

Meeting title: North East LAF Chairs

Minutes

Date 4 May 2017 **Start time** 2pm **Finish time** 4pm

Location Northumberland National Park Offices. Garden Room, Eastburn, South Park, Hexham.

Attendees

Amanda Earnshaw Chair Northumberland JLAF	Victor Cadaxa Chair T&W JLAF	Nigel Harrison V Chair T&W JLAF
Liz Bray V Chair T&W JLAF	Angela Johnson V Chair Durham LAF	

Apologies

Geoff Hughes Durham LAF	Beryl Bird Tees Valley LAF	Angela Tees Valley LF

Action points

Ref no.	Action	Owner	Due date
2	LAFs to make contact with their local Combined Authority and contribute to their transport plans	All LAFs	
3	Remind combined authorities of the statutory requirement to have Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Invite NECA to other LAFs and next Regional meeting.	All LAFs	
4	Request consultation on suggestion for joint working of the region's Rights of Way Officers	All LAFs	
5	Parks and green spaces – monitor and report any proposed changes in management at next regional meeting.		
6	National Conference request report back on future role of DEFRA & Natural England with LAFs and Access generally	LB	
9	Bring to next meeting, common problems with potential for advisory press releases	All LAFs	

Discussion

Agenda item	Discussion
1	Amanda agreed to chair, Liz to take minutes.
2	North East Combined Authority. VC reported on presentation to TWJLAF by Ian Coe. (See letter attached) Agreed that all NE LAFs need to engage with their combined authority as they are responsible for regional transport plans, in place of the local transport plans at county level. There is a Tees Valley Combined Authority. NECA needs better knowledge of how LAFs operate, ROWIPs and other non-motorised access matters, plus their role as a S94 body.

3	<p>ROWIPs T&W ROWIP has been revised by Tim Ducker, Sunderland R of Way Officer. It extends to 2021, but is enveloped within the 3rd Tyne & Wear Local Transport Plan. (Appendix D) LTP now to be superseded by a new Regional Transport Plan so need to ensure the ROWIP survives the process. Original (2007 -11) is still active as “parent” document to ROWIP 2 and contains much research and background. Original contains important appendices: Equestrian Strategy and “Missing Links” that JLAF does not want to lose.</p> <p>Durham ROWIP is a free-standing document and is reviewed annually by Victoria Lloyd but not thought to have been through a revision. Main emphasis is on walking and cycling.</p> <p>Northumberland ROWIP due to be revised this year by David Brookes Northumberland CC, in consultation with NJLAF. Contains an appendix on vehicle usage, BOATs and Restricted Byways.</p> <p>Note: Appointing Authorities MUST consult the LAF before making or revising ROWIPs. ROWIPs are a statutory requirement. The NE ROWIPs have different timespans but there are many features in common. (Ref AE’s recent analysis). Heath and wellbeing is becoming an increasingly important aspect for ROWIPs to address.</p> <p>Agreed ROWIPs are still central to work of LAFs and a statutory requirement. Natural England thought to be doing more work on regional access plans but there is a glaring gap at both regional and national strategic level which combined authorities could help to plug. Consider a regional “umbrella ROWIP”. Route connectivity is a big issue in our region. Durham & Northumberland will respond to the NECA letter to Tyne & Wear (tabled by Vc and copy attached) and request a presentation. Invite NECA to next regional meeting in autumn.</p>
4	<p>Rights of Way Officers discussions on joint working. Information previously circulated. Noted that John Bourn (NECA and T&W JLAF Administrator) is leading on this. LAFs have an interest and wish to be consulted. Sharing good practice would be supported.</p>
5	<p>Parks & Green Spaces LB outlined Newcastle Council proposals to establish a Community Trust to maintain a significant proportion of its parks, allotments and recreation grounds, though not all. The Trust has no endowment currently. Other councils known to be interested in following suit.</p> <p>Noted presence of many rights of way through public open spaces and potential implications if maintenance is reduced or changed, or in event of land sales or development by a charitable trust looking to raise funding.</p> <p>Durham has a Green Infrastructure Plan 2012. Other authorities will often have these as part of strategic planning documents.</p> <p>Agreed to maintain a watching brief.</p>
6	<p>Has LAF role changed? Discussion reflects the loss of support from Natural England (Jim Milner and regional co-ordinator) and the pressures on LAF appointing Authority officers. LAFs are not receiving many invitations for formal consultations from officers and are left to identify their own priorities and issues to address. Coast path and Forestry Commission still coming forward with consultation.</p> <p>International Advanced Manufacturing Park in Sunderland/S Tyneside referred to as good practice example, but initiated by JLAF members attending a consultation event.</p> <p>Sill Project in Northumberland also good practice.</p> <p>Major LNP landscape projects had no early LAF involvement, but coming aboard now. (Egs Land of Oak & Iron, Revitalising Redesdale)</p> <p>.</p> <p>Noted that LAFs have not yet received a Natural England/ DEFRA Annual Review form this year. (Due 30 June)</p> <p>Agreed to query role of Natural England & DEFRA – potential National Conference topic. LB to draft.</p>
7	<p>North East Local Nature Partnership Not discussed in detail in absence of GH. Noted “LNP Vision for Environmental Growth” and need to find out what this might mean for LAFs and access generally. (See attached draft for consultation.)</p>
8	<p>LAF Conference. National Conference new date welcomed and see item 6 above.</p>
9	<p>Regional press releases. DLAF produced a 2017 statement on sheep worrying. 2016 – advice on hedge cutting and preventing punctures for cyclists. Agreed these are useful advice and a way to publicise the LAFs, strong potential for joint working, and need input of</p>

	<p>officers. NJLAF has a press strategy. Other topics include Ground-nesting birds, courtesy on multi-user routes, Lost ways.. Agreed next regional meeting will look at 4 common problems and potential press releases</p>
10	<p>Discovering Lost Ways Sue Rogers' training session with Durham well received. She has a team of keen researchers with specialist skills. AJ reported that DLAF has a sub-group and Durham Officers have been very helpful. Northumberland JLAF parish initiative will help tackle historic routes. (Possible press release? See 9 above)</p>
11	<p>Vehicles on Rights of Way AE reported this is regularly on NJLAF agenda. (Trail bikes, Quad bikes, vehicles etc) Slaley Forest is a hot spot. Hadrians Way in Newcastle is problematic for motorcycles. Jet skis are a problem outside the authorised speed zone reaches of the R Tyne.</p>
12	<p>Coast path All LAFs consulted by Natural England project team.</p>
13	<p>AOB Regional routes – mapping. Possible project for NECA</p>
Date of Next meeting	<p>12 October 2017 2pm venue TBC</p>