



# Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

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

## JLAF 18

### Draft Minutes of meeting of Friday 03JUL09

Date: Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2009  
 Time: 2:00pm  
 Venue: The Carter Room, Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham. BRISTOL. BS31 2AU

Present: JLAF Members:  
 Chris Bloor, Jill Britten, Cllr Chris Cray (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Ann Fay, Roger Fowler, Peter Gould, John Gunnery, Robert Killen, Bernadette Macey, Ray Newbigin (JLAF Chairman), Ron Phelps (JLAF Deputy Chairman), David Waterstone, Robin Winfield (JLAF Vice Chairman)

Also in attendance:  
 Chris Hogg (JLAF Secretary), Will Steel (Bath & North East Somerset Council), one member of the public.

#### Action

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<b>A</b>	<b>INTRODUCTIONS</b>	
<b>A1</b>	<p><b>Welcome to new members and introductions</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed all present, particularly new members Chris Bloor, Jill Britten, Bernadette Macey, David Waterstone and one member of public present.</p> <p>The Chairman has contacted recent JLAF members who have not been reappointed, expressing thanks for all of their contributions to the JLAF.</p> <p>In the background papers for this meeting David Waterstone should be shown as a JLAF member in the 'user interests' category rather than the 'other interests' category.</p>	
<b>A2</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>JLAF Members:            Janine Averis, Anna Ferguson, Colette Linehan, Kevin Quartley (Bristol City Council), Andy Short, Adam Stratton</p> <p>Also:            Andy Whitehead, John Roy, Terry Bullock (Bristol City Council), Rennie Dickins, Anita Robertson, (South Gloucestershire Council), James Blockley (Cotswold Way National Trail), Nicola Chidley (South Gloucestershire Council)</p> <p>Members Not Present            Cllr Malcolm Bridge (South Gloucestershire Council), Bill Dawson, Margaret Wilson.</p>	
<b>A3</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>Cllr Chris Cray declared an interest under item 'B6iv: Lansdown Access Land' as Chair of Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council's Regulatory (Access) Committee.</p>	
<b>A4</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting on 6th March 2009.</b></p> <p>The minutes were then <i>agreed</i> as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	

<b>A5</b>	<p><b>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</b> Item B2v 'Proposed ROWIP Small Grants Scheme' B&amp;NES reported that this would not be progressed this year because of time and budget constraints, but it remains an intention for future years.</p>	
<b>B</b>	<b>MAIN BUSINESS</b>	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Cotswold Way and National Trails and Routes review</b> <b>James Blockley, National Trails Officer, Cotswold Way</b></p> <p>James Blockley had not attended both this meeting and the previous meeting.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Joining up the Spaghetti</b> Following discussion at the previous meeting, JLAF members are still encouraged to submit their suggestions for gaps in the public rights of way network to the Secretary, who is compiling them along with ROWIP suggestions. The JLAF Chairmen will then progress them with the PROW officers.</p>	<b>Members</b>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) on three byways in B&amp;NES</b></p> <p>Will Steel, of Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council presented the three Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that they propose. The Council has already consulted user groups. The making of those TROs, to apply a width restriction of one metre to the byways, will be subject to a decision by the Cabinet Member for Customer Services. Bollards would then be installed on these routes.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the specific TROs:</p> <p><b>BA20/18 &amp; BA11/22 – Mill Lane, Priston</b> A stone arched culvert which has been identified by the council archaeologist as worthy of protection is damaged. Bridleway gates have restricted access in the past, but these gates are not authorised. TRF volunteers had cleared this route five years ago. This order was supported by the JLAF.</p> <p><b>CL17/41 - Ringspit Lane, Pensford (off A37 lay-by)</b> The route runs from a layby on the busy A37 road, and is heavily fly-tipped and rutted, making it impassable for legitimate users. There is potential for increased equestrian use if the layby is used for horse box parking, though connecting routes are important. Once the route is restricted, the surface would need levelling and clearing, and the TRF would be willing to help with this. Any bollards would need to be installed with the agreement of adjacent landowners. A link to the permissive path on the other side of the A37 should be considered, though this is a very busy, fast road. This order was supported by the JLAF.</p> <p><b>BA8/87 Compton Dando &amp; CL17/34 Pensford - Birchwood Lane</b> This route runs from Lord's Wood north to Woollard. There have been extensive repairs carried out on this routes that now need protecting from damage. The lower section of the route is coexistent with a stream, and there is no room for pedestrians or horses to pass vehicles. Large groups of 10-30 vehicles have been reported queuing to use the route. The route was described as very attractive for walking, running, riding and cycling. This order was supported by the JLAF.</p> <p>General comments by JLAF members included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All three routes are damaged and involve watercourses and unsealed surfaces.</li> <li>- The proposed width restrictions will not stop motorcycles. Most damage to these routes is understood to have been by heavy use of four-wheel drive vehicles, not from motorcycle use.</li> <li>- There is a contrast between the council providing byways for recreational motor vehicles and at the same time restricting horses on multi-use routes.</li> <li>- Alternatives to bollards should be considered, including Kent Gaps that allow carriages and to ensure access for agricultural vehicles.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing key-holder or permit access to routes is likely to be impractical to administer. Current and future use of these routes by different classes of user should be monitored.</li> </ul> <p>The following resolution was agreed by JLAF members:</p> <p><u>The JLAF supports Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council in making these three TROs to restrict the width of three byways. Routes should be managed so that they provide enjoyable and convenient use by the majority of users. Heavy and inappropriate use of these routes by four-wheel drive vehicles is likely to cause further damage, or hamper efforts to repair and protect these routes. The Council should implement these plans as soon as possible, and continue to monitor the use of the routes.</u></p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Rights of Way Improvement Plan Implementation Update: Full Network Survey; Paths Order Policy</b></p> <p>The Councils will soon produce a joint ROWIP Annual Report for the year 08/09, including 09/10 actions.</p> <p>The Full Network Survey of Infrastructure on public rights of way has been completed by contractors 'Exegesis' in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. They are now working in Bath &amp; North East Somerset. The data will now be processed and submitted to the councils 'Countryside Access Management System (CAMS)' databases. This data will lead to information on works required on public rights of way, and this will be analysed by the councils to apply to work programming. The JLAF members raised the issues of availability of the data to parishes and landowners – the councils should make the data available on request. The availability of the data should be publicised to parishes and landowners. The councils are working on a joint website, then online mapping, and this data will be considered in such a mapping system. The councils were urged to check the quality of the data from the survey.</p> <p>The Joint Paths Order Policy is currently in the process of being submitted to Executive/Cabinet Members or Committees in each council for adoption as Council policy.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Gating Orders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Update on Gating Order Policies</b></li> </ul> <p>Bristol City Council has adopted a gating order policy, South Gloucestershire is reviewing it's policy and Bath &amp; North East Somerset is developing a policy. All councils have committed to consult the JLAF on their policies and on each gating order.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Current or proposed Gating Orders</b></li> </ul> <p>The JLAF are being active, through the chairmen and particularly Ron Phelps the Deputy Chairman, in responding to proposals for gating orders. The two main proposals are of Prow 163 in Fishponds, Bristol, and Kipling Road, Filton, South Gloucestershire and JLAF members will be emailed where the JLAF is consulted by councils on proposals. A summary table of the JLAF's gating order involvement was viewed at the meeting and will be added to the JLAF website on a dedicated 'gating proposals' page, including orders currently under consideration. JLAF members were asked to report any proposals of which they become aware.</p>	

6	<p><b>JLAF Project Progress</b></p> <p><b>i. Chew Valley Lake</b></p> <p>A planning application by Sustrans for two sections of routes at Chew Valley Lake was withdrawn with the intention of carrying out necessary nature conservation surveys. Grassland surveys are being carried out in May and July and the JLAF will push for the planning applications to be submitted as soon as possible. The JLAF Chairmen have visited Bristol Water, Sustrans, Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council and Natural England to discuss the routes within the planning application, and possible future routes around the lake. JLAF members referred to the route around Rutland Water as an example, and to the importance of nature conservation.</p> <p><b>ii. Monarch's Way</b></p> <p>In the absence of a Bristol City Council officer JLAF member Peter Gould reported that there has been encouraging progress on the section of this route in St Phillips Marsh and on another section between Sea Mills and Shirehampton. This progress is encouraging, and it is understood that the cabinet member in Bristol, Dr John Rogers is keen to resolve the issues.</p> <p><b>iii. Chipping Sodbury links</b></p> <p>The BHS have been collecting user evidence for a route from Chipping Sodbury Common with a view to making an application for a modification order to add the route to the definitive map.</p> <p><b>iv. Lansdown Access Land</b></p> <p>Following the JLAF's resolution at its meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March, The JLAF Chairman made a statement at the Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council Regulatory Access Committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2009. He said that the JLAF supports the making of orders to divert and create public rights of way on land at Chelscombe Farm near Bath. Following assent by the Committee, Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council has been preparing the Orders that are now with the legal department prior to being published.</p>	
C	<b><u>ITEMS FOR RATIFICATION</u></b>	
1	<p><b>JLAF response to Informal Consultation: FP163, Fishponds, Bristol</b></p> <p><u>The response shown in the background papers was agreed as the response from the JLAF.</u></p>	
2	<p><b>Bristol LDF Core Strategy response</b></p> <p>The absence of a reference to equestrian access was highlighted. The secretary will refer the Planning Department in Bristol City Council to the reference to equestrian access in the JLAF Position Statement on Local Development Frameworks.</p> <p><u>The response shown in the background papers was agreed as the response from the JLAF.</u></p>	<b>Secretary</b>
3	<p><b>JLAF Gating Order Position Statement</b></p> <p><u>The position statement shown in the background papers was agreed as a Position Statement of the JLAF.</u></p>	
D	<b><u>ITEMS TO REPORT/ FOR INFORMATION</u></b>	
1	<p><b>National and Regional LAF Business</b></p> <p>Including the JLAF, there are 12 LAFs in the SW England region, advising Councils or National Parks as well as Defra (who make laws), Natural England (who implement policy) and others. The SW LAFs send two Chairmen to the England Access Forum (EAF) who have been recently set up to advise Natural England and others at a national level. Paul Heal (Chairman of Somerset LAF) and Ray Newbigin (JLAF Chairman) have been elected to the EAF by South West England LAF Chairs. At their last meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the EAF considered, among others, the following major items: a Natural England Access Policy, an 'Inspiring People' consultation, Coastal Access, Surfacing of Shared Routes and work following the cancelling of the 'Discovering Lost Ways' project. The EAF minutes will be published on the JLAF</p>	

	<p>website.</p> <p>The Chairman and Vice Chairman attended a meeting of the Gloucestershire LAF on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009. Their meeting was preceded by a site visit to view improvements for disabled users and included a round-table discussion about the site visit.</p> <p>The Chairman also attended a meeting of the Brecon Beacons National Park LAF.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Public Rights of Way Liaison Groups</b></p> <p>The members reviewed the agendas in the background papers.</p>	
<b>E</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Cotswold AONB 'My Countryside' project</b>  The JLAF had received information from John Mills of the Cotswold AONB who is planning a grant application and project called 'My Countryside' that aims "to increase the number of people from under-represented groups in the urban areas around the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) who are aware of, understand, enjoy, and learn new skills in, the Cotswolds AONB. One of the under-represented 'groups' that the project aims to reach is people with disabilities." John Mills was unable to attend today, but the JLAF will invite him to brief a future meeting.</p> <p>The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This project could link into Health Walk schemes in urban areas (one is run in Bath by a JLAF member), provided there is transport to allow trips from urban areas to the Cotswold AONB.</li> <li>- Including young people is key to this project, to counter any impression that access to the countryside appears old and 'fuddy-duddy'.</li> </ul> <p>The following resolution was agreed by JLAF members: <u>The JLAF offers the 'My Countryside' Project its support.</u></p> <p><b>Forestry Commission Consultation</b>  JLAF member Ann Fay highlighted a Forestry Commission consultation [on the 'Long Term Role of the Forestry Commission Public Forest Estate in England']. The Secretary will put this on the JLAF website when it is available.</p> <p><b>Councils' Attendance at Meetings</b>  The JLAF expressed disappointment that there were no officers or Councillors from Bristol City Council or South Gloucestershire Council at this meeting, and highlighted that it was important that they attend and consider the advice of the JLAF.</p>	
<b>F</b>	<p><b>The next meeting 2:00pm on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham. BRISTOL. BS31 2AU</b></p> <p><b>Possible Agenda Items</b>  Presentation by the Bristol Cycling City team.</p> <p><b>Subsequent Meeting Dates</b>  See background papers or JLAF website.</p>	
	<b>Close</b>	