

Norfolk Local Access Forum
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 09 July 2019
at 10.30am in the Oddfellows Hall, Sheringham.

Member:

Martin Sullivan - Chairman
Ken Hawkins – Vice-Chairman
Victor Cocker
Hilary Cox
Mike Edwards
Brigid Fairman
Donna Gibling
David Hissey
Suzanne Longe
Elizabeth Meath Baker

Representing:

Motorised Vehicles
Walking
Walking
Health and Wellbeing
Land Ownership
Equestrian
Sport and Outdoor Recreation
Cycling
Equestrian
Rural / local business / economy

Officers Present:

Sarah Abercrombie	Green Infrastructure Team Leader (Projects)
Gemma Harrison	Green Infrastructure Officer
Ella Meecham	Marriott's Way Heritage Trail Project Trainee
Matt Hayward	Lead project Officer
Su Waldron	Project Officer (Green Infrastructure)
Russell Wilson	Senior Trails Officer (Infrastructure)
Matt Worden	Area Manager (South)
Nicola LeDain	Committee Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Chris Allhusen, Andy Brazil, Geoff Doggett, Bethan Edmunds, Simon Fowler, Louise Rout, Paul Rudkin, Cllr Andrew Jamieson.
- 1.2 It was requested that as the walking and cycling champion, Cllr Andrew Jamieson be invited to submit a written report for each meeting if he were unable to attend.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no interests declared.

4. Urgent Business

- 4.1 There was no urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 No public questions were received.

6. Local member Issues / Questions

There were no member questions received.

7. Feedback from Events

- 7.1 Ken Hawkins reported that he had attended meetings of the Broads LAF and Suffolk LAF. There had been staff resignations from the Broads Authority who were also part of the BLAF and this had created some concern with members of the BLAF. The Forum were investigating the public access in the staithes in the Broads Area.
- 7.2 The Suffolk LAF meeting had taken place in April and they were focusing their attention on the Network Rail proposals to close level crossings. Their Public Rights of way Improvement Plan was out for consultation until 20th September.

8. NLAF's subgroups' report (Permissive Access; PROW; NAIP)

- 8.1 The NLAF received the annexed report (7) which summarised the activities since the last NLAF meeting by the NLAF's three subgroup: The Public Rights of Way (PROW) subgroup; the Permissive Access subgroup and the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) subgroup. 3 members asked to join the PROW subgroup: Brigid Fairman; David Hissey; Simon Fowler.
- 8.2 The NLAF:
- i). **NOTED** the positive report of the first parish council seminar and **ENDORSED** the plans for the second one;
 - ii). **AGREED** the proposed response regarding public rights of way affected by the route of the Long Stratton bypass;
 - iii). **AGREED** the proposed response regarding the Thickthorn junction crossing;
 - iv). **AGREED** to support the recommendation made by the Broads LAF to the Broads Authority for the creation of a Public Right of Way at Reedham to resolve problems of access along a key section of the Wherryman's Way;
 - v). **SUPPORTED** the letter sent by Worcestershire LAF to Defra seeking postponement of the deadline of 1st January 2026 as specified in the CROW Act 2000 and agreed to send their own letter along similar lines;
 - vi). **NOTED** work to promote the effective permissive access scheme at Bradenham;
 - vii). **NOTED** revisions to terms of reference (or new terms of reference) for the various subgroups

9. Pathmakers Project

- 9.1 The Forum received the annexed report (9) which updated the NLAF on recent activity by the Pathmakers.

- 9.2 As presented in the report, it was agreed that Kate MacKenzie and Simon Fowler would be two of the five NLAf's appointed Pathmakers Trustees. There were still vacancies on Pathmakers and there was concern that the time commitment could be a factor in individuals not applying from within NLAf. However, Pathmakers trustees do not have to be NLAf members.
- 9.3 The NLAf:
- (i) **NOTED** the Pathmakers Annual Report and Financial Statement (2017/18)
 - (ii) **AGREED** the proposed Pathmakers/NLAf members (as identified in this report) who would sift trustee applications (selection panel)
 - (iii) **AGREED** that the selection panel would have delegated authority to make trustee appointments subject to full NLAf approval
 - (iv) **NOTED** other updates presented in the report

10. National Trail Annual Report (Norfolk)

- 10.1 The Forum received the annexed report (10) which highlighted the work carried out by the National Trail Partnership in Norfolk over the past 12 months (2017 – 2018). This annual report is produced for Natural England and reflects the highlights of the development of the National Trail over the period.
- 10.2 The Forum heard that there had been a huge jump in footfall over some of the Trails. A factor of this was more and improved monitoring with data counters to be able to value the economic impact of the trail. Nationally, the monitoring differed as there were different management models and approaches. Some trails fell into more than one highway authorities which made it slightly more complicated.
- 10.3 As part of the national meeting of the Chairs of the regional Trails Partnerships, a working party had been created to lobby Government to explain why funding for trials needed to be long term.
- 10.4 The NLAf:
- i). **NOTED** the National Trail Annual Report (Norfolk) and outputs.
 - ii). **ENDORSED** the work of the National Trail Partnership in Norfolk and the ongoing delivery of the National Trail in Norfolk

11. Greenways Project

- 11.1 The Forum received the annexed report (11) which provided an update for the NLAf on the Recycling Norfolk's Disused railways, which was now known as the Greenways project including an update on the results of the public consultation on pilot route proposals following assessments by Sustrans and Active Norfolk.
- 11.2 A desk based feasibility study would take place for the Holt to Fakenham route in year one. With regards to the link to Wells, a full review had taken place about how it could be improved. It was hoped that the miniature railway line would co-exist alongside the proposed route.
- 11.3 There was a phased approach for the Weavers Way routes from Kings Lynn to Fakenham and Kings Lynn to Hunstanton to use the existing public rights of way network. The initial phases could take 3-5 years.

- 11.4 There was a discussion around the benefits of the green pilgrimage project and it was hoped that it would result in more sustainable tourism in Walsingham.
- 11.5 The NLAF **NOTED** the opportunities presented in the feasibility studies (Weavers' Way – Aylsham to Stalham; King's Lynn to Fakenham; King's Lynn to Hunstanton) and feasibility review of the whole disused railway network across Norfolk.

12. Establishing the Definitive Line (Wherrymans' Way Case Study)

- 12.1 The Forum received the annexed report (12) which highlighted the actions taken by Officers in ensuring the completeness and accuracy of the definitive Map and delivering a number of key outputs from the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP).
- 12.1 The Norfolk Local Access Forum **NOTED** the report and endorsed the approach taken by Officers:
- i). To align Public Rights of Way on the Definitive Line;
 - ii). To remove all barriers to access (or to install measures that provide the least restrictive access to the countryside);
 - iii). To support "access for all" routes being developed throughout the county as a priority action
 - iv). To support the use of the countryside for all users.

13. Countryside Access Arrangements Update

- 13.1 The Forum received the annexed report (13) which outlined the work in terms of the volumes of customer queries received and responded to. The paper also highlighted other key areas of work.
- 13.2 The Forum heard that cutting was now not taking place if wild flowers were present; they were left to bloom and seed. The cut on trails would take place at the end of July.
- 13.3 The Local Access Forum **NOTED** the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.

14. Major Infrastructure Projects

- 14.1 The NLAF received the annexed report (14) which informed them of any major infrastructure projects including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) which impacted on public rights of way.
- 14.2
- i). The NLAF **AGREED** the drafted protocol regarding their input on schemes and projects affecting PROW that arise through the planning system and welcomed the offer of training;
 - ii). The NLAF **AGREED** recommendations from the PROW subgroup regarding the updated list of major infrastructure projects and agreed draft responses (from the PROW subgroup) to the following schemes: A47/ Thickthorn bridge; Long Stratton bypass; Western Link; others (as identified by the PROW subgroup).

15. Appointment of Chair / Vice-Chair – process and timeline

- 15.1 The Forum received the annexed report (15) which outlined the process in place for appointing the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Norfolk Local Access Forum.
- 15.2 It was suggested that having to immediately chair a meeting straight after being elected made it hard for the Chair to be fully prepared and may be discouraging individuals from applying to be Chair so the term of office could start after the meeting in which the Chair was elected.
- 15.3 The NLAF **AGREED** the process and timeline for the 2019 appointment of the Forum's Chair and Vice-chair positions.

16. Meetings Forward Plan

- 16.1 The NLAF received the annexed report (16) which set out the Forum forward plan for future meetings.
- 16.2 The Forum heard that a replacement for George Saunders in his capacity of 'access for all' representative was being sought.
- 16.3 The NLAF **AGREED** the forward plan and considered items for future inclusion.

Dates of future meetings:

16 October 2019	10:30am	Edwards Room
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The meeting closed at 12:30pm

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



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