

MINUTES

Cumbria and Lakes Local Access Forum meeting held on Friday 21st October 2016 at Ambleside Parish Rooms

| Attendees: | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|------------------------|----|-----------------------|----|
| Charles Ecroyd | CE | Carole Barr | CB | Dave Robinson (LDNPA) | DR |
| David Gibson (CCC) | DG | Jim McQueen | JM | Geoff Wilson | GW |
| Oliver Coles | OC | Terry Jolley | TJ | Chris Lyon | CL |
| Ron Lyon | RL | Cllr Nick Cotton (CCC) | NC | Kathy Miles | KM |
| Geoff Davies (LDNPA) | GD | Bridget Pickthall | BP | Cllr Helen Wall (CCC) | HW |
| Sylvia Woodhead | SW | Elizabeth Barraclough | EB | Malcolm Petyt | MP |
| Steve Pighills | SP | | | | |

1 Welcome

David Gibson took the chair, welcoming all to this auspicious occasion, the first joint meeting of the Cumbria Local Access Forum and Lake District Local Access Forum.

All present introduced themselves.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Cllr Liz Mallinson, Mike Murgatroyd, Jonathan Brooks, John Crosbie, Ken Taylor, Sam Stalker and Vicky Bowman.

3 Chiring of meeting

Members were asked if they wished to elect a new chair for the Joint LAF. However, it was felt it would be better to wait with appointing a chair until January when there may potentially be some new members and some existing members may have stood down. NC proposed electing a chair for a limited period and proposed CE. CB agreed the original understanding was that a chair would be elected for the day. GW proposed CE as chair; seconded by SP and JM. CE was elected chair for the day, with a permanent chair to be elected in January.

4 Public Participation

No representations or questions had been received from members of the public.

5 Disclosure of Interest

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

6 Exclusion of Press and Public

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

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting s

The Cumbria LAF minutes were accepted with one amendment:

14.1 – Rothay to replace Rathay

The Lake District LAF minutes were accepted with addition of detail to 698.1 as follows:

Declaration of Interest for Ken Taylor: Organised Events, as he sits on the Access Management Group of the BMC and they have been in dialogue with the National Trust.

8 Matters Arising

8.1 Matters Arising from the Cumbria LAF Minutes

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7.4.1 Publicity article – this would be dealt with under Agenda Item 9

10 Cumbria County Council representation on the Joint LAF – CE had not yet contacted Janet Willis, the portfolio-holder but would do so. Following discussion, it was concluded that this would be settled in due course and would be clarified in May following the elections. **CE**

11.2 Lack of bridleways in Barrow – HW and BP had so far made little progress in following this up.

8.2 Matters Arising from the Lake District LAF Minutes

701.1 Flood Recovery Funding – DR reported that a bid for funding had been made, but this would be nowhere near enough. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) had been pressed for a decision, particularly as the deadline is June 2018. DG mentioned that the RPA had that morning contacted CCC to say they were awarding £0.5m. It was to be hoped that DR may find that the Lake District would now also receive a decision. DR observed that there would be a shortfall in that this money would not be enough, but they had been asked to put together a funding bid for anything up to £5m, though not sure they would receive all of this.

LDNPA had just advertised for a project manager for ten flood rangers to do reinstatement work.

MP raised the situation where a particular individual was working hard to complete a high level route from Grange to Windermere and needed help from LD rangers, but had been told that the number one priority was flood recovery. It seemed a great shame that it was not possible to support this route at this time. CB observed that Mark Eccles should carry this forward.

JM asked if someone had a permitted path on their land, would the Lake District support it, as he felt that the authority should set an example. DR explained that on occasion it was right to support a permissive route, whereas at other times the landowner is encouraged to dedicate routes as ROW.

Northern Railway Route at Keswick – GD observed that the Lake District Local Plan had this as a Sustainability Route.

712.1 Surveying of ROW in the extension areas

Volunteers have surveyed all the extra 36km of ROW gained through the extension of the Lake District NP. An estimated additional £18k will be required for these paths. The Breast High Road is currently open but will need a large amount of money spent on it; LD and CCC are still discussing this. DG added that a sum is to be put to the Members and their answer will come back to LDNPA.

9 Joint Cumbria and Lake District Local Access Forum

9.1 LAF Title Members discussed various titles and wondered if 'Joint' needed to form part of the new LAF's title. The official title ought to include 'Joint' and the names of the constituent Access Authority areas, ie Cumbria County and Lake District National Park. Members agreed "Cumbria and Lakes Joint Local Access Forum"; to be known as Cumbria and Lakes LAF.

9.2 LAF Membership CE and CB reiterated the intention to offer continued membership to all existing members and, following expressions of interest in remaining, to assess numbers, category etc to ensure a reasonable balance. KM will write to each LAF member to ask if they are willing to remain on the new LAF; with replies to be received by 1st December. **KM
All**

In January it will be seen who remains and the balance of categories, skills, and geographical location will be reviewed. Ron and Chris Lyon requested that they be counted as one member, as their membership was very much as a single unit.

- 9.3 Councillor/Authority representation This had to an extent already been covered under 8.1. Some discussion followed as to whether there should be one representative from each of the two Access Authorities, ie CCC and LDNPA, or three (the maximum allowed), as this would help ensure representation at all meetings. It was to be hoped that councillors would be appointed who had an interest in countryside access.
- 9.4 Term of Membership Discussion of membership terms highlighted the need for varied lengths of term, as prescribed of one-year-minimum to three-year-maximum duration, to ensure continuity. Terms could be renewed as appropriate.
- 9.5 Lead Authority Following a meeting of the LAF chairs and officers when it had been agreed that it would be best if the County Council were the lead authority, David Gibson had been able to speak to senior CCC officers and this had been accepted.
- 9.6 Secretariat It had also been accepted that the current arrangements for the Cumbria LAF Secretariat could continue for the new Joint LAF. LAF Members then also agreed that Kathy Miles should continue to cover aspects of the LAF Secretary role as at present, such as producing LAF minutes, circulating correspondence and meeting documents to all LAF members and supporting the chair, vice-chair and officers.
- 9.7 LAF Chair This would be decided at the January meeting when a Chair will be elected.
- 9.8 LAF Meetings It was felt that the new Joint LAF would have a greater workload and would need to meet quarterly. Normally two meetings a year would be held in the National Park and two outside, and usually with a training session in the morning.
- 9.9 LAF Terms of Reference It was agreed that GW and CE would draft new Terms of Reference. **GW
CE**
- 9.10 Logo and branding A few ideas for the logo were suggested and members then agreed on CB's idea of a 'C' surrounding an outline of the county's coast and boundary, and incorporating some representation of mountains and lakes within. CB would ask a contact of hers to draw up a logo. **CB**
- 9.11 LAF Website Currently the Lake District LAF's web presence is embedded within the Park Authority website, whereas Cumbria LAF's is standalone, but administered by CCC. It was agreed that the CLAF website should become the website for the new Joint LAF and that it would be revamped. Both authorities' websites would have a link to the new LAF's website.
- 9.12 Annual Reports Each LAF will produce an annual report for 2016.
- 9.13 Budget and Expenses All members are to submit all outstanding claims to their respective authority by the end of December 2016. **All**
- Arrangements will be put in place for the new LAF so that travel expenses, lunch costs and other reasonable expenses can be paid.
- 9.14 Other GD raised the point that the Lake District Partnership ought to be made aware that the two LAFs will come together. Also the Partnership has brought in a couple of new members. It would make sense for the Chair or another representative of the new LAF to be on this Partnership. **CB**
KM to circulate a list of members' names, email addresses and town/location. **KM**

10 News from National and Regional Access Bodies

- 10.1 The NW Regional meeting scheduled for Thursday 8th September had been cancelled due to insufficient attendance.
- 10.2 LAFs had been informed by Rob Leek via Huddle that he had taken voluntary redundancy. For information Rob also informed that: “Andy Mackintosh will now, at least in the short term, be the national contact for all LAF enquiries (LAF@naturalengland.org.uk). Huddle will continue to operate as now and will be managed by Andy and Pippa Langford. More staff resource has been allocated for national LAF work but will not be in place until the start of December so there will be a slight lull in activity in October/November. The original aim to submit the national annual report to Defra and the Minister by the end of October may now slip slightly due to the staff changes. Natural England has acquired a volunteer who is keen to take on producing the LAF newsletter 'LAF News' and a new edition should be out within the next month or so. Natural England are planning another national LAF conference this financial year, likely to be held February/March again though possibly as a single conference this time in Birmingham. LAFs will be consulted about all of the conference plans soon. I'd additionally like to say it's been a pleasure working with all of the LAFs over the years and wish you good luck for the future and hope you all continue with your valuable work improving access and rights of way across the country.”

11 Coastal Access Update

- 11.1 CLAF response to report on Stage 3, Gretna to Allonby
The CLAF response was submitted and receipt acknowledged. Gerry Rusbridge had informed CE that it appeared there would be a public inquiry as a number of objections and representations had been received.

11.2 Report on Stage 4, Walney Island

CE asked members to look at the Walney Island report and send him comments by 7th November. CE felt the only possible objection may be about the avoidance of taking the path around the south tip of Walney Island. KM to circulate the report to LD LAF members. **KM**

11.3 Stage 2

CE reported that establishment of Stage 2 was going forward but in some areas the path will be rolled back. The standard of path already put in has met with approval.

12 AOB

- 12.1 CB had received a letter about barbed wire from Ernie Robin and had assured him that this would be on the January agenda.
- 12.2 GW gave an update on fencing. The LD LAF had been very concerned about fences going in and had tried to log those going in. In 2015 it was put to the Lake District National Park Partnership who approved this and were happy for it to be taken forward. The bodies involved and their IT and GIS people had been able to provide a suitable means of recording fencing.

CLAF had been kept informed of what had been done, but GW was unsure whether the scheme would deal only with the national park or would include Cumbria as a whole. However, he hoped that it would go wider – regional and national. It should be possible to easily extend it. GW would update LAF members on progress.

[More detailed Fell Fencing Update below supplied by GW, for information:

In the autumn 2015 the Lake District LAF took a paper to the Lake District National Park Partnership for the continued development and hosting of a database that records information about instances of new fencing in the uplands. It recommended that the Lake District National Park Authority be asked to host the database, which could be managed with support from others (such as LAF Members, Natural England and Forestry Commission).

To respond to this request, a limited group of key organisations (Natural England, Forestry Commission, National Trust and the Lake District National Park Authority) were drawn together to ascertain the scale of fell fencing, the most effective way to record the location, extent and other details.

Data relating to fencing installed by means of recent agri-environment schemes was passed from Natural England and the Forestry Commission to the Lake District National Park Authority. This has now been formatted, and presents a clear picture as to the location of recent fencing works. However, work is still required to ensure that the supporting data provided is as complete as possible.

The LDNPA, Natural England, Forestry Commission and National Trust will continue to work with LAF members Ken Taylor and Geoff Wilson on this project at a Lake District National Park level.]

12.3 RL and CL had been invited to the Morecambe Bay Partnership as they had received funding for Trampers. The Partnership had come up with 25-30 possible routes. RL felt that he and Chris had been able to contribute a lot to the Partnership's knowledge.

12.4 BP referred to the Kendal to Lancaster Canal survey being conducted by the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TowpathTrailSurvey>). LCRP are aiming to provide continuous, improved towpath access for walkers and cyclists from Kendal to Lancaster. BP suggested that perhaps she and JM write to Helen Moriarty, LCRP Project Manager and encourage multi-user use. DG added that CCC had already done an access audit for them but that it may be helpful if BP and JM write a letter to support multi-use.

BP also reported that the Seldom Seen maps from Artgene were now published.

12.5 SW and BP had visited two footpath diversion requests, which they had approved on behalf of the LAF. The first was a re-visit to Dalton, and the second to near Casterton, which is now, since 1st August, in the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP).

SW reported that the tree planting at Dina Gill on Gaythorne Plain, now also in the YDNP, was progressing well, and was a credit to CCC Countryside Officers. She also reported that a fence had recently been erected on Stennerskeugh Clouds. Its relatively small extent was apparently allowed under the Commons Act. It had only poor 'landowner stiles' on its long side.

SW asked if there was any progress on the longstanding issue of the footpath blocked by Vicarage School in Kendal.

CE would be attending the Yorkshire Dales LAF meeting on 1st November and would raise the matters SW had informed the LAF about.

12.6 JM gave an update on the proposed Arnside Viaduct cycle route. The Morecambe Bay Partnership had now taken the lead and provided a member of staff for the next 12 months. The intention was to ascertain whether the route would be viable.

12.7 CE reported that work was in progress regarding a gate at Clifton near Penrith that is now locked and which used to be open.

Holker Estates wish to infill a void at Willow End Quarry on Kirkby Moor Common.

CE's initial reaction was that there should not be a problem provided access was protected.

SW was aware of an application to divert several ROWs on the south side of Kirkby quarry (and was surprised this had not come before the LAF). NC added that the Development Control and Regulation (DC&R) Committee was to have a site visit there, so was able to assure that this was being looked into.

CE had also received a letter about an application to deregister 3.2h on Kirkby Moor Common and replace with a new area of similar size.

Geoff Fewkes had contacted CE about fire response which had changed following the national park extensions, but there was nothing to worry about at present.

CE read out an email just received from Ian Brodie about issues the latter had raised in connection with a proposed change to the Hadrian's Wall Trail at Gilsland. DG had seen David McGlade's proposals and was able to add some history and comment. LAF members were happy with the proposals as explained by DG, particularly as they removed the necessity to cross the railway line, thus eliminating a serious safety hazard. CE would respond to Ian Brodie to say that it had been discussed at the LAF meeting. However, he would first let DG have a look at this and then circulate to members for comment.

CE
All

13 Feedback from morning Training Session / Flood repairs in Ambleside

CE thanked both David's for organising the two site visits: to a CCC-Ambleside Civic Trust ROWIP project at Waterhead; and to look at CCC-LDNPA flood recovery works in Rothay Park. It had been interesting to see and hear about the work undertaken and about the financing obtained.

CB wished to say how positively she felt that the meeting had gone, as though all had been working together for a considerable time already, and that this augered well for the future.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday 17th January 2017.