



# NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

## DRAFT Public Rights of Way Subgroup Minutes

**Date:** Monday 27 March 2017 **Time:** 2pm - 4pm

<b>Present</b>	
Neil Cliff (NC)	U3A
Ken Hawkins (KH) (Chair)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ian Mitchell (IM)	The Ramblers
Jean Stratford (JS)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Martin Sullivan (MS)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
<b>In attendance</b>	
Russell Wilson (RW)	Senior Trails Officer (Infrastructure)
Grahame Bygrave (GB)	Area Manager South (Highways Maintenance)
Sarah Abercrombie (SA)	Senior Projects Officer (Environment)

Item	Description
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> were received from Keith Bacon and Helen Leith
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting on 5 December 2016</b> The minutes were agreed as a correct record
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters arising from the minutes, not already on the agenda</b>
3.1	Walking and Cycling Strategy The Strategy has been adopted by Norfolk County Council at the last NCC Environment, Development and Transport Committee Meeting. It is on the Agenda for the LAF of 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2017. [Note: the document is available via <a href="http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/654/Committee/18/Default.aspx">http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/654/Committee/18/Default.aspx</a> , item 17, Appendix A.]
3.2	Maintenance and enforcement issues It was noted that the guidance leaflets are now available on the NCC website. GB said that once the new systems are in place after 1 <sup>st</sup> April, he would be able to report in more detail on this.
<b>4</b>	<b>Highways/ Trails Management</b>
4.1	GB showed the map of the new areas, which will be reduced from 4 to three across Norfolk from April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Norfolk; Area Manager Karl Rands; Countryside Access Officer David Mills</li> <li>North (incl East); Area Manager Chris Alston: Countryside Access Officer Sarah Price</li> <li>South (incl Brecks); Area Manager Grahame Bygrave: Countryside Access Officer Jody Thurston</li> </ul>

The Countryside Access Officers will be responsible for planned maintenance of PROW and prioritisation/ management of responses to reports/ incidents from the public.

The Trails Team will be responsible for delivery of projects, the management of the National Trail (Norfolk Coast Path and Peddars Way) and external funding for Countryside Access Projects.

<b>5</b>	<b>Issues considered at LAF Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017</b>
5.1	Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Countryside Access. Covered in previous item 4.1
5.2	<p>Widening Access to Public Paths</p> <p>Following discussion it was agreed that the Sub-Group will recommend that the LAF responds to the CTC saying they are</p> <p>“Happy in principle that there should be a change in legislation providing better access for cyclists to public paths as long as “responsible access” is encouraged. However they can foresee significant problems in the detail particularly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining which routes would be suitable</li> <li>• Agreeing and meeting adequate standards</li> <li>• Raising resources to meet the costs of mapping and management</li> <li>• Enforcing ‘responsible access’”</li> </ul>
5.3	<p>Actions to Improve Public Satisfaction with Rights of Way in Norfolk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve signage <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RW reported that 850 signs have been installed over the last 8 years</li> <li>b. GB reported more than 150 finger posts installed in South Norfolk in the last year</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Remove obstructions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RW reported improvements in arrangements with cutting contractors on path surfaces</li> <li>b. GB reported levels of engagement with landowners to improve reinstatement following crop management as well as overgrowth alongside paths.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Improve user friendliness of online reporting system <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Reporting system part of NCC corporate system. Customer feedback is part of continuous improvement. Sub-Group/ LAF to send any comments/ suggestions to GB or RW and they will feedback to corporate team.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
5.4	<p>Support for Footpath Wardens in Parishes</p> <p>RW explained he is developing a single reporting system for members of the public and volunteer wardens which will be part of the NCC reporting system as above. Once finalised it will be available to Parish Wardens with an information pack. KH said that different approaches will be needed for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Parishes</li> <li>• Parishes who are interested but need more support</li> <li>• Parishes who are not interested</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that a second Parish Council Seminar would be useful, particularly for the second group as above and this would be recommended to the LAF.</p> <p>RW proposed that the next meeting of this subgroup should be devoted to this sole topic.</p>
5.5	<p>2026 – Routes claiming Rights of Way before 1.1.2026 deadline</p> <p>There is a need to coordinate claims to prioritise the key ones and reduce</p>

	<p>duplication.</p> <p>KW is working with HC and is offering to provide a coordination point for claims. The Sub-Group to propose this solution to the LAF. MS emphasised the need for unique identification of routes being considered.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Partnership and Community Working</b>
6.1	<p>Ramblers Cutting Programme</p> <p>Progressing as planned. RW noted that NCC was meeting its contractors on 18 April and would be contacting The Ramblers after that.</p>
6.2	<p>Liaison for Planning Applications</p> <p>RW reported that this is no longer a function for the Countryside Access Officers but will be taken on by the Trails Team.</p>
6.3	No other issues
<b>7</b>	<p><b>NAIP</b></p> <p>KH has drafted a walkers section for the NAIP and will continue to coordinate with the NAIP sub-group. He invited comment on this and any other aspect of the NAIP; IM and MS offered some comments.</p>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Reports from NCC Officers</b></p> <p>Nothing to add</p>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>None raised</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Dates of meetings 2017</b></p> <p>The LAF is meeting on 19 April, 5 July and 11 October 2017. This group is meeting on Mondays 12 June and 18 September 2017, from 2pm to 4pm.</p>