

# WREXHAM LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

## CONFIRMED MINUTES

of the twenty second meeting held at Guildhall, Wrexham on 8 September 2006

### 46/06 ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

Attendance:

CHAIR

Ieuan Lewis

ACTING SECRETARY

Katie Birks

MEMBERS

Mike Crawshaw

Sue Gittins

John Marchant

Mavis McBride

Clive Menzies

Gerald Moss

Margaret Murphy

Gwynfor Jones

Karl Praker

Shelagh Roberts

Edward Wardle

NON MEMBERS

Martin Howorth

Paul Mitchell (CCW)

Dave Smith (Access Ranger)

John Pugh

Apologies: Tim Rosselli, John Cooper-Poole, Mabyn Pickering, Alun Price, Tim Stevens

### 47/06 Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting on 7 July 2006

*(39/05) Wynnstay Estate Visit*

**A letter of appreciation was sent.**

*(26/06) Planning Applications*

**No response from Forum.**

*(27/06) Definitive Map Modifications Orders*

**No response from Forum.**

*(36/06) Report from Access Rangers / Clarification of insurance for people on community orders*

Edward Wardle stated insurance for individuals fulfilling community orders was coordinated and covered nationally by the national probation service.

Both Clive Menzies and Sue Gittins wished for additional assurances about this matter.

**ACTION: Secretary to seek further clarification.**

*(38/06) Budgeting Issues*

Forum dissatisfied and disappointed with response from Chief Executive, Council Leader and Councillor Mark Pritchard.

Chairman suggested contacting the Chief Executive to reschedule a meeting convenient for her.

**ACTION: Secretary to produce a letter to Chief Executive.**

*(39/06) Members Training*

Flintshire LAF responded to query asking who would train LAF newcomers and how long would it take.

Clive Menzies expressed views newcomers may find Forum jargon too much and had envisaged a half-day training opportunity probably involving the Rights of Way dept. Karl Prakes suggested a 'list of terms' for new members/interested parties.

Ieuan suggested a 'list of terms' first, to be followed up possibly by training if the list of terms was not fulfilling the role.

John Marchant asserted the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section on the Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers' webpage would answer many of the 'jargon queries'.

**ACTION: ROW to produce the 'List of Terms'.**

*(40/06) Balance of Forum*

Secretary to chase Councils Head of Young Peoples Inclusion to arrange future meeting with young people.

**ACTION: Secretary to contact again.**

*(43/06) Any other business*

No response to gating consultation.

**48/06 Chairman's Report**

Chairman had been invited to the National LAF meeting in Builth Wells. Chairman is unable to attend, so Clive Menzies will attend in his stead. Chairman requested if Forum members had issues they wished to be discussed at this gathering, to inform Clive.

**49/06 Secretary's Report**

No report.

**50/06 Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

Martin Howorth, Parks, Countryside and Rights of Way Manager reported that 32 responses out of the 200 questionnaires had been received, resulting in the amending of some of the priorities.

Forum expressed thanks to Martin regarding the ROWIP.

Sue Gittins and Chairman raised again the importance of meeting with the WCBC Chief Executive to talk about resources for the ROWIP conclusions.

Forum expressed concerns over budget for improvement works.

Concern expressed by Gerald Moss about the accuracy and resourcing of the Definitive Map. Clive Menzies pointed out that the maintenance of the Definitive Map is a statutory duty.

Martin Howorth stated he was meeting with the Scrutiny team. Martin suggested a LAF subgroup meeting, and will invite all members to this.

Positively, Martin said this will be the first time ROW has a 10 yr Strategic Plan.

**Martin Howorth to report back regarding the Scrutiny Meeting at next LAF meeting.**

**51/06 Report from Access Rangers**

Dave Smith reported the team are currently working on the 2007 events programme.

Alison has continued to have success around the cropping issue, and most access has been restored. Two notices have been served for non-compliance. The community footpath development at Brymbo continues in conjunction with Groundwork. Work with Cadburys Chirk Local Action Group is ongoing.

Sean attended a meeting with the Ramblers' Association on 4<sup>th</sup> September. Continued work to sign routes.

Dave reported no major problems on access land, with the walks series being very successful. Two arrests for illegal use of motorcycles on Ruabon Mountain in early May.

Shelagh Roberts highlighted that weather conditions may also play a part where landowners have not complied with notices to remove crops.

**52/06 Countryside Council for Wales**

Paul Mitchell, Regional Countryside Officer attended in Alun Preece's stead. Wrexham access land has been quiet. One enquiry regarding closure due to extreme fire risk. Landowners made the enquiry on behalf of a shooting tenant. Eventually agreed not to close land as the fire index was due to reduce, and closure was not feasible. WCBC ROW agreed to carry out a fire watch, and shows how closure can be managed 'out' as an option.

No studies show an increase in usage of open access land across Wales as present.

**53/06 Lay by Parking**

Mike Crawshaw reported that walkers are parking in local passing places and causing problems.

Gerald Moss asserted that the Glyn Ceiriog area is increasingly promoted but parking is inadequate – we need joined up thinking on this issue. Public transport provision is also inadequate.

John Marchant mentioned there was a transport plan being developed and Colin Simpson was the best person to contact.

**ACTION: Secretary to contact Colin Simpson regarding lay-by parking issues and inadequate parking facilities in the Ceiriog Valley which is being increasingly promoted as a tourist destination.**

**54/06 Dogs in the Countryside**

Issue will be also addressed at the National LAF meeting that Clive Menzies is attending in Builth Wells.

Gwynfor Jones stated dogs on leads can also be an issue and cited some recent cases of attacks, when suckler cows show aggression to person leading the dog.

He also cited a case in Usk where a landowner has had 3 incidences of people being attacked and the HSE have requested he not keep cattle. Fencing off is a possible option.

Dave Smith from the ROW Dept presented some signs available to use of gates/stiles regarding close control of dogs in certain areas.

Sue Gittins suggested putting a press release out next spring to remind the public about their responsibilities as dog owners in the countryside.

Forum agreed distribution of signs best carried out by Access Rangers.

**55/06 Ruabon Mountain Project**

Dave Smith presented issue recently come to his attention about the possibility of creating ponds on Ruabon Mountain.

Forum felt this project was not access-related and suggested CCW may be interested in the conservation project.

Shelagh Roberts stated many of the springs on the mountain feed farm water supplies so any alterations/plans regarding this must be thought about very seriously.

**56/06 Any Other Business**

- Strategic Planning of Water-related Sport & Recreation in Wales correspondence from Environment Agency Wales regarding stakeholder meetings in October/November 2006.

**ACTION: Secretary to contact Environment Agency Wales on behalf for Forum and register the Forums interest in attending their stakeholder workshops.**

- Expenses with John Marchant.  
Still uncertainty whether Forum members must attached VAT receipts to claim travel costs.

**ACTION: John Marchant to clarify for next LAF meeting.**

**57/06 Items for the Next Agenda**

Gwynfor Jones suggested inviting a representative from the Ordnance Survey to next meeting.

**ACTION: Secretary to invite a Wales Ordnance Survey representative to next LAF meeting.**

**58/06 Date & Location of Next Meeting**

Committee Room 3, Guildhall on Friday 10 November at 1.30pm