

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum

Thursday 19th September 2019

Carmarthen Leisure Centre, 6pm

Present:

Members:

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair
Karen Burch (KB) – LAF vice Chair
Richard Leggett (RL)
Mo Rapley (MR)
Paul Barrett (PB)
Martin Murray (MM)
Geoff Williams (GW)

Secretary (interim)

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

Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public

Oliver Wickes (OW) – Ramblers Association Wales
Stephen Pilliner (SGP) – CCC Head of Transportation and Highways
Lucy Pugh (LP) - CCC Acting Countryside Access Officer
Rob Williams (RW) – Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF)
Nigel Bailey (NB) – Walking Well St Clears

Apologies: Members:

Jillie Gardiner (JG)
Jim Shadbolt (JS)
Jane Evans (JE)
Dai Stacey (DS)

Advisors/Observers:

Cllr. Hazel Evans
Cllr Peter Hughes-Griffiths
Daron Herbert (Natural Resources Wales)
Russell Jones (Natural Resources Wales)
Neil Thomas – CCC
Sam Palmer – CCC
Simon Charles - CCC

Absent:

Michael Jones
Glyn Evans
Gerald Brown

*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 introduced observers/speaker</p>	
<p>Item 2 - New Members/Resignations – None</p> <p>CF – Interest shown in joining LAF from a Landowner and a Disabled PRow user, no formal applications received to date.</p>	
<p>Item 3 - Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were taken and recorded.</p>	
<p>Item 4 – Matters arising from Minutes - not otherwise Agenda Items</p> <p><u>Tywi Valley Path meeting with BHS and CCC</u> CF: Awaiting further response from JE (area BHS rep) to confirm if meeting is required.</p> <p><u>Public Space Protection Orders</u> KB – Can CCC be advised that Orders need more promotion to public to increase understanding.</p> <p><u>Heads of Service Meeting</u> MH – HoS meetings are no longer taking place as SGP is attending quarterly LAF meetings. CF – To be removed from agenda</p> <p><u>Equestrian Access</u> KB – Any update? Was John Morgan Emailed? He has stepped down as Chair of Chairs. MH – Will contact Carys Drew who new CoC will be? May be announced at Chairs meeting Oct 19th</p> <p><u>BOAT/ORPA Project</u> CF – Project would be of limited value to Highways dept. Info that would be of most value would be missing/unmapped routes and reports of safety concerns.</p> <p>MH – Can we get a list of routes not surveyed by Highways? Perhaps a Byway User Group (BUG) Meeting is required to discuss further.</p> <p>MR – Can video survey routes from motorbikes</p> <p>CF – unlikely to be able to upload to WDM system used by Highways but will check</p> <p>MH – Can LAF get a list of currently surveyed ORPAs</p> <p>SGP – Better that MH sends a list of ORPAs to Highways via CF to start process</p>	<p>JE</p> <p>CF</p> <p>MH</p> <p>CF</p> <p>CF</p> <p>MH/CF</p>

<p>Item 5 – Ramblers Wales, Paths for People Presentation (Oliver Wickes)</p> <p>OW - Presented the Paths for People project to the Forum, information leaflets were given out.</p> <p>Project has been trialled in Powys with Community Councils (CCs).</p> <p>Project encourages CCs to help protect and promote the public paths in their areas</p> <p>Funding has been awarded from the Peoples Postcode Lottery allowing Ramblers to provide advice, training and basic tools to assist CCs – upskilling and equipping volunteers.</p> <p>Aim to leave sustainable groups who can continue beyond the end of the project within their community.</p> <p>GW – Some Community Councils have a footpaths officer, is that what this project is trying to achieve?</p> <p>OW – A dedicated footpaths officer or ideally a sub-committee</p> <p>MM – How many staff are working on the project? What is insurance position?</p> <p>OW – 3 staff, not full time. There is insurance for Ramblers members and other options are being explored.</p> <p>SGP – Strategically CCC need to work with the voluntary sector and engage Town and Community Councils, a theme throughout the ROWIP.</p> <p>MM – Training is key to maximise efficiency of volunteers.</p> <p>OW – Waymarking can be a very quick hit to improve path networks.</p> <p>RL – More people walking = more paths kept open. Information panels may also encourage walking.</p> <p>SGP – Upcoming Town and Community Council event to launch ROWIP, invite OW to raise awareness of project.</p> <p>MH – Keep project on agenda, OW to provide updates on progress via CF</p>	<p>CF/SR</p> <p>OW/CF</p>
<p>Item 6 – Ministers Statement and Access Reform</p> <p>CF – Following Ministers Statement on Access Reform a steering group is now being formed, momentum around reforms in Wales is continuing at present.</p> <p>The Welsh Rights of Way Management Group (WROWMG) have been asked to provide a representative on the Steering Group for Public Rights of Way and Access related reforms.</p> <p>Specialist groups are to be appointed at the appropriate time to advise the steering group on individual technical amendments.</p> <p>All Access reform information to be circulated/re-circulated to LAF members.</p>	<p>CF</p>

<p>Item 7 – County Walks Promotion</p> <p>MM – from April the Discover Carmarthenshire team want to promote walking – last year was cycling. Countryside Access have formed a good working partnership with Marketing and Media. There are currently 21 County Walks being promoted (handout provided to members).</p> <p>RL – Can GPX be provided for County Walks?</p> <p>MM – Plotaroute.com being used for this.</p> <p>KB – Can riding routes be promoted?</p> <p>SGP – Specific actions contained in the ROWIP relating to promotion of routes.</p> <p>OW – Communities should be asked to have more involvement in their promoted routes</p> <p>CF – To be included on December agenda, Marketing and Media have indicated they will attend.</p>	
<p>Item 8 – Sustrans Cycle Network – Paths for All</p> <p>KB – attended meeting in Cardiff – Paths for All Steering Group. Would like ongoing item on the agenda to keep LAF updated.</p> <p>Objective to review National Cycle Network (NCN) with a view to removing barriers (many not DDA compliant) and roadside sections, renegotiating access agreements and opening more of the NCN to all.</p> <p>Also aim to improve signage by adding destinations and mileages, also a new website.</p> <p>Objective to remove mapped roadside sections places expectation on Highway Authorities to continue with their maintenance.</p> <p>MH – Can the TVP barriers be checked for DDA compliance?</p> <p>KB – on existing routes that are open to all, anti-social use/trespass policed by users</p>	<p>SGP/CF</p>
<p>Item 9 – LAF Annual Report.</p> <p>CF – report with translation, will go on website once translation is returned.</p>	<p>CF/LP</p>
<p>Item 10 – ROWIP</p> <p>CF – All agreed changes have been implemented and are now going through the political process. Been through 1st stage, 3 further stages before being signed off. Aiming for publication in December. Launch will then be arranged.</p>	

<p>Item 11 – Issue Reports</p> <p>RL – Now have 3.5 years’ worth of data, thanks to team, Lucy specifically.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Trend of 12% increase in outstanding maintenance issues with a large no. of issues outstanding for more than 3 years. Signage issues have increased, more than 15% in the last year.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Trend for Legal issues plateaued during the last year.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Longstanding issues have spiked, demonstrating pressures on the team.</p> <p>MM – People have confidence in reporting as they get feedback and updates following their report.</p> <p>GW – experience of reporting issues in a neighbouring County illustrates that our level of outstanding issues is not unique. Surprised to be notified of 2000 issues in an area renowned for tourism.</p>	
<p>Item 12 – BOAT Signposting</p> <p>CF – It has been clarified that the Highways dept. have a duty (following the NERC Act) to signpost BOATs.</p> <p>The LAF are asked to prioritise the list of BOATs considered open/partially open by the area inspectors.</p> <p>A small budget has been allocated so signposting programme can commence on a basis of between 5 and 8 routes per annum once priority list received.</p> <p>Will circulate list of routes provided by inspectors</p> <p>Matter to move to BUG meetings as a continuing agenda item.</p> <p>MH – Is there a grant available to assist with this? Possibly TRF</p> <p>CF – Ramblers are looking a grant funded project for signposting</p>	<p>CF</p>
<p>Item 13 – Pembrey Double Yellow Lines</p> <p>CF - new Traffic Order will become operative on Friday 25th October 2019.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Traffic Order provides for a new 30 metre bay (restricted to class of vehicle) not be subject to pay and display. Work to remove the double yellow lines, to provide new bay and all necessary signage will be completed by 25/10/19 possibly before.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Off Street Parking Order for the car park is still ongoing.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">CF can pass any further queries to Traffic Management.</p> <p>KB – Can that information be circulated or can Traffic Management provide an official statement that can be circulated</p> <p>CF – Will look into it</p> <p>KB – will the Off Street Parking Order apply to other sites?</p>	<p>CF</p>

<p>LP – Can car park be available for overspill or will large vehicles still prohibited under provisions of the Order? CF to make necessary enquiries.</p>	CF
<p>Item 14 – Tywi Valley Path</p> <p>MH: Original motion to only support TVP if budget not to coming from PRow. LAF could support amended motion if budgets are made clear each year?</p> <p>SGP – Budget published every year. Can't guarantee future budgets but have put bids in to increase Capital Budget for PRow.</p> <p>RL – Not willing to support if there will be a negative impact on PRow budgets.</p> <p>MH – further discussion needed, keep on agenda. Update from SP will be circulated</p> <p>GW – Can equestrians use it?</p> <p>CF – JE not heard anything further from BHS yet</p>	MH
<p>Item 15 – Brechfa Wind Farm</p> <p>JG not present, sent summary document regarding Brechfa Community Fund stakeholder meeting.</p> <p>PRow/Access representatives should come forward with a suitable date for meeting.</p> <p>MH – Organisers should propose a date for stakeholders to work to.</p> <p>Circulate JG document</p>	CF
<p>Item 16 – Barriers and Gates on ORPAs</p> <p>KB and CCC received a complaint from a rider of an incident on an ORPA caused by an impassable gate and cattle crush on the route.</p> <p>KB – what is Highways' policy on removing obstructions from ORPAs/BOATs?</p> <p>CF – Enforcement action is taken using Highways Act powers. The gate obstruction on the route where the reported incident took place has been resolved, the cattle crush is being looked into again.</p> <p>KB – Appears CCC are not prepared to deal with problems</p> <p>CF – Conversation with Highways left no doubt that enforcement powers would be used.</p> <p>SGP – Matters dealt with on a case by case basis, always better to deal will issues by negotiation, working with landowners. If case ends up in Court CCC have to demonstrate they have been reasonable.</p> <p>MH then introduced paper regarding placing barriers on ORPAs.</p> <p>Paper was discussed.</p> <p>SGP – offered to speak with NRW to gain views and ensure appropriate liaison and consultation in future so correct processes are followed.</p>	SGP

<p>RL – LAF should take up SGP’s offer MH – Will leave taking matter further for now.</p>	
<p>Item 17 – Future Agenda Items</p> <p>BOATs/ORPAs as a general item covering all aspects discussed Sustrans Access for All Ramblers Paths for People County Walks/Marketing and Media Walking Promotion</p>	
<p>Item 19 – AOB</p> <p><u>National Access Forum</u> MH - Can the forum have some feedback from MJ who attended NAF</p> <p><u>LAF Conference</u> MH – 4 members of forum eligible to attend. MH and KB unable to go. Anybody interested to let CF know.</p> <p><u>NRW Area Statements</u> MH – Area Statements (South West Wales) Event, October 10th for stakeholders wishing to comment. CF – Might be worth inviting NRW to LAF to ensure all members have their say.</p> <p><u>Welsh Assembly Consultation</u> GW - Re-drawing map of Wales to provide areas for windfarms and solar farms. Consultations close 5th November 2019. Came through CPRW, should LAF be sending a response? KB – We responded TAN 8 so we should respond to this. CF – Not been well publicised MH – any forum members who have a chance to look before deadline, send comments to MH.</p>	<p>CF</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Item 18 – Next meetings</p> <p>5th December 2019 - Tywi Centre, Llandeilo. 5th March 2020 – Carmarthen Leisure Centre 11th June 2020 - Tywi Centre, Llandeilo 10th September 2019 – Carmarthen Leisure Centre 3rd December 2019 - Tywi Centre, Llandeilo</p>	