

Minutes of the meeting of the Local Access Forum  
Wednesday 12 December 2007  
Leigh Town Hall



		Action														
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>															
	<p>It was agreed that John Pimblett chair the meeting in the absence of Edgar Ernstbrunner (Chair) and Jackie Roberts (Vice Chair). JP then welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>															
	<p><b>Present:</b></p>															
	<table><tbody><tr><td>John Pimblett</td><td>Wigan and District Ramblers Association</td></tr><tr><td>Trevor Boardman</td><td>Cycle Liaison Group</td></tr><tr><td>Peter Burns</td><td>Peak &amp; Northern Footpath Society</td></tr><tr><td>Judith Burton</td><td>British Horse Society</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>Dave Allen</td><td>Long Distance Walkers Association</td></tr></tbody></table>	John Pimblett	Wigan and District Ramblers Association	Trevor Boardman	Cycle Liaison Group	Peter Burns	Peak & Northern Footpath Society	Judith Burton	British Horse Society	Eileen Rybka	Standish & District Bridleway Group	Edna Booth	Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group	Dave Allen	Long Distance Walkers Association	
John Pimblett	Wigan and District Ramblers Association															
Trevor Boardman	Cycle Liaison Group															
Peter Burns	Peak & Northern Footpath Society															
Judith Burton	British Horse Society															
Eileen Rybka	Standish & District Bridleway Group															
Edna Booth	Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group															
Dave Allen	Long Distance Walkers Association															
	<p><b>Officers:</b></p>															
	<table><tbody><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></tbody></table>	Elizabeth Parry	Public Rights of Way Officer	David Scrivens	Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer											
Elizabeth Parry	Public Rights of Way Officer															
David Scrivens	Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer															
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies</b>															
	<table><tbody><tr><td>Edgar Ernstbrunner</td><td>Ramblers Association - Manchester area</td></tr><tr><td>Jackie Roberts</td><td>Crankwood Bridleways Group</td></tr></tbody></table>	Edgar Ernstbrunner	Ramblers Association - Manchester area	Jackie Roberts	Crankwood Bridleways Group											
Edgar Ernstbrunner	Ramblers Association - Manchester area															
Jackie Roberts	Crankwood Bridleways Group															
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b>															
3.1	<p>Item No. 5.2 - EB noted that she had voted against the letter of 'Support in Principle' rather than abstained. The minutes were then accepted as a true record.</p>															
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>															
4.1	<p>Item No: 4.1 - EP advised that the Claims Register is up and running on the Wigan Council's internal website but are now waiting for Central I.T. to put it onto the main system.</p>															

4.2 Item No: 6.1 - EP confirmed that the logo for the Local Access Forum letterhead had been created and was shown to the group. DA thought it was a good logo which will give Wigan LAF a brand image. The overall opinion of the group was that it was very good but the wording under the LAF logo needs to stand out more. EP to ask Dave Green to create a few examples with larger text and bring them to the next LAF meeting for consideration. EP also circulated Edgar's letter of 'Support in Principle' to the group. Everyone was happy with the comments made.

EP

4.3 Item No: 4.3 - EB raised the issue of signage on Pennington Country Park. EB had noted that the signage needs changing to reflect the area containing Ragwort and the use of dogs in the park. EB also advised that some of the Ragwort had been removed. EP will, once again, raise the issue with WL&CT about the signage.

EP

4.4 Item No: 7.1 - Planning development and presentation – EP has been in contact with Penny McGinty who has advised that doing a presentation would not be a problem. However, with the re-organisation that is taking place with regard to the Department, the Townships and in addition to national changes, Penny felt it would be better to put the presentation on hold until things are sorted out. EP advised that Penny has given some internet addresses for finding out further information as shown below:-

General information about Section 106 agreements

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelid=12526>

The link below gives more detailed advice from the Planning Advisory Service:

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelid=24796>

**EP then circulated the Planning Obligations Practice Guidance.**

4.5 Item No: 7.2 - Leigh Guided Busway – EB was still concerned about the status this route will have if it is completed. EP explained that as far as we know, there are no changes to the original plans and bridleways are still to be incorporated. EB was still concerned that the Inspectors Report, at the time, did not mention bridleways. EP explained that the route is a claimed route and will be looked at within the ROWIP.

JB was also concerned that the Leigh Guided Busway could be linked with the funding for the congestion charge which would leave the whole proposals in jeopardy.

As noted in the previous meeting minutes it was advisable for the LAF to write to the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive to get an update on the scheme and specifically on bridleways and to ask any questions of concern.

## **5 Alleygating**

- 5.1 EP explained that following the previous LAF meeting and correspondence from Dave Allen to various Chief Officers, efforts have been made to encourage a response from Community Safety and the Legal Department. EP advised that we have had no response to our request for a presentation.

EP advised that she attends the National Meeting of the Metropolitan Authorities on behalf of the Greater Manchester Group. A regular item is that of Gating Orders and alley gates and it was mentioned at the last meeting that questions have been raised with regard to the alley gates in Liverpool. Apparently the District Audit had called into question the erection of alley gates in Liverpool using public money.

EP understood that this may be related to public money spent in 2004/05 being used to erect gates on publically maintained highways where no legal process has been followed. Further information is available on Liverpool City Council's web site. EP had brought this to the attention of Senior Management and understands that the Community Safety Section has assured everyone that all is in order.

EB asked whether Gating Orders carried out under Section 129A to G invalidate Sections 118 & 119. EP explained that, as an example, the Trees Estate was designated a high crime area under the Highways Act Section 118B but was actually gated using 129A of the Highways Act as a result of the governments new Cleaner Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005.

PB advised that it would be appropriate to leave the gates open in daylight hours so that pedestrians can use these highways.

DA thought the issue of alley gating should be discussed at LAF meetings at the initial consultation stage not when they have already been agreed. DA suggested the LAF write to all Council Departments to raise issues and concerns of Alley Gating and that the LAF should be consulted before a gating order has been agreed. DA also raised the issue of Claimed routes and asked why alley gating has taken priority over Claims in the Legal Department. Some of which have been on going for years. DA had written to the Legal

Department regarding alley gating Orders and confirmed that he had received a reply from them explaining that it had been taken up by the Environmental Services Department.

JB confirmed that they do receive gating Orders but only after they have been agreed. JB was concerned that the Orders are approved without considering any objections received from the public. JB reiterated the necessity for the LAF to be informed at an early stage when a gating scheme is under consideration.

It was also suggested that instead of closing alleyways it might be more beneficial to clean these areas and install lighting to improve safety and improve the area.

DA advised that the LAF should write to all departments to highlight the fact we are a statutory group and we need to be heard.

**CHAIR/  
LAF**

It was suggested that a letter be drafted to specific Officers expressing concern over the Alley-gating scheme along with a copy of the minutes.

EP explained that if the LAF could write letters of concern to each department, officers could ensure that they will be sent out with the minutes of the meeting.

JP confirmed that, as a first step, letters of introduction from the LAF would be written to each Department Head. Any further letters would be sent out with the minutes when appropriate. JP also requested a presentation for the next LAF meeting from Community Protection.

**CHAIR/  
LAF**

## **6 ROWIP**

- 6.1 EP advised that the final report is due to be printed soon. EP mentioned that she had done a presentation to the Environment Development Partnership last week and the final document will go to Cabinet early in the new year. EP also confirmed that a draft job description and person specification is being drafted for the ROWIP Officer post. This will be funded through the Local Transport Plan and is proposed to be advertised in the new year.

## **7 Selection of Greenheart Board Members**

This item was requested by Jackie Roberts.

- 7.1 EP stated that she has spoken with Gary Harold regarding this issue and he has advised the following:- The number of Board members is now fixed and its number and composition were agreed by Cabinet, however, membership of the Steering Group is more flexible. Gary Harold felt that the Steering Group would be of greater

benefit to the LAF/HUG where issues can be discussed and solutions found. The role of the Board is to agree recommendations put forward by the Steering Group. Gary suggested that the LAF write to him and ask if they can be a member of the Steering Group. If there is a desire to be on the Board this can be raised in the letter and when a vacancy occurs this request can be considered.

ER thought that the Greenheart Board members should be attending LAF meetings to get our thoughts and suggestions on proposals that they may have. EB agrees that we should be consulted on any issues relating to linking specific routes and issues regarding open spaces.

ER also stated that it would be helpful to have a map of the Greenheart project at a LAF meeting where we can discuss potential routes together as a group and with Board Members.

**CHAIR/  
LAF**

**8 Any other business**

8.1 LAF Nomination - DA put a nomination forward to accept Barry King, from the Long Distance Walkers Association, as a member of the LAF. The group accepted the nomination without objection.

8.2 Bickershaw North – EB was concerned that the exhibitions that were to take place in September/October had been cancelled and no further dates had been agreed. EB wanted to know future dates for the exhibitions? EP advised that it would be advisable to put Bickershaw North on the agenda for the next HUG meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2008 where Gary Harold will be in attendance.

**DS**

8.3 Sustrans Connect 2 – TB advised that Sustrans had included 79 new bridges in its plans for connecting various routes throughout the country. TB had been on Sustrans website and had noticed that Wigan was not mentioned. TB explained that we need three bridges in Wigan and why had we not bid for them in the Sustrans scheme?

JP proposed TB to write to Martin Kimber Director of Environmental Services to ask about the Sustrans Connect 2 scheme.

**TB**

8.4 Training - EP advised the group that if the Local Access Forum has identified any training requirements for members, then there is potential funding through Natural England. EP also confirmed that Catherine Hurworth from Natural England had been in touch to ask the LAF if they would like a presentation.

Due to a possible presentation at the next LAF meeting on Alley Gating, it was decided that EP would write to Catherine Hurworth at Natural England to see if we can determine a future presentation at a later date.

**EP**

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

- Ebulletin on Discovering Lost Ways Project September 2007 – Natural England.
- Access Newsletter from Defra, October & December 2007.
- Email with Letter attached from the Chair of West Yorkshire Pennine LAF Re: National Access Forum.
- Email Letter attached from Chair of Cumbria LAF.
- Email Information attached Re: North West LAF & Regional Coordinator.
- Letter from the Equestrian Access Forum to Dr Helen Phillips Chief Executive of Natural England Re: Discovering Lost Ways.
- Email from Mike Furness Editor of IPROW's Waymark magazine, promoting IPROW and the magazine.

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

9.1 The next meeting will be held at Wigan Town Hall on Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Sandwiches and refreshments will be provided from 6.00pm with official business starting at 6.30pm.