

# Agenda Item 7

## **COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL – Report**

### **Report by John Law (a representative on the South Lincs Local Access Forum) for the South and Mid Lincs Local Access Forum Meetings on 20 and 26 April 2016**

#### **COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL ROUTES**

##### **Lincolnshire**

The new route literature should be available early May. We need to collate the new routes with the existing routes in the route folders. We were fortunate to obtain funding from Lincolnshire County Council to improve the route at Chambers Farm Wood and bring it back to a suitable standard.

The funding we have received from Bromhead Medical Charity will fund a further four route leaflets this year. We are currently looking at suitable routes. If you have any ideas of countryside routes which you feel are worth investigating please inform a member of the sub group.

The Woodland Trust have informed us that they may be able to invest in improvements to Owlet Wood near Gainsborough in 2017 and have asked for our advice. We have spoken to them about the route from the car park to the surfaced trail and this maybe something they can upgrade. So we may investigate whether they could fund the production of the leaflet. If not, it may be something we have to find funding for in 2017.

Just Lincolnshire has asked for our advice in relation to the Freedom Trail they are creating at Hill Holt Wood. If this can be made into an accessible trail for wheelchairs and mobility scooters it may be another site for producing countryside for all route literature in 2017.

The Sub Group has also been looking at how we can improve the current routes to enable people with a wider range of disabilities to enjoy them. We have identified four routes which we feel could be improved to provide increased access for people with disabilities. These are Hubbard's Hills, Chapel Six Marshes, Bourne Woods and Ashing Lane Nature Reserve.

Hubbard's Hills has two car parks, one which is privately run which is on a gradient which may be difficult for wheelchair users, the other is a roadside pull in/layby . The roadside car park appears to be part of the highway. It looks as if at one stage it did have disabled parking markings on the road. This road marking is worn and difficult to read.

Chapel Six Marshes belongs to Lincolnshire County Council and is part of the Coastal Country Park. The surface of the route is far from ideal as it forms a sticky mulch after rain. We have been informed it will cost approximately £6000 to provide

a surface which is fit for purpose. We have been in discussion with Chris Miller to see whether Natural England would fund this improvement and increase the route length as part of the Coastal Path. If Natural England will not provide this funding the Sub Group will be looking at other avenues of funding for this project.

Bourne Woods belongs to the Forestry Commission and is well used. The countryside for all route will need some attention in the near future, otherwise it will require significant funding to bring it back to the current standard. Discussions will take place later this year with the Forestry Commission and the Friends of Bourne Woods to investigate how we fund and make these improvements.

Ashing Lane Nature Reserve is owned by the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust but managed by the Nettleham Woodland Trust. Although this is a fairly young site, as a nature reserve it has a lot of interesting features. In years to come it is going to be a very attractive site if it continues to be managed in the same manner. That is the reason it has been included as a countryside for all route. The issues that let this site down are the signage to the site, the road to the site and the car park. The Nettleham Woodland Trust have requested a “modest addition to a post at the A46/Ashing Lane junction of a standard 'footpath' sign marking the bridle way to Ashing Lane Nature Reserve,” to be erected by Lincolnshire County Council. The road to the site has numerous pot holes. The car park becomes very muddy after rain and access from the car park to the countryside for all route needs improvement. The Nettleham Woodland Trust and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust have stated that they are interested in working with us to obtain funding to make the improvements to the car park. The Sub Group will be having discussions with all parties this year to specify and cost the improvements. There may also be a case for increasing the length of the accessible route. Once we have agreement from all parties we will be looking for funding sources.

***Action requested: That the Local Access Forums should write to the County Council's Environment and Economic Directorate to request:-***

***a) That the disabled road parking for Hubbard's Hills should be repainted***

***b) That the placement of the signage should be investigated and discussed with the Local Access Forums, Nettleham Woodland Trust and the Rights of Way team.***

***c) That the major potholes in Ashing Lane should be filled.***

### **Rutland**

The funding from Nineveh Trust will enable the Rutland Water Nature Reserve route to be printed. It is possible that Anglian Water may fund the printing rather than the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. We are currently awaiting the outcome of this.

The Woodland Trust stated in 2015 they would be planning a countryside for all route in Rutland in 2017. The Sub Group have recently contacted them to see if we can assist them. We are awaiting a response.

### **INCLUSIVE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS COURSE**

This course was funded by Bromhead Medical Charity and took place on 21 March at Willow Tree Fen. The course included delegates from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Forestry Commission, Boston Woods Trust, Northamptonshire County Council Rangers and Sam Tate from the South Lincs and Rutland Local Access Forum. The reasons we requested funding for this course was to:

- a) Enable other organisations to have a better understanding of what inclusive countryside means.
- b) Display how they could improve their organisation's sites to make them more accessible.
- c) Enable organisations to display and create their own route literature in the countryside for all format.

The feedback comments are below:

### **INCLUSIVE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS COURSE FEEDBACK ANALYSIS**

21 March 2016

Total Attendance 9 Delegates

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Course content			2	7
Course Presentation			1	8
Course Material			2	7
Venue		1	4	4

### **When asked - "Which of your organisation's sites do you hope to improve accessibility?":**

The RSPB representative stated "Initially Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore. Share knowledge with others across the region and maybe UK."

The Boston Woods Trust representative stated "Fenside"

The Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust representatives stated "Willow Tree Fen" and "As many as possible"

The Forestry Commission representative stated - "Will keep more of an open mind/awareness"

The Northamptonshire CC representative “for area A” - stated “All”

The Northamptonshire CC representative stated - “for area B” said “1 site”

**When asked - “Which of your organisation’s sites do you hope to develop countryside for All leaflets for?”:**

The RSPB representative stated “Initially Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore. Share knowledge with others across the region and maybe UK .

The Boston Woods Trust representative stated “Fenside”

The Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust representatives stated “Willow Tree Fen” and “North Lincs reserves”

The Forestry Commission representative stated this was the publicity officer’s responsibility

The Northamptonshire CC representative “for area A” stated “All”

The Northamptonshire CC representative stated - “for area B” said “2 sites” .

These details together with other information and photos will be provided to the funding body.

## **DEMENTIA FRIENDLY WALKS**

### **Lincolnshire**

The Mablethorpe meeting on 21 January, held at the Marisco Medical Practice, was attended by Magna Vitae, Lincolnshire CC Public Health, the CCG and the Alzheimer’s Society. The Age UK representative could not attend due to illness. There was no representation from the GPs or the Patient Participation Group. A number of actions were agreed which included Magna Vitae holding two events at the Marisco Medical Practice. Magna Vitae still have had no real expression of interest from carers or people with dementia wanting to take part in walks from Mablethorpe. However, there has been interest in these activities taking place at Horncastle. Magna Vitae plan to deliver Dementia Friendly walks from Horncastle rather than Mablethorpe in the near future.

### **Walk Leader Training -Lincolnshire**

Bromhead Medical Charity have provided funds for two courses, one for West Lindsey and the other in East Lindsey. The West Lindsey training took place at Richmond House, Gainsborough 19 April. The East Lindsey course has not been arranged yet but is expected to take place in May. The Sub Group will include the outcome of these courses in our next report to the LAFs.

### **Walk Leader Training –Rutland**

The Nineveh Trust funds will enable 14 people to be trained as dementia friendly walk leaders for Rutland. Discussions will have taken place 12 April to look at training dates and venues. The adverts to volunteers will also be finalised at that meeting.

### **CHOICE UNLIMITED EVENT**

The Choice Unlimited event is a one day event which is a market place for independent living. LCIL deliver the event with local partners. The event provides information, services, products and opportunities for disabled people, older people and carers. It is felt that the event will help promote our projects including health walks, countryside for all routes and the dementia friendly walks/strolls.

### **Lincolnshire**

The meeting held at North Hykeham civic offices was disappointing. A number of people at the meeting felt it was not worth holding a Choice Unlimited event in Lincoln, as they believed the event delivered by Lincolnshire Sports covered all aspects disabled people required. A meeting maybe arranged towards the end of the year with other organisations to assess their requirements for 2017.

A meeting is going to be arranged in Boston to see whether a Choice Unlimited will help people in that part of the County.

### **Rutland**

A second meeting has taken place with LCiL to progress the Choice Unlimited event. The date for the event at the Hub, Oakham has been set as 19 October 2016 from 1pm to 7pm. The Rutland team will showcase their event at the Leicester Choice Unlimited event at the Tigers. The Sub Group is attempting to obtain a TV of a reasonable size to use as part of the display providing a screen show. The Rutland table aims to attract businesses, disabled people and their carers to the Rutland Choice Unlimited event.

The Rutland event will be an ideal way of promoting the new dementia friendly strolls and the countryside for all routes.

### **FUNDING BIDS**

With the success of the funding applications to Bromhead Medical Charity and the Nineveh Charitable Trust, there are no current open funding bids.

We are currently identifying the four new walks where we have now got funding for. Our initial thoughts include:

The Water Rail Way as it leaves Lincoln

Part of the Grantham Canal towpath

The Ostlers plantation

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS ON HEALTH WALKS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY WALKS**

It was confirmed at the Walks Forum that the financial year 2016/17 is the final year for funding by Lincolnshire CC. The funding provided for 2016/17 is to prepare groups/organisations for post March 2017. The Sub Group has a meeting with Lincolnshire CC Public Health to discuss our proposals. It is stated and minuted in the Walks Forum meeting that our report went along way to help achieving funding for 2016/17

### **ACCESSIBILITY AMBASSADORS**

The Sub Group is now investigating the possibility of training people who are disabled or carers to become accessibility ambassadors. The aim is for these ambassadors to work with organisations which allow public access to parks, countryside and green spaces, to influence them to improve accessibility for the disabled and young families with pushchairs.

### **NATIONAL WEB SITE FOR COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL ROUTES**

Work on this project had come to a standstill. We are now looking at restarting this project and investigating whether we can attract funding to carry out the work.