CORNWALL COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM (CCAF)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2015

Date: Tuesday 21 April 2015
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Grenville Room, Cornwall Council, County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY

Present: Nick Jeans (Chairman), Julie Bate (Vice-Chairman), Patrick Aubrey-Fletcher, Adrian Bigg, Steve Church, Terry Faull, Bob Fraser and Jacqueline Merrick

Apologies: Tony Blumenau, Jim Candy CC, Joyce Duffin CC, Howard Farmer, Ian Kemp and James Scobie

Minute no		**Action by**
CAF/47	**Declarations of Interest (On matters included in the agenda)** The following declaration of interest was expressed:- (i) CAF/46 – Newham Trail – Proposal to Tarmac – the Chairman declared an interest in this item by virtue of him being a member of the Truro Running Club.	Secretary's Representative
CAF/48	**Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 January 2015 (For accuracy)** It was **RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum held on 27 January 2015 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.	Secretary's Representative
CAF/49	**Matters Arising (Not otherwise included in the agenda)** (i) **CAF/27 (ix) Sustainable transport links** – With reference to the major development underway on Tresillian side of Truro and the provision of a cycleway, the Chairman provided the Forum with an update on the current situation and the issue with regard to the lack of allocated funding for a cycleway. It was ***agreed*** that the Natural Environment Manager would continue to investigate and report back any developments at the next meeting. (ii) **CAF/29 (ii) CAF/6 (v) Access Restrictions by the Forestry Commission** – The Chairman provided the Forum with an	JJ

		update on the current situation regarding access restrictions by the Forestry Commission, he informed the Forum that he had now spoken to John Ebsary, Forestry Commission. The Forum was advised that John Ebsary had indicated that he would again be approaching Natural England with a view to them indicating Public Rights of Way on access restrictions. Further to this issue, reference was made to the closure window referred to by Natural England and whether anything could be done to narrow the closure window. A further reply from John Ebsary was awaited.	
	(iii)	**CAF/33 – Consultation: Connecting Cornwall 2030: Implementation Plan for 2015-2019- Response Ratification** – The Forum asked if Connecting Cornwall had replied to the Forum's Consultation response, to which the acting Secretary's Representative replied that she was unaware. The Chairman undertook to raise the matter with the appropriate officers.	Chairman
	(iv)	**CAF/37 – Consultation on Policy on Vegetation Management on Bridleways and Other Rights of Way – Update –** The Forum was advised that the results of the Asset Condition Survey had been completed, a copy of the Survey was circulated to the Forum.	
	(v)	**CAF/40 – Tourism and Rural Access in Cornwall (TRAC) Project Update** – The Forum referred to the TRAC Project and it was noted that the final report had previously been circulated to Members.	
	(vi)	**CAF/46 – Newham Trail – Proposal to Tarmac** – The Forum was advised that a debate was still ongoing regarding the proposal to tarmac a section of the Newham multi use trail, and whether this should be a tarmac or a porous surface. The Forum was of the opinion that the funding would be better spent on improving drainage and repairing the pot holes along the multi use trail.	
	(vii)	**CAF/27 – Cabinet re-shuffle** – The Forum noted that Councillor Joyce Duffin had submitted her apologies for todays meeting. The Forum referred to the importance of developing a relationship with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environment. It was ***agreed*** that the Chairman would arrange to	Chairman

	meet with Councillor Joyce Duffin to put forward the case for the Countryside Access Forum.	
CAF/50	**Chairman's Announcements** The Chairman made the following announcements, which the Forum ***agreed*** to note: (i) Hilary Winter, South West Regional Co-ordinator – The Chairman advised that the role of South West Regional Co-ordinator had been terminated. The Forum was advised that Hilary Winter would continue to work for the Devon Countryside Access Forum and had indicated that she would be try to continue some of her role acting as a clearing house for neighbouring forums. The Forum discussed the role of Natural England and their involvement with Access Forums. (ii) Vacancies/Appointments to the Countryside Access Forum – It was ***agreed*** that the Secretary's Representative send a reminder to the retiring Members of the Forum that they would need to re-apply to continue membership of the Access Forum. (iii) Closure of Level Crossings – The Countryside Access Team Leader informed the Forum that no specific requests had been received from Network Rail.	Secretary's Representative
CAF/51	**Working Group Updates (Verbal reports from the Chairman of each of the following Working Groups:)** Forum members considered updates from the Chairmen of each Working Group:-	
CAF/52	**Rights of Way and Definitive Map Working Group** Adrian Bigg provided the Forum with an update on the work of the Rights of Way and Definitive Map Working Group since the last meeting. He advised that it was proposed to work with the Countryside Access Team Leader to develop the Group. The Countryside Access Team Leader advised that it was intended to undertake an internal review of the Modification Order process and that it would be possible to work with Group with a view to providing a report for the summer meeting.	ROWDMWG/ME
CAF/53	**Coastal Access Working Group** Steve Church (on behalf of James Scobie) informed the Forum that the Coastal Access Working Group had not met since the last Forum meeting. The Forum was provided with an update on the current position with Natural England's Coast Path proposals and the estimated timetable for implementation in Devon and Cornwall (in stages) as given by NE,	

	which was between 2015 and 2017.	
CAF/54	**Consultation Response Working Group** Consideration was given to the Forum's Consultation Response Working Group in respect of the Cornwall Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document. Arising from consideration of the briefing note the Forum referred to the following issues:- (i) the impact of renewable energy developments on the Public Rights of Way, it was commented that the Local Planning Authority was granting temporary consent for renewable energy schemes (up to 25 years), however, public rights of way diversions to accommodate such schemes were permanent. The Ramblers Association had suggested that the Local Planning Authority should only consider such diversions if an equivalent or improved diversion could be implemented. The Countryside Access Team Leader responded to the comment and highlighted that there would be a need for Policy Framework to be in place to support such a suggestion; (ii) reference was made to the proximity of wind turbines to horse riders and the need to ensure that the suggested separation distance of 200m as suggested by the British Horse Society be adhered to by the Local Planning Authority which he believed was not always the case. The Forum was reminded that the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum had a detailed position statement in respect of wind turbines; (iii) the Countryside Access Team Leader informed that Forum that the Local Planning Authority had a duty to consult on planning applications which were within 10metres of the Public Right of Way, it was questioned whether this was always adhered to by the Local Planning Authority. It was ***agreed*** that the response in the Chairman's Briefing Note was confirmed as the Forum's Consultation Response to the Cornwall Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document.	
CAF/55	**Moorland and Open Access Working Group** Julie Bate advised that a letter had been sent to the Chief Executive of Cornwall Council seeking resources to provide an Access Strategy. The Countryside Access Team Leader advised that would be working with the Natural Environment Manager to provide a response on behalf of the Chief Executive. The Chairman in referring to the Bodmin	

	Commoners Association, advised that the Association had been established by Parliament as a Council. It was suggested that further information be sought on the establishment and membership of the Council. It was ***agreed*** that Patrick Aubrey-Fletcher and Julie Bate would investigate the current position and report back to the Forum.	
CAF/56	**Asset Condition Survey - Update** The Natural Environment Manager outlined his report regarding the Natural Environment Comprehensive Asset Survey and outcome of Public Rights of Way and multi use trails. The report set out the findings to date which would allow the Service to develop a better understanding of assets and respond to defects which were picked up. Reference was made to the headline figures and it was stressed that these should be put into context, and that category 1 defects would be dealt with within 24 hours, it was important to specify that safety was of paramount importance and that aesthetics were a secondary issue. The information in the Asset survey would be used to justify future investments. In response to issues raised in debate, the Natural Environment Manager provided details of the format and system used for recording assets, the timetable for publishing the results of the survey, resources and financial implications of undertaking works identified, reporting mechanism for works, the different types of asset, investment in ongoing maintenance, how results had been recorded, how the survey could be used to provide an ongoing record and history of assets, how maintenance works linked with the category of footpath. Further to the above reference was made to the involvement of the Ramblers Association to provide data for a survey of the footpaths. The Forum welcomed the opportunity for a 6 monthly or annual update on the Assets Survey and suggested that it would be useful, if at the next meeting, a plan could be provided regarding how it was proposed to make improvements and the availability of resources. It was ***agreed*** that the Natural Environment Manager would provide a plan for the next meeting regarding how it was proposed to make improvements to the assets and availability of resources.	JJ

CAF/57	**Trawl of Interest from Forum Members in Membership of the Moorland and Open Access Working Group** The Forum agreed that it would be more appropriate to revisit the membership of the Moorland and Open Access Working Group following the recruitment exercise when new members had been appointed. It was ***agreed*** that the membership of the Moorland and Open Access Working Group be revisited at the Forum meeting in July 2015.	
CAF/58	**Trawl of Interest from Forum Members to Set Up/Provide Workshops for Town and Parish Councils** Further to the decision at the last Forum meeting in respect of options to improve communication of the work of the Forum with Town and Parish Councils, the Forum was advised that the Secretary's Representative had made contact with the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (CALC). The Forum was requested to consider who would be available to respond to any interest that arose from a Town and Parish Council. Arising from the above, the Natural Environment Manager and Countryside Access Team Leader referred to proposed work with the Town and Parish Councils to discuss Modification Orders and to research missing Public Rights of Way. Julie Bate, Jacqueline Merrick and Patrick Aubrey-Fletcher indicated that they could assist in their areas of the County. The Chairman advised that in the event that approach was received from Town and Parish Councils Forum members may be contacted to assist.	
CAF/59	**Cornwall AONB General Meeting - Feedback from Forum Members Attending** Jacqueline Merrick provided the Forum with an update on the Cornwall AONB General Meeting which she had attended with James Scobie. She referred to the issues raised at the meeting and the providing details of the workshops. In the ensuing debate reference was made the review of the AONB Management Plan and that the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum would be invited to comment on the Management Plan in due course. In discussions, Julie Bate advised the Forum that the official opening of a 2km path had taken place at	

	Easter following an agreement for a 40 year lease of land from Antony Estate to provide the path, which would provide a link around the village. This scheme had not been eligible for Paths for Communities (P4C) scheme funding, so funding had been sought elsewhere by Sheviock Parish Council.	
CAF/60	**Strategic Plan for Trail Development** Consideration was given to the Chairman's Briefing Note in respect of the Strategic Plan for Trail Development.. Arising from consideration of the briefing note the Forum referred to the following issues:- (i) the level of work required to achieve a Strategic plan for Trail Development; (ii) it was commented that whilst the LTP contained a number of proposals both current and for the future, they appeared to be planned on a piecemeal basis, without any strategic overall route plan; (iii) the connected schemes for the County appeared to be urban routes in response to locally perceived shortcomings or missing links; (iv) there were issues with making connections; for example, cycling plans failed to consider horse riders; (v) the LTP appeared to be aimed at 'getting to work' and smaller local schemes, there did not appear to be any connection with the strategic network; (vi) reference was made to the Forum making an approach to the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership to seek funding for a joined up approach and to provide an improved access for inland areas; (vii) it was noted that Devon had a Strategic Plan for Trail Development; (viii) reference was made to the lack of links with public transport and where there were links the availability of space to accommodate bicycles; (ix) there was a suggestion that it would benefit the Forum if a number of projects were identified and ready to draw down any available funding. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Jacqueline Merrick and ***agreed*** that :- The Forum, noting the apparent absence of any long term strategic planning for the extension of the County's multiuse trail network, advises the Council, that in order :-	

	1. To improve the network to the greater advantage of residents and visitors alike, both for health and recreation; 2. To achieve, eventually, continuous long distance routes connecting to the adjoining county of Devon, and 3. To be in a position to avail the County of future funding opportunities, the Council should, as a first phase draw up a long term integrated Strategic Plan for Trail Development, with a carefully thought out overall route map covering the County, with links to existing trails and cycle routes. Furthermore, once the overall plan had been agreed, the Council should prioritise and prepare a limited number of projects against the eventuality of the future availability of funding. Project proposals should be designed to provide facilities of an adequate standard and include provision for future maintenance.	
CAF/61	**CCAF Work Programme** The Forum gave consideration to the report circulated at the meeting regarding the CCAF Work Programme for Summer and Autumn 2015. The Countryside Access Team Leader highlighted the topics for which advice from the Forum would be sought. In addition to those projects identified in the Work Programme, it was ***agreed*** that the following Projects be included in the next Work Programme:- (i) Asset Survey – Update/progress report together with an Asset Survey Plan to be timetabled for Summer 2015; (ii) AONB – an invitation be extended to Collette Beckham to discuss with the CCAF the Draft AONB Management Plan to be timetabled for Summer 2015; (iii) Sustainable Town Transport Strategy – an invitation be extended to Rebecca Salmon to discuss with the CCAF the Sustainable Town Transport Strategy to be timetabled for Autumn 2015. The Forum noted that the Public Open Spaces Strategy would be timetabled for Winter 2015. Arising from the above the Forum discussed the statutory roles of DEFRA and NE in terms of Countryside Access and their roles as Section 94 bodies. In response to which it was ***agreed*** that the following Projects be added to the Work Programme:- (iv) Jon Holmes (Natural England) be invited to attend a future meeting of the CCAF;	ME

	(v) Neil Constable (DEFRA) be invited to attend a future meeting of the CCAF. The Forum commented that they were disappointed regarding the lack of response from Section 94 bodies and that there was a need to highlight with them that the CCAF had not been consulted as a Statutory Consultee on certain consultations.	
CAF/62	**Date, Time and Venue of Future Meetings** The dates and times of future meetings were noted.	
CAF/63	**Business which the Chairman Considers to be Urgent** There were no items of urgent business to be considered.	

The meeting ended at 4.50 pm.

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