

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
Public Rights of Way Subgroup Minutes

Date: Monday 7 January 2019 **Time:** 2pm - 4pm

Venue: County Hall

Present	
Neil Cliff (NC)	U3A
Vic Cocker (VC)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ken Hawkins (KH)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Jean Stratford (JS)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Officers in attendance	
Andy Hutcheson (AH)	
Sarah Abercrombie (SA)	
Michelle Sergeant (MSg)	
Su Waldron (SW)	
1	<p>Introductions and apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies from Ian Mitchell; Martin Sullivan; Matt Worden; Russell Wilson; Ann Melhuish.</p> <p>The group introduced themselves to MSg. MSg outlined her remit as Green Infrastructure Officer (Access) which involves scrutinising planning applications for access issues to ensure that these are tackled through the planning process. There are 3 officers who have this role: MSg; Gemma Harrison and Sarah Leece. AH said that in due course it would be possible to provide statistics for the group on numbers of applications commented on, and perhaps the extent to which the comments were implemented.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the meeting on 17 September 2018</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a correct record.</p>
3	<p>Matters arising from the minutes, not otherwise on the agenda</p> <p>3.1 3.1 NAIP: it was noted that the current timetable is for approval by NLAF on 30 January, by EDT on 8 March, and for publication thereafter.</p> <p>3.2 4.1 Definitive Map Modification Orders: it was reported that the NLAF had noted 'with disappointment' that the Council had declined to review its default neutral stance on Definitive Map Modification Orders.</p> <p>3.3 4.2 Parish Council powers of enforcement: it was noted that Matt Worden had circulated a document listing Parish Council powers on 8 October 2018.</p> <p>3.4 5.1 Norfolk Trails Newsletter: it was noted that this had been circulated by Su Waldron on 8 October 2018. The Marriott's Way e-newsletter had also been circulated to the group as a "one-off", with members invited to subscribe if they wished.</p> <p>3.5 5.1 Volunteer Co-ordinator role and support for the parish seminars: SA/SW confirmed that Pathmakers was still taking forward the bid to the Resilient Heritage Fund of the Heritage Lottery Fund and that the intention remained that the parish seminars could be delivered through the project.</p>
4	<p>LAF Minutes of the meeting on 24 October 2018. The minutes had been circulated.</p>

4.1 12 Economic Benefit of Norfolk Trails.

KH asked how the data could be used to benefit PROW in Norfolk. AH suggested that the NLAF could request a figure showing the current level of investment made by NCC on PROW and how this compares with similar authorities (benchmarking).

KH noted that the PROW budget was comparatively small, but that the benefits accrued to other budgets, suggesting a need to demonstrate the value and benefits of PROW to those other budget holders, to see if some additional funding could be drawn in to the PROW and Trails budgets.

VC was concerned that any assessment didn't lead to a 'Beeching analysis' of the network. Complexity and locality of the PROW network are key attributes.

NC asked about payback schemes. AH / SA said this is where visitors pay a small extra charge when using local services for example, which goes toward Norfolk Trails / the National Trail upkeep in Norfolk.

ACTION: a comment would be made to the NLAF that the PROW subgroup welcomes the report on Economic Benefits of Norfolk Trails, and requests that the NLAF supports and explores use of the information.

4.2 15 Major Infrastructure Projects and access (NLAF considered Norfolk Vanguard, Hornsea Project Three, A47 works, Great Yarmouth 3rd river crossing, Norwich Western Link and Long Stratton Bypass).

An updated list of projects had been circulated to the group (and would go to the next NLAF meeting).

VC had looked through all the projects on the lists and felt that the NLAF should be involved with more detail concerning access rights associated with each of the major projects so it could fulfil its statutory function and prepare advice for NCC. KH said that the NLAF has an agreed protocol for dealing with issues that arise between meetings so timing (of consultations) should not be an impediment. However, a mechanism was needed to ensure that the NLAF could make timely comments on projects.

In the discussion, AH noted that Highways England (HE) had established a budget to which NCC could bid for cycling and walking improvement projects that were in proximity of the HE network.

ACTION: NLAF to request appropriate levels of detail from NCC Environment Team on projects involving access to allow the NLAF to comment where appropriate. NCC to advise how this could be arranged (to ensure the NLAF were consulted on appropriate schemes and not overloaded).

4.3 6.1 Norfolk: A World Class Environment

NC asked for more information on the event held on 12th December 2018. AH said that key stakeholders were present at the event (such as NWT,

Broads Authority, NCC etc) and the driver had come from the Rural Strategy for Norfolk, recognising that one of Norfolk's key assets is its natural environment.

AH said that NCC Environment Team were progressing the idea of a Norfolk 25 year plan for the environment (mirroring the national plan), and were also working with Suffolk. VC asked if the NLAF could be involved as a partner and the answer was 'yes'.

A report will be made to the NLAF (30th January meeting) by Pat Holtom who had attended the event.

ACTION: add to the report for the NLAF on the World Class Environment event recommendation that the NLAF is involved in developing the 25 year plan for the environment with NCC Environment Team.

ACTION: AH to put the NLAF onto the mailing list for updates on developing the 25 year environment plan for Norfolk.

5 Partnership and Community Working

5.1 Volunteer Co-ordinator role

Covered earlier under 3.5

5.2 Vision and ideas group

KH asked AH for an update on developing a vision to value the PROW network (see last meeting – 17th September 2018 point 5.2).

AH said that the Marriott's Way HLF project was engaging the local community and that other projects such as the EU funded 'BIDREX' project and the Recycling the Railways project (now renamed as the Greenways project - see 6.9 of these minutes) would also help.

However, AH felt that the NLAF should set up their own working group to explore how the value to Norfolk of the PROW network could be recognised and developed.

ACTION: NLAF to be requested to set up a Vision and Ideas working group.

5.3 Parish Council seminars

KH suggested that the first of these should take place in June 2019 (to allow time for the NAIP to be fully available) and requested SW/SA to make arrangements (find date, book venue etc.) at The Atrium in North Walsham.

5.4 To consider any issues from represented organisations (CPRE, OSS, The Ramblers, U3A).

NC requested further information on Pockthorpe Lane: why has the part of the route not under dispute been removed from the definitive map (what was the process by which it had been removed)? SW said she would ask Legal Orders and Registers Team for advice.

ACTION: SW to contact Legal Orders and Registers re Pockthorpe Lane

6 Countryside Access arrangements

6.1 General update

The meeting briefly reviewed the report which had been prepared by MW and RW's team. KH asked for an update on the bridge closure on the Marriott's Way. AH said that a temporary fix was being applied and the long-term repair would go out to tender (framework contractor).

6.2 Online reporting system

It was reported that a demonstration of the new Power BI report may be given at the NLAF.

KH said that the online reporting system had undergone great improvement and was much more user friendly than hitherto and felt it was worthy of formal 'launch' with a press release.

ACTION: SW to ask Maria Thurlow/MW whether the reporting system could be formally launched with a media release

6.3 Earsham footbridge

AH said that options were still under consideration. Removal of the collapsed bridge would be required regardless.

6.4 Transport Asset Management Plan: It was noted that a response to the requests for amendments to the TAMP was awaited.

ACTION: MW to provide response to the group/NLAF

6.5 England Coast Path: It was noted that Natural England had accepted an invitation to attend the next NLAF meeting to report on progress with the comments made on the Weybourne to Hunstanton section. It was thought that this would also provide opportunity to receive an update about the impact of the recent ruling at the Court of Justice of the European Union in the matter of People Over Wind, requiring NE to take its proposals through a further assessment process, adding to the time needed to get approval.

6.6 National Highways and Transport Network Survey

Deferred as MW was absent

ACTION: MW to provide update or defer to next PROW meeting

6.7 Cley FP4

ACTION: MW to provide update or defer to next PROW meeting

6.8 Beachamwell issues

ACTION: MW to provide update or defer to next PROW meeting

6.9 Any other issues

Recycling the railways (Greenways)

AH gave an update on the Recycling the Railways project using information from a report to the EDT committee in November

<http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1408/Committee/18/Default.aspx> (see minutes [here](#))

The meeting looked at the maps showing the opportunities (including new circular loops) in the feasibility studies: Weavers' Way (Aylsham to Stalham; King's Lynn to Fakenham; King's Lynn to Hunstanton).

VC thought it would be good to add in areas where people using the new routes (along disused railway lines) could see the view to add value to their experience. AH said it was the intention to factor this in to allow users to connect with their locality.

VC said how difficult it is to get out of Fakenham for a walk and AH assured him this was being looked at carefully.

JS said she had walked the permissive access along the disused line between Fakenham to Wells.

AH said the project was looking at re-instating the line between Fakenham and Walsingham although not much of the route is in public ownership.

VC said the new ideas should integrate with public transport well.

KH said there had been a recent documentary series 'Walking Britain's lost railways' on Channel 5 and wondered if the programme could be encouraged to film in Norfolk if it planned a second series?

7 Claims for lost paths ('2026')

A recent Guardian article was noted -

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/04/memory-lanes-the-ramblers-trying-to-save-10000-lost-footpaths> - which had prompted more local interest.

KH had requested a list of outstanding DMMO applications and whether NCC was adopting any procedure to prioritise them. Legal Orders and Registers team had responded as follows:

"All our current registered applications to modify the definitive map and statement of public rights of way can be [viewed on our website](#) and includes information on receipt and registration as well as what stage the application is in (such whether we have decided to make an Order or not).

We deal with applications in order of receipt, however, if a case is more complex or controversial for various possible reasons it may not be resolved as quickly as a more simple case received afterwards as the complex case will often take longer to complete.

We still operate a policy where we may prioritise a case if it is threatened by developers but we have rarely needed to do so. We have discussed the possibility of prioritising cases that include user evidence if we are inundated with applications as a result of the 2026 deadline. We would do this as it is not best to have user evidence cases waiting for too long a time as valuable witnesses could move away from the area while the application is waiting. As things stand though we have not reached a stage where we are having to do this."

8	Reports from NCC Officers There was no other updating information of relevance to the sub group.
9	Any other business - none
10	Dates of next meetings 1400 on Mondays 11 March, 24 June and 23 September 2019.