



JLAF14: Background Papers

Agenda item 6: JLAF Membership and Secretariat

Change in membership

Each Council that established the JLAF ("Appointing Authorities"): Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils nominates a Councillor to be a member of the JLAF, and these appointments are generally made or renewed on an annual basis, or after elections to the Councils. South Gloucestershire Council has recently nominated Cllr. Malcolm Bridge as a JLAF member. Cllr. Peter Tyzack is therefore no longer a JLAF member.

Upcoming JLAF Membership and Recruitment

The appointments of eight members of the JLAF, those appointed for a period of three years from 2005, will expire before the next full meeting of the JLAF. A recruitment process will begin soon that will adhere to any statutory requirements such as advertising vacancies in the local press and considering the membership as a whole, for example in achieving a balance of interests on the Forum.

As part of this process, those members will be contacted in writing with details of the appointment process and invited to express their interest in re-appointment. Expressions of interest that are submitted will be considered in the appointment process together with any applications for membership.

Membership of the JLAF as at 30th June 2008		
JLAF Member	Interest Category	Period of Membership
Councillor Chris Cray - Bath & North East Somerset Council	Nominated as Councillor Members	Nominated annually by each Council
Councillor Kevin Quartley - Bristol City Council		
Councillor Malcolm Bridge - South Gloucestershire Council		
Kay Bath	Other	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
David Colbourne	Other	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
Bill Dawson	User	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
Ann Fay	User	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
*Peter Gould	User	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008
John Gunnery	Landowner	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
Bob Hall	User	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
*Robert Killen	Landowner	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008
*Mark McGuinness	Other	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008

*Alun Morgan	Other	<i>Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008</i>
*Ray Newbigin	Other	<i>Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008</i>
*Ronald Phelps	User	<i>Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008</i>
Andrew Short	User	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
Adam Stratton	Landowner	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
Janet Wallis	Other	Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2009
*Margaret Wilson	Landowner	<i>Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008</i>
*Robin Winfield	Landowner	<i>Appointed to the JLAF for 3 years until 30/06/2008</i>

**memberships expiring before the meeting in July 2008*

Agenda item 7: Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Implementation

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) has been published. The following are three actions from the Statement of Action in the ROWIP, where the JLAF has been included as a "key partner and stakeholders/funders".

- **Develop joint diversion policy including specification standards for diverted paths**
- **Complete a full review of signage in the area and produce signage guidelines**
- **Provide information, guidance and support to landowners**

The Councils have formed officer groups to consider the implementation of the ROWIP, three of these groups will cover the actions highlighted above:

- **Public Path Order Policy**
- **Review of Signs**
- **Publicity and Communications**

At the meeting, the Councils will update the JLAF on the work of these three groups, outlining how the JLAF might become involved in them and their implementation of actions proposed by the ROWIP.

Agenda item 9: ITEMS FOR RATIFICATION & INFORMATION

Agenda item 9a: Correspondence and Activities of the JLAF

JLAF members attend other meetings and events on behalf of, or in the interests of the JLAF. An Agenda meeting is held before each main JLAF meeting, and Minutes/Actions meetings are held after each main JLAF meeting, where the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Deputy to the Chairman and Vice Chairman, with the Secretary administer the JLAF. A further meeting is to be held between main JLAF meetings to co-ordinate JLAF work.

Other local meetings include Public Rights of Way Liaison Groups, where Ray Newbiggin attends the South Gloucestershire PROW Liaison Group for the JLAF, Robin Winfield attends the Bath & North East Somerset PROW Liaison Group for the JLAF and Ron Phelps attends the Bristol PROW Liaison Group for the JLAF. JLAF Members also meet PROW and other council officers, and managers to discuss individual matters. Other recent events that JLAF members have attended include:

- 20NOV07: B&NES Enterprise & Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel, the Chairman of the JLAF attended to address the meeting about multi-user routes.
- 13DEC07: Natural England ROWIP Funding event, Taunton.
- 15JAN08: South West Region LAF event, Taunton.
- 23JAN08: Cotswolds Access Conference, Cirencester.
- 24JAN08: National LAF Conference, Sheffield.

As well as further details of these events, matters of information are now published between meetings of the JLAF on the JLAF website at:
www.jlaf.org.uk/meetings

This information is shown in the table below, with the most recent additions first. Further information appears on the JLAF website or can be obtained from the JLAF Secretary. Any queries can be raised by members under this item at the meeting.

Here, those items that are dealt with separately at this meeting are in *italics* and marked with an asterisk (*). Underlined items in electronic versions of these background notes, or on the JLAF website, are links to full documents.

JLAF13-14: Information arising between meetings - NOV07-MAR08 (most recent first)
13FEB08: Natural England Board <u>Meeting 13 February 2008</u> .
<i>*13FEB08: Natural England Board meeting, <u>paper on Discovering Lost Ways (DLW)</u>. This paper follows a consultation the JLAF responded to on 07NOV07 and sets out proposals to limit the scope of the project to providing advice and advising on legislative changes, rather than continuing to research documentary evidence of public rights of way: "Natural England has reviewed the effectiveness of the DLW project to date and concluded that researching lost ways is extremely resource intensive. Even if Natural England were to adopt a policy of focusing on pursuing 'high quality' routes, it would still require exhaustive and costly research."</i>
31JAN08: Bristol City Council Press Release: " <u>Parks to get even better deal from revised investment plans</u> ". This relates to an upcoming decision by Bristol City Council on their Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.
<i>*29JAN08: <u>JLAF Notes of the National LAF Conference held on the 24th January 2008 in Sheffield</u>.</i>

28JAN08: JLAF Notes of the ROWIP Funding Conference held on the 13th December 2007 in Taunton.
<i>*24JAN08: National LAF Conference, Sheffield. Event attended by or for JLAF.</i>
23JAN08: Cotswolds Access Conference, Cirencester. Event attended by or for JLAF.
18JAN08: The JLAF, along with all English Local Access Forums has received this letter from Jonathan Shaw MP, Minister for Marine, Landscape and Rural Affairs and Minister for the South East.
<i>*18JAN08: Bristol Local Development Framework (LDF) Press Release</i>
15JAN08: South West Region LAF event, Taunton. Event attended by or for JLAF.
07JAN08: South West Region ROWIP funding event 13th December 2007. The JLAF were represented at that event. Copies of presentations made on that day have been made available on The Access Company's website .
03JAN08: Bristol City Council Press Release: " Parks and green space strategy ready to get green light from Cabinet ". The JLAF previously responded to the consultation draft of this strategy.
18DEC07: From a presentation that Natural England gave to the IPROW conference at Oxford University in summer 2007 on future funding streams for ROWIP implementation: "A copy of the PowerPoint presentation and the accompanying notes [also included in background papers of JLAF13 meeting] that went with our presentation and hope you find them useful. Please feel free to make use of these if you wish. As the notes explain this represents work in progress and we will be updating it periodically. The notes are also on the IPROW GPG website . Please also be aware that this paper is not comprehensive but includes those funding streams where there is a realistic opportunity of bidding for funds for ROW implementation."
<i>13DEC07: Natural England ROWIP Funding event, Taunton. Event attended by or for JLAF.</i>
<i>*12DEC07: Letter from the JLAF to Cllr Charles Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Customer Services at Bath & North East Somerset Council about a proposed Route around Chew Valley Lake</i>
07DEC07: Defra publishes: " Summary of Responses to the Consultation on Proposals to Improve Access to the English coast ". This links to the Defra web page about this consultation, and recently added to this page is the document "Summary of responses (PDF 500 Kb)", which incorporates the JLAF response to the consultation.
07DEC07: Defra Access Newsletter 13, December 2007 Contains information on the results of the coastal access consultation undertaken by Defra earlier in the year.
26NOV07: SW Local Access Forum Newsletter Produced by the Regional Coordinator, SW Region LAFs
20NOV07: B&NES Enterprise & Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel 20th November 2007 (Minutes). Following the letter sent to the Chairman of the panel below, the 3 JLAF Officers (Chairman, Vice Chairman and Deputy) attended this Panel, making a plea for tolerance and continuation of the year-long trial. The recommendation from the panel to the Cabinet member will be to endorse all the multi-user routes, except two, and there the trials should continue. The Chairman of the JLAF spoke at this meeting and his speaking notes are on the JLAF website.
15NOV07: Letter from the JLAF to Cllr Martin Veal, Chairman of Enterprise and Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel, Bath & North East Somerset Council about Pedestrian, cycle and equestrian access on multi-use paths
07NOV07: Letter from the JLAF to Defra: Discovering Lost Ways Consultation Response

Agenda item 9b: Regional and National Local Access Forum (LAF) Business

South West England LAF Chairs and Secretaries met on in Taunton on the 15th of January 2008. This was partly to meet and review the work of LAFs, but the meeting concentrated on preparing for a national meeting of LAFs in Sheffield on the 24th January 2008, where the South West were represented by Alistair Gordon, Chairman of Somerset LAF, and Ray Newbiggin, the JLAF Chairman. The notes from the national meeting on the 24th January follow.

MEETING OF LOCAL ACCESS CHAIRMEN AND NATURAL ENGLAND SHEFFIELD 24TH January 2008 Note of Meeting

Present

From Natural England

Andrew Wood	-	Executive Director Evidence and Policy
Terry Robinson	-	Access and Recreation Policy
Lucy Heath	-	Sr Specialist, Greenspace, Recreation & Access
Ciaran Gannon	-	Regional Director West Midland

From the Local Access Forums:

Pam Brooks – Northumberland	Steve Scoffin – Tees Valley
Duncan Graham – Cumbria	Jim Kirwan – Lancashire
Alistair Gordon – Somerset	Ray Newbiggin – Bath etc
David Boden – Staffordshire etc	Andrew McCloy – Peak D
Andrew Shirley – Derby etc	Bob Smith – Peterborough
Matthew Balfour – Kent	Alan Marlow – Hampshire
David Nortcliffe – W.Yorks etc	Edward Anderson – N.Lincs

Chair

It was agreed that Duncan Graham, Cumbria LAF, chair the meeting

Item 1 Natural England/LAF Liaison at national and regional levels

Andrew Wood welcomed LAF representatives to the meeting, and briefly explained the priorities Natural England had been addressing in its first 18 months of life, which had contributed to a lack of focus on access issues. In the next financial year, Access to the Natural Environment has been listed as among the top 5 policy priorities for Natural England. This is within a climate of a likely £12.5m budget cut next year, where difficult decisions are having to be made. 10% of the staff roll of c.2,500 will be reduced through Voluntary Early Retirement and natural wastage plus cuts to programme budgets.

The meeting was opportune as recreation and access were set to climb up the agenda. NE looked forward to a meaningful working relationship with LAFs, of which this was the start.

There was round table agreement that a LAF/NE liaison body was worth setting up. Discussion centred on the paper prepared by Duncan Graham (copy attached) and the agreed outcome was:

There will be a **National Access Forum** (despite the unfortunate acronym!)

Its purpose will be:

- Balanced view to NE and countrywide feedback
- Exchange of information - political realities
- Effective and co-ordinate joint lobbying of government

- Accurate information on policy initiatives and objectives
- Feedback on initiatives and implementation
- Exchange of best practice - less reinvention of wheels

The main elements are

- The constitution will be simple and informal
- Frequency will be three times per year, March/April, October/November and one other, normally in the summer
- Membership will comprise 16 LAF members, two nominated by each region (process for nomination to be agreed between LAFs), and a number nominated by Natural England. Term of office will be three years.
- The Chair will be appointed from the LAF members
- Venues will be in NE offices around the country
- Secretariat will be provided by NE who will liaise with the Chair. Papers could come from either the LAFs or NE.
- Communication will be through LAF Regional Secretaries who will be involved in agendas, papers, minutes.
- Natural England would reimburse travel expenses according to their transport and subsistence policies; i.e. travel by sustainable means on public transport at standard rates. A simple mechanism for claiming expenses needs to be found so this wasn't over-burdensome on staff time
- The value of LAF volunteer time and additional professional support members could draw on was recognised as a vital contribution to a NAF.
- Liaison with equivalent UK and European bodies

Additional points

- NAF must be a constructive partnership not an occasion for LAFs simply to hold NE to account. The emphasis was on understanding and working together
- LAF members should be representatives not mandated delegates
- There could be substitution for LAF members but every effort should be made to ensure continuity
- Each region should be free to determine how its two members are chosen
- There was scope for discussion about regional development and inter - region liaison
- Regions should be encouraged to submit agenda items and to discuss agenda items prior to meetings. LAF Regional Secretaries have a key role to play.

Item 2 LAF representation on NCAF successor body

NE was still undecided whether to re-establish a National Countryside Access Forum (NCAF). Andrew Wood threw open discussion, suggesting that NCAF might be an opportunity for a range of different bodies to have a voice, and to demonstrate to Government that they were being heard. There was some concern from LAF Chairs that it might simply duplicate NAF, with single issue voices not adding anything constructive to overall dialogue. They were unsure whether there was merit in LAFs being represented on a new NCAF-type body. Chairs reserved their position at this stage. If it were to be re-established it would be unlikely to be called 'NCAF'. The meeting suggested its name should be one that makes clear the difference between it and Access Forums

Item 3 – Recreation Policy Review – paper circulated prior to meeting.

Terry Robinson gave background to this. Key points:

- Agenda has mostly been about what we inherited from the Countryside Agency.
- Critical stage in the nation's physical and mental health in terms of obesity, activity levels, stress levels and increase in diabetes and cardio-vascular disease.
- Prisons filling up faster than we can build them
- Local communities becoming indoor and nucleated.

So what can Natural England offer as solutions towards some of these issues?

- Need to show evidence of benefits the natural environment provides.
- NICE guidelines in development for walking and cycling routes
- Children's Plan – an opportunity to increase play outdoors and access to the outdoors.

- We can marshal and present evidence
- We can show how the natural environment can be effective
- We can promote quality places that aren't dangerous, unappealing and unkempt – creating a culture of good urban design.
- Benefits based approach
- It will have to pay its way and we can show it does so royally in e.g. reducing heart disease and stress.
- LAFs can help to provide evidence
- How do we engage people – marketing is key and where we have been effective in this there have been successes, e.g. Walking your Way to Health Schemes.
- Government currently spends £17billion on cardio vascular disease, £5.2 billion on diabetes and £ 8.5 billion on obesity and all these levels are set to increase.

Item 4 ROWIPs

LAF Chairmen expressed concern at lack of funding by local authorities for implementation of ROWIPs. Matthew Balfour(Kent LAF) indicated that Highway Authorities would not and could not pay for implementing ROWIPs. Had NE lobbied DEFRA and would it continue to do so? Andrew Wood replied that NE can and may put pressure on Govt to provide extra funding. Presently NE had no funds of its own to commit, but would take any opportunities which occurred. Andrew agreed that ROWIPs were “magnificent things in their own right” and were important and useful, even without full funding to carry them out. He also said that NE was concerned that some authorities had not yet met the November 2007 deadline for submitting a ROWIP and that NE would be following that up.. Access management schemes were considered a success by LAFs and could provide a model for any future ROWIP funding.

Among other points made were

- The role that LAFs can and do play in supporting ROWIPs and in feeding in information on progress on local schemes is significant and hopefully will continue.
- About the availability of funding for implementation and lack of government support in this. It was recognised that Natural England would not be in a position to grant aid ROWIPs again although there may be potential to fund specific schemes in specific places. Natural England could, however fulfil a role in helping secure funding from other sources.
- Need to loudly campaign about the importance of ROWIP delivery in achieving recreational infrastructure.
- Opportunity to press for the implementation of ROWIPs through Local Area Frameworks that are accountable to Comprehensive Area Agreements

At this point it was agreed that the remaining items deserved fuller consideration than could be given at this meeting. They would form the basis of an agenda for the first meeting of the newly constituted body in March.

Conclusion

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution. This had been a momentous day, and the establishment of a National Access Forum in such an evident spirit of partnership is timely and bodes well for the future. For Natural England, Andrew Wood stated that the meeting was perhaps somewhat late but in the end well-timed. Natural England needs the help and support of LAFs and we had today “only scratched the surface” on many issues which we will continue to explore together.

Agenda item 9c: Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)

Introduction

Local Development Frameworks are documents that each Unitary or District Council will produce, which will broadly replace Local Plans. These documents will guide development in the area. The JLAF can have an input into development through providing its advice to the councils on development and public rights of way. One way of doing this is for the JLAF to produce a Position Statement on Local Development Frameworks.

A response to Bristol City Council's Core Strategy, a strategic overview to the Local Development Framework in Bristol, was drafted by the JLAF Chairman and JLAF Deputy to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. This was submitted to Bristol City Council by the deadline of 22 February 2008, subject to consideration at this JLAF Meeting. The submission included a section specifically addressing Bristol's Core Strategy, and **a draft JLAF Position Statement on LDFs**, written in a manner that could be used for LDF preparation in the other councils. This is to be considered at the JLAF meeting, and **follows the introduction to LDFs, below**. The JLAF is now on the consultation list for all three LDFs, and so will receive relevant LDF consultations from each council.

Introduction to LDFs

What will LDF's do?

The Local Development Framework approximately replaces the old Local Plans, partly also Structure Plans. The LDFs are compiled by unitaries or districts, not by counties, and not jointly. They are significant to all development in the area on what is permitted where, on specifications for densities, access, location, remedying of impacts of development and so on. They will be used to guide Planning Applications, Inquiries and during their compilation gain increasing significance over the current local plans, even before adoption of the LDF in full.

What form do LDF's take?

The LDF is not a single document, but a 'folder' of documents. The guide to this folder is the 'Local Development Scheme', which outlines the contents and timetable for the research, compilation, and consultation of all the documents that make up the 'folder'.

Early documents in the process include:

'Local Development Scheme' – the guide to the LDF

'Statements of Community Involvement' – how councils will consult

'Core Strategy' – the main principles to guide development in the area

Defra's LAF guidance

... says that LDFs are LAF's most effective way into the development process. It advises against LAFs getting too involved in specific planning matters, advising that LAFs restrict their input (usually) to the policies and principles of the LDF.

For reference:

Bristol City Council

Local Development Framework Pages:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment-and-planning/planning/local-development-framework/>

South Glos.

Local Development Framework Pages:

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/ConstructionandHousing/Planning/PlanningPolicy/LocalDevelopmentFramework/>

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RATIFICATION BY THE JLAF:

- 1. as a submission of the JLAF to Bristol City Council**
- 2. that Section 2 below be used as a Position Statement of the JLAF**

Submission made to Bristol City Council on behalf of the JLAF

**Ray Newbigin, Chairman of the JLAF. Robin Winfield, Vice Chairman of the JLAF. <http://www.jlaf.org.uk>
Ron Phelps, Deputy to Chairman and Vice Chairman**

Reference: S:\Prow\JLAF\JLAF Meetings,Business\JLAF13 upto JLAF14\2008-01 LDF\2008-02-22 JLAF Bristol LDF Response.doc

bdf@bristol.gov.uk by email

BDF (PTSD/BH)

FREEPOST (BS6529)

BRISTOL

BS1 5BR

This letter constitutes formal advice from the Joint Local Access Forum for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire (the JLAF). Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire Councils are required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this forum in carrying out its functions.

Friday 22nd February 2008

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Core Strategy Preferred Options – Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) Response

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to contribute to Local Development Framework at this stage in its development.

Unfortunately, there was insufficient time for a scheduled full meeting of the Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) to consider this consultation.

This response that follows this letter has been compiled by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the JLAF. However, it cannot be considered as formal advice without the consensus of the JLAF as a whole. We request, however, that you pay **full attention** to the advice that this response provides. This response will be reported to the JLAF at its next full meeting on the 7th March 2008 where I am confident that the full JLAF will agree this submission. I can write again after the meeting to inform you of the outcome of this matter.

We would be grateful to receive feedback on the advice that this letter provides.

Yours sincerely,

Submitted by email from Chris Hogg, Secretary to the JLAF

on behalf of Mr Ray Newbigin, Chairman of the Joint Local Access Forum

pp Mr Robin Winfield, Vice Chairman of the Joint Local Access Forum

pp Mr Ron Phelps, Deputy to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the JLAF.

Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire:
Response to the Bristol Development Framework – Core Strategy. Preferred Options 2008, submitted Friday, 22 February 2008.

The JLAF is a statutory body established by the three councils shown below, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land in the area of Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area.

This response that follows this letter has been compiled by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the JLAF. However, it cannot be considered as formal advice without the consensus of the JLAF as a whole.

We request, however, that you pay **full attention** to the advice that this response provides. This response will be reported to the JLAF at its next full meeting on the 7th March 2008 where I am confident that the full JLAF will agree this submission. I can write again after the meeting to inform you of the outcome of this matter.

We have compiled our response in two sections: the first addresses your questionnaire where it is relevant to the statutory function of the Joint Local Access Forum; the second section is a draft JLAF position statement on Local Development Frameworks.

SECTION 1: RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE.

This Response to the Bristol Development Framework – Core Strategy. Preferred Options 2008 by the Joint Local Access Forum for Bath and North East Somerset, City of Bristol and South Gloucestershire (JLAF) confines itself to the issues for which the Forum has a statutory remit.

Question 2 in the Questionnaire

While we are in general supportive of the main thrust of the Preferred Options we are concerned that insufficient weight is given to the importance of walking and cycling and the infrastructure to support these means of accessing work, school, leisure, and shopping activities. We believe that Strategic Objectives 2, 7 and 8 should make specific mention of the importance of walking and cycling in delivering the strategy.

Question 2 in the Questionnaire

The main elements of the Core Policy on page 31 of the document give due weight to improvement to public transport but omit any reference to walking and cycling. This should be remedied.

General Comment

Bristol City Council recently adopted the Joint Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This should be regarded as one of the Council's Core Policies and reference made to it where appropriate in the Preferred Options document.

SECTION 2: JOINT LOCAL ACCESS FORUM (JLAF) DRAFT POSITION STATEMENT ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS (LDF)

This Position Statement is to be considered for ratification at the meeting of the JLAF on the 7th March 2008).

Planning general

- all developments must adhere to the guidance given in PPG 13 (particularly paragraphs 4, 24 and 75 to 80) and to PPG 17 (particularly to paragraphs 24, 25, 32 and 33);
- the authority should take steps to ensure that all Rights of Way are adequately protected in the event of development proposals;
- attention must be paid to road safety where development is proposed. This is particularly important when pedestrian, cycle and horse routes use or cross vehicular routes;
- recognise that 21.9% of households in the area covered by the Joint Local Transport Plan do not own a car, see page 31;
- ensure that the future for tourism is protected.

Functional walking and cycling

- maximise opportunities for walking and cycling within communities This would accord with the Government health agenda and sustainability proposals;
- identify strategic walking and cycling routes within communities and ensure these link to surrounding rural areas and the rights of way network;
- ensure new development proposals include safe and high quality provision for cycling and walking routes linking housing to schools, shops, employment areas and recreational and sports facilities;
- seek to develop circular routes within and around communities and settlements to encourage healthier lifestyles and minimise car use;
- encourage opportunities to develop, facilitate and promote the National Cycle Network and its integration with other forms of transport;
- give adequate consideration to the requirements of those with mobility needs in the design of new walking and cycling routes, and in the improvement of existing routes.

Rights of Way

- recognise the contribution of the Rights of Way network to health, tourism and sustainability;
- Adequately protect the rights of way network in the event of development proposals;
- ensure new housing developments link to the rights of way network, where appropriate;
- seek to improve the safety for rights of way users where routes meet or run alongside busy or dangerous roads;
- seek to create a network of circular routes around settlements to increase usage;
- explore the integration of transport links with rights of way, particularly strategic long distance routes;
- seek opportunities to expand provision through the Common Agricultural Policy in rural areas and other funding mechanisms;
- increase opportunities for strategic routes along former railways and canals;
- recognise other routes, such as Unclassified County Roads, and their contribution to recreational opportunities.

Other recreational space

- Facilitate access to open countryside and registered commons as identified under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and highlight the opportunities this affords for recreation;
- draw attention to permissive and dedicated access opportunities on farmland and in the Forestry Commission woodlands;
- recognise the importance of green space, green linkages, playing fields and other similar areas and protect these from development;
- map and indicate legal lawful uses of green space areas within the plan area;
- seek to develop green recreational areas within new housing and employment sites.

Other issues

- identify, facilitate and promote opportunities for water recreation;
- identify, facilitate and promote opportunities for horse riding.

Agenda item 9d: Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Access Objective

The JLAF has been invited to comment on this Natural England paper, which Neil Constable, who works for Natural England in South West England, is currently preparing for national use. The deadline for responses has been extended to the end of March 2008. This is not a formal consultation of Natural England.

<u>TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RATIFICATION BY THE JLAF:</u> as a submission of the JLAF to Natural England

Draft cover email from the JLAF to Natural England

Neil,

Probably the best way we can answer your questions in the short time available is to make our notes on your email and your targeting note. In preparing this response, I have consulted all 5 JLAF members (of whom one is our Vice Chairman) who are classified as "Landowners" and one "User" (who is our Deputy Chairman) and have included their relevant comments. [This has subsequently been considered at the JLAF meeting on Friday the 7th March and has been agreed as a consensus response of the JLAF.]

We are all impressed by your note and we are pleased that you place so much emphasis on the integration with existing ROWIP and PROW and also emphasise the use of local knowledge. Remember that LAFs are statutory consultees.

Ray Newbigin,
Chairman, Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire.

Introductory email from Natural England

With JLAF annotations in *red bold italics*.

Subject: HLS Access targeting

Sent: 07 February 2008 16:27

Dear SW England LAF

"At the Rights of Way improvement plan funding workshop held last December and at the County Surveyor's Society SW meeting held last month I outlined changes as to how Natural England will target the application of Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) funding. Although some discussion was possible at both those events, I wish to now follow this up in order to gather your views in more detail.

Natural England together with Defra has made the decision to move from a list-based to a map-based approach for the targeting of HLS. This approach should provide a more robust, consistent and transparent means of identifying and selecting the agreements that offer multiple benefits and the best environmental value for money.

There are five primary objectives for HLS - Landscape, Biodiversity, Historic Environment, Resource Protection and Access and it is the latter for which **I am acting as topic lead**. A national map for each objective has been produced using national data sets to indicate priority areas where HLS could be most effectively be used. Combined, these maps will produce a single 'multi-objective' map which will enable the identification of:

- 'target areas' where the most high priority outcomes can be achieve on individual holdings
- single issue 'themes' which should be addressed in non-target areas

For access, unlike the four other objectives we can only seek to map potential by using data sets of where linear and area access ostensibly exists already. Accordingly for Access, more than any of the other objectives, it will come down to the local advisor *guided by the map* to apply local knowledge as to where the scheme can make the most benefit .

Good , we can give you plenty of local advice. Ask each of the PROW Officers for the three Councils, the Ramblers (RA), the British Horse Society (BHS) and the cyclists.

Who is our "local advisor"?

It is with this in mind that I am in contact to seek your views particularly as to how Natural England at a local level can connect with the information, aspirations and most importantly ROWIP proposals as they emerge. Please find attached two documents:

- The draft national map of existing access provision
- Draft guidance as to the methodology behind the map and how targeting could work at a local level (worded for an internal audience)

(NB It is very important that you view the map in relation to the methodology as explained in the accompanying guidance note)

I would be interested to hear your views as to

- This approach to targeting, given finite budgets ***This seems sensible.***
- Given the methodology, is the map accurate in broad terms ? (it is a national map which can be zoomed in on) ***Yes, it is.***
- Are there other perhaps local data sets that we could make use of ? ***We do not know of other data sets – but ask the three PROW Officers***

And specifically..

- How we can make the link at a local level with *your* authority's ROWIP action plan? ***Ask Chris Hogg for a copy of our ROWIP.***
- Do you have / can you supply information in a GIS format? ***Ask the three PROW Officers.***
- What other strategies or plans does your authority work to which would be relevant e.g. emerging green infrastructure plans, and how can we connect with *them*? ***Ask the three PROW Officers.***
- Given the limitations outlined in the guidance and the objective and priorities for HLS access, are there other general opportunities which are not listed? ***We can not think of any.***
- Other thoughts ***In the JLAF we have a number of active people who would help the "local advisor".***

the ideal would be to hold a meeting to discuss but in reality finding a date, venue and opportunity will be difficult especially as I'd value at least your initial thoughts by the end of March - hence the need to circulate electronically.

With very many thanks
regards
Neil Constable

Draft Natural England Paper

With JLAF annotations in *red bold italics*.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP (HLS) PHASE 2 TARGETING MAPS

ACCESS OBJECTIVE

BACKGROUND

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) represents one tool through which access can be established. Alongside existing mechanisms It can add significant value and enhanced opportunities for people to access the natural environment. As a scheme which is both permissive and time limited it will neither replace existing mechanisms nor should it be regarded as a panacea to deficiencies in their use.

Defra and Natural England have made the decision to move from a list-based to a map-based approach for the targeting of HLS. This approach should provide a more robust, consistent and transparent means of identifying and selecting the agreements that offer multiple benefits and the best environmental value for money.

For Access, a targeting map will give a broad indication of where new access is likely to be of benefit based upon where existing provision is thinnest. Local knowledge and evidence must then identify the actual opportunities that exist on the ground

NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR ACCESS WITHIN HLS

The overarching *objective* for access within HLS is to enhance the recreational experience:

"Close to where people live and close to where people visit"

Excellent and it is about time the emphasis was placed on people rather than routes. To put it another way, demand is as important as supply.

The *priorities* for Access within HLS will remain:

1. To provide facilities on farms that promote greater understanding of the countryside - it's history, landscape, wildlife, economy, culture and agriculture to groups from all walks of life and for study by school children and higher level students.

2. To create new access routes to currently inaccessible features of interest such as riversides, historic features and areas of wildlife or landscape interest where appropriate.

3. To improve countryside access for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and people with limited mobility by creating routes that bridge gaps in the PRoW network; that give access to landlocked areas of CRoW open access land; that join areas of CRoW open access land or that link to long distance footpaths, national trails or coast paths, and that where possible link to public transport networks.

The JLAF is fighting to get a "limited mobility friendly" route around Chew Valley Lake. This idea was first mooted some 10 years ago by an NFU JLAF member and part of the route has been established. However, the Local Authority has yet to complete the route.

4. To create new areas of open permissive access (as opposed to CRoW land), where this is seen as a local priority and where appropriate.

If you look in The West of England Partnership ROWIP at figures 6, 8 and 10 you will see that many of the footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes look like spaghetti hanging on a tree because they start nowhere and end nowhere. The ROWIP team could provide detailed maps and the users (walkers, cyclists & Horse riders) could give detailed knowledge of the lie of the land.

Access and Stewardship land is shown in figure 12 of the ROWIP

A TARGETING MAP FOR ACCESS

With regard to HLS Access the targeting map must, by definition, plot **potential** rather than **actual** i.e. depict the parts of the country where HLS Access could make a difference because of where existing provision is at its thinnest.

For access, the target map will be based upon 'Super Output Areas' (SOAs), the standard geographical unit for reporting and comparing statistics regarding *people*. They have consistent population numbers (approximately 1,500), fixed boundaries and in the future will enable a variety of related data sets to be overlaid, (e.g. health, deprivation etc) In essence they enable us to target 'where people live' whether that is rural or urban.

Using national data sets existing linear and area access provision has been plotted against SOAs. Combined, they will provide a *national* map highlighting the 10% of the country where provision is nil or at its lowest level. The data sets used are:

- Public Rights of Way
- CROW access land
- National Nature Reserves
- Local Nature Reserves
- Woods for People (open access woodland & Forestry Commission)
- EH parks & gardens
- National Trust land
- **National & local cycle networks**
- **Multuser routes**

LOCAL REFINEMENT & TARGETING

The targeting map for access can only give an indication of where new access might be appropriate or add value. At a regional level additional data sets of existing access provision might exist which will help to refine the 'access' map. This might include:

- Publicly accessible green space in and around urban areas (known as PPG17 data)
- Wildlife trust reserves with public access etc

The targeting map for access will be combined with the other primary objective maps (landscape, biodiversity, historic environment and resource protection) to produce a single 'multi-objective' map which will enable the identification of:

- those 'target areas' where the most high priority outcomes can be achieved on individual holdings
- single issue 'themes' which should be addressed in non-target areas.
They could be a useful tool and may encourage applicants who would not otherwise be enthusiastic because of the limited environmental strength of their application.
- ***all HLS agreements should allow for on-site mapping and promotion by the authorities and others. However, local interests must be respected. It is possible to envisage a situation where horses and riders are bussed in, causing parking problems and poaching on bridleways. Local, planned management is essential.***
- ***All HLS agreements should be voluntary and compensated.***

For access agreements it will be up to local teams to identify where opportunities and demand exist to provide further access, or to enhance existing access inside and outside 'Target Areas'. ***Local Access Forums, as statutory consultees, must be included.***

The HLS scheme management structure could be used to administer other available funding streams for the specific promotion of access. This would save money.

OPPORTUNITIES *WITHIN* TARGET AREAS

Guided by the resulting 'multi objective' map, local targeting should follow the **objective** and **priorities** for HLS access outlined above i.e. enhancing access and recreation opportunities - close to where people live and where people want to go - within the context of existing provision and set against where there is a demand or need for more.

Accordingly, within 'target areas' opportunities should be *proactively* sought:

We wonder if NE should try to foster a spirit of proactivity by financing PROW teams to employ an HLS salesman whose only job would be to seek out "target area opportunities" on urban fringes where farming and conservation can be difficult.

Many, if not most, farmers are discouraged from applying for HLS grants because the process is both time consuming and expensive and the HLS salesman could do most of the paper work for the farmer.

The qualifying criteria for HLS must be changed because at present it is principally based on environmental standards.

- ***where it will link people with place e.g.***
 - link settlements or create /contribute to circular routes,
 - provide access to the coast, riverside, view points or historic features,
 - link National Trails, or locally promoted routes, with services / facilities,
 - make useful links within the existing ROW network including permissive higher rights e.g. to connect two bridleways
 - provide access to /connect CROW island sites

These are all sensible.

- ***where there is identified demand or need e.g.***
 - to maintain existing classic scheme access agreements which are ending and which are known to have been successful and well used
 - opportunities identified in a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (see below)
 - opportunities advised by local highway authorities and / or local access forums.

These are all sensible.

With all such agreements new access will adhere to the principles of providing the least restrictive access.

The primary source of evidence as to where new access is wanted or needed is likely to be the emerging **Rights of Way Improvement Plans** (ROWIPs). Local/ unitary authorities were required to produce these statutory documents by November 2007. Although in many cases these 'strategies' will only set out broad principles they should be supported by a **statement of action** identifying and locating potential activity.

Our three Authorities may be ahead of the game because they have an action plan for the ROWIP and they are now taking action. The ROWIP mentions the HLS scheme but observes that "these schemes are time limited", paragraph 3.13.

Although such information could be accessible via local authority web sites it remains important that local teams make and maintain direct contact with their local /unitary authority rights of way / countryside access teams. There are invariably locally expressed desires for more access which HLS could potentially deliver and which they will be able to advise on. In addition, some authorities might also be able to provide ROWIP proposals in the form of a GIS overlay.

NB The multi-objective map should not be a substitute for the expertise of local staff and partners, but instead enable this expertise to initiate, develop and monitor high quality agreements that will yield high environmental outcomes across all objectives of the scheme.

OPPORTUNITIES *OUTSIDE* TARGET AREAS

Inevitably there will be opportunities where HLS can make a valuable contribution to recreation and access outside of the mapped SOAs comprising the single objective map and ultimately the target areas depicted on the national 'multi objective' map. For example, a valuable link in an area with otherwise good provision such as from a settlement to a coastal path or a *successful* expiring classic scheme access agreement etc

The mechanics of how such opportunities (or single 'themes') will be addressed outside target areas has not yet been finalised. However, although the greater part of the available budget will be focused upon 'multiple benefit' target areas approximately 20% will be retained to address such opportunities where they are demonstrably of high priority.

Giving only 80% of the available budget to the areas where people live is too small. It should be at least 90%.

As one drives around the country one sees HLS money being wasted on schemes well away from centres of population. These are probably cases where the politically savvy have jumped on to an early bandwagon!

Therefore the existing facility to enter into single interest agreements in exceptional circumstances might well assist in realising important opportunities outside target areas.

EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

The 'multi objective' map will not be used to target educational access which will sit outside the 'target areas' approach. It has been recognised that the vocational nature of this option means that each case should be assessed on its own merits and accordingly educational access will be treated as a priority single 'theme'.

Educational access remains an important option, with HLS representing a key government tool for its provision. Progress has been made toward creating a separate national map of educational access provision in its various forms to assist local advisers. It is hoped that this will be the first step toward producing more detailed regional maps which will plot existing provision against schools and settlements.

This will be made available to regions as and when it is available.

This is sensible.

RENEWAL OF EXISTING AGREEMENTS

Many existing CSS and ESA agreements contain access options which have proved to be very popular with the public. By definition these sites demonstrate a demand which would cease to be satisfied if the access was discontinued. It will be necessary for local teams to identify, each year, which expiring agreements fall into this category while their targeting will depend upon whether they sit in or out of the target areas as outlined above. Again, the facility to enter into single interest agreements will be relevant.

How is the counting of "the public" done?!

Agenda item 9f: JLAF Project Progress i. Chew Valley Lake

This letter was sent by the JLAF to Cllr Charles Gerrish, the Cabinet Member for Customer Services at Bath & North East Somerset Council on the 12th December. Council officers will be updating the JLAF on progress with this project at the meeting of the JLAF on the 7th March.



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

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

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**Ray Newbigin, Chairman of the JLAF. Robin Winfield, Vice Chairman of the JLAF.
Ron Phelps, Deputy to Chairman and Vice Chairman**

Reference: S:\Prow\JLAF\JLAF Meetings\JLAF13 upto JLAF14\2007-12-12 Chew Valley Lake Trail letter Gerrish.doc

Cllr Charles Gerrish
Park House
Station Road
Keynsham
Bristol
BS31 2BN.

Wednesday, 12th December 2007

Dear Cllr Gerrish,

Route around Chew Valley Lake

Thank you for your prompt reply to my letter regarding a route around Chew Valley Lake.

This route was originally proposed some 10 years ago and we would welcome progress, not only towards joining and extending the existing routes and trails, but to making a route which will totally encompass the lake.

The Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) feels that not only could it benefit the local rate payers but it would also benefit Bristol Water and the area as a whole with tourists travelling to the area in order to enjoy this amenity.

The Chairman of the Disabled Ramblers Association has asked us to emphasise the benefit that the disabled have had from reservoir circuits such as Carsington in Derbyshire, Rutland Water, Pitsford in Northamptonshire and Kielder in Northumberland. Clearly a similar facility in the South West of the country would be of tremendous benefit to everyone.

I understand that £75,000 has been allocated to this project in the B&NES 2008/9 capital budget and we would ask that this sum is honoured. I also trust that adequate staff resources will be allocated to progress this most desirable project which will bring benefits to the wider public and which would be a beacon project for B&NES.

Yours sincerely,
R Newbigin

Chairman of the Joint Local Access Forum for Bath & North East Somerset, City of Bristol and South Gloucestershire

cc: Matthew Smith, Assistant Director: Environmental Services, B&NES

Agenda item 9g: Discovering Lost Ways

Below is a paper that was presented to the Board of Natural England at its meeting on the 13th February 2008. This paper follows a consultation the JLAF responded to on 07NOV07 and sets out proposals to limit the scope of the project to providing advice and advising on legislative changes, rather than continuing to research documentary evidence of public rights of way: "Natural England has reviewed the effectiveness of the DLW project to date and concluded that researching lost ways is extremely resource intensive. Even if Natural England were to adopt a policy of focusing on pursuing 'high quality' routes, it would still require exhaustive and costly research."

Natural England Board

Meeting: 9

Date: 13 February 2008

Paper No: NEB PU09 10

Title: Discovering Lost Ways

Sponsor: Adrian Belton, Executive Director Operations

1. Purpose
 - 1.1. To advise the Board of the findings of the Discovering Lost Ways (DLW) project and set out our proposed approach.
2. Background
 - 2.1. Natural England has reviewed the effectiveness of the DLW project to date and concluded that researching lost ways is extremely resource intensive. Even if Natural England were to adopt a policy of focusing on pursuing 'high quality' routes, it would still require exhaustive and costly research. But it is important that those who wish to pursue such cases should have a process to do so. Natural England has an important role to play in offering support and guidance to those that wish to carry out that research. That guidance could focus on the research standards that Local Authorities are required to achieve to pursue a case. Natural England might also offer guidance on what constitutes a 'quality route' (i.e. those which deliver greatest public benefit, e.g. provide a missing link in a network, make an unsafe route safe, connect access land to existing well used routes but not on a definitive map) although local knowledge is probably better placed to make that interpretation.
 - 2.2. Natural England needs a more holistic approach to rights of way generally and should champion changes to legislation and procedures relating to the definitive map.
 - 2.3. In light of this, we are proposing a fundamental review of the legislation and process relating to access provisions and would involve the entire stakeholder community in this. Natural England would facilitate, with the group itself being independently chaired. It is possible that the Rights of Way Review Committee (ROWRC), to whom we already provide support, is the most suitable body, or at least a sub-group of it. The ROWRC is a non-statutory body that brings together representatives of the main national stakeholders in public rights of way (users, land managers and local authorities). It has been in existence for twenty years and is chaired by an MP, and discusses a wide range of issues. Observers are sent from Defra, DfT, and DCMS. The Chair writes direct to Ministers if it is felt action needs to be taken by Government. Its aims are:
 - to work through consensus to help resolve conflict;
 - for legislation and procedures affecting public rights of way, to be effective and efficiently applied; and
 - to agree proposals for action.
 - 2.4. This would also require the involvement of the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) as the legislation is relevant to both countries. It would report back to Government and the Welsh Assembly via the ROWRC.

- 2.5. This approach is entirely consistent with the advocacy priorities outlined in a separate Board paper. Through this review of rights of way, we have the opportunity to influence decisions on enhancing the rights of way network, its use, and its underpinning legislation.
- 2.6.
- In summary, the proposed way forward would see Natural England:
 - progressing from its current role of researching and claiming individual lost ways to providing advice and guidance to those that wish to do so at their own initiative;
 - facilitating a fundamental review of the legislation and current processes that underpin the provision of access;
 - working with stakeholders on the review;
 - building on and encouraging further progress with the Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) prepared by local Highway Authorities; and
 - seeking to invest the money saved on the current DLW project approach to deliver this work.
3. Next steps
- 3.1. The proposed approach has been developed in liaison with Defra officials, who have indicated that they are broadly comfortable with it. We are currently notifying Defra Ministers of our proposed way forward and anticipate that Ministers will respond by mid-February.
- 3.2. In anticipation of a favourable response, by the end of March we will have drafted the guidance on research standards and on quality routes. We will also have drafted the terms of reference and a timetable for the fundamental review and agreed with Defra and CCW whether the Rights of Way Review Committee should be asked to oversee that review.

Agenda item 10h: Public Rights of Way Liaison Groups

There follows a copy of the Agenda for the most recent meeting of each of the three Public Rights of Way Liaison Groups, together with the date of the next meeting. These meetings are not statutory as the JLAF is, and meetings are not held in public. If you would like further information, contact the JLAF secretary in the first instance.

South Gloucestershire Public Rights of Way Liaison Group (PROWLG) Thursday 17 January 2008

Agenda

1. Apologies
 2. Notes of last meeting 18th October 2007 and matters arising
 3. Resignation of James Brindley and interim arrangements
 4. Priority Issue Progress
 5. CAMS resolved feedback
 6. Capital programme improvements
 7. ROWIP: Onwards to implementation
 8. Progress reports from User Groups
 9. Any Other Business
- The next meeting – 1st May 2008

Bath & North East Somerset Council Public Rights of Way Liaison Group (PROWLG) Wednesday 7th November 2007

Agenda

1. Welcome
 2. Apologies
 3. Notes from last meeting held on 20th June 2007 and matters arising
 4. Rights of Way Improvement Plan update
 5. Chew Valley Trail
 6. Chelscombe Farm, Lansdown, Bath, Access Land
 7. Bath University bridge, AQ99
 8. Batheaston Public Footpath BA2/5 – collapsed riverside path
 9. Major works on PROW 2007 & 2008
 10. Current PROW Legal Orders update
 11. City of Bath Definitive Map update
 13. Any other business
- The next meeting – 5th March 2008

Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way Liaison Group (PROWLG) Thursday 6th December 2007

Agenda

1. Chairperson
 2. Minutes of PROWLG meeting on Thursday 13th September 2007
Matters arising
 3. Public Path Orders
 4. JLAF/ ROWIP update
 5. Provisional meeting dates
 6. Chairperson
 7. Any Other Business
 8. Severn Way Video
- The next meeting – 6th March 2008

Agenda item 11: The next meeting JLAF15

(in Bath & North East Somerset on the 4th July 2008)

Proposed Agenda Items

The following items are proposed for the meeting on the 4th July 2008:

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- JLAF Website

Subsequent Meeting Dates

The following are dates for full meetings of the JLAF, following a pattern of once every 4 months, on the first Friday of the month:

Meeting Date	Location	Agenda items submitted by	Agenda meeting, week of	Papers available
04 JUL 2008	Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham	06 JUN 2008	09 JUN 2008	20 JUN 2008
07 NOV 2008	Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham	10 OCT 2008	13 OCT 2008	24 OCT 2008
06 MAR 2009	Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham	06 FEB 2009	09 FEB 2009	20 FEB 2009
03 JUL 2009	Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham	05 JUN 2009	08 JUN 2009	19 JUN 2009
06 NOV 2009	Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham	09 OCT 2009	12 OCT 2009	23 OCT 2009