

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM  
WEDNESDAY 3 MARCH 2010  
WIGAN TOWN HALL**



**1. INTRODUCTION.**

Jackie Roberts Chaired the meeting in the absence of Edgar Ernstbrunner (Chair). JR welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present:

Jackie Roberts	Crankwood Bridleways Group
John Pimblett	Wigan and District Ramblers Association
Trevor Boardman	Cycle Liaison Group
Peter Burns	Peak & Northern Footpath Society
Judith Burton	British Horse Society
Brenda Gaskell	Leigh, Atherton & Tyldesley Bridleways Group
Ruth Killen	Landowner
John Gurhy	Disability Forums

Officers:

Mike Worden	Head of Planning & Transport Strategy
Elizabeth Parry	Public Rights of Way Officer.
David Scrivens	Assistant Rights of Way Map Officer.
Katie Jackson	ROWIP Officer

**2. APOLOGIES.**

Edgar Ernstbrunner	Ramblers Association - Manchester area
Barry King	Long Distance Walkers Association

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

3.1 Page 5, item 11.1 should read 'BG RK was concerned of reports'

3.2 The minutes were then accepted as a true record.

#### 4. **MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 Item No: 6.2 – Definitive Map & Statements. EP explained that the ROW map is now available on the Council website, the issue of the statements is progressing and we are getting closer to being able to print them off.

DS

4.2 Item No: 4.5 – Railway Street – EP has spoken with Graham Dickman in Development Control and he has advised that the matter is with Legal. An enforcement notice was served on the landowner; requiring that the gates remain unlocked at all times, and the removal of any notices deterring users of the footpath. The landowner has advised the authority that he is not locking the gates and it is his neighbour that is now doing so. EP understands that it is now up to Legal to prosecute the respective parties.

RK advised that Network Rail may have also served notice on the landowners, albeit she could not recall where she had heard this information.

4.3 Item No. 11.2 – Shevington Parish Council - JB confirmed that notices had been made and placed in livery yards asking horse riders to respect sports pitches near the War Memorial and not to churn them up. JB distributed them and all were in favour apart from one objection from a yard owner who refused to acknowledge the notice.

#### 5. **ENGLAND ACCESS FORUM / NW REGIONAL LAF**

5.1 In the absence of EE, a brief note had been sent to EP: EE had noted that the future of the England Access Forum is still uncertain. A meeting of the Forum has been called for 8 March, in London, the intention being to involve Natural England and DEFRA in discussions on the way forward. It is impossible to predict the outcome.

#### 6. **DISABLED ACCESS ISSUES – John Gurhy**

6.1 JG advised that a meeting had taken place a little time ago with ROW Officers, landowners and some interested parties re. Crankwood Road. The landowners agreed that horse riders, walkers but not Invalid Carriages, could use the road. JG advised that an Invalid Carriage is not a motorised vehicle and that there is a clear distinction between the two.

JG explained that this issue; access for individuals using motorised scooters, should be raised by EE at the England Access Forum and at the NW Regional LAF so that an agreement can be made that an Invalid Carriage is not a motorised vehicle to clarify the situation.

EE

JG confirmed that he had received the draft DEFRA Disability Discrimination Act document. Is this going to be made law?

JR has had a conversation with Mrs Hibbert; one of the landowners on Crankwood Road, she advised that the road is very uneven and dangerous for Invalid Carriages to use. There is a danger of them toppling over.

JP advised that there are very few Public Rights of Way accessible for disabled access because of the nature of the routes.

EP confirmed that when barriers need replacing the ROW Team will only erect them if necessary and if they are needed, and then every effort is made to replace with DDA compliant barriers.

JG stated that the issue regarding Invalid Carriages on Public Rights of Way should be discussed at the LAF meetings to help to sort this issue out.

BG advised that using Invalid Carriages through farmland is extremely dangerous. An incident occurred where a man toppled over on his scooter in their Orchard and was found freezing lying on the floor.

JG explained that there is no training on Invalid Carriages when you purchase them. He explained that it might be a good idea to set up such a course.

PB also mentioned the problem of drainage on ROW which also needs to be addressed.

## 7. **ROWIP**

7.1 EP advised that at the time of writing she is unaware of what budget will be available to spend next year, although following on from Emma Barton's presentation at the Highways User Group, it would be safe to say it will be less than last year.

Hindley 11 & 12, work is completed on these footpaths; albeit concerns have been raised recently by Peel Holdings for the condition of one of their bridges, as such they are considering a possible diversion of the route over a very short section. Further surveys will be undertaken on the structure.

JG confirmed that everyone who is using the completed footpaths are very happy with the work that has been done but there is still a small section that needs to be completed close to Dog Brook and the Paddock.

EP also advised that Martland Park south has now finished. Letters have been sent out with an ecological brief for undertaking survey work on the northern routes.

### Other Schemes:

British Water Ways – There is nothing further to report on this at the moment.

Crankwood Road – EP advised that Legal has received a response from the Barrister regarding independent advice on the status of the road based on information gathered thus far and EP is waiting for Legal to respond to that.

Lowton St Mary's Line - EP currently waiting responses to land registry searches on this to confirm details if possible of the link from Brancaster Drive to the dismantled railway.

Wigan 91 – EP is hopeful that the notices for the creation order will go up on site shortly.

### Future Schemes

EP advised that as a priority Katie will go through the files on schemes originally identified and produce a brief summary of where each is at. Once completed a discussion will take place to identify how to progress matters further. EP will also be suggesting that Katie works closely with the Greenheart Officers to look at alternative means of funding / sourcing some schemes.

There is an opportunity to look at the Future Jobs Fund partnership between the Council, Groundwork and Lancashire Wildlife Trust to see if some low skilled work can be undertaken by trainees.

## **8. GATING ORDERS**

8.1 EP stated that there have been a number of objections against the gating order on Snowden Avenue, Worsley Mesnes, albeit EP didn't know how many. Apparently the objections have been sent to the Alley Gates Team for comment.

In his absence BK had asked EP to raise concern about the status of footpath Wigan 73 and in particular the alternative route.

BK mentioned that there are no signs up on site, no observable notices on site. Alternative route not shown on the plan which is a common problem.

BK specifically asked that the Chair makes a request to the Council to ensure that LAF Members are kept informed of the outcome of this order.

EE

JR then made a formal request for the LAF to be kept informed of future developments of the Snowden Avenue Gating Order.

## 9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

9.1 RK raised the issue of the lack of advertising of the 'Complaints Form' for horse riders who have encountered incidents on the road. They are not displayed in livery yards and wanted to know where they can be found?

JR advised that she had visited all the livery yards and distributed the Council's 'Complaint Forms' in the past but no one seemed interested.

RK requested that the new updated form should be displayed on the Council's website so that it can be found easily.

JB advised that if anyone has an incident with a vehicle, it is worthwhile getting the registration number, then go to the PACT meeting and tell the community policeman what has happened. They would then probably visit the driver to have words with them.

9.2 JR raised the problem of the swings on the park area at Pennington Country Park. They cause a hazard for horse riders and would be useful to do a small diversion around the park area. Wigan Leisure & Culture Trust have been approached about this but don't seem interested.

9.3 EP advised that Brian Warren is retiring from the Council.

The following items were then circulated:-

National Parks Consultation.

Cumbria LAF site visit, Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March.

'Best of Both Worlds' website. Outdoor Pursuits and Conservation.

Tramper Vehicle Training, 25<sup>th</sup> March, Beacon Fell Country Park.

## 10. **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

10.1 The next meeting of the Local Access Forum will be held at Wigan Town Hall on Wednesday 9 June 2010. Sandwiches and refreshments will be provided from 5.30pm with official business starting at 6.00pm.