



WREXHAM LOCAL ACCESS FORUM CONFIRMED MINUTES

Thirty-third meeting of the forum held at 'PLAS PENTWYN' Coedpoeth Enterprise & Life Long Learning Centre, Castle Road, Coedpoeth on Thursday, 7 May 2009 at 1.30 pm

12/09 ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

Attendance:

PRESIDING OFFICER AND SECRETARY

Emma Haldane

(Following item 13/09, Mabyn Pickering was appointed Chair)

CHAIR

Mabyn Pickering

MEMBERS

John Cooper-Poole

Sue Gittins **(Deputy Chair)**

Martin Howorth (WCBC)

Tim Stratton

Edward Wardle

Mabyn Pickering

Gerald Moss

Peter Cade

Janet Williams

Gwynfor Jones

Mary Roberts

John Evans

Natalie Edwards

Guy Springett

NON MEMBERS

John Marchant

Alun Price (CCW)

Jeanette Blackford

Yvonne Palmer (AVOW)

George Williams (Coedpoeth CC)

Len Coling

Apologies: Shelagh Roberts, George Kinder, Mike Crawshaw

13/09 Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

The Presiding Officer confirmed that Mabyn Pickering was happy to put her name forward as Chair to the forum and Sue Gittins as Deputy Chair. These nominations were seconded by Gwynfor Jones and Tim Stratton. As no further



nominations had been received, the Presiding Officer announced Mabyn Pickering as Chair and Sue Gittins as Deputy Chair to the Wrexham Local Access Forum.

Mabyn addressed the forum with thanks for all the support she had received from new and old members. She gave special thanks to Clive Menzies, previous chair to the forum for all the excellent work he helped to achieve locally and nationally in Wales.

14/09 Matters Arising from Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 February 2009

15/08 Cross Border Issues

Sue Gittins and Tim Stratton agreed to represent Wrexham as part of a working group to look solely at cross border issues.

Secretary had received positive responses from Denbighshire, Flintshire, Powys and Cheshire and had contacted other LAF secretaries to organise a date for the first meeting. No response to date.

ACTION: Secretary to keep Sue and Tim informed

09/09 King Mills Car Park

A problem with pot holes to the access road to the car park at Kings Mills had been reported. Secretary had received confirmation that the potholes have now been repaired.

15/09 Secretary's Report

Retirement

After 3½ years in post, secretary informed members that she would be retiring at the end of June, due to family, work and study commitments. She thanked members for all their support and help during her time in post and that the vacancy would be advertised shortly.

ACTION: Secretary to inform members of new appointment when advised.

New Expense Claim Forms

Secretary informed members that the authority had produced new volunteer expense forms. These would replace the old forms.

Should members wish to make a claim for any travelling or car parking expenses with regards to LAF business please contact the LAF secretary.

New LAF Council Representative

Martin Howorth, Parks, Countryside and Rights of Way Manager is the new council representative on the forum taking the place of John Marchant.

16/09 Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Martin Howorth reported that he was currently looking at funding access projects for the next year as part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and felt that members could help to decide what actions needed to be prioritised in relation to bridleway projects, in order that Wrexham puts their bid into the assembly in time for the next funding release.

Martin felt that members may benefit from a brief presentation on the Definitive Map by the Rights of Way Team Leader, Sean Hanratty as part of training for new

members of the forum. He explained that Wrexham was committed to working towards improving the rights of way network for all users, though due to money constraints and a steady decline in funding he felt that there was a need to prioritise where money is to be spent in the near future.

Interest had previously been expressed in a new bridleway route for horse riders. One suggestion received was in the vicinity of the moss valley.

Janet Williams felt that it was important to ensure that all user groups were considered when deciding where to put a new bridle route and asked whether it was possible to include access for carriage drivers. Martin confirmed that he was happy to pursue and confirm the access status.

ACTION AGREED– members to come forward with any proposed works to be completed at the next meeting

NOTE: Secretary to place on next agenda for discussion

Natalie Edwards congratulated the Rights of Way Team and Access Wardens for all their support given to the ground work team. She was happy to report that any issues raised were dealt with promptly and efficiently by the team.

17/09 Report from Access Rangers

Martin Howorth presented a report by rangers Alison Whitley, Dave Smith and Sion Roberts of work currently underway in the County.

Alison reports that:

- All of the completed works in Gwersyllt have recently been checked and Alison is now in the middle of logging new furniture on to CAMS system. She reported that she will be putting together a signpost schedule for Gwersyllt over the next couple of weeks. A press release has recently been issued reporting on the progress of the project. A further press release will cover 'adopt a path' which will cover all three past projects, including; Brymbo, Coedpoeth and Gwersyllt.
- Alison has started putting together the survey maps for this year's project area which is Broughton.

Dave reports that:

- He has compiled a comprehensive list of 95 maintenance issues on promoted routes as reported by the team of volunteers, and is ready to issue work to contractors as soon as landowners have been visited. He has also started work on this year's BVPI's.
- Dave has yet to hear back from CCW on this year's Offa's Dyke Grant, but is reasonably confident of success. He is also leading a walk shortly – further details are in the Information and Events booklet and will also be in the local press.

Sion reports that:

- He is currently working on finalising the Rights of Way Improvement Plan list of work to be carried out in 2009/2010. Several popular urban / village fringe

paths have been identified as being suitable for upgrading from stiles to kissing gates. It is anticipated that a new footbridge will be installed near Caia Farm in Rhos, together with a new footbridge installed on the well used River Dee path that runs from Erbistock towards Lower Farm.

- Contractors are due to start the summer strimming programme shortly.

Charlotte reports that:

- She has been helping with this year's signpost schedule's and can report that all are nearly complete with the exception of one or two flags still with the sign makers, and the last batch of signs are ready for the contractor to install. She has also been helping Dave Smith with this years BVPI's.
- Charlotte has also received one fully completed 5-year survey and two partially completed surveys. There are now only 7 communities left to be surveyed.
- The Volunteer webpage is now in its final stages with the next step being a meeting with the web team to discuss its launch.

Digital Maps for Members

It was reported that Flintshire LAF members had been provided with digital maps of their county. Members asked how feasible it was for Wrexham to supply WLAF members with digital maps.

ACTION: Martin to look at production costs

18/09 Countryside Council for Wales

Alun Price introduced himself to new members of the forum, giving a brief description of his background and current work within CCW, highlighting his current roles and responsibilities within his post and the positive partnership he has developed with Wrexham. He explained that the footpath projects within the county were partially funded by CCW and had proved very successful.

Access to Inland Waters in Wales

At the last meeting it was reported that the Welsh Canoeing Association (WCA) in 2008 had put in a petition of nearly 10,000 signatures to the Assembly calling for new legislation that would secure rights of access to and along inland waters. Alun reported that the Anglers were now compiling a list of signatures in a similar petition.

19/09 Any Other Business

Draft Annual Report 2008/09

John Cooper-Poole had kindly put together the first draft of the WLAF Annual Report 08/09. Secretary thanked John for his hard work in producing the report. Copies were distributed and members were asked to report back with any changes.

ACTION: Final report to be agreed at next meeting

Bronington 36 Stile

At a previous forum meeting a concern had been raised over the accessibility of a stile in the village of Bronington which was felt to be too high to climb over. One

solution was to erect a kissing gate in its place. At the time of the meeting Martin was unsure of the dimensions of kissing gates and how feasible it was to replace the current stile. He confirmed that he would discuss dimensions with Sion Roberts and report back to members. **(please see footnote)**

New Member Induction

Mary Roberts felt that an induction for new form members would be beneficial.

AGREED: Martin to invite access rangers to a future meeting to give a presentation of their roles and the work undertaken within the county as part of the induction process.

20/09 Items for Next Agenda

Annual Report

Cross Border Issues

Projects for ROWIP (suggestions to secretary before meeting)

Access Rangers

21/09 Date and Location of Next Meeting

Thursday, 6 August 2009 at 1.30 pm to be held at the Erddig Meeting Room, Erddig Estate, Wrexham.

Footnote

After the meeting it was established that the Authority currently uses centrewire Kissing Gates. Metal gates installed height is 1m - 1.2m in height with a fenceline of 2m and a width of 1.2m