

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Local Access Forum
Held on Friday 3 September 2013
Oxford Place, Leeds

Present:

Barbara Martin (BM)	Barnsley Local Access Forum
Danny Jackson (DJ)	Bradford Local Access Forum
John Harker (JH)	Doncaster/Rotherham Local Access Forum
Hazel Armstrong (HA)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Clive Bolton (CB)	East Riding and Hull Local Access Forum
Jerry Pearlman (JJP)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Mike Willison (MW)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Philip Maude (PM)	Leeds Local Access Forum
Catriona Cook (CC)	North York Moors Local Access Forum
Muriel Mitchell (MM)	North York Moors Local Access Forum
John Taylor (JT)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Tony Martin (TM)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Rachel Connolly (RC)	North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
Terry Howard (TH)	Sheffield Local Access Forum
Sarah Rogers (SR)	Wakefield Local Access Forum
John Richardson (JR)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
David Gibson (DG)	Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Philip Robinson (PR)	Natural England
Andrew Macintosh (AM)	Natural England
Co-ordinator: Rachel Briggs (RB)	Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

1. **Welcome and introductions**

JP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given.

It was suggested that RB write to the LAFs in the region about non-attendance to the Regional LAF meeting as it is seen as an important link between LAFs at a local level up to ministerial level. JJP congratulated CC on her recent MBE .

RB to write to the LAFs in the region urging them to send members to the meetings.

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

TH said that page 4 was incorrect and that the Sheffield LAF **had** been involved with the application for a Paths for Communities project in the Sheffield area.

HA asked that page 6 of the minutes be changed to read: 'HA said that the LAF had been trying to demonstrate how successful the ROWIP had been and that the research has shown that upgraded PROW in the region has increased'.

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

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

Matters arising

Multi User Routes

RB explained that Mandy Loach, Trans Pennine Trail Officer, had sent her apologies for the meeting. It was suggested that she be invited to talk about the Trans Pennine Trail at the next meeting.

RB to invite Mandy Loach, Trans Pennine Trail Officer, to the next meeting of the Regional LAF.

Section 15 Land

JJP informed members that he had written to HM Revenue and Customs after the last meeting and that he had received a response (**Appendix 1**). JJP explained that the letter explained where the inheritance tax properties were but that it didn't say where the free access was. JJP said he was looking into the issue and would inform members at a later date.

JJP to keep members informed with regards to the inheritance tax issue.

RB informed members that she had not yet written a joint letter with Rachel Finney from Calderdale LAF but that this would be done before the next meeting.

RB and RF to write to OS on why land falling under Sections 15 and 193 isn't shown on the OS maps.

Dual Status Routes

CC told members that she had written a letter to OS with regards to showing dual status routes correctly on OS maps. However, the letter didn't include all the correct appendices and so the letter would be resubmitted.

CC and RB to write to OS to establish their internal policy on showing dual status routes on OS maps.

National Local Access Forum

RB told members that she had attended a meeting for all the Regional Co-ordinators where she had brought up the issue of a Regional LAF Chairs meeting. Unfortunately, Natural England had said that there was no funding for such a meeting and that this was unlikely to happen. A meeting of the northern chairs was suggested (NE, NW and Yorkshire and Humber) and RB said she would look into this option.

RB to look into setting up a meeting for the three northern Regional LAF chairs.

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

JJP urged members to send in agenda items for Regional LAF meetings as the meeting agenda should be set by those attending. HA suggested looking at the 2026 cut off date and the width of highways at the next meeting.

Members to let RB know of any agenda items for the next meeting.

HA to bring an agenda item on the 2026 cut off date and the width of highways at the next meeting.

3. Update from the Yorkshire and Humber Regional LAF

Annual Review

RB reiterated the importance of the Annual Review and asked members to push their appointing authority to fill out the form in time for the October deadline.

National Conference

RB explained to members that Natural England had no funding for a National Conference for 2014. However, they are still keen to host a conference due to the success of the conference in Sheffield earlier in the year. RB asked if members thought their appointing authority would be likely to pay for travel expenses to a more local venue (as it would be likely that there would be a northern and southern conference).

CC suggested a biannual conference. JT said he would prefer an annual conference and that he was sure North Yorkshire CC would fund 2-3 members' attendance.

HA thought it would be a good idea to ask all Local Authorities if they had a suitable venue that could be used for free. SR said that she could offer Nostell Priory for a northern venue.

MM suggested looking at funding streams and wondered if there was any money to be gained from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding (see item 10).

JJP suggested all LAFs go away and ask if their appointing authority would fund member's expenses to attend a northern regional conference on an annual basis or a biannual basis.

RB to suggest all LAFs in the region add a note in their annual review on the importance of a National Conference

RB to ask all LAFs in the region to add a note to their annual reviews expressing the importance of holding a National LAF Conference.

4. Update from Natural England

Paths for Communities

PR updated members with regards to the Paths for Communities (P4C) project. The newsletter is now available on the Natural England website

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

(<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/rightsofway/p4c.aspx>) and an annual report has been produced, which will be disseminated once approved.

By the end of June 2013, there had been 270 expressions of interest in the project with 21 grants awarded (£940k). It is fully expected that the full £2m will be spent by the end of March 2014.

Natural England Reorganisation

PR told members that from 2014 Natural England were expecting a further 10% cut in their budget, which would have to be from the staff resource budget. Staff are unsure as to what impact this will have on their area of work but it is thought that there will be a more localised team structure.

TH thought that the Regional LAF should be writing to the government express their concerns over the cuts to the Natural England budget. PM thought it might be a good idea to write a letter via the Department of Health from a health and well being angle. It was agreed that this was a good idea and MW suggested also writing to the Health and Well Being Boards with Richard Benyon CC'd into any correspondence. JJP thought it might be a good idea to also write to Mary Creagh, MP for Wakefield, on the same issue.

JJP and RB to write a letter on the proposed cuts to the Natural England budget.

5. Huddle update

RB circulated some relevant information she had found on Huddle over the last month:

- Advice/Guidance around Wind and Solar farms upon Open Access Land.
- Summary of responses to the Defra consultation 'Improvements to the policy and legal framework for public rights of way'.
- Key findings from the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey.
- Draft Deregulation Bill.

There was a discussion about the Deregulation Bill and what it actually means. JJP said that members needed to compare the amendments listed in the briefing note with the original Bill. He added that the most important issue was that someone somewhere was scrutinising the document. AM said that this was being carried out by the Stakeholder Group.

6. National Trails

Unfortunately, a member of Natural England staff from the National trails team was unable to attend the meeting. However, they had sent an update, which PR gave:

Natural England has published two reports, detailing the outcome of the National Trails review on 28th March 2013.

[The New Deal: Management of National Trails in England from April 2013](#) explains how National Trails will be managed and maintained in the future. Trails will be delivered on the ground, as most of them already are, by Local Trail Partnerships. Each Partnership

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

will report to Natural England on how they are meeting National Trail standards and spending their budgets.

[Analysis of Responses](#) summarises the key findings from the consultation on the National Trails review. 141 responses were received; each respondent expressed different views about the reasons for the review and about the levels of detail in our proposals. However, the majority agreed that the propositions as set out in the consultation were “in the right direction of travel”.

PR added that he would try to get someone to come along to the next meeting to talk about National Trails.

PR to ask a member of the National Trails team to attend the next meeting of the Regional LAF to discuss the management of National Trails.

7. National update – HS2

AM told members that he was expecting a consultation to come out on the proposed HS2 in 2014. JT added that there was a consultation out now that individuals could respond to. However, LAFs had not been consulted as a whole.

8. Village Greens

JJP said he had attended the village greens workshop earlier in the year (as discussed at the March Regional LAF meeting) and that it had been useful. The main issue to come out was that there will be changes to the Commons Act. JJP agreed to provide a short note explaining the present situation with regard to claiming new village greens.

JJP to write a note explaining the present situation with regard to claiming new village greens.

9. Higher Level Scheme – fencing and commons

JJP said he had put this on the agenda as more and more applications for fencing on common land are coming to the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for consultation and asked that members keep their eyes out for applications in their areas.

TH added that it was important that LAFs ensure there are sufficient access points when these applications are submitted.

PR told members that the guidance says that applicants should consult LAFs and that if this isn't happening he would like to know about it. AM added that the CAP reform guidance for fencing schemes says that LAFs **have** to be consulted. JJP asked for this guidance to be circulated.

AM to send RB the new CAP reform guidance on fencing of common land to circulate to all LAFs in the region.

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

10. Potential new source of funding

JJP asked members to read the document before them on potential funding from Local Enterprise Partnerships in their own time due to time constraints of the meeting.

11. Good news items from LAFs

Bradford

The old West Yorkshire Pennines LAF has been disbanded and three new LAFs have formed – Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale. The Bradford LAF has had its first meeting but no Chair has been appointed yet. It is hoped that a member of the LAF will be available to attend the next Regional meeting.

Sheffield

The Sheffield LAF has been involved with a successful Paths for Communities project.

Rotherham

The Rotherham LAF annual budget has been reduced from £20k to £15k but it is still a success that such a budget exists for a LAF.

Doncaster

The Doncaster LAF have become more proactive in getting the bridleway network up to scratch.

Leeds

The Leeds LAF have been involved in the opening of St Aiden's in Leeds. MW agreed to send a location map to RB to circulate to members.

Yorkshire Dales

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority have responded to the Yorkshire Dales LAF's concerns with regards to lack of consultation on planning matters and have agreed to add the LAF to the list of consultees for any relevant applications.

12. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional LAF will be on 21 March 2014 and will be held at the Natural England offices, Queen Street, Leeds.

Afternoon session on multi user routes

TH opened the discussion on multi user routes stating that it is necessary to increase the provision whereby your choice of 'exploring' is compatible and compliments other users and offers mutual respect. JJP thanked TH for his opening remarks.

DRAFT Unapproved Minutes

CC took TH up on some of his points, one being that horses can cause damage to SSSI's. CC said that many SSSIs were open to horse riders. E.g. Dartmoor Common and Richmond Park in London, and that damage is not increased.

CC also commented on TH's statement that 100% of the PROW network was available to everyone and that it is by choice that higher rights users do not have access to the full network. CC said that the welfare of her horse was paramount and that it needed exercising so much that she didn't have the opportunity to walk, and thus use 100% of the network.

PM said that in the next 5-10 years there will be a further increase in pressure on building houses, especially in the south of the country, and that the provision of access should include the consideration of rights for non motorised users. HS said that the main PROW running through Milton Keynes is a bridleway which is heavily used.

RC felt that walkers have the higher ground. Local Authority officers dealing with PROW are often called 'Footpath Officers' and the company taken on to manage to marketing for the National Trails are called 'Walk England'.

PR thought that attitudes were changing and that the P4C scheme was a good example of how higher rights was a real consideration.

JH said that in Sheffield, much of the Local Authority owned land is being sold off and that when a parcel of land is sold, the Ramblers are consulted to see if new footpaths could be created. He wondered why the British Horse Society are not consulted in the same way.

JJP summed up the discussion by adding that in order to change the status of a route, the definitive map needed to be altered by applying for Definitive Map Modification Order. There have been huge successes in the region of upgrading routes – Pennine Bridleway and Tran Pennine Trail – but these have cost a lot of money. JJP suggested each LAF choose a number of routes that are a priority for higher rights and try to deal with those few rather than tackling the whole network.

RC asked if any LAFs knew of anywhere where a Local Authority was successful in getting money from LTP3. MW said that Leeds had received funding from LTP3 but not for PROW and DG said that Bradford had received large amounts of money to fund their Rights of Way Improvement Plan actions. JH asked that the Local Transport Plan be on the agenda for the next meeting and that members bring successful projects along with them.

<p>All members to bring any successful funding bids from LTP3 to the next meeting of the Regional LAF.</p>
