



Minutes

Date:	28th October 2025
Time:	13:00 – 16:00
Location:	NCH Grenville Room / Microsoft Teams
Chair:	David Cooper (DC)
Vice Chair:	Shelley Barratt (SB)
Attendees:	Cllr Julian German (JG), Cllr Steve Webb (SW), Steve Church (SC), Rob Knill (RK), Jeremy Elvins (JE), Jim Hancock (JH), Paul Rabbeth (PR), Phil Allen (PA), Jon Rowell (JR), Tim Passmore (TP), Charlotte Evans (CE), Donald Martin (DM), Dave Wood (DW), Susan Parker (SP)
Apologies:	Cllr Karen LaBorde, Kay Driver, Bill Makin, Jim Flashman, Martin Howlett

1. Welcome and Introductions

DC opened the meeting welcoming Tim Passmore (TP) as the new CLAF Secretariat for Cornwall Council and Susan Parker (SP), prospective CLAF member and member of Trail Riders Fellowship, as an observer. All attendees introduced themselves.

A vote of thanks was recorded for Tanya Bicknell in her role as Secretariat for previous meetings.

2. Presentations

a. Enhanced LMP (Dave Wood)

DW handed out copies of the Enhanced LMP 2025 – 2026 specification and explained its operation and current status (copies of Specification and Presentation slides provided to Members).

Questions arising:

- SB asked for clarification on the distinction between Enhanced LMP and the normal LMP. DW responded that normal LMP only covers surface clearing on gold and some Silver PROW (at the discretion of each Parish/Town), Enhanced LMP allows more in depth works, i.e. surface improvements or extensive side growth.
- DC questioned why many parish councils haven't got involved, either with LMP or ELMP? DW responded that there are various reasons why councils decide not to participate in LMP and noted that local councils must already be in LMP in order to qualify for ELMP. The spread in ELMP is quite good; 35 applications have been processed, and 10 more parishes are considering, showing that interest is growing. RK noted that volunteer fatigue is a very real constraint. DW also observed that it just needs one member in each parish to take a lead and get the ball rolling.
- JG asked for clarification on the financial figures quoted. CE stated that £110k was included in the initial programme of ELMP. £330k is the current budget for this year, of which £230k has been committed so far. CE also advised that the budget is only allocated on a year-by-year basis, and this makes it hard to forecast properly for long-term projects.
- SB suggested there may be a need to simplify the system. RK stated that DW has now addressed that issue and the process does seem logical upon reflection. DW agreed that changes had been made to make their process as straightforward as possible.

All members thanked DW for his contributions; DW left the meeting.

b. RoWIP Update (Charlotte Evans)

CE made her presentation (copy provided to Members) providing an update on the RoWIP process since the last meeting. CE reported as particularly useful engagement with the Youth Council which had highlighted specific issues with that cohort's use and access to PROWS.

In addition, a focus group meeting had been held with Town and Parish Councils.

Questions/matters arising:

- DC suggested that it would be good for CLAF to engage with the Cornwall Youth Council and asked CE to facilitate how we could do this, recognising that safeguarding issues would need to be addressed.

ACTION: CE/DC – identify a suitable representative from Cornwall Youth Council to work with CLAF.

- Recognising the problems associated with the DMMO application backlog, JR asserted that the idea of bundling DMMO orders together by area/parish was a non-starter from a legal perspective.
- Stakeholder written submissions are starting to come in now, including from British Horse Society. SB has submitted the CLAF response. The Ramblers submission has not been received yet.

ACTION: PR to chase Ramblers for formal submission.

- RK made the point that people want perfection, but they won't get it. As such, it is imperative that the plan identify when something is not possible, so that expectations match with reality.
- DC pointed out that it is now becoming clear that youngsters want signage to help them feel safe exploring the countryside, but signage is low on CORMAC priorities. DM stated that CORMAC's priority is safety but that this should extend to signage as well. They are doing a better audit of where signs are missing and proactively supporting local groups to put signs up.
- SB reiterated that the prioritisation matrix is flawed, and this needs to be looked at again, because the priorities clearly aren't right. After RoWIP there will be a revisit and review of the processing systems for what is done on the ground.
- SW asked if any other groups are under-represented in the responses? CE said that landowners are, but they don't currently want to engage in the process. It needs to go to formal consultation and then we may get some traction with them. At the moment, their fear is that they will have to start managing the PROW on their land.

JR added that he had received no response from CLA (Country Land and Business Association) to an invitation to join the Forum. CE has also written to them without response.

SW asked about Cornwall Young Farmers - CE is waiting to chase up with them. County Farms also received the details but are not responsive.

DC mentioned that The National Trust (BM) are not regularly attending CLAF, same for other landowner representatives so the RoWIP is also unlikely to get the required representation level from them.

RK suggested that we need to give the Duchy, Tregothnan, St Aubyn etc more visibility over these plans. CE will try getting the big landowners to commit to

RoWIP again and make them aware of the forum. JE suggested having a landowner-focussed CLAF meeting once per year maybe, to try and encourage more landowner participation in that one meeting.

ACTION: CE to contact landowners directly.

- It was noted that Natural England oversee RoWIP so are involved and answer questions around access land, but it can be hard to get them to engage properly in the details.
- World Heritage are also being consulted.

CE was thanked for her useful update and left the meeting.

PA had to leave early but wanted to raise the topic of Community Area Partnerships (CAP) as there has been a longstanding project to provide all parish councils with information to introduce CLAF and advise on how they can manage their public rights of way. The WG has re-issued a draft proposal for Feock that JE helped create but now need to issue a calendar of presentations to all CAPs.

DC and JR informed the group that they attended the Roseland CAP earlier in the month and this should help inform the process. In addition, both were willing to attend other CAPs if required.

Action: PA to look at DC/JR presentation and send through his presentation for Feock. Aim to sign off by January 2026 and then send out afterwards, providing a timeline in the presentation.

JR also advised that people are more interested in maintenance of PROWs than the legal side, so need to think carefully about what people want to hear about.

PA left the meeting.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

- Previous minutes – 28/07/25 adopted, and approved unopposed
- TP confirmed that e-cards have been sent to Victoria and Nick, thanking them for their contributions to CLAF
- No responses to JT request regarding expense claim information. It was agreed that expenses should be submitted once a year, in early March; claims would be dealt with in the most efficient way, normally through Petty Cash. Members wishing to claim expenses should agree with JR. **ACTION: SB and JR** to discuss offline after meeting.

4. **Changes to Membership / Appointment of New Members**

- a. JE has been reassigned to the landowner classification
- b. SP application received
- c. It was clarified that Forum Members sit as individuals rather than representatives from organisations.
- i. **ACTION: JR/DC** to review Defra guidance on this point.

5. **Cornwall Council Update (Jon Rowell)**

a. **PROW Roles & Responsibilities**

Overall structure of the different teams at Cornwall Council:

- JR and TP are members of the PROW Team, which is part of Regulatory Services, in the Community Wellbeing Directorate.
- DW and CE (and Adam Chell) are all part of the Countryside Team, in the Environment Service.
- So, there is a distinction between legal matters (Regulatory Services) and maintenance matters, but we all work incredibly closely together (despite being located in different offices)
- The third party is CORMAC – they are the countryside officers who deliver on the ground.

PROW Team structure:

- JR and Emma Walker are Team Leaders
- 3 Assistant PROW Officers who are mainly responsible for processing Public Path Orders (PPOs) – where private individuals ask for paths to be diverted or extinguished
- 4 PROW Officers who are mainly responsible for Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)
- TP is Senior Technical Officer, supporting all other members of the team
- Currently 359 DMMOs on the register (a large number but many other local authorities have even more) which means we have to manage expectations – people expect a quick resolution but, in some cases, it might take up to 15-20 years.
- 67 of those DMMOs are currently in processing and of those, 17 are with the Secretary of State. 11 of those are active, and this is the point at which resource requirements ramp up massively, in order to prepare for public inquiries. The remaining 6 are still pending, and it can sometimes take up to two years between submitting a case to the SoS and that case reaching public inquiry.
- Under provisions in the Highways Act 1980, 9 PPOs have been made recently, 5 of which still have objections outstanding that the Council has failed to resolve

so have been submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation. 8 more PPOs are at the alert stage (i.e. identified that a path is obstructed) and need to be processed. 17 PPOs have been completed so far this year, of which 11 are certified on the ground (i.e. the path is open and available to our specification, so the Order has been brought into force). This last part (certification on the ground) can take years and is very frustrating for our team as we have little power to enforce the changes on the ground are completed in a timely fashion.

- Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 there are currently 6 cases at the alert stage, 1 PPO has been made which has been subject to objection and 11 PPOs have been completed, including 10 Orders brought in force.
- The PPO Team has also been working on a project to certify old cases that had stalled, often for a decade or more, and this has resulted in a further 21 Orders being brought into force generating not insignificant income for the PROW Team.
- As a power rather than a duty and therefore a discretionary function PPOs are chargeable to the landowner and we have published a new Fee Table on our website, introducing a system of payment where costs are recovered at each stage in the process, hopefully encouraging applicants to continue to pursue their diversions rather than letting them languish.
- The PROW team are also responsible for Commons Applications, and we received 101 of these in December 2020 for areas of land which were provisionally registered in 1965 but where registration was cancelled. 47 of these are currently in processing, 20 of which are with the Planning Inspectorate awaiting determination. We estimate having all 101 cases dealt with in the next 2-3 years, but it is chewing up significant resources.

Questions arising:

- DC noted that some of the information on the website on PPOs is inconsistent with what is actually happening. JR said that a lot of these are due to teething problems because all Assistant PROW officers are completely new to the team and to PROW in general. The Council also doesn't publish all of the early-stage consultations as it's often not very helpful - the first time a case appears on the website is usually after the decision is made.
- DC stated that early consultation with organisations such as Ramblers is beneficial and will avoid issues arising after the decision has been made.
- JE asked when it would be best to start processing Orders for Imerys' new paths. JR advised that it is always better if the alternative path was already constructed and physically existed on the ground, as this avoids a third certification stage which can be combined at the second stage by bringing the new path into force upon confirmation. So best to build them as a permissive path and then apply to have them dedicated as a PROW.

Thanks offered to JR from all members for the detailed numbers. The increased output from the team, as a result of recent staff additions, was also noted by DC.

b. Planning Consultations

This is deferred to the next meeting as Emma Walker had contributed some useful figures to highlight the PROW Team's current workloads and JR considered the focus on planning and PROW would benefit from a detailed discussion with the forum.

6. Cormac Update (Donald Martin)

- The revenue budget programme is currently in a fairly strong position going into the winter period, with over 50% committed and sufficient budget remaining to see us through the winter period.
- Cormac have been working with Cornwall Council to set out an emergency response around major storm events and how that might be enacted. But broadly speaking, the main programmes around cutting have been completed across the South West Coast Path (SWCP) and we're now working towards our winter maintenance programmes, including proactive surfacing, drainage clearance, hard vegetation cutting etc.
- In terms of capital expenditure, of the £1.8 million that's been earmarked for this year, about 50% has already been spent, but £1.6 million (88%) committed. So, the programme is in a strong position moving into the second half of the year.
- The process is extended as not only do the schemes have to be identified in the first instance, the works packages drawn up, liaise with the engineers, but the Council then has to work with the landowners and delivery teams in terms of ensuring those projects are being completed and managed effectively.
- Of the notable projects at the moment, Tywardreath is probably the biggest one on site, costing over £100,00 in terms of a standalone project. It's a major river scheme working in partnership with the Environment Agency and landowners to protect and shore up a riverside footpath, which is pretty rare in the county, so really good to see that and it's nearing completion.
- As part of the capital programme, Cormac are also looking at improving efficiency, reviewing design principles around boardwalks and bridges, and the works that we're doing in terms of standardising design - this should ensure that commissioning is more efficient and cost effective.
- Work is also being done to ensure that delivery safety is improved; some of the standard designs currently used involve structural elements that are fairly complex, heavy, and difficult to get into locations. So, Cormac is trying to optimise them, in terms of how they work and to make things more straightforward for installations.

- Volunteering continues to go from strength to strength. This last quarter we're up in terms of the overall number of hours recorded - putting that into financial terms, it's thousands of pounds worth of additional hours. Essentially this involves supporting the teams with delivery on the ground, mainly around vegetation clearance, some surfacing improvements, and it's really positive to see. This is also something we're targeting both with our outreach teams and within the rights of way team as well. We're looking at developing specific risk assessments for working on rights of way which will add to the generic templates that we use at the moment but also looking at creating a supportive toolkit. We've spoken with a number of local authorities, specifically ones that have more established volunteering programmes, and drawn from their experience, and we definitely think a dedicated targeted toolkit to support volunteering on rights of ways is a step forward for us in terms of operations.
- We recently had BSI audits targeting our inspections, which included specific reference to the rights of way inspections. This was found to be extremely positive, and we had very good feedback from the BSI teams in terms of how we operate.
- Policy updates since we last met - we've reviewed the dangerous livestock response after the recent case on Exmoor. This has led to updates in terms of our current inspector and operational toolkits.
- CAMS continues to progress. From my team's perspective, that's really now embedding in terms of how we're operating, which is really good to see. In addition to CAMS, we're also looking at a wider Council and Cormac integrated asset management system.

Questions arising:

- DC asked that the capital projects list should be updated and presented at each meeting, together with an indication of which month the work is programmed for. It would also be helpful to see the list of future projects scheduled for 2026.
- DM stated that most work is reactive as it comes in, but happy to put more detail in around timings in preparation for the Jan meeting, to include upcoming tasks for the year ahead (capital programme).
- SB asked for clarification on the difference between revenue and capital projects. DM responded that capital projects tend to be for major infrastructure improvement works. The revenue budget is the money that's given to the service area, essentially to manage and maintain the network and the operations. So, for instance, SWCP vegetation cutting would be a revenue project, a major new bridge infrastructure would be a capital project.
- SC noted the planned cutting work on SWCP but asked if there is any planned for the Saints Way, St Michaels Way etc. DM – yes, we do but a lot is responsive to issues reported.

- RK asked about the new Bissoe bridge, which DM stated was on the multi-use trails programme under Adam Chell. DC clarified that CLAF don't see PROW and trails as separate issues and so ideally, they should all be added to the list of projects from Cormac. JR noted that the intention is to invite Adam Chell to the next meeting.

7. Working Groups Feedback

- DC noted that the Major Schemes report from Carol Wilson had been distributed. **ACTION: DC** to help Carol get closure on her points in yellow from the last update, noting that her term of appointment to CLAF is due to end soon.
- Moorland and Open Access – currently inactive but moved into Major Schemes group
- Local Transport Planning (LTP) was active in the past and consulted CLAF a few years ago. JG stated that LTP is a long-term plan for 5-10 years so not required at the moment. SW also added that the council is waiting for central government to release their plans, so LTP is not actively worked on at present.
- JE – Multi User Trails – 3 or 4 meetings have been held with Adam Chell to map existing routes onto a database. This will be ready to present a report in the January meeting. Chair of the working group to be nominated at their next meeting. SC clarified that it also includes strategic walking on trails, not just motorised activities. Terms of Reference to be created for the group after their next meeting.
- DC and SB to become part of Parish and Town Council working group
- Health and Wellbeing Group – nothing received, not met yet, no history of any previous meeting. SW keen to be involved. **ACTION: SW and JH** to meet and discuss next steps for this working group.
- SB – RoWIP Group had an initial meeting with CE and then a follow up meeting before writing the report. Potential next meeting in January once first draft of the RoWIP report comes out.
- JE – China Clay Area working group - Imerys multi-year project with JR and Ollie Howe/Hannah Rodger. Info to be included in a presentation to the January forum meeting. PR to be included in the working group. **ACTION: JE** to add PR to the distribution list.
- SB suggested that there should be a working group for the Interactive Map. JE and JH keen to be involved. DC asked if someone from GIS could be involved to help address the reliability issues. JR is keen to make internal council mapping services more widely available to the public. **ACTION: TP** to organise meeting for a working group on the interactive mapping in the next 2-3 weeks (sending out invites to all CLAF members to seek interest)

8. Correspondence to the Forum

- Nothing received

Members to note that any new external correspondence received should be forwarded to TP and DC.

9. Any Other Business

- DC noted that suggestions for constitution amendments and additions had been received. DC and JR are reviewing the Constitution (in the context of DEFRA guidance) and will table a draft for the next meeting with the aim of agreeing by the April Meeting and ratifying at the AGM (July 2026). Members were invited to submit any changes or additions thought necessary. **ACTION: DC/JR/ Members**
- DC noted the need to broaden representation at CLAF, in particular within the Landowner/Manager constituency.
- CLAF Website needs further development, in particular to publicise the work of the forum. Members agreed that photos and bios should be included. JH volunteered to help. DC ask other members to consider helping with this work, in particular content creation. **ACTION: DC** to grant JH access to the website admin.
- JH expressed how valuable a CLAF members skills survey would be, to find out what everyone is good at. No objections so JH will take the lead on this. **mapping** There was a general feeling among members that communication & publicity need to be improved. Ideas for publishing on website would be helpful. JE suggested dates to celebrate certain anniversaries would be good. SB also suggested sending press releases for that kind of thing - SB happy to coordinate press release content but it would need to be sent out via CC outlets. DC suggested a newsletter type page on the website to help show progress is being made. **ACTION: SB** to come up with a plan of action for improved publicity of CLAF.
- RK noted that this is a great time to rejuvenate the forum and reintroduce ourselves to the wider community.

10. Time and Date of Next Meeting

- 27/01/26, 13:30 – 16:00, NCH Grenville Room (back up 2N:03)

ACTION: TP to confirm room bookings and send out invite to members.

Provisional dates for subsequent meetings:

- 28/04/26
- 28/07/26 (AGM)
- 27/10/26

Forum Membership (as at date of meeting):

<i>Landowner/ Manager Group (7)</i>	<i>User Group (7)</i>	<i>Others Group (3)</i>	<i>Cornwall Council (3)</i>
Bill Makin Jim Flashman Martin Howlet Jeremy Elvins	Carol Wilson David Cooper Paul Rabbeth Philip Allen Shelley Barratt Stephen Church Rob Knill	Jim Hancock Kay Driver	Karen LaBorde Julian German Steven Webb