

# **Tees Valley Local Access Forum**

## **AGM - Minutes**

**8<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 4:00-6:00pm**  
**Town Hall, Middlesbrough**

**Present:** Robin Daniels (Chair), Rob Brown (Vice Chair), Yvonne Ramage, Mike Roff, Chris Scaife, Malcolm Thompson, Beryl Bird, Stewart Williams, Councillor Carson, Graham Clingan, Mike Cherrett, Christine Corbett.

**Apologies:** Fiona Campbell, Judith Underwood, Graham Clingan, Rob Morrow, Councillor Rooney, David Reed, Deborah Jefferson.

**Observer:** Paul Harman.

### **1. Introductions and Welcome**

Robin (RD) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies – as above.**

### **3. Ratification of meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

Councillor Carson asked for the Minutes to reflect he had sent his apologies.

### **4. Matters arising**

4.1 The Sita Bid for North Gare had not been given Board approval. The fund had been 4x oversubscribed.

4.2 Top Ten training – subjects circulated and all agreed to progress. RoW Officers to lead on 10 minute training slots in two meetings per year.

4.3 CS briefly outlined the work to date with regard to the project at North Brierton Farm to manage the sheep worrying at that site. Whilst a PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) was being considered, a consultation process would begin once a way forward had been agreed by the landowners Messers JGM Brown and Son, the Hartlepool Borough Council and the Hartlepool Police. CS noted the Kennel Club had been included in the discussion, and were very positive about the process, and would be included in any future plans. At present signage is being discussed and a list of consultees drawn up.

### **5. Heritage Lottery Meeting Update**

RD, BB, Jim Milner (Natural England) and Dave McGlade (Northumberland Joint LAF) met with the Heritage Lottery Fund's Regional Director Ivor Crowther and Ellen Creighton Development Manager. The draft Minutes of the meeting have been circulated.

The outcomes agreed are:

1. HLF to provide examples nationally of access led projects
2. HLF to provide a copy of the template they use when prioritising projects, this would be circulated and completed amongst the LAFs and submitted to the HLF as support for local bids.

GC wondered if the trail was important would that make a difference to their position. RD outlined Heritage Lottery's support for Hadrian's Wall, but felt a different approach would

draw funding, that undoubtedly small 'h' heritage would create an imbalance in a bid as the costs for creating path surfaces would be higher, but found the HLF new found flexibility welcome. YR wondered if there was an opportunity for funding for the less able. RD thought they were not willing to move from their position of recognising others statutory responsibility, but would probably want to see the project envisaged. He cited the request from Natural England and Allen Banks. Councillor Carson asked about the limits of each grant scheme, RD described two funding streams up to £10K and up to £100K. CS and MT thought RoW are heritage in themselves. <https://www.hlf.org.uk/>

## **6. Chairman's Report and Regional Roundup**

RD thanked everyone for their support and help during his tenure at Chair; he had found the TVLAF work very interesting and a pleasure!

## **7. AGM - Election of Chair and Vice Chairs**

CS asked BB if there were any nominations for the posts of Chair and Vice Chairs.

BB said that Yvonne Ramage had been nominated for Chair and Rob Brown and Mike Roff for Vice Chairs.

Rob Brown nominated Yvonne Ramage for Chair and this was seconded by Mike Cherrett.

CS described the agreed need for two Vice Chairs to spread the load and gain greater experience.

Rob Brown was proposed by Yvonne Ramage and seconded by Robin Daniels.

Mike Roff was proposed by Mike Cherrett and seconded by Christine Corbett.

All accepted.

The AGM was closed.

## **1. Teesdale Way Update**

Graham Clingan, Greenspace Manager from Stockton on Tees Borough Council presented an update from all the partners involved in the work undertaken so far into the Teesdale Way. The papers describing this have been circulated.

SW from Middlesbrough Council described the work to support this bid underway:

- re-surfacing the riverside path between Teesaurus Park to Newport Bridge,
- a new entrance to Teesaurus Park linking to the Teesaurus Path,
- replacing 26 signposts along the route including 4 with route information,
- these would be installed April and May 2016.
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GC described the Redcar and Cleveland bid to replace the Tata Steel Bridge which cost £100K jointly funded with Coastal communities funding.

GC described the dredging works about to commence at Dabholm Beck; MR thought the area causes local difficulties as bird watchers enjoyed the bird species attracted to the flooded area, whilst the flooding caused hazardous access issues.

SW has produced maps of the River Tees area, detailing the loops off the Teesdale Way which could be used as promotional resources. GC described the links to the North Tees Trail. SW is also establishing links with partners in the North Pennines project area.

CS was interested in the final slide describing Issues – promotion, continued maintenance, links to the England Coast path and links to the community and local economy – and wondered if these could form the basis of another meeting to begin to address. YR asked if the Teesdale Way has National Trail status and would therefore enjoy the promotional and financial support provided by Natural England as well as appearing on OS maps; SW and CS thought it didn't but there were guide books and a web site promoting its use and it was a European trail. However as the scale of the path crossed several Local Authorities boundaries the production of promotional literature was problematic; a paper map enormous and unusable. GC thought that progress to a National Trail was slim, as national standards had to be met.

Paul Harman wondered if it was a function of local groups to promote 'their' sections of the Teesdale Way into their local communities, describing clear access to public transport. YR thought that view could usefully be added to a future meeting.

SW recognised that RTR should be attempting to establish a regional approach to the issue as it not simply one of promoting the route through the Teesside area. MR thought we should recognise how much progress has been made and that public transport and bus services are constantly subject to revision.

CG asked the meeting how important could this route be for local economic regeneration? He thought we need to make a case for local authority support but at the moment we appear to have little figures on usage. As the bid for City of Culture in 2025 takes shape with the links to Stockton and Darlington should it form part of that bid? We need more robust data demonstrating its value to the local community and the local economy.

Yvonne thanked Graham for his presentation.

*Action: To consider the need of promotion, continued maintenance and links to the England Coast Path, as the main agenda item for discussion next LAF meeting*

## **2. Members Activities**

### **2.1 Co-ordinate LAF Activity**

the Development Officer Report has been circulated.

### **2.2 Coastal Access**

GC and SW described the latest section of the England Coast Path (between Newport Bridge and Filey Brigg) due to go 'live' later this year. GC thought there remained funding difficulties in the route; some areas require bridging work and boardwalk. CS explained that the next consultation, for the section between North Gare and Newport Bridge runs from 23.3.16 - 18.5.16 with only landowners able to object. At a meeting last week, it was thought there would be 2 objections, but Natural England felt confident these could be overcome. The Planning Inspector would decide in autumn of this year, with final completion in 2017. SW said the route from Newport Bridge to the Transporter Bridge will use the existing cycleway.

GC thought the path will open up for the first time, a route through sensitive areas, giving the walker the opportunity to enjoy access to local wildlife; all future proofed when funding becomes available to upgrade the path into a cycleway.

### 2.3 RoWIP Review

SW believes Middlesbrough Council wish the RoWIP to be combined and would appreciate any advice from the Forum. CS combined Hartlepool Borough Council's RoWIP at the last review in 2011, with their Local Transport Plan which allows access to funding.

### 2.4 National Conference

MR attended the northern National Conference in Leeds on the 1.3.16. Mike's paper on the conference has already been circulated, and he added Cavers are requesting the Secretary of State to review the RoW legislation, as landowners and Local Authorities shouldn't be allowed to 'arbitrarily close' caves as it wasn't 'open air recreation'. MR detailed the conference interest in 2026 and the cut off date for additional routes to be registered. A discussion ensued about cycle tracks and bridleways.

*Action: BB to forward conference papers when available.*

### 2.7 Cycling strategy

Consultation papers are awaited from the Department for Transport.

### 2.8 River Tees Re-discovered

CC is responsible for the guided walks programme within this heritage Lottery project and was able to detail a number she is developing and running for this year; with Tees Archaeology, Teesside Archives, Local Historians, Botanists and Railway Ramblers taking in public transport. She is working with three volunteer walk leaders, tailoring walks around Walking Festivals and using Heritage Trail Routes. She is working with MT in Darlington, CS at Greatham Creek researching the houseboat community and training volunteers in Giant Hogweed control. She highlighted the funding that they are providing to community groups, who can apply for £1K to develop their own walking programme.

YR thanked CC for her update.

[http://riverteesrediscovered.org/?page\\_id=447](http://riverteesrediscovered.org/?page_id=447)

### 2.9 Tees Valley Local Nature Partnership

RB was able to confirm that there had been no meetings of this group, GC was able to add that an appointment had been made that day of a Co-ordinator, it was expected that once in place the meetings and work would re-commence. It was noted by CS that the Chair of the TVLNP was leaving the Hartlepool Borough Council, and a new Chair would need to be appointed.

### 2.11 Limestone Landscapes

CS and BB had attended the closing meeting of the Limestone Landscapes which had included a book launch.

### 2.13 Friends of TVLAF

The Sita bid for funding to support North Gare access had passed all local and regional hurdles had fallen at the final Board meeting. All other local Friends groups who had supported the bid had been informed; however it is unlikely we will be able to re-submit. The issue of poor access is now back with Hartlepool Borough Council.

### 2.14 Appointing Authority Planning

There had been only one major housing plan affecting a RoW and suggestions for creating a missing link via S106 had been made.

## 8. Rights of Way Officers Reports

8.1 No written report from Middlesbrough. SW was in the process of updating the Definitive Map, and re-classifying the network which would effectively double the RoW in

Middlesbrough. He is handling a BHS objection to the proposed width of a new Bridleway application at Nunthorpe.

8.2 Darlington – please see paper circulated.

8.3 Stockton on Tees – please see papers circulated

8.4 Hartlepool – please see papers circulated.

**9. Issues raised**

None reported.

**10. AOB**

None reported.

**11. Date of next meeting**

14th June 2016 at Darlington, 4:00pm - 5:30pm.

Meeting closed at 6.03pm