

**Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday 14 May 2025**

**Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Johnstown – 4pm**

**Present: Members:**

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair  
Karen Burch (KB) – Deputy Chair  
Sean Brown (SB)  
Jillie Gardner (JG)  
Peter Griffiths (PG)  
David Gravelle (DG)  
Tara Jane-Sutcliffe (TS)  
Julie James (JJ)  
Julie Sweet (JS)  
Laura Grant (LG)  
Sandra Downey (SD)  
Phil Snaith (PS)

**Secretary** – Caroline Ferguson (CF) – CCC Countryside Access Manager

**Advisors/ Observers/Speakers/Members of the Public:**

Cllr Aled Vaughan Owen (AVO) – CCC Cabinet member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability  
Cllr Edward Thomas (ET) – CCC Cabinet member for Transport, Waste & Infrastructure Services  
Alex Morgan (AM) – Countryside Access Project Officer  
Christopher Nelson (CN) – CCC Highways Asset Manager

**Apologies: Members:**

Wyn Owen  
Ryland Jones

**Advisors/ Observers:**

Phillip Morgan - NRW Team Leader SW Land Management

**Note:**

CCC in these minutes refers to Carmarthenshire County Council

PROW in these minutes refers to Public Rights of Way

NRW in these minutes refers to Natural Resources Wales

CAMS in these minutes refers to Countryside Access Management System (GIS mapping software)

BHS in these minutes refers to British Horse Society

ITEM	ACTION
<p><b><u>Item 1 – WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>CF welcomed new forum &amp; read out apologies.</p> <p>All members, observers and advisors introduced themselves &amp; their access interests/role</p> <p>AVO provided a formal thanks to forum members for their valued time and commitment.</p> <p>Members asked AVO &amp; ET for details of their Cabinet Member portfolios</p>	<p>AVO/ET/CF</p>
<p><b><u>Item 2 – ACCESS MANAGEMENT PRESENTATIONS – HIGHWAYS DIVISION</u></b></p> <p>CF presented CCC PROW management. A brief background to the PROW network and how it is managed, prioritised and maintained &amp; the challenges. Follow up Q&amp;A.</p> <p>CN presented CCC Highways management. An introduction to the network, how it is categorised &amp; prioritised and the challenges. Follow up Q&amp;A.</p> <p>AM presented an introduction to PROW project management in Carmarthenshire, providing details of project development, funding and successes to date. Follow up Q&amp;A.</p> <p>CF explained that further suite of Access presentations is scheduled for the second meeting of the new LAF term from other divisions with access management in their remit.</p>	
<p><b><u>Item 3 – UPDATE ON PENDING STRATEGIES/REPORTS</u></b></p> <p>CF advised that the LAF Annual Report and the ROWIP Mid-term Review are both scheduled for a decision for approval on 22 May 2025.</p> <p>CF also advised that the Equestrian Strategy has been approved at (CMT) Corporate Management Team &amp; will be considered at Pre-Cabinet (the next stage of Council approval) in June 2025.</p> <p>New members asked to see Strategy. CF to circulate</p> <p>JG suggested where CCC develop cycle paths over land with evidence of equestrian use, recording them through Modification Order process as Bridleways rather than using Compulsory Purchase to dedicate Cycle Tracks, could save money.</p> <p>Suggestion to be minuted.</p>	<p>CF</p> <p>CF</p>

<p><b><u>Item 4 – AN INTRODUCTION TO PROW PERFORMANCE REPORTS</u></b></p> <p>CF explained to the group how performance reporting to the LAF came about and the recent changes that have been made in what information the reports display.</p> <p>CF also advised the group that RL took on the role of analysing the former reports and presenting findings to the group and hopes that he will continue in that role for the term ahead.</p> <p>KB pointed out that the performance reports don't provide route status information which might be useful once equestrian strategy delivery has begun.</p> <p>CF separate reports can be developed for the purpose of assessing the success of the strategy</p> <p>It was also suggested that volunteer stats could be included.</p> <p>AM advised there is already a report template for the volunteer project that can be brought to the forum each quarter.</p> <p>Group agreed this would be beneficial</p>	<p>AM</p>
<p><b><u>Item 5 – STORM DARRAGH, IMPACT ON ACCESS</u></b></p> <p>MH outlined the continued impact of storm damage to access across the WG Woodland Estate, managed by NRW.</p> <p>MH, as a Carms LAF representative, attended a meeting with NRW and Adam Price (MS) to discuss the impact of the storm damage and the time it is taking NRW to clear access routes for both local people and tourists.</p> <p>Observations have been that clearing access routes has not been prioritised and systems to keep local people and businesses informed has been poor. Also, implications for Emergency Services access to the forestry if there is an accident.</p> <p>PS advised that volunteer groups have assisted in clearing some routes</p> <p>MH suggested forestry is very quiet for time of year as many routes are still closed.</p> <p>NRW outlined the implications that mass clearance of windblown trees would have on budgets. Adam Price's opinion was that a budget solution needs to be found.</p> <p>General forum discussion highlighted dissatisfaction in respect of NRW rationale for not clearing the affected woodland. Suggested that a LAF Advice Note be issued to highlight concerns and suggest a way forward.</p> <p>MH to draft note, CF to circulate to members, implement any changes and send to NRW &amp; CCC representatives &amp; Adam Price.</p>	<p>MH/CF</p>

<p><b><u>Item 6 – ACTIONS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u></b> (not otherwise agenda items)</p> <p><u>TVP</u> now launched from Whitemill to Nantgaredig, already being well used.</p> <p>PS advised that public seating requirements had not been implemented. Offered to contact project officer on behalf of the LAF.</p> <p>Members agreed.</p> <p><u>SWTRA By-Pass</u> at Robeston Wathen provides scope to create missing NCN links in west Carmarthenshire, road layout &amp; construction give potential for multi-user access.</p> <p><u>Safe Overtaking signs</u> (cyclists) have been removed from the road network. Where have they gone? They should be reinstated as they were valuable safety tools.</p> <p>CN will investigate with Traffic Management team</p> <p><u>Disabled access along pavements</u> would benefit from some additional funding</p> <p>CN advised that extra capital money has been assigned to pavements (footways) this year. A recent high-definition survey of the road network includes pavements, providing useful condition data.</p>	<p>PS</p> <p>CN</p>
<p><b><u>Item 7 – NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <p>4pm difficult for some but a better time to secure engagement in meetings with access organisations.</p> <p>CF to circulate poll for meeting availability late June/early July</p>	<p>CF</p>
<p><b><u>Item 10 – ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS</u></b></p> <p><u>Election of LAF Chair &amp; Deputy Chair</u> at the next meeting. Members invited to nominate themselves if interested.</p> <p><u>Byway User Group</u> meeting date to be scheduled if new forum wishes to see it continue as a LAF sub-group.</p> <p>Members Agreed</p> <p>CF to schedule a meeting date late May-Early June</p> <p><u>Planning Applications &amp; PPO consultations</u> will re-commence with LAF now new forum has been appointed.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>CF</p>