

**Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Local Access Forum**  
**Held on Wednesday 21 September 2011**  
**The Guidhall, York**

## Present:

Catriona Cook (CC)	North York Moors Local Access Forum
Charles Appleby (CA)	North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
Clive Bolton (CB)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Danny Jackson (DJ)	West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum
Hazel Armstrong – Chair (HA)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Jane Sara (JS)	Rotherham Local Access Forum
Joanne Coote (JC)	City of York Council
John Siddall (JSi)	Doncaster Local Access Forum
John Taylor (JT)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Mike Willison (MW)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Nicky Wareing (NW)	Barnsley Local Access Forum
Philip Robinson (PR)	Natural England
Rachel Connolly (RC)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Richard Holmes – Chair (RH)	Wakefield Local Access Forum
Sam Roebuck (SR)	North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
Co-ordinator: Meghann Hull (MH)	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

## Apologies:

Terrence Howard	Sheffield Local Access Forum
Phil Woodyer	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
David Gibson	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

RH and HA welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given.

**2. Unapproved minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Lost Ways

Members noted the response from Defra regarding the cut off date for Lost Ways, in the letter dated 4 January. PR had no more up to date knowledge on this but said he would look into it.

**PR to follow up Lost Ways with Natural England**Aggregate Levy Sustainability fund

It was noted that HM Treasury had not yet responded to the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Access Forum's letter regarding the ALSF. HA asked MH to follow this up with a letter.

**MH to write to HM Treasury and ask for a response to the letter**

### Dual Status Routes

Members noted the letter from Natural England in response to the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Access Forum's letter regarding the issue of barriers to horse riders on dual status routes. CC felt that a letter now needed to come from the top and sent to all LAFs as a reminder of these routes.

**MH to write back to NE on behalf of the forum and remind them of their statutory obligation to ensure that these routes are used, and ask that they send a letter to all LAFs regarding this access.**

### BHS and Open Spaces letter

A few members had not seen these, or had not received these from their LAF secretary's. MH confirmed she circulated the email to LAF secretaries with the two letters attached, on the 14 June 2011. Members asked if these could be forwarded again. Some members also said they had not received papers and emails previously circulated for the meeting. MH said she would speak to LAF secretary's and remind them to pass on information to Members.

**MH to re-circulate the BHS and Open Spaces letters and remind LAF secretary's to forward on this information.**

### Funding for future LAF training

MH informed the group that there is no funding for regional training events this year and PR said that NE is planning a national conference for LAFs, for Feb/Mar 2012, in two locations for the northern and southern LAFs – most probably Newcastle and Reading. Dates and venue confirmation will be sent out soon. HA asked if this information could be sent out before 1 October 2011.

**PR to follow up information regarding dates and venues for the LAF conference**

### Defra Forestry Commission

Members noted that a response to their letter to Defra regarding a LAF representation on the forestry commission panel had not been received and asked MH to resend the letter and ask for a response.

**MH to re-send the letter to Defra regarding a LAF representation on the Forestry Commission panel and ask for a response.**

### Section 15 Land

CC wished to repeat her statement from the previous meeting that section 15 land is not shown on Ordnance Survey maps, and as a result remains hidden access. She asked if a letter could be written to Natural England about getting this access shown on OS maps.

**MH to write a letter to Natural England on behalf of the forum to ask about having s15 land shown on OS maps.**

### ROW Review Committee

No members had any news. RH confirmed that the group was still continuing and hoped that they were still seeking a LAF representative, if not already got one. RH asked MH to follow this up by writing a letter.

**MH to write a letter to Richard Benyon regarding a LAF representative on the ROW Review Committee.**

### LAF annual reports

MH said that despite many reminders she never received all the annual reports from individual LAFs. HA asked her to remind those she had not received, in an email.

**MH to send an email to LAF secretary's who have not forwarded on their annual reports.**

### **3. Update from Natural England – Philip Robinson, Lead Advisor**

RH introduced PR and said he was pleased to have a Natural England representative at the meeting. PR said his role was to support the LAFs in the Yorkshire and Humber region as a replacement for the Regional Coordinator, but not as a secretariat role. He has already visited a few individual LAF meetings and hopes to visit each area during this year. He would like the LAFs to contact him as their first point of call and asked MH to minute his contact details:

**Philip Robinson, Lead Advisor,  
People and Partnerships North and Midlands Team**

**Natural England  
25 Queen Street  
Leeds  
LS1 2UN**

**[Philip.j.robinson@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Philip.j.robinson@naturalengland.org.uk)  
Tel 0300 060 4255**

PR asked members if they wished for the meetings to continue – everyone did. PR said he was happy to support one or two meetings a year but wanted to stress that there would be no financial support. PR provided updates on the following:

### LAF report proforma

Natural England have produced a standard annual report for LAFs to fill out and return to NE as a replacement for LAFs individual annual reports, hoping to reduce the amount of work for LAFs and also to build up a more consistent and comparable record of information. Members felt that their current annual reports were extremely useful and would still want to produce these also.

### LAF conference

Details of the conference had been given earlier in the meeting (see item 2. Future for further LAF training). RH asked if there would be opportunities for LAFs to discuss how other regions were still operating their regional meetings, and any other relevant discussions. PR said he would follow this up

### **PR to follow up details and agenda for the LAF Conference**

### Coastal Access

PR had no more news on this and RH informed that the Ramblers Association were running a campaign.

### Land-locked Access

PR explained that there was nothing to report or follow up. NE funded a one-off pilot in East Yorkshire that failed to get any take up, and there are no resources or will to take things any further.

Members agreed that primary legislation was needed to help tackle these issues, and that a letter should be written to NE and Defra. Members agreed that a Bill should be produced, and that any ideas and information which cover locked access land, higher rights and cycle tracks, should be sent to MH to collate and bring to the next regional meeting for this to be discussed.

### **All Members to feed ideas and information for a Bill to MH to collate for the next meeting**

## **4. Increasing LAF Membership**

PR invited the forum to an open discussion for advice on encouraging new LAF membership, as some LAFs in the region are functioning well, and others not at all.

DJ said that the West Yorkshire Pennine LAF had started well but has lost members during the last 18 months, creating a lack of representation and a repetitive agenda.

CB suggested a political input – it lies with the Local Authority as a legal responsibility to make sure they have a LAF.

HA said the East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston Upon Hull LAF had a very buoyant LAF, but have recently lost five members. It is felt that every time a suggestion is put forward, it is stamped on, and the engagement with the Authority was consequently lost. She noted it is a national problem that elected members do not attend.

PR felt that Huddle would be a great way for LAFs to discuss these issues between themselves on a national scale, and ask questions.

RH informed the forum that a meeting would be taking place to help York establish a LAF, and invited DJ to attend this.

RC said they were currently experimenting with amalgamating liaison groups with LAF members to try to broaden the understanding and enthusiasm, and fill gaps in the membership.

HA suggested contacting the CLA and the NFU, believing that farmer's wives have a good source of knowledge and time to tap into. She also suggested the Health Authority.

SR said North Lincolnshire LAF had looked at the NFU for representation and that LAFs also needed to consider retention of Members and perhaps plan a meeting for electing representatives.

HA said that the members of the public always outnumber the LAF members at meetings. People do not like going into County Hall, so they move their meetings around the county for this reason.

## **5. Huddle Update**

MH updated the group on the current progression with Huddle and informed members that NE were currently training the Regional Coordinators to use this workspace, who will then be responsible for rolling out the training to all LAF secretaries and Chairs in the region, hopefully in November/December. Only NE staff and the Regional Coordinators are currently using Huddle. She reminded the forum that her role as Regional Coordinator would end as of 1 April 2012, and it was hoped that all LAFs would be up and running on Huddle by that time. Initially, a 'Huddle Champion' and LAF Secretary will be trained to use and understand the protocols and etiquette around the workspace.

There were some concerns between members about censorship, and worries that Natural England might be able to edit or override any comments or discussions between LAFs on the workspace. MH said she was sure this would not be the case, but would forward these concerns on at her next regional Coordinator meeting.

MH introduced Huddle to the group by giving members an introductory glance around the workspace. She asked members to note the Huddle flyer which had been circulated with the papers, and asked members to pass on this information to their LAFs. She also asked for any queries or questions to be passed on to her.

<b>MH to forward on comments at the next Regional Coordinator meeting</b>
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## **6. Horses on Cycle paths**

HA updated the group on the letter received by Richard Benyon MP, dated 14 June 2011, regarding the use of cycle tracks by horse riders. She said that cycle routes form good links between routes but you can't necessarily ride on the routes. Sustrans are also not favourable of horse riders in urban areas.

RC circulated an image of a NP 956.1 sign for multi-user routes, to promote sharing of off-road space. She informed the meeting that a highway authority wishing to use the non-prescribed sign would need to contact the Department for Transport. The sign would be

particularly useful where the route was on a carriageway verge or a route that was not a definitive bridleway. The multi-shared routes with this sign have no legal status.

HA said this issue would be ideal to put forward for the Bill for land-locked issues.

## **7. Fencing on Common Land**

MH informed members on behalf of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum (YDAF), that the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority only 'informally' consult the YDAF on consultations for proposals for fencing on common land (s38 of the Commons Act 2006) and the exchange of common land for another piece of land elsewhere (s16). It has also been stressed to the YDAF that the Authority are only consulted on any proposals, and that ultimately, any decisions on fencing lie with Natural England.

The YDAF feel very strongly for LAFs to be included in any consultations, which ultimately affect access, and have suggested lobbying Defra to amend the guidance on fencing on commons to read applicants 'shall' consult the LAF.

Other LAFs in the region agreed that they had been experiencing similar problems. HA said her LAF had not been consulted on various deregistration issues.

DJ said a NE representative came voluntarily to one of their LAF meetings to discuss fencing in their area personally.

Members offered regional support and proposed that MH wrote a letter to Defra to ask for LAFs to be considered a statutory consultee. MH said she would pass this on to the YDAF at their next meeting.

**MH to pass on the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Access Forum's support to the YDAF, and MH to write a letter to Defra regarding LAFs as a statutory consultee**

## **8. Good news items from LAFs**

RH said Wakefield LAF had been identified as the best authority scoring 100% at a recent Mystery Walkers report. The LAF are still making progress on the definitive map and have received their first gating order, which they are refusing.

HA said East Riding and Hull have a great number of disused railways which are all now footpath and bridleway, and are currently replacing a bridge which was unsafe – all are being reclassified and have had condition surveys. They have also had an application for a park and ride and have an unsurfaced green-way route for non-motorised users.

JS announced that Doncaster have been making good progress on leading biodiversity in southern Yorkshire, and CA wanted to complement the Doncaster cycle tracks.

SR informed that the Trent long-distance path is to be extended and will be a mixture of footpath and bridleway. The complete multi-user cliff path has secured funding for two bridges, and their LAF now meets quarterly.

MW was pleased to say that gating orders were no longer a time consuming aspect of their LAF meeting agenda's.

JC announced that a new map for the East Riding had now been completed.

DJ said they had been making progress on collaborative working and sharing legal advice and expertise across the five districts.

NW informed that the Trans Pennine Trail was nearly finished and the Large Estates new Chairman of the Board is a horse rider, so they are hoping that this will have a positive impact for riders, and help to open up more routes.

CC told the group that their definitive map officers were being lost, but the maintenance budget was being kept. New posts are being created to develop the new North York Moors brand.

## **9. Date and venue of next meeting**

Members held a vote for the venue of the next regional meeting, for Natural England's head office at Leeds, or the Guildhall at York. The unanimous decision was to hold the meeting at the Guildhall, York.

A date was fixed for Wednesday 18 April 2012.