

TEES VALLEY LOCAL ACCESS FORUM



Fairy Dell, Middlesbrough Council by courtesy of Philip Barker



HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



DARLINGTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Middlesbrough
moving forward



Greatham Creek, Hartlepool Borough Council by courtesy of Stephen McColloch



The Whinnies, Darlington Borough Council by courtesy of Hugh Mortimer



Quarry Wood, Stockton on Tees Borough Council by courtesy of Mick Garratt

Chairman's Report

There are two HLF funded Landscape Partnership Projects in the Tees Valley LAF area at the moment; Limestone Landscapes and River Tees Rediscovered. One aspect of Limestone Landscapes will see improvements to the footpath network in the Hart and Elwick area of Hartlepool and complimentary to this the LAF has supported a 'Paths for Communities' bid by Elwick Parish Council to Natural England. River Tees Rediscovered is in the development phase at the moment and the Rights of Way Officers and members of the LAF are actively involved in this, particularly in relation to improvements to the Teesdale Way and Circular Trails linked to the Teesdale Way in Stockton-on-Tees, Darlington and Middlesbrough.

The Coastal Access Project, or as it is now known as 'The England Coast Path' in the area is moving towards approval between Hartlepool and Sunderland and the LAF is supporting steps to extend the route from North Gare at Hartlepool across the Tees Estuary to link with the Cleveland Way.

The TVLAF has also focussed on potentially hazardous crossing points where footpaths cross the rail network and it is encouraging to see that Network Rail has addressed some of these issues.

Regional working has continued, with joint work pledged between our neighbouring LAFs and the sharing of

good practice at the recent spring National Conference held in Sheffield.

Steve Scoffin, founder member and first Chair has retired, and we would like to thank him for his contribution and guidance over the years.

My thanks also go to the Rights of Way Officers across the Tees Valley and for the valuable contribution of all the TVLAF members.

Robin Daniels
Chair, Tees Valley Local Access Forum



Robin Daniels leading a local walk in Norton

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Business of the Forum

During the year, two full meetings have been held, with Working Groups meeting throughout the year.

Appointment of Members and membership period

At the AGM in March 2013 Robin Daniels was again voted in as Chairman, with Rob Brown, Vice Chair.



Training Courses

Whilst there were no formal training exercises during the year, Tyne and Wear LAF hosted an Urban LAFs Workshop in November 2012 at Newcastle on Tyne Civic Centre, with attendance from Natural England, to discuss the differences in operation between urban and rural LAFs.

Dates of previous meetings

1st October 2012, the general meeting took place at Thornaby, Stockton on Tees.

18th March 2013, the AGM took place at the Town Hall, Middlesbrough.

Full meetings are generally preceded by walks around the local area, with an opportunity to see recent improvements in place. In October 2012 Officers guided members around the recently improved Thornaby Trail, between the busy A19 and local housing.

Presentations

In October 2012, **Graham Clingan, Countryside & Greenspace Development Manager** described the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Stockton on Tees. The Delivery Plan, which is fully costed, is being progressed through Partnership Boards, Town and Parish Councils, with sections becoming live when the funding is in place; most recently this has included a route from Preston Park to Hartburn.



Preston Park overlooking the River Tees by courtesy of Mick Garratt

The meeting also discussed the Coastal Path access issue; choosing the most appropriate crossing for the River Tees. All interested groups had been consulted by Natural England, including the LNP River Tees Re-Discovered, the North Tees Natural

Network and Coastal Communities group.

The AGM on the 18th March 2013 at Middlesbrough Town Hall, included an LNP River Tees Re-discovered Access Audit, led by **Vicky Haire of Groundwork** –identifying the most interesting and appropriate paths linked to the Teesdale Way promotion. All Rights of Way Officers from the TVLAF marked up routes leading into sites of interest along the River Tees from Piercebridge to the mouth of the river.



Teesdale Way at High Coniscliffe by courtesy of Chris Heaton

Rights of Way Improvement Plans

ROWIP Action Plans have been moving throughout the year. Rights of Way Officers from each Local Authority have been applying for a wide range of funding opportunities to assist with the development of new access projects, improving and upgrading paths, cycleways and bridleways.

The River Tees Re-Discovered Project is a collaboration between all of the TVLAF Local Authorities and is a Landscape Partnership Bid supported by HLF.

HLF have also supported the Limestone Landscapes Bid in Hartlepool, with the creation of new access at Hart and Elwick villages. In addition, Hartlepool Borough Council together with Elwick Parish Council have created a route around Elwick with assistance from Paths for Communities and Limestone Landscapes.

The Natural England Coast Path is a result of collaboration between the Borough Councils of Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees.

Consultations

The topics listed here include Consultations, Planning Applications and papers circulated for information.

March 2012

Potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Show People, Darlington Borough Council

April 2012

Traffic Orders Simplifying the Process

May 2012

Draft Coastal Access Sunderland, Durham, Hartlepool

DEFRA – Improvements to the Policy & Legal framework for PROW

Middlesbrough Council Issues & Options Housing Review

National Trails – Future Management

June 2012

Middlesbrough Council Leven Street Gating Orders

Darlington Borough Council Town Centre Fringe Masterplan

July 2012

Hartlepool Borough Council Schedule of Changes to Local Plan

Stockton on Tees Borough Council Regeneration & Environment Local Development

Darlington Borough Council Planning
Obligations – Supplementary
August 2012

Wynyard Planning Application
Housing

September 2012

Middlesbrough Council, Urban
Design Consultation

Darlington Borough Council
Green Infrastructure

October 2012

Middlesbrough Council Stop-up
Order Longridge Wood

MoD Open Access Arrangements

December 2012

Wynyard, Woodland View
Development



Wynyard plans in Stockton on Tees and
Hartlepool

January 2013

Middlesbrough Council Preferred
Options

Coastal Access Final Consultation

February 2013

Defra review of Natural England
Wynyard, Development sites x 2

March 2013

Tees Lowlands National Character
Profile

Marketing the Forum

Despite the inclement weather a
limited number of events were
attended;

P4C Natural England hosted event at
Summerhill 23rd May 2012



Coastal Access Launch by Natural
England at Durham County Council
29th May 2012

Limestone Landscapes Festival at
Herrington County Park 16th June 2012

BBC Green Event at Ward Jackson
Park, Hartlepool 22nd June 2012

**Tees Valley Local Nature Partnership
Launch** at Cowpen Bewley Woodland
Park, 12th September 2012

Planning Inspector, Assessing
Hartlepool Local Plan January 2013

Working Groups

The two Working Groups of the
Forum are in good shape and are able
to act quickly when demanded.

The **Access Working Group** led by
Judith Underwood, have built on the
themes identified by the Forum
members to support ROWIP
implementation across the Tees
Valley. Stockton on Tees Borough
Council have had particular success in
discussions with Network Rail in
agreeing the required boarding of

crossings to allow for the safe passage of horses.



The **Funding/Marketing Working Group** led by Deborah Jefferson has also made considerable progress. Taking guidance from the Access WG, the Friends are tracking sources of funds to assist the Rights of Way Teams in the Appointing Authorities.

Regional Working

Robin Daniels and Steve Scoffin (Vice Chair of Durham LAF) were re-elected Chair and Vice Chair respectively of the **north east Region Local Access Forum** in the spring of 2012.

Three meetings have been held during the year of the north east Region Local Access Forum and issues agreed included support given to the Landscape Partnership Bids across the north east, leading to three successful bids. Presentations from **Dr Sue Antrobus, Development Manager Tees Valley LNP**, and **Jim Cokill, Director Durham Wildlife Trust** clarified the bids across the north east, enabling strategic support to be made.



Tees Valley Nature Partnership logo

The first wholly LAF managed **National Conference**, hosted by Defra and Natural England was held on the 28th February 2013 in Sheffield. Full papers are available on the Natural England web site <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/7685821>

The National Conference covered such knotty issues as the differences between Urban & Rural LAFs, updates in Disability Access, Impact of Cuts, and Local Nature Partnership Working, with Natural England and Defra bringing the Conference up-to-date with developments in Coastal Access and P4C.

Steve Scoffin



Steve Scoffin

Steve Scoffin retired from the TVLAF during the year, as founder member and first Chair he was instrumental in the success of the work of the Forum. As Regional Vice Chair, Vice Chair at Durham and member of the NYMNP Local Access Forum his influence was

felt across the north east. We all wish him well as the 'Moor Than Meets the Eye' Project Manager at Dartmoor National Park where we are assured he is unavailable for Local Access Forum responsibilities! He did however agree to open the spring National Conference.

Membership

Rob Brown

Rob farms on the outskirts of Hartlepool and joined the Forum to help put both the broader farming perspective as regards ROW, and the experience of farming on the urban fringe.

Robin Daniels

As Head of Tees Archaeology, Robin has developed a service which promotes and encourages opportunities for people to become involved in the heritage of the area.

Michael Higgins

After working for some years on oil exploration and around the world as a driller, Michael came home and worked as a Production Engineer for 12 years.

Deborah Jefferson

Deborah heads the Hartlepool Borough Council Countryside Warden team, responsible for the management of five nature reserves in Hartlepool.

Fiona Campbell

Fiona joined the TVLAF to assist in the development & improvement of access to the rural environment for people of all abilities, as a voice for the disabled community.

Peter Jennings

Peter works at the Middlesbrough Enterprise Centre, helping to set up small businesses. He is a member of Friends of Elm Tree Wood.

Norman Leslie

Norman is a retired veterinarian and an active member of the YHA, Ramblers Association & Stockton Ramblers.

David Leyshon

David is a long standing member of the Ramblers Association, Open Spaces Society and Stockton Rambling Club.

Michael Roff

A retired Chartered Engineer, Michael is a keen walker and cyclist. His particular interest is to try to eliminate 'missing links'.

Judith Underwood

Judith has worked in the environment sector for over 10 years, working on physical environmental improvement projects with Groundwork.



Judith Underwood

Membership of the Forum

Rob Brown	Landowner
Fiona Campbell	Other
Robin Daniels	Other
Michael Higgins	User
Deborah Jefferson	Other
David Leyshon	User
Steve Scoffin	Retired
Norman Leslie	User
Peter Jennings	User
Michael Roff	User
Judith Underwood	Other

Councillor Cath Hill
Hartlepool Borough Council Retired

Councillor J Lauderdale
Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor Dot Long
Darlington Borough Council
Councillor Michael Smith
Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Councillor Nicola Walker
Middlesbrough Council

Malcolm Thompson ROW Officer
Darlington Borough Council
Chris Scaife ROW Officer
Hartlepool Borough Council
Rob Morrow ROW Officer
Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Stewart Williams ROW Officer
Middlesbrough Council

TEES VALLEY
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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Middlesbrough
moving forward




Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



www.teesvalleylocalaccessforum.co.uk