

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 05 July 2017 at 10.33am in the Cranworth Room, County Hall

Member:	Representing:
Martin Sullivan - Chairman	Motorised vehicle access / cycling
Chris Allhusen - Vice	Land ownership / management / farming
Chairman	
David Ansell	Walking / health and wellbeing
Rebecca Champion	Walking / Health and Wellbeing / geology
Victor Cocker	Walking
Mr M Edwards	GI and planning / conservation / sustainability
Seamus Elliott	Sport and outdoor recreation / cycling
Ken Hawkins	Walking / cycling
David Hissey	Cycling / public transport
Pat Holtom	Economic development / walking
Ann Melhuish	Equestrian / all-ability access
Paul Rudkin	Walking / GI and planning
George Saunders	All-ability access / health and wellbeing / voluntary sector
Jean Stratford	Youth and education / walking / voluntary sector
Officers Present:	
Russell Wilson	Senior Trails Officer (Infrastructure)
Graham Bygrave	Area Manager, South, Community and Environmental
Oranani Dygrave	Services
Andrew Hutcheson	Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects)
John Jones	Head of Environment
Su Waldron	Project Officer, Environment Team
Charlotte Watts	Project Officer
Sophie Cabot	Senior Project Officer (Marriott's Way)
Hilary Cox	Representative of Norfolk Trails Group

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 The Chairman thanked Ken Hawkins and his wife for attending the recent conference and noted that points about health and tourism from this were included under the subgroup report.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 Apologies were received from Julie Brociek-Coulton, Geoff Doggett and Fabien Eagle. Also absent were Helen Chester, Simon Eyre, and Kate MacKenzie.

3. Minutes of last meeting

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 April 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 <u>Matters arising:</u> Ken Hawkins queried the letter which it was agreed would be written to the Minister about permissive access issues. The Chairman confirmed that the letter had not yet been sent owing to the change in minister as a result of the General Election. The Chairman **agreed** to send a letter to the new minister, Michael Gove.

4. Declarations of Interest

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

5. Urgent Business

- 5.1.1 The Vice-Chairman gave an update on permissive access issues; serious approaches had been received following circular letters to FWAG (Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group). The Chairman and Pathmakers colleagues were putting together an application to fund some permissive access routes and were considering funding the cost of making the application. Interested parties were encouraged to engage with parish councils regarding keeping permissive access.
- 5.1.2 The Community infrastructure levy could not be used to fund permissive access according to government policy; the Senior Trails Officer (infrastructure) confirmed that the Norfolk County Council legal team would bring a statement to the LAF about this.
- 5.2 Pat Holtom arrived at 10:39am.
- 5.3.1 Issues related to permissive access were mostly seen in arable Counties like Norfolk.
- 5.3.2 It was suggested that communities be encouraged to look at other strategies to grant funding such as sponsorship or fundraising and that Local Access Forums should put pressure on Government to reintroduce access provisions.
- 5.4 Discussion was held over presentations received at meetings; Ken Hawkins raised concerns over the amount of presentations received. He felt time could be handled more efficiently with less time set aside for presentations and more time for discussion.
- 5.5 George Saunders arrived at 10:44am.
- 5.6.1 Pat Holtom felt it would be helpful to receive presentations prior to meetings; the Chairman reported that forward planning of meetings and topics to be discussed was due to be developed.
- 5.6.2 The Vice-Chairman suggested setting targets for time spent on discussion and presentation of reports.

6. Public Question Time

6.1 No public questions were received.

7. Countryside Access arrangements update

7.1 The Local Access Forum (LAF) received the update brought to address concerns

raised by them about Public Rights of Way Management and delivering the service in an economic and cost effective way. (see updated area map, Appendix A)

- 7.2.1 The Area Manager, South, Community and Environmental Services, clarified that the report covered April and May of 2017 only.
- 7.2.2 Higher levels of issues in South Norfolk were queried. The Area Manager, South, Community and Environmental Services, noted that customers in South Norfolk and Breckland were more likely to report issues. The Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects) reported a higher density of Public Rights of Way in South Norfolk.
- 7.2.3 Each of the three operational areas had its own budget.
- 7.2.4 It was queried whether the structure would be reassessed if differences across areas continued. The Area Manager, South, Community and Environmental Services, confirmed that data would be reviewed regularly and regular discussions were held with the South Countryside Access Officer.
- 7.2.5 It was confirmed that updates would continue to be brought to LAF; the Chairman **requested** an update at each meeting. Detail on issues seen in each area was **requested** in future reports.
- 7.3 Norfolk Local Access Forum **NOTED** the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.

8. PRoW (Public Rights of Way) subgroup update

- 8.1.1 The Local Access Forum received the report providing an update from the latest PRoW subgroup meeting.
- 8.1.2 Minutes from the subgroup meeting were circulated see appendix B.
- 8.2.1 Three events rather than a single paths seminar were planned across 2017, one in West, one in North and one in South Norfolk.
- 8.2.2 The Senior Trails Officer (infrastructure) reported that the Norfolk County Council legal team were able to attend the next prow subgroup to answer questions; the Chairman **requested** that they attend a future LAF meeting.
- 8.3.1 <u>Maintenance and enforcement issues:</u> LAF **AGREED** that relevant legal staff be invited to the next meeting (18 September) of the PRoW subgroup to inform members of the principles and criteria determining the County's actions and plans in enforcement matters.
- 8.3.2 <u>Support for Footpath Wardens in parishes</u> LAF **APPROVED** proposed arrangements described in the report for the planning and holding of seminars.
- 8.3.3 Claims for lost paths

LAF AGREED that the County be asked by Ken Hawkins to inform the subgroup:(a) What were the County's intentions regarding resourcing the department which would be required to consider claims over the next 8 years (to 2026)(b) What was the County's policy in regard to orders it made: was there a general

policy to take a neutral stance on all orders (and if so, on what basis?) If not, by what criteria was the County's stance in each case determined?

9. Annual report on National Trail Development

- 9.1 The Forum received the report highlighting the key achievements of the National Trail, made up of the Peddars Way and the Norfolk Coast Path.
- 9.2.1 A noticeable increase in visitors along the Peddars Way was noted.
- 9.2.2 It was queried whether the £7.5m detailed in the report represented the total economic benefit to be realised from the project. A report and presentation would be brought to the next LAF meeting based on information gained from data counters along the trail to demonstrate the economic benefit of the project.
- 9.2.3 The Local Access Forum **NOTED** the report and **SUPPORTED** the work that the National Trail partnership had been doing both based on the report and into the future.

10. East of England Coast Path

- 10.1 The Forum received the report giving background on discussions which had been taking place on the potential for Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex County Councils to work together on the promotion and management of an East of England Coast Path.
- 10.2.1 The path was planned for completion by 2020.
- 10.2.2 Discussions had been held over the possibility of having a joint National Trails Partnership for the East of England. The South West Coast Path was being used as a model, which had seen a large economic benefit to the area.
- 10.2.3 Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex planned to put a bid into the Lottery Fund to fund an officer to research the feasibility of the proposal.
- 10.3 The LAF **SUPPORTED** the proposal for a funding bid to more closely examine the potential for an East of England Coast Path.

11. Green Pilgrimage NLAF Working Sub-Group

- 11.1 The Forum heard a presentation from the Project Officer on the proposal of a steering group to deliver walking routes for pilgrimage seeking to become a sub-group of NLAF to share knowledge and expertise. (see appendix C)
 - Pilgrimage, a journey from one place to another, could be religious but could also be for other reasons;
 - The historic environment service had helped look for sites which could be possibl destinations and route stops;
 - Walsingham was highlighted as an unsustainable destination due to poor prow access, and primary access being by road;
 - The Project Officer felt this project had shared objectives with the 15/16 LAF reviewed;
 - The Project Officer was keen to work with LAF due to the groups they represented, enabling input from a wide range of groups, interests and expertise.

- 11.2.1 It was highlighted that the Diocese Advisory Committee were looking at linking historic footpaths between churches and it may be useful to involve them in the project.
- 11.2.2 The criteria for a pilgrimage site was queried; the Project Officer replied that the project was in the early stages and information about the pilgrimage site was being researched.
- 11.2.3 A pilgrimage link between Walsingham and Canterbury had been previously discussed.
- 11.2.4 Investigating the viability of a pilgrimage route between churches was discussed.
- 11.2.5 The Churches Conservation Trust offered provision at some churches for people to stay overnight, providing scope for the pilgrimage project.
- 11.2.6 The churches at North and South Creake were suggested as pilgrimage sites, which would be suitable with Wells and Fakenham as the start point. For historic reasons, most footpath networks connected churches; watts noted that some footpaths had been taken up by roads.
- 11.2.7 A key permissive path from Binham to Hindringham would be lost in January 2018 which would affect access to Walsingham.
- 11.2.8 It was suggested that it would be beneficial to tie up with the work of the permissive paths sub-group and FWAG.
- 11.2.9 The Vice-Chairman proposed that it was too soon for a sub group to be set up and that many issues would be covered under the permissive rights of way and public rights of way sub groups.
- 11.2.10 The Head of Environment reported that there was a requirement to engage with the LAF, and that feedback, advice and support would be helpful due to the wide range of interests represented, either through a sub-group or through support of the project and LAF receiving updates and assisting when necessary.
- 11.2.11 the Project Officer clarified that the current funding applied for was to carry out research; from this further funding would be sought for the development of the green pilgrimage route.
- 11.3 The Vice-Chairman left at 11:35.
- 11.4 The LAF **AGREED** to support the Green pilgrimage project and for the permissive and public rights of way sub groups to provide advice when needed.

12. Pathmakers – Burgh Castle Launch

- 12.1 The report giving an update following the recent launch event for the Burgh Castle boardwalk on the 14 June 2017 was discussed by LAF.
- 12.2.1 Publicity was not as effective as expected; a letter had written to the EDP but the Chairman was unsure whether it had been published.
- 12.2.2 The Head of Environment commended LAFs involvement in delivery of this route.

12.3 NLAF **AGREED** to continue to act as advocates for Pathmakers and the new boardwalk.

13. Attendance at the National Local Access Forum Conference

- 13.1 The LAF considered the report giving an update following the Natural England Local Access Forum conference which took place on Wednesday 21st June 2017.
- 13.2.1 Ken Hawkins gave feedback from the Conference;
 - It had been heavily orientated towards plenary presentations which were useful and workshops were also available;
 - He felt that not as much opportunity was made for discussion and engagement by attendees as could had been;
 - He proposed that the LAF registered a view with Natural England that time should be given for LAF members to discuss issues and topics.
- 13.2.2 David Hissey agreed with Ken based on his experience at a previous conference.
- 13.2.3 Pat Holtom felt that input into the agenda would also be useful.
- 13.2.4 Seamus Elliott felt it would be helpful to have a representative from Government in attendance at conferences.
- 13.2.5 The Chairman suggested that the recommendations as agreed below be included in the improvement plan.
- 13.3 Norfolk Local Access Forum :

(i) AGREED to make approaches to health agencies to promote the access agenda into their work by showing how it helps them, and/or seek funding from them;
(ii) REVIEWED whether they could did more to link with tourism issues;
(iii) AGREED that the Chairman would write to Natural England on behalf of LAF to Represent views discussed above.

14. Marriott's Way HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) Project

- 14.1 The LAF received the report and heard a presentation providing information on the Marriott's Way Heritage Trail Project (see Appendix D)
 - The project was led by the County Council;
 - Research would be undertaken by volunteers to look at archives, oral history, artefacts and their storage;
 - The project would include conservation of surviving railway structure and habitat management;
 - Work was underway with nurture groups, and future work was planned with other education groups;
 - Traineeships and university volunteer work experience would be available;
 - Public engagement events were planned and had been carried out.
- 14.2.1 the Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects) confirmed that sustrans were involved in the project,
- 14.2.2 An increase in visitors to the route were seen; 500,000 people walked the route in

2016, and the data showed this to be increasing in 2017, making it the most walked route in the East of England. Factors cited were improved lighting, better management and publicity and improvements to the route.

- 14.2.3 Carparking along the route at Lenwade and Attlebridge for commuters was discussed, and whether this could be developed further; The Countryside Manager (Trails and Projects) confirmed that this had not yet been considered under the park and ride strategy which involved a strategy around parking and cycling.
- 14.2.4 It was confirmed that funding for improvements at Whitwell had been withdrawn.
- 14.2.5 Overgrowth of Cawston hedge was discussed; the Senior Trails Officer (infrastructure) reported that businesses were reluctant for it to be removed as it provided screening.
- 14.3 Norfolk LAF **AGREED** to support the delivery phase of the MWHT (Marriott's Way Heritage Trail) Project as a key Stakeholder, by agreeing to continue to work closely with the Norfolk County Council project team.

Dates of future meetings:

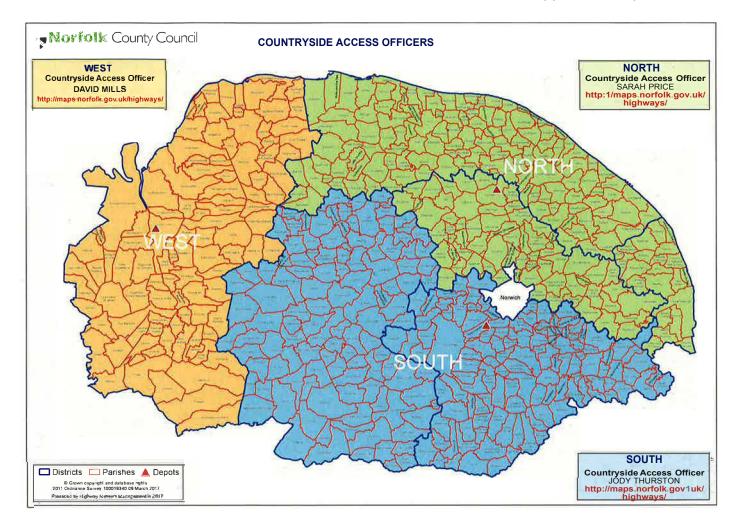
The next meeting was 11 October in the Cranworth Room, County Hall

The Meeting Closed at 12:09

CHAIRMAN



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Community and Environmental Services Minutes of Meeting Local Access Forum Public Rights of Way subgroup.

Held on: Monday 12 th June 2017		Time: 14:00 – 16:00
Venue:	Room 1, Floor 6, County Hall	

Present	Post Title
Ken Hawkins (KH) Jean	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Stratford (JS) Martin	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Sullivan (MS) Ian	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Mitchell (IM)	The Ramblers
Neil Cliff (NC)	U3A
Keith Bacon (KB)	CPRE Norfolk and Broads Local Access Forum
Russell Wilson (RW)	Norfolk Trails
Graham Bygrave (GB)	NCC Highways Maintenance
Su Waldron (SW)	NCC Projects Team

Item Minute

1.0	Apologies
2.0	Andy Hutcheson (NCC); Ian Witham (IW) (Open Spaces Society); Sarah Abercrombie (NCC) (sick leave); Helen Chester (HC) (NLAF); Helen Leith (CPRE)
	Minútes of the meeting on 27th March 2017 Under point 4.1, swap the names of the Area Managers for West
3.0	Norfolk Area and North Norfolk area.
3.1	Otherwise the minutes were agreed as a correct record.
	Matters arising from the minutes
3.2	Walking and Cycling Strategy. Councillor Colin Foulger has been appointed as Walking and Cycling Champion. colin.foulger.clr@norfolk.gov.uk Maintenance and enforcement issues – update on recent actions. GB said that Countryside Access Officers had dealt with 440 separate enquiries since March 2017, with 248 cases completed. 50 concerned non-reinstatement notices This was a similar level of enquiries to previously, but cases were being dealt with more effectively under the new arrangements.
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Three specific cases were discussed:

• NC raise d a long-standing issue with access at Thompson. GB is seeking help from the legal team at NCC with this particular

Action by

case and agreed to send any key dates (magistrates' hearing for example) to the PROW group. RW suggested that someone from the legal team attends the next PROW subgroup GB meeting to report back on progress with this case. GB to arrange.

- KB raised an issue at Cess Staithe on Martham Footpath 1 where a diversion request from a boatyard is going to public enquiry. He had heard that NCC was facilitating the case and sought clarification on what that meant. IM said that NCC did not defend the public right – but rather prepared the case which was then handled by the planners. KH asked if there is a generalised policy on which applications for diversions (and definitive map modification orders) NCC would support or was each case judged on its merits? KH asked if the NCC policy on this could be made available for scrutiny?
- KB raised an issue with a path that has become impassable at Trunch and asked what the priorities for clearing paths are? JS said that this particular path would need another connecting piece of path reinstated also. GB to ask Sarah Price to confirm priorities and reasoning.
- KH said that he had heard that some cases have been closed on the NCC problem logging system ("problem not found, query closed") when they have not been resolved. GB offered to investigate with Jody Thurston.

4 Issues considered at the NLAF meeting on 19th April

- 4.1 3.2.1 Highways/Trails management. Family tree showing staff structure.
 - GB confirmed that the Countryside Officers report to the 3 Area Managers.
 - GB showed the meeting a map with Area Officers 'patches' and **SW** contact numbers/email addresses . SW to circulate.
 - KB asked for further detail of the department hierarchy and how the different teams involved with PROW fit together. RW confirmed that within NCC, the teams involved with PROW are: the Countryside Officers (and Assistants); the Definitive Map Team and Norfolk Trails.
 - GB said that due to department restructuring it would be better to wait until September before circulating family tree structures.
- 4.2 **7.5.2** Norfolk Access Improvement Plan. Next meeting has been postponed until SA's return in July/August.
- 4.3 11.3.1 Widening access to public paths.MS said he thought that this had not been followed up yet. He believed that Seamus Elliott might be dealing with this.

GB

GB

- 11.3.2 Support for footpath wardens in parishes.
 - RW confirmed that the Norfolk Trails handbook to encourage and recruit volunteers to help with footpath management was in the process of being revised (the current version is available on the Norfolk County Council website)
 - the Norfolk County Council website).
 RW said that the online system for logging reports on footpaths (the CRM system) was in the process of being overhauled to ensure that records of footpaths in favourable condition following inspection (ie a null problem) could be logged as well as those with problems.
 - The meeting discussed the proposal to run a second Parish Council Seminar. RW suggested that rather than a countywide conference, there could be three, each held at a location within each of the three Countryside Access Officers' areas.
 - Each would be an NLAF led event to support local action for PROW (volunteer focus and support for volunteering)
 - Information could be provided ahead of each meeting covering: definitions ('what are PROW'); the volunteer handbook (based on the Norfolk Trails volunteers' handbook); parish path partnerships; etc.
 - Information would be sent to all parishes (via NALC to the Parish Council clerk)
 - Approval for the approach would be sought from the NLAF (KH/RW?)
 - Timing for the conferences was discussed. MS suggested that the 3 area events could be held at different times. The meeting agreed that the first one would be held in Spring 2018 to give time to work up the itinerary.
 - JS suggested that it was important to fix the outputs required from the events at the next PROW subgroup meeting before any further logistics could take place – this was agreed. MS also said it was important for any system modifications (to CRM) to be in place beforehand also.
- 4.5 11.3.3 Claims for lost paths.
 - There is a 2026 deadline to register lost paths.
 - KH will be the point of contact for coordination of claims
 - IM said that regulations for definitive map orders were still being worked on by Defra (delays had been caused as the department was side-lined by Brexit)
 - IW and HC had put forward a lot of evidence in the claim they submitted which would make it easier to deal with by NCC's definitive map team. RW said that records should be as good as possible to help NCC

KH/RW

4.4

- The meeting agreed that the NLAF should consider the topic again and draw attention to the resources at NCC required to deal with claims; as it seemed that numbers of claims had risen and some recent ones had been rejected by the Planning Inspectorate because they contained errors.
- 4.6 Other items
 - No further items
- 5.0 Partnership and community working
- 6.0 Nothing to report

Reports from NCC officers

• Nothing to report

7.0 AOB

 IM asked if NCC is attending meetings concerning the route of coastal windfarm on-shore cables. RW confirmed that the Green Infrastructure Team at NCC Environment Team continue to attend meetings.

9.0 AOB

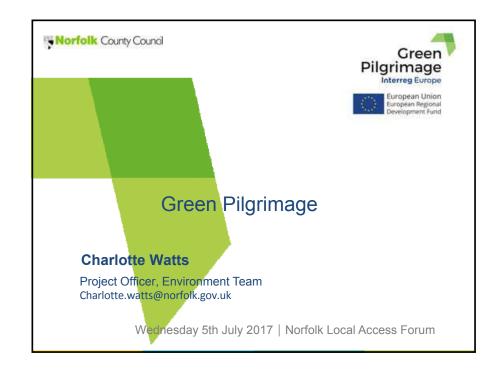
Nothing to report

10.0 Date of next meeting

Monday 18th September 2017 from 2pm to 4pm Meeting Room 1, Floor 6 at County Hall

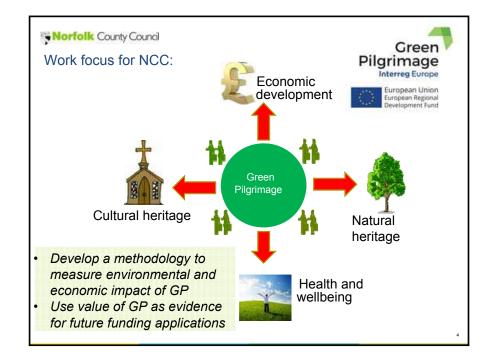
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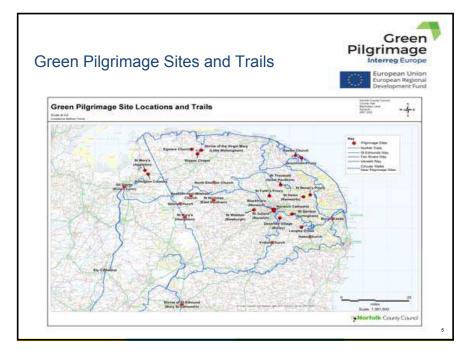
Appendix C

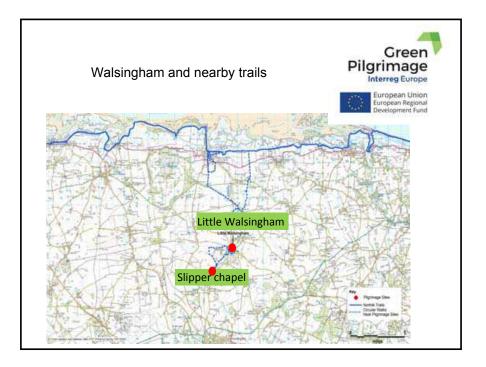


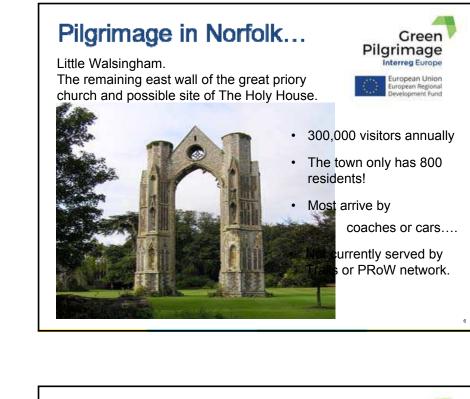
















Green Pilgrimage



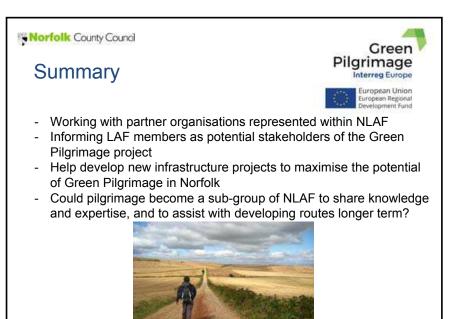
Shared objectives:

- Increasing routes for walking and access to outdoors in general
- Encouraging non-vehicular transport
- Rights of Way improvement / management
- Supporting and growing the visitor economy sustainably

From the 2015-2016 Annual Review Priorities:

- Assessment of the permissive access network and prioritisation of linking routes
- Working with parishes to achieve greater local involvement to keep path networks accessible.
- Pathmakers will look for appropriate opportunities to improve public access and consider effective ways to generate funding.





10

Appendix D



Who's in the Project?

Ownership/Management

NCC, Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk

Railway Heritage Organisations E.g. Friends of City Station, Whitwell & Reepham Station, M&GN Circle

Natural Heritage Organisations

E.g. Friends of Train Wood, Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Communities along the route

Businesses along the route

Specialist Organisations E.g. Education, Countryside Access, Sustainable Transport, Archives, Tourism...



Partners & Stakeholders



Norfolk Courty Courd

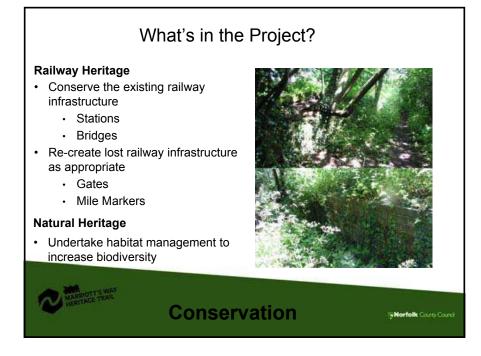




Research

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What's in the Project?

- A new Marriott's Way Heritage App.
- More on the web-site
- New Interpretation Boards and signage
- A new leaflet
- New Circular and Spur Routes leading of Marriot's Way
- Public Engagement Events
 - Runs and Walks
 - Vintage Cycling Rally
 - Promenade Theatre Production



What's in the Project?

- Formal learning activities for school and uniformed groups
 - Curriculum activities
 - Nurture Groups
 - Badge work
- Informal learning activities for other young people
- Training and work experience for young adults
- Project traineeships
- Experience for university students doing education mentoring

Education

Outcomes



- Increased numbers using Marriott's Way
- Enhanced public records
- · Benefits to the local economy
- · Improved health and well-being
- Educational attainment
- Improved employment prospects for young people
- Protection of more sensitive sites by visitor deflection
- Improved green infrastructure
- Implementing elements of the Marriott's Way Improvement and Delivery Plan for 2015-2025.





Interpretation

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