

# **TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 24 July 2019 at 2.30pm at The Business School, Wrekin College, Sutherland Road, Wellington, Telford**

**Present:** Anthony Francis-Jones (Horse Riding / BHS), Fiona Stevenson (Disability), Chris Hallam (Madeley Town Council), Paula Doherty (Rights of Way Projects/TES Ramblers), and Naomi Wrighton (Wellington Walkers are Welcome and Jane Bonner (Cycling). Cllr Arnold England (TWC).

**In Attendance:** Andrew Careless (Senior Rights of Way Officer, Telford & Wrekin Council), Nichola Stallard (Legal Assistant, TWC), Ann Sharkey (Legal Assistant, TWC), Jayne Clarke (Democratic and Scrutiny Officer, TWC) and Joe Galkowski (Democratic and Scrutiny Officer, TWC)

### **LAF-1      Apologies for Absence**

Dave Hopkins (Dawley Hamlets Parish Council), Cadi Price (Severn Gorge Countryside Trust), Katrina Baker (Parish Councils), Peter Holt (CLA/ Landowner), Sally-Anne Robinson (Telford Bridleways Association), Jan Mees-Robinson (British Driving Society), Trevor Davies (Shropshire Ramblers). Councillors Hilda Rhodes and Carolyn Healy.

### **LAF-2      Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2019 were currently unavailable and would be presented to a future meeting when they were available.

### **LAF- 3      Membership Matters**

The Chair reminded members to complete their Code of Conduct forms that were given to them when they re-applied for Membership. Membership was still low with regard to the land owner group and it was hoped that a mix of urban and rural landowners (with a traditional farming background) could be explored.

Action – AC to look at land owner membership.

It was suggested that the Code of Conduct be sent out via e-mail (or post where necessary) to ensure that everyone was signed up to the Code and that this would concur with the term of membership for 2 years.

Action – AC/JC to confer on 2 year date

The Chair explained there would be no proxies at meeting as this may affect the balance of the Forum, unless it was as elected member proxy. Members of the public were allowed to sit in the audience but not take part in the meeting.

## **LAF- 4      Current Projects Update**

P Doherty informed the LAF that 2 days' work had been undertaken in conjunction with the Waters Upton and Great Bolas Parish Councils which involved putting up new finger posts and short posts as part of the WET P3 Partnership (Waters Upton/Tibberton/Edgmond). This work was in conjunction with Senior Rights of Way Officer and had a positive input and made a difference. A further half day had looked at slightly projects such as improving access, kissing gates, styles and repairs to a bridge.

Wellington Walkers are Welcome had put in 2 short posts at the Huntington Coal Site to guide people through the open landscape and had undertaken a half day driveway clearance which had taken place at the travellers camp with an enormous amount of rubbish being removed. A further 2 posts were to be installed on Hutchinson Way.

The Ramblers were committed to keeping Hutchinson Way accessible and some re-way marking had been done with the discs and stickers with clearance work taking place whenever possible.

A list of finger posts which needed replacing or had been removed needed to be drawn up as this was a statutory requirement and it was important that these were in place, together with a list of TSO requirements including extra furniture and posts had been completed.

It was suggested that the LAF took an on project and set itself a target to aim for, ie to have 100% finger posts within the Borough by a set date, a quantifiable project. The Senior Rights of Way Officer felt there may be difficulties with this as not all paths were in good working order and accessible and a survey had not been undertaken and he was unsure what percentage was viable and what the cost of bring the unused footpaths and putting up finger posts would be. Capacity and the way markers going missing was also an issue, although he felt it was a good project despite the reservations. It was further suggested that maybe this could be looked at in conjunction with Parish Councils or Groups such as the Ramblers or Wellington Walkers are Welcome. Where it was difficult to get finger posts in it was suggested that small metal plaques were fixed to ie a wall if permission could be gained and by using existing LAF Members, groups and Parish Councils it could also gain good publicity.

C Hallam informed the LAF that fingers posts were key and that after a winter survey these could be looked at in the Madeley/Blists Hill/Coalport areas. A review of steps was due to be commissioned for all steps in the area to make the paths accessible, replace steps and handrails

It was suggested that the LAF works with the Parish Councillors and any gaps be picked up by volunteers and community workers with any challenging work being undertaken by a contractor. The LAF would write out to SALC to put forward the proposals to all Parish and Town Councils. The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that he had set aside £5,000 for a sign posting project and it would see how far it would go by the end of 12 months as these were a visual aid and lead to

better usage of the rights of way and a clear benefit to the public. If it was a successful project it could be built on year on year.

Wellington Walkers are Welcome Walking Festival was due to take place. They had been holding 2 working parties per month and working alongside the Ramblers on joint projects. The Chair asked N Wrighton to pass on his thanks to the working parties for their invaluable work. P Doherty further reported on the T50 project. Work had been taking place to mark-up Granville and a T50 guide book was being published which would be available from Southwater Library for £5 which gave routes and directions. A "Friends of" Group had been formed and the Shropshire Way Festival was due to take place.

Action – AC to write letter to SALC

## **LAF-5      Definitive Map Modification Orders**

The Legal Officers gave an update on DMMOs:

- Wrekin Hill – Order to be made soon
- Ercall – Golf Links – Application for Bridleway
- Upgrades to Paths 69/72/74
- Shropshire Footpath 18 – 3 separate orders counted as 1
- Decision on Wrekin – 6 separate orders
- Ercall – 2 paths – big project as taken over Shropshire's work

The Senior Rights of Way Officer was looking to upgrade footpaths to bridleways and was also looking at some new orders. He planned to determine 4 every fortnight. Two of them being significant.

The Legal Officers reported that there was to be a Public Inquiry for:

- Festival Gardens
- Travelers Joy, Station Road

The case for Travelers Joy was being finalised as facts needed to be 100% restricted byway.

Sylvan Close, Lilleshall had completed last year.

Four applications every couple of weeks would be looked at to see if there was enough evidence and then they would work through the applications.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that he would publish the statements and then follow procedure on how to determine the applications with the exception of sites subject to the approval or development as he would need to look how to prioritise the applications for community benefit and if they are simple and easy to do. Streamlining of processes was also being looked at.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that STROWP had now gone and a new Partnership in Madeley to replace this function was currently proving successful.

Other issues discussed were:

- Crudgington
- Granville
- Forest School, Shortwood
- Maddocks Quarry
- Cropping of Routes

The Senior Rights of Way Officer reported on the Definitive Map and confirmed they had a new officer in place to replace Declan. He was currently proofing all of the work undertaken to date and he expected this to have been completed by Christmas 2019. The map would be in 2,500 scale and would be held on the 2020 GIS database. This would be a legal record and would become legal fact.

**LAF-6      Any other urgent business**

- The Chair discussed the style of the LAF
- No response from Natural England with regard to their representation on the LAFs regionally and nationally
- HUDDLE
- Ironbridge Power Station – Agenda item at LAF meetings
- Removal of Trees and footpath at Rock Road

**LAF-7      Dates of Future Meetings**

Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019  
Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
Wednesday, 22 April 2020

The meeting ended at 4.46pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** .....