



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

JLAF 03

Draft Minutes of meeting of Friday 12MAR03

Date: Friday, 12th March 2004
 Time: 2:00pm
 Venue: Bath Cricket Club Pavilion, North Parade, BATH. BA2 4EX.
 Present: Bill Blyth, Bill Dawson, Ann Fay, Cllr. Howard Gawler (South Gloucestershire Council substituting for Cllr. Arnold Lovell), John Gunnery, Rae Harris, Robert Killen, Alun Morgan (JLAF Chair), Ray Newbigin (JLAF Vice Chair), Angela Nicoll, Ron Phelps, Andrew Short, Janet Wallis (JLAF members)
 Rennie Dickins (South Gloucestershire Council), Chris Hogg (JLAF Secretary), Will Steel (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Nicola Chidley (South Gloucestershire Council), Richard Phillips (North Somerset Council), Jonathan Tweney (DEFRA), Anita Walker (South Gloucestershire Council)

Action

		Action
1	Introduction and Housekeeping	
2	Apologies Cllr Chris Cray (Bath & North East Somerset Council and JLAF member), Cllr Evelyn Elworthy (Bristol City Council and JLAF member), Cllr Arnold Lovell (South Gloucestershire Council and JLAF member), David Colbourne (JLAF member), Pete Hart (JLAF member), Adam Stratton (JLAF member), Chris Weedon (JLAF member), Robin Winfield (JLAF member), Paul Wynne (JLAF member) Tina Bath (Mendip AONB), Marc Cashmoor (South Gloucestershire Council), Denise Chandler (Wiltshire County Council), Mark Connelly (Cotswold AONB), Paula Spiers (Avon Valley Partnership), John Roy (Bristol City Council), Neil Stacey (Sustrans)	
3	Minutes of the last meeting on 7th November 2003 The minutes were <i>agreed</i> as an accurate record of the meeting Item 4: Observers had been invited from the Avon Wildlife Trust, the Cotswold AONB and from the Avon Valley Partnership. There is no age restriction for the insurance of members of the JLAF. Item 8: Members had been requested to bring route leaflets to the meeting and these should be passed to the Secretary so that a list could be compiled.	
4	Access Land 'Gossip Time' The Vice Chair introduced the provisional maps of Access Land that were displayed on a projector for members to look at areas of concern to them, and 'gossip', as this was found to be useful at the discussion group. The <u>JLAF discussion group on Access Land</u> Vice Chair summarised the meeting of the Access Land discussion group that met on the 6 th February, and the notes from that meeting (background paper). <i>Members agreed with the priorities for work on access land as identified by the discussion group</i> , that is: the highest priority access land as: 1. Access Land with access to it and no appeal. 2. Access Land with access to it and an appeal. 3. Other Access Land.	

	<p><i>Members agreed that the chair should write three letters on behalf of the Forum</i> as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To the Ordnance Survey on Access Land mapping methodology. 2. To DEFRA and the three councils on finance for Access work, including calls for a grant for access land work. 3. To the three councils (and the Countryside Agency) on priorities for work on access land. <p>In writing the letter 1, above, it would be suggested that the new Countryside Code should appear on all maps.</p> <p>Members were asked to <i>inform the secretary should they see news on the Lord Haskins review</i>.</p> <p>There was some discussion about the appropriate level of interpretation on access land. There was some agreement that in areas of high use and close to centres of population there should be more detailed interpretation, and in some areas of likely low use interpretation should be less prominent. Also, that the placing and style of interpretation should take account of vandalism and be either sufficiently robust or readily replaceable.</p> <p>A decision on which section of South Gloucestershire Council would undertake access land functions is imminent.</p> <p>It was suggested that each authority investigates the possibility of using Public Service Agreements as a potential source of income.</p> <p><u>Access Land Update</u></p> <p>There were a number of items of information relating to access land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new website at http://www.openaccess.gov.uk had been launched. • The Countryside Agency has published access land Land Manager's Guidance Packs. These are available on the website above, or as paper from 0845 100 3298. • The date of commencement for the JLAF area, in 'Central Southern England, area 3' has been delayed until after areas 1 and 2, now scheduled for September 2004. • There are two documents relating to Access Land that DEFRA are currently consulting on: on Section 42 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the relationship between Access Land and 'Public Places' (deadline 23APR04); and on Section 38 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and appeals by landholders over Means of Access Agreements (deadline 02JUN04) members are encouraged to respond to these documents via the secretary. 	<p>Chair</p> <p>Members</p> <p>Authorities</p> <p>Members</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Secretary's Review</p> <p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>The correspondence of the JLAF can be made available to members on request to the secretary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter was sent by the chair to each authority on the subject of Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) and responses have been received. These letters requested contacts within each authority for ROWIP matters and for ROWIPs to be considered in other policy and strategy documents. This letter also served the purpose of introducing the JLAF. • The chair responded to a consultation by the Countryside Agency regarding access land signage guidance. This response was sent on behalf of the JLAF as little time was made available for comment. <p><u>Bath & North East Somerset Consultations</u></p> <p>Will Steel of Bath & North East Somerset Council introduced a draft Enforcement Policy that will be made available for consultation soon. The JLAF would be consulted on this policy. The following comments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no mention within the priorities of disabled access needs 	<p>B&NES</p>

- There are costs involved in implementing such a strategy, including the costs associated with diversions.
- There is a large backlog of long standing obstruction problems, numbering several hundred in both Bath & North East Somerset and in South Gloucestershire.
- Such a policy should be considered in South Gloucestershire and Bristol.

Will Steel of Bath & North East Somerset Council also introduced a draft Strategy for Horse Riders that will soon be made available for consultation. JLAF members would be consulted on this policy. The document is being prepared to tie into the Local Transport Plan.

Avon Area Cycle Map

Andy Short summarised a cycling map that all four authorities in the former Avon area had been working on.

The map will show urban and rural maps at different scales, all the road network and detailing rights of way useable by cyclists. Facilities such as cycle lanes and cycle tracks, signal controlled crossings, parking facilities etc are also to be highlighted so that any journey can be planned by a range of cyclists. Of particular use will be the contour and height information which is missing from the majority of mapping currently aimed at the cyclist. Production and printing of the map will cost many thousands of pounds, but there is no intention of reclaiming this through charging for the maps at this stage.

There were a number of questions relating to the maps – they are shown below with information gained after the meeting in [square brackets]:

What scale would the maps be?

[rural 1:40,000, urban - likely to be 1:15,000 (up to 1:20,000) depending on what is needed to be fitted in (Bristol is the main problem here).]

When will the maps be available?

[aiming for launching the series of four in Bike week (12-20 June). This may mean later changes to improve the map.]

How will bridleways be shown?

[These will be shown in a different colour to cyclepaths.]

How will height and gradient be represented?

[at present marked faintly at 5 metre intervals, with colour changes at about 25 metre intervals. Small chevrons will mark the intersection of roads with contours.]

Will the map be available on the internet?

[It is planned to put the maps on the internet, possibly after launch of the free paper copies. It is hoped that it will be possible to select areas for viewing and printing.]

[Further changes- Development of the map appearance continues, with such changes as the thickness of the black boundaries to the road coloured width indicating traffic levels.]

JLAF Website

The JLAF website is up and running at <http://www.jlaf.org.uk>, containing all of the papers of the JLAF and information of interest. Any comments or suggestions will be welcomed by the secretary.

Expenses

Only a few member of the JLAF are claiming their expenses – forms are available. Plain paper is available for the use of members.

Finance

A request had been made for information from each authority on the finances available for access work. It was agreed that this would be a full item on the agenda of the next meeting of the JLAF, and each authority would brief the Forum.

Review of other meetings / other Local Access Forums

The secretary can make available and / or brief members on the meetings of liaison groups and of adjacent local access forums on request.

National Countryside Access Forum (NCAF)

This body was described to members – more details available from the

B&NES

Members

Authorities

	<p>secretary on request. The secretary will ensure that there is a link to the NCAF webpage from the JLAF website. <u>SW England Local Access Forum Conference</u></p> <p>There will be a conference for LAFs in Bristol in the autumn of this year – where delegates can discuss progress and developments relating to the work of LAFs, and perhaps an opportunity from training. Members are encouraged to contact the secretary with suggestions for the conference.</p>	<p>Secretary</p> <p>Members</p>
6	<p>Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs)</p> <p>The officers of the authorities present gave a summary of progress with the Rights of Way Improvement Plans:</p> <p>There have been meetings between the officers of authorities in the former Avon area (North Somerset Council, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council) to liaise and possibly co-ordinate over ROWIPs and Local Transport Plans (LTPs). This follows encouragement from central government for these authorities to work closely. This may result in a common joint Framework for ROWIPs, though discussions are at an early stage and between officers. This Framework would appear in each authority's Local Transport Plan (LTP) document that will be published in July 2005.</p> <p>This Framework could include one main objective: 'to increase use of local rights of way' and further objectives and a statement of the problems that should be addressed and the means by which the objective will be reached. The document might include a timetable leading up to the publication of the full Rights of Way Improvement Plans by 2007 and include background data and mapping. If this approach should be adopted, the North Somerset LAF would be consulted along with the JLAF. This is a subject that the JLAF may wish to form a subgroup to study and advise in detail.</p> <p>It was suggested that each authority's LTP Annual Progress Report due in July should mention ROWIPs and this approach if adopted, making it clear that the JLAF would be consulted on all ROWIP documents.</p> <p>Members were encouraged to comment further on this approach and to continue to send in suggestions for the ROWIPs.</p> <p>A question was asked on the Bath Definitive Map Project and it was suggested that this could be an item on the agenda of a future JLAF meeting.</p>	<p>Authorities</p> <p>Members</p>
7	<p>DEFRA Consultation on the Use of Mechanically Propelled Vehicles on Rights of Way</p> <p>The deadline for this consultation is Friday 19th March 2004.</p> <p>A letter drafted by the chair was circulated, and then summarised by the chair. It was proposed that this letter form the JLAF response to the consultation. The letter introduced the response in general, then identified the comments previously received from members, under their respective interests.</p> <p>Discussion took advantage of the presence of a DEFRA officer to clarify points within the consultation document. The Forum stated that it valued the request to contribute from the minister, and was informed that its views would be considered. <i>Members agreed that the letter as drafted should be sent as the JLAF response.</i></p>	<p>Secretary</p>
8	<p>JLAF Subject Areas: The Country Code</p> <p>The secretary gave a presentation on the history of the Country Code and the proposed publication of a new "Countryside Code" by the Countryside Agency in July 2004. The launch of the countryside code will be accompanied by an education and publicity drive, to coincide with the commencement of the Access Land provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. There were several points resulting from the presentation that the members of the JLAF may wish to comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the JLAF see this being applied in this area? 	<p>Members</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, one of the three areas (also Information and Urban Routes) suggested by members • How might the 'Countryside Code' apply to urban areas? • How should this be tied into access land work, for example access land signage? 	
9	<p>Date of forthcoming meetings, including the dates of the next meeting, JLAF04 (in South Gloucestershire) and proposed agenda items</p> <p>The next meeting of the JLAF is to be held on Friday the 9th July 2004 in Tortworth, South Gloucestershire.</p>	
10	Close	