



FLAF04



FLINTSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes - 6th February 2024

Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve

Members – Julian Pellett, Huw Morgan, Jeff Shone, Nia Thomas, Alan Neale, Johnny Hulson, Marjorie Thomson, Shirley Fermor, John Holiday,

Observer - Ian Hughes, Natural Resources Wales

Guest presenters - Richard Sumner – Natural Resources Wales

Dave Shiel – Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

Officers in Attendance - Tom Woodall, Derrick Charlton, Natalie Davies, Adrian Hibbert, Suzanne Williams, Jon Hill, Stuart Jones.

Apologies – Sarah Hampson. Councillor Dave Evans.

1/ Welcome -

The Chair welcomed everyone to the 4th meeting of the LAF. Introductions were given by all present and apologies received.

It was noted that Neville Howell had resigned from the forum. Members wished him well and offered thanks for all his support over the years.

2/ Minutes of previous meeting

MT noted that her apologies were not noted on the minutes. Subject to the amendment, the minutes of the meeting 17th October were agreed as written.

a. Matters Arising

Regarding farmyard diversions, JP offered his support in developing a policy, TW responded that he would happily share a draft when developed.

The Chair reminded members of the forums purpose and to discuss individual cases with the team separately.

3/ New National Park.

Richard Sumner gave an overview and update which has been sent as an attachment along with the minutes.



FLAF04



JP suggested the LAF should focus on access & recreation elements of this project. He commented that there should be a commitment to appropriately resource and asked why Denbigh Moors were not considered?

RS said they are looking for really large continuous areas

JS asked what about gateways into the area as visitor pressure is already stretched in this area.

RS said he already knows where the pressures are and is looking for ways to manage them. He is aware of values and issues of gateways.

JP asked what the benefits and disadvantages of the national park.

RS reflected that there would be better longer term funding, access & recreation is a higher priority, work can be more strategic across a larger area for example able to diffuse visitor pressures.

JP asked if the national Park would have a planning function.

RS said it may need to be shared with the local authority it's still to be determined.

MT asked is the national park going to disadvantage the AONB.

RS said the AONB would cease to exist as the National Park would supersede it.

JH asked will it link with more deprived areas.

RS said ideally yes but it is difficult to link across to some further afield.

JH asked what impact it will have on the quarrying eg Halkyn.

RS said there needs to be some work to gain a better understanding of this.

SF asked will you consider small pockets on Halkyn Mountain.

RS said it's an area that would be included.

NT asked how you will be getting responses from people.

RS said questionnaires online and the consultation will be completed by March.

JP asked if RS could provide a copy to the LAF.

TW said it had been emailed.

RS said it was advertised in the press but not many people responded.

. **Action** – RS would like any other thoughts from the LAF and will email the questionnaire to the Access Team to draft a response on the forum's behalf.



FLAF04



4/ Access in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, Area of Outstanding National Beauty.

Dave Shiel gave a presentation of their recreation plan and current work around Cilcain.

DS said he would like to put a more permanent base in Moel Famau as what is available now doesn't cover the whole area.

SF Asked about a possible new build at Bwlch pen barras, DS replied that they are looking to replace the successful 'shepherds hut' with something more permanent, to give a staff presence and w/c.

MT commented that the signage was much improved and thanked DS.

JP asked is there a shuttle bus out of Mold.

DS said they used to but had to stop as the funding ended. They currently do run one in the Dee Valley and it has been very popular.

MT asked so everything works fine until it snows, Is there a snow plan.

DS said yes we do have one and they work with Denbighshire highways.

JS said that populated areas preferred off road tracks linking to Mold Famau.

DS has looked at this and there is lots of apps available with routes.

HM asked if they are looking to do this in the North and South.

DS said funding is making it difficult.

Action – DS to liaise with TW to further engage the LAF on appropriate topics,

.5/ Access Service update.

a. Map consolidation.

ND gave an update on work, she said they were half way through it is a long process. TW said there will be a 6 month consultation period, where the LAF would have an opportunities for comment.

b. Access Improvement Grant.

Grant value for 2023/24 was £74,197, with first claim for £43,663.28 being claimed and received in October and the remaining £30,533.72 to be claimed before end of March 2024. The schemes included – Installing 30 - 40 number kissing gates, Footpath and Bridleway surface improvements and Improvements to access/egress points to open access land and green space.



FLAF04



c. Inspectors report.

Significant effort has been made into completing the path surveys and the Access team are much closer to reaching our annual survey target than in previous years. One of the many benefits from the survey data is that it allows evaluation of the standard of the Rights of Way network between each community. This evidence shows that areas, such as Nercwys and Treuddyn, have a greater need of improvement than others. Work is being carried out by the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB around Nercwys Forest. A number of site visits in an attempt to resolve some long-standing issues has occurred. There have been several meetings, especially, with landowners that have been very positive and could lead to many issues being able to be resolved on CAMS after a straightforward programme of work.

d. Network summary of diversions, complaints and obstructions.

CAMS is in the process at the moment of being assessed for a possible upgrade to a newer version which would potentially be more user-friendly for both the officers and also the public.

The link to the Flintshire CAMS website is:
<https://rightsofway.flintshire.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx>

A quarterly update was provided to members in respect of issues logged/resolved and also the current furniture numbers (all data derived from CAMS).

SJ has volunteered to do a demonstration on CAMS for members at a future LAF event in 2024/25.

6/ AOB

HM reminded the forum of the WG Sustainable farming Scheme and that he was compiling a response to their consultation. He asked members to email their comments to him by 5th March

Action – Members to email HM their comments by 5th March

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12pm.

The next meetings due - 13th May 2024
16th September 2024
14th January 2024
8th April 2025