

-----Original Message-----

From: Matthew Balfour [<mailto:Matthew.Balfour@tmbc.gov.uk>]

Sent: 28 October 2009 11:02

To: [Amanda.Earnshaw@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Amanda.Earnshaw@naturalengland.org.uk);  
[andrew.wood@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:andrew.wood@naturalengland.org.uk); [duncan.mackay@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:duncan.mackay@naturalengland.org.uk);  
[helen.phillips@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:helen.phillips@naturalengland.org.uk); [poul.christensen@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:poul.christensen@naturalengland.org.uk);  
[rob.cooke@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:rob.cooke@naturalengland.org.uk); [Terry.Robinson@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Terry.Robinson@naturalengland.org.uk)

Subject: Coastal Access Commons Report Stage

Dear All

You may not have been able to either hear or read the Commons Report Stage debate on Monday but, in case you missed it, I thought you would be interested in the following particular exchange from Hansard

(<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091026/debtext/91026-0010.htm>) :

**"Mr. Benyon:** The Minister mentioned local access forums. They are feeling a little unloved at the moment, so will he give his leadership and ensure that they are genuinely consulted? Local access forums have a wealth of experience and understand what is required in delivering greater access, and they do that for next to nothing. They are a cheap and welcome addition to the expertise that already exists, but the Minister might like to put his weight behind ensuring that they feel part of the process.

**Huw Irranca-Davies:** The hon. Gentleman makes a good point. I met the local access forums two weeks ago, and they want to play a pivotal role in the coastal routes' development. Their members have expertise, they are volunteers, and they know the routes and the lie of the land. I cannot conceive how local access forums would not be part and parcel of the coastal routes' development.

The ethos of the Bill is to use local knowledge from walking the routes to devise the proposal that will go to the Secretary of State. If the hon. Gentleman wants leadership in saying that local access forums, in all different shapes and sizes throughout the country, should be part and parcel of the scheme, I give him that categorical assurance."

You may also have missed **Nick Herbert's** comment from yesterday's Third Reading: "We would like to see much of the responsibility for the route devolved to voluntary access forums and local authorities. We believe that a top-down approach to coastal access is not the answer and that local groups are much better placed to designate and manage the shape of the route."

Regards - Matthew  
01732 870253 or 07771 992822