

TORBAY LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
IN THE CECIL ROOM, OLDWAY MANSION
ON THURSDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2011 FROM 6.00 P.M.



Present : Dominic Acland (DA) (**TLAF Chairperson**) TCCT; Bob Harvey (BH); Michael Lear (ML); Elaine Mason (EM), Torbay Care Trust

Council Officers Attending : Janine Clarke (JC) Rights of Way Officer, Highways

Others Attending : Alex Scholefield, Torbay GI Officer; Colin Jones, Natural England; Valerie Simpson, Secretary to TLAF (Minute Taker)

<u>ITEM</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	The Chair welcomed new member Elaine Mason, Walking for Health Co-ordinator from the Torbay Care Trust and Alex Scholefield, Torbay GI Officer from the TCCT attending to present on the Green Infrastructure.	
1	To Accept Apologies and Sanction Absences : Robert Boyd (RB); Cllr. Ian Doggett (ID) Torbay Council, (attending Council meeting); Margaret Forbes-Hamilton (MF-H) (holiday); Wanda Hollingworth (WH) (prior commitment); John Mellor (JM) (unwell); whose absences were sanctioned.	
2	Declarations of Interests : None, other than those already notified to the TLAF.	
3	To Confirm and Accept Minutes of the AGM of 13 October 2010 : Subject to one amendment on Page 3, Item 5, Election of Officers 2010/2011, Vice Chairperson should read John <u>MELLOR</u> and not John <u>Lear</u> , the Minutes were accepted and agreed as an accurate report of the meeting	ACCEPTED/ AGREED
	Teresa Buckley to arrange for agreed Minutes with the amendment shown above to be shown on the TLAF Webpage.	TB/ WEBPAGE
4	Matters Arising not Shown on the Agenda from Previous Meetings :	
4.1	Matters Arising not Shown on the Agenda from 21 July 2010 Meeting :	
	Churston Golf Club : After viewing the Council's website, it appeared that there may be a proposal to grant Bloor Homes permission for the road to service the new Club House to either a) go down American Way, or b) to go across the next field The Forum felt that a report should come to the LAF regarding this and whether this work might affect any rights of way – Secretary to request Report from Patrick Carney.	SECRETARY /PC
	American Way Kissing Gate : Query raised at TLAF Meeting 15.9.10 as to whether there was	

an obligation to provide access for Disabled/Wheelchair/Tramper Users and whether there was any legal power to get gate unlocked. JC informed the gate at end of American Lane should be able to be opened with a radar key which can be obtained from TCCT. JC also informed that the Definitive line is over the stile and not through the gate. RB to look into whether radar key works and, if not, to contact JC direct. **Action still outstanding as RB not able to attend this meeting.**

RB

TLAF.10.01.04.4 -10 : 10.02.04 : Introduce Better Links for Cyclists : LAF Members had noted that cyclists had been riding on the path through Cockington Water Meadows and concern was raised regarding the lack of appropriate signage to inform that cyclists must not use pathways for this purpose. At February 2011 meeting Chair informed this work sits within Regeneration Bid for whole Park which had to be submitted by next Monday 28 February 2011. Chair would inform LAF of proposals at next meeting.

DA/
UPDATE
19/5/11
MEETING

10.01.09.7 : 10.02.04 : Cockington Forum : It was agreed that the work on the Green Transport Plan for the Cockington development should be completed before this item was dealt with by the TLAF At February 2011 meeting it was agreed that this item would be included with the Report on the Cockington bid referred to in item above.

DA TO
INCLUDE
WITH
UPDATE
ABOVE

TLAF.10.01.09.2 : 10.02.04 : Membership of the Open Spaces Society : Discussion took place on whether this was relevant for TLAF as it was felt it was very unusual for a LAF to be part of this. It was noted that there was very little resource available for the LAF to become a member of this Society and other bodies and would only be relevant if fighting a campaign. It was therefore agreed that this action should be taken off the Agenda.

ACTION
TAKEN
OFF
AGENDA

Recruitment of New Members/Other Representatives :

Representing	Action
Land Owners :	BH/DA - BH had nothing to report as yet. It was suggested contacting the National Trust to discuss possible representation – Chair would approach Mike Ingram, Warden for the Kingswear area.
Tourism (to replace LB) :	DA - Alex Scholefield, Torbay GI Officer, agreed to look at feedback from the Forums engaged in the Green Infrastructure Plan for possible representation and inform the Chair.

BH/DA

AS/DA

4.2

Matters Arising not Shown on the Agenda from 15 September 2010 Meeting :

Walk No. 8 : Broadsands/Short Walks Publication : RB had visited site of stone gate in Grove Wood to look at possibility of access for Trampers – the stone wall would need to be changed to allow this access. JC thought there would not be a problem with removing some of the stone but that Conservation Planners might have an interest in this. An issue was raised, if some of the wall was removed, as to how motor-bikers would be stopped from accessing at this point. JC agreed to look into these issues and feasibility as to whether a kissing gate would be suitable to provide disabled access. JC reported to the February 2011 meeting on the response from Planners to the above query which read *'unfortunately the stone stile has no statutory designation but is an important heritage asset and is characteristic of the Torbay*

Coastal Footpath and as such every effort should be made to retain it. As part of the current planning application for the Torbay Holiday Chalets site it is proposed to redirect the South West Coast Path to the coastal fringe and improve recreational cycle access to The Grove. It would make sense to allow for disabled access as part of the re-routed footpath scheme and leave the stone stile as it is'. The Planners suggested speaking to the Planning Case Officer for the Fishcombe Cove Planning Application to ascertain if disabled access could be provided for as part of the current development proposals.

4.3 Matters Arising not Shown on the Agenda from 13 October 2010 Annual General Meeting :

Membership/Raising Profile : BH suggested using air time on local radio station, Palm Radio, to promote the TLAF – there would not be a cost involved for this. Other suggestions included approaching Radio Devon, going into South Devon College – talking to Duke of Edinburgh, Public Services students or Explore Scouts about the work of the TLAF and joining membership. Chair to explore suggestions made. **This action still outstanding.**

DA

Formation of Sub-Groups to Research Priorities for the RoWIP :

Brunel Woods : Further to report from last meeting that there was a very dangerous exit on to Maidencombe Road, the suggestion was made to divert the pathway into Brunel Woods, JC to organise site visit from Engineers Department to determine what could be done and report back to TLAF.

JC

Forestry Commission – Tree & Woodland Health : The Forum had requested the Secretary to invite Neil Coish, who is producing a Tree and Woodland Strategy, to a LAF meeting to talk on Woodland issues. As this situation had now become clearer, BH agreed to liaise with Mr. Coish direct and report back to TLAF. BH informed that all larch had to be felled in the West Country, but it was in the interest of Landowners to keep larch as long as possible to get best possible price for same. Very new and waiting to see what happens – no powers to enforce as yet.

BH

Presentation of TLAF Annual Report : Torbay Council has agreed to fund the printing of TLAF Annual Report – Chair to liaise with Design Department. After discussion it was agreed that there should be no change to Torbay Local Access Forum's name.

DA

5 Work as Physical Activity Co-ordinator in Torbay Care Trust and Any Opportunities for the LAF to Move Things Forward :

New member, Elaine Mason informed that she works for the Torbay Care Trust as part of the Healthy Lifestyles Team – 50% GP exercise referral programmes, 30% Bay Walks Co-ordinator; remaining time involved in weight management programmes, diabetes management, Lifestyle team events, etc.

There are 3 new walks starting this month taking total up to 10 walks; timetable for same was distributed to members. The measured mile is due to be re-furbished and the Torquay and Paignton miles will be joined up with markers at every 1/4 mile along the route to help walkers/joggers to monitor their progress.

Attending LAF meetings to represent Bay Walks and to share knowledge about walking; not as spokesperson for Public Health – any Public Health issues would need to be referred to Torbay Care Trust Senior Staff.

Walking for Health is in transition period at moment – would be moving from Natural England to another organisation by November 2011. The Department of Health is managing a new Walking for Health transition team, led by Sir Muir Gray from Knowledge Into Action (KIA), to facilitate this process.

Felt the scheme was recognised as being very valuable, strong and well-established and would continue.

EM to keep LAF updated.

6 Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan Presentation and Consultation :

Alex Scholefield, Torbay GI Officer, from Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust presented on the Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan and informed she had been working with Torbay Council on this. The document would feed into the core strategy to deliver sustainable communities in the future with the following key themes (maps can be downloaded from the website www.torbaygreeninfrastructure.org.uk):

- Recreation and Travel
- Local Food
- Biodiversity and Landscape
- Climate Change Mitigation

Action Areas :

- Torquay North
- Ocombe and Cockington
- Brixham and Kingswear Peninsular Action Area
- Clennon Valley and Paignton

At present this is a draft Plan; any queries, comments, etc. can be forwarded to Alex Scholefield at email alex@countryside-trust.org.uk, telephone 01803 528841; with more information available on www.torbaygreeninfrastructure.org.uk.

The Forum supported the Plan and it was agreed that the Chair would make any formal representation and feedback on behalf of the TLAF – members to look at the website www.torbaygreeninfrastructure.org.uk and feedback any comments direct to DA.

ALL

7 Lease of Forestry Commission Land - Consultation :

BH updated on position informing there had now been a U turn by Government. All organisations were against the proposal and relieved at the decision. Dr. Sarah Wollaston, South Hams MP, was very committed to the cause.

Regarding letter written on behalf of the LAF to DEFRA, it was felt the reply to this was derisory and should be followed up. Also awaiting response from Ruth Sanders. It was suggested that the Forum should write to the Secretary of State complimenting on change of heart and pointing out LAFs are statutory bodies and should have a representative as a member of the Committee to ensure these Forums had a proper say. It was agreed that as BH

had much knowledge and experience in this area that he would do the work on this with the Chair being kept fully informed. All correspondence would be agreed by and sent from the Chair on behalf of the TLAF. All agreed a letter should be sent to Secretary of State suggesting BH sits on the National Committee.

**BH/
CHAIR**

8 Area Reports :

As a reminder had not been sent out with Agenda for Co-ordinators to prepare their Area Reports for this meeting, it was agreed this item would be deferred until the next meeting on the 19 May. These reports would help to structure future Agendas. For information Area Co-ordinators are listed below :

Torquay Co-ordinators : Margaret Forbes-Hamilton and 1 other
to be appointed as Leon Butler had resigned
Paignton Co-ordinator : Wanda Hollingworth
Brixham Co-ordinators : Rob Boyd and Mick Lear

9 TLAF Information Sharing as at February 2011 :

Item for information only. BH commented on how useful he found the summary sheet.

10 Membership Recruitment / Raising Profile :

Covered in previous items discussed earlier in meeting.

11 LAF Training Day on 21 March 2011 :

Colin Jones informed Torbay LAF members plus some Devon members would be attending. Putting together Agenda with Hilary Winter – very pleased to be able to facilitate this day. Members to inform Secretary of any changes they might wish to make or add to Agenda.

ALL

12 Any Other Business :

12.1 Closure of Brixham Fish Quay Path : ML informed coastal path to be closed temporarily and attempts had been made to request notices to be put in place in good time to inform public of same. Secretary to email Patrick Carney to request early warning signs for this closure.

SECRETARY

12.2 Good News Stories : JC reported :

- The decision of the Development Management Committee of the 24 January 2011 was to approve the recommendation to make an Order to modify the County Definitive Map and Statement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by way of creating a public footpath from Innerbrook Road to Pilmuir Avenue. This is now with the Council's Legal Department, and
- An application for Modification to the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way for a public footpath from Petitwell Lane to St Marychurch Road has been lodged with the Council under Schedule 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

See link below :

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/leisure/countryside/prow/definitivemap/definitivemapmodificationorderapplications.htm>

12.3 **Natural England** : Colin Jones informed that Natural England was still working through process of restructure; Government does not want Quangos such as Natural England making policies or lobbying, but still wants them to continue with land management, etc. LAFs have opportunity to express their views, but there was no formal consultation at the present time. Regarding Resources, looking at c. 28% reduction in discretionary budget; Staffing : looking at c. 30% reduction over next 4 years with 400 staff leaving this year. New business model for Natural England would not include a regional tier from April. LAF liaison had not yet been decided, but there would be involvement in South West LAFs from Natural England with a relationship and contact for advice in place. Hilary Winter's Regional Co-ordinator's role is very much in the balance. Chair of Forums meeting with Acting Regional Director on the 14 March – Bob Harvey would be attending. On positive side DEFRA has said LAFs were important and would continue in the future and be part of the 'Big Society'. Members voiced apprehension on this restructure and such a massive move to centralisation.

The Forum asked for its thanks to be recorded to Colin Jones, who would be leaving Natural England, for his work with the Torbay LAF and his attendance at meetings. Colin Jones wished the TLAF well for its future.

12.4 **Torbay Council Re-Organisation** : The Forum asked the Secretary to email Patrick Carney to enquire whether the Council's new structure would mean any change to the existing Rights of Way Officer's post and, if so, to inform the Forum how this post would be covered in the future, bearing in mind the LAF is a statutory body.

SECRETARY

12.5 **The British Horse Society – Equestrian Representative** : The Secretary referred to a letter dated 4 February 2011 from The British Horse Society asking any LAFs who do not have an Equestrian Representative on its membership to inform the Society who would encourage members to apply to join membership. It was agreed that the Secretary should write to the Society to inform that the TLAF does not have an Equestrian Representative and would consider applications from interested members.

SECRETARY

13 **Date/Time/Venue of Next Meeting** : 2011 : Wednesdays from 6.00 p.m. at Oldway Mansion in Cecil Room : 19 May, 21 July, Venue to be agreed for 20 October (AGM)

The Chairperson thanked all those that attended and closed the meeting at 8.00 p.m.