

Local Access Forum

Annual Report

2015-2016



Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum
Annual Report, April 2015 – March 2016

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BBNP LAF ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

Chairman's Foreword

Another interesting and thought provoking year for the members of the Local Access Forum, and one in which they have responded with equal parts of common-sense and passion. Chairing such a group is most rewarding and so I thank all members for their contributions during the year.

There is a good diversity among the membership but, in common with LAFs across Wales, I still see the need to widen the scope, particularly in terms of geographical spread and attracting younger members. We need to address these factors in the coming year as we approach the end of this LAF's tenure. On that subject, one of our responses to the Access Green Paper was to extend the term of LAF members to four years to bring LAFs in line with most other bodies.

My thanks finally to Richard Ball and Lisa Lloyd for arranging the meetings and providing excellent Minutes.

Ian Mabberley

Chairman, Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum

Chairman's Report

The year in question has seen a lot of challenges in the way that Access and Rights of Way (AROW) are both managed and maintained due to the ongoing pressures on public sector finances. The Members of the BBNP LAF have responded positively to potential cuts to both the Wardening and AROW Management services, discussing each in detail prior to delivering advice and requests to the National Park Authority senior management and Members to reconsider their proposals. In each case the status quo appears to have been maintained (unfortunately at the expense of other posts). The LAF believes passionately that the ROW network is a key asset in the attraction of visitors to the Brecon Beacons and as such must be maintained.

This year we also undertook site visits which help members to understand the actualities of the work of the AROW teams, in a way that boardroom discussions cannot. Site visits are something that we intend to continue into the future.

We have welcomed presentations from the Brecon Mountain Rescue Team and from the Crickhowell Walkers are Welcome organisers, both of which provided members with insights into other organisations with a close interest in the AROW network. Continuing close relationships with such organisations is important for all parties.

On a National basis the Rights of Way Improvement Plan process has exercised minds across the country particularly given the delays in Natural Resources Wales producing guidance for the process. Additionally, members contributed a well-argued response to the Green Paper on Access and Recreation but felt unable to add anything to the Active Travel Bill consultation as the proposals were very limited to urban paths rather than the Park's ROW network. This was felt to be a wasted opportunity to link towns and villages in the Park with cycle ways and easy to use paths.

The BBNPA LAF looks forward to continuing to contribute to the work of the Park's AROW teams.

A note from the Secretary

During the past year the Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum (BBNP LAF) has discussed a variety of access related issues and, whilst the debate has not always provided formal advice to the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, advice has been given to its Officers in a less formal way and this has been very useful.

As with most of the public sector the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has continued to see its budget cut in real terms and this has impacted on current access management within the Park and proposals for future management of this area of work. The LAF advice regarding future management proposals for the rights of way network within the National Park had some impact on BBNPA decisions and expressed strong support of the service within the NPA.

The LAF has also influenced other access providers in the Park such as Natural Resources Wales and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and Welsh Government.

Over the past year the Welsh Government Glastir (agri environment scheme) team has sought advice from the LAF on a number of permissive access scheme proposals. The Glastir has changed its mode of operation following recommendation from the LAF in the previous year and now consults on a case by case basis rather than its previous system. The LAF supported all of the proposals that were referred to it over the past year.

The past year has been turbulent, it has been extremely busy in terms of access management supported by Welsh Government funding for capital works, but has also seen the BBNPA making plans to cut its rights of way delegation agreements with the local authorities in order to make savings. The LAF has provided constructive advice and support throughout the year and has responded to the ups and downs. I would like to thank all members for their contributions and significant amount of time that they spend on LAF issues during meetings and outside the meeting cycle.

Richard Ball

Secretary, Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum.



Local Access Forum Members on a site visit to the Blorengre to view a potential ROWIP project

Introduction

This current Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum (LAF) was established on 13th November 2014 and comprises 13 members, including a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman. The National Park Authority has a statutory duty to establish at least one Local Access Forum (LAF) as required by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.

The Forum has only one statutory function, which is to advise the National Park Authority (NPA), the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and others as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. This advice should be given having taken due regard to the needs of land-management and the natural beauty of the area.

Meeting papers relating to the LAF can be found on the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) website, www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk, or members of the public can view copies at the National Park Office, Plas y Ffynnon, Cambrian Way, Brecon, LD3 7HP or individual copies can be ordered from that office (at a small charge). Members of the public are welcomed at all meetings of the Forum and may be invited to speak at the discretion of the Chairman. Forum Members can be contacted via the Secretary.

THE YEAR REVIEWED

A Flavour of Issues Discussed and Advice Given by the Local Access Forum 2015 – 2016

Not all issues discussed by the LAF are listed below but the following gives a flavour of the LAF business during the past year. Many items such as the Visitor Management Plan were discussed at a number of different meetings as they were significant areas of work. During the year the LAF held 1 site meeting and 3 formal meetings.

Site Meeting, Talybont-on-Usk

The LAF met at Talybont-on-Usk on June 4th to observe access management undertaken by the Canal and Rivers Trust. A number of issues were discussed with the local representative of CRT including shared use of the towpath and probable promotion of the canal as part of the 'Wales Trails' programme.

The LAF also looked at access issues at Blaen y Glyn and recommendations were made to NRW regarding signs in the area. As a result of the meeting the LAF also wrote to Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water requesting that it reinstall a pedestrian gate to improve access to the area – DCWW has subsequently installed a gate as requested.

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Warden Service

Concerns were raised by LAF members regarding potential cuts to the BBNPA warden service and the perceived lack of presence at weekends. The issue of trying to retain an effective warden service with a varied work load at a time of budgetary cut backs was discussed at length. It was also noted that BBNPA undertakes partnership work with NRW and that this should be maintained if at all possible. The LAF wrote to the CEO at BBNPA requesting that at least some weekend wardening be retained.

Active Travel Consultations

The constituent Local Authorities within the BBNP were required to undertake consultation regarding Active Travel maps being produced as required by the Active Travel Act. The LAF expressed disappointment at the lack of routes identified within the BBNP.

Improving Opportunities to Access the Outdoors for Responsible Recreation (Green Paper Consultation)

The formal LAF response to this consultation is attached to this report at Appendix VI. The LAF spent a significant amount of time discussing the Welsh Government's ideas which were put forward in its Green Paper. The general consensus was that the LAF supported measures that would reduce costs that are currently incurred in various rights of way procedures and also to simplify some of those procedures.

The opinion of the LAF was that it would be inappropriate to extend a right of responsible access to all land in Wales

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Review

The BBNPA had produced its first ROWIP in 2007, the Authority was the first to produce a ROWIP in Wales and the only NPA to do so. The legislation requires ROWIPs to be reviewed every 10 years and reviews must take account of guidance that will be produced by Natural Resources Wales. It appears that the guidance will require a substantial review which is likely to have significant resource implications. Unfortunately NRW has not published guidance yet and the time available for BBNPA to produce its review is therefore being compressed. The LAF has written to NRW expressing its concerns on this matter.



LAF members discuss access issues on a visit to Blaen y Glyn

Rights of Way Management in the BBNP

The BBNP LAF held an extraordinary meeting to discuss proposals in respect of rights of way management within the BBNP which senior managers at BBNPA were to present to the National Park Authority members. The proposals formed part of a series of cost saving measures that were required in response to a cut in the Authority's grant from Welsh Government. The proposal involved terminating the current delegation agreements which the Authority has with each of the constituent local authorities but to negotiate payment for undertaking practical works on the network.

The LAF expressed strong concerns and felt that rights of way management should be a core part of the Authority's work. It was felt that proposals would lead to a disjointed approach to rights of way management and that the LA's would not have the resources to manage them to an appropriate level, it was also suggested that this area of work would be of a much lower priority within LA's which provide a much larger range of services than the NPA. The LAF also commented that the proposals appeared to have been rushed and the full consequences had not been entirely considered. It was noted that if the delegation agreements were terminated that the staff expertise within the Authority would be lost and it would be difficult to take back the function if circumstances changed in future. It was also noted that ROWIP funding which BBNPA has received since 2008 may not be available in future if BBNPA terminated the delegation agreements. The LAF agreed to write to the BBNPA CEO voicing the grave disquiet and due concern and recommending that RoW management should not be changed.

At its meeting on 5th February 2016 the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority agreed to serve notice on the PRow delegating Authorities to hand back the function from 1 April 2017 to allow it to, should it choose to do so. However, the Authority's preferred position would be to enter into negotiations to revise funding arrangements and the Authority will begin to actively progress this. Consequently BBNPA will retain the Rights of Way Officer post for 2016/17 to allow for negotiations on funding and alternative internal options to be assessed.

Rights of Way

The LAF was regularly updated regarding progress on implementation of BBNPA's ROWIP. Continued funding by the Welsh Government was acknowledged as very positive.

The LAF was also consulted on rights of way orders at each meeting.

APPENDIX I

APPOINTING AUTHORITY DETAILS

Appointing Authority:

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Plas y Ffynnon

Cambrian Way

Brecon

Powys

LD3 7HP

Tel. 01874 624437

Fax. 01874 622574

Email. enquiries@beacons-npa.gov.uk

Secretary:

Richard Ball

Countryside and Access Projects Officer

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Plas y Ffynnon

Cambrian Way

Brecon

Powys

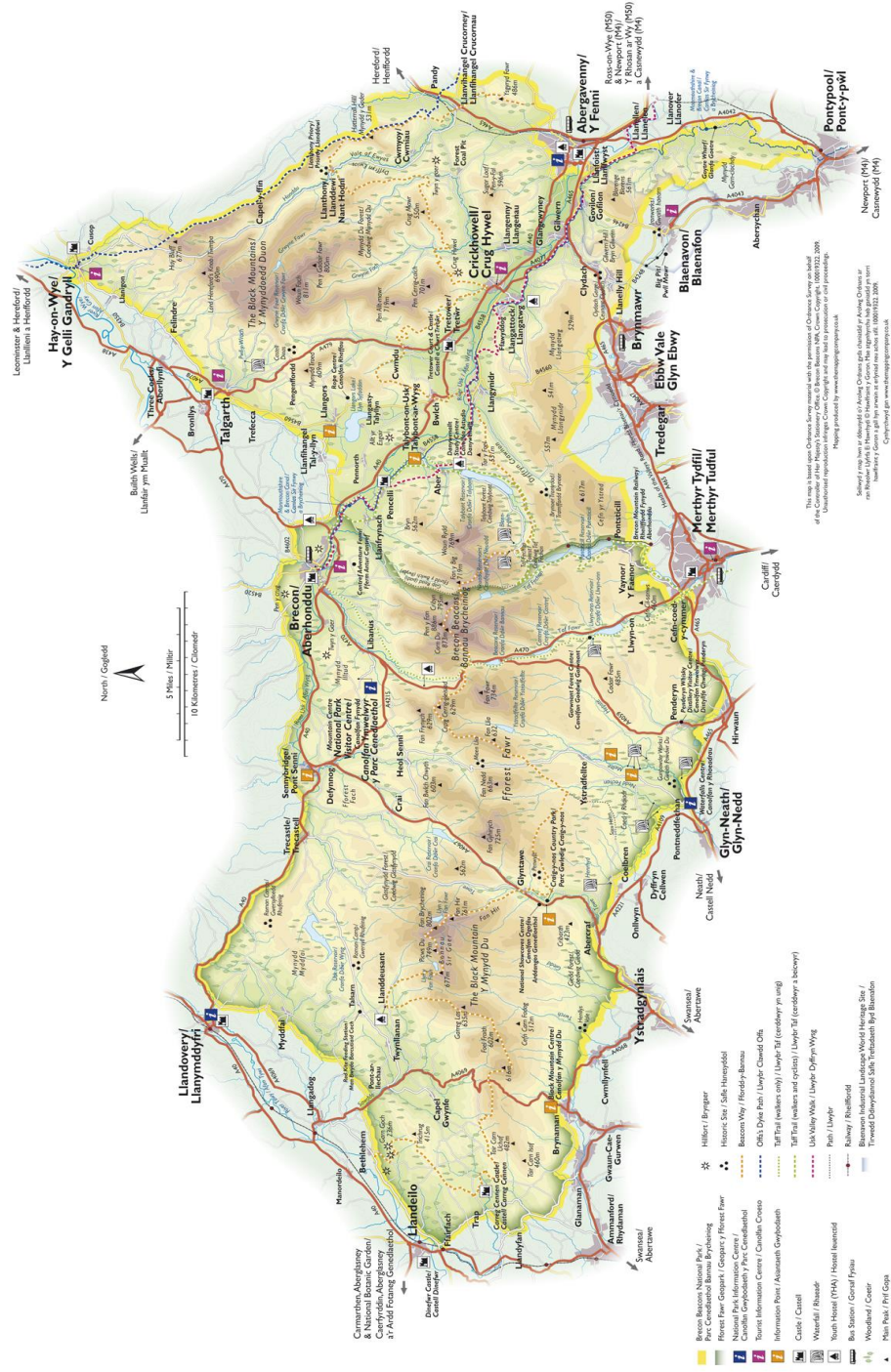
LD3 7HP.

Tel. 01874 620464

Email. richard.ball@beacons-npa.gov.uk

Appendix II

Map



APPENDIX III

MEETING DETAILS

During the year the following meetings were held, all of which were open to, and attended by the public:

2015-16

4 th June 2015	Site visit, Talybont-on-Usk area
17 th September 2015	Brecon Beacons NPA Visitor Centre
26 th November 2015	Brecon Beacons NPA Visitor Centre
1 st February 2016	Brecon Beacons NPA Office, Brecon

Appendix IV

Members Details

Name	Date Appointed to LAF
Chair – Ian Maberley	13th November 2014
As a resident he has a keen interest in the safety of the users of the National Park, working with landowners and other organisations to stop the illegal use of open access land, such as off road vehicles and illegal raves. He is also a Community Councillor, director of the Crickhowell Information and Resource Centre, also a member of the National Trust.	
Deputy Chair – Julian Atkins	13th November 2014
Director of the department of the National Park Authority responsible for Countryside and Land Management and, in particular, access and rights of way and warden area teams. In addition, the department is responsible for sustainable tourism, visitor services (including education), information and interpretation.	
Colin Woodley	13th November 2014
Farms in the Hepste valley. Conservation officer for the South Wales Caving Club. Member of the Dan Yr Ogof Cave Advisory Committee. Chair of the national governing body for caving; The Cambrian Caving Council. Secretary of the Penderyn Commoners Association & Vice-chair of the Penderyn branch of the FUW. Member of the Ystradfellte CC and of the Hirwaun & Penderyn CC. Interests include cave & mine exploration, underground access and industrial archaeology	
John Crellin	13th November 2014
He is BSBI (Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland) Recorder for Botany for the historical county of Brecknockshire. A keen walker and photographer who leads walks for Hay and Talgarth Walking Festivals as well as Brecknock Wildlife Trust; but also likes to explore alone and is hence very dependent on good footpath provision and mapping. He lives just inside the Park at Hay-on-Wye.	
Jon Everington	13th November 2014
Head of Centre at Glasbury House Outdoor Education Centre, a residential centre used as a “springboard” for experiences in the Brecon Beacons National Park. Lived and worked in the Park since 1981, now living in Hay-on-Wye. An Outdoor Education professional qualified as a mountain, cave, and mountain bike leader also a canoe and kayak coach. Has spent 30+ years introducing groups of, mainly young, people to the wonderful variety of natural environments, both above and below ground, that are available in the Park. Professional associations include the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres, the South Wales Outdoor Activity Providers Group and the Wye and Usk Foundation canoe access steering group.	

Leisure activities are driven by the same passion for the great outdoors as working life with mountain walking being top of a list which also includes running, cycling canoeing and walking the dog.

Patrick Dobbs

13th November 2014

A continual user of the BBNP for recreational purposes on horseback and on foot for over 50 years. My main interest on the LAF is to reconcile the conflicting interests of farmers, commoners with those of visitors to the countryside. This will make the BBNP a pleasanter place for everyone.

Phillipa Cherryson

13th November 2014

Main area of interest is equestrianism, as a keen hacker and endurance rider access within the national park is very important to me. I am a regular long distance walker and have personal knowledge of most of the RoW within the BBNP.

I am also a landowner living within a farming community in the national park and can understand and share the concerns that access can cause.

Pamela Bell

13th November 2014

My early background was in the travel industry, followed by a period at university, studying for BSc and MSc degrees, interspersed with working in the scientific civil service and educational sectors. I have qualifications in environmental sciences, heritage studies and leading/coaching a range of outdoor activities.

I first experienced National Parks as a visitor walking and climbing for recreation and bringing groups of young people to many of our National Parks, including the Brecon Beacons, for Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition training. I have lived and worked in the Brecon Beacons National Park since 1988, running a small activity tourism business.

My recreational interests include walking, swimming, canoeing, kayaking and sailing. I am a life member of the YHA and the Field Studies Council, and a member of Gwent Wildlife Trust, Aberystwyth History and Archaeology Society and the Snowdonia Society. Through my business I belong to SWOAPG, Beacons Active, Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter and the Marine Conservation Society.

I became aware of access issues as a climber and hill-walker, and later as a canoeist. I became involved in river access while a member of the Welsh Canoeing Association (now Canoe Wales) chaired the Welsh National Access Committee and served on the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee. I am a strong supporter of the campaign for land reform legislation for Wales, similar to the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

I am concerned that increasing commodification and packaging of the countryside can be detrimental to opportunities for informal unstructured recreation and quiet enjoyment, particularly for individual and less advantaged users

David Sharman

13th November 2014

He is a member of Vale of Grwyney Community Council and also Chairman Glagryney Village Hall. Having lived in the countryside most of his life he has a great deal of interest in the maintenance of the Rights of Way network with added importance to disabled access.

Denis J Murphy	13th November 2014
<p>I am a resident and small landowner in the Brecon Beacons National Park, close to the Black Mountains. I am also a professional naturalist and wildlife enthusiast, and a keen outdoor sportsperson.</p> <p>As a Professor of Biology and lecturer on topics such as biodiversity, environmental conservation, and invasive species, I have a professional interest in the natural aspects of our local environment and regularly bring students on field trips to the Park area. We have several ongoing projects in the Park looking at topics such as alder phytophthora disease and the management of invasive plants.</p> <p>I am an active member of a Cardiff-based running/orienteering/cycling club that participates in many events in the National Park. If I am not participating in such events, I regularly assist with their organisation and marshalling.</p> <p>I was a regular panellist on the Radio 4 Home Planet programme, which answers listeners' questions on the natural environment. I have also appeared on numerous BBC Radio Wales programmes.</p> <p>My major interest as a member of the LAF is to help ensure that appropriate areas of the Park are available to the widest possible range of users. However, I am also interested in ensuring that such access is managed in order to maximise the long term sustainability of each type of use and to minimise the environmental footprint of visitor use so as to secure the availability of an unspoiled Park for future generations.</p> <p>I am a member Welsh Athletics and of several professional organisations related to my academic work. The latter include the Society for Experimental Biology, the Association for the Advancement of Science, the Biochemical Society, and the University and College Lecturers' Union. I also sit on the Editorial Board of several scientific publications including Inform and World Agriculture.</p>	
Hilda Marion Williams	13th November 2014
<p>As a Community Councillor she has a great deal of interest in improved access for members of the public with varying abilities.</p>	
Jeff Spencer	13th November 2014
<p>Jeff has been Historic Environment Record Officer at the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, based in Welshpool, since 2002 and is responsible for maintaining and enhancing information about archaeological sites, finds and events in mid and north-east Wales and for the computer system which holds that information. As well as contributing to various aspects of CPAT's community outreach programme Jeff is responsible for recording artefacts found by members of the public as part of the <i>Portable Antiquities Scheme</i> and in recent years has led CPAT's Cadw-funded project work on 20th century military sites.</p> <p>After studying for a degree at Bournemouth University Jeff worked for 3 years on the EH-funded <i>Archaeological Investigations Project (AIP)</i>, visiting SMRs and archaeological organisations across England and writing summaries of client-funded project reports. He completed an MA in Cultural Landscape Management at University of Wales Lampeter in 2001 and worked at the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust on the <i>Tir Gofal</i> agri-environment scheme before moving to CPAT. Jeff is a Practitioner in the <i>Institute for Archaeologists</i>, is a member of the <i>CBA</i>, the <i>Fortress Study Group</i> and <i>Airfield Research Group</i>. He is a Welsh speaker and branch assistant with the <i>Marches Young Archaeologists' Club</i>.</p>	

Debbie Hughes

13th November 2014

I have lived in this area since 1981. I met my husband at the farm where I was pony trekking for a summer job after finishing a degree in BSc Environmental Studies at Hertfordshire University - he was at the time a contract shearer. We started farming in 1988 on 40 acres and now run 800 Welsh breeding hill ewes and a small herd of Highland Cattle. Our farm is located in the heart of the National Park. We have 4 daughters and 2 grandsons

I have always enjoyed walking and riding over the mountains locally. I have bred Welsh Sec D cobs, Bluefaced Leicester sheep, Scottish Terrier dogs and Working sheep dogs with varying levels of success!

At present I am Assistant Secretary for the Black Mountains Grazing Association East - Glastir Committee. I am also a lifetime member of the Welsh Pony and Cob Society.

APPENDIX V

FURTHER READING

LAF Annual Reports

All appointing authorities are required by statute to produce annual reports to cover the year ending 31 March. These can be obtained from the relevant LAF Secretary. Agendas, minutes and other papers are also available for individual LAF meetings.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; The Stationary Office Limited (2000).

National Assembly for Wales

The Countryside Access (Local Access Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2001; The Stationary Office Limited (2002).

Countryside Council for Wales

LAF Guidance 1: The Establishment of Local Access Forums – Advice & Best Practice Guidance (2002).

LAF Guidance 2: The Role Duties and Functions of Local Access Forums (2002).

Local Access Forums in Wales Annual Report & Directory 2003 (2004).

Appendix VI

Consultation on improving opportunities to access the outdoors for responsible recreation – Questions

Please return this form by post or email to reach the Welsh Government no later than 2 October 2015

Consultation

Response Form

Your name: Ian Maberley, Chairman

Organisation (if applicable): Brecon Beacons National Park
Local Access Forum

email / telephone number:

Your address:

Question 1: What are your views on the principles outlined above [section 2]? If you would suggest changing them, please explain how and why.

Comments

The BBNP Local Access Forum (LAF) believes that the overall objectives outlined in Section 2 are both sensible and desirable.

Question 2: Tell us your views on the issues highlighted above [section 4], and whether there are other key challenges you believe need to be resolved?

Comments

We are in agreement with the comments in 4.4. The current system is too slow, expensive and unwieldy (see also our comments on Q3) and needs to become more modern in its approach to changes.

Question 3: What changes, if any, do you think need to be made to improve and simplify the procedures for recording, creating, diverting or closing public rights of way?

Comments

BBNP LAF believes that the current procedures for changes to the PROW network need to be significantly simplified.

1) Current definitive mapping appears to be out-of-date and cumbersome. A fully digitised system should be introduced as soon as possible.

2) BBNP LAF believes that the greater powers should be given to LAFs to help to determine changes to the network. LAFs are independent bodies representing a wide spectrum of landowners and users and as such can be relied upon to give logical and unbiased opinions on changes. A LAF decision should then be sufficient for the LA to make the relevant alteration without further ado. An appeal system, such as is currently in place, but possibly administered by the relevant Local Authority rather than the Planning Inspectorate, would allow for any disputes to be more quickly resolved.

3) The current system of press advertising is both slow and extremely costly and should be abolished as soon as possible in favour of a system combining local on-site notices and details on the Local Authority website.

Question 4: What changes, if any, do you think need to be made to improve and simplify the provisions available to local authorities for making improvements on the ground?

Comments

1) BBNP LAF is totally opposed to the idea of racing taking place on any PROW. The conflict of interest between the aims of racers and other users is likely to cause injury and distress to ordinary members of the public and particularly to their accompanying animals. We do however realise that certain events may be authorised from time to time where alternatives are not available. Such events should be clearly signed and notified to the relevant LAF well in advance of the event. The LAF should have the right to oppose any application.

2) We believe that LAs and National Parks should have greater powers to remove illegal fences and misleading signs without the need for long "consultation" periods.

3) We believe that gates, stiles and other 'furniture' on a PROW should be able to be erected (with the agreement of the LAF), not just for the ingress and egress of livestock, but also for safety reasons e.g. where a PROW meets a major road.

Question 5: What non-legislative changes would you like to see in the meantime that you believe would help to improve the rights of way network in Wales and reduce the burden on local authorities?

Comments

The use of schemes such as Tir Gofal and Glastir, has brought success in realising the reopening of long-obstructed rights of way. Such a system should apply to all agricultural holdings as, historically, incentivisation has been a far more efficient system for improving access than the threat of enforcement action. We believe that this approach would encourage landowners/tenants to come forward with solutions to reconcile long-standing issues. The network should also be subject to inspection and testing through Welsh Government Rural Audit procedures.

Question 6: How should the number, role, membership, and purpose of local access forums be redefined?

Comments

- 1) BBNP LAF is not in favour of tying membership to organisations or interest groups. We believe that this would slow down decision making as members may have to refer back to their own grouping before committing to a decision. We also believe that individuals, who will usually have a particular interest, are better placed to provide an holistic view than those representing a particular organisation. It may be that a case could be made for "special representatives" who could attend in the place of a member who is unable to attend to represent a specific interest group from time to time.
- 2) We would welcome a four or five year term of office, in line with the LAs and similar. With only a small number of meetings a year, a three year period is insufficient to develop a good working relationship among members.
- 3) As mentioned above the LAF should be the sole initial arbiter of changes to the PROW network.
- 4) Local knowledge is key to the success of LAFs and thus any changes to LAs should not necessarily be applied to the LAFs in those areas. LAFs cost virtually nothing to run and so there is little requirement, economically, to merging LAFs to fit LA boundaries.

Question 7: How should the rights and responsibilities surrounding dogs in the countryside be harmonised to provide greater certainty over what is acceptable and what is not, in a way that makes communicating messages about responsible dog ownership and handling more straightforward?

Comments

This is an almost unanswerable question!

As in many cases, whatever legislation or guidance is put in place, the responsible dog owner will abide by it, the irresponsible will ignore it.

We firmly believe that dogs must be under control, particularly in areas where livestock is present, but whether this is on a lead or not is debatable viz. the suggestion that dogs are off leads in fields with cattle.

Given these points, we can only suggest that "Under Control" is the best description, but that the onus is put on the owner, to ensure that the dog is Under Control, whether that means on a lead or not.

Question 8: How could current legislation be changed to make it easier to allow for a wider range of activities on existing and new paths?

Comments

The variety of other uses of Access Land needs to be determined more accurately than a simple blanket change. There are areas, which because of their ecological or agricultural status would not be suitable for say horses or cycles. Whilst we appreciate that this could cause confusion and cost we believe that it is necessary to make distinctions.

Generally the use of forestry roads, for example, should be extended to horses and cycles. We cannot however see that many Footpaths could be upgraded to Bridleways due to the huge potential cost involved.

Question 9: How could legislation better strike a balance between the various demands of motorised users, landowners and the natural environment?

Comments

BBNP LAF is totally opposed to the use of motorised vehicles (with the exception of bona fide agricultural or rescue vehicles) on any of the current PROW network where rights do not already exist.

Question 10: How should the need for new or improved access opportunities be identified, planned, and provided?

Comments

The BBNP Authority has a Rights of Way Improvement Plan in place and will be working towards the 10 year extension of this once guidance is received in the next few weeks from NRW.

The LAF believes this is the correct format for maintaining the PROW network in the best order possible within budgetary constraints.

At present we understand that funding is supplied for this via the relevant LAs. This is unduly complex (there are 7 LAs in the BBNP area) and the funding for the ROWIP should be paid directly to the BBNPA in future.

Question 11: What are your views on the benefits and challenges of creating a right of responsible recreation to all land in Wales?

Comments

Population pressures and ease of access from major urban areas, create far greater pressure on the wilder areas of Wales than in the countries noted in the consultation document.

Therefore we are of the opinion that this is not an acceptable or appropriate way forward

Question 12: What approach do you advocate to improve opportunities for responsible access for recreation on inland waters?

Comments

BBNP LAF is firmaly of the view that increasing access to inland waterways is not the way forward. From a conservation point of view unmanaged access could be an ecological disaster. Current access arrangents are felt to be perfectly adequate.

Question 13: What approach do you advocate to improve opportunities for responsible access for recreation on the coast and in the marine environment?

Comments

This section does not specifically affect the BBNP and so we will not comment.

Question 14: What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a statutory code of conduct for outdoor recreation in Wales?

Comments

Codes of Conduct are followed by the legitimate user and ignored by those intent on 'doing as they please', therefore without the prospect of criminal charges being imposed on those disregarding the code they are of little practical use.

Advantages, in theory, of a statutory code could be to make recourse to damages by the injured party simpler and in helping adjudication of disputes involving behaviour in the countryside..

Disadvantages would include making a code which is sufficiently concise as to be usable.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: