

## Gloucestershire Local Access Forum





**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

### **NOTES of meeting held at *Cheltenham Chase Hotel***

Preceeded by an informal walk of 2 of the Connecting Parishes Schemes to be funded by Designated Funds

	Notes	
Item	Topic	Action
1.	Present: Alison Williamson (Chair); Richard Holmes (Vice chair); Charlie Morriss; Jacky German; Paul Lockley; Alan Shelley. Alan Bently (Speaker – Connecting Parishes); Nicola Chidley (GCC Principal PROW Officer) Apologies for absence: Cllr Wendy Thomas, Sue Ellis, Nicola Simpson; Cllr Robert Vines	
2.	Declarations of Interest - no interests declared.	
3.	Notes of meeting on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February and 22 June 2023 and matters arising not covered in the agenda below. Agreed and signed.	
3a.	Review of Morning Site visit. – An interesting walkover of two of the sites to be improved. The Connecting Parishes project includes those sites that were reviewed and assessed by GLAF to be PROW near centres of population leading to the Cotswold Scarp and Cotswold Way that would benefit from improvement or to be added to the network. Funded by National Highways. Members requested a circular walk when they have been delivered. Suggestions - promotion of the schemes Perhaps some plastic discs as GLAF project “Improved by GCC and GLAF funded by NH”.	Chair/NC/AB ALL/AB/RH
4.	Review of Notices and Consultations received by GLAF and Membership. The King Charles III Coast Path was for South Glos but was interesting to read.	
5.	Sharpness Development (TBC) discussion of site meeting. After being contacted by EDP and discussions between Ecology and PROW, there was an impasse trying to get Natural England on board. It would make an interesting site visit but may take 2 years to progress. Sharpness and Berkeley are in the local plan for development. RH in contact with EDP. No Action and to be removed from agenda for future meetings.	
6.	Don't Lose Your Way/Restoring the Record –Bernard Gill of Ramblers is running the local team of reserchers and includes Michelle who is Chair of Glos Ramblers. CM reported there is a lot of archive material and some progress in the Forest of Dean area on applications. Defra are short of resources to progress the Deregulation Act 2015 but two Statutory Instruments have been passed to bring in 2031 as cut off date. In the early days of the LAF, Lost Ways were an important topic and included some sites visits. With elections looming the Ramblers are pushing access up the agenda whilst DEFRA is focussing on farming. We are likely to see Access issues on the political agenda. Access Land reviews are overdue. Ideas such as access to woodland and watersides may be progressed. The Presumption of diversion/extinguishment in farmyard/garden/enclosed areas (eg factory) guidance has been issued by DEFRA. Applies to applications for diversion and extinguishments but only if it also meets the legal tests. GLAF would like to see the guidance. Updates from Stakeholder reps and review of Definitive Map statistics (CM)	

	<p>DMMO Update – 6<sup>th</sup> June saw the determination of an application at Tetbury, applied for by AS, a GLAF Member. An 82 page report was very thorough on the investigation into the evidence. Question - if it only needs to satisfy the reasonably allege test why so lengthy but v thorough and why so few considered per year. The DMMO process requires thorough investigation and reporting to ensure GCC has carried out its duty. Limited delegated powers means 4 CROW Cttees/year looking at most historic evidence. Some 30 year old opposed orders are on the backlog which may mean when they are determined it may not be possible to cross examine or test a witness's evidence. It was encouraging that there was progress being made.</p> <p>Question to Karen pearman – Could the investigations be reduced in detail to produce the determination report? and is the amount of detail really required for such lengthy reports? If officers recommend making an order then it ought to be made. If the application involves The reasonably alleged test perhaps the detail might only be needed at confirmation stage? Is historical evidence required when an application is supported by user evidence? Could the delegated powers be extended to facilitate more progress?</p>	KP
7.	<p>A417 Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Update on A417 Missing link, Air Balloon Construction –  DCO  <a href="#">Link here</a> Progress on works started. Discussion on lighting the tunnel or not. Its preferred that it isn't due to wildlife and the road around isn't being lit. Might it attract unwanted behaviour? The WCH group meet to discuss design on signposts, waymarks and gates. Suggested they use metposts for WMP to increase longevity of posts, geotextile is a good weed suppressant.</li> <li>b) Designated Funds Project – Connecting Parishes Project. The original 36 projects identified were assessed and 18 selected for the design and delivery bid. This has been approved for £429k funding over two years. It includes 3 new routes for dedication/creation; 15 for accessibility, surface improvement. Connecting Parishes from residential areas to the Cotswold Scarp and Costwold Way. A list of projects 1 – 18 were shared. P.12 may now include a bridleway upgrade. Works for design and delivery have included access, landowner permissions, ecology and other reports and contractor quotes. Before and after photos being taken at each stage. 7 Counters have been installed and are operating. It was felt that this was one of the best GLAF projects taken forward. List of Projects for notes please. They ought to be added to cyclical maintenance budget for the future maintenance.</li> </ul>	NC/RH/AB
8.	<p>Other updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cotswold Trails and Access Partnership – 26<sup>th</sup> October meeting - Margaret Reid now chair of the group. Review of counters any new suggested locations on CWNT. CW funding for Glos area at Chipping Campden for a verge path for safety and at Leckhampton Hill. New National Trails Charity; Update on Cotswold Visual Impact project to remove pylons and bury the cables. Ecological survey completed and archaeological survey to commence; Cotswold Way Asociation assisting funding projects.</li> <li>- 3 Choirs/Wysis Way &amp; Gloucestershire Way – Gerry Stewart's legacy has been taken on by the group. GCC have supplied some Gloucestershire Way waymarks. New books being published.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brunel Bridge by Alney Island – It isn't a 'Brunel' bridge but it is owned by GCC. It is a key access to Alney Island but any works to the bridge would require funding. Update for next meeting What avenues might be available. Could CM supply 6" maps of Alney.</li> <li>- Hanover Green – Magistrates chose to not stop up this unsurfaced, Class 5 lane at a 1 day hearing. The application to stop up as unnecessary was disallowed. CM</li> </ul>	NC/Jen D

	<p>believes that Unsurfaced UCRS ought to be under the auspice of PROW but with a budget. Concern re notices being adequately distributed to interested bodies rather than just on site. Request that Map That on public site include the UCRS not just PROW as in other areas. What map layers are included in Fix My street? – (Its taken from the National Streets gazetteer).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CM to show Karen and Nicola the TRF Green roads map.</li> <li>- Community Pay back are assisting in several Access improvements with vegetation clearance and tidying up.</li> <li>- GCC are involved in 3 old railway bridges over the river Wye. The Tintern bridge work has been completed. Next is Black Bridge to be identified for works.</li> <li>- The Ramblers have carried out research on the Well being value of Paths.</li> <li>- Looking at how close people live to the countryside and paths. RH to circulate</li> <li>- Concern that the GLAF generic email is being shared with PROW. It is but we are inundated by emails generally and reviewing how we receive reports of issues. Fix My street being the system to use. All GLAF agreed to share emails with members of GLAF as well as in GLAF inbox.</li> <li>- From the minutes Kemble to Tetbury former railway not making much progress but Lord Bathurst considering a diversion. There is a study on an ultralight railway/bus idea with path alongside from Kemble to Cirencester.</li> <li>- Please bring form and guidance on how to claim expenses to next meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>NC</p> <p>NC/KP</p> <p>RH</p> <p>NC</p>
1	Date of Next Meeting: Thursday February 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2024	
	<b>2024 Meeting dates:- Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb; Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024; Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024</b>	
	Meeting -    	

Signed: Chair..... Date .....