

## ROWIP MEETING

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT OLDWAY MANSION ON 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2006

Members present:	Ken Robertson John Gibson June Haywood Peter Huff	Co-ordinator (Paignton) Co-ordinator (Brixham)
Elected Council Member:-	Cllr Ian Doggett	
Council Officers:-	Chris Gubby – Principal Engineer Janine Clarke – Public Rights of Way Officer	
Guest Speakers:-	Hilary Winter – Secretary, Devon Local Access Forum and Regional Co-ordinator S. W. Region LAF's Geoff Audcent – DEFRA	
Observers:-	Bob Harvey – Chairman, Devon Local Access Forum Master Audcent Cllr David Browne	
Apologies:-	Patricia Doughty-Mortimer	

	Action
Councillor Ian Doggett offered to Chair the meeting due to a lack of current Chair or Vice Chair.	
1. Cllr Doggett opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and in particular the two guest speakers and Bob Harvey, Chairman of the Devon Local Access Forum.	
Apologies were given by Patricia Doughty-Mortimer.	
2. Janine Clarke introduced the ROWIP, copies of which had been distributed prior to the meeting.	
Janine talked about the progress to date, the publication of the plan and the consultation process/period.	
The plan was basically well received, however a number of comments were made regarding various photographs and a need to underline relevance, need to change priorities, not horseriders first.	
Maps should revert to originals which were felt to be clearer and grid references added.	
Considerations should be given to including an example of the Definitive Map and Statement. If necessary map scales could be changed and maps could be pull outs.	
It was suggested that information regarding gates/stiles and gradients is helpful indeed vital if routes are to be used by mobility	

impaired.

It was important that a timetable be included regarding the consultation process/period and when the plan would be finalised.

Access to private land was raised, however, it was felt that this was not a matter for the ROWIP.

3. Hilary Winter, the Regional Co-ordinator of the SW LAF's addressed the meeting and referred to the Regional Local Access Forum Event in November held in Taunton at which all forums were represented.

John Gibson had attended on behalf of the Torbay Local Access Forum.

The meeting covered a number of topics;

David Gear, Countryside Adviser, The Countryside Agency talked about LAF's and the conclusions and recommendations resulting from research carried out in 2005 by the Countryside and Community Research Unit.

Other speakers spoke about how LAF's fit into the broader picture and the Joint LAF experience in particular Bath/Bristol and also the role of LAF's in delivery the ROWIP.

Hilary Winter spoke about a meeting which had been held in March 2006 of Secretary's and Officers which had proved a very useful day with a number of topics covered including, recruitment and retention of members, attraction of new members, including landowners.

A further meeting is to be held in October/November 2006 and LAF's are invited to contribute advising on topics, speakers, format, discussion groups and venue up to six members from each LAF are invited.

Natural England are to produce a handbook for members. It has also been suggested that a newsletter might be produced.

Following the presentation various comments were made regarding the lack of members, the need to broaden the base, current members being mainly users.

Need to include mobility impaired groups. Due to the cost of advertising it was suggested that we, where we can, use press releases. This was appropriate in some cases, however, a press release would be tied to a event, such as a launch of a project etc.

It was also suggested that the LAF should engage with sports trusts, health authorities and other forums to raise the profile of the healthy/lifestyle aspects of walking.

The use of the new Palm radio station should be investigated.

Peter Huff suggested the use of the ward partnerships would be helpful in engaging/including people resident or within the ward to come forward.

The use of an electronic newsletter should be pursued.

Cllr Doggett thanked Hilary for her presentation.

4. Geoff Audcent (DEFRA) Policy Team for England was the second presenter.

Geoff Opened by saying that he had heard the event advertised on the radio on the way to the meeting and was impressed.

In his experience in contact with various LAF's he had found that there was significant variation between good to struggling, frustrated to confused.

The Countryside Agency were carrying out a study to best identify how to support/develop LAF's.

A handout is to be introduced with key actions identifying how to raised the profile of LAF's through the Commons, articles and new legislation.

Regulations would assist in identifying the work of forums, broaden functions, not just recreation.

The revised guidance would look at key themes to encourage/support LAF's. Guidance would include statutory function, status, advice, feedback to forums, look at broader issues, health, tourism and links to local transport plans.

The advice should be independent constructive and would include training and the roles of members of the LAF's.

A general discussion took place identifying the following; publicity is the key, public needs to see improvements, welcome user friendly guidance.

Any forum needs a dynamic group of co-operative members and should include health authorities, local authorities, local schools and possibly informal members with a particular expertise.

It was suggested that the Torbay Development Agency be included in securing funding through developments or indeed contributions towards improvements from other planning applications as appropriate, submitted to the authority.

Young people should be invited to be involved either as individuals, groups or schools.

There was some concern that the LAF and ROWIP are not currently included in the Local Development Frameworks.

It was suggested that a trawl of staff in the Council or other authorities might be appropriate inviting the to join the forum.

Including the Travel Plan Co-ordinator should be considered.

Geoff was thanked for his presentation.

5. Nominations for Chair, Vice Chair – will be discussed at the AGM to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
6. TLAF Memberships – will be discussed at the AGM to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
7. TLAF Secretary – will be discussed at the AGM to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
8. No other Matters

Meeting closed at 8.40pm