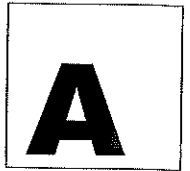


TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM



**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7th July 2016 at 1.30pm
at The Studio, Graham Building, Wrekin College, Sutherland Road, Wellington,
Telford**

Present: Anthony Francis-Jones (Horse Riding / BHS), Fiona Smith (Disability), Anne Suffolk (Telford & East Shrops Ramblers), Bob Alton (Ramblers Association), Bob Coalbran (Wellington Walkers Are Welcome), Malcolm Morris (STROWP), Peter Holt (CLA/ Landowner), Jan Mees-Robinson (British Driving Association), Jane Bonner (Severn Spokes, UK Cycling Shropshire)

In Attendance: Keith Harris (Group Manager - Development Team, TWC), Andrew Carless (Senior Rights of Way Officer, TWC), Ann Sharkey (Legal Assistant, TWC), Deb Moseley (Democratic and Scrutiny Team Leader, TWC), Stacey Worthington (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, TWC)

LAF-1 Election of Chair

RESOLVED – that Anthony Francis-Jones be elected Chair of the Local Access Forum for 2016/17.

LAF-2 Electon of Vice-Chair

RESOLVED – that Fiona Smith be elected Vice-Chair of the Local Access Forum for 2016/17.

LAF-3 Minutes

Matters arising from the minutes:

Information regarding the off-road Tramper buggy was circulated to attendees. This had been well used in other counties for less mobile individuals to access less urban pathways.

Resolved – that subject to the inclusion of J Bonner as present at the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

LAF-4 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Liz Clare (TWC), Marion Law (Ramblers Association), Paula Doherty (Rights of Way Projects) and Cadi Price (Severn Gorge Countryside Trust)

LAF-5 Chairman's Matters

The Chair reported on the following issues:

LAF Annual Report.

The LAF annual report has been submitted and will form a part of the national report.

PRoW Issues.

There were particular issues with a number of restricted byways being blocked by vehicles. Hill Top Road had been blocked; this was an adopted highway. A barrier had been put up across Restricted Byway 36 (Parish of Little Wenlock) and this was an illegal obstruction which would need to be removed. The landowner would be written to.

- **Action – landowner to be written to and instructed to remove the obstruction.**

BHS Access training dates.

Dates of the training courses were shared with the committee.

Definitive map update.

Since the last meeting, work had been completed regarding two DMMO's which were to be sent to the Secretary of State, the majority of the work had been done, but had not been sent.

There had been a lot of work done around legal event modification orders (LEMO), which were orders which had to be made following each public path order; be it a DMMO, or a planning act order, to enable the definitive map and statement to be amended. Some of them even went back to the Shropshire Council days. There had been a change in legislation which meant the more recent orders and those in the future would not be subject to these legal event orders. The exercise to get the LEMO's up to date took two officers (Ann Sharkey and Andrew Careless) working solely on the project four weeks to complete, with some mopping up still to do.

Work had been progressed with DMMOs and both A Sharkey and A Careless completed training to update these online. Work was currently being undertaken on statutory declarations to add these to an on-line register. It was hoped that the work on the DMMOs as regards the mapping and registers could be completed within 12 months dependent on workloads. It was suggested that an apprentice or student could assist with this work.

TWC website update.

P Doherty was not present at the meeting however A Suffolk summarised her report. The website had significantly improved. There had been a few minor issues, but these had been addressed. The cycling map which was on the website was inaccurate, but had since been withdrawn. Members were asked to look at the website and report back any issues.

- **Action – members to look at the TWC website and raise any issues.**

Path clearance group update.

B Alton advised that the ramblers group had cleared footpaths near Lilleshall. There was another morning's work to complete before they were clear. It was agreed that notification of paths which need to be cleared would be helpful. There were a number of urban paths which need to be cleared.

B Coalbran stated that the Wellington Walkers Are Welcome had been clearing paths around Ercall Woods and had started to clear a path parallel to the motorway, down as far as the Buckatree Hotel. Over the next few weeks, they will be concentrating on urban paths within Wellington.

Dedicating a route to Jim Roberts' memory – 'The Jim Roberts' Way'.

A Careless noted that Jim did a great deal of work for Rights of Way in the area, so this would be a way of recognising the work that he did. If anyone had ideas for a route which would be suitable, this would be gratefully received.

Refreshing the Hutchinson Way.

There were routes within the area which needed refreshing, possibly by volunteer groups. A section of Hutchinson Way had been blocked and there was very poor signage along the route, with a lot of furniture needing replacing.

Climate Change and PRow.

There were national issues with erosion to Rights of Way or drainage onto third party properties. Work could be destroyed by just two or three rainfalls which raised a huge cost implication.

Westminster Briefing: 'Recording our Public Rights of Way: The Path to 2016'. (2026)

The Rights Of Way Officer would be attending this meeting. There were positives and negatives to this legislation but A Sharkey remained cautiously optimistic. There had been no mention of extra funding, as the aim of the changes was ultimately to save money. Condition 29 would mean that there were mandatory questions in regards to Rights of Way when property purchases were being made.

LAF-6 Membership Matters

The Chair advised that Peter Whittle had requested to join the LAF as a landowner; however, Mr Whittle was not a landowner. Mr Whittle suggested he could represent certain landowners and act as a person to engage with landowners on behalf of the LAF. Current Member, Peter Holt, was a landowner and he did a good job of representing the LAF to other landowners.

It was recognised that HCA were a major landowner in the area and it would be very useful if a representative could attend from HCA. NFU would also be helpful in seeking another landowner, potentially around the North of the County/Newport area.

Resolved – that:

- a) a letter to Mr Whittle declining his request to join the LAF as a landowner be sent.
- b) HCA be contacted by the Rights of Way Officer and requested to send a representative.
- c) NFU be contacted to support with recruiting a further landowner to the LAF.

LAF- 7 Rights of Way Improvement Plan

This had been on the agenda for some time. M Morris produced a discussion document on the Plan. He believed that Telford and Wrekin had set themselves an impossible task as the report stated the plan should be reviewed every 5 years. A Careless advised that circumstances had changed since the report was written in 2007 and the plan needed to adapt in line with major policy changes.

M Morris stated that the document should be strategic rather than specific. It was felt that the report was very out of date and did not reflect the current situation.

It was suggested that the Action Plan needed to be 'quick fixes', which relate to a longer term goal. Each year, the fixes should be reviewed, which would tie in with the strategic aims.

A Careless noted that the text and Statement of Aims of the Plan was fine, these could remain the same over a long period of time and follow guidance from DEFRA; it was the Action Plan which will need to be reviewed. The Action Plan was a working document, whereas the policy documents were for reference.

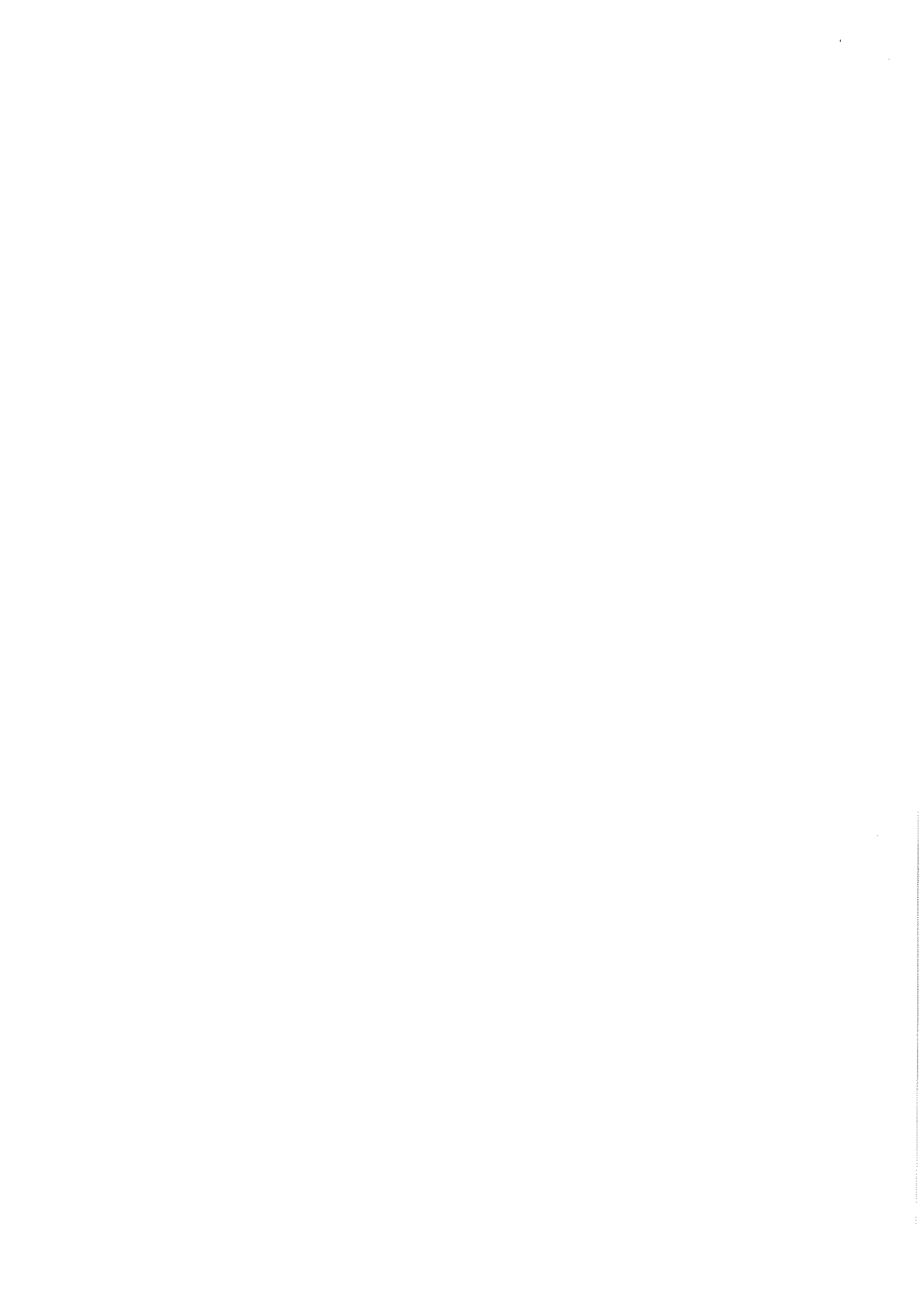
The LAF was advised that the Rights of Way Officer had recently moved Service areas. Previously, the work came under Neighbourhood and Leisure Services, but now fell under Business Development and Employment Development management, therefore, closer to planning. The idea was to create a more streamlined development process.

LAF- 8 Any Other Urgent Business

B Coalbran stated his concern regarding the state of Lime Kiln Wood. Lime Kiln Wood was the closest nature reserve to the town, and the most accessible. It was a bio-diverse and sensitive area. There needed to be a resolution of the ownership issue, which had been pushed back another year.

B Coalbran recommended the LAF appoint a Working Group to investigate and resolve the current worst issues within Lime Kiln Woods over summer 2016.

J Mees-Robinson noted the issues preventing access to public rights of way around the Huntington Lane UK Coal mining site in Little Wenlock. All of these issues were within one square mile.



LAF – 9 Future Meeting Dates

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and noted that the next meeting of the LAF would be held on the 5th October at The Studio, Graham Building, Wrekin College at 1.00pm for 1.30pm start.

The meeting ended at 3.29pm.

Chairman: *Mr Jones*

Date: *5 Oct 2016*

