



Norfolk County Council

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 July 2016
at 10.30am at County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Martin Sullivan (Chairman)
Chris Allhusen
Rebecca Champion
Victor Cocker
Hilary Cox
Geoff Doggett
Mike Edwards
Ken Hawkins
David Hissey
Pat Holtom
Kate MacKenzie
Ann Melhuish
Fiona Prevett
Paul Rudkin
George Saunders
Jean Stratford

Representing:

Motorised vehicle access / cycling
Land ownership / management / farming
Walking / Health and Wellbeing / geology
Walking
Norfolk Cycling and Walking/National Trails Partnership
Conservation / voluntary sector
GI and planning / conservation / sustainability
Walking / cycling
Cycling / public transport
Economic development / walking
Voluntary sector / walking
Equestrian / all-ability access
Walking / cycling / health and wellbeing
Walking / GI and Planning
All-ability access / health and wellbeing / voluntary sector
Youth and education / walking / voluntary sector

Officers Present:

Andrew Hutcheson
Kirsty Webber-Walton
Russell Wilson
Nicola LeDain

Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects)
Trails Officer (Development)
Senior Trails Officer (Infrastructure)
Committee Officer

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Helen Chester, Julie Brociek-Coulton, Stephen Agnew, Tim Bennett, Seamus Elliott, Ian Monson and Graham Sillett.

3. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2016 were regarded as an accurate record and signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment at 13.2 which reflected that the walking emphasis in the Cycling and Walking Action Plan was on promoted routes rather than the local walking network as a whole.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 Paul Rudkin declared an interest that he had been involved with the planning of the Northern Distributor Route which was being discussed at item 7.

5. Items of Urgent Business

- 5.1 There were no items of urgent business.

6. Public Question Time

- 6.1 The Board received a comment from a member of the public who expressed concern at the recent planning application for Whitwell Station. He commented that the application had been withdrawn and that he hoped the Local Access Forum would explore fully the proposals if they were to be submitted again.

7. Northern Distributor Route (NDR) Progress

- 7.1 The Forum received the annexed presentation (7) from the Community Liaison and Communications Officer which presented a progress update with regards to the development of the NDR.
- 7.2 It was confirmed that bridleways rather than restricted byways were planned as had been agreed several months ago.
- 7.3 The Forum asked if the slides could be distributed and feedback could be given directly to the Communications Officer, John Birchall.
- 7.4 The Forum **NOTED** the NDR proposals as given in the presentation. It was **AGREED** that the Forum were kept up to date with the addition of the west part of the NDR and once reports had been taken to the EDT committee they were shared with the Forum.

8. Parish Paths Seminar

- 8.1 The Forum received the annexed report (8) from a Forum member which updated the Board on the conclusions and the feedback received from the Parish Paths seminar that had taken place.
- 8.2 It was suggested that there were a lot of issues which had been raised which could be easily answered. An action plan would help ensure that answers were given in a certain timescale.
- 8.3 The Forum were alerted to the existence of a frequently asked question section on the Highways section of the Norfolk County Council website which could answer some of the raised issues.
- 8.4 There was a short discussion around signposting Parish Councils to the information and it was suggested that the Forum could communicate via the Norfolk Association of Local Councils who hold a database of Parish Council's email addresses.
- 8.4 It was **AGREED** that officers from Highways Maintenance and the Trails team would answer the queries that applied to them.

9. NLA Forward Planning

9.1 The Forum received the annexed report (9) from the Chair which outlined the way forward for the Forum.

9.2 The Forum **NOTED** the forward plan.

10. Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP) Working Group

10.1 The Forum received the annexed report (10) from the Chair which outlined the terms of reference for the CAIP working group. An amended terms of reference had been circulated before the meeting which is attached to these minutes as an appendix.

10.2 It was suggested that water and water based activities were added to the terms of reference.

10.3 Subject to the amendment, the Forum **AGREED** the terms of reference of the CAIP working group.

11. Permissive Access Working Group

11.1 The Forum received the annexed report (11) which outlined the terms of reference for the permissive access working group as well as the approach for taking forward the work necessary to assess the network and to liaise with landowners where permissive routes make up a valuable part of the network.

11.2 The Forum heard that there had been a delay of the information being provided from DEFRA which has meant that a freedom of information request had to be submitted. The Forum were aware that landowners would only engage with the process if they wanted to and this would be the initial stage of the process. Signage would then be introduced. Norfolk County Council were investigating the legalities of the process.

11.3 The Forum **AGREED** the terms of reference and in doing so **AGREED** the permissive access approach adopted by the Working Group.

12. PRoW Users Group

12.1 The Forum received the annexed report (12) which provided the proposed Terms of Reference and the draft minutes of the last meeting.

12.2 The Forum **AGREED** that the NLA adopt the PROW Working Group as a user sub-group at the next meeting and that the Terms of Reference would be agreed and presented to the LAF for approval at the next meeting.

13. Auditing the Boudicca Way

13.1 The Forum received the annexed report and presentation (13) which explained the audit of Boudicca Way by a power chair user.

13.2 The maintenance of Boudicca Way would involve three cuts per year.

13.3 The Forum **NOTED** the report.

14. Report back from Joint LAF

14.1 The Forum received the annexed report (14) from the Senior Trails Officer (Infrastructure) which updated the Forum on the work of the Joint Local Access Forum with Suffolk.

14.2 It was felt that the meeting had been very successful and provided a useful place to meet colleagues. It was suggested that it would be a good arena to discuss the coast path.

14.3 The Forum **NOTED** the report and supported the further work with colleagues in Suffolk and Essex.

15. National Trail Partnership Update

15.1 The Forum received a verbal update from the Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects) which informed the Forum that Natural England were discussing future savings for National Trails and how this could impact the Local Access Forum. The Forum would be updated regularly with information.

16. Cycling and Walking Action Plan

16.1 The Forum received the annexed report (16) from the Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects) which informed the Forum that the public consultation for the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan had closed and what the next steps would be.

16.2 The Forum **NOTED** the report.

17. Access Enforcement

17.1 The Forum received the annexed report (17) which informed the Forum of the on-going approach to encourage landowners to fulfil their legal responsibilities to provide public access across their land where rights exist.

17.2 The Maintenance Projects Manager confirmed that highways had taken over the management of this from 2012. Until the present time, the officers had been working centrally; however this was due to change with localisation.

17.3 The Forum **NOTED** the report.

Meeting ended at 1pm.

CHAIRMAN



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Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP) Working Group

Terms of Reference

June 2016

Purpose:

To function as a “Task and Finish” group to steer the development of the new Countryside Access Improvement Plan (effective 2017).

Membership:

Core membership consists of members of the Norfolk Local Access Forum.

- Martin Sullivan (Chair)
- Ken Hawkins
- Pat Holtom
- Paul Rudkin
- Seamus Elliott
- David Hissey
- Geoff Doggett
- Helen Chester

Support from Norfolk County Council Officers will be provided by:

- Kirsty Webber-Walton (Trails Officer, Development)
- Matt Worden (Maintenance Projects Manager)
- David White (Senior Green Infrastructure Officer)
- Andrew Hutcheson (Countryside Manager, Trails and Projects)

Responsibilities:

The Chair of the CAIP working group is also Chair of the NLAF and will consist of a term of one year.

The working group will take a “task and finish” approach and adhere to a clear timescale.

The working group will develop a clear vision for the Countryside Access Improvement Plan in order that it may fulfil its purpose effectively.