



**MID-LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS
FORUM
18 OCTOBER 2016**

PRESENT: CHRIS PADLEY (CHAIRMAN)

Representing Lincolnshire County Council: Councillor D McNally

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council: Councillor Iain Colquhoun

Representing Independent Members: Dr Chris Allison, Sheila Brookes, Richard Graham, Sandra Harrison, Ray Shipley and Colin Smith

Officers: Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Chaplin (Public Rights of Way Mapping Officer), Christopher Marsh (Senior Highways Officer (Countryside)) and Chris Miller (Environmental Services Team Leader (Countryside Services))

Also in attendance: Alec Hill, a member of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum.

21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public stated that footpaths and waymarks were inadequate in the Lincolnshire Marshes, particularly in the vicinity south of Mablethorpe and enquired why this was the case. Officers stated that due to the lack of records kept by the Internal Drainage Boards in the early 1960's many of the replacement bridges which had been installed following drainage works were now either unsustainable or were missing and many of the bridges crossed large ditches which were expensive to replace. Officers stated that the County Council was trying to manage the situation by finding alternative routes and the Lost Ways initiative also provided an opportunity to find a better route.

22 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

On a motion by Chris Padley and seconded by Dr C Allison, it was -

RESOLVED

That Sheila Brookes be elected Vice-Chairman of the Mid Lincolnshire Local Access Forum for the ensuing municipal year.

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D C Hoyes MBE and Deborah North.

It was noted that David and Katherine Mills had resigned from the Forum.

24 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests at this stage of the meeting.

25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE MID LINCOLNSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON 19 JULY 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 July 2016, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the deletion of "Katherine Mills" from those listed in attendance.

26 A PROJECT APPROACH TO FACILITATING HORSE RIDING TRAILS

The Forum received a presentation from John Presgrave, a County Council Volunteer Warden/British Horse Society (BHS) Volunteer, who was involved in the management of the Lincolnshire Wolds Riding Trails Project, in connection with undertaking a project to identify a sustainable network of safe and user friendly circular horse and mountain biker rideable routes in the Wolds. He outlined a number of options to tackle access issues including, improved publication of routes, more involvement by the public to clear routes and the need to report problems of access to the Local Authority.

John Presgrave had a number of concerns which were out of horse riders' control including, amongst others, parking of horse boxes and trailers near or on routes which caused parking problems and the gradual reduction in Local Authority mowing was leading to fewer useable bridleways. He outlined the project approach which he used and which had been successfully used in Devon and North Yorkshire. He added that his project was now managed directly through the County Council's Countryside Team which was able to provide the necessary funding, with the help of North East Lincolnshire Council, to carry out the limited work necessary and to fund the promotional work as it arose.

A discussion took place and included the following:-

1. John Presgrave's project work was welcomed and appreciated by all.
2. The BHS details were on Facebook and this provided an opportunity to disseminate information about the project and to get volunteers involved to clear bridleways and Green Lanes for horse travel.
3. Many horse riders were apprehensive about using the road and off road access was preferable.
4. It was important to involve people in the project and it was noted that there were also a number of Horse Driving Clubs in Lincolnshire who could be approached.
5. The BHS had organised a seminar at the Bransby Retired Horse Centre and this had provided an opportunity to publicise the project which had not been taken.

6. The maintenance of Green Lanes should be the County Council's Countryside Team's responsibility not Highways.
7. There were many metalled roads which had potential for multi-use.
8. The Wildlife Trust should be contacted as they would be able to provide information and help about the clearance of Green Lanes for both wildlife and access.
9. The use of verges as Green Lanes was a good idea.
10. Landowners needed to be made aware that horse riders could help in crime prevention.
11. Forum members needed to use their contacts to spread the message about the project and to involve people because this would benefit people's health and wellbeing. John Presgrave stated that there needed to be more collaboration between the Local Authorities, the BHS and volunteers.
12. BHS needed to report issues with access on bridleways.

27 HORSE PASTURES AND RIGHTS OF WAY

The Forum received a report from Chris Padley in connection with access issues on public footpaths caused by horse paddocks being installed by private owners and the use of electric fences. It was the case that sometimes no alternative route was made available and the highway authority recognised this as a problem. However, occasionally, owners used a "break handle" for the public to use to avoid coming into contact with electric fences. Chris Padley questioned the legality of these "break handles" and the fact that the public were nervous of electricity at the best of times.

Chris Padley stated that there were options available to owners to avoid this, such as dividing paddocks up without the need to put up fencing. He sought the views of the Forum on this matter.

A discussion took place and included the following:-

1. Horses needed access to a water.
2. Mains electricity was not used for electric fences and therefore were not a threat to the public.
3. Electric fences were seen as a deterrent and should follow the line of the footpath.
4. If the fencing was temporary it was acceptable to use "break handles".
5. Warning signs needed to be clearly visible to the public.
6. Legislation had not caught up with what was taking place nowadays.
7. The County Council's Structures Policy was due to be reviewed and this provided an opportunity to raise this issue.
8. The effect of electrified fences on walkers with heart pace makers needed to be considered.
9. Health and safety legislation required that a yellow flag should be shown to indicate the presence of an electric fence.

RESOLVED

That the comments by the Forum be considered by the County Council when their Structures Policy was reviewed.

28 ENGLISH COASTAL FOOTPATH - PROGRESS REPORT

The Forum received a report in connection with the latest situation of the English Coast Path from Sutton Bridge to Skegness, Skegness to Mablethorpe and Mablethorpe to the Humber Bridge.

A discussion took place and included the following:-

1. Coastal access around the Ports on the Humber might be an issue.
2. Some footpaths in North Lincolnshire doubled as bridleways.
3. The Port of Sutton Bridge presented access problems similar to the Ports on the Humber.

Officers stated that Natural England were confident in finding the necessary funding to build a bridge over the River Steeping but the issue was the County Council finding the necessary funding to maintain any bridge. There were options for the County Council to find funding but there would be a need for the Council to find the first 25%.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

29 COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL ROUTES

The Forum received a report from John Law, a representative on the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with the provision of Countryside for All Routes in both Lincolnshire and Rutland.

The Forum commented that it would be useful to invite a representative of the local blind society in Lincolnshire in the work of improving accessibility at Owlet Wood and, in turn, they would be able to disseminate information about the project.

It was noted that the information in connection with the Accessibility Ambassadors who had the role of meeting landowners to discuss rights of way access and assessing provision in their areas for disabled people had been sent to both Forums.

RESOLVED

That the report and action detailed be noted.

**30 ACCESSIBILITY AMBASSADORS FOR PARKS, GREEN OPEN SPACES
AND THE COUNTRYSIDE**

The Forum received a report from John Law, a representative on the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with the role of Accessibility Ambassadors for parks, green open spaces and the countryside in Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Richard Graham stated that he had partially been involved in the Disability Group and Accessibility Ambassadors in the Dementia Friendly Groups had been mentioned.

Councillor Iain Colquhoun stated that he would investigate the promotion of Accessibility Ambassadors and volunteers in North East Lincolnshire.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

31 ACCESSIBILITY AMBASSADORS APPLICATION PACK

The Forum received a report from John Law, a representative on the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with the Accessibility Ambassadors Application Pack. The Forum noted that an event had been arranged at Lincoln College on 28 October 2016, in connection with the provision of activities for all and the opportunity would be taken to promote and appoint Accessible Ambassadors and to try and get more people to become members of the Forums.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

32 HEALTH RELATED WALKS FROM APRIL 2017

The Forum received a report from John Law, a representative of the South Lincolnshire Local Access Forum, in connection with funding for Walking for Health and dementia friendly walks county wide. It was noted that John Law was examining alternative funding streams for this area because of the withdrawal of funding by the County Council.

The Forum discussed the matter including an enquiry about the role of Clinical Commissioning Groups in providing funding and the role of Co-ordinators to train volunteers to encourage people to walk. It was noted that when Walking for Health was first established funding was provided by the Health and Wellbeing Boards and in the Forum's view they still had a role to play. Officers stated that many stiles on footpaths in urban areas had been removed to encourage people to walk.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

33 LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS AND RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP)

Officers stated that there was no longer any public money for Rights of Way schemes and that the emphasis now was to try and get funding from external sources and the County Council was unable to find money for bespoke projects. Therefore, there had not been any progress in producing ROWIP 2.

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RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

34 NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Forum received a report from North East Lincolnshire Council in connection with the latest situation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Issues highlighted in the report was that alternative proposals for a suitable diversion route for footpath 21 Stallingborough were being investigated this week and that work on the production of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2 were about to start with funding coming from the Council's Local Transport Plan.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

35 LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS OF DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

The Forum received a progress report from Lincolnshire County Council in connection with Definitive Map Modification Orders. Officers highlighted the following in the report:-

Colsterworth/Gunby and Stainby – it was noted that it was possible to make representations on the whole Order again and

North Somercotes/Marsh Chapel and Grainthorpe – the Council was seeking a reply to this Order following an appeal by the applicant to the Secretary of State;

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

36 NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL PROGRESS OF DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

The Forum received a progress report from North East Lincolnshire Council in connection with Definitive Map Modification Orders.

The Forum noted that a Public Inquiry had been arranged for 15 November 2016 to consider New Clee Sidings (Fuller Street Bridge to Salvesen Road) Claimed Footpath.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

37 LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS OF PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

The Forum received a progress report from Lincolnshire County Council in connection with Public Path Orders.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

38 NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL PROGRESS OF PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

The Forum received a progress report from North East Lincolnshire Council in connection with Public Path Orders.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

39 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

2.00pm on Tuesday 24 January 2017, at the County Offices, Newland, Lincoln

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm

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