

TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 9th October 2013 at 1.30pm at The Studio, Graham Building, Wrekin College, Sutherland Road, Wellington, Telford

PRESENT: Anthony Francis Jones (Telford Bridleways Association), Fiona Smith (Disability), Marion Law (Rambler), Janet Mees-Robinson (British Carriage Drivers Association), Jim Roberts (Landowner), Cllr Liz Clare (Telford & Wrekin Council), Cllr Tracy Hope (Telford & Wrekin Council), Peter Holt (Land Owner), Bob Coalbran (Wellington Walkers are Welcome), Marilyn Pietroni (Disability), Cadi Price (Severn Gorge Countryside Trust), Paula Doherty, Reg Potter (BUGS) and Alec Connah (representing STROWP).

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Careless (Senior Rights of Way Officer), Ann Sharkey (Legal Assistant, Telford & Wrekin Council), Jayne Clarke (Democratic Services Support Officer)

LAF-14 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3rd July be agreed.

LAF-15 MATTERS ARISING

Dog Control Orders

A question was raised regarding Dog Control Orders. The Chairman had not received any further information from Shropshire regarding their scheme.

Rights of Way / Legal Staffing

The Senior Rights of Way Officer reported that the Assistant Rights of Way post was no longer an option. There was currently a re-structure taking place based on the current cuts to the Councils budgets. The Senior Rights of Way Officer was due to move to the Traffic team. Although there would be no dedicated rights of way post the existing Traffic Officers would take on some of the day to day tasks.

Ann Sharkey, Legal Assistant for Telford and Wrekin Council, was introduced to the LAF. The role of the Legal Assistant was to undertake Modification Orders for Rights of Way together with S38 and S278 work.

LAF-16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Bob Alton (Rambler), Malcolm Morris (STROWP) and Jill Seymour.

LAF-17 CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

The Chairman gave a brief overview on the work that was being undertaken by the LAF in close liaison with the Senior Rights of Way Officer, which included:

- Liaising with the Senior Rights of Way Officer
- General 'clearing house' for Public Right of Way enquiries
- Weekly checking of Planning Applications for Rights of Way Issues
- Public Path Orders
- Discussions with Developers – Telford Millennium Community
- LA21 – Liaison

- UK Coal Restoration Site – Letter from British Driving Society regarding issues around gates and fencing and the restoration plan
- Headed Paper/Logo

The Chair had also been asked to report on the Ramblers Volunteer Group in the absence of Bob Alton.

The Ramblers had had a good summer with a number of jobs completed on the Wrekin Link, Arleston together with some work for the Little Wenlock Parish Council. The work that had been undertaken was outstanding and of great benefit to the community. It had been difficult to get people together during the summer, although this was due to the holiday season rather than lack of support or lack of numbers. The LAF were very grateful for the work that the Volunteer Groups such as the Ramblers, Wellington Walkers are Welcome and the Telford Bridleways had undertaken.

LAF-18 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Marilyn Pietroni had tendered her resignation from the Local Access Forum.

A vote of thanks to Marilyn Pietroni was proposed by Jan Mees-Robinson for the tremendous work that Marilyn had done for Rights of Way and for the LAF. Jan spoke of Marilyn's "vision of the Trundle" (a name only she could have thought of!) which was an inspiration to all. Jan went further to say that the Trundle was finally to be started and it was hoped that it would be a flagship for other projects around Telford which would make the Borough unique and that although Telford had been late starting there was still green space to continue to do this and it should be considered at every planning application. Jan said that Marilyn would be sorely missed and wanted to thank her for pointing the LAF in the right direction.

This was seconded by the Chairman and the LAF.

LAF-19 WREKIN TRUNDLE UPDATE

Marilyn Pietroni gave a final overview report to the LAF of the work and position of the Trundle to date.

This report could be found at Appendix 1 to the Minutes.

Marilyn also referred to the work of the Birmingham City University Landscape Architects which had been displayed at the meeting for members of the LAF to view.

The Chair thanked Marilyn Pietroni for her report. This project had been a steep learning curve for the LAF.

It had been suggested for the future that the LAF set up a LAF controlled bank account.

The LAF had a statutory role and it was hoped that the LAF would continue to lead their own projects.

It was suggested that the LAF may become a charity or non-profit making organisation and Janet Mees-Robinson was to continue to look into this and report back to the next meeting of the LAF.

A discussion took place including:

- Trundle to have ½ hour slot on the next Agenda
- Future of the Trundle
- Landowner Permission
- Contract
- Steeraway Farm Diversion Order
- Access to route at Hutchinson Way
- Charity Status/Non-profit making organisation

Cllr L Clare suggested that she would have a meeting with the Senior Rights of Way Officer to discuss the Trundle and to see if there was a way of moving the project forward. Cllr Clare would report back to the next meeting of the LAF.

LAF-20 REVIEW OF DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER APPLICATIONS

Ann Sharkey gave a brief overview of where the Modification Orders currently stood and the work that she had been undertaking.

After walking the Golf Links Lane to Ercall Lane route, verbal agreement had been reached with Shropshire Wildlife Trust and the design of the access for horse riders was being finalised. A route was also being added from near to the Quarry which ran between Lawrence's Hill and the Dairy pit.

Sylvan Close, which linked to the Hutchison Way was due to go to Planning Committee on 6th November 2013. If approved the appropriate notices would be sent/displayed.

Consultation had begun on the footpath from Sutherland Arms to the 3 routes on Grange Lane to the restricted byway.

The routes on Council land were with Estates and Investments to consider:

- Court Road to Rough Park Way
- Cockshutt
- Lees Farm to Meadow Pit

Janet Mees-Robinson asked if there had been any progress with Benthall Edge.

Ann Sharkey had received no communication from Shropshire Council regarding this whilst she had been in post.

LAF-21 VOLUNTEER GROUPS UPDATE

The Chair had given a brief update on behalf of Bob Alton in "Chairman's Matters".

Cadi Price thanked the Senior Rights of Way Officer for all of his excellent work on the Severn Valley Way which had put in steps and widened the path.

LAF-22 DONKEY FIELD UPDATE

The Donkey Field now had full Planning Permission, although this had a lot of "reserved matters".

The Chair was currently working through all of the reserved matters and was currently seeking advice regarding these.

Funding for the project would need to be looked at as, unfortunately, the funding bid submitted to HLSMCLC had been wholly unsuccessful.

LAF-23 SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Paula Doherty presented a report on a recent meeting which had taken place with herself and Paul Rochfort, Principal Rights of Way Officer, Staffordshire County Council.

A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 2 to the Minutes.

A discussion took place including:

- Tourism & Leisure Links to work with Rights of Way to promote the walks on the website
- Council's website needed improving as lagging behind both Shropshire and Staffordshire Councils
- Sign Posts on Bridleways and Footpaths

LAF-22 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Bob Coalbran presented some updated brochures for Wellington Walkers are Welcome and asked Members of the LAF to take some leaflets to promote the walks.

LAF-22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the LAF was to be held on 8th January 2014.

The Meeting ended at 3.27pm