



**THURROCK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**Working Group Meeting – Minutes (3)**

**Tuesday 13 August 2019**  
**7pm to 9pm Committee Room 2**  
**Civic Offices, New Road, Grays**

**Present:**

Paula Watts – Projects Leader Highways Information & LAF Secretary – **PW**  
 Sue Dobson – LAF Chair and Essex Bridleway Association Representative – **SD**  
 Bryan Benton – LAF Member – Thurrock Ramblers – **BB**  
 Alison Loveridge – Highway and Public Rights of Way Information Officer – **AL**  
 Mike Ostler – LAF Vice-Chair – **MO**  
 Paul Wakeling – LAF Member – Forgotten Historic Routes – **PWHR**  
 Steve Swinney – LAF Member RSPB Surveyor – West, East and Linford Forum  
 representative – Keen walker and cyclist – **SS**  
 David Fish – LAF Member – Sustrans Ranger and Gateway Cycling Member – **DF**

Item	Description	Action
1.	<p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <p><b>SD</b> Madame Chair thanked those present for attending and informed members that regrettably Carly Hollands has informed both herself and Paula she has decided to leave the Forum via the following email:-</p> <p>After a lot of thought and some regret I have decided I would like to retire from the Thurrock LAF. I have been a member for around 6 years and have given a lot of time and effort for the equestrian cause, but the lack of progress and achievement has become frustrating.</p> <p>I have seen my interaction with green spaces with my horse diminish to the point where I can no longer ride because it's just too labour intensive or prohibitive to attempt.</p> <p>I feel it is now time for me to try other things, and at some point that will involve moving out of Essex for greener, hopefully horse friendlier pastures.</p> <p>I am happy to still help out on anything through EBA or with any support Jenny needs indirectly.</p> <p>Thank you for all your help and support over the years it has been a pleasure working with you and the other members.</p> <p>Best wishes for all your future endeavours</p> <p>In response Sue has thanked Carley for her help over the years</p>	

	<p>and having always made a very useful contribution to the forum.</p> <p><b>DF</b> I am sympathetic with Carley with regards to rights of way and access as it feels like one has permanent concussion from constantly hitting ones head against a brick wall.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Apologies:</b></p> <p>Steve Plumb- Thurrock Council  David Fish – LAF Member – Sustrans Ranger  Bernard Smith – LAF Member – Thurrock Ramblers  Brian Hatcher – LAF Member – Thurrock Ramblers  Jenny Mann – LAF Member &amp; EBA Representative for Thurrock  Jon Lane – LAF Member &amp; Rambler &amp; Gateway Cycling Member</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting:</b></p>	
	<p><b>MO</b> Amendments required Page 2 from Essex County Council to Essex Records.</p> <p>Minutes then approved</p>	
	<p><b>4. Matters Arising</b></p>	
	<p><b>(A) Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan</b>  <b>PW read report on behalf of Steve Plumb</b></p> <p>Once again there has been little progress or information to report on as Highway England still continue to work their way through 30,000 consultation responses therefore there is still nothing specific to report on. When any information becomes available I will report back to the LAF.</p> <p><b>(B) Lower Thames Crossing</b>  <b>PW</b> Surveys of Thurrock’s Public Rights of Ways network are soon to take place with surveyors carrying a letter of authorisation from Highways England. The survey company will also be seeking necessary permissions to carry out camera surveys, where they may be requesting to fix cameras to highway authority property.</p> <p><b>MO</b> Provided members with copies of Highways England 2019 Project Interim Update document following their consultation at the end of 2018 and It would appear on page 16 that the public do not to seem care about the future of our public rights of way and it would seem Orsett residents are the most opposed to the road proposal.</p>	

**(C). Coastal Path – Natural England**

**AL** Additional plans have been received though they appear to be based along the same route as before. At present we are looking as to who is going to take the lead on this project.. at the moment it looks likely to be myself and Paula.

Should the implementation of the route fall within our remit this will create extra work load especially as a fellow senior engineer who over saw public rights site works has relocated to another department.

For advice and guidance we have been trying to contact Shirley Anglin at Essex County Council who is overseeing the route through Essex. As yet we are still trying to speak with Shirley.

**(D) PROW – Report it**

**AL** We have been trying for several months to devise a mapping and fault reporting system via mobile phones as we are no longer able to print our Public Rights of Way maps. Ideally this would allow those using Thurrock's Rights of Ways routes to report any issues they may come across.

**MO** Enquired if the system can be made to accept emails. **PW** said they would enquire.

**SD** This sounds great news and how are we intending to publish this? Does the Council have a newsletter for example or would we need big article in the local paper. **SS** Seconded this Report It as people just don't know how or where to report issues they have with regards to our rights of ways.

**Further suggestions made :-**

Those local farmers who have websites or are on face book advertise Report It.

Posters being placed on site **MO** Ideally an A4 leaflet to give out to those we meet whilst out walking.

Ask Essex Radio to do an article on this new app.

**SD** This is an item for our next meeting. Members to think of ways of getting the message out there.

**AL** A nice idea would be to try and link say George Young's farm at Fobbing with say Herd Lane School Corringham whereby the app could provide routes between the school and farm where Mr Young has spoken of creating a working educational farm.

**SS** Enquired was there a date in mind as to when this would go live. **AL** we will be looking around April / spring time

### **(E) Junes AOB Reports / Responses**

**(A) MO** Reported the required edge of field clearance of Footpath 95 had been undertaken.

**(B) JL** Questioned the validity of Dell Road one way system. **PW** On enquiring on behalf of JL was informed by Development & Transportation the one way system was legal.

**(C) SS** Common land North of Northumberland Road Linford being closed in by electric fencing. **AL** confirmed land is not common land. Private land owner details were provided.

**(D) SS** Princess Margaret Road Level Crossing light issue regarding Gobions Park **PW** Network Rail Level Crossing Manager has been Informed.

**(E) SS** Sought clarification on process for a possible accident claim Footpath 61.

**PW** To make an insurance claim resulting from a highway defect, precise details of the incident should be put in writing to Highways. Any invoices for repairs already carried out should also be included. All insurance claims received will be forwarded to our insurers, who will write to you direct.

You need to provide :

- The location, including town and street name and any landmarks that would help locate where the incident happened
- The date and time of the incident
- Details of the alleged loss suffered
- A description of the incident

**DF (F)** Via email – Reported overgrown bridleway within Davy Down. **PW** Confirmed an email had been sent to Grounds Maintenance asking for clearance works to be undertaken.

### **(5) Planning Applications**

None received in regards to Public Rights of Ways

### **(6) Footpath / Bridleway Issues:**

#### **(A) Rainbow Lane – User Evidence Forms**

**AL** Reminded members to complete and send in the above and to also ask others who may be able to assist by submitting evidence forms.

**(B) DP World Bridleway Creation Orders.**

**AL** Having not received any objections following the publication of the above informed the meeting documents are now with DP World and we are awaiting them to be signed off.

**SD** Once the formalities are over it would be nice for Essex Bridleway Association to have a photo opportunity if an official opening ceremony was held.

Maybe the Portfolio Holder for Highways could attend as well as Thurrock Gazette

**DF** Facebook is another good way to advertise these new multi user routes.

**SS** Enquired whether Rights of Way had a face book website if not he would be happy to help.

In addition we still seek evidence forms to be submitted to us proving use of the route via Rainbow Lane, crossing the railway track and then eastwards along land south of the railway track between BW 39 and BW 190.

**SS** Enquired the time scale for this information as he may have contacts who could assist. **AL** As quickly as possible as we have to work in conjunction with our legal team.

Mary Morris of Essex Legal Services name was provided as being very helpful on matters such as this.

**PW** This may be the right time to inform members that an apprentice has now been appointed to join Alison and I within the Public Rights of Way team and we are hopeful Luke is going to be of great assistance especially when it comes to IT issues such as setting up a website and the work needed setting up the Report proposal...

Ideally all Public Rights of Ways will be surveyed, spread sheets created for maintenance purposes especially in identifying edge and cross field routes, the identity of land owners re-confirmed to enable a produce for letters or emails to be sent out informing landowners of their responsibilities in keeping the routes open. We will also look into getting cross field routes treated by weed control **SD** Should land owners not comply DEFRA need to be informed as they have powers to reduce land owners funding.

**SD** Listening to member's enthusiasm it is nice to see this forum with such lifted spirits and let's hope we can start making residents aware of the rights of way through out their borough.

**(C) 2026 Deadline for the re-establishment of Public Rights of Ways**

**PWHR**

Up dated members on his endeavour to re-establish historic rights of ways by saying progress is slow, time consuming and costly requiring lots of information with having to visits various establishments to gain access to plans and then having to pay for copies but he hopes to be able to submit at least

	<p>one application in the near future. <b>SD</b> EBA will give you a £100.00 should you manage to re- establish a bridleway</p> <p><b>Capital Funding for Public Rights of Ways</b></p> <p><b>AL</b> With this year’s capital funding and Luke the apprentice now joining us it is hoped surveying will get underway to identify the need for ideally upgrading stiles to possibly gates for ease of access. Also new signage being erected with more way marker posts being erected and required bridge up grades.</p> <p><b>SD</b> The way marking of routes needs is to be encouraged to help users find their way as people won’t use the public rights of way if they are unsure where to go and are concerned they may mistakenly end up trespassing onto private land.</p> <p><b>SS</b> It would be beneficial for members to monitor their own patch around where they live to ensure signage, stiles and surfaces are in acceptable condition..</p> <p><b>Any other business:</b></p> <p><b>PWHR</b> Further to the Report It item as an idea Thames Chase publish circular activity walks detailing places of interest along the way with the length of walk and time anticipated to complete it. It would be good to get such routes published by Thurrock encouraging local people to use them and then hopefully they may take an interest in voluntary helping to keep them clear.</p> <p><b>SS</b> Referring back to Junes minutes he agreed with Madam Chairs wish to try and time manage the meetings in respect of Any Other Business items and it would work well with questions being sent in advance to allow time for PW &amp; AL to provide the information / response required as in</p> <p><b>PW &amp; AL</b> are more than happy to receive enquiries in advance of meetings enabling us time to provide a response which can then be included into the minutes.</p>	
	<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>Working Group Meeting Tuesday 10 December 2019</b></p> <p><b>Civic Offices – please note Committee Room 4 @ 7pm</b></p>	