

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Date: 20 January 2021
Time: 10.30am
Venue: Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)

Please use this link to view the live meeting online: https://youtu.be/Vx67NgYGO_4

Members of the Panel and other attendees will be sent a separate link to join the meeting.

Membership:

Mr Martin Sullivan (Chairman)
Mr Ken Hawkins (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Cycling and Walking Champion)

Mr Chris Allhusen
Mr Andy Brazil
Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton
Mr Vic Cocker
Mrs Elizabeth Meath Baker
Mr Geoff Doggett
Miss Bethan Edmunds
Mr Mike Edwards
Mrs Brigid Fairman

Mr Simon Fowler
Mrs Donna Gibling
Mr David Hissey
Mrs Suzanne Longe
Cllr Beverley Spratt
Miss Louise Rout
Mr Paul Rudkin

**For further details and general enquiries about this Agenda please contact the
Committee Officer:**

Nicola Ledain on 01603 223053 or email committees@norfolk.gov.uk

Under the Council's protocol on the use of media equipment at meetings held in public, this meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. Anyone who wishes to do so must inform the Chairman and ensure that it is done in a manner clearly visible to anyone present. The wishes of any individual not to be recorded or filmed must be appropriately respected.

A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2 Chairman's Announcements

3 Minutes

Page 5

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2020

4 Members to Declare any Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

5 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency

6 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Friday 2 October 2020**. For guidance on submitting a public question, view

the Constitution at www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetingsdecisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-aquestion-to-a-committee

7 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm on Friday 15 January 2021**.

8 Feedback from events attended by NLAf members

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Tom McCabe
Head of Paid Services
County Hall
Martineua Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 12 January 2021



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Norfolk Local Access Forum
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 07 October 2020
at 10.30am via Microsoft Teams

Member:

Martin Sullivan - Chairman
Chris Allhusen
Andy Brazil
Elizabeth Meath Baker
Mike Edwards
Simon Fowler
Ken Hawkins – Vice-Chairman
David Hissey

Representing:

Motorised Vehicles / Pathmakers
Land Ownership
Voluntary sector
Rural / local business / economy
Land Ownership
Walking / Pathmakers
Walking
Cycling

Officers Present:

Sarah Abercrombie	Green Infrastructure Team Leader (Projects)
Mike Auger	Projects Manager.
Su Waldron	Project Officer (Environment Team)
Jason Moore	Area Manager (West)
John Jones	Head of Environment
Nicola Ledain	Committee Services Officer, Strategy and Governance Department, NCC

Broads Authority

Lewis Treloar
Ella Meecham

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Cllr Danny Douglas, Donna Gibling, Suzanne Longe, Bethan Edmunds, Louise Rout and Paul Rudkin.
Technical difficulties meant that Brigid Fairman and Vic Cocker were unable to attend.

2. Election of Chair

- 2.1 Martin Sullivan was duly elected for the ensuing year.

3. Election of vice-Chair

- 3.1 Ken Hawkins was duly elected for the ensuing year.

4. Chairman's Announcements

- 4.1 The Chairman reported that Geoff Doggett had tendered his resignation from the NLAF. Members wished him well and thanked him for all his hard work and contribution to the NLAF.

- 4.2** A constitutional review was underway for the NLAF and this would be discussed at the January meeting.
- 4.3** A table of consultations received and responded to by the NLAF available to view on the NLAF SharePoint site https://norfolkcounty.sharepoint.com/sites/Norfolk_Local_Access_Forum to which all NLAF members have access.
- 5. Minutes of the last meeting**
- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2020 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
- 6. Declarations of Interest**
- 6.1 There were no interests declared.
- 7. Urgent Business**
- 7.1 There was no urgent business.
- 8. Public Question Time**
- 8.1 No public questions were received.
- 9. Local member Issues / Questions**
- 9.1 There were no member questions received.
- 10. Feedback from Events**
- 10.1 Martin Sullivan and Ken Hawkins had attended 2 meetings of the Broads Local Access Forum held virtually.
- 10.2 Martin Sullivan and Ken Hawkins had attended a Regional LAF meeting in July and contributed to discussions on access elements of the Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) presented by Natural England, and the review of “at grade” crossings being conducted by Highways England.
- 11. NLAF Subgroups’ report (Permissive Access; PROW; NAIP; Vision and Ideas; Joint Communications)**
- 11.1 The NLAF received two annexed reports (11) (PROW subgroup and NAIP subgroup) which set out the latest discussions and recommendations of the sub-groups of the NLAF.
- 11.2 The PROW subgroup had continued to meet virtually throughout COVID lockdown with meetings held on June 15th and September 7th (a meeting on 14th March was held in person).

- 11.3 The NAIP subgroup had also met twice virtually during COVID lockdown, with a meeting on September 10th (a meeting on 14th March was held in person).
- 11.4 The Vision and Ideas group had met virtually on 20th July 2020 (a meeting on February 18th was held in person)
- 11.5 The Parish Paths Seminars and report were discussed. The NLAF AGREED that actions of most help to Parish Councils and volunteers (and hence to the access network) identified by the seminars, were
- for parishes to join forces with a neighbouring parish to tackle PRow issues;
 - incentivise use of local paths by the younger generation;
 - provide information about PRow and suitability for different users;
 - appoint a footpath warden..
- 11.6 The NLAF discussed if there was any statistics about how many footpath wardens currently existed in parishes. Although there might be some statistics, it was probable that they were out of date and would need refreshing
- 11.7 It was suggested that there could be some literature or training for footpath wardens or if there was some already in existence and that the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) might be a good way to engage with parishes on the subject.
- 11.8 The NAIP subgroup has received three monitoring reports from NCC reviewing progress with the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan.

The subgroup reported overall satisfaction with actions to improve access, but highlighted 4 specific recommendations for action by NCC, which were:

- More resource for handling Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)
- More resource for enforcement action to re-instate footpaths
- A mechanism to quantify PRow usage and hence estimate their contribution to Norfolk's economy and people's health
- Better public transport to connect PRow and Norfolk Trails to communities.

The group were keen to promote the existence of the NAIP document more widely and agreed to hold their next meeting with the Communications Group members, to work on a strategy to do this.

These recommendations were AGREED.

- 11.9 The NLAF RESOLVED to:
- Ask the Forestry Commission if it plans to take more land out of tree production in the Thetford Forest area.
 - Write to NCC expressing strong concerns about the lack of recognition of the amenity value of an area at Shouldham Warren identified for minerals extraction, and object to any proposed development in the area.
 - Approve and implement the revised protocol for commenting on Major Infrastructure Projects and planning applications (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects – NSIPs) which have potential implications for the access network.

- Request that a notice period of 6 months should be given of closures to rights of way affected by the laying of power cables (e.g. by Vattenfall), especially if there are more than minor diversions planned.
- Request that NCC safeguards or increases the very modest budget(s) allocated to the access network.

12. Pathmakers Projects

- 12.1 The NLAf received the annexed report (12) which updated the Forum on the activities of the Pathmakers:
- Sarah Abercrombie had become a Pathmakers trustee
 - HLF funding had been sought for an access project
- 12.2 The NLAf **AGREED**;
- To note the progress to date and to approve appointment of Sarah Abercrombie to the trustee board

13. Widening the Reach of the NLAf

- 13.1 The Forum received the annexed (13) report which summarised the identified actions in response to the recommendations of an earlier commissioned report; *Widening the reach of the Norfolk Local Access Forum*.
- 13.2 The recommendations from the report would be emailed to all NLAf members for any thoughts and a response was required by 7 November 2020.
- 13.3 The NLAf **AGREED** that a firm set of recommendations will be prepared and brought to the January 2021 NLAf.

14. 25 Year Plan for the Environment

- 14.1 The Forum received the annexed report (14) that provided an update to the joint working of Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council to drive development of a 25 Year Plan for the Environment for Norfolk and Suffolk. The Plan was a regional response to the Government's own 25 Year Environment Plan – 'A Green Future' which set out how the environment would be improved within a generation.
- 14.2 John Jones (Head of Environment at NCC) explained the work in more detail, which has included production of a Compendium of Natural Capital Assets by partners at UEA. This is an inventory of six categories of natural asset: land; soil; habitats and species; freshwater; coast and marine; and atmosphere; along with the current and future risks to these assets.
- 14.3 A Steering group of partners led by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils is now working on next steps which will see the Compendium used as a springboard for practical action across the region. Connecting people with the environment is a key way to improve health and wellbeing, reducing stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression and we are very fortunate to have accessible natural spaces in our counties, mostly free to enter, and our extensive public rights of way network
- 14.4 John Jones offered to talk further with NLAf members about the Plan if they wished.

- 14.5 The NLAF **NOTED** work in progress to establish a 25 Year Plan for the Environment for Norfolk and Suffolk.

15. Water, Mills and Marshes

- 15.1 The Forum received the annexed report (15) which updated the NLAF on work to create a Mills Trail at Halvergate.

A presentation was given by Ella Meecham of the Broads Authority.

The Trail will allow people to get close to the mills and learn about heritage that is being restored. A 2nd Broads Mills Trail is nearer to Burgh Castle and follows the Waveney. Routes will be waymarked and have interpretation. Improved access would allow more people to enjoy the Trails.

- 15.2 The NLAF were pleased to see permissive routes as part of the project and were very interested in the agreements secured with landowners (over permissive access) and ongoing maintenance of the route. Lewis Treloar said that maintenance was being picked up by the Broads Authority where the parish was unable to do so.
- 15.3 The Halvergate route of 8.5 miles would incorporate all mills.
- 15.4 The NLAF **NOTED** work ongoing by the Broads Authority to develop countryside access through a Mills Trail and thanked Ella Meecham for her presentation.

16. Countryside Access Arrangements update

- 16.1 The Forum received the annexed report (16) which highlighted this work in terms of the volumes of customer queries received and responded to. The paper also highlights other key areas of work including a new cutting contract, now managed jointly for Highways and Norfolk Trails.
- 16.2 The report would be looked through in more detail at the PROW sub-group before the next NLAF meeting.
- 16.3 The NLAF **NOTED** the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.

17. NCC Member Walking and Cycling Champion update

- 17.1 The Forum received the annexed report (17) which provided a summary of the key walking and cycling projects relevant to the Local Access Forum.
- 17.2 It was hoped that at the next meeting, the Champion would be able to attend to talk through some objectives for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and how they were aligned with the NAIP.
- 17.3 The NLAF **NOTED** the progress of the walking and cycling projects as outlined in the report.

18. Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning

- 18.1 The Forum received the annexed report (18) which updated them on the major infrastructure projects that were currently underway in the County which impacted on Public Rights of Way.
- 18.2 The NLAF **NOTED** the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.

19. Meetings Forward Plan

- 19.1 The NLAF received the annexed report (19) which outlined agenda items for the forthcoming meetings.
- 19.2 The NLAF **NOTED** the forward plan.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm

**Martin Sullivan, Chairman,
Norfolk Local Access Forum**



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Norfolk Local Access Forum

(Forum member report)

Report title:	Changes to NLAF Constitution
Date of meeting:	20 January 2021

Summary

Changes are proposed to the NLAF Constitution, some as a result of a normal periodic review to enable improved operation of NLAF, or reflect its changed practice, and some to encourage closer contact with neighbouring Broads and Suffolk LAFs.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	The existing NLAF constitution is appended - see Appendix 1
1.2.	The proposal is to make the changes outlined in Appendix 2
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To seek the adoption of the changes by Norfolk County Council, if this is needed.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	Self evident from the Appendix 2

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name :	Ken Hawkins
Email address :	ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk



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Norfolk Local Access Forum – Constitution (October 2018)

Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) requires local authorities and National Park authorities to establish advisory bodies known as Local Access Forums to advise decision-making organisations about making improvements to public access for outdoor recreation and sustainable travel. Forums operate in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007.

This Constitution applies these regulations for the Norfolk Local Access Forum. The Forum enjoys the same level of support from Norfolk County Council as a committee (although it is not a formal NCC committee). Forum members are given technical and administrative support by Norfolk County Council officers to enable them to undertake their advisory role as effectively as possible

1) Terms of Reference

a) Norfolk Local Access Forum members are volunteers appointed to the Forum by Norfolk County Council (the appointing body) to represent a range of local interests.

b) The Forum gives advice to Section 94(4) bodies as follows: Norfolk County Council; district and borough councils within Norfolk; Government Departments e.g. Defra and MOD as well as the Planning Inspectorate and the Highways Agency; Natural England; the Forestry Commission; English Heritage; Sport England; the Norfolk Coast AONB Conservation Board; Parish and town councils in Norfolk. These bodies should have regard in carrying out their functions, to any relevant advice given to them by the Forum.

c) The advice which the Forum gives falls within one or more of the following categories:

- improvement of public access (whether on foot or by horse, cycle, mechanically propelled vehicle or any other lawful means) to land (including land at the water's edge) in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area;
- public access to land (including land at the water's edge) in the area for any other lawful purpose (whether on foot, horse, cycle or by any means other than by mechanically propelled vehicle);
- public access to land in the area by means of a mechanically propelled vehicle for any other lawful purpose, but only insofar as the access relates to

byways open to all traffic.

- d) The Norfolk Local Access Forum is a statutory consultee for:
- draft maps showing open country and registered common land;
 - byelaws affecting access land
 - the appointment of access wardens on access land
 - directions that would restrict or exclude long-term access
 - rights of way improvement plans
 - Dog control orders which apply to access land

2) Composition of the Forum

a) The Forum comprises at least ten and not more than 22 representatives appointed by Norfolk County Council in accordance with The Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007. Under 3(5) of the Regulations, membership of the Forum is representative of the following groups (applies to **all** members):

- users of local rights of way;
- owners and occupiers of access land or land over which local rights of way subsist; or
- any other interests especially relevant to the authority's area

b) Under 3(4) of the Regulations, the maximum number of members who may also be members of a district council or Norfolk County Council or the Broads Authority is **three**, as long as the Forum consists of no fewer than 17 members (falling to **two** if the Forum consists of not more than 16 members).

c) Norfolk County Council will organise recruitment and appointment of members (see Section 6 of Guidance on Local Access Forums in England (revised guidance 2007). Terms of appointment for Forum members shall be set by Norfolk County Council.

3) Number of Meetings

The Forum will meet at least twice in each year. Generally, meetings are held in January, April, July and October.

4) Chairman and Vice-Chairman

At its first meeting after 1 August in each calendar year (or as agreed), the Forum will appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman. In making these appointments, the Forum must ensure so far as practicable that they are not at any one time both drawn from the same interests referred to in paragraph 2. The length of time served by the Chairman and

Vice-Chairman is for the Forum to determine, but will be constrained by the maximum term of their appointment as a Forum member (see 6(5) of the Regulations).

5) Access to Meetings and Documents

- a) Meetings of the Forum are open to the public, subject to any power of exclusion to suppress or prevent disorderly conduct or other misbehaviour at a meeting;
- b) Copies of the agenda for meetings of the Forum and of any reports for meetings will be published on Norfolk County Council's CMIS (Content Management Interoperability Service) and open to inspection by members of the public at County Hall at least three clear days before the meeting except:
- Where the meeting is convened at shorter notice, the copies of the agenda and reports must be open to inspection from the time the meeting is convened;
 - Where an item is added to an agenda, copies of the document adding the item to the agenda and the copies of any report for the meeting relating to the item must be open to inspection from the time the item is added to the agenda.
- c) An item of business may not be considered at a meeting of the Forum unless these requirements are complied with or, by reason of special circumstances to be specified in the minutes, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency;
- d) After a meeting of the Forum, the minutes, agenda and reports to the meeting must be open to inspection by members of the public at County Hall for at least two years following the meeting;
- e) In addition, where any report for a meeting of the Forum is open for inspection by members of the public there must also be open for inspection copies of a list of any background papers for the Report together with a copy of the documents included in that list;
- f) Where any document is open to inspection a member of the public may upon payment of a reasonable copying fee, require the person having custody of the document to supply a copy to him or her.

6) Declarations of Interest

A member of the Forum who is directly or indirectly interested in any matter brought up for consideration at a meeting of the Forum must disclose the nature of that interest to the meeting. Failure to do so may mean that the County Council will terminate the representative's appointment.

7) Location of Meetings

Meetings will be held at such venues as the Forum decides. Generally, meetings shall be held at County Hall in Norwich.

8) Secretary

- a) The Forum's Secretary is Norfolk County Council's Head of Democratic Services;
- b) The technical support officer will
 - receive correspondence addressed to the Forum within its terms of reference;
 - co-ordinate work on behalf of the Forum and provide advice;
 - compile and send correspondence as agreed with the Chair on behalf of the Forum.
- c) The administrative support officer will:
 - Issue meeting agendas and write up the minutes.

9) Expenses

The County Council will meet:-

- a) Any reasonable expenses incurred by Forum members in connection with their attendance at meetings of the Forum and any other activities relating to the discharge of the functions of the Forum, but only in respect of:
 - Travel and subsistence costs;
 - Any expenses of arranging for the care of their children or dependents

10) Annual Report

The Forum must produce an annual report on its work, to be published by the County Council. The annual report will:-

- (a) set out the occasions and issues on which the Forum has provided advice in the preceding year, and indicate to whom advice was given;
- (b) include such other information as the Forum thinks fit.

11) Proceedings of the Forum

The rules contained in the Appendix govern how the meetings of the Forum are run.

APPENDIX

1. Quorum

The Quorum for meetings of the Forum is 7 members.

2. Voting in Meetings

(a) Voting will be by show of hands.

(b) Every issue will be determined by simple majority of the votes cast at the meeting.

(c) Every member of the Forum has one vote on each issue except for:-

- the Chairman of the meeting, who has a second or casting vote; and
- any Observing County Councillor, who may not vote (See paragraph 3).

3. County Councillor Representation

(a) In the event of a Forum meeting being held when fewer than 17 representatives are appointed, the member from the party with the third most council seats will be an Observing County Councillor for that meeting.

(b) Where 3(a) applies, the observing County Councillor may attend the meeting but not vote and only speak at the meeting on the same terms as a member of the public.

4. Substitutes

Members of the Forum cannot appoint substitutes to represent them in their absence from meetings.

5. Minutes

The Chairman will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting.

6. Record of Attendances

Each member attending a meeting of the Forum must, with a view to securing the recording of his or her attendance, sign the attendance sheet provided by the Secretary for that purpose. If any member arrives after the attendance sheet has been circulated, he or she must intimate their presence to the Secretary.

7. Public Questions

(a) A person resident in Norfolk may attend meetings of the Forum and, by giving two working days notice, may ask any question on any matter in respect of the Forum's Terms of Reference.

(b) Any questions submitted in time will be included on the agenda and will be the subject of response by the Chairman.

(c) If the person asking the question is not present at the meeting, the answer as reported at the meeting will be sent by post to the questioner following the meeting.

(d) The number of questions which may be asked by any one person at any one meeting will be limited to one (plus a supplementary) and Public Question Time will be limited to 10 minutes in total. Any questions which remain unanswered within that timescale will receive written notices.

8. Chairman's Ruling

The ruling of the Chairman as to the construction or application of these rules or as to any proceedings of the Forum will be final for the purposes of the meeting at which it is given.

9. Allocation of Duties

The Chairman (with NCC officer support) will:-

- appoint and convene sub-groups with responsibility for replying to incoming correspondence subject to there being:-
 - at least one representative from each category of interest appointed where practicable
 - at least seven-day's notice of proposed response to all Forum representatives to allow them to comment
- grant responsibility to individual representatives for maintaining contact with Committees, Local Access Forums, Liaison Groups, etc.
- grant responsibility to categories of interest to invite speakers and arrange training
- submit the agenda to the administrative officer at least a month before the date of the next main meeting
- sign outward correspondence

10. Changes to these Rules

The Forum may change the rules in this Appendix (as long as they still comply with the Regulations) by a simple majority. Similarly, the Forum may add new rules of procedure.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS (to be appended to pdf)

- 1. The Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007**
- 2. Guidance on Local Access Forums in England (revised guidance 2007)**

Appendix 2

Add new 1)e)

The Norfolk Local Access Forum will seek to promote closer liaison and understanding between the various interest bodies and organisations which have an interest in access within its catchment area, including with the Broads and Suffolk LAFs.

Add new 2)d)

In addition, the Broads and Suffolk LAFs will each be invited to nominate one of their members to participate in all Norfolk LAF business, and who will be treated as if a member in all respects save voting rights.

Add new 2)e)

Where an interest group has no representative, whether through no appointment having been made, or the resignation of the last or sole representative of that interest group, Norfolk County Council may support co-option of an appropriate person pending the next recruitment exercise.

Amend 3

3) Number and format of Meetings

The Forum will meet at least twice in each year, but seek to meet quarterly (generally, in January, April, July and October). Where exceptional circumstances warrant, meetings can be conducted virtually (online), as long as public participation can be maintained.

Amend 5)c)

5)c) delete ‘;’ at end and add “except as provided in 5)d) below;”

add new 5)d) (and renumber accordingly)

d) where consultations and issues arise which require response before the next meeting of the Forum, responses may be formulated and issued as follows:

- the issue and proposed response may be considered by a relevant subgroup if time permits
- a draft response will be prepared and circulated by email for comment by all Forum members
- where there is significant divergence of view, a second draft response will be circulated if time permits
- the final response will be decided and issued by the Forum Chair (with NCC officer support)
- a protocol governing this process will be drawn up and agreed by the Forum

Amend 7

7 Meetings will be held at such venues as the Forum decides. Generally, meetings shall be held at County Hall in Norwich with one meeting each year in a community setting.

Add new 12

This Constitution will be reviewed as a matter of course every 3 years, and in between where required.

Appendix, 7.(a) - the website <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/partnerships/local-access-forum/meetings> says only “Meetings are open to the public and questions may be raised but they must be submitted in advance of the meeting to be considered by the Chair.”, so either that or 7(a) needs to be changed.

Appendix, 7.(b) - does this make sense? Most questions will be submitted in response to the agenda, which will have been published usually a lot more than the 'three clear days' in advance of the meeting. I propose deleting it.

Appendix, 9. Allocation of Duties - delete text below

The Chairman (with NCC officer support) will:-

- ~~appoint and convene sub-groups with responsibility for replying to incoming correspondence subject to there being:-~~
 - ~~– at least one representative from each category of interest appointed where practicable~~
 - ~~– at least seven day's notice of proposed response to all Forum representatives to allow them to comment~~
- grant responsibility to individual representatives for maintaining contact with Committees, Local Access Forums, Liaison Groups, etc.
- grant responsibility to categories of interest to invite speakers and arrange training
- submit the agenda to the administrative officer at least a month before the date of the next main meeting
- sign outward correspondence

New Appendix, 10 (and renumber remaining sections)

- The Forum will create such subgroups as seem to it useful in conducting business, subject to approving their terms of reference, membership and chair, and may review and amend these arrangements as it sees fit
- In addition to Forum members, the subgroups may invite others to attend meetings, either regularly or on specific occasions, as provided in their terms of reference
- Subgroups will not be open to the general public and therefore will function without a requirement to publish agendas other than to their members

Ken Hawkins
30 December 2020

Norfolk Local Access Forum

(Forum member report)

Report title:	Widening the Reach of the NLAFF
Date of meeting:	20 January 2021

Summary

NLAFF commissioned the report *Widening the reach of the Norfolk Local Access Forum* and received the report and its recommendations (see page 59 of agenda pack for NLAFF meeting 7th October 2020 <https://tinyurl.com/ycdl4zp7>).

A summary was drawn up as an aid to identifying actions in response to the recommendations and NLAFF members were invited to submit their thoughts to the Chair and Vice Chair by 7th November 2020.

Specific responses to the recommendations have now been prepared for consideration (adoption or rejection) by the NLAFF. These regard areas such as: meeting structure and style; filling vacancies; collaboration; and improving communication.

Recommendation

To consider and adopt (or reject) specific responses to the recommendations (Appendix 1)

1.	Proposal
1.1.	See Summary above.
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To consider and adopt or reject responses outlined in Appendix 1.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	Provided in Appendix 1.

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAFF member name :	Ken Hawkins
Email address :	ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk



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Appendix 1

The following specific proposals are made in response to the recommendations from the *Widening the reach of the Norfolk Local Access Forum* report, May 2020. The bullets (·) are direct quotations from pp5-7, followed by [a proposal from me \(➤\)](#). At the end, the full pages are repeated.

Ken Hawkins, 30 December 2020

Meeting structure agenda setting process to be reassessed

- 1 specific concerns or areas for discussion are not addressed in meetings, especially concerning groups that are not walking
 - we could designate a lead person for each interest represented, but I believe this would make taking a cohesive view on issues more difficult to achieve; as an alternative, I propose **continuing invitations to all NLAF members to propose discussion topics**
- 2 the agenda and consequentially meeting discussion favours walking; encourag[e] members to email their thoughts and questions prior to the agenda being set
 - **as 1 above:** steps have been taken to pay more attention to issues for horse riders and carriage drivers
- 3 meetings could be less formalised and more conversational, consider room layout
 - I'm not sure that any alternative layout will work for the number of NLAF attendees; there is more opportunity for discussion in the subgroups, so perhaps **more members should be encouraged to join the subgroups?**
- 4 A virtual message board approach could ... be used for members to post their questions and comments during or prior to meetings
 - **I would not support this** - I think it's reasonable to expect members to take responsibility to engage with the meeting, as long as we ensure that we enable and encourage it
- 5 opportunities for members to meet in less formal, social environments may be helpful
 - **subgroups could serve this** to some degree; or **arrange an annual conference** type event, with little or no formal agenda? If members agreed, perhaps a first one could address these very issues?

Filling vacancies and/ or increasing representation

- 6 Investment in the recruitment process needs to begin to fill ... vacancies
 - agreed, but **depends on NCC resources**
- 7 a key opportunity for collaboration with the BLAF
 - **agreed, if technically possible**
- 8 Youth uptake could be encouraged through partnerships with University societies or talks in local colleges

- to try during next recruitment

Collaboration

- 9 Collaboration with the BLAF could include attending each other's meetings and sharing materials and knowledge
 - the former is already operating; **proposals have been made to change the NLAF constitution** (and to Suffolk LAF to encourage similar exchange)
- 10 Combining influence in efforts to fill vacancies
 - again, **agreed if technically possible**

Promotion

- 11 Development of digital platforms must be considered as key to improving communication
 - NLAF should **consider this as part of a wider publicity plan**; it would need time and expertise to make significant change
- 12 Social media platforms will also be an important resource for a wider audience
 - **as 11 above**
- 13 Live broadcasting or posting meeting videos online should be considered
 - **as 11 above**
- 14 Consider condensing [the NAIP] into a leaflet which can be made available online
 - **in progress**
- 15 [Not a recommendation, but Norfolk Greenways, the Health and Wellbeing agenda, 'Green Health' and Parish Path Seminars are mentioned positively]
 - **no comment**

RECOMMENDATIONS

MEETING STRUCTURE AGENDA SETTING PROCESS TO BE REASSESSED

Overall survey results show that members feel that specific concerns or areas for discussion are not addressed in meetings, especially concerning groups that are not walking. Another concern was that the agenda and consequentially meeting discussion favours walking. Although members understood that walking is extremely popular in Norfolk they felt that forum seeks to be inclusive and represent the range of people accessing the outdoors which is not as successful as it may be. The BLAF also expressed room for improvement in representation for individual groups/ members, where they have taken action by re-writing their constitution towards a more member focused approach to agenda setting. It is also important to increase understanding and appreciation between interests in order to build a more connected access network.

This is an approach that could be taken forward by the NLAF, in order to engage members with the agenda setting process. This could be achieved by encouraging members to email their thoughts and questions prior to the agenda being set. By making the opportunity to feed-in less formal it should encourage those who usually don't feel confident enough to speak in meetings to make an input. Similarly, meetings could be less formalised and more conversational, consider room layout. A virtual message board approach could again be used for members to post their questions and comments during or prior to meetings which are then read out by the chair. Also, opportunities for members to meet in less formal, social environments may be helpful in making members more comfortable talking with each other.

INCREASED EFFORTS TOWARDS FILLING VACANCIES AND/ OR INCREASING REPRESENTATION OF THESE INTERESTS/ ISSUES

Vacancies for All Abilities Access, Minority Groups, Health and Wellbeing and Youth representatives are felt heavily by the Forum. Either filling these vacancies or bringing interests of these groups onto the agenda is integral to meet the aims put forward in the NAIP which seeks to 'increase the number and range of people accessing the outdoors through Norfolk's PRow network' over the next 10 years. Investment in the recruitment process needs to begin to fill these vacancies, however time and funding constraints are a major obstacle. In the meantime, training and education of current members of issues and topics surrounding the needs of these interest groups is advised. Building cohesion and understand between interest groups. This is a key opportunity for collaboration with the BLAF where specific knowledge of members can be shared. Youth uptake could be encouraged through partnerships with University societies or talks in local colleges. Regarding All Abilities Access the BLAF are organising a trip to the Aston Rowant national Nature Reserve, the UK's first ever specialist centre in Oxfordshire will improve countryside access for wheelchair users, those with mobility needs, horse riders, cyclists and walkers this could be an important educational resource for NLAf members.

COLLABORATION

A positive response was received regarding collaborating more with the BLAF to improve the standing and reach of the NLAf detailed explanation of key areas for collaboration are outlined above. Collaboration with the BLAF could include attending each other's meetings and sharing materials and knowledge. Combining influence in efforts to fill vacancies may achieve a more successful response. If filling vacancies for identified interests is slow utilising each other's expertise to fill the gaps will aid integration of these missing interest and issues into the agenda.

PROMOTION

'The challenge is to increase use of the network by people who do not use it and out of season' NAIP 2019

Promotion of the NLAf to the general public must become a priority in order to raise the profile of your work and increase engagement with key user groups as well as those who do not regularly participate in outdoor recreation. The communications sub-group have been making progress, but development of digital platforms must be considered as key to improving communication. Firstly, the website needs to be made more accessible to those who are not familiar with council resources. With key information about recent projects and resources clearly signposted. Use of social media platforms will also be an important resource for a wider audience to learn about and keep up to date with your work. For example, Facebook could be used to update followers with key events and trail updates. Social media also enables the public to contact you with ease, asking questions or starting up discussion. The NAIP is an informative and accessible resource but you should consider condensing it into a leaflet which can be made available online.

The Norfolk Greenways project has great potential to engage publics in countryside access as a means of sustainable travel, clear and easy access to this information will be integral to its success. Health and Wellbeing may be a useful way to increase uptake of countryside users, utilising the health agenda in promotional materials. 'Green Health' is gaining traction especially amongst the COVID-19 pandemic where access to green spaces have become an increasingly appreciated and precious resource. Parish Path Seminars have also been successful in increasing local level engagement in 2019 but again promotion through social media could see a further uptake in involvement. Especially as the Stewardship is coming to an end, community connection and cohesion will be vital to overcoming challenges. Lastly, live broadcasting or posting meeting videos online should be considered as a way to open up and encourage increased involvement.

SUMMARY

This report presents the main findings from a survey distributed amongst NLAf members, NCC

support staff and BLAF members reflecting on areas to improve the standing and reach of the NLAF. Results found that although representation amongst current members and their appointed interest is excellent other interests notably All Abilities Access, Minority Groups, Health and Wellbeing and Youth are severely lacking representation. Furthermore, meeting atmosphere and structure is not conducive to encouraging all members to input their views. Lastly, understanding and communication of the Forum's work is low. The NAIP is highlighted as a great asset to the Forum providing clear and informed actions for the future. There is much work to be done to meet these goals which the suggested recommendations aim to work towards. Recommendations are summarised under four headings; meeting structure and agenda setting, increased efforts towards filling vacancies and/ or increasing representation, collaboration and promotion. The NCC may consider restructuring forum meetings to make for an environment more conducive to open and free discussion. Building a social media presence will make the forums work more accessible to a wider audience and increase conversation with the public.

Norfolk Local Access Forum

(Forum member report)

Report title:	Meetings Forward Plan
Date of meeting:	20 th January 2021

Summary

A plan for agenda items for future NLAF meetings has been prepared for discussion and agreement.

Recommendation

To agree the plan and put forward further suggestions, proposals and timings for future agenda items

1.	Proposal
1.1.	Suggested agenda items for future NLAF meetings are brought to the meeting for agreement and timetabling (Appendix 1). This spreadsheet of proposals is maintained by NCC officers and the plan feeds into the Department's Forward Plans for Committees ('Other' committees). The plan is used at NLAF agenda-setting meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair.
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To agree the plan and put forward further suggestions, proposals and timings for future agenda items
3.	Evidence
3.1.	See proposal

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name :	Martin Sullivan Ken Hawkins
Email addresses :	martinsullivan4x4@yahoo.co.uk ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk
Phone number	Via 01603 222810

Norfolk Local Access Forum
20th January 2021
Chairman's announcement (not a report)
Feedback from conferences and events attended by NLAf members (not a report)
Meetings Forward Plan NLAf MEMBER REPORT
Sub-groups' NLAf MEMBER REPORT (Permissive Access; PROW; NAIP; V and I; Communications)
Pathmakers NLAf MEMBER REPORT
Countryside Access Arrangements NCC REPORT
NCC Member Walking and Cycling Champion update NCC REPORT
Major infrastructure projects NCC REPORT
EXPERIENCE NCC report
Constitution amends NLAf MEMBER REPORT
Widening the Reach of the NLAf NLAf MEMBER REPORT
[Add minutes and meeting dates BLAF/ Suffolk LAF to agenda]
FOR CONSIDERATION
Water based activity report (tbc)
Path widths standards (for new paths arising from development) (tbc)
LCWIP (tbc)
Cycling and Walking Strategy (tbc)
Windfarm Routes (tbc)
Access for all (tbc)
Highways Team highlights (TBC)
Update - data counters and footfall on Norfolk Trails (TBC)
Cutting contract (TBC)
SAIL (TBC)
Felmingham location site visit (Weavers' Way - RDPE surface improvements (TBC)
Agriculture and Environment Bills
ELMs presentation (Natural England) - access elements, timescale
Economic value of PROW and concerns regarding funding (Vision and Ideas group led discussion) (TBC)

Report title:	NLAF subgroups' report (PRoW; NAIP; Vision and Ideas; Communications; Permissive Access)
Date of meeting:	20 January 2021

Summary

Recent progress and recommendations from the NLAF's 5 subgroups (PRoW; NAIP; Vision and Ideas; Communications; Permissive Access) are reported.

Recommendations for the NLAF:

1. PRoW subgroup:
To inform parishes through the NALC newsletter and direct contact to prioritise 4 issues from the Parish Paths Seminars; it is proposed that NLAF agree the setting up of a small working group to take this forward.
2. Vision and Ideas subgroup
To provide comment on a paper drafted by the group concerning the economic value of PRoW and concerns regarding funding for ongoing maintenance, and agree to further discussion at the April full NLAF meeting.
3. NAIP subgroup
To explore specific recommendations to improve access with NCC staff at the next NAIP subgroup meeting.

1.	PROW subgroup
1.1.	<u>Proposal</u>
	To consider the recommendations made in the Minutes of the PRoW subgroup meeting of 7 December 2020 (Appendix 1).
1.2.	<u>Recommendations</u>
	<p>5.1 that NLAF approach parishes through the NALC newsletter and by direct contact, to inform them of the decision to prioritise four issues from the Parish Paths Seminars and invite comments and expressions of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join forces with a neighbouring parish to tackle PROW issues • Incentivising use of local paths by the younger generation • Information about Public Rights of Way and suitability for different users • Appoint a Footpath Warden <p>It is proposed that NLAF agree the setting up of a small working group of NLAF/PRoW subgroup members, plus other interested organisations, such as CPRE, to explore possibilities.</p>
1.3.	<u>Evidence</u>
	These are the priorities which emerged from the feedback from Seminar participants, and had been endorsed by NLAF previously
2.	Vision and Ideas subgroup

2.1.	<u>Proposal</u>
	To consider the recommendations made in the Minutes of the Vision and Ideas subgroup meeting of 10th December 2020 (Appendix 2) regarding the draft paper brought to that meeting on the economic value of PROW and concerns regarding funding for ongoing maintenance (Appendix 3).
2.2.	<u>Recommendations</u>
	That the full NLAf provides comment on the draft paper (Appendix 3) to Vic and agrees to devote more discussion time to the topic at the April NLAf meeting (it will be an agenda item).
2.3.	<u>Evidence</u>
3.	NAIP subgroup
3.1.	<u>Proposal</u>
	<p>The NAIP subgroup monitors progress with the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP).</p> <p>At the last full NLAf meeting, 4 specific recommendations for action by NCC to improve access were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) More resource for handling Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) (ii) More resource for enforcement action to re-instate footpaths (iii) A mechanism to quantify PROW usage and hence estimate their contribution to Norfolk's economy and people's health (iv) Better public transport to connect PROW and Norfolk Trails to communities.
3.2.	<u>Recommendations</u>
	To explore specific recommendations to improve access with NCC staff at the next NAIP subgroup meeting
3.3.	<u>Evidence</u>
	<p>Agenda pack from last NLAf meeting https://tinyurl.com/ycdl4zp7</p> <p>Minutes from last full NLAf meeting https://tinyurl.com/y7lwwebzt (point 11.8)</p>
4.	Communications subgroup; Permissive Access subgroup
4.1.	No written update provided - verbal updates to be provided at the meeting as necessary

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAf member name :	Ken Hawkins (re PROW subgroup) Vic Cocker (re Vision and Ideas subgroup) Martin Sullivan (re NAIP subgroup)
Email address :	ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk vic.cocker@btinternet.com martinsullivan4x4@yahoo.co.uk

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Appendix 1

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM Public Rights of Way Subgroup Minutes

Date: Monday 7 December 2020

Venue: MS Teams meeting

All supporting documents are on SharePoint

https://norfolkcounty.sharepoint.com/sites/Norfolk_Local_Access_Forum/SitePages/Home.aspx

Present	
Keith Bacon	CPRE Norfolk, Broads LAF
Vic Cocker	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Simon Fowler	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ken Hawkins (chair)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ann Melhuish	Norfolk Horse Driving Club
Ian Mitchell	The Ramblers
Martin Sullivan	Norfolk Local Access Forum
In attendance	
Mike Auger (to 6.2)	Cycling and Walking Team
Helen Timson (to 6.2)	NCC Norfolk Coast Partnership
Su Waldron	Projects Team
Michelle Sergeant	Green Infrastructure Team

1	Introductions and apologies for absence Apologies had been received from Neil Cliff, Brigid Fairman (technical problems), David Hissey and Jason Moore. Others absent were: Chris Dady, Ian Witham
2	Minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2020 The minutes were approved , with the last part of the first sentence of 6.1.3 changed to read “MA said that the NCC legal team had accepted the landowner’s case for excepted land and NCC was looking at alternative routes.”
3	Matters arising from the minutes, not otherwise on the agenda 3.1 Ian Witham’s comments on a number of issues discussed at the meeting were received and noted . 3.2 <u>3.1 Signpost longevity</u> - Jason had responded to say “we are unable to extract or gather the information requested from our reporting system ... we proactively replace damaged or removed PROW signage but do not record frequency.” This was noted . 3.3 <u>5.2.1 Forestry Commission</u> - It was noted that NLAF had agreed to ask the Forestry Commission if it planned to take more land out of tree production in the Thetford Forest area, and the request had been made on 4 November, but no reply had been received to date. It was agreed that Su would follow this up. 3.4 <u>6.1.3 Nar Valley Way at Newton by Castle Acre</u> - Ian Mitchell reported that he had applied for Restricted Byway status for the route from the end of the Restricted Byway to the road; at same time, the householder had applied for deletion of the Restricted Byway section outside their garden, and these would be considered together. 3.5 <u>6.2.6 DMMOs and major developments</u> - Michelle reported that if a planning application proposal potentially affects a registered DMMO claimed route, then NCC’s consultation response will take this into consideration. Claimed routes are treated as if rights are proven and the applicant and Planning Authority are advised accordingly; the claim process is such that the landowner should be aware of any claimed PROW. However, NCC would not necessarily be consulted by a PA where a claimed route may be affected if no other PROW are within the vicinity of the application site and

	<p>currently we rely on local knowledge to advise us of such cases. It was noted that the public would know of claims only if they checked on the NCC website.</p> <p>3.6 <u>9.1 Footpath maintenance</u> - It was noted that NLAf had agreed to write to NCC to highlight the importance of footpath maintenance. Councillor Jamieson had replied (5 November) "I am very conscious of the constraints under which the ROW team are working. We are currently working on the forthcoming program for 2021/22 but I do not think you will be disappointed." It was noted that Cllr Jamieson was expected at the January NLAf meeting when he could be asked for further details. Mike agreed to communicate the budget cycle dates.</p> <p>3.7 <u>9.2 Earsham bridge</u> - It was noted that the bridge is now open once more, and Ian added that 2 other bridges in the area had been replaced.</p>
4	<p>NLAf minutes from the meeting on 7 October 2020</p> <p>The minutes were not yet available, but Ken reported that all PROW subgroup recommendations had been adopted.</p>
5	<p>Partnership and Community Working</p> <p>5.1 <u>Parish Council seminars</u></p> <p>It was noted that NLAf had accepted the recommendation to prioritise four issues from the seminars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join forces with a neighbouring parish to tackle PROW issues • Incentivising use of local paths by the younger generation • Information about Public Rights of Way and suitability for different users • Appoint a Footpath Warden <p>Following discussion It was agreed to recommend that NLAf approach parishes through the NALC newsletter and by direct contact, to inform them of our decision and invite comments and expressions of interest. It was also thought that the Communications subgroup might have a part to play, though its position was unclear following the resignation of Geoff Doggett: Martin would follow this up.</p> <p>5.2 <u>Issues from represented organisations</u> (CPRE, OSS, The Ramblers, U3A)</p> <p>A number of questions had been received from Ian Witham (for OSS). Ken had summarised these as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending on Norfolk Trails which do not carry rights of way • Why are NCC permissive routes not dedicated as rights of way? • Where does the liability lay if a member of the public sustains an injury whilst using routes maintained by the county council as Norfolk Trails that aren't public rights of way and aren't owned by the county council? • Equestrians are expected to wait many months for autumn/winter clearance. • How does the council collate and store the data that is generated from their 5 yearly inspections of PROW? • There seem to be more consultations through where an application has been made to NCC for it to divert an illegally obstructed path. • Public Path Orders (diversions and extinguishments): Do members of the public have an equal right to approach the authority to request the creation of a public path <p>Mike agreed to research them and report back to the next meeting.</p>
6	<p>Countryside Access arrangements</p> <p>6.1 <u>General update</u> A report had been circulated and was received with thanks. It was asked how far the period had been typical, and Mike said that staff were to some degree still catching up with the backlog occasioned by COVID-19. Concern was expressed about rising numbers of unresolved issues, though Michelle pointed out that there was likely to be some duplicate reporting.</p> <p>6.2 <u>Specific issues</u></p> <p>1 Bramerton FP1 (dispute over the path's line) - Mike reported that discussions with</p>

	<p>the landowner were still taking place.</p> <p>2 Hoe FP3 (closure of bridge and path by Mid-Norfolk Railway) - Mike confirmed that the bridge was owned by Mid-Norfolk Railway.</p> <p>3 Highways England - Mike agreed to review plans for discussions which had been suspended during the first lockdown.</p> <p>4 Fakenham river side paths - Vic introduced this, declaring his interest as an active member of Fakenham Ramblers. The significance of the affected paths to the town was accepted, and Mike reported that staff were already investigating. Ian suggested that a survey was needed to establish what works might be necessary, probably involving the Environment Agency. Simon suggested that CIL money might be directed to this work. Ian added that he considered this had health and safety implications warranting early action.</p> <p>5 TAMP (Transport Asset Management Plan) - Arising from the above discussion, it was noted that the priorities for action in the TAMP (p305, 22.7.2.1) were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate - if it has health and safety implications. • High - if it affects a Norfolk Trail spinal route. • Medium - if it affects a Norfolk Trail associated route. • Low - if it affects only an isolated generally unused path or one that runs alongside another path. <p>It was noted that this classification meant that anything not considered a safety issue and not connected with a Norfolk Trail was inevitably accorded the lowest priority. Members considered that this was inadequate and agreed that we should press for a review. Mike said he would talk to Jason about this.</p>
6.3	<p><u>Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning Applications</u></p> <p>1 <u>Protocol</u> It was noted that NLAF had approved the revised protocol.</p> <p>2 <u>Norwich Western Link (NWL)</u> It was noted that NLAF had approved and submitted the response prepared by the subgroup.</p> <p>3 <u>Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review - Shouldham Warren</u> It was noted that NLAF had written on 4 November as proposed by the subgroup, but that no reply had been received to date. It was agreed that Su would follow this up.</p> <p>4 <u>Vattenfall</u> It was noted that NLAF had written to Vattenfall as proposed by the subgroup, and the reply from Vattenfall had been circulated. Michelle said that this event had alerted her to the need in future to advise user groups of the potential impact of major developments. Vic welcomed the assurance that work to lay the cabling was completed rapidly, but said that often it was a separate contractor who would complete the restoration work, and this sometimes dragged on; ideally a time limited closure should be agreed, though Michelle thought there was little freedom for NCC to specify this.</p>
7	<p>Claims for lost paths ('2026')</p> <p>Ian reported that some claims were once more moving to enquiries: that for routes in Cley was being proposed as a virtual meeting.</p>
8	<p>Planning for the future: Modernising the planning system to get Britain Building</p> <p>The Government's proposed changes, which had attracted considerable opposition from access and environmental groups, were noted. A significant feature was that community input would be in determining zones for development, with little or no facility to comment on individual planning applications. Michelle thought there might not be too much impact on NCC's ability to respond, as the Highways Act 1980 would still need to be observed.</p>
9	<p>Reports from NCC Officers</p> <p>There were no additional issues.</p>
10	<p>England Coast Path: Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge</p>

The proposals for this section had been published, with representations invited by 20 January. The proposed process for response was **agreed**:

- NLAF members who have comments submit them to Ken Hawkins by 20 December
- Ken collates them and prepares a draft to be circulated for comment early in the New Year, responses due back by 11 January
- if needed, a final draft can go out again between 11 and 18 January
- target submission date is 19 January
- report to NLAF 20 January

The proposals are at www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-hunstanton-to-sutton-bridge.

Vic noted that the section needs walking to provide informed comment and expressed his willingness to do so, with a partner to assist. None was immediately forthcoming, though it was **agreed** that this offer be made known to all NLAF members.

11 Agriculture and Environment Bills

Vic noted that recent government announcements had little mention of access, in spite of earlier pronouncements. It was **agreed** that Ken and Martin consider what action from NLAF might be appropriate.

12 Dates of next meetings

It was noted that NLAF 2021 dates are 20 January, 14 April, 7 July, 6 October; and proposed that the subgroup dates are 15 March, 14 June, 13 September, 2pm-4pm. Su **agreed** to reserve these dates in the NCC calendar.

Appendix 2

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

VISION AND IDEAS SUB GROUP MEETING :10 December 2020 Time 14.00 to 15.30

FORMAT; meeting held using Microsoft “Team” connectivity

NALF Sub -group members

Suzanne Long	SL
Brigid Fairman	BF
Ken Hawkins	KH
Martin Sullivan	MS
Vic Cocker (Chairman)	VC

NCC Staff

Mike Auger	MA
Jason Moorse	JM
Sarah Abercrombie	SA
Su Waldron	SW
Russell Wilson	RW

1 Apologies were received from RW, CA

2. Minutes of meeting held on 21 July 2020 by Team connectivity

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July were approved as a true record.

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising which were not covered by the agenda

4. Vision and Ideas subgroup Draft report to NALF

The main agenda of the meeting was to comment on this report which had been drafted by VC based on the work of the committee to date.

Section 1 : The work we have done so far

There were no comments or alterations to this section

Section 2: Activity levels and the scale of benefits attributable to the PROW and trails network

KH proposed that the text should clarify that most stats of walking activity referred to pre-lockdown

MA and JM said that there had been a significant increase in walking activity on trails during lockdown and subsequently .It was the intention to collate all the data but this was not yet complete. The increases were expected to be large for instance a 100% increase on the Marriotts

Way in the period up to September 2020. There was no information available on the increases in walking on PROW in this period but the trails information could be indicative.

The figures of ECONOMIC BENEFITS arising from walking were accepted as broad estimates. BF agreed that only 30 % of the equine economic contribution should be linked to access to PROW and trails.

Estimates of Health benefits for Trails had previously been supplied by Russell Wilson . MA said that work was currently being carried out by various institutions on the health benefits of PROWs and that he felt in the absence of results we should give only a broad indication. He offered to provide information on the research work being carried out. VC noted that there is a fairly well documented HEAT methodology but it required detailed information on the number of walkers, frequency and distance walked which was not readily available. **Action MA re comments on requests for research on health benefits of walking.**

Section 3 . The asset base and costs of maintenance

It was agreed that the text would be modified to show that the asset data , which showed lengths of footpath and bridleway, numbers of stiles, gates etc although drawn correctly from the 2019-20 TAMP was based on extrapolations from an old data base and should be treated as being estimates only.

JM said that the budgets for maintenance of PROW in 2019-20 did not include £40,000 which had been put into a separate capital account. They should be added back for comparison purposes so that the reduction in budget on maintaining PROW would be from £201,611 in 2016-17 to £164,000 in 2019-20. Budget figures for the year 2021-2 are not yet available.

Regarding condition of the network VC noted that the text should be updated to reflect the latest data of logged requests for service on the Mayrise system.

JM explained that the £200k capital allocation was a one off fund covering the period from 2018 to 2021.

The committee debated to what extent it should seek to recognise the extremely adverse climate for local government finances in carrying out their duties regarding PROW. KH expressed the view that it was the role of the Committee to express any concerns about the adequacy of expenditure on the County fulfilling its duties regarding maintenance of PROW and associated assets. This did not mean that there was a lack of appreciation of the financial position. MS endorsed this position.

Section 4 . Alternative sources of funds for PROW.

JM asked whether the promotion of PROW to increase use was consistent with the strategy. VC indicated that that this was consistent with the Statement of actions 2019-2019 in the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP).

It was agreed that there should not be explicit reference to a number of possible walks (100 or 300) as this could generate another workload to identify and update the walks which have been published over the last 10 years..

BF said that it was desirable and viable that there should be promotion of Norfolk as the Walking county . She felt that parishes should be involved too. Walks needed to be identified and promoted. This was generally supported.

KH felt that parishes have the power to promote paths in their own territory.

SA said that parishes were asking for Parish Maps which could be displayed to encourage walkers. It was noted that this had been very successful in reviving local economies in the Yorkshire Dales for instance. SA said that NCC was looking at the possibility of a funded project through Pathmakers .

VC said that there was a risk if we promoted walks and could not afford to keep them well maintained. MA said that this needed to be recognised as a risk to be managed rather than a constraint. KH felt that this was the proposal was the type of thing which NLAF should be supporting.

Section 5. Understanding the opportunity costs of reducing budgets.

This section of the report recognised that although benefits exceeded costs by a large multiple we should still be pursuing efficiency gains. JM confirmed that the grass cutting contracts for Highways and trails had been merged for this reason.

There was general agreement among the NLAF members that further real cuts in budgets were likely to incur greater opportunity costs than the cash saved. There had been formal reassurances that the County would meet its PROW maintenance duties when the policy decision on the separation of Trails and PROW took place.

KH asked whether the results of the annual survey of public opinion on performance of Highway authorities was available. **SW to check**

Section 6. Conclusion

SA suggested that reference should be made to the Love the Broads campaign as an example of a successful promotion of an area for leisure activity including walking..

SA said that there are many circular walks attached to Trails which can be easily promoted. Alternatively we could focus on the areas which are not served by trails in order to spread out the pressure of demand from the honeypots.

KH suggested that we should encourage further ideas.

Next steps

It was agreed that the NLAF main committee in January would be made aware of the V&I group discussion of the draft report. Its content in terms of a revised draft should be made available to NLAF in order to draw out any helpful or critical comment without formally submitting the report as an Agenda item at this stage. Action:

SW to include with subgroup reports

Vision and Ideas Sub group : Report to NLAF

DRAFT

Revised post 10 December meeting

1 The work we have done so far

The Vision and Ideas group of the Norfolk Local Access Forum has held 5 meetings since May 2019. The original focus of our work was to estimate the economic value of the Public Rights Of Way (PROW) network and to explore the possibilities of alternative methods of financing the network.

In the course of our meetings we have received presentations on the economic value of sections of the Trails network and been provided with information about possible future investments in routes using the old railway corridors (Greenways project) and the Pilgrimage project.

In exploring benefits methodology we have received reports on the benefits of the Trails network and we have also looked at the report on the Economic Benefits of the English Coast Path. We discussed the possibilities of monetising benefits so that more resources could be made available for maintenance.

With reference to the cost of maintaining the PROW network we were provided access to official NCC papers which explain the decision by Norfolk County Council to separate the management of Trails from the PROW network in 2011 and the safeguards subsequently described to the Scrutiny committee to ensure adequate maintenance of the PROW network. We have also examined the 2019-20 Transport Asset Management Plan which shows the expenditure on PROW and trails.

2 Activity levels and the scale of benefits attributable to the PROW and Trails network.

Sport England sponsors the most comprehensive annual sample survey of activity levels in the UK using a sample size of 200,000 conducted by MORI. The survey data which is pre-covid shows that **walking is the most popular national activity .There is a strong upward trend in participation. In Norfolk 49.3% of the adult population of 750,000 said that they had walked at least twice for leisure in the last 28 days** between November 2018 and November 2019. This demonstrates an increase well above the national trend (up by 8% since 2015 -16 in NCC). In North Norfolk the participation rate is

even higher at 57% whereas in Norwich it is just over 40%. However many more people walk for travel in Norwich which, if added in, brings their overall activity levels up to average for the County. Before the covid restrictions all areas of the County were demonstrating an increase in leisure walking since 2015-16.

It is highly likely that restrictions on social mobility required by the Covid 19 pandemic of 2020-1 have increased the frequency of walking for exercise. Although no official stats are available there are reports that walking activity on the Marriotts way had increased by 100% in the period March to September 2020 and this has been reflected in other popular Trails. An increase in footfall on the PROW network is also evident but there is no measurement.

At this point the benefits of the Trails network are fairly well documented and we have been provided with a total economic benefit of £17m p.a. by Russell Wilson of the Trails team. We have a figure of £6 per walk for MENE benefits on the normal footpath network but the calculation of the number of walks on the network annually is difficult and subject to wide margins of error. More work is necessary to evaluate these benefits.

The benefits attributable to the network are very broadly estimated as follows:

Economic Benefits : £million per annum

Walkers :

National Trail only (Peddars' Way & Norfolk Coast Path) (based on ¹ surveys and counters)	17
PROW (Based on ² MENE valuation of £6 per walk).	15
Horses (Based on 30% of ³ total equine economic contribution)	30

Health benefits

⁴ Trails	70
⁵ PROW	30 +

Summary of benefits

Although there may be considerable range of uncertainty around the exact numbers, which would require significant expenditure on counters and surveys to narrow down, there is little doubt that **economic benefits to the Norfolk economy of the PROW and Trails network exceed £50m per annum and health and wellbeing benefits £100m per annum.**

3 The asset base and costs of maintenance

Assets:

Based on the Countryside Access management system quoted on the ⁶2019/20-2023/24 TAMP the physical parameters of the Norfolk total network including Trails are:

	Length km
Footpath (excl. permissive)	2700
Bridleway	590
Restricted Byway	480
Byway open to all Traffic	54
TOTAL	3824

Structures:	Number
Bridges	1300
Signposts	6800
Way- marks	1000s
Stiles	1650
Gates	1750

These figures are based upon Countryside Access Management System records 2014. We are advised by NCC staff that they should be regarded as an estimate only.

Costs of maintenance:

⁷The revenue budget to maintain these assets on the **PROW network (excluding trails) peaked at £201,611 in 2016-17 and was reduced to £124,000 for 2019-20. However a separate provision of £40,000 was included in a Capital Account for 2019-20.**

⁸For **Trails** the separate revenue budget increased from £77,000 in 2016-17 to **£92, 270 in 2019-20.**

Condition of the Network

There is no database currently showing condition of the PROW in Norfolk. A structured Asset Management Plan such as that pioneered by Kent CC, which identifies the level of expenditure necessary to keep the asset base in a stable and sustainable condition has not been completed for Norfolk CC. (Norfolk is not alone in this regard.)

In the absence of sample surveys of asset condition the only parameter which provides a suitable indicator is problems reported by the public. Over the 2 years ended 27 October 2020 some 5976 defects in PROW were reported. The best indicator of work outstanding is ⁹ Mayrise system of “logged requests for service for which an order had not been raised” which stands at 940 on 30 September 2020 ,including damaged or missing signs, obstructions, overgrown surface, overgrown hedges and trees and surface condition. This backlog has grown due to the suspension of maintenance work on PROW during the lockdown. As the latest report to the NALF PROW committee noted the additional use of footpaths during lockdown led to increased reporting of complaints about the condition of the local path network. “This has been recognised within the ROW profession nationally and **some LA’s are now re-evaluating the importance of adequately maintaining local path networks.**” However the report states that “at the current time there are no additional resources earmarked for PROW maintenance”. There is a £200k capital allocation for upgrading schemes but larger schemes , including those in conjunction with the EA , are regarded as only achievable through one off additional fund allocations.

4 Alternative sources of funds for PROW

The attraction of alternative sources of funds for Public Rights of Way requires a marketing platform. Vision and Ideas Group have considered whether it is possible to promote Norfolk generally as the Walking County. There is a need to create additional routes for exercise as well as tourism given overcrowding on some of the honey pot walks, especially on the coast, and this is consistent with the NAIP. Norfolk has a variety of inland walks which are easily accessible through beautiful countryside. Sponsorship of the most interesting footpath walks as a group or set may be possible. Parishes and Town Councils may be interested in promoting local footpaths in order to attract walkers and enhance local businesses as seen in Derbyshire and the Yorkshire Dales. Parishes had indicated an interest in Parish maps to display local footpaths. Prior to lockdown there was some interest from local parishes to take on the footpath maintenance stewardship, with a transfer of budget from NCC.

The Experience project which is being led by NCC may give rise to broader marketing opportunities. An example of a successful project was “Love the Broads”. There may be scope for Park and Walk/Horse-ride schemes to generate revenue. We are now seeing many new walkers who are not affiliated to groups but have become interested in walking due to the lockdown experience and who are seeking to find and explore new routes.

5 Foregone benefits and missed opportunities

Commercial benefits amounting to £50 million p.a. and community/health benefits worth probably in excess of £100 million p.a. could effectively be underpinned by a very modest increase to the maintenance expenditure on PROW and T rails.

The fact that benefits of the network are so high should not preclude measures to further improve the efficiency of maintenance work, such as combining grass cutting contracts for highways and paths which has been activated recently.

The V&I group understand the severe budget constraints that apply to local government generally. However there is real concern that if the expenditure falls to a level where walks or riding circuits cannot, reliably or safely, be completed by members of the public, or tourists enjoying exercise, then

confidence will be lost , many £ millions of benefits will also be lost and the effectiveness of the network will be damaged. Significant expenditure has already been taken out of the PROW element of the network by efficiency improvements but there is now concern among experienced walkers that it has fallen to sub optimal levels which is affecting the County's ability to enforce the obligations of farmers and landowners as well as support their own statutory duties.

Part of the thinking behind the policy of separating the management of Trails from Public Rights of Way was that the Trails and associated circular walks could represent a "sustainable" segment of the network. Explicit in transferring the PROW network from Environment to Highways was the opportunity to maximise the efficiency of the PROW maintenance activity. At the time 3 County Councillors raised the concern that the policy might lead to legal action against the County for failing to carry out its maintenance duties and "called in" the decision. Through a formal review process, ie the Scrutiny committee, they received assurances that the network would be maintained effectively and there was no implication that the network would be allowed to deteriorate.

Despite these assurances it seems probable that further reductions in expenditure on the PROW network are likely to incur opportunity costs (in the form of lost benefits) which are substantially greater than the cash saved. These opportunity costs include all the benefits which are foregone as a result of a loss of public trust in an otherwise highly valuable network and may amount to many £millions.

On the other hand there is an opportunity for Norfolk to invest in the most popular leisure activity, which has benefits for wellbeing and health and potential economic gain for the local economy.

6 Conclusion

Investment in Trails and their maintenance to higher quality levels has significantly benefited the population of Norfolk and the leisure economy. The PROW network offers significant economic and health benefits too. At current levels of expenditure, small reductions of just tens of thousands £'s from the PROW budget could have big consequences for these benefits and for public confidence in the PROW network; by the same token, increases of

quite modest levels could have equally big, but positive, consequences and lever in much larger benefits.

It would be possible to develop a strategic opportunity to make Norfolk the Walking County where visitors and residents are attracted to take more exercise locally leading to environmental and health benefits plus commercial gains for pubs and local shops. This would involve promotion of Norfolk's walks primarily involving local PROW and easing the burden on the most popular Trails. It would need a thematic marketing platform covering Norfolk as a whole and supplemented by many local initiatives at Parish and Town level. Detailed thinking behind this proposal can be developed by the NLAF and voluntary bodies in which Pathmakers could be an important player. However such an investment of effort and time of many volunteers will depend on a credible commitment to maintenance of the network at a level which signifies and underpins strategic intent.

Notes

Sources are given below. It is accepted that the calculation made require more thorough verification, but nevertheless are robust enough to give a clear idea of potential benefits from increasing investment.

¹ National Trails Annual Report 2018 / 2019, Norfolk County Council, 2019, p28

² Average amount spent on greenspace visits: £6 Countryside and Town & City (£18 Coastal visit); Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment, Natural England, 2016, p11. Norfolk Insight gives the adult (16+) population of Norfolk as 750,000 (<https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/population/#page1>). The MENE Annual Report 2013-14 said 58% of the English adult population claimed to visit the outdoors at least once a week. Scaling this up to 52 weeks, and using the £6 per visit figure indicates a spend of £135m. We have taken just an eighth of this as a conservative estimate, allowing for exaggeration and double counting of the Trails use.

³ Figures from a paper prepared by Brigid Fairman for the Vision and Ideas Subgroup, 21 July 2020. It is estimated that there are some 36,000 horses in Norfolk, and each horse contributes £3-5,000 to small independent businesses in the local economy including farriers, vets, hay straw, hard feed, livery, saddlers, instructors, paddock maintenance, competition venues etc. Taking the lower figure, the local economy in Norfolk may benefit by £108 million; only 30% of this has been attributed to usage on PROW.

⁴ According to the National Trails Annual Report 2018 / 2019, Norfolk County Council, 2019, p28, £32.4m is attributable to the National Trail alone (Peddars' Way & Norfolk Coast Path),

so we consider £70m, a figure quoted to us but without further reference, to be a reasonable estimate for the whole Norfolk Trails network.

⁵ Estimate to be verified. This figure is derived from the HEAT model developed by the World Health Organisation to assess the value of regular walking activity using very modest assumptions of numbers engaging in footpath walking .

⁶ Transport and Asset Management Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24, Norfolk County Council, 2019, p299 and 300

⁷ Transport and Asset Management Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24, Norfolk County Council, 2019, p303.

2013-14 Actual	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Original
£140,793	£180,703	£170,712	£201,611	£113,125	£121,494	£124,000

The table below indicates the % of the total length of footpaths and other rights of way that were easy to use by members of the public - falling over the years from a point where one in five paths were not easy to use, to more than a quarter of all paths were not easy to use.

	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Target	79%	79%	79%	79%	70%	Discontinued
Actual	79.1%	78.8%	76.8%	78.9%	72.5%	

⁸ Transport and Asset Management Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24, Norfolk County Council, 2019, p307.

2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Budget
£84,850	£82,942	£77,000	£82,945	£62,770	£92,270

⁹ Countryside Access arrangements update for Norfolk Local Access Forum PRoW subgroup meeting on 7 December 2020, Appendix 3 Months to 30 September 2020, p3.

Vic Cocker

for the Vision and Ideas Subgroup of the Norfolk Local Access Forum

05 January 2021

Norfolk Local Access Forum

(Forum member report)

Report title:	Pathmakers update.
Date of meeting:	20 th January 2021

Summary

Pathmakers Trustees have met virtually a couple of times since the last NLAF meeting.

- The Paving the Way project is proceeding in a limited way. We will shortly be sending out a tender for the drafting of a communications plan. We would hope to launch the new Comms Plan when the Covid restrictions allow and we will be following this up with a scheme to promote Pathmakers.
- We are in the process of agreeing our appointment as project managers of a proposal to erect fences and bridges on behalf of the Lizard Trust on land immediately to the south of the A 11 at Wymondham. The appropriate funding is in place.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	Please see Summary. Further verbal updates will be given at the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	That the NLAF notes progress to date.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	n/a

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name : Simon Fowler.
Email address : simonfowler5@gmail.com

Norfolk Local Access Forum Committee

Item No. 14

Decision making report title:	Update on the EXPERIENCE Project and its Norfolk Objectives
Date of meeting:	20 January 2021
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andy Grant
Responsible Director:	Steve Miller (Director, Culture and Heritage)
Is this a key decision?	No
<p>Executive Summary</p> <p>EXPERIENCE is a €23m project co-funded by the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme, which has committed €16m from the European Regional Development Fund. With 14 partners across France and England, EXPERIENCE will boost off-season visitor numbers in Norfolk, Kent, Cornwall, Pas-de-Calais, Compiègne and Brittany by developing sustainable experiential tourism based on natural and cultural assets. The project is led by Norfolk County Council and runs from September 2019 to June 2023. You can find out more about EXPERIENCE here.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>1. To note the objectives of the EXPERIENCE project, how it will be achieved and its impact on the visitor economy.</p>	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. Co-funded by the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme, EXPERIENCE will run from Sept 2019 to June 2023 and will increase off-season (October to March) visitors to six regions across England and France. Norfolk County Council Environment Service is the lead partner of this project.
- 1.2. 'Destination' tourism in much of England and France has traditionally centred on promoting mass-market locations during the peak season. 'Experiential' tourism engages with visitors and encourages them to seek their own adventures. It supports immersion in cultures and landscapes and follows a 'tread lightly' ethos. EXPERIENCE will transform the off-season visitor economy by supporting the development of this innovative experiential tourism strategy.
- 1.3. Experiential tourists to Norfolk will immerse themselves in our unique regional culture to explore local foods and crafts, bespoke activities, inspiring arts, an outstanding natural landscape and stunning regional heritage assets.

- 1.4. Sustainability of the new tourism offer is central to EXPERIENCE. The project aims to avoid the pitfalls of peak season tourism and create lasting benefit for people, place and economy. One third of the activities and itineraries developed will be accessible and inclusive to people with additional cognitive/physical/sensory requirements and/or people from backgrounds less likely to access nature and culture e.g. BAME communities and LGBTQ+ .
- 1.5. Consequently, as well as generating economic prosperity, the project aims to bring benefits to the local residents and the wider environment. To achieve this, EXPERIENCE will work with local businesses and communities. In some locations existing infrastructure, including cycle and walking trails, such as the Bure Valley Path, will be adapted, while new products will be market tested to ensure they meet the rigorous sustainability and accessibility/inclusivity standards.
- 1.6. An online platform will be created to inspire tourists before their visit and enable them to curate their own experiential adventures. Cutting-edge marketing will promote the experiences effectively to an international market.
- 1.7. Throughout EXPERIENCE, the 14 project partners will continually collaborate and share best practice. This knowledge, along with the experiential tourism strategy, will be made freely available to help local, regional and international tourism recover, and eventually thrive, in a post-Covid market.

2. Proposals

- 2.1. NA

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. NA

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1. NA

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1. NA

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. NA

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1. **Staff:**

NA

- 7.2. **Property:**

NA

- 7.3. IT:
 - NA
- 8. Other Implications**
 - 8.1. Legal Implications
 - NA
 - 8.2. Human Rights implications
 - NA
 - 8.3. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
 - NA
 - 8.4. Health and Safety implications
 - NA
 - 8.5. Sustainability implications
 - NA
 - 8.6. Any other implications
- 9. Risk Implications/Assessment**
 - 9.1. NA
- 10. Select Committee comments**
 - 10.1. NA
- 11. Recommendations**
 - 11.1. 1. To note the objectives of the EXPERIENCE project, how it will be achieved and its impact on the visitor economy.
- 12. Background Papers**
 - 12.1. NA

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name:	Patricia Day Mathew Hayward Tel No.: 01603 223315	Tel No.:	01603 217605
Email address:	patricia.day@norfolk.gov.uk ; matthew.hayward2@norfolk.gov.uk		



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Report title:	Countryside Access Arrangements Update
Date of meeting:	20th January 2021
Responsible Officer:	Steve Miller, Director, Culture and Heritage
Strategic impact To address the concerns raised by the Local Access Forum with regards to Public Rights of Way Management and delivering the service in an economic and cost-effective way.	

Executive summary

At the July 2017 Local Access Forum (NLAF), it was agreed that at each future meeting, a summary of the work the Countryside Access Officers and Environment teams would be provided. At the October 2017 NLAF it was agreed that this report should be presented to the PROW sub-group prior to being brought to NLAF.

This paper highlights this work in terms of the volumes of customer queries received and responded to. The paper also highlights other key areas of work.

Recommendations:

1. That the Local Access Forum note the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Since 1 April 2017, there is a single point of contact within each Highways Area office being responsible for their local rights of way issues. By having the officer within the Area office, they are more “on the ground” and better placed to deal with the operational reactive issues that occur when managing rights of way. They are supported by the wider Highways Area team staff. In addition, the Norfolk Trails team sits within the Environment Service at County Hall and carries out strategic and developmental aspects of developing the countryside access network.

2. Performance

- 2.1. The information in **Appendix A(to follow)** summarises the performance information available for the complete months since the last report.
- 2.2. The new CRM defect reporting system went live in March 2018. Defect notes are being made visible to the public in the automatic update emails sent when third party defects have been inspected & more status options available on tablets under the ‘No Defect’ category, as previously reported.
Minor updates continue to be made to CRM to enhance operation and feedback elements.
The provision of additional information appears to have led to a decrease in follow up requests.
- 2.3. A new report has been prepared to display the relevant PROW/Trails information via PowerBI – **Appendix A (Stats for the last 3 months and 2 years) (to follow)**.
- 2.4. In summary, the Mayrise system of logged requests for service had at 26th October 2020 **727** open issues for Public Rights of Way. There were an additional 154 logged to the Trails Team members. Most enquiries received continue to be regarding damaged or missing signs, non-reinstatement, obstructions, overgrown surface, overgrown hedges/ trees and surface condition.
- 2.5. The significant rise in cases is primarily attributed to the impact of Covid 19. While

the country went into lockdown Central Government advice was that local outdoor exercise was promoted for wellbeing and there was evidence of significant increases in walking, running and cycling on village/local path networks across the Country. There were also isolated cases of landowners using Covid as an excuse to close some paths. Naturally, additional use has led to an increase in complaints about the condition of the local path network. This has been recognised within the ROW profession nationally and some LA's are now re-evaluating the importance of adequately maintaining local path networks.

- 2.6. At the current time there are no additional resources earmarked for PROW maintenance.
- 2.7. As of the 14th September 2020, the Norfolk Trails Team had 136 open CRM issues. Highways had 91 open CRM issues
- 2.8. These figures do not reflect the substantial volume of reports and correspondence still received through direct email and telephone communication from members of the public.
- 2.9. In addition to the numbers above, there have been a number of enforcement notices sent out to landowners since April 2020. The following have been issued:
 - 21 number Section 131A, 134-137 Non-reinstatement Notices issued. The majority are resolved without recourse to further enforcement. The numbers are lower so far this year this may be a reflection of the impact of Covid 19, during a significant part of the summer the CAO's have been unable to make site visits to corroborate/serve notice regarding non-reinstatement issues.
 - Since April 2020, No Section 130's (obstructions) or s56 (out of repair) notices have been received by NCC. It is noted that a total of 13 notices were received in 2019-20.
- 2.10. It should be noted that processing these s130/56 legal notices is time consuming for NCC staff. As part of a legal process with set timescales, regardless of priority considerations it has an adverse effect on staff resources. Recent surveys of local authority PROW services indicate that across the country the *average* number of s130/56 notices served on any authority is only approximately 2 per yr. These issues remain ongoing and being actively monitored and pursued with landowners.
- 2.11. In terms of other progress, key highlights include:
 - A new cutting contract tender process was completed and several new contractors were added to the NCC approved list of contractors although some are less likely to receive work purely on a cost basis, being considerably higher on a per metre basis. Highways and Trails cutting contracts have been amalgamated for practical and efficiency purposes for 2020 and going forward.
 - There have been some issues with the new 2020 cutting contract. Awarding contract areas was delayed at the start of Covid and delays in authorisation to commence cutting as lockdown eased meant that the cutting was delayed by about 6 weeks. The performance of new contractors has been variable, but we are working on improvements with them. One contractor has agreed to a reduction in payment based on poor performance.
Capital fund: Remainder of £200k allocation has been earmarked for schemes that will be completed by the end of 2021. (e.g: upgrade to the surface of Ingoldisthorpe FP4, a well-used route to school and local link path, now complete).
 - Some schemes have had to have been deferred until 20/21 such as Cley FP4 in partnership with EA, this particular issue is down to priorities/pressures on EA elsewhere in response to UK flooding issues. Such schemes are part of a

forward programme list of larger scale capital PROW works compiled by CAO's which may only be achievable through similar "one off" additional fund allocations.

- Urban paths: A small Capital Fund is available for the improvement of Urban paths (primarily surfacing) 2 paths in Downham Market and one in Kings Lynn are under investigation for 2020/21.

2.12. **Norfolk Trails update**

- 2.13. Paston Way signage has been completed. This Trail runs from North Walsham through to Cromer and covers 22 miles. This route has also benefitted from vegetation cut backs and access improvements.



Associated promotional booklet and research has been completed and booklet is going through the proofing process

2.14.



Following an access audit further work completed on the Boudiccas way at Shotesham – bridge improved, signage checked and repaired, boardwalks maintained.

2.15. Weavers Way circular walks installed at Aylsham North West, Aylsham North East and White Horse common.

2.16.



Before



After

Tree work across the network – particularly on the Marriotts way and Pingo trail.

2.17.



Work has been completed with landowner at Riddleworth on the Angles way. Obstructions removed and landowner has installed new gates on route providing improved walking experience on the Angles Way

2.18. National Trail annual asset audit has been completed.

2.19. **New cutting contract**

2.20. The procurement of the cutting contract is progressing on time. The tender has been advertised and the opportunity for questions to be asked has been completed. This has again created additional work for the trails team on mapping and contract clarification.

2.21. The closing date and evaluation period is during March with contract awarding expected at the end of March / during April.

3. Financial Implications

3.1. None arising from this report

4. Issues, risks and innovation

4.1 Jody Thurston met with Paul Tong Community Payback Senior Officer (The Norfolk and Suffolk Community Rehabilitation Company) to see if there is any scope for their volunteers to help maintain the Rights of Way network. They are looking for routine work and would require welfare facilities (if there are none local). CAO's will consider routes that may be suitable for ongoing work but this may be subject to limitations regarding welfare facilities. There are no updates regarding this work. Covid issues will impact on delivery of this type of work for the foreseeable future.

4.2 Highways England Meeting update

4.3 *An initial meeting was held on the 2nd December 2019 with Highways England (HE) to discuss RoW issues severance by main trunk roads (A11 & A47).*

Last year NCC provided HE with the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan affirming the need for Highways England to look at PROWs between King's Lynn to Swaffham.

4.4 A follow up meeting was arranged for the end of March 2020 to consider HE's "Designated Fund" criteria linked to PROW which will include further discussions around network connectivity and trunk road barriers to non-motorised users. Meetings have been postponed because of Covid and there has been no further progress regarding this matter.

4.5 Jody Thurston (CAO South area) is no longer the South area contact for PROW issues. **Frances Salway** is the new South Area CAO. Covid issues delayed the commencement of the post and there have been some I.T. challenges in getting Frances the necessary support for her role during lockdown resulting in significant backlogs on issues. These will take some time to clear with current resources.

5. Background

5.1. The background information to this paper is covered by the preceding paper on Public Rights of Way Maintenance, presented to this Committee.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

Officer name : **Jason Moorse**
 Mike Auger

Tel No: **01553 778002**
Tel No. **01603 223057**

Email address : jason.moorse@norfolk.gov.uk
 mike.auger@norfolk.gov.uk



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Norfolk Local Access Forum Committee

Item No: 16

Decision making report title:	NCC member Walking and Cycling Champion update
Date of meeting:	20 January 2021
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andy Grant (Cabinet Member- Environment and Waste)
Responsible Director:	Steve Miller (Director, Culture and Heritage)
Is this a key decision?	No
<p>Executive Summary</p> <p>At the July 2019 LAF meeting it was agreed that the Walking and Cycling Champion provide a summary of the key walking and cycling projects relevant to the Local Access Forum.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>1. To note the progress of the below walking and cycling projects by the Local Access Forum committee.</p>	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. To provide an update to the Local Access Forum on progress on key projects from the Walking and Cycling Team.

2. Proposals

2.1. Overview of key projects delivered in 2020

Below is an overview of key walking and cycling project delivered in 2020.

2.2. Holkham resurfacing

The surfacing at Holkham on the coast path between Lady Anne's Drive and Wells and circular walk signage is complete. This has created a vastly improved all weather surface on one of the most heavily used sections of the Coast Path.

2.3. Weavers Way resurfacing and railway heritage gates

The resurfacing on the Weavers Way between Alysham and Stalham has been completed and the 11 heritage railway gates have also been installed along the route through funding from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

2.4. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan work

Norfolk County Council are developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) to provide a prioritised list of schemes to improve walking and

cycling conditions. Four LCWIPs are currently in progress looking at Norwich, King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Dereham, the outputs of these reports will be.

- A network plan for walking and cycling and identification of the priority cycling routes and walking zones
- A prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements to be delivered in the short, medium and long term
- A report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and growing network.

2.5. **Pathways to History**

Earlier in 2020 the UEA landscape history team and NCC's Walking and Cycling team works together to create 5 new short walks in the Wensum Valley with a particular focus on the historical landscape of the area. These were promoted as part of the heritage open days through a webinar with Dr Sarah Spooner at UEA talking through the routes. Information about these routes can be found at <http://pathwaystohistory.co.uk/wp/>

2.6. **Transforming Cities- Tranche 2 application**

The Walking and Cycling Team has contributed to the Tranche 2 of the Norwich Transforming Cities Application. A resubmission was request by DfT and a revised proposal was submitted in May 2021 and local consultation is currently ongoing on detailed plans for individual elements of the proposals.

2.7. **Pushing Ahead**

Following the extension of the Pushing Ahead funding, the Pushing Ahead project continues to work across existing partnerships and initiatives to support economic growth in Norwich and Great Yarmouth. Its main objective is to reduce single occupancy car trips and increase 'active' travel. This has been delivered through several schemes including workplace promotion and promotion of the new Beryl Bike Scheme.

3. **Key projects to be delivered in 2021**

Below is an overview of key walking and cycling projects to be delivered in 2021.

3.1. **Greenways**

The Covid situation has delayed planned feasibility works to continue our Greenways project, however, we plan to continue these in 2021 and link this in with the Local Cycling and Walking Plans wherever possible, especially at King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

3.2. **Weavers' Way Circular Walks**

Following the completion of the resurfacing 8 new circular walks are going to be waymarked using the Weavers' Way and other existing Public Rights of Way. The waymarking has been built and will be installed early in 2021 with new route leaflets available in the Spring.

- 3.3. **Burlingham**
Following a successful application to the Business Rates Pool fund we are currently undertaking a feasibility study on the Norfolk County Council owned land at Burlingham. This will provide details on opportunities for access improvements as well as wider Environmental schemes to support the 25 year Environmental Plan.
- 3.4. **Bure Valley Path**
Norfolk County Council have entered into a partnership with Broadland District Council to support the maintenance and Improvement on the Bure Valley Path. This will be a key element of the delivery of the Experience Project and part of a CIL funded project that will start in April 2021 to bring access and ecological improvements onto the path.
- 3.5. **Kett's Country Long Distance Trail**
Following a successful bid to the Greater Norwich Growth Broad for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding we are creating a new Norfolk Trail, Kett's Country. This will link Norwich to Wymondham via existing public rights of way, it will be fully signed along the route and will have associated promotional material created for it. Five new circular walks will be signed, and access will be improved along the route by removing stiles and fixing bridges. These works will start in the spring and be completed by autumn.
- 3.6. **National Cycle Network review**
This year, Sustrans announced a national review of the National Cycle Network (NCN), as part of this some sections in Norfolk has been declassified and identified as providing poor cycling provision. We are working with Sustrans to identify schemes to bring forward our Greenways network and also bring these sections of the National Cycle Network back up to the standard needed and extend where possible
- 3.7. **Extension of England Coast Path**
In November 2020 Natural England presented their plan for the next section of the coast path between Hunstanton and Sutton Bridge. A consultation is currently underway and is due to close on the 20th January. Establishment works will only start once the proposals have been approved by the Secretary of State.
- 3.8. **Delivery of delayed upgrade to existing Norfolk Trails Network**
Resuming work on planned improvements works on the trails network that has been delayed due to Covid.
- 3.9. **Extension of Norfolk Trails to include access through some of the major re-wilding projects underway in West Norfolk.**
Progression of extending the Norfolk Trails network, working alongside Natural England, to include access through areas currently undergoing re-wilding projects.
- 3.10. **Develop Active Travel solutions within the AONB pilot project.**
Working with the Norfolk Coast Partnership to develop and promote active travel solutions within the Norfolk Coast AONB.

4. Impact of the Proposal

4.1. n/a

5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

5.1. n/a

6. Alternative Options

6.1. n/a

7. Financial Implications

7.1. n/a

8. Resource Implications

8.1. **Staff:**

n/a

8.2. **Property:**

n/a

8.3. **IT:**

n/a

9. Other Implications

9.1. **Legal Implications**

n/a

9.2. **Human Rights implications**

n/a

9.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)**

n/a

9.4. **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate)**

n/a

9.5. **Sustainability implications (where appropriate)**

9.6. **Any other implications**

n/a

10. Risk Implications/Assessment

10.1. n/a

11. Select Committee comments

11.1. n/a

12. Recommendations

12.1. 1. To note the progress of the below walking and cycling projects by the Local Access Forum committee.

13. Background Papers

13.1. n/a

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Matt Hayward **Tel No.:** 01603 223315

Email address: Matthew.hayward2@norfolk.gov.uk



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Norfolk Local Access Forum Committee

Item No: 17

Decision making report title:	Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning
Date of meeting:	20th January 2021
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andy Grant (Cabinet Member- Environment and Waste)
Responsible Director:	Steve Miller (Director, Culture and Heritage)
Is this a key decision?	No
<p>Executive Summary</p> <p>A table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk (including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)) which impact on public rights of way has been made available to the NLAf by NCC Environment Team (Appendix 1).</p> <p>The NLAf agreed a revised protocol to address how they deal with schemes and projects that may impact on PRow at their last meeting (October 7th 2020).</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>1. To note the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.</p>	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. Major infrastructure projects (including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)) in Norfolk carry implications for the public rights of way (PRow) network.

A table of major infrastructure projects which impact of PRow has been listed by NCC Environment team and made available to the NLAf (**Appendix 1**).

2. Proposals

- 2.1. That the NLAf notes the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. See background and proposals

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1. See background and proposals

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1. See background and proposals

- 6. Financial Implications**
 - 6.1. None as a result of this report
- 7. Resource Implications**
 - 7.1. **Staff:**
N/A
 - 7.2. **Property:**
N/A
 - 7.3. **IT:**
N/A
- 8. Other Implications**
 - 8.1. **Legal Implications**
N/A
 - 8.2. **Human Rights implications**
N/A
 - 8.3. **Equality Impact Assessment**
N/A
 - 8.4. **Health and Safety implications**
N/A
 - 8.5. **Sustainability implications**
N/A
 - 8.6. **Any other implications**
- 9. Risk Implications/Assessment**
 - 9.1. N/A
- 10. Select Committee comments**
 - 10.1. N/A
- 11. Recommendations**
 - 11.1. 1. To note the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk
- 12. Background Papers**
 - 12.1. N/A

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Mike Auger

Tel No.: 01603 223057

Email address: Mike.auger@norfolk.gov.uk



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Summary of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and other Major Strategic Projects impacting on Norfolk

December 2019

1.	Summary of NSIP Proposals – September 2020	
	Proposal (Applicant)	Status / Note
1.1.	<p>Hornsea Project Three Offshore (2.4 GW) Wind farm and ancillary onshore grid connection (Orsted);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfall Weybourne; • Booster Station at Little Barningham; • Grid connection at Norwich Main <p>National Infrastructure Planning webpage</p>	<p>Public Examination ran 2/10/18 – 2/4/19</p> <p>On 1 July 2020 the Secretary of State (SoS) for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma) announced that he was minded to approve the application subject to further information from the applicant and interested parties.</p> <p>The further information relates to offshore habitat/environmental matters.</p> <p>The final Decision has been postponed to 31 December 2020</p>
1.2.	<p>Norfolk Vanguard Offshore Wind Farm and ancillary onshore grid connection (Vattenfall) (1.8 GW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfall at Happisburgh; • Grid Connection at Necton <p>National Infrastructure Planning webpage</p>	<p>On 1 July 2020 The Secretary of State has granted development consent for this application. For further information please refer to the following decision documentation:</p> <p>Planning Inspectorate Notification of Decision Letter Secretary of State Decision Letter Examining Authority Recommendation Report Development Consent Order as made by the Secretary of State Habitats Regulation Assessment Regulation 31 Notice</p>
1.3.	<p>Boreas (1.8 GW) offshore wind Farm</p> <p>National Infrastructure Planning webpage</p>	<p>This scheme is approximately 12 months behind the Norfolk Vanguard project (sister project) and uses much of the same proposed onshore infrastructure, for example: shared landfall point; cable route/ducts; and grid connection point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S42 PEIR consultation took place November 2018. • DCO Submission in June 2019. • Application accepted in July 2019.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of preliminary meeting in October 2019 (here) <p>Examination timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination – hearings started in November 2019 and should have finish on 12 May 2020, however, this has now been extended to 12 October 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. Hearings now being undertaken using TEAMS; • Examination has finished 12 October 2020. The Examining Authority have three months to make their recommendation to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State then has 3 months to make his final decision.
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	Highway Projects	
1.4.	Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling Scheme Highways England Highways England project page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th September HE shared current plans based on feedback received as part of autumn 2018 consultation • The application is expected to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Q4 2020 <p>Construction start estimated to be January – March 2022-23</p>
1.5.	A47 / A11 Thickthorn Junction Improvement Highways England Highways England project page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S42 consultation on PEIR – Ran between 3/6/19 – 11/7/19 • Application for development consent early 2021 • Construction start date estimated to be January – March 2022-23
1.6.	A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Dualling Scheme Highways England Highways England project page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S42 (PEIR) Consultation – ran between 26/2/20 to 8/4/20 (NB was extended to 30/4/20 due to Covid-19). • 56 DCO Consultation – not known at this point in time; • Construction start date estimated to be January-March 2022-23.
1.7.	Vauxhall Junction (NSIP Uncertain) Highways England project page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the preferred route announcement of the Highways England (HE) scheme, the Great Yarmouth 'Third River Crossing' was awarded funding by the Department for Transport. • Initial assessment commissioned by HE has indicated that the Third River Crossing may have

		<p>a significant impact on traffic flows in Great Yarmouth, therefore HE to reassess traffic flows in the area so that agreement can be reached as to what is required to improve the road network in Great Yarmouth</p>
1.8.	<p>Third River Crossing – Great Yarmouth</p> <p>National Infrastructure Planning webpage</p>	<p>NCC received confirmation (26/2/18) that the Secretary of State has accepted the section 35 application (Planning Act 2008) for the project to be considered nationally significant and therefore follow the DCO process for statutory approvals. Key dates for delivering are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCO submitted to PINs with consultation (S56) ran between 17/6/19 to 4/8/19; • Examination took place between 24 September 2019 to 24/3/2020; • Recommendations sent to SoS 24 June 2020; • DCO granted on 24 September 2020 by the Secretary of State; • Start of works on site January 2021; • NCC have submitted the Full Business Case to DfT and are awaiting approval that we hope to receive early in December, enabling the planned start of works early in January 2021. All pre-commencement Requirements within the DCO are currently being worked through. • Assuming start of works is January 2021, completion is expected by early 2023.
1.9.	<p>Norwich Western Link (NWL)</p> <p>Not an NSIP</p> <p>Norfolk County Council webpage</p>	<p>Following the announcement of the preferred route for the Norwich Western Link in July 2019, the project team have been carrying out work to refine and inform the detailed design of the road and associated measures.</p> <p>We have also started work on an Outline Business Case for the project, which is the next document we are required to submit to the Department for Transport. This will go into more detail than the Strategic Outline Business Case which was submitted in 2019 and approved in May 2020.</p> <p>We are working to the following timetable, some of which is subject to all the necessary statutory processes for a project of this kind being complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 – Outline Business Case completed and submitted • Early 2021 – Contractor appointed • Mid-2021 – Pre-planning application public consultation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 – Start of work on site • Late 2025 – Road completed and open to traffic
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