

BBNP Local Access Forum

Confirmed Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 April 2008 at 10.30 am at The National Park Visitor Centre (Mountain Centre)

Present:

Secretary and Acting Chairman:

Richard Ball

Members:

Jeremy Atkinson (JA)

Graham Davies (GD)

John Evans (JE)

Gwyn Gwillim (GG)

Helen Lloyd Jones (HLJ)

Steve Rayner (SR)

Mike Scott-Archer (MSA)

Richard Stowe (S)

Colin Woodley (CW)

Observers:

Avril Barnes

Rights of Way Assistant, BBNPA

Judith Harvey

Area Manager West, BBNPA

Michael Smith

Countryside Council for Wales

Alan Ward

Area Manager East, BBNPA

Sunita Welch

Education Manager, BBNPA

Brad Welch

National Park Plan Development Officer, BBNPA

1. Welcome and Apologies

RB chaired the meeting, and congratulated all present on their appointment for a period of three years starting from that date. He said that twenty four applications had been received and fourteen members had been appointed, including John Cook, Director of Countryside, BBNPA. He emphasised the purpose of the LAF which was set out in the terms of reference:-

To provide advice to the BBNPA, relevant local authorities, the CCW, WAG and others as appropriate as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation.

Apologies for absence were received from David Mantle, Martin Skinner, Pam Bell, Neil Bennett, John Cook, Eifion Jones and Dawn Fox.

2. Introduction of Members

The members introduced themselves in turn and gave a brief account of their interests and reasons for joining the LAF. Biographical details of all members are held by the Secretary.

3. LAF Business and Administration

RB noted that the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) and associated regulations included some procedures concerning administration of the LAF but where this was silent the guidance recommended that LAFs decided procedures for themselves. He noted that the LAF was not a committee of BBNPA but was autonomous. The following points from the Terms of Office were raised:-

1. The election of Chairman would be the first item of business at the next meeting. The regulations did not stipulate a procedure for running such an election other than it should be by secret ballot. It was recommended that officers held the post for the three year term. Three members had submitted their names for consideration as Chairman or Deputy Chairman, Steve Rayner, John Evans, and Mike Scott-Archer, and Helen Lloyd Jones had put her name forward as Deputy Chairman. It was agreed that each should have a five minute slot to present their case. Biographical details of those members would be circulated with the minutes. RB asked any other members that wished to be considered for either post to let him know before the next meeting.
2. Terms of Reference had been circulated with the agenda and would be discussed at the next meeting.
3. The Minutes of the LAF would be presented to the Planning, Access and Rights of Way Committee as soon as practicable and recommendations would be made through that route.
4. Operational matters would be discussed directly with the Manager of Countryside Department, who was a member of the LAF.
5. Correspondence to CCW and other organisations would be signed by the Chairman using individual stationery (i.e. not BBNPA headed paper).
6. Observers can be appointed as required. CCW and WAG are allowed to send observers, although WAG has never sent an observer to the previous LAF meetings. The BBNPA can bring as many observers as it wishes.
7. The Secretary is not a member of the LAF but provides support to members.
8. National Access Forum – LAFs in Wales appoint one representative to the NAF and points can be raised through him. The present representative is Clive Menzies.
9. Expenses claims should be made in a timely fashion when totals reach £20 or more.
10. Venues – JA asked if meetings could be held in areas relevant to issues discussed, and it was agreed that venues would be rotated. Craig y Nos country park and Crickhowell Resource centre were both suggested.
11. Sub committees – RB pointed out that sub committees could be raised as necessary. MSA thought this was the best way of tackling issues, but GD felt it would be divisive.
12. Regularity of meetings – It was noted that two meetings a year was the statutory minimum allowed and that 4 meetings would be held if business for discussion merited it.
13. Attendance – if members failed to attend for 12 months they were disqualified.

4. Setting the Scene

Alan Ward, Eastern Area Manager, and Judith Harvey, Western Area Manager, gave individual presentations about work and issues within their own areas. Of particular interest to members

was the project of reclamation on Waun Fignen Felin, west of Dan yr Ogof Caves. Area warden contacts for local community areas is listed below:-

Eastern Area

Alan Ward	Manager	07854 997505
Shelley Baars	Hay, Llanigon, Crucorney, Vale of Grwyney	07854 997509
Howard Morgan	Gwernyfed, Llangorse, Talgarth, Llanfihangel Cwmdu	07854 997514
Sam Ridge	Talybont , Llangynidr, Llagattock, Crickhowell, Vaynor	07854 997507
Steve Smith	Brynmawr, Llanelly, Llanfoist, Abergavenny, Llantilio Pertholey, Goetre, Llanover, New Inn	07854 997536
Clive Williams	Warden	07854 997515

Western Area

Judith Harvey	Manager	07854 997510
Wyn Morgan	Maescar, Cray, Llywel, Trallong, Ystradgynlais, Tawe Uchaf	07854 997512
Jon Pimm	Brecon, Llanfrynach, Glyn Tarell, Yscir	07854 997506
Helen Pye	Ystradfellte, Penderyn	07854 997516
Toby Small	All Carmarthenshire Communities	07854 997511

5. Sgwd yr Eira Footpath

RB stated that as EIJ and the Forestry Commission had been unable to attend this meeting discussion about the resolution of the problem with the footpath behind the waterfall should be postponed to a future meeting. He did report that the path behind the waterfall was closed for a further six months due to the danger of falling rock, which had been assessed as a high risk. He explained that the site is a SAC and a SSSI and options for remedial action by the landowner is restricted. FC proposed a de-scale of the rock, and after inspection last week the area involved was estimated as 8 m x 10 m, larger than previously thought. FC were awaiting an assessment by CCW to conclude whether work had an adverse effect on the area. FC are concerned about occupiers liability and CCW are concerned for the integrity of the SAC. MS advised that FC should take legal advice as to whether liabilities are involved and a wider consultation was required about access in general. SR reported that the walk behind the waterfall was featured in the new publication Visit Wales.

Action point: Agenda Item for next meeting

6. Foot and Mouth Disease fences

RB outlined the reasons for installing the fences in 2001, when foot and mouth disease was prevalent in the area, on Manor Mawr, the Central Beacons and along the upper Grwyne Fawr in the Black Mountains. He said that the Manor Mawr commoners had applied to WAG to keep the fence to prevent stock deaths on the road and also to assist with the Tir Gofal scheme; the Black Mountains commoners wanted to keep the fence at Grwyne Fawr but had not yet made an application to WAG and the chair of the commoners intended to speak with the RA before making an application; the National Trust wanted to remove the fence on the Gap Road although the commoners wished to retain it and the CEO for BBNPA was acting as mediator in this

discussion. GG stated the case for keeping the Grwyne Fawr fence and said that it would be discussed at the AGM of the Black Mountain Commoners in May.

Action point: Agenda Item for next meeting

7. Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan (NPMP)

Brad Welch gave a brief presentation outlining the purposes behind the NPMP, its structure, who it was for, priorities for action and an implementation framework. The process was in the consultation phase until 31st August, and he asked members to consider their response to the NPMP. Brad Welch can be contacted by telephone at 01874 620411, by email on brad.welch@breconbeacons.org or by letter at the National Park offices.

He led members through a 20 minute activity considering elements of the plan and their initial response to issues within it. RS said that Brad Welch's efforts and intentions with regard to community consultation were currently undermined by the BBNP Planning service'. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next meeting.

Action point: Agenda Item for next meeting

8. Proposed Business of Next Meeting

Elections of Chairman and Deputy Chairman

Terms of Reference

Scwd yr Eira – FC and EIJ to be invited

Foot and Mouth Fences

NPMP

Community Involvement

Change of Status of Talybont Reservoir to SSSI

Electronically available planning application forms

Overview of resources for improving Access

Access to Inland Water

Disabled Access Groups – John Phillips of BAG to be invited

9. Any Other Business

Beacons Park Society Great Debate

RB reported that a debate entitled 'IS THERE A FUTURE FOR WELSH NATIONAL PARKS?' was to be held on 19th April in Crickhowell by the BPS, involving prestigious speakers.

Other LAFS

JE reported that he had received an invitation to the Herefordshire LAF in his former role as Chair of the EALAF and asked members if they wanted him to attend. It was agreed that he should attend if he was able and GD asked if other members should also attend adjoining LAF meetings. It was agreed this would be discussed under terms of reference at the next meeting.

Action point: For discussion at the next meeting

Bridge over R Monnow

JE reported that a planning application had been received for a new bridge on the R Monnow.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 21 May 2008, at the NPVC (Mountain Centre) starting at 4 pm. Suggested dates for the remaining meetings were 10 September, 4 December and 5 March 2009.