

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
Public Rights of Way Subgroup Agenda
Date: Monday 18 June 2018 **Time:** 2pm - 4pm

Venue: County Hall

Sub group members	
Keith Bacon (KB)	CPRE Norfolk, Broads LAF
Neil Cliff (NC)	U3A
Vic Cocker (VC)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ken Hawkins (KH) (Chair)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ann Melhuish (AM)	Norfolk Local Access Forum, Pathmakers
Ian Mitchell (IM)	The Ramblers
Jean Stratford (JS)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Martin Sullivan (MS)	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Officers in Attendance	
Matt Worden (MW)	
Andy Hutcheson (AH)	
Sarah Abercrombie (SA)	

1	Introductions and apologies for absence Apologies from Ann Melhuish, Ian Witham and Helen Leith
2	Minutes of the meeting on 19 March 2018 – the minutes were approved as a correct record
3	NLAF Minutes of the meeting on 18 April 2018 Minutes now circulated
4	Future work of the Public Rights of Way Subgroup 4.1 Re Partnership Working. NC commented on the value of volunteers and schemes such as the Parish Paths Partnerships run in Bedfordshire. VC pointed out that the perspective of volunteers is different to those of users of PROW. It was agreed that a volunteer coordinator was key to successful volunteer activity. Involvement of Parish and Town Councils would be valuable. 4.2 Re Strategic Vision for Norfolk. The value of PROW for walking and cycling to both the health of users and to the visitor economy is increasingly recognised. Communicating this to the wider public and key stakeholders is important with a clear agenda. 4.3 Re The Way Forward. 4.3.1 A seminar focussed on economic value and health benefits should be proposed with the aim of getting more people active and walking and attracting more people to Norfolk. 4.3.2 An “ideas” group to be proposed with representatives from tourism, health and NCC to consider a vision for Norfolk and the value of volunteering and the way forward for a volunteering scheme with a coordinator. 4.3.3 The Parish Paths Seminar should be used to engage Parish and Town Councils in the process
5	Matters arising from the minutes, not otherwise on the agenda
5.1	Staff family tree (4.1): An updated version of the Environment Staff Team

	plan is available
5.2	NAIP (4.2): Initial results from the Consultation feedback show 84 respondents, 65 individuals and 19 organisations (this will be further updated with details for the NAIP sub-group)
5.3	Pathmakers (4.3): Pathmakers will be involved in development of ideas, potential projects and funding for projects
5.4	Terms of reference (4.4): KH updated the NLAF had now adopted the PROW Sub-Group Terms of Reference
6	Countryside Access arrangements
6.1	General update: MW just returned from holiday – full report to follow for NLAF, including content from the Trails Team. It was confirmed that this report should come to the PROW Sub-Group before the NLAF.
6.2	Enforcement - Public footpaths through fields: MW explained that NCC talk to the landowner and encourage them to take action as a first step, followed by a letter if no action taken and this usually gets results. Legal action is only taken as a last resort as it is expensive and time consuming. It is also possible under the Highways Act for Parish Councils or users on foot to take direct action to provide access.
6.3	Online reporting system (minute 5.3): MW explained there are further improvements to the system and he will update as part of the NLAF report
6.4	Earsham footbridge (minute 5.4): AH explained that Norfolk Trails as part of their responsibility managing Angles Way, have been talking to the NCC Bridges Team. However replacement and decommissioning are expensive with no budget to fund it. They are doing an options appraisal and will report back to the next meeting.
6.5	The Ramblers' Pathwatch reports (minute 5.4): AH reported that these are useful and are being used to inform the creation of Norfolk Trails circular walks
6.6	Access seaward of the England Coast Path (minute 8.1): AH reported that Norfolk Trails have reviewed the signage for Trimmingham Footpath 8, where the footpath runs to the cliff edge, through 'spreading room', and have decided that the signs should stay as they are on health and safety grounds.
6.7	Thompson (Pockthorpe Lane to Sparrow Hill): MW is not aware that there have been any objections, though the Order is still open to comment.
6.8	Any other issues
	6.8.1 England Coast Path Stretch 3 Route Consultation. The NLAF has made a response as has Norfolk County Council. A key element of the response is the inadequacy of funding from Natural England for the creation of the proposed route.
	6.8.2 Issue at Stow Bedon. MW explained that discussions are ongoing with the land owner to resolve the issue.
7	Parish Council seminars - see minute 6
	To consider arrangements (see Appendix) It was agreed that an event in late October in the Atrium in North Walsham should be planned. Date to be confirmed (now 23 rd October 2018 in the afternoon).

8	Claims for lost paths ('2026')
8.1	The response to the LAF's request regarding the Council's approach to Definitive Map Modification Orders (minute 7.1) was received. The statistics provided suggested that there had not been a large negative impact on claims, though KB pointed out that the policy meant that there were no representations in the public interest. KH pointed out that the NLAf letter requested a review of the policy and this had not taken place. It was agreed to take it back to the NLAf to ask again for this review.
8.2	The response to the request regarding the logging of claims for Definitive Map Modification Orders (minute 7.2) was received. KB was concerned that in the run up to 2026 NCC will be very understaffed. There was also concern expressed that for those where there is evidence from users, if applications are logged and dealt with as they come in, users may no longer be alive to give evidence by the time a claim is brought forward. There should be some mechanism for prioritising these in a different way. AH commented that this is also subject to the Deregulation Bill which is yet to be defined in a Statutory Instrument.
9	Partnership and Community Working There were no issues from represented organisations (CPRE, OSS, The Ramblers, U3A).
10	Reports from NCC Officers There was no other updating information of relevance to the sub group.
11	Date of next meeting 17 September 2018, at 1400.

Appendix

Proposals for Parish Council seminars

Already agreed

- 3 events, one in each of the Highways management areas
- during 2018, originally agreed spacing to adjust subsequent events in light of experience of earlier ones
- information to be provided ahead of the meeting covering: definitions ('what are PRoW'); the volunteer handbook (based on the Norfolk Trails volunteers' handbook); parish path partnerships

Aim

- to build up a network of people interested in monitoring and maintaining publically available paths (primarily rights of way and promoted routes)

Attendance invited

- relevant LAF personnel
- NCC officer, including the Countryside Access Officers
- parish/town representatives (Clerks, Councillors, Footpath Wardens as appropriate)
- Trails volunteers
- The Ramblers, OSS, U3A, CPRE, WaW towns

Agenda content

- sources of information (to head off issues that can be resolved already)
- survey of current activity - by NCC, parishes/towns, The Ramblers, any others?
- review of action from 2016 Parish Paths Seminar report
- current volunteer network(s) and proposals to unify
- Pathmakers and HLF
- possible separate session/stand for registering specific issues
- the on line reporting system
- others?

Dates and venues

- to be agreed