

## CALLAF meeting Carlisle July 2018 - Rural Payments Agency (RPA) Flood Site Visits - Informal Report

After a formal meeting of the Cumbria and Lakes Local Access Forum in Carlisle Civic Centre in the morning, David Gibson and Chris Graham of CCC led LAF members on a visit to assess the flood remediation measures still taking place after the huge damage to paths which were washed out near the River Eden by Storm Desmond in December 2015. The works have been 100% funded from the RPA Cumbria Countryside Access Fund.



Under the Eden Bridge, at a site visited by the LAF in April 2015, on the path which links the cricket ground with Rickerby Park, a concrete surface has been laid, designed to allow flood water to flow across without damaging the path. Members agreed that hard top paths were a suitable solution in an urban area.



In Bitts Park, where sections of the right of way on the outer side of a bend in the River Eden were washed out, three lines of willow planting have successfully stabilised the river bank. Members approved this soft engineering approach for its natural look.





The Sheepmount leisure centre area was badly flooded by the rivers Caldew and Eden, with much damage to buildings as well as rights of way, which here is the Hadrian's Wall Path, a National Trail. This route, which was completely washed out, was in the process of being resurfaced at the time of the visit. The large tonnage of stone needed for the base layer had proved difficult to transport through a popular park and over bridges with weight limits. A surface of quarry dust, which was being firmed in on the visit, will provide a flood resistant surface for the future.



Continuing under the railway bridge over the Eden to the area being marketed as the *Carlisle Gateway*, the path has been surfaced and tree branches raised to make better sight lines. This path has proved very popular with both visitors and local people.



The end result of these improvements looks so natural that it is sometimes difficult to realise how much work has gone into their achievement. Members thanked David and Chris for showing the on-going work to improve access along paths near the rivers in Carlisle.