

Agenda Item 7



A statutory advisory body to Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and other providers of outdoor recreational access

Report to:	Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum
Date:	23 April 2024
Subject:	Countryside For All

Summary:

This report provides an update on the work of Countryside For All.

Actions Required:

1. To request an update from Lincolnshire County Council on the progress of towpath surface improvements to Grantham Canal.
2. To request that Lincolnshire County Council and North East Lincolnshire Council provide an update at the next meeting of the Local Access Forum on the data held on Publish Rights of Way Furniture on the network.
3. That anyone interested in helping make the countryside more accessible for those with limited mobility email John Law.

1. Background

1.1 Countryside For All and LCC Route leaflets

We are now aiming for the first orders for the Countryside For All leaflets to go out in late May. We will also be asking our distributors to place orders for an October delivery. LCC Public Health and Active Lincolnshire will also be promoting these leaflets from this year forward. There were over 12,000 Countryside For All leaflets distributed last year and 5495 LCC walks leaflets distributed by us.

The Lincolnshire County Council South, Thoresby Warren route surface, has now been brought back into a suitable standard for us to include it in the Countryside For All portfolio of leaflets.

We will be resurveying South Thoresby Warren and Chapel Six Marshes before these leaflets go to the designers for amending and printing.

1.2 Funding for leaflets in 2024

Unfortunately we are now not allowed to apply for Lincolnshire County Council grants.

We are fortunate in that Lincolnshire County Council Public Health have funded the route leaflets for the Lincolnshire County Council sites, at the Spa Trail, South Thoresby Warren and Chapel Six Marshes. City of Lincoln have funded Hartsholme Country Park leaflet. Hubbard's Hills Trust have funded the leaflets for Hubbard's Hills.

A big thank you goes to the Lincolnshire Coop and their customers, as on the 26th March, the Lincolnshire Coop informed us that they have raised £1256.75 through the Community Champions Fund for the Countryside For All leaflets

Just Giving has raised £450.

We are continuing to try and raise funds from businesses. As at 1st March 2024, we have 10 sites requiring 10,500 leaflets with no sponsors. If we do not receive further sponsorship from businesses by the end of April, we will be using some of the money we have available to fund these leaflets.

We still urgently need to fill the role of fund raiser.

1.3 New Countryside Fo All Sites in Lincolnshire

If funding is still available and the work required is completed for the Natural England Rimac site, a leaflet will be created later in the year.

We also aim to have leaflets available for Owlet Wood near Blyton and the Sustrans route from Skellingthorpe.

1.4 Grantham Canal

We have arranged another date for a meeting with the Canal and River Trust and the Grantham Canal Trust, with the aim of getting the towpath surface improved. Lincolnshire County Council is working on getting the link from the road to the towpath on the definitive map.

ACTION: Can Lincolnshire County Council update us on the progress?

1.5 Across the Lincolnshire Borders

As mentioned previously the only complaint we have from people in Lincolnshire, is that they would like to visit other areas of the countryside but do not have similar leaflets for neighbouring counties. So we are hoping to address this.

Rutland did have 3 different Countryside For All sites. Two of these were at Rutland Water. The leaflet for one of these sites needs updating. Following a number of emails with Anglian Water, it is clear that it is very improbable that they will update the leaflets and pay for printing. The Rutland Countryside Access Forum have won funding for the updating of the Exton leaflet and have applied for funding the Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue leaflet.

We are still looking for suitable sites In Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire close to the Lincolnshire border. We have decided that due to towpath maintenance issues, not to include any part of the Leicestershire section of the Grantham Canal. The North East Lincolnshire Countryside For All site will be at Cleethorpes.

1.6 Miles Without Barriers

It's been stated that Lincolnshire County Council does not have a full record of the location and type of PROW furniture on the network. It is clear that to make the network more accessible for those with limited mobility, knowing what legal barriers are on the network and there location will help them. It will enable them to make a judgement on finding a suitable route for those with limited mobility to enjoy the countryside.

ACTION: Can Lincolnshire County Council provide us with information at our next meeting in relation to what is held by them, how the data is held it and what they feel is missing? This information is required for the disability subgroup to see how we can assist those with limited mobility.

ACTION: Can North East Linc's also provide us with the information above.

1.7 Disability Sub Group membership

We are still desperate to recruit members from the LAF into the Disability Sub Group. We have a wide range of positions available.

ACTION: Can anyone interested in helping the countryside more accessible for those with limited mobility email john.law_32@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

2. Conclusion

The Forum is invited to consider the update and actions detailed within the report.

This report was written by John Law, Representative of 'other interests' for the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum.