

**Minutes**  
**Cumbria Local Access Forum**  
 Meeting: Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
 Parkhouse, Carlisle

<b>Attendees</b>					
Charles Ecroyd (Chairman)	CE	Bridget Pickthall	BP	Sylvia Woodhead	SW
Jim McQueen (Vice-Chairman)	JM	David Young	DY		
Oliver Coles	OC	Terry Jolley	TJ	Geoff Fewkes	GF
Elizabeth Barraclough	EB	Chris Lyon	CL	David Gibson	DG
Elizabeth Mallinson	EM	Ron Lyon	RL	Eve Borrino	EMB

**1 WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Received from; Mike Murgatroyd, Nick Cotton, Douglas Chalmers, Alan Dougherty and Jo Cleary.

**3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There was no disclosure of interest by any member in relation to agenda items.

**5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There was no requirement to exclude members of the public/press.

**6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes were accepted as accurate, and will be uploaded to the website.

[EMB to upload to website](#)

**7 MATTERS ARISING**

- A letter to the Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) has been drafted and will be in the post in the next day or two.
- The Ramblers plan on running 'The Big Pathwatch' as part of their 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Their intention is to survey every Right of Way (RoW) in the country. We shall wait and see what their conclusions are vis-à-vis Cumbria.
- A representative from the Woodland Trust will meet with GF shortly, to discuss location of access furniture at Mallerstang.
- GF has met with the Ravenstondale Chairman of the commoners to put access point locations onto a scheme map. This is ready to go when the commoners agree to it.
- GF reported on the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NPAONB) peatland restoration scheme on Nine Standards Rigg. As part of

this scheme, there are plans to flag a section of the Coast-to-Coast route. There is also a chance that this section may be dedicated as a RoW.

- BP + SW have taken up the challenge of producing the Annual Report. They undertook to become the editorial team with the Forums approval.  
[EMB to forward BPs email address to members](#)  
[Members to forward photos to BP for possible inclusion](#)
- The Moorhouse Access Consultation has prompted attempts by Mike Ogden (Durham CC) to correct a RoW anomaly relating to the path around Cow Green reservoir. The RoW is recorded as a footpath on the Durham side of the county border, yet as a bridleway on the Cumbria side.
- Ken Taylor and Geoff Wilson are still trying to get a commitment from Natural England to take forward the project mapping fencing on Open Access land.
- EB will continue to keep a watching brief on the permissive footpath in Keswick.
- JM had sent by email his update on the Arnside Viaduct proposal. He remains concerned that CCC does not have a written report from the engineer.

## 8 CHAIRMANS ACTIONS

CE attended a European Marine Sites Management Group meeting.

A focus of the meeting was towards updating the action plan for the Special Protection Area. He reminded the group of the need to make provision for the rollout of coastal access.

[CE to write to reinforce this point](#)

In fulfilment of actions arising at previous meetings; CE has contacted the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Nature Partnerships.

## 9 MEMBERSHIP

A number of members have been contacted and have agreed to extend their membership. They are reminded to return their letters of appointment.

[Members extending their appointments to respond to letters](#)

## 10 MEMBERS NEWS

JM sent out an email updating members about the Storth Public Inquiry. Closing statements were delivered at the end of March; a decision is expected in 6 weeks. JM feels the decision could go either way.

He expressed concerns about how information re the Inquiry was communicated, especially with regard to the council taking a neutral stance over cases.

It was thought that a training session about the Public Inquiry process would be appropriate. Writing to the Planning Inspectorate expressing the LAFs concerns was considered necessary. It was believed that de-regulation could have an effect on how such issues would be settled in the future.

It was requested that LAF members to be kept informed about similar cases in the future.

[CE +JM to write to Pins](#)

[DG Notification on cases proceeding to public inquiry to be sent to LAF members](#)

Terry Jolley spoke on the proposed Moorside Power station, and possibly another two nuclear power stations on Cumbria's west coast.

Connection of the power station(s) to the 'Supergrid' will be required. New transmission lines will need to be built.

TJ passed around a paper which included photographs of the new pylon design.

He outlined that two circuits will be needed. One will go north from Moorside to Harker near Carlisle. The other will head south to Barrow and then under the bay to Heysham. These will have a significant impact on the coastal landscape; a line of towers extending the length of the west coast of Cumbria. The majority of this power will not be used in Cumbria, but exported to other parts of the country.

A major asset for Cumbria is its landscape; the pylons will detract significantly from this.

CE thanked TJ for his presentation and agreed there would be a huge visual impact.

He felt that it would be appropriate for individual members to take their own actions in this matter. He felt that otherwise the CLAF would be diverging from its main remit of access.

[Members to consider making submissions to the consultation process](#)

DG explained that there had been a pre-scoping meeting with the company. An impact on Rights of Way has been identified; some form of gain would be expected in mitigation.

BP spoke about the Lost Ways workshop she had attended. It was an interesting morning with Andy Sims in the Archives, Carlisle. It was a time consuming process, which involved a lot of looking at maps. She felt that the next step for her would be to meet with someone who had gone through the process of claiming a route.

BP mentioned that she would be attending the Cumbria Bridleways Society meeting the next day (17-4). She has also been out to meet a couple of groups associated with the Morecambe Bay Partnership. She had been on a work-party at Greenodd with Sustrans. She also attended a meeting with Artgene (Barrow). She brought along one of their new maps; 'Seldom Seen', they cost £8 and tie in with a phone app.

SW spoke about an anomaly she and BP had visited on a bridleway at Old Croft Farm, Old Hutton. There was a missing section of the route at the parish boundary. This oversight had probably arisen at the time parishes were drawing up maps of RoW. SW + BP could not see any reason why the route should not go through the farm.

SW outlined the launch of the Morecambe Bay Cycle route on 11<sup>th</sup> June. A group will cycle the route over 4 days, starting at Walney Island. This route does not involve any new infrastructure. SW also mentioned that there was some opposition in Grange to the use of the Prom by cyclists.

There is also a Morecambe Bay Partnership guided walk on 26<sup>th</sup> April in Arnside.

OC explained that he was continuing his watching brief of the Health and Wellbeing Board's progress. He accessed the board's Agenda on-line, but could rarely see topics of relevance to the interests of the CLAF. He was frustrated that there seemed little opportunity for him to participate.

EM suggested other meetings/situations where he could participate more (e.g. Healthy Living, which is a district function). She suggested the two of them could discuss possible approaches.

[OC to discuss with EM](#)

RL informed members that from the 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> June the Disabled Ramblers (DR) would be running a series of 1 day rambles in North Cumbria. It is an opportunity for members to learn more about how the DR operate; all are welcome to attend.

[RL will forward details to EMB for circulation](#)

Alan Dougherty reported via email on the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NPAONB) working group:

Mike Ogden, Team Leader, Access and RoW at Durham CC reports the following topics of interest to CLAF that have arisen at the Working Group:

- Restructuring / cuts to Cumbria CC RoW Team.
- A Partnership Manager has been appointed to the Pennine National Trails Partnership (which is led by Yorkshire Dales NP). The appointee is from a partnership management / funding background rather than a specific access background; consequently Steve Westwood is no longer the National Trail Officer. He has sent a message to say how much he enjoyed attending Working Group meetings in his former role.
- Noted were the Ramblers' Big Path Watch and that a stage of the Tour of Britain cycle race will finish at Hartside Top in September.
- Working Group member Ted Liddle, who sits on the Northumberland LAF, attended the Annual Forum of the Northern Uplands Chain Local Nature Partnership. He reports that the partnership does not appear to regard access as an important aspect of its work, although the members of the discussion group in which he was involved seem to agree with his assertion that nature without appropriate access is rather pointless. In contrast, Ted has been invited to sit on the board of the Northumberland Coast and Lowlands LNP specifically because of his access background. This LNP embraces access and is actively seeking funding to improve it on the grounds of job creation and economic impact.

DG added that another important item discussed at the NPAONB meeting was the development of the northern extension to the Pennine Bridleway.

## 11 CLAF ACTION/RESPONSE

- Cliburn Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR). On this occasion, Ian Brodie (Open Spaces Society) was against more access on this reserve. He feels much has already been done to improve access to the site in recent times. Any further escalation of access on this fragile site would impinge on nature conservation.
- Ravenstonedale and Mallerstang were covered under section 7. Matters Arising.
- No recent NNR updates have been received from Natural England (NE). This may be because there has been a staffing change. Chris Pope is no longer in the role, it is now Kevin Vigars. GF mentioned a couple of developments he had heard of recently: Halsenna Moor (already Open Access, as it is dedicated common land) and a meadow at Rowrah, to which access is already well publicised.
- North Pennines Open Access restrictions for the protection of overwintering of Black Grouse: Monitoring has shown that it is not public access but primarily climate that influences population numbers. However, the nuclear sites in Cumbria are so critical for the survival of the birds that restrictions will remain in place.

**12 NEWS FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ACCESS BODIES**

The sad news is that Natural England (NE) has withdrawn funding for the Regional Co-ordinator role (in CLAFs case; Kathy Miles). NE cites reduced funding; however they still expect to retain a close working relationship with the LAFs. One suggestion from NE is greater use of Huddle.

[CE to circulate minutes of the February Regional meeting in due course](#)

The next regional meeting is in June.

**13 COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS WORK PROGRAMME**

Update given by DG: a number of changes have to be instigated:

**ROW** We are falling behind on the 6 year rolling program of Parish surveys; primarily because of the workload coming from Carlisle City. Some areas in Carlisle have not been visited for 10 years and it is taking a great deal of work and money to get the RoWs up to standard. The change will be that the 6 year program of survey and maintenance will become a 6 year program of survey. The change will be that we will be going back to the landowner's responsibility to maintain stiles and gates. We will notify them of any repairs that need doing. CCC will still cover signposting, our bridges and surface condition. Our contribution towards stiles and gates will be supplying the stiles and gates to address the issues on the landowner's property.

**ROWIP** 28 projects ran last year with 115% of match funding.

**ENQUIRIES LIST:** When CCC worked with Capita Symonds we had to work to strict and measurable targets to ensure public money was well spent. We can now afford to be more flexible in our approach to getting value for money. We need to bring the ROWIP further into the way we manage routes.

**COASTAL ACCESS:** The Deputy Prime Ministers commitment to deliver coastal access by 2020 leads to another staff pressure. We will see after May if there is still the same drive to implement coastal access.

**NATIONAL TRAILS:** The new lady working on both the Pennine Way and the Pennine Bridleway is Heather Proctor.  
Hadrian's Wall Path: Management is still unsettled. CCC contributed £15,000 last year to help overcome the problems of the trust collapsing. This contribution cannot be repeated this year. We are looking at a £5,000 cash contribution plus a number of improvement works through the Carlisle area. For example, Etterby Scour, Rickerby Park, the Swifts are all due to benefit from improvement works. These are along the line of the route. This will mean that there will be an additional input of £5,000 of staff time.

**BRIDGES:** No major bridges are planned for the next year, just lots of smaller 5-6m bridges, plus possibly one for coastal access near Abbeytown.  
Forum members congratulated the Countryside Access team on the success and good PR following the completion of Charlie's bridge at Wampool.

An Asset Register will be replacing the Enquiries list.

DY asked when this would be available for CLAF members to view?

GF will be developing/populating the register, until then the Enquiries list will continue to tick over.

Forum members congratulated the Countryside Access team on the success and good PR following the completion of Charlie's bridge at Wampool.

#### 14 OTHER BUSINESS

GF mentioned that the new mountain bike route in Northumberland 'The Sandstone Way' is an excellent example of cycle route development.

There continues to be a problem within Natural England that is impacting on the Coast Path delivery. There are internal issues between the Access and the Conservation bodies within the organisation. There seems to be some conflict between EU Conservation legislation and the Marine and Coastal Access bill. We understand that Cumbria is a pilot area for the delivery of the England Coast path, but NE must resolve their process/policy quickly if the path is to be completed by 2020.

[CE to contact Danny, Gerry and Giles Mounsey-Heysham](#)

#### 15 FEEDBACK FROM THE MORNINGS TRAINING SESSION

A site visit was made to footpaths at Etterby Scour, alongside the river Eden in Carlisle. DG outlined some of the issues affecting the recent works carried out. CE commented it was an interesting site visit which demonstrated the reality on the ground of taking over responsibilities from the City Council. It was good to see there is much collaborative working.

#### Dates of the next meetings:

15<sup>th</sup> July: Solway Wetlands Centre, Campfield Marsh Nature Reserve.

21<sup>st</sup> October: Cycle café, Sandy Gap, Walney Island

*Postscript: EM explained Wednesdays were difficult for her to attend. EMB looked in to changing the Wednesday meetings to Tuesdays. This was not possible for the July meeting, but for the October meeting and beyond; Tuesday will be the preferred day of the week for CLAF meetings. **The October meeting is now planned for Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October.***

#### Actions from the meeting:

- CE** Circulate minutes of the February Regional Co-ordinators meeting.  
Write to European Marine Sites Management Group to reinforce the need to consider provision for the England Coast Path.  
CE +JM to write to Pins  
Contact Kevin Vigars re NNR updates  
Contact Danny, Gerry and Giles re internal issues.
- JM** CE +JM to write to Pins
- DG** Notification on cases proceeding to public inquiry to be sent to LAF members
- SW + BP** Compile and edit Annual report(s)
- ALL** forward photos to BP for possible inclusion in the annual report  
Members extending their appointments to respond to letters
- OC** To discuss Health + Wellbeing input with EM
- RL** To forward Disabled Ramblers event info to EMB for circulation
- EMB** Edit + upload to the website minutes from the January meeting.  
Edit date of the next meeting  
Forward BP's email address to members  
Supply EM contact details to OC