

**Conwy East and Denbighshire Local Access Forum**  
**Minutes of the Meeting held on**  
**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at**  
**Ty Llywelyn Community Centre at 10am**

**Local Access Forum Members**

Tim Faire (Chair) TF  
Paul Frost PF  
Laura Crawford LC  
Kevin Slattery KS  
Hilary Davies HD  
Iona Pierce  
Cllr Martyn Holland  
John Buckley

**Representing Conwy County Borough Council**

Sian Williams (Access Warden)  
Simon Billington  
Owen Conry

**Representing Denbighshire County Council**

Hannah Arndt (Access and Recreation Officer and LAF Secretary)  
Howard Sutcliffe (AONB and Ranger Service Manager)  
Huw Rees (Countryside and Heritage Manager)  
Adrian Walls (Rights of Way Network Manager)

Peter Rutherford (Snowdonia National Park)  
Tom Culhane  
Angela Charlton (Ramblers Cymru)  
Gruff Owen (Wales Coast Path Officer)

**Apologies for Absence were submitted from: -**

Tom Woodall, Gwen Butler, Heather Fitzgerald, Chris Marshall, Duncan Barratt  
Victoria Currie, David Shiel, Paul Mitchell

**Actions and Notes of the Last Meeting**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. HA listed apologies received. The Chair asked if the notes of the last meeting were an accurate record. Proposed as accurate Paul Frost and Kevin Slattery.

**Page 2 Area Statement Workshops**

TF asked if anyone had attended the workshops and could provide an update.

HS updated the LAF and advised that area statements would cover North East and North West Wales. The workshops were organised by NRW as they try to get a broad range of people to engage. They are creating a database of what is in each area and what people think is important in each area.

Later this month the All Wales Marine statement workshops will take place. NRW will probably host other meetings to go through the details once everything has been collected.

HS added that the NRW North East countryside officer will have a remit towards the area statement in their job description

**Angela Charlton**

Angela spoke to the LAF about the current position of Ramblers Cymru (RC). They are currently preparing their manifesto going forward and are starting conversations with ministers. The manifesto will be launched next year at the Senedd. RC view is to work towards shared access where appropriate, on a case by case basis.

RC have a big fundraising team and have received many millions from people's postcode lottery, which has improved digital aspects of their work and helped attract a new audience. They are turning the corner on membership and starting to see a rise. RA is starting to look modern.

RA and RC are getting much better at data gathering and have created an insight network.

Let's Walk Cymru – WG funding was discontinued and the RA role increasingly was towards training. Now RA have rolling training programme of courses such as How to Waymark, leading walks for families. As a charity they need to consider sustainability and how to generate income.

RC structure - 3 core permanent staff and 9 staff until October 2020. Good at finding funding. Latest is Tesco bags, which has provided funding to redesign family activity pack  
Next year will also see the Big Welsh Walk event at Chirk, which is a challenge event.

Next year's business plan is to work on the Paths for People Project, which didn't get £1m applied for through ENRaW, RC received a good response from WG. All but 2 Local Authorities supported the proposal to RC are now working with People's Postcode Lottery to gain funding.

## **West Shore Access**

### **Introduction from Sian Williams**

There has been lots of discussion about the access at west shore, Llandudno from the car park by the café towards Deganwy and the breakwater. It is used a lot and is a popular area, but there is a lot of windblown sand on the path, which requires a lot of clearance. A new active travel route has been put in place nearby.

### **Sian introduced the officers and LAF members**

Kevin Slattery (KS), LAF member from the Llandudno area  
Owen Conry (OC), Flood Risk Manager, CCBC  
Simon Billington (SB), Open Spaces Manager, CCBC  
Gruff Owen (GO), Wales Coast Path Officer North, NRW  
Apologies received from Sustrans and the CCBC Active Travel Officer

### **Presentation from Kevin**

KS presented his views and described himself as a layperson who uses the area.  
Presentation – Alternative Ways. KS highlighted that there are currently 3 possible ways to access the area  
Alternative 1 - Current path covered in sand, beautiful area to be. Completely impassable  
Alternative 2 - 3 km route from train station along road over railway line (steps, very steep and narrow) impossible for wheelchairs and mobility scooters (move onto alternative 3)  
Alternative 3 – retrace steps over railway line at Deganwy, narrow pavement, and then pavement obstructed by lamppost. A546 (merge with alternative 2) and a new 400m section of path is great, lovely surface, wonderful for all users. Hedge too high to see the view, but has been lowered in some places. Then multiple road crossings. Lot of money spent on this route.  
People are taking the car instead of using route 1 because the other routes are not practical for all users.

Alternative 1 was laid in 2008 at the foot of the sand dune not in front of the bottom of the dunes. The sand blown is trying to reclaim the sand dune. Path always going to fail as it was cut through sand dunes not beneath them. KS gave an example of being at west shore on a windy day when there was no

sand covering rocks on the foreshore and the area never gets covered by water even at high tide, which is why he has proposed a route in this area to avoid wind-blown sand issues and high tide.

KS has spoken to one of flood defence officers and believes CCBC have never considered building a path above high tide. KS asked how much money was spent on the Active Travel path on the A456.

### **Officer Responses**

SB endorses that path built in wrong place. CCBC will not continue to fund sand clearance in this area. It is a maintenance burden in excess of 80k per year which means 80k less work elsewhere and there are also environmental considerations to make with regard to heavy plant used for this work.

OC highlighted flood defence work which will be happening in Llandudno, Llanfairfechan and Kinmel. There will be opportunities to include wider benefits as part of each scheme. Wider benefits can include improving access, toilets and lighting as examples. These projects are a result of funding being made available by Welsh Government in response to projected changes in sea levels, which could have a devastating effect on these communities. Consultation for this project will be online on the Conwy website. In the next 12 months the project will be at the point of looking at details for wider benefits, which is where the Wales Coast Path comes in.

GO highlighted that the path was installed in 2008. The Wales Coast path was aligned to this route when it was developed and then opened in 2012. A lot of NRW budget has been provided to assist with sand clearance, but there are others issues in Conwy's section of the path which need attention. Though it is primarily a walking route, we must also consider least restrictive access. GO said NRW can offer some funding for realignment, this fund is competitive with other local authorities. It would be good to see what can come out of the other projects mentioned.

### **Questions**

*Can the path through the golf course be used?*

Yes, it is a fully functional route for walkers, not least restrictive access. It is a public right of way. The route through the dunes is not a legal right of way and there is no duty for the local authority to maintain this route at public expense.

KS asked three questions in his presentation:

*Was there any consultation on the active travel route?* Yes a consultation was carried out to create Integrated Network Maps.

*Was the path in the boulder area considered?* Yes, however it was deemed not suitable for a path due to rising tides.

*What was the cost of the Active travel route?* £266,791 excluding VAT.

*Is it reasonable for us to expect every footpath to be accessible to all users at all times?*

*What is practicable to be open to all users?*

KS reiterated his main issue about why his proposed route above the high tide area which is not covered in sand or water cannot be considered.

OC said it can be looked at again but a solution that is acceptable to all is needed.

The chair thanked Kevin for this contribution to the meeting and asked if work could have been done any cheaper? OC suggested sending in an FOI, CCBC are transparent in their spending.

**Other matters:**

Martyn Holland highlighted that current consultations in Denbighshire are available on [Denbighshire.gov.uk](http://Denbighshire.gov.uk)

**Date of forthcoming meetings:**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Loggerheads Country Park

This will be the last meeting of the current three-year term of the Forum.

DRAFT