

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Access Forum  
Wednesday 19 September 2007  
Wigan Town Hall



|  | Action                                       |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------|--|----------------|--|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>1 Introduction</b></p> <p>Jackie Roberts (Vice Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting in the absence of Edgar Ernstbrunner.</p> <p><b>Present:</b></p> <table><tr><td>Jackie Roberts</td><td>Crankwood Bridleways Group</td></tr><tr><td>Eileen Rybka</td><td>Standish &amp; District Bridleway Group</td></tr><tr><td>Edna Booth</td><td>Leigh, Atherton &amp; Tyldesley Bridleways Group</td></tr><tr><td>Brenda Gaskell</td><td>Leigh, Atherton &amp; Tyldesley Bridleways Group</td></tr><tr><td>Trevor Boardman</td><td>Cycle Liaison Group</td></tr><tr><td>John Pimblett</td><td>Wigan and District Ramblers Association</td></tr><tr><td>Barry King</td><td>Long Distance Walkers Association</td></tr></table> <p><b>Officers:</b></p> <table><tr><td>Elizabeth Parry</td><td>Public Rights of Way Officer.</td></tr><tr><td>David Scrivens</td><td>Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer.</td></tr></table> | Jackie Roberts                               | Crankwood Bridleways Group | Eileen Rybka       | Standish & District Bridleway Group    | Edna Booth  | Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group | Brenda Gaskell | Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group | Trevor Boardman | Cycle Liaison Group | John Pimblett | Wigan and District Ramblers Association | Barry King | Long Distance Walkers Association | Elizabeth Parry | Public Rights of Way Officer. | David Scrivens | Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer. |  |
| Jackie Roberts   | Crankwood Bridleways Group                   |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Eileen Rybka   | Standish & District Bridleway Group          |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Edna Booth   | Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Brenda Gaskell   | Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Trevor Boardman  | Cycle Liaison Group                          |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| John Pimblett  | Wigan and District Ramblers Association      |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Barry King   | Long Distance Walkers Association            |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Elizabeth Parry  | Public Rights of Way Officer.                |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| David Scrivens   | Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer.         |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| <p><b>2 Apologies</b></p> <table><tr><td>Judith Burton</td><td>British Horse Society</td></tr><tr><td>Edgar Ernstbrunner</td><td>Ramblers Association - Manchester area</td></tr><tr><td>Peter Burns</td><td>Peak &amp; Northern Footpath Society</td></tr><tr><td>Dave Allen</td><td>Long Distance Walkers Association</td></tr></table>  | Judith Burton                                | British Horse Society      | Edgar Ernstbrunner | Ramblers Association - Manchester area | Peter Burns | Peak & Northern Footpath Society             | Dave Allen     | Long Distance Walkers Association            |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Judith Burton  | British Horse Society                        |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Edgar Ernstbrunner   | Ramblers Association - Manchester area       |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Peter Burns  | Peak & Northern Footpath Society             |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| Dave Allen   | Long Distance Walkers Association            |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| <p><b>3 Minutes of the last meeting</b></p>  |  |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| <p>3.1 Item No.2 - Trevor Boardman had given his apologies for the previous meeting. The minutes were then accepted as a true record.</p>  |  |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| <p><b>4 Matters arising</b></p>  |  |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |
| <p>4.1 Item No. 4.1 – EP advised that meetings had been held with regard to the Claims Register with Bill Humphries; Communications Group Manager and his Assistant Steve Hubbard. They have looked at the data and maps and tweaked it to be more "web-friendly". They have also partially completed the test site and they anticipate that this will</p>   |  |                            |                    |  |             |  |                |  |                 |                     |               |   |            |                                   |                 |                               |                |                                      |  |

be completed and available (internally only) by the end of this week or the start of next week. Any changes will then be made.

Once the final design and functional specification has been completed, they can then move it through Central IT to the Internet. Publishing the pages will depend on the Central IT web team's work load, but they explained that they didn't know how long this would take.

- 4.2 Item No. 6.1 – EP has spoken with Dave Green, Graphic Designer, regarding a logo & Letterhead for the LAF. EP explained that whilst some thought has been given to this matter there was nothing to bring to the meeting, however, Dave Green wants to know what contact details are required for the letterhead.

**EP**

BK advised that, from past experience, having the contact details on the letterhead can cause problems when there are changes to be made and suggested keeping it blank. The group decided that it would be appropriate to decide at the next meeting when EE will be in attendance.

**ALL**

- 4.3 EB raised the issue of the Risk Assessment on Pennington Country Park. EP explained that WL&CT had been in contact and agreed to replace the signage with new wording following comments made at the Highways User Group.

BG explained that there had been a vicious attack by a dog at the park and it would be appropriate for the signage to mention keeping dogs under control. BG also had concerns regarding Ragwort and the implications this had on children picking the plant not realising the dangers of handling it. No signs warn of this danger.

## **5 ROWIP**

- 5.1 a Discussion of the Final ROWIP – EP explained that the final report has been circulated. Comments have been received from Peter Burns and states “You may of course endorse the above plan for me, in my absence as in principle I support its aims and see it as a genuine way forward to improve ROW in the Borough.”

Peter does make a number of points, most are emphasising and stressing the importance of various issues, his main concern is maintenance.

EP reiterated the position that LTP money cannot be used to undertake maintenance work although improvement works can be done through the ROWIP/LTP. EP also advised that in order to illustrate the current position with regard to maintenance the

following gives an idea of the current situation: -

121 PROW are on the current Annual Maintenance Programme (AMP) which in effect covers just less than 10% of the network, but financially the amount that this cost's constitutes approximately 53% of the total ROW budget. Based on last years figures approximately the same was spent on the AMP, however the overall work that was undertaken on maintenance and signage constituted approximately 93% of the total budget. This includes any additional monies that were secured later in the year. Wigan is in the top quartile in Greater Manchester for spending per km length.

EB had asked who to contact regarding the Bickershaw site and the Land Reclamation Trust. EP advised that any issues regarding the Bickershaw site should be directed to Gary Harold, Dennis Makey, Sarah Smart or EP and not Alison Whitehead.

ER asked how much of the ROW budget is spent on updating the Definitive Map? EP explained that it varies because of legal involvement and other issues. ER also mentioned that bridleways need to be cut back to their full width so that there is room for all users along with a 12ft height clearance.

TB & EB emphasized the need for the ROWIP to create new routes and to make these definitive as a priority, not for maintaining the existing ROW network.

ER was concerned that the Claims List in the ROWIP is not very clear. The list should clearly state a reference number and a name for each claim; some are currently shown with a name. Also the claims for Standish No.49 and No.57 do not appear to be on the list. EP to look at this issue.

**EP**

BK made reference to page 14 of the final ROWIP and the mention of the Rotary Way and the Lancashire Trail. BK explained that these routes should be shown on the maps within the ROWIP because they enter the Wigan Boundary. EP advised that the ROW Section have no record of the actual routes. BK stated that a booklet was produced for each Trail and he may be able to get hold of copies and forward them on. BK also congratulated Wigan Council for working on the footpaths in Atherton, which are part of the Rotary Way, and doing a great job.

**BK**

- 5.2 b Letter of 'Support in Principle' for inclusion in the ROWIP – A vote took place to determine if there was support for such a letter in the ROWIP. Six Members were in favour plus PBs letter of support; there was one abstention.

JP insisted that the ROWIP is a very positive step forward and should be fully supported. Everyone had also agreed that the letter of support in principle should come from the Chair of the LAF.

EE

## 6 **Alleygating**

- 6.1 EB was concerned about gating off areas without consulting the LAF group first. BG explained that the routes that are being gated off, in most cases, are used as safe alternative routes to that of busy main roads. BG was also concerned that public money was being spent on private property.

EB advised that cyclists are already using the pavements and this will increase with Gating Orders because access to the rear of houses has been blocked by gates.

EP asked if all Members received copies of the Gating Orders; JR does not, EP advised that EE had sent an email earlier in the day and read out the information relative to alley gates:

“My suggestion would be that the Forum be asked whether any member would have a problem with any of them. All the non-contentious ones should thus be regarded as being unopposed by the LAF. Any remaining ones could then be discussed and (if need be) voted on. The duty to consult the LAF would thus be seen as having been fulfilled.”

There was some discussion on Gating Orders and it was generally felt that it would be of assistance if there was an overall plan showing the area where gating orders were proposed, this way it would give a better overall view of the implications to users of back streets.

BK suggested that someone from Community Safety be requested to attend the LAF meetings to discuss alley gating and any proposed schemes. Also whether the balance between high crime and accessibility makes the scheme appropriate.

## 7 **Any other business**

- 7.1 JR requested that a planning officer attend a future meeting to discuss the issue of Section 106 Agreements and the situation regarding the money used for Public Open Space. JR stated that, as far as she knew money was to be spent in the township. Is this happening?

BK advised that it is worthwhile checking with the Planning Department first of all as the current 106 Agreement is under review.

EP will approach Penny McGinty in the Planning Department to see if anyone will be available to attend a future meeting to discuss 106 Agreements.

EP

- 7.2 Leigh Guided Busway – BG wanted to know if there have been any updates. BG had concerns that the original plans have been changed and will not incorporate multi-user routes. EP advised that she was not aware of any further developments since the last discussion.

BK advised that from his experience there would not have been any changes to the original plans from the Public Inquiry. They would have to go through the whole legal process again to change any of the details. To be sure BK advised the LAF to write to the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive to get an update on the scheme and specifically on bridleways.

ALL

- 7.3 DS circulated recent information supplied from various organisations for LAF members as shown below:-

- i The British Horse Society: Response to consultation on the proposals to improve access to the English Coast
- ii Access Newsletters from DEFRA for May & August 2007
- iii DEFRA Implementation of the ROWIP: Letter to Kent LAF
- iv LAF Briefing Note: Public Consultation on the 'Right to Apply'
- v E-mail from the Kennel Club to LAF members: Dog Control Orders and an invitation to join KC Dog Club
- vi Kent Countryside Access Forum: Letter from Kent LAF in response to DEFRA 'Implementation of the ROWIP'
- vii Cumbria LAF: National Countryside Access Forum

## 8 **Date and venue of next meeting**

- 8.1 The next meeting will be held at Leigh Town Hall on Wednesday 12 December 2007. Sandwiches and refreshments will be provided from 6.00pm with official business starting at 6.30pm.