**DENBIGHSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Minutes of the Denbighshire Local Access Forum, held at Llangollen Pavilion at 10am on February 8th 2012

**PRESENT**

Ron Williams (RW) Chair Adrian Walls (AW) DCC, Highways and Secretary to the Forum

Chris Marshall (CM), LAF Peter Scarll (PS), LAF

John Bradshaw (JB), CLA Antoni Vitti (AV), North Wales Tourism

Kay Culhane (KC), RA Cllr Sharon Frobisher (SF), DCC

Edwina L Hart (EH), BDS

**ALSO PRESENT**

Howard Sutcliffe (HS), CR & DV AONB Helen Mrowiec (HM), DCC

David Shiel (DS), CR & DV AONB Hannah Salisbury-Arndt, DCC

Ben Wilcox-Jones (BW), DCC Tania Evans, DCC

Rhun Jones, AONB Roly Schwarz (RS), DCC/CCBC

Max Grant (MG), CELAF Mike Skuse (MS), CPRW

Pam Burton, Sustrans Pete Bland (PB) RA

G.I Moss (GM), RA Simon Allen (SA), Exegesis

Alun Price (AP), CCW

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Hugh Crosswood (LAF), Mike Whitley (Forestry Commission Wales),

Farmers Union of Wales – please inform of future meeting arrangements.

**2. (2.1) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Correction to the minutes:

Gating order – SF declared an interest

**(2.2) CYCLING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

HM informed that the cycling centre of excellence is still at a review stage with Visit Wales and the Welsh European Funding Office. Resultant delays are hoped to be overcome in the coming months. Progress has been made with work on some bridleways. CCW have been approached about the creation of routes in south Denbighshire where official routes do not exist, although some exist on enclosure maps. CCW have raised concerns about the potential nature conservation impacts. AW mentioned the possibility of a bridleway linking Llandegla forest with the Horseshoe Pass – talks are on-going to obtain the right to implement a route. HM suggested a site visit in the near future.

**3. ExeGesIS – CAMS Presentation**

SA presented the meeting with an overview of the benefits of using CAMS within the authority. DCC has been using the software since 1998. It provides a variety of options for efficient management of the RoW network. Detailed information regarding issues on the RoW network may be logged on the CAMS database. The software produces a variety of reports, including summaries of outstanding or resolved issues. Data may also be used, for example to aid resource allocation, produce furniture inventories or for asset management.

SA presented Kent County Council as an example of how CAMS may be used in the public domain to aid the work of the RoW team. Members of the public can log faults online at the Kent CC website. Members of the RoW team can then internally log the faults onto CAMS. This is an approach RW hopes DCC will be taking.

**4. Gating Orders**

RS provided the rationale behind gating orders and an update on the Hen Lon Parcwr gating order consultation.

The problem involves disruption and anti-social behaviour along the residential access route to the nightclub at Hen Lon Parcwr, Ruthin. The proposal involves the erection of an alley gate near the nightclub, which will be locked by local residents allocated with keys between 11:30pm and 2:00am on Friday and Saturday nights, to prevent patrons of the club using the residential access route.

JB questioned how RS can propose to legally close a RoW, to which RS replied that the purpose of a gating order is to allow the legal closure of a RoW to eliminate criminal or anti-social behaviour. PS asked if the gate would be a fire risk. RS explained that gates are designed for pedestrian access only and keys are made available to people who need to use the route when the gate is closed. RS stressed that the club would take sanctions over any abuse of the gate by key holders. RS reiterated that both the club owners and local residents are pressing for the installation of the gate to curb the anti-social behaviour.

RW concluded the discussion saying that 2 ½ hours a night for 2 nights a week is a small ask now he realises alley gates support enhanced security for residents. RW thanked RS for explaining the subject well and providing the forum with a better knowledge of gating orders.

RW proposed the gate at Hen Lon Parcwr go ahead, whilst EH seconded.

* **RS to make annual review of all gating orders to the Forum.**
* **A written report will be made available at the next Forum meeting in July.**
* **In future, RS will meet with AW to discuss any new gating orders requests.**

**5. DENBIGHSHIRE ACCESS PROJECTS**

Ben Wilcox-Jones (BW) provided the meeting with an overview of current access projects, including details of the feasibility study being undertaken on the Carrog to Corwen route (at present three potential routes are under consideration) and current progress with the Wrexham to Barmouth route. BW also detailed that past schemes included the resurfacing of the horse-drawn boat area of the canal in Llangollen with funding from Taith.

JB asked if the Carrog to Corwen route was to use part of the busy B-road, how it would be made safe for cyclists. BW stated that at present this is the least favoured route, with the preferred route being alongside the heritage railway. Safety considerations would be made if the B-road route were to be used.

JB also inquired if the purchase of land would be required alongside the heritage railway, BW replied that in most places, sufficient space to support both user groups was available. However in a couple of places it may be an option to move the track over slightly to create space for cyclists. AW added that consultation with the railway company is on-going.

**6. 10-YEAR REVIEW OF OPEN ACCESS**

CCW has a duty to review access maps every 10 years. Alun Price (AP) provided details of the forthcoming review and answered queries regarding the review and possible changes to maps.

CCW will rely on the public to advise them of changes by making representations. Each land parcel CCW receives representations for will be investigated. Land parcels against which no representation has been made, will not be investigated. Officers will not actively sample vegetation.

HM asked if CCW will be holding road shows and community council events as they did with the implementation of open access. AP replied that due to staffing reductions this would no longer be possible and is not required as open access is no longer a new feature. The draft maps will be available online at [www.ccw.gov.uk](http://www.ccw.gov.uk) for members of the public to access and print if desired. Maps can be made available to those without internet access.

Timetable of events:

16th July 2012 – Draft Map made available for scrutiny

23rd November 2012 – Closing date for representations

7th August 2013 – Provisional Map produced – at which point landowners can appeal

24th September 2014 – New conclusive map released

Central enquiry line 0845 130 6229; Email openaccessmapping@ccw.gov.uk

* **Forum to meet before November 23rd closing date to discuss any representations, which may wish to be made.**

**7. OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE MANUAL – DEFINITIVE MAP**

RW questioned the section about compensation claims for any order put forward. AW explained that landowners are able to claim for inconvenience suffered as a result of a path order. He stressed that the applicant is liable for compensation costs and not the authority.

**9. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

RW highlighted action 3.3(a), the appointment of community path coordinators to provide the County with a briefing/feedback mechanism. AW explained there had been difficulty finding path coordinators in some communities, however some communities have benefitted from this relationship, whilst others have received input from outside the community. AW considered whether this could be something the LAF could take over.

Action 4.3 – Improve signage to identify access land – was highlighted as problematic due to the short shelf life and frequent removal of signs. MS asked if landowners are obligated to put signs up – they are not. DS added that a proactive approach has always been taken towards OA, with route promotion across access land, which has resulted in few problems with landowners.

JB highlighted action 2.8(a) – Complete statutory duty…to signpost every path where it leaves the metalled road. Again, there are problems with signs disappearing. In problem areas signs depicting “It is an offence to remove signs” have been placed, with a contact telephone number. These have been helpful as landowners with issues about signs have then contacted the telephone number to disagree with the signage. DCC are then able to explain the situation and work with the landowner/farmer.

**10. CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**

DS provided the meeting with a presentation on the extension of the AONB, detailing the history behind the recent extension and plans going forward.

JB asked whether the extension to the AONB will affect planning. DS replied that the AONB management team is not a planning body but they are consulted on planning applications and are able to make comment and recommendations on such things as the siting of development and the materials used taking consideration of the landscape. HS added that they are only consulted on larger operations.

**11. AOB**

PS highlighted that the last Forum meeting notes on the DCC website date back to 2008. AW explained, this is due to security issues, which have been internally investigated. Agreement has been sought to add the notes to the Countryside Services pages in the short term, and also to place them on the separate Denbighshire Countryside website (www.denbighshirecountryside.org.uk). EH suggested other LAF in the locality should be informed of this change.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for July 11th 2012

The formal business of the Forum was followed by a site visit to Horseshoe Falls led by Rhun Jones.