

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum

Thursday 6th December 2018

Tywi Centre, Llandeilo, 6pm

Present:

Members:

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair
Karen Burch (KB) – LAF vice Chair
Jillie Gardiner (JG)
Geoff Williams (GW)
Richard Leggett (RL)
Mo Rapley (MR)
Paul Barrett (PB)
Jim Shadbolt (JS) (new member as of this meeting)

Secretary (interim)

Caroline Ferguson (CF) – (CCC Acting Countryside Access Manager)

Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public

Lucy Pugh (LP) - CCC Acting Countryside Access Officer
Gruffydd Rees (GR) - CCC Countryside Access Ranger
Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths (PHG) – CCC Executive Board Member
Rob Williams (RW) - TRF

Apologies:

Members:

Gerald Brown (GB)
David Stacey (DS)
Caroline Evans (CE)
Glyn Evans (GE)

Advisors/Observers:

Sam Palmer (SP) - CCC
Russell Jones – NRW
Allan Haskins
Neil Thomas – CCC
Cllr. Hazel Evans
Glyn Lloyd-Jones (GLJ) – NRW
Ian Maberly – BBNP LAF
Martin Murray – CCC

Absent:

Jane Evans
Michael Jones

*CCC in these minutes refers to Carmarthenshire County Council

ITEM	ACTION
<p>Items 1 - Welcome & Introduction</p> <p>MH welcomed all to the meeting and a round-table introduction was given.</p>	
<p>Item 2 - New Members/Resignations</p> <p>Jim Shadbolt's application to join the LAF was read out. He was elected onto the LAF, proposed by MH and seconded by PB.</p>	

<p>Item 3 - Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were taken and recorded.</p>	
<p>Item 4 – Consideration and Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Approval already completed via email. This method to be continued in the future as it saves time during LAF meetings and the minutes are able to be uploaded to the website more quickly.</p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting still to be included when agenda is sent out.</p> <p>Item to be removed from future agendas.</p>	CF
<p>Item 5 – Matters arising from Minutes - not otherwise Agenda Items</p> <p><u>LAF Website</u> This was discussed and it was noted that the website is up to date apart from June's minutes, which will be added as soon as available. Dates for forthcoming LAF meetings to be added.</p> <p><u>NRW</u> In the previous minutes (Item 5.9) it was stated that MH was to check for an email that was sent to NRW. MH: This was sent, but the meeting Jane Evans raised is a BHS-only meeting.</p> <p><u>Bridleways Report</u> KB: Met with LP to try to resolve the anomalies in bridleway lengths between the 2007-17 ROWIP and the draft ROWIP. It was agreed that it would be impossible to resolve all the anomalies as there was no way of finding out how the figures were derived in the earlier report. KB: Would like the report showing open/closed bridleways to also show issues on the closed ones and whether it would be possible to reopen them.</p> <p><u>Consultant Update / Archives</u> KB: What is the progress with Edwinstford? CF: The consultant is currently still undertaking research. JG: The Finance Act maps and schedule books have now been moved to Haverfordwest. PHG: Have visited the new archive building (by St Peters Car Park in Carmarthen). It is progressing well and is scheduled to open in Autumn 2019.</p> <p><u>Heads of Service Meeting</u> Meeting that was scheduled for 7th Nov has now been rescheduled for 18th Dec. KB: Unable to attend. GW: Will attend in KB's place. MH: Following discussions during ORPA meeting at Mynydd Mawr offices, will be requesting a central register of Traffic Regulation Orders.</p> <p><u>Recreational Access to Water, ROWIP and LAF Representation</u> GW: LAF should deal with access <i>to</i> water, not necessarily <i>on</i> it. GW: Should we invite a representative from Canoe Wales to the LAF?</p>	<p>LP</p> <p>LP</p> <p>MH</p>

CF: They are a ROWIP consultee so will know about the LAF and their ability to contribute if desired.

AOB

MH: Update on the £16k budget being spent on 5 vehicular routes – list as follows:

Route & Location	Works Planned	Est. Cost
Brechfa puddles (UCR, SN566343)	clearance & resurfacing	£10,262
Nantyllyn (Byway 15/40, SN552324)	resurfacing	£1,370
Abergorlech (Byway 15/31, SN566356)	clearance	£1,525
Myddfai (UCR, SN766327)	clearance & resurfacing	£3,195
Dunlop Hill, Brechfa (UCR, SN542289)	clearance	£1,040
Total spend on routes:		£17,392

Will ask Alan for update on what work has been done.

MH

Item 6 – CCC Countryside Access Maint and Legal Teams

CF & PHG outlined current position. Merging the Countryside Access service is still “work in progress”.

GR: The plan still seems to be that there will be 4 rangers instead of 5.

MH: The LAF should raise that as a concern.

PHG: The draft budget is currently out to consultation.

GW: A “letter of concern” should be written from the LAF.

MH: And sent to whom?

PHG: Should be sent to Chris Moore and copied into the Chief Executive.

CF: This should be discussed at the HoS meeting on 18th Dec to ensure a reduction in Rangers numbers is definitely being proposed before writing to express concerns

PHG: The Council need to save £28m over the next 3 years.

GR: Will be difficult to maintain levels of resolved issues with less rangers. Tourism is vital to the County, and the PRow network is fundamental to that.

MH/CF

Item 7 – PRow Network Issues Report

RL: The number of both legal and maintenance issues is at the highest level since the LAF started to receive reports in May 2016.

KB: Can the stats be made public?

CF: Would not be appropriate to circulate to the general public, the detailed figures are produced to help inform the LAF in their statutory role.

RL: It would be ok to share the headline figures and trends though? AGREED.

GW: Carmarthenshire is ahead of the game by having these stats. No other Welsh LAF is given such information.

RL: It is worth noting that the Performance Indicator (5% sample survey showing lengths of paths open, accessible, signed) figures have gone down this year.

GR: Issue prioritisation scoring system influences the order in which issues are dealt with.

Item 8 – CAMS Demonstration

LP gave a CAMS demonstration, focussing on areas that had been discussed in previous meetings such as:

- Showing Glastir land and identifying closed PRowWs on this land
- Showing the Heart of Wales Line Trail (HoWLT) and identifying the routes that form part of the Trail
- Showing the Operational Status of bridleways via colour-coding on the map

LP: Whilst the Operational Status info is very useful, we do not intend to share it widely at the moment as it will allow people to focus on routes which are not open and we do not have the resources to deal with this.

KB: Can we just share the routes that are open?

LP: Possibly, but we are wary of misleading people by inadvertently giving out the wrong operational status if circumstances have changed and we are not aware.

RL: There is a responsibility on the public too, to report issues to CCC, so that information can be kept up to date.

It was agreed that an aspiration of the LAF is to have the open routes mapped (assuming there was sufficient budget and staffing to maintain the records).

GW: There is some HoWLT funding available for maintenance – will find out current position.

CF: Unless the position has changed since the scheme began, HoWLT is a crowd funded project so there is only as much funding as has been donated.

It was also mentioned that it is possible to download GPX files for sections of the HoWLT route from the <http://heartofwaleslinetrail.co.uk/> website.

GW

Item 9 – LAF Conference 15th November 2018

GW: Conference was well attended. Points / suggestions arising:

- NRW are reorganising into 6 areas with a representative for each area. These area reps will attend/contribute to LAF matters.
- Consultation presently out on proposals to replace Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in Wales. Part of new scheme is to reward 'Public Good'.
- LAFs should produce a work program for the next 12 months.
- LAF Annual Report should be produced by the Local Authority.
- LAFs should maintain contact with Community Councils.
- Any formal advice offered to the Council should be in the form of a letter sent to the Chief Executive.
- LAFs should connect with neighbouring LAFs.

MH: Re the LAF Annual Report – am happy to continue producing it.

MH: Ramblers Association are officially requesting that agri-environment schemes withhold money if PRowWs are not open.

CF: Mark Stafford-Tolley (PRow Officer, Powys CC) gave a presentation at the event asserting that PRowWs should be incorporated into Welsh agriculture funding as it presently is through Cross Compliance in England. The new Basic Payment Scheme proposed by WG should include keeping all PRow open as a basic requirement of funding. He encouraged consultation responses include this proposal.

<p>In support of this suggestion - a recent all Wales PRow management meeting revealed there is no standalone PRow Bill proposed following on from the 2015 Green Paper on Access due to time constraints created by Brexit – Access matters will piggy-back other Bills such as Agriculture.</p>	
<p>Item 10 – Tywi Valley Path</p> <p>MH: No update provided by Sam Palmer. Will request one.</p> <p>GW: Attended a presentation in Llandeilo, organised by the Civic Society. Questions were asked about funding, which SP was unable to answer.</p> <p>JG: Public money is being spent on routes that are not available to all vulnerable road users such as equestrians. Should the TVP be highlighted to the British Horse Society?</p> <p>KB: That should really come from individuals rather than the LAF.</p>	<p>MH</p>
<p>Item 11 – ROWIP</p> <p>CF: Draft is now back from Translation following approval at Executive Board Member (EBM) meeting. Hoping to get it out to consultation before Christmas, consultant has been notified that translation is complete (12 week consultation period).</p> <p>Thank you to PHG who was very complimentary about the PRow staff and section during consideration of the draft ROWIP at the EBM meeting.</p> <p>RL: Noted that in recent correspondence about paths in the Whitemill area, a Councillor has written to Martin Murray expressing his understanding of the issues that the section are facing – the message does seem to be getting across.</p> <p>Topic changed to Volunteers</p> <p>PB: A lot of work has been done on the PRowS by volunteers – would be nice if there was some recognition of the contribution.</p> <p>CF: It should be possible to do a press release about volunteer achievements, the Authority would be keen to recognise contributions. Also, previously Ramblers plaques have been used in the past, affixed to furniture etc. to show which routes have been contributed to.</p> <p>PB: A formal letter expressing thanks would also work.</p> <p>JS: Dinefwr Ramblers are hoping to work with Rangers and NRW in January. How much clearance can volunteers do with no supervision?</p> <p>CF: Minor cutting back with secateurs only if not working in partnership with Rangers.</p> <p>JS: Could volunteers' travelling expenses be covered?</p> <p>MH: Will raise volunteer expenses and recognition of contribution at HoS meeting.</p>	<p>MH</p>

Item 12 – Pembrey Double Yellow Lines

KB: Have been in contact with Lee Waters AM. Council are offering Fishermen's Car Park (near the beach) for equestrian car parking but that is unsuitable as the track leading there is very narrow, and if there are no spaces in the car park there is no room to turn a vehicle & trailer round so could be stuck!

Keep on agenda for next time.

Item 13 – BOAT/ORPA Subcommittee Update

MH: Have had 2 meetings at Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park Council Offices.

- 79 routes need checking
- 34 routes are ok
- 37 routes are low priority, e.g. no-through routes
- 47 routes are byways.

How best to survey in order to collect data which is useful to the LA? Is there a survey form available?

CF: There is, but it may be worth developing a more specific form for this project.

RL: We need to be clear on what outcome we are aiming for. Need to sit down with Highways and see what is realistically achievable/useful – this could be done through the HoS meeting.

CF: It would be useful to the PRoW section to have condition surveys for BOATs.

KB: Can HoS direct someone from Highways to attend the BOAT/ORPA meetings?

CF: We can discuss project idea and Highways involvement at the HoS meeting.

MH: The Trailwise 2 website (<https://www.trailwise2.co.uk/>) shows routes that are open and available (available to GLASS members only).

MR: It could be risky sharing details of open routes with the wider public as the area could get overwhelmed with people travelling to use the routes.

MH: The routes are available on OS maps etc anyway

Item 14 – Express Dedication at Common Law (EDCL)

CF: Gave an outline of what it is. Documentation was not received in time to circulate to members for this meeting. Information to be circulated, and discussed at next meeting.

Item 15 – Bridges Update

GR: Bridges on the program are as follows:

- Pant-y-rhedyn (37/63)
- Llandybie (51/73a)
- Llandybie (51/120)
- Llanddarog (32/10) (2 bridges)
- Talog (1/23)
- Cilmaenllwyd (4/20)
- Afon Dafen Bridge
- Ammanford Swing

Item 16 – Future Agenda Items

- Heads of Service Meeting
- BOATs map, with Operational Status
- EDCL
- Tywi Valley Path
- Double Yellow Lines at Pembrey
- Canoe Wales
- Brechfa Wind Farm public liability
- Agricultural Bill (if relevant at that time)

Item 17 – AOB

GW: A483 Fairfach Public Access Consultation. Included a questionnaire about PRoWs in the area. Response given highlighted that access opportunities will be severely affected by the proposed bypass being built and what use is made of the old railway track.

MH: LAF was not consulted. Emailed company undertaking the survey who issued questionnaire, was an oversight.

CF: The PRoW section received questionnaire via Transport Strategy, wasn't sent directly to correct team.

KB: Have been looking into surfacing for multi-user paths. Nu-phalt seems to be the most popular and well regarded solution.

CF: There may be an opportunity to trial it in the County – have raised it with the Active Travel section.

RL: Circulated Lost Ways information.

Item 18 – Next meetings

7th March 2019 – Carmarthen Leisure Centre
13th June 2019 - Tywi Centre, Llandeilo
19th September 2019 - Carmarthen Leisure Centre
5th December 2019 - Tywi Centre, Llandeilo.

Meeting concluded at 21:10.