

Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF)

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 17 July 2025

Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Johnstown – 4pm

Present: Members:

Mark Hadley (MH) – LAF Chair
Richard Leggett (RL) - Deputy Chair
Karen Burch (KB)
Sean Brown (SB)
Jillie Gardner (JG)
Peter Griffiths (PG)
David Gravelle (DG)
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:

Alex Morgan (AM) – CCC Countryside Access Project Officer
Neil Thomas (NT) – CCC Senior Outdoor Recreation Manager
Andrew Paterson (AP) – CCC Common Land Officer

Apologies: Members:

Wyn Owen
Tara Jane-Sutcliffe

Advisors/ Observers:

Cllr Aled Vaughan Owen (AVO) – CCC Cabinet member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability
Cllr Edward Thomas (ET) – CCC Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services
Christopher Nelson – CCC Highways Asset Manager
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)

ITEM	ACTION
<u>Item 1 – WELCOME & APOLOGIES</u> CF welcomed forum & read out apologies. All members, observers and advisors introduced themselves & their access interests/role.	
<u>Items 2 & 3 – ACCESS MANAGEMENT PRESENTATIONS</u> <u>OUTDOOR RECREATION</u> NT presented CCC Outdoor Recreation management. An outline of the Outdoor Recreation portfolio, how it is managed and maintained & the challenges. Follow up Q&A. <u>COMMON LAND</u> AP presented a summary of CCC Common Land management and its challenges. The process of digitising the Common Land register was also detailed including future consultation which the LAF can be included in. Follow up Q&A. MH thanked both presenters and encouraged continued engagement with both services going forward. CF explained that one further session of Access presentations is scheduled for the third meeting of the new LAF term. NRW, Sustrans and CCC Grounds Maintenance will present a summary of access management within their remit. Request that slides from both presentations be circulated.	CF
<u>Item 4 – ELECTION OF LAF CHAIR & DEPUTY CHAIR</u> MH only member to put name forward for LAF Chair – unanimously voted in No names put forward for deputy role ahead of meeting. PS nominated RL. RL accepted the nomination – unanimously voted in	

MH accepted role as Chair and led remainder of meeting.	
<u>Item 5 – PROW PROJECTS UPDATE</u> AM provided an update on all current projects, outlining planning and progress in each case. Successful funding bids also detailed including where funding is to be spent. KB requested that a map of project areas be provided from next meeting to help understand the overall picture of PROW network improvement. Query regarding Volunteer Surveying project, will it continue after 2 years? CF advised that a commercial solution to complete the surveys may be sought from 1 April 2026 to keep the data collection across a 3-year period or less, retaining validity of all data gathered. Volunteers will be moved to new roles. RL - the volunteer project is a model for the future AM - some volunteers may wish to continue surveying beyond 31 March 2026, they will be accommodated but many have expressed more interest in doing more physical work such as clearing paths and/or helping with furniture installation	AM
<u>Item 6 – PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY PERFORMANCE REPORTS</u> All members reviewed reports ahead of meeting CF Apology – Freedom of Information Requests, Searches & Complaints data omitted. RL suggested that the reports are produced quarterly according to calendar year regardless of when LAF meetings fall to make comparisons easier. Also, need to ensure a read across the reports to ensure numbers of active items at the end of one period equate to the backlog at the beginning of the next - inconsistencies have been noted. Also expressed opinion that data should be presented to improve understanding of legal matters caused by obstructive landowners. Members agreed. CF to consider suggestions and discuss report alterations with software provider. Proper analysis of data to begin once a full year of new reports have been produced.	CF

<u>Item 7 – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION FOR CAIO FOREST RESOURCE PLAN</u> Consultation on Caio and Llandovery Forest Resource Plans MH observed the plans differed in their aspirations and weren't formatted with the same key headings, would have expected them to be produced with the same template and contain similar objectives. KB both plans should aspire to improve access opportunities, not retain. MH agreed plans should contain more positive goals in respect of access. SB no mention of 4x4/motorised access users. Members agreed key points for response: - Improve access opportunities - Ensure existing access is open and available - Consistency across plans - Include recreational vehicular access considerations MH will draft and circulate a note for members to comment.	MH
<u>Item 8 – UPDATE ON ACCESS STRATEGY/POLICY</u> CF advised 2023 LAF Annual Report and ROWIP Review now signed off and with Translation team prior to being published. 2024 LAF annual report is underway. CF updated members on progress of Equestrian Strategy adoption. Very well received at Scrutiny Committee, lots of positive engagement with members. Final stage of consideration prior to sign off will be Cabinet in September (2025). JG suggested Equi Strategy action around investigating under-recorded routes could form basis of a Lost Ways project – BHS provide training and resources to assist applicants and improve quality of applications.	
<u>Item 9 – ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u> <u>Cabinet Member Portfolio details</u> - yet to be circulated <u>Circulate Equestrian Strategy</u> – some members did not receive document, re-send <u>Advice Note to NRW re: storm Darragh recovery</u> – sent, no response to date. NRW update email on storm recovery & access reinstatement recently issued and states that it will be their 'final update'. <u>Wind Farm Grid Connection</u> – future agenda item to discuss and enable members to take view on subject. Matters to include for discussion:	AVO/ET CF CF

- Impact on public access - Impact on green agenda - Potential Community benefits <u>TVP update</u> – could somebody be invited to attend to present project progress? <u>Byway User Group</u> – held 19 June 2025, useful meeting, lots of helpful discussion. Minutes should be circulated to all LAF members to keep updated on topics of discussion.	CF CF
<u>Item 10 – NEXT MEETINGS</u> 9 October 2025 – 4pm (Llandeilo) 22 January 2026 – 4pm (Carmarthen) Byway User Group – 29 October 2025 – 4pm (Mynydd Mawr or Llyn Llech Owain)	
<u>Item 10 – ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS</u> <u>CF - Archive of CAMS issue data</u> Thoughts on archiving some CAMS issue data where it is over 5 years old and seasonal or 'changeable' in nature? Performance reports include very old data that is likely to lack relevance today. Mixed response from members. Discussion group meeting to be arranged via TEAMS to consider further. Members interested in contributing: RL, JS, SB, KB, JG All agreed that volunteer survey data should become new data set once project is complete. <u>RL – Marketing</u> Recent article on Carmarthenshire as the Garden of Wales. Should CCC Marketing representative be invited to join LAF meetings so opportunities to promote access in the County are not missed? All agreed <u>CF – Carmarthenshire LAF Logo</u> Noted that other LAFs have a logo, request that members design some logo ideas.	CF CF

Selected image could be added to webpage and provide a header to documents issued by the LAF. Design ideas to be submitted to CF by next meeting.	ALL
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