

**Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum**  
**Unconfirmed Minutes of the 5th Meeting held at 2pm on November 26th 2015**  
**National Park Visitor Centre, Libanus**

**Present**

Secretary – Richard Ball (RB)  
Chair – Ian Mabberley (IM)  
Phillipa Cherryson (PC)  
Patrick Dobbs (PD)  
Dave Sharman (DS)

Debbie Hughes (DH)  
Jon Everington (JE)  
John Crellin (JC)  
Colin Woodley (CW)  
Julian Atkins (JA)  
Pam Bell (PB)

**Observers**

Sarah Coakham (SC)	NRW
Chris Heaps (CH)	NRW
Julian Steadman (JS)	Crickhowell Walkers are Welcome
Andy Johns (AJ)	Crickhowell Walkers are Welcome
Lisa Lloyd (LL)	Rights of Way Assistant BBNPA
Eifion Jones (EJ)	Rights of Way Officer BBNPA
Richard Tyler (RT)	Tourism Manager BBNPA
Andrew Fleming (AF)	Blaenau Gwent CBC

**I. Welcome and Apologies**

IM welcomed members and observers. Apologies for absence were received from Jeff Spencer, Denis Murphy and Hilda Williams.

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 17th September 2015**

The minutes of the 4th meeting were accepted and it was agreed that IM should sign them as a true record.

**3. Matters Arising Not Otherwise Appearing on Agenda**

**Improving Opportunities to Access the Outdoors for Responsible Recreation. (Green Paper)** - IM thanked members for the comments made on the Green Paper Consultation and confirmed that he had sent them to the Welsh Government.

**Blaen y Glyn** - IM confirmed that he had written to Welsh Water regarding the removal of the kissing gate at Blaen y Glyn. Welsh Water have responded and said that the gate had been stolen and the Farmer had not had time to replace, they would ask a Welsh Water Warden to look at replacing the gate.

Action: IM agreed to follow this up as the work has still not been completed.

**4. Beacons Way Review**

RT updated members on the progress of the Beacons Way review. Hawk Associates have been appointed to review the route, initially they are looking for ideas and comments on the problems with the route and suggestions on how these can be addressed.

RT told members that the biggest issues are in the far west of the National Park where a lack of way marking in the upland areas and where the route is difficult to navigate means that the route is not suitable for inexperienced walkers. RT confirmed that the original route would be kept but with the option of a less challenging route to enable it to appeal to a wider audience.

IM asked if the modified route would then fit the criteria of a 'Wales Trail'. RT said that he would want the alternative route to meet the criteria. RT said he was waiting to hear back from Jont Bulbeck, NRW, regarding the current situation with the promotion of 'Wales Trails'.

SC said she would follow this up with Jont Bulbeck.

JE said he would be interested in seeing the brief that the consultants had been given and RT agreed to forward the document to JE.

PC suggested that more emphasis should be placed on publicising and helping with accommodation, parking and transport along the existing route rather than changing the line of the route. RT said that these aspects would be part of the plan and that signage is something that we must consider and thought needs to be given as to how we provide this.

PD suggested that the use of signage on rocks should be looked at. He also thought that well signposted easy routes lead to walkers sticking to the same line which overtime creates problems with erosion and the need for remedial stone work.

RB said that often when trying to spread the load people tend to follow desire lines for example along the edge of the Fans above Llyn y Fan Fach and Llyn y Fan Fawr.

RT agreed to circulate the email address for Hawk Associates so members can comment directly. There is also a workshop being held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 that members are welcome to attend.

## **5. Walkers are Welcome in Crickhowell**

Andy Johns and Julian Steadman attended the meeting and provided members with an overview of Walkers are Welcome in Crickhowell. The walk booklets that have been produced were circulated.

RB asked if the BBNPA could be consulted when the booklets are revised, AJ agreed that this would happen.

JG asked what engagement had there been with landowners and graziers in the past as there had previously been a little resistance to walkers are welcome groups. AJ said that they had liaised with landowners in and around Table Mountain and it had been very positive. They

have been working very closely with National Park wardens and improved way marking through farmyards has helped. They had also offered to go to graziers meetings but the offer had not been taken up.

DH said that Black Mountains Graziers were looking for speakers for future meeting and asked if they would mind if she put their name forward. AJ said they would be delighted to attend and speak at a meeting.

IM thanked AJ and JS for attending the meeting.

AJ, JS and RT left the meeting.

## **6. – 8. Active Travel Consultations in Powys, Monmouthshire and Rhondda Cynon Taff.**

The active travel consultations were discussed and members were advised to go to the relevant authority webpage to make any comments or suggestions. There was general disappointment that few routes had been identified in the BBNP including most of the canal.

## **9. ROWIP (Rights of Way Improvement Plan) Review**

EJ gave members some background to the consultation and explained that there was a duty for the unitary authorities produce and to review the ROWIP but that the National Park Authorities did not have the same duty (although the BBNPA did produce a ROWIP in 2007). The current BBNP ROWIP was produced jointly with the constituent Local Authorities as permitted by the CROW Act. The LAF would be a statutory consultee regarding the ROWIP whether the unitary authorities or the BBNPA carry out the review. RB added that the initial ROWIP cost a significant amount of money to produce, with a dedicated officer in place for 18 months. In 2004 the cost of producing the ROWIP amounted to c. £50,000 in staff time. JA said that with substantial further savings over the next 4 years the extent to which BBNPA will have to comply to satisfy the ROWIP guidance would have to be looked at. ROWIP funding on the back of the initial ROWIP had amounted to nearly £600,000 since 2008. However, there is no guarantee of ROWIP funding after the revised plan is published.

RB noted that the BBNPA would welcome advice from the LAF on how the NPA should proceed with this matter.

CW said that it would be a considerable drain on staff resources if the NPA try to meet the guidance.

There was some further discussion and it was agreed that IM should respond to the Welsh Government consultation regarding the review process raising concerns about the amount of work that would be entailed and the resources required.

## **10. Consultation on proposal for a Public Spaces Protection Order, Carmarthenshire**

EJ explained that this affects the Black Mountain as a public space and JA added there are concerns with regard to CROW land.

IM said that he couldn't see how this could be enforced.

RB said he was concerned that it would cause more confusion especially as there was already confusion amongst some members of the public regarding the issue of dogs on leads on CROW access land.

PB added that she thought this consultation was a bit premature as the Green Paper will look into this.

LAF members agreed that they would not respond.

## **11. Rights of Way Consultations**

EJ gave members a brief outline of the proposals in the Waterfalls Area.

CW said that he knew the area well and had no objections to the proposals and JE added that the area is covered by CROW open access so members of the public could walk the original paths if they wished to. Members agreed to support the proposals.

## **12. A.O.B**

### **Circuit of Wales**

JA told members that there had been approval of 300Ha of replacement land for the loss of Common land. Mitigation land is separate from this and has been allocated close to the site. The replacement land comprises of parcels of land, some located close to the site and others further away.

## **13. Date of the next meeting**

3rd March 2016, 2pm - Venue to be confirmed.