solution, thinking along the lines of some car parking outside the village closer to the A66. He also said that most of us were in agreement with this car park but only on a short term basis and also without the infrastructure that they were proposing as well, with toilets and other such facilities.

JB seconded the comments made by MM regarding the temporary nature of the car park.

AN felt there needed to be wider thinking for the whole of Borrowdale.

CB asked if the group wanted to make a comment as a LAF.

AN said we should maybe open up the debate with the right authorities on the wider issue of car parking and that might be a better way of doing it.

CB said we could maybe do this through the new user impact report.

JB added that he had already made his comments directly to the National Park Authority about the application.

MM asked EM if there was any news on what was happening with the footpath in the Newlands Valley. His other question was regarding the Keswick to Threlkeld route regarding removal of trees and shrubs at the Keswick end of the track opening up a lot of properties so are there any plans to replant that embankment?

EM replied that the Newlands footpath because it's an erosion issue would have to be worked closely with the landowner and making it complicated it is the same landowner that has put in an application for Ullock Moss so as we are also the planning authority, now is not the right time to be having negotiations with him about that as it could be seen as though the two were linked. Depending on the outcome they would hopefully be working with him to resolve the issue. With regard to the trees and shrubs she agreed with MM that it does look very bare. There are some plans to put more in and also most of the trees were coppiced rather than felled, so they will grow back and this should be much better in a year or two.

15. Members News

MM had circulated his report prior to the meeting and had nothing further to add.

GW replied that he was surprised that the reports sent in by MM, SP and SW about responses to public path orders had not been included on the agenda. One of the responses sent in by MM some time ago about Nenthead at Alston which was for a path extinguishment, the LAF's response was objecting to the extinguishment and this order was considered at a recent meeting of the County Council Development & Control Committee and I virtually sat in on that meeting. I just want to read what I had written:

“CCC's Development Control & Regulation committee on 19 January agreed that an order be made to extinguish an historic path which had been shown on maps since at least the early 1800s and had clearly been used before then by miners, and as a consequence of which in the 1950s was claimed by the parish for inclusion on the county's definitive map of PRow.

The decision was contrary to the LAF's advice and in my view the LAF's advice was misrepresented in the CCC officer's report presented to the committee which recommended extinguishment.

In my view the committee decision was bizarre in that the application for extinguishment as made by the landowner on the basis that the footpath threatened the safety and security of an area which is in the process of being developed as a camp site. The officer's report failed to advise the committee that the planning application for the camp site had not been determined and consequently the consent for the site may not be granted. Despite the none determination of the planning application being drawn to the committee's attention via public representation at the meeting the committee approved the extinguishment.

Much was made by some committee members that neither the Alston parish council nor the local council member had objected to the proposal. But neither had they expressed supported it. Perhaps the proposal was never even considered by those interests.

CCC's duty is to protect and promote the right of the public to use public rights of way. This decision appears to have done almost the opposite of that".

I think this should be a concern to the LAF that there advice was misrepresented and that we have a County Council committee that is in the business of extinguishing public rights of way. I regret that NC isn't here as he was one of the Councillors that actually voted against the extinguishment.

DG replied that it was a lead mining area and there is a footpath running along the side of the same field, there's a footpath running along the top of the field and the highway runs along the bottom of the field so it's much easier to use the ones that remain rather than the one that's been extinguished.

GW said that it was certainly seen by committee members as a practical solution but in my view it is not a lawful solution as you could make that excuse for many locations and just because there are alternatives isn't a reason for extinguishing footpaths. Where does that stop?

CE said he had been contacted to see if his letter could be made public which he agreed to but hadn't heard anything further.

SW said that a lot of these issues are reflected in the comments she has made – she made one visit to a footpath diversion that was in fact an extinguishment of a footpath south of Ulverston. It looked sensible on the map, which she circulated to everybody, but when she went to have a look at it, it was obviously one of these footpaths on a heritage site along a large hedgerow with flowers underneath, it was well walked and it linked two roads and the plan being put forward is that this will be extinguished and will become the spine road of a new suburban housing estate. So this heritage feature will disappear. It was argued that the spine road was a better option even though it would come out onto a very busy road. It was said there would be provision for a walkway but that's not on the housing plan and there is no room on the road itself. The LAF advice was that we did not support this extinguishment. There have also been a number of orders made and there was one at Scalthwaiterigg better known as Mealbank south of Kendal which we

managed to visit and again the LAF didn't support the diversion route that was being proposed because the diversion route was a vendetta against the owner of the house that the footpath went through and there was an acceptable diversion that was just a bit longer. But the order approved the diversion we didn't approve. So I think we have a couple of examples of where our advice is not being taken.

MM wanted to reiterate the points made by both GW and SW over the lack of attention to the representations we are making, in the particular case that GW was referring to although DG made the point there were existing alternatives to this potential closure of the path, one was a road that attracts high speed traffic with no footpath and the alternative to that was a very heavily eroded track which was far from being convenient to use.

CB suggested that as several points had been raised that maybe we should look at some training around our responses and to be able to contact the authorities and have a discussion on the advice we are giving and whether we are making the points in the right way.

DG said this was particularly important with the point that SW had raised regarding the path vanishing as this was a Town & Country Planning Act order not a Highways order which have different tests to pass so basically they needed to extinguish the path for buildings to go up and that's what the T&CPA have to abide to.

Action: To take forward this last point regarding training

SW wanted to support what CB had said regarding wider strategies and the issues of housing development and the extinguishment of footpaths is a general issue on which we could have a discussion. There was a further point I raised via email concerning footpaths being lost to leaky dams and re-wilding rivers but I've had assurance that those will lead to improvements to the public path network.

RL said he had managed to get contact with the North Pennines Fell Foot Project and he had managed to get out in November and do a review of the track around Castle Carrock reservoir and he would like to get more involved with the North Pennines.

JB mentioned about research about footpaths and cycleways around Derwentwater and that hopefully improvements would be made in all of those areas.

AN wanted to add onto what JB had said and speaking mainly to EM the lockdown has stopped us getting together and talking about routes round Derwentwater or Bassenthwaite but hopefully we will be able to get together and have a site visit when lockdown is lifted.

BM said he had emailed the footsteps project and would let the group know when they get back to him.

RB wanted to place on record his thanks to Richard Fox for the Fix the Fells, Richard came to our conference in 2019 and I think I learned more from him about land erosion and maintaining paths etc in five minutes than I ever did at school or anywhere else. I was on the Support England call this week where they launched a new strategy and I did wonder about raising this but one of their five big issues is

around the environment and maximizing green spaces for walking and cycling so it may start to come across our desk in that sort of sense.

KM had nothing to add.

SP hadn't much to add only that footpath diversion can sometimes be a really good thing – GW and I had a look at one in Orton parish where we discovered the original footpath went over a little concrete bridge straight into a very old looking stone wall and apparently through some buildings, the National Park had put in a diversion which means that for the first time ever this footpath will actually be walkable.

HW mentioned that there was an awful lot happening in Barrow regarding walking and cycling and they have a Walking & Cycling Plan which has a lot of money to do it and they are the first scheme in Cumbria under the new guidelines. It's the Active Travel Fund Scheme trans 2 and also the Town Deal and they're combining different pots of money to make a joined up project. They're working very hard to get better walking and cycling facilities for people.

CB felt this would be a good point to keep updating the group on.

TH agreed with comments that it had been a very useful meeting and she was looking forward to meeting people face to face in the near future and get out on site visits and to extend the invitation to the Partnership Plan meeting on 11th February as she felt it was an important opportunity to express views.

DG said that CE had emailed and asked for EM to set up the next meeting on Zoom.

EM said she would do that.

RL asked for the link to the future meeting to be made more clear.

CB suggested when we get the meeting link for the date and time to be typed into the email as well to make it clearer.

16. Dates of Future Meeting

Dates suggested were 27th/28th/29th April

CB suggested members send their availability to JR and closed the meeting.