

**Notes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at  
County Hall, Glenfield on Monday 27 July 2009.**

**Present**

Mrs. V. Allen, Mrs. R. Camamile CC, Mr. R. J. Denney (in the Chair), Mr. H. Eppel, Mrs. L. Forman, Mr. T. B. Kirby, Dr. G Mason, Mr. M. Parr, Mr. B. Sutton, Mr. P. Tame, Mr. S. J. Warren.

**Officers in attendance**

Mr. C. Gordon (For Minute 325), Mr. A. Jackson (For Minute 323), Mr. H. Lucas (For Minute 324), Mr. G. King (For Minute 324), Mr. E. McWilliam, Mr. A. Poole (For Minutes 329 and 330), Mr. S. Weston and Mr. P. Williams.

**Action by**

**317. Chairman's welcome**

The Chairman welcomed members and members of the public to the meeting, in particular the following representatives:

Chris Gordon (Natural England)  
Andy Jackson (The Stepping Stones Project)  
Hugh Lucas (Aggregate Industries, Bardon)  
Graeme King (Aggregate Industries, Bardon)

The Chairman took the opportunity to notify members that Jeremy Hefford had resigned from the Forum with immediate effect.

**318. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the following members:

Heather Brown  
John Kitching

**319. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

**320. Matters arising from the minutes**

**Minute 305: Green Infrastructure**

Mr Williams stated that the Strategy for the River Soar and Grand Union

Canal was nearing completion and would be available in September 2009.

#### Minute 307: Wind Farms

A public enquiry into the Swinford Wind Farm would be ending on Friday 21 July. Ms. Allen would update members on its conclusions at the next meeting.

VA

#### Minute 308: Connect2 and the proposals for the Soar Valley Canal

The Thurmaston Bridge at Watermead Country Park was opened on 9 January. Improvements would be made to the link between Thurmaston and Birstall. Work had been commissioned to improve the Birstall Bridge.

### **321. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **322. Urgent items**

It was AGREED that the following items be taken as urgent:

- Regional LAF;
- Footpath at Barrow-upon-Soar;
- Carlton Hayes Obstruction;
- Bardon Aggregates Quarry.

### **323. The Stepping Stones Project**

Mr. Jackson delivered a presentation on the work of The Stepping Stones Project. A copy of the slides forming Mr. Jackson's presentation is filed with these minutes (the map of the project area is included in the slides).

Arising from the presentation, the following points were made:

- More joint working was taking place between the Authority and parish councils to link walks and create greater continuity;
- Though the City Council were not currently a funding partner for the Project, joint working did take place on projects around the City/County border.

AGREED:

That the presentation be noted.

### **324. Bardon Quarry Expansion Plans**

Mr. King and Mr. Lucas delivered a presentation on the proposed expansion of Bardon Quarry. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the presentation, the following points were made:

- Aggregate Industries wanted to create a community facility for local people in the Coalville area;
- There was an option to create a country park as part of the plans. Aggregate Industries were keen to create links to the Charnwood Forest area;
- There was also the possibility of a 'study centre', which would educate people about the Quarry and provide space for research activities;
- Reserves at the new Quarry were expected to last in the region of 40 years. It was planned that the old site would become a reservoir for drinking water, but would take around 40 years to fill it;
- It was felt that there could be a large visual impact on the area if, as planned, power lines were relocated on higher ground;
- All forms of tourism, such as rock climbing and mountain biking, were being considered by Aggregate Industries as part of the plans for the Quarry.

AGREED:

That Mr. King and Mr. Lucas be thanked for their informative presentation.

### **325. Natural England**

Members of the Forum were introduced to Mr. Gordon, Team Leader of the Leicestershire Natural England. Mr. Gordon would be attending future Forum meetings in place of Jan Tilsley. Mr. Gordon discussed the following facts about access to green space:

- 1 in 5 people were now clinically obese. This was expected to rise to 1 in 3 by 2020;
- It was calculated that 9 out of ten people would be overweight by 2025 and people would increasingly suffer with mental health issues;
- You were 27% more likely to be overweight or obese if you had little or no access to green space.

Ms. Allen raised the issue of riding access on Countryside Stewardship Schemes.

AGREED:

- (a) That Mr. Gordon be thanked his attendance and the information provided;
- (b) That Mr. Gordon raise Ms. Allen's issue with colleagues and report back at the appropriate time.

**CG**

**326. Watermead Country Park Site Visit**

Mr. McWilliam reported on plans for a site visit to Watermead Country Park. The visit would involve a Ranger-guided walk through the north end of the Park to look in detail at the new Connect2 funded projects that were either complete or in progress.

Mr. McWilliam proposed that the site visit take place on Tuesday 29 September 2009 at 3.30pm prior to the Forum's meeting at 6pm that evening. Those members who were not able to make their own way to the Park were asked to inform Mr. McWilliam in order that officers could provide lifts to the site from County Hall at around 3.15pm. It was planned to leave the Park at around 5.30pm in order to arrive back at County Hall for the 6pm meeting.

**ALL**

AGREED:

That the site visit take place on the date and with the arrangements outlined above.

**EM**

**327. Castle Donington Site Visit**

Mr. McWilliam reported that the Countryside Service had been in touch with the race track owners and a permanent diversion of the ROW had been discussed, although no application had been made as yet. Ms. Allen asked that the needs of riders and cyclists be met by providing an off-road route along ROW L87.

A view was also expressed about some signage in Castle Donington within the Derbyshire border, which was not consistent with national standards. Mr. McWilliam commented that authorities were responsible for their signage and any members who had any issues would have to raise this with the respective authorities.

AGREED:

That the information now provided be noted.

**328. Temporary Closures Update**

There were no temporary closures to report.

**329. Annual Report/Leaflet**

Mr. Poole reported that the Annual Report/Leaflet was now completed and copies would be provided to libraries and service shops soon. A version would also be provided on the website at: [www.leics.gov.uk/laf](http://www.leics.gov.uk/laf).

AGREED:

That a copy of the Annual Report/Leaflet also be circulated to district councils in an effort to increase awareness of the Forum's role and work.

**AP**

**330. Walking Week '09 (19 – 27 September)**

Mr. Poole reported that contributions had been made to the organisation of walks for the event and a promotional flyer was currently being drafted. The launch event would be held at Watermead Country Park on 19 September.

AGREED:

That the information now provided be noted.

**331. Correspondence**

(i) Natural England

Forum members had been requested to circulate copies of Natural England's 'Countryside Code' as widely as possible at any events that they attended.

(ii) English Access Forum (EAF) meeting – 30 June

Natural England would be providing feedback to the EAF on major road projects and their affect on ROW.

**332. Orders update**

It was AGREED that this item need not be discussed.

**333. Sub Groups**

Local Transport Plans

The Sub Group had met on two occasions to discuss schemes. A further meeting was scheduled for later in the week.

AGREED:

That details of the improvements be circulated to all members with a reply slip giving members the opportunity to make suggestions.

**EM**

**334. Urgent Item: Regional Chairs' meeting**

The Forum considered this matter, the Chairman having decided that it was of an urgent nature in view of a decision required of the Forum prior its meeting on Monday 3 August.

The Regional Chairs had an available budget to provide 'consensus building' training for LAF members.

Forum members felt that this was not a good use of resources and further felt the budget would be better spent on a regional training day or producing a leaflet for LAFs to circulate in order to publicise their work.

It was suggested that the Forum would benefit from a subscription to IPROW Magazine.

AGREED:

- (a) That the suggestion for a regional training day or the production of LAF leaflets be put forward to the Regional Chairs' meeting;
- (b) That the Forum investigate obtaining funds for a LAF subscription to IPROW Magazine.

**EM**

**335. Urgent Item: Carlton Hayes Obstruction**

The Forum considered this matter, the Chairman having decided that it was of an urgent nature in view of the possible need to raise an urgent objection to a ROW closure.

The issue related to a ROW that someone had deliberately obstructed to block access to. It was reported that the obstruction had since been removed.

**336. Urgent Item: Barrow-upon-Soar Planning**

The Forum considered this matter, the Chairman having decided that it was of an urgent nature in view of the possible need to raise an urgent objection to a ROW diversion.

The issue related to a proposal to direct ROW I3 to go past I14 and join I5 on the bend. It was felt that this was contrary to planning guidance.

AGREED:

That the County Council would report back at the next meeting.

**337. Open Forum**

There were no items.

**338. Agenda items for the next meeting**

There were no items.

**339. Date of next meeting**

NOTED:

That the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 29 September 2009 at 6pm in the Guthlaxton Committee Room at County Hall, Glenfield following a site visit to Watermead Country Park at 3.30pm.

6.00pm - 8.50pm  
27 July 2009