

Conwy East and Denbighshire Local Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on
Thursday 8th March 2018
at
Venue Cymru, Llandudno
at 10:30am

Local Access Forum Members

Gwen Butler
Jo Hughes
Max Grant
Kevin Slattery
Paul Frost
Don Milne
Hilary Davies
Kay Culhane
Tom Woodall
John Buckley

Representing Denbighshire County Council

Hannah Arndt (Access Officer and LAF Secretary)
Helen Mrowiec (Senior Recreation Officer)
Adrian Walls (Rights of Way Manager)

Representing Conwy County Borough Council

Sian Williams (Access Officer)
Caroline Turner (Definitive Map Officer)

Observers

Tom Culhane

Apologies for Absence were submitted from: -

Tim Faire, Heather Fitzgerald, Hugh Crosswood, Paul Mitchell (Natural Resources Wales), Victoria Currie, Jim Gaffney, Chris Marshall, Duncan Barratt, Dan Hurst, Toni Mayne, Cllr Martyn Holland, Iona Pierce

Actions and Notes of the Last Meeting

The Vice Chair asked if the notes of the last meeting were an accurate record. Proposed as accurate by Jo Hughes and seconded by Paul Frost. Actions raised at the last meeting were as follows;

Matters arising

Page 4: Max Grant asked if any documents regarding Glastir had been received. HA hadn't received any yet but had created a Dropbox folder to share files with members.

Action Point	Detail of Action	Current Situation
AP 6.1	HA and GB to draft letter to Hannah Blythyn and other departments regarding the loss of RoWIP funding. HA to circulate draft to LAF.	
AP 6.2	Local Authorities to feedback at next meeting with further suggestions about a scheme.	Agenda Item

Adventure Smart – presentation from Emma Jones-Edwards

Following the 2016 Year of Adventure, Wales was firmly placed in the spotlight and there was negative press about the number of Mountain Rescue call outs. In response, Snowdonia Active were involved in putting a Visit Wales funding application together about visitor safety, which was turned down.

In 2017, 35 organisations submitted a joint application to promote safe access to adventure activities. This application was accepted. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB and Snowdonia National Park provided some of the match funding for the project.

Emma has looked at campaigns from Canada New Zealand and the USA for inspiration. It was decided that it shouldn't be a fear of death campaign, but should deliver positive messages, so the project looked at how to get people to adopt behaviour you do want to see. The aim is to do this through key messages.

The main message of the campaign is – **Be Adventure Smart: make your good day better**. With the main aim being to promote safe enjoyment of natural outdoor resources by providing live information and education opportunities. The partners hope to encourage people to take relatively simple steps to plan for a good day out and make people take responsibility for themselves.

Three initial videos will form part of the launch on March 22nd with themes around access to land, water and day length change with emphasis on doing activity with correct kit. The project has developed standardised clear, bilingual safety messages, covering a variety of outdoor activities.

The Adventure Smart Wales website (www.adventuresmartwales.com) features weather forecasts, sunset times and tide times. It offers tourism businesses access to safety information, which they can share with visitors, ensuring safety messages reach new audiences.

The project has also worked with the tourism sector to create a toolkit on the website aimed at businesses, which includes branded images for use on business websites and the ability to embed the videos. Information and interpretation at honeypot sites will also be branded ASW message – the team are keen for areas updating their on-site information to add some of the Adventure Smart messages.

Questions for Emma

JB asked how the project will measure success. Emma said this will be through Mountain Rescue Team and RNLI call outs, which are already recorded. Behaviour change takes a long time, hopefully organisations will carry on with the messages. Hoping for more funding to help, particularly if the project becomes a UK wide initiative, however they want to be sure the project works before going UK wide and the messages don't encourage bad behaviour.

PF asked about further funding. Emma is hoping for a further 2 years to create a 4 year project. Organisations will then own the brand and project and there will be nothing to pay for in theory if branding and messages are right. Emma may review the project in 5 years to assess if messages are still appropriate and if further funding is required.

DM asked how the project will measure effectiveness. Mountain Rescue Team have good records of "avoidable" callouts and their reports break down call outs very well to analyse. RNLI also do this, therefore there is no need for extra data collection.

HM asked why the logo isn't bilingual and thought it may be difficult for some organisations to use two on a document. Emma said there are English and Welsh versions for design reasons. Logo use guidance is available on the website. HM said that Friends of the Clwydian Range are hosting a navigation day as part of Llangollen walking festival and it could be packaged using AWS brand.

JH asked if the website would list acceptable and not acceptable clothing lists. Emma replied that most organisations already have detailed information on kit for specific activities on their individual websites.

Active Travel Update

Sian provided an update from CCBC. HA to forward DCC update when received.

Conwy Council has placed 3 bids for funding of Active Travel INM Routes to the Welsh Government this year (the maximum allowed). They were chosen as it was felt they best met the current criteria so were more likely to receive funding. CCBC are currently awaiting the outcome of these bids. The Active Travel schemes bid for this year are:

- Maesdu Avenue, Deganwy to Llandudno
- Ysgol Aberconwy, Conwy town to Morfa Conwy Business Park
- Creuddyn Phase 2, Penrhyn Bay

These projects and plans are restricted to communities with a population over 3,000.

HM said that DCC are trying to get Corwen in but it is currently outside the criteria and AW added that Bodelwyddan is also slightly under despite current housing development plans.

MG asked if there would be integration between Active Travel and RoWIP. AW said this will be the case going forward in new RoWIP. SW will find out if this will happen in Conwy.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review Update

Denbighshire County Council

AW gave a presentation on the current progress with the RoWIP review. AW has been looking at assessment since October. The new plan will be called the “Countryside Access Improvement Plan” to extend beyond rights of way network. Staff were unable to complete the full 11% survey but AW has been looking at data gathered through GPS devices and phone apps as the issue of footfall is important.

AW gave an example from Greater Manchester where they are using variety of data sets to show the most trodden paths. Using this model AW showed maps of foot and cycle traffic at Llyn Brenig and Llyn Alwen to demonstrate the difference in popularity of parts of the network.

Strava Metro, an app collecting this data will sell data to local authorities. However there is no resource in the authority to manage the data. AW is trying to get Welsh Government to fund a pilot project with university students to analyse the data. There are opportunities to use the data for the highways network and economic development, who are keen to look at potential footfall to rural businesses.

Although app data will not capture all users (those not using GPS), it will give a good idea of usage due to the number of people now using GPS and it will start to give an important indication into the areas

not in network that people are using. Are these areas not used because there are issues with the network or is it because they are further away from main populations? Do we encourage people to go to the unused areas or do we prioritise funding to medium and high use areas?

Questions

JH asked if GPS can distinguish hooves. AW is not aware of a GPS app collecting equestrian data, but can get an idea of bridleway usage from cyclists. He added that a different approach to equine use is required as it tends to be localised. For example if there is only one bridleway in a community it would be high priority irrelevant of GPS data. Most bridleways in Denbighshire are medium to high profile because of the small network available to equestrians and mountain bikers.

KS highlighted that he uses OS mapping with GPS but not for a whole walk to save battery.

MG asked what percentage of people are not using GPS. AW said that Strava are doing a study to quantify how many users have GPS and DCC also have loggers on the ground on some routes.

Conwy County Borough Council

SW provided an update from Victoria Currie:

Unfortunately we haven't progressed much since the last meeting. The Assessments are still awaiting approval from Andrew Wilkinson (head of neighbourhood services) but we are hoping that now Simon Billington (Head of Open Spaces) is in post he may take this forward. We are proposing 5 aims (themes) which are:

Aim 1 – Ensure that the public rights of way network is open and available for use

Aim 2 - Provide an up-to-date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement

Aim 3 - Provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users

Aim 4 - Improve the promotion, understanding and use of the network

Aim 5 - Encourage greater community involvement in managing local rights of way

The Delivery Plan will relate to these aims and we hope this is where the LAF will have the most significant input. A meeting is scheduled for next week with neighbouring authorities to discuss different plans and approaches to try and share knowledge and information. Hopefully by the next LAF meeting we will be in a position to share our Assessments with a view to forming a sub-group of the LAF.

JH asked if the details could be circulated.

Donate a Gate Update

Conwy County Borough Council

Sian met with Tom Gravett who is trying to find out about asset management associated with a potential scheme. Sian has mentioned the scheme to a community group, Cerdded Conwy who are interested in trialling the scheme to see how it could work.

CCBC have agreed to take forward a scheme in theory, with a preference for wooden gates over galvanised gates, with discreet plaques.

The administration of the scheme is yet to be confirmed or assigned to an officer.

MG added that he had given a presentation to the Snowdonia North LAF and received positive vibes. MG will present to Snowdonia South LAF next week.

Denbighshire County Council

Work is ongoing with projects funded by donations from the public. These include a seating project at Bwlch Pen Barras, planting of ornamental trees at Plas Newydd and replacing a stile with a gate near the top of Moel Famau.

Any other business

- JB asked for background information on presentations prior to the meetings.
- MG asked for an update on membership

Action 7.1	HA to recirculate list of members and request background information from those not provided previously
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- JH brought the Wales 360 event to the attention of the LAF and raised concerns about the use of bridleways in the event. There will be 400 participants in year one and up to 1000 places are available.

AW said the event is not a race and will start and finish in Aberystwyth. The event is being organised by Sweetspot who organise the Tour of Britain and other high profile events very professionally. The event is supported by Welsh Government and Visit Wales. The route through Denbighshire will mostly be on NRW land, roads and trail centres for the stage between Betws y Coed and Llangollen. The event doesn't need consent to hold it because it is not a race and the Council has no regulatory powers to govern. DCC is working closely with WG and VW.

PF said he had no objection to organised or large scale events because they don't happen every week. There should be adequate promotion on a local basis of which rights of way will be used and riders entering events should be made aware of their responsibility to other users.

- GB asked for members to suggest future agenda items
- KS wanted to highlight the importance of site visits as part of the LAF meetings and added that it was useful to visit Bishop's Wood.
- MG highlighted that Ramblers Cymru have organised some rights of way training days in Llandudno and Llangollen. MG to send Hannah details.

Date of forthcoming meetings:

The Forum decided to continue with 4 meetings per year. The June and September will be held in early evening. The winter meetings (December and March) will be held in daytime.

- 7th June 2018
- 6th September 2018
- 6th December 2018