

**Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum**  
**Confirmed Minutes of the 6th Meeting held at 2pm on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January**  
**2019 at Brecon Subud Hall**

**Present**

Ian Maberley (IM) - Chairman	Hywel Morgan (HM)
Richard Ball (RB) - Secretary	Denis Murphy (DM)
Pam Bell (PB)	Steve Rayner (SR)
Philippa Cherryson (PC)	Dave Sharman (DS)
Stuart France (SF)	Chris Waterhouse (ChW)
Debra Hughes (DH)	Katherine Whitrow (KW)
Ian Jenkins (IJ)	Colin Woodley (CW)

**Observers**

John Morgan (JM)	National Representative of LAF Chairs
Cllr Edwin Roderick	BBNPA Member
Ian Rowat	BBNPA Member
Fiona Ford	Torfaen CBC/Eastern Valleys LAF
Sarah Tindell (ST)	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
Eifion Jones (EJ)	Rights of Way Officer BBNPA (Item 5)
Lisa Lloyd	Rights of Way Assistant BBNPA
James Lawrence (JL)	Visitor Management Officer BBNPA (Item 4)
Caroline Ferguson	Carmarthenshire CC/Carmarthenshire LAF
Mark Hadley	Chair Carmarthenshire LAF
Judith Harvey	Warden Manager BBNPA (Item 10)
Tony D'anna	Crickhowell Town Council

**1. Welcome, Introductions and apologies**

IM welcomed members and observers to the meeting. Apologies were received from Patrick Dobbs, Josie Pearson, Tracy Purnell, Paul Sinnadurai, Toby Veall, Ruth Pickvance and Richard Tyler (BBNPA)

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

The minutes were accepted and the Chairman authorised to sign them as a correct record.

**3. Matters arising not otherwise appearing on agenda**

BBNPA budget – In the past the BBNPA has received additional funding from Welsh Government (WG) towards the end of the financial year. RB advised members that the BBNPA were waiting for a decision on additional funding for this year. Julian Atkins (JA) is meeting with WG tomorrow. Members supported RB's suggestion that the LAF email JA to stress the importance of getting a decision in time for the funds to be spent by the end of the financial year or confirmation that WG would allow the money to be rolled over into the next financial year. IM agreed to send an email.

Access restriction at Mynydd Ddu Forest - ST confirmed that NRW had revised the guidance.

Car parking at Pont ar Daf – LAF to write to National Trust.

#### **4. Waterfall Country Visitor Traffic Study (James Lawrence)**

JL provided members with an update on the progress of the study. A report has been published and went out to public consultation between 15<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The report is aimed at addressing the traffic management issues in the area and was commissioned by the BBNPA on behalf of local authorities, Ystradfellte Community Council and NRW. JL invited comments from members before 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Members discussed a number of issues.

SF expressed concern that the traffic data was collected over the August bank holiday weekend on what was expected to be the busiest day of the year and this provided just a snapshot at various locations. SF said that he is happy to share data and notes from vehicle counters that his company have collected at the Dinas Rock car park since 2012, the data provides the 'long view' and helps illustrate the significant day to day variability it is also indicative of the overall Waterfalls Area. JL appreciated that the vehicle numbers fluctuated during the year and the study collated data on that date to capture the worst case scenario so that facilities could be investigated that would cope with the projected peak numbers.

Members stressed the need for integrated transport in order to reduce the numbers of cars in the area. KW asked if the study had considered integrated transport that created loops taking in other visitor attractions in the area such as Dan yr Ogof Caves. JL responded stating that examining public transport would form part of the next phase of the project.

PB added that toilet facilities should be considered when attempting to distribute parking, she suggested that the toilet facilities at Cwm Porth Car Park were one of the reasons that people parked there. JL agreed and said that during the peak season of 2018 portable toilets were provided at Gwaun Hepste Car Park.

PC suggested that the Gunpowder Works project could potentially become a popular visitor attraction in Pontneddfechan creating more traffic. The study doesn't appear to take this into consideration. JL suggested that the Gunpowder works project looked to preserve heritage for the community and future generations rather than specifically to become a tourist attraction.

RB was concerned that the report doesn't give any indication of the costs for the proposals. For example the report suggested developing parking in Penderyn and promoting the footpath to Sgwd yr Eira and states that the route would need substantial upgrading to accommodate the footfall, however, the report does not give any indication of the costs of footpath improvements.

## **5. Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation**

EJ provided members with an update. The draft ROWIP is currently out to consultation which ends on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Any negative comments received would be brought to the next LAF meeting. PC thanked EJ for making the changes around bridleways and horse riding that were suggested at the last meeting.

## **6. Step Changes ENRAW (Enabling Natural Resources and Well-Being) application**

Clare parsons, BBNPA Sustainable Development Manager, attended the meeting to provide a summary of the grant bid submitted to WG.

The project is a partnership between BBNPA, Brecon Beacons Park Society and Cardiff University. The proposed Step Changes project aims to enable a greater understanding, enjoyment and access to the National Park for a wider range of users with the potential to benefit their health and wellbeing. It will address physical, information, confidence and perceptual barriers to do so. The project budget over 3 years is approx. £900,000 and seeking £700,000 from ENRAW. Hope to receive a decision from WG in March.

CP agreed to forward an overview of the project to members.

FF stressed how important the traineeships element of the grant is for people to access countryside related careers.

RB added that the project would look to expand on the Miles without Stiles project and remove barriers to accessing the countryside by changing people's perceptions and giving people confidence.

DM suggested contacting the cardiac rehabilitation programme that is being run in Abergavenny.

## **7. Welsh LAF Joint meeting feedback**

IM introduced John Morgan (JM), National Representative of Welsh LAF Chairs. JM gave a brief summary of the issues discussed at the meeting of the Chairs of Welsh Access Forums meeting held in November. The issues discussed included ROWIP's, rights of way issues on NRW land, LAF relationship with NRW and recommended amendments to LAF regulations.

Arising from discussions around Area Statements, IM asked ST if NRW would give a presentation to the LAF.

## **8. Black Mountains Rangers**

The Black Mountains Rangers gave their apologies as they were unable to make the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances.

## **9. Bryn Arw woodland creation site visit**

IM provided a summary of the site visit to Bryn Arw, where a number of LAF members met with the applicant to look at the planting area and discuss the proposal.

PB said that she supported the proposal but stressed that access needs to be provided in the new fence line. PC added that although she couldn't make the site meeting, she has since been to look at the area and supports the application.

HM was concerned that planting on Common land could set a precedent, RB added that this application was unusual as there are so few graziers. KW thought that precedent had already been set where MOD land in Cumbria had been planted.

Members agreed to support the application subject to conditions.

KW questioned if the LAF had been consulted on the WG's 'Achieving our low-carbon pathway to 2010' consultation. Land use and forestry proposals include 66,000 hectares of tree planting, 90% of which is to come from large plantations, a 50% increase in afforestation in Wales. KW considered this amount of tree planting would have an effect on rights of ways and access and thought this should be something that the LAF was aware of.

It was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

## **10. Llyn y Fan Fach access**

JH gave a PowerPoint presentation showing photographs at points along the track. She explained the work that had taken place to improve car parking and access and highlighted the opportunities for improved access to open up the track allowing disabled access. Members discussed the options for improving access adjacent to the fisheries.

Tom Packham, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW), has stated that he would be happy to discuss improvements but said that all stakeholders would need to be happy with the proposals.

Members agreed to support the principle of improved access at Llyn Y Fan and for the LAF to write directly to DCWW directly in the first instance.

## **11. Any Other Competent Business**

DH asked if the LAF had been informed about the Original Mountain Marathon (OMM) Event held in the Black Mountains in October. There had been issues where competitors were using areas of land that they shouldn't have been on. She had been in contact with organisers to raise the issue. IM confirmed that the LAF had been consulted and had given their support.

PC had met with NRW Woodland Officer and they had confirmed that there is no compulsion on the landowner to keep access clear if the route is not a rights of way. RB added that on CROW access land there was no duty on landowner to keep the route clear but that BBNPA (as CROW Access Authority) could negotiate access improvements. If there is a specific location details can be forwarded to RB to look into.

KW asked if the LAF could look at the Summit to Sea project at the next LAF meeting as it may reach the boundaries of the National park.

Tony D'anna, Crickhowell Town Council, raised the issue of proposed fencing around the grounds of Crickhowell High School. He pointed out the impact it would have on public access and possibly a right of way but said that there are legitimate issues around the safety of the children.

DM added that there were similar issues at the high school in Abergavenny.

**Date of the next meeting**

11<sup>th</sup> April 2019, Venue to be confirmed.