



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2006**

**2pm – 5pm**

## **AGENDA**

**2 - 2.15**                      **Arrival and coffee**  
**2.15**                              **Meeting starts**

<b>For discussion / Decision</b>		
2.15 - 2.20	<b>(1) Welcome and Apologies</b> Members Introductions	MB
2.20 - 2.25	<b>(2) Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>	MB
2.25 – 2.40	<b>(3) Taking LAF Forward</b>	MB
2.40 – 2.55	<b>(4) ROWIP Update</b>	Katy Haines
2.55 – 3.05	<b>(5) User Group Meeting Update</b>	MB
3.05 – 3.35	<b>(6) PROW Technical Manual</b>	Paula Cheesman
3.35 – 3.45	<b>(7) Report from launch of Natural England</b>	Kevin Ascott
3.45 – 3.55	<b>(8) Future Agenda Items</b>	All
3.55 – 4.10	<b>(9) Correspondence</b>	MB
4.10 – 4.25	<b>(10) Public Questions</b>	
4.25 – 4.35	<b>(11) Members Group Photo</b>	All
4.35	<b>Close</b>	



Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006  
At Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford

### **Present**

Alan Adcock  
David Anderson  
Kevin Ascott  
Mick Brash  
David Corke  
Bob Drane  
Jenny French  
Lawrence Hammond  
Norman Hunt  
Susan Pattrick  
John Victory  
Edward Woods

### **Apologies**

Charles Gooch  
Hazel Jarrold  
Tracy Mann  
Richard Tattersall

### **Officers**

Merryl Mackenzie  
Paula Cheesman

### **1. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed the members and the public who were in attendance. He made thanks to the past chairman, Simon Gibson, for his work over the last 3 years. The Chairman welcomed new members to the meeting and all members introduced themselves giving a quick resume of their backgrounds.

### **2. Matters arising from previous minutes**

There were no amendments to the previous minutes and they were signed off as a true record. Susan Pattrick wanted it recorded that she was disappointed with the forums response to the Defra consultation on Outdoors for All? Draft Diversity Action Plan.

### **3. Taking LAF forward**

The Annual Report was discussed and due to the delay in publishing the last report it was decided that as LAF is independent, there was no need to look for approval on the report. It was also decided that LAF should do a report on the advice it has given and that this should be sent out to Essex County Council, Defra, Natural England and any other bodies involved. It was

suggested that LAF write to the above companies each year and ask what they've done about the recommendations made.

The forum represents a broad range of expertise. The chairman spoke of making LAF more than a talking shop with the need to ensure that the recommendations made are carried out.

#### **4. Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

This item was cancelled as there was nothing to report on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan due to the Public Rights of Way team awaiting the results of the consultation process.

#### **5. Update on Training Day**

This item was added to the agenda as time was available due to the cancellation of the previous item.

The training course held on 15<sup>th</sup> November was titled 'Making LAF More Effective' and was attended by Susan Patrick and David Anderson. Susan and David gave some impressions of the course and discussion followed. The following points were raised:

- It might be a good idea to have a Councillor on the forum as this would raise the awareness of the forum in the Council.
- LAF should be consulted by Planning Department on new developments where they affect Rights of Way.
- LAF should be getting feedback after giving advice.
- LAF doesn't seem to have any influence and this perception needs to change.
- There is more LAF can do to promote itself both internally (within the Highway Authority) and externally.
- Meetings should be set in time for actions to go to Cabinet. It was explained that LAF needed to go through the Head of Highways & Transportation and the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation in order for anything to be set before cabinet. The chairman said that he was hoping to open discussion with the cabinet member for Highways & Transportation.
- During discussion it was suggested that LAF should be making contact with the S94 groups (groups Defra has LAF as consultees for). The chairman suggested using sub groups to make contact with these groups.
- It was suggested that LAF ask for a presentation from Planning department in order to make them aware of LAF and it's influence. The chairman asked that if anyone feels there is something important to discuss they can ask for it to be put on an agenda.
- It was suggested that LAF could raise it's influence through funding by the Wildlife Trust etc. and by getting involved with or setting up a project with them.
- It was suggested that questions from the public were held at the beginning of the meeting so that perhaps answers could be found during the meeting.
- Presentations should not only come from outside organisations (eg) specialist groups. They should be from corresponding groups. A point was raised that after the presentation by the canoe specialists there should perhaps have been a presentation by a landowner with river frontage or by Defra on the subject. It was stressed that the right person should be found to do the presentations.
- The LAF constitution should be revisited on an annual basis to keep LAF on track.

## **6. User Group Meeting update**

The user group meeting was attended by Mick Brash, Chairman of LAF, and he gave a short summary of the meeting. Budget was discussed and it appeared that PROW do not have the budget to carry out works necessary to the network. The claims procedure was also discussed and it was determined that both Law and Admin and the Definitive Map team were very under-funded and under-resourced. Digitalisation will speed up work when it is ready but it is taking too long. Funds can only be accessed with targets are met and they can't be met due to the lack of funds. The meeting was made aware that there are no dedicated legal people who work for PROW and that situation delays work even more.

After discussion it was suggested that there was a proforma for gating and styles which could then just be rubberstamped, thus saving time and expediting PROW work.

Action: LAF to write to Tony Ciaburro about the process and how we can streamline it.

## **7. Technical Manual**

Paula Cheesman, team leader for Community Action Team, introduced herself to the members and talked about the Technical Manual working document which PROW was writing. Paula had put together some technical drawings which the contractors use for Rights of Way. She asked that member look at the diagrams for points that may need to be changed or altered to get the best design standards.

Included in the handout were some notes about DDA and it's regulations. Essex County Council are making adjustments where they can and where they consider reasonable access can be made (eg) changing 2 plank bridges into 3 plank bridges where possible.

Paula explained that PROW were using British Standards as a baseline where possible. She also said that the P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) scheme were trying to update things in their own parishes.

The chairman suggested that a subgroup be formed. Susan Pattrick (mobility); Edward Woods (sport); Jenny French (equestrian) and John Victory (walker) volunteered. Paula recommended that the Countryside Agency booklet 'By All Reasonable Means' be read.

Paula told members there was no order of priority for changing ROW to meet disabled needs. It was not possible to change all ROW so it was up to officers to work on routes as they came up.

Dedicated routes for DDA were suggested but it was discussed and decided that information about each path was more important so that individuals could make an informed decision.

It was decided that LAF make this a project to raise money for new signs giving distance and destination to routes.

Action: members of the subgroup should email the secretary with their thoughts by the 11<sup>th</sup> December (2 weeks) and they would then be forwarded to Paula.

Action: Paula Cheesman to advise on the type of destination signage on ROW.

## **8. Launch of Natural England**

Kevin Ascott attended the launch on behalf of Essex LAF. There was a handout of notes on the launch. One of the things that struck Kevin was the information that Hertfordshire County Council had a PROW officer walking the 25% rolling programme of paths over 6 months and looking at DDA at the same time. They work on the least restrictive option (see handout).

## **9. Future Agenda Items -**

the chairman felt that these should be thought of before each meeting. Anyone who has something to offer or who knows someone who can make a contribution to LAF should let the secretary know.

The following things were proposed:

- Education of youth was raised as a problem in today's schools. It was suggested that Outdoor Centres and Visitor Centres were used more by schools.

Action: LAF to send a letter to the education authority

- Common Land – it was suggested that Parish Councils should make a registration for land. The only person who can challenge the registration is someone with a better title to the land.

Action: LAF to write a letter to the National Association of Local Authorities and the Essex Association of Local Authorities.

- Defra – 'Evidence and Innovation Strategy Programme'

Action: Secretary to find this document and email the link to member for reading

- Planning – request someone from Planning to come and give a presentation to LAF on their 5 Year Strategy and how it affects ROW.

Action: LAF to send a letter requesting a presentation on their strategy.

## **10. Correspondence**

An email was received from Libraries Distribution Centre asking whether we should be sending out Agenda and Minutes to libraries. All other committee documents are listed on line. After discussion it was decided that we would not send out documents as all LAF papers are listed on the website and are available to be viewed by appointment with the secretary.

Action: LAF to write an article about the forum for publication in Essex Matters. This would also hold the dates of future meetings. LAF to do a similar article for Essex Wildlife Trust and Essex Association of Parish Councils.

## **11. Public Questions**

A question on cross-compliance was received from a member of the public before the meeting. The letter was handed to Geoff Wilkinson, Rural Network Manager, to deal with as this does not fall into the LAF remit.

## **12. Any Other Business**

It was discussed and decided that this would be added to future Agenda's as a standard item.

## **12. Next meeting**

Dates for the meetings for 2007 were set. All meetings are held at the Central Baptist Church, on a Tuesday afternoon from 2 – 5pm.

30<sup>th</sup> January 2007

20<sup>th</sup> March 2007

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007

17<sup>th</sup> July 2007

18<sup>th</sup> September 2007

20<sup>th</sup> November 2007

The meeting closed at 4.35pm.

**Background Papers:**  
**PROW User Group meeting**  
**Report from launch of Natural England**  
**LAF Annual Report 2005 – 2006**



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

**30<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

**2pm – 5pm**

## **AGENDA**

**2 - 2.15**                      **Arrival and coffee**  
**2.15**                              **Meeting starts**

### **For discussion / Decision**

2.15 - 2.20	<b>(1)</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	MB
2.20 - 2.25	<b>(2)</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>	MB
2.25 – 2.40	<b>(3)</b>	<b>Taking LAF Forward</b>	MB
2.40 – 2.55	<b>(4)</b>	<b>ROWIP Update</b>	Katy Haines
2.55 – 3.05	<b>(5)</b>	<b>User Group Meeting Update</b>	MB
3.05 – 3.15	<b>(6)</b>	<b>Selecting a Vice-chairman</b>	All
3.15 – 3.45	<b>(7)</b>	<b>Training update– Making LAF more effective</b>	All
3.45 – 4.00	<b>(8)</b>	<b>Future Agenda Items</b>	All
4.00 – 4.10	<b>(9)</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	MB
4.10 – 4.25	<b>(10)</b>	<b>Public Questions</b>	
4.25 – 4.35	<b>(11)</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	All
4.45		<b>Close</b>	

**Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007.  
Central Baptist Hall, Chelmsford.**

**Present**

Alan Adcock  
David Anderson  
Kevin Ascott.  
Mike Brash  
Bob Drane  
Bob Drane  
Charles Cooch  
Lawrence Hammond  
Norman Hunt  
Hazel Jarrold  
Tracy Mann  
Susan Pattrick  
Richard Tattersall.

**Apologies**

John Victory  
Edward Woods  
Jenny French  
David Corke

**1 ) Welcome.**

The Chairman offered apologies that there was no secretariat. It was explained that immediately prior to the meeting it had become obvious that Merryll Mackenzie was not present and a mobile phone call to the CC. had established that she was on sick leave and, although there had been an alternative plan, that had also failed to be activated. As a result there were no paper minute copies, nor agendas, nor were there any copy letters nor correspondence. It was also apparent that there would be no presentation on the Rights Of Way Improvement Plan. There was some discussion which generally reflected badly upon the County Council and it was suggested that a letter be written in strong terms to the Leader of Essex C.C. pointing out that this was not good enough.

New members Hazel Jarrold and Tracy Mann introduced themselves and apologised for having become lost trying to attend the last meeting. Mrs Jarrold has a keen interest in disabled access and Tracy Mann principally represents equestrian pursuits.

Two matters of housekeeping arose; Bob Drane should receive minutes and other information by post as he has no access electronically. The County Council should update it's attendee's list for the Rights Of Way Users Meetings, to be sure that all know where and when to attend, The LAF should receive a report from these meetings.

**2) Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Sub Group who had consulted and given advice and opinions to Paula Cheesman concerning the new Technical Manual.

The Chairman asked those members who represent landowning and land management interests whether they felt able to advise how best the LAF may ensure that there should not become too great a bias in membership towards users rather than providers, of access. Charles Gooch and Richard Tattersall felt that letters to the NFU and CLA and articles published in the farming press would assist. Alan Adcock explained that it was likely that landowners in general find public access to be a nuisance. Charles felt this was a bit of a generalisation and that the modern generation of farmer was far more tolerant.

### **3) Taking LAF Forward.**

David Anderson agreed to provide copies of the course training notes from the meeting that he and Susan attended on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2006 to those members not able to download from the internet.

The Chairman highlighted a number of fields of activity from the training course which he hoped could be pursued. Kevin Ascott suggested that the apparent lack of interest by the CC did not bode well.

It was agreed that members, and perhaps the public through the website, should be able to see what and to whom has been written by the LAF. At least one copy of the letters should be tabled before the meeting.

### **4) Rights Of Way Improvement Plan**

The intended presentation did not materialise, no officer was available.

Geoff Wilkinson, Network Manager joined the meeting

---

Mr Wilkinson apologised for the lack of secretariat and officer attendance, it was suggested that the prospect of redundancy, due to restructuring has added to his staffing problems. Under considerable pressure from questions by LAF members, he conceded that there were likely to be redundancies in the near future. He would become responsible for the ROWIP amongst his many other duties, a secretary would be provided to the LAF and other ROW functions, in particular the Definitive Map record, were to be "outsourced". Members were most concerned about these proposals and felt that the CC. ought to have consulted before making such profound changes. The ROWIP and LAFs are a statutory duty and consultation would have been beneficial. Once more it was suggested that a strong letter be written by the LAF to Essex CC asking for more information and the likely effects of the changes.

The Quiet Lanes Scheme is being retained. Essex LAF is concerned that the true value is established before more are introduced, most of the routes being already fundamentally quiet before being considered for inclusion. The funding is directly linked to a government initiative.

The consultation documents for the ROWIP are with consultants for evaluation. Mr Wilkinson appeared to suggest that the forms had been too broad in scope. Richard Tattersall felt that the results of these questionnaires should be presented to the LAF as a draft before being accepted

as a course of action for the ROWIP. This idea was generally accepted and ELAF will write accordingly.

The secretariat was briefly discussed, it is the duty of the CC to provide same, and a budget has presumably been set. It was suggested that if, under the new restructure, there continue to be problems then perhaps the LAF should have an independent secretary. However, it was felt that a person within the ECC would be preferable as they would understand the protocol and channels with the council.

#### **5) User group Meeting Update.**

There had been no attendance by a LAF member; however Mr Dowding, attending the meeting as a member of the public, offered to send his notes to the chairman who will circulate them.

#### **10) Mr Anderson reminded the chairman that public questions were intended to be brought forward earlier.**

Mr Dowding asked whether the LAF would consider whether a turnstile deer gate was appropriate on the Essex Way at Wrabness. Mr Wilkinson agreed to review the matter, although the gate appeared to be totally legitimate and appropriate to the landowners needs. Mr Wilkinson left the meeting

-----

#### **6) Vice Chairman.**

Hazel Jarrold was elected as vice chairperson.

#### **7) Training Update.**

4 members will attend a training day at Ely on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Richard reminded that the training given 3 years ago did not extend to the new members and that it might soon be necessary to offer some courses.

#### **8) Future Agenda Items.**

Members were asked to consider from whom they would like presentations, currently we are hoping to hear from Planning, Education, Police and the ECC Law and Admin.

It was suggested that the proposed redevelopment of Stansted Airport could have a large impact and consultants working on the ROW issue ought to be invited to discuss the implications with Essex LAF.

The Environment Agency has a large area of coast under their control. They may be able to suggest ways of improving access.

## **9) Correspondence.**

The lack of secretariat also resulted in a lack of correspondence. It appeared that Mr Wilkinson was unable to access Merryl Mackenzie's files due to data protection issues.

## **11) Any Other Business.**

Alan Adcock spoke of his concern about unlawful use of motor vehicles on ROW. The LAF will press the Essex Police to take strong action.

Norman Hunt was concerned that Parish Councils were reluctant to join Parish Paths Partnership Schemes. This part of the CC's activity does not seem to be subject to cuts and it is hoped that there will be a greater uptake. Perhaps relying upon volunteers is not the best option, people are willing to give their time but do not want to shoulder responsibility. Health and Safety Assessments are cumbersome.

Kevin Ascott asked that we should support DEFRA in their Discovering Lost Ways Project.

Richard Tattersall pointed out that the Forestry Commission had dedicated all its land to open access and that others may follow suit.

Tracy Mann volunteered to act for the LAF in encouraging better educational links.

The Chairman will write up the minutes and circulate to members.

**The Next Meeting will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> March.**



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**2pm – 5pm**

## **AGENDA**

**2 - 2.15**                      **Arrival and coffee**  
**2.15**                              **Meeting starts**

### **For discussion / Decision**

2.15 - 2.20	<b>(1)</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	MB
2.20 - 2.25	<b>(2)</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>	MB
2.25 – 2.40	<b>(3)</b>	<b>Taking LAF Forward</b>	MB
2.40 – 2.55	<b>(4)</b>	<b>ROWIP Update</b>	Katy Haines
2.55 – 3.05	<b>(5)</b>	<b>User Group Meeting Update</b>	MB
3.05 – 3.35	<b>(6)</b>	<b>New Guidance on LAF</b>	All
3.35 – 3.55	<b>(7)</b>	<b>Feedback and discussion from Ely</b>	JV
3.55 – 4.10	<b>(8)</b>	<b>Future Agenda Items</b>	All
4.10 – 4.20	<b>(9)</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	MB
4.20 – 4.35	<b>(10)</b>	<b>Public Questions</b>	
4.35 – 4.50	<b>(11)</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	All
5.00		<b>Close</b>	



Minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007  
at 2.00pm in the Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

**Present** Mick Brash (Chairman), Edward Woods, Bob Drane, Jenny French, Merryl MacKenzie, Jo Carrington (Secretary), Hazel Jarrold, John Victory, Tracey Mann, Norman Hunt, Kevin Ascott, David Anderson, Laurence Hammond.

**Apologies** Charles Gooch, Richard Tattersall, David Corke, Susan Patrick, Alan Adcock.

### **Agenda Item**

#### **(1) Welcome and Apologies**

It was noted that with the absence of Charles Gooch, Richard Tattersall and Alan Adcock the Essex LAF has no land owners/mangers representation at this meeting. MB will address this issue with a letter/article to NFU and CLA publicising LAF and asking for new members.

Action – MB - NFU & CLA press article.

Concern was expressed by the Forum as to whether the new Secretary would have sufficient time to devote the role owing to existing work load. JC will address this issue with her manager to ensure she has time to complete the work. MB will also write to ECC (Essex County Council) if this issue is not resolved.

Action – JC – address role of Secretary with manager at ECC.

Essex LAF was very disappointed to say goodbye to Merryl MacKenzie and thanked her for all her hard work over the years as Secretary.

#### **(2) Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Essex Local Access Forum 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007 were accepted and signed by the Secretary as a correct. BD and KA approved the minutes.

#### **(3) Taking LAF Forward**

It was stated that LAF Secretaries are now taking on more roles and responsibilities on behalf of their Forums; this was highlighted by the training day at Ely. MB has written to the Chairman of ECC on this matter and also conveyed the LAFs disappointment at not being consulted on recent staff changes in Network Management. MB has only received a holding letter at present.

**(4) ROWIP Update**

Katy Haines sent her apologies but she was not in a position to provide the Forum with a ROWIP update. She suggested that Geoff Wilkinson would be in a better position to do this at the next LAF meeting.

LAF members agreed that it would be a good idea to write to the ROWIP consultants and ECC to ensure that the draft strategy is not produced without any input from themselves. There was a strong feeling that LAF must be involved during these crucial development stages.

HJ commented that during the production of the Thurrock ROWIP Thurrock LAF was heavily involved in every step of the ROWIP production.

KA raised concerns and JV reiterated concerns of the lack of involvement the LAF has with the ROWIP development and stated that the ROWIP Steering Group had only met once.

The Forum again conveyed their concerns over the manner in which the ROWIP was being developed, especially in light of the fact that the document is meant to be published in November 2007 and LAF have no knowledge of work being carried out.

The question of how to improve the Forums relationship with ECC was discussed. It was agreed that if the relationship did not improve then the Forum may need to consider contacting the LAF Co-ordinator at Natural England for advice and assistance.

Action – MB – write letter to ROWIP consultants, Geoff Wilkinson and Tony Ciaburro regarding ROWIP update. Convey disappointment at lack of LAF involvement and request to see draft document as soon as possible.

Action – JC – obtain a member list for the ROWIP Steering Group.

**(5) User Group Meeting update**

The Forum was informed that the last User Group meeting was cancelled; the next meeting is scheduled for the 26<sup>th</sup> April.

BD asked if there was any further information on byway funding?

Concern was raised pertaining to the outsourcing of the Definitive Map team. The Forum was worried that PRow staff would not have sufficient access to the definitive maps if this team is moved out of County Hall. DA proposed that the Forum write a letter to ECC regarding this issue. BD seconds the action and added that the maps need to go to the Essex Record Office or somewhere safe.

Action – MB – write letter to ECC regarding the Definitive Map Team.

**(6) New LAF Guidance**

All Forum members agreed they were happy with the new guidance and commented on its timely arrival.

MB proposed that the statement on page seven of the guidance should be included in all correspondence.

Action – JC – to include statement on existing letter heads as appropriate.

The role of the LAF Secretary was again raised as the guidance stated that the Secretary should have sufficient time to devote to their duties.

It was suggested that the information from bullet point one under section 7.2.2 should be included in the ROWIP letter to Geoff Wilkinson.

The matter of Diversion Orders was discussed owing to the receipt of an order from Dian Tompkins. It was agreed that as LAF has a strategic role, LAF should only be consulted if an impasse is reached and no decision can be made between user groups. In addition owing to the fact that orders only have a 21 day consultation period it would not be possible for LAF to discuss each order and comment in this designated timeframe.

Action – JC – send e-mail to Dian Tompkins to explain decision.

## **(7) Feedback and Discussion from Ely**

John Victory felt that the training day was very useful. The event was attended by lots of LAFs from all over the country. The Forum reviewed the training day notes, several points were addressed and actions followed (A copy of JV notes is included with the minutes).

Action – JC – circulate JV updated notes.

Action – JC - register for Defra newsletter.

Action – JC – find out if Rural Panel exists.

KA raised the issue of Lost Ways and the ECC review process. It was stated that ECC will not look at anything that has been looked at before. It was felt that the claim process is stalling. MB has spoken to the legal team at ECC about this situation and a member of the legal team will be attending the next Forum meeting in May. The issue of unclassified roads was also raised as those not recoded by 2026 on the Definitive Map the rights would be lost. It was thought that these claims will come from users and parish councils.

A discussion followed on Green Infrastructure Planning. The Forum wished to know if it is going on in Essex and if not why not? If it is going on why has the Forum not been consulted?

Action – JC – to ask Geoff Wilkinson or Kevin Jones about this matter.

Permissive paths were also discussed and members directed to look at the Defra website for further details. It was noted that conservation walks will be changing to conservation walks and bridleways.

Following a discussion it was agreed that LAF needs to be more prominent within the Members circles, the whole LAF profile needs to be raised. It was acknowledged that LAF had already approached planning and education teams. It was suggested that LAF minutes need to be sent to certain Local Authority

Committees. The Forum felt that there was no point in having a voluntary group whose advice is watered-down, ignored and advice not followed due to budget constraints.

Forum members were invited to write their own press articles for publications such as Essex Matters. However if these are to be presented as views of LAF they should be channelled for publication via the JC.

**(8) Future Agenda items**

A representative from the legal team at ECC will attend the meeting in May. Arrangements will be made to invite the education team to a meeting over the summer to give a talk on how they promote PRoW. The Forum will then offer them advice.

Action – JC – arrangements for legal team to attend May meeting.

Action – JC – invite education team to speak at summer meeting.

Action – JC – send reminder letters to planning and the police.

HJ agreed to give a presentation on disabled access from the Ely training day at the next LAF meeting.

**(9) Correspondence**

**ECC Education Department**

Letter received from the Education Department at ECC who would be happy to attend a LAF meeting, arrangements are underway, see above.

**Southway – erection of gates**

A problem concerning the erection of gates at Southway has been reported by the Senior Ranger at Langdon Hills Country Park.

Action – MB - write to Network Manager explaining that LAF have taken note of this issue and trusts that existing highway rights will be upheld.

**Stansted Airport Exhibitions**

David Anderson will attend exhibition.

Action – JC to forward details to DA and MB.

**Styles and Gates**

The letter received from Tony Ciaburro contradicts the view of Paula Cheesman who states that there is a problem and staff are held up by procedure.

Action – JC – send copy of response from TC to PC.

**Cross- Compliance**

A letter on this matter has been received from Geoff Wilkinson.

**Cambridgeshire LAF – T9 Policy**

Essex LAF sent an e-mail to say they concur with the proposal made by Cambridgeshire LAF.

### **Essex Bridleways Association (EBA)**

In response to the letter received from EBA LAF will write to Tony Ciaburro to enquire how this work will be continued with the loss of this member of staff and express their concerns.

Action – MB – write letter to TC expressing concern.

### **Environment Agency**

Edward Woods and Norman Hunt will represent Essex LAF.

Action – JC – ask the five absent members if they would like to register.

Action – JC – register interests of EW and NH to Environment Agency.

Action – JC – copy Environment Letter and send to EW and NH.

### **(10) Public Questions**

No questions.

### **(11) Any other Business**

Action – MB – write articles to NFU, CLA and Access Essex.

Forum member asked what CRF meant? MB informed the Forum that it means Carriage Road Foot, which means ancient carriageway. Today it would be know as a restricted byway.

JC asked if all expense forms could be returned within seven days of the each meeting so they can all be processed together.

Meeting closed.



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

## **AGENDA**

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007  
2pm – 5pm**

**2.00 Arrival and coffee**

**2.15 Meeting starts**

- |             |             |  |                            |
|-------------|-------------|--|----------------------------|
| 2.15 - 2.20 | <b>(1)</b>  | <b>Welcome and Apologies</b>                         | Mick Brash                 |
| 2.20 - 2.25 | <b>(2)</b>  | <b>Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>                  | Mick Brash                 |
| 2.25 – 2.50 | <b>(3)</b>  | <b>Definitive Map Orders</b>                         | Jacqueline Millward        |
| 2.50 – 3.00 | <b>(4)</b>  | <b>Public Questions</b>                              |                            |
| 3.00 – 3.15 | <b>(5)</b>  | <b>ROWIP Update</b>                                  | Geoff Wilkinson            |
| 3.15 – 3.25 | <b>(6)</b>  | <b>User Group Meeting Update</b>                     | Mick Brash                 |
| 3.25 – 3.40 | <b>(7)</b>  | <b>Disabled Access – feedback from Ely</b>           | Hazel Jarrold              |
| 3.40 – 3.50 | <b>(8)</b>  | <b>Summer Site Visit - suggestions</b>               | All                        |
| 3.50 – 4.00 | <b>(9)</b>  | <b>LAF Training &amp; Promotion</b>                  | All                        |
| 4.00 – 4.10 | <b>(10)</b> | <b>Barry Gardiner's Circular &amp; Kent response</b> | All                        |
| 4.10 – 4.20 | <b>(11)</b> | <b>LAFs &amp; Parish Councils – Defra proposal</b>   | All                        |
| 4.20 – 4.25 | <b>(12)</b> | <b>Future Agenda Items</b>                           | All                        |
| 4.25 – 4.40 | <b>(13)</b> | <b>Correspondence</b>                                | Jo Carrington / Mick Brash |
| 4.40 – 4.50 | <b>(14)</b> | <b>Public Questions</b>                              |                            |
| 4.50 – 5.00 | <b>(15)</b> | <b>Any Other Business</b>                            | All                        |

**Close**



Minutes of the meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007  
at 2.00pm in the Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

**Present** Mick Brash (Chairman), Edward Woods, Bob Drane, Jenny French,  
Jo Carrington (Secretary), Hazel Jarrold, John Victory, Tracey Mann,  
Charles Gooch, Alan Adcock

**Apologies** Kevin Ascott, Richard Tattersall, Susan Patrick, Lawrence Hammond.

### **Agenda Item**

**(1) Welcome**

MB asked each member of the Forum to introduce themselves to the members of the public. MB introduced Cllr. Spencer, who deputy portfolio holder for Development, Highways and Transportation who had come to observe the meeting.

**(2) Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Essex Local Access Forum 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007 were accepted and signed by the Secretary as correct. BD and JV approved the minutes.

**(3) Definitive Map Orders**

Jacqueline Millward (JM) from the Law & Administration Team at Essex County Council gave a presentation on Definitive Map Orders.

Following the presentation MB asked Forum members if they would like to think about and prepare questions for the next meeting pertaining to the presentation as there was a lot of information presented.

It was agreed that this would be the best course of action; however some Forum members indicated that they had a few immediate questions they would like to ask JM.

MB asked whether JM thought that the DMMO rolling programme had any disadvantages? For example if the Definitive Map team are not starting to look at the District of Maldon for another 10 years, with 2026 set by law for the closure of Definite Map claims, surely in some cases evidence would be lost.

JM explained that with any rolling programme there would be winners and unfortunately also losers. It is hoped that the definitive map register will help

assist the DMMO process. JM asked the Forum where they thought priorities should lie.

HJ pointed out that the Review of the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way pack does not comply with Disability Discrimination Act. Nowhere on the pack does it inform the applicant that the pack is available in alternative formats.

JM took the point on board and will forward to the relevant officer at Essex County Council.

CG asked what the difference was between an informal and formal application.

JM explained that a formal application involved the completion of all relevant forms and gathering of evidence and an informal application would be a telephone call from a member of the public.

CG then asked if both applications were on the register.

JM explained that only formal applications were kept on the register.

CG stated that the requirements of the application and the potential delay before a decision would be made was a discouragement for anyone who wanted to make an application.

JM agreed that this may be a discouragement owing to the long and detailed form applicants were required to complete. It is a large task and can be off-putting, but her team were bound by the existing procedures and the review policy.

MB asked if a member of the public was to ring from the Maldon District would they be told that their enquiry would not be dealt with for 10 years.

JM said that as already stated Essex County Council has a rolling programme for examining applications and they would be told that. JM added that it is very difficult to determine how long the legal team will be working in one area and therefore very difficult to give exact dates as to when claims may be investigated.

HJ enquired that if there was strong case for a claim would the application be taken out of the rolling programme and investigated.

JM replied that if there was a strong case for example a new development then the claim may be moved up the rolling programme but only if it complied with the 'out-of-programme order' criteria.

MB stated that town centre footpaths and unclassified roads need to be on the definitive map before the cut-off date. MB then asked if JM team would be prepared for the extra work.

JM said she was unaware of the requirement and could MB provide her with relevant information.

#### **(4) Public Questions**

Mrs Marlene Curtis (British Horse Society) – asked a number of questions which related to the value of the County Council's records, particularly the 1932 maps.

JM explained that they were not evidential because the 1932 survey is not fully documented but does still contribute to the investigation. JM explained that even if you used the 1932 map and not the later maps the 1932 map is still only one piece of evidence.

JM explained that in 1949 the 1932 maps were sent to parish councils so they could update the older map, they added, deleted and amended the Public Rights of Way shown. The 1949 map was the first that went through a statutory process.

Mrs Curtis asked if there be copies of JM presentation available to the public?

It was agreed that JC will arrange for the presentation to be up-loaded onto the LAF website.

**ACTION – JC – add presentation to LAF website.**

Mr John Dowding asked if informal applications are given the same weight as formal applications.

JM explained that the legal team pick up informal applications as they go through each District, for example the team are just moving into Tendring and letters will be sent out to individuals who first brought attention to the anomaly to inform them that the legal team were now in their area and investigating claims.

#### **(5) ROWIP Update**

Geoff Wilkinson (GW) gave a short presentation on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). He explained that he was now responsible for the development of the ROWIP.

Forum members asked to receive copies of the ROWIP update presentation.

**ACTION – JC will forward copies to members.**

GW asked the LAF to identify priorities for the ROWIP and also suggest sources of funding for improvement schemes. All comments need to be sent back to JC by the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2007 for collation.

JV asked if there were others who would be consulted?

GW explained that there are a number of other statutory consultees who would be asked to comment on the draft ROWIP. He also added that additionally there were

a number of ROWIP workshops for consultees to attend and the LAF had been sent an invite.

MB asked if GW could shed any light on the ROWIP Steering Group.

GW stated that there will be another ROWIP Steering Group shortly and a date will soon be circulated.

MB confirmed that the LAF will send comments back to JC for collation and then they will be passed back to GW. JC will also send names of representatives who wish to attend the ROWIP workshops.

**ACTION – JC to circulate draft ROWIP action plan, collate ROWIP comments and collect names for ROWIP workshops.**

Additional Questions for Network Manager

BD asked if the outside contract for the work on byways had been finalised.

GW conformed that the contracts had just been authorised.

## **(6) User Group Meeting Update**

MB asked for minutes to be sent to all Forum members.

**ACTION – JC to circulate minutes.**

MB reported to the Forum that Rosemary Welch (RW) attended the last meeting and that she was now responsible for highway safety and network management. RW was keen to emphasise that the number of accidents involving motorcyclists and young drivers had increased and that this would be priority for Essex County Council.

MB informed the LAF that he had spoken about maintenance of highway verges. He had suggested to the user group that maybe there needs to be an over riding policy on maintenance as area mangers all seem to have their own strategy.

MB suggested to the Forum that maybe LAF could do more to target 4x4 drivers through magazines to show what is happening to byways in Essex. They might also take the opportunity to highlight the fact that if damage continues then closures may follow. Also is there any possibility of developing off-road sites to remove vehicles from highway network?

**Action – All – Members to source and respond to 4X4 articles.**

**Action – MB – Letter to planning regarding off-road sites for 4X4.**

## **(7) Disabled Access – feedback from Ely**

Hazel Jarrold gave a short presentation on the training day at Ely.

**ACTION – JC to circulate notes.**

## **(8) Summer Site Visit - suggestions**

JC asked for suggestions from the Forum for their summer sit visit.

BD suggested a site visits to byways which were experiencing sever abuse so all members can appreciate the issues.

JV suggested visiting new developments such as Stansted Airport so again Forum members can discuss the problems associated with such a development.

It was decided that all suggestions should be passed to JC within the next few months so arrangements can be made.

**ACTION – All - members to send site visit suggestions to JC**

## **(9) LAF Training & Promotion**

MB asked whether the LAF could approach P3 for training for new members as they have done in the past.

JC informed the Forum that she had already approached the P3 team; however the P3 team are not sure if they are running events this year.

MB asked members to let JC know if they feel they are missing relevant knowledge and would like some form of training.

**ACTION – All – inform JC of any training needs.**

JF informed the Forum that the British Horse Society website was a good source of information. [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk)

It was agreed that the LAF could provide good advice to individuals and organisations and that as a Forum they need to start promoting their work.

JC suggested that maybe the LAF could attend the Barlylands Show on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of September and promote their work.

**ACTION - All – inform JC if you would like to attend.**

JC passed around a publication from Hampshire LAF which was agreed to be an excellent example of a promotional leaflet, which also included the annual report of the group.

MB asked JC to see if there were any of the Essex LAF leaflets left.

**ACTION – JC – to find any existing leaflets.**

MB asked all members to look out for causes that LAF could get involved in, for example the proposal for the Burnham to Southminster cycle path as this project is addressing the problem that people are too scared to cycle on our roads. The

campaign group have now set up a local committee and there may be room for LAF to get involved in the issues and offer support.

**(10) Barry Gardiner's Circular & Kent Response**

MB explained that Kent LAF had responded strongly to Mr Gardiner's letter and that he personally felt that if our response was too strong then we may be in danger of losing support. MB asked the Forum if they felt Essex LAF should also respond to the letter and if so in what tone.

HJ reminded the Forum that there is just a duty to produce a ROWIP and not implement a programme of work.

CG added that he thought the County Council should explore the possibility of using money from new developments to carry out some of the work.

MB said that once we have the ROWIP plan the next step will be to sell it to the public and reassure them that it can be achieved. MB believes that one of the roles of the LAF should be to promote the ROWIP as worthwhile.

BD added that LAF needs to be seen as working alongside Essex County Council without endorsing or influencing it.

CG said that the promotion of LAF and the ROWIP will help.

It was agreed that a letter/response should be sent to Barry Gardiner however the tone should not be as strong as Kent's letter. MB agreed to draft a response and circulate to members for comment.

**ACTION – MB – draft response to Barry Gardiner and circulate to members for comment.**

**(11) LAFs & Parish Councils – Defra proposal**

An article by Geoff Audcent was printed in the National Association of Local Councils to promote the work of LAFs to Parish Councils.

MB asked whether the LAF could target parish councils.

It was agreed that this was an issue to re-visit later on in the year.

**(12) Future Agenda Items**

No suggestions were received.

**(13) Correspondence**

**ROWIP Workshops**

Following an invite from Paula Cheesman for LAF members to attend the ROWIP workshops representatives nominated to attend each workshop.

### **PRoW & Planning Process**

MB reported that he had been in communications with Gary White regarding a policy for dealing with S.119 applications. Apparently a policy is in the process of being developed and MB will write to Garry White and ask to be kept in informed.

### **Cllr Martin**

A letter was received from Cllr Martin informing the LAF that they shortly receive a response form the planning department regarding their request for a presentation on PRoW and planning process.

### **Cllr Hume Invite**

MB wrote to Cllr Hume to congratulate him on his appointment and invite him to attend the Forum meeting. Cllr Hume wrote that he would not be able to attend on this occasion but had asked Cllr Spencer to attend on his behalf.

### **ROWIP Update**

A letter was received from Geoff Wilkinson on this matter explaining that as he had been invited to attend the next Forum meeting he would give a ROWIP update then.

### **Definitive Map**

No correspondence had been received to date.

### **PRoW Staff Changes**

No correspondence had been received to date.

### **Langdon Hills Country Park**

A letter was received from Mr Terry Buck regarding the issue of highway rights not being upheld at Southway. The Forum were advised that a claim for bridleway rights over the remainder of the Highway was outstanding.

### **Discovering Lost Ways Project**

A telephone call was received form Amanda Earnshaw explaining that she had received the letter for Essex LAF and that she was in the process of writing a response.

### **Definitive Map Orders**

Details of a Definitive Map order was sent to JC from Dian Tompkins. JC forwarded details to Chairman.

### **E-mail questions to Geoff Wilkinson**

ROWIP Steering Group – The next Steering group meeting will follow shortly now the draft ROWIP comments have been received.

Rural Panel – Not as far as I'm aware, though there are various groups and organisations that support/promote rural issues. I'm involved with the Essex Rural Partnership which was set up after foot & Mouth outbreak in 2000 to promote commerce in rural areas, this tends to focus on Farm Diversification with an emphasis on pressuring government to relax planning legislation in the countryside.

Green Infrastructure Planning – Yes this does exist in Essex and the contact is Martin Wakelin who resides in the Environment and Commerce section in County Hall.

#### **Response to Stile Consent Letter**

An e-mail was sent to the LAF from Paula Cheesman explaining that the letter the LAF had received stating that stile consents took six weeks to process the letter should have read six months. The Forum decided that a further letter needs to be sent to clarify the situation.

**ACTION – MB – follow-up letter**

#### **(14) Public Questions**

Cllr Spencer conveyed his thanks to the Forum for inviting him and said that he had found the meeting very interesting and that he had learnt a lot. He also added that he was aware that the time for legal responses needed to be accelerated and it was something that is being addressed.

#### **(15) Any Other Business**

None received

**Meeting closed**



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

## **AGENDA**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2007**  
**2pm – 5pm**

**2.00 Arrival and coffee**  
**2.15 Meeting starts**

2.15 - 2.20	<b>(1)</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	Mick Brash
2.20 - 2.30	<b>(2)</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings</b>	Mick Brash
2.30 – 3.00	<b>(3)</b>	<b>ROWIP- Consultation</b>	All
3.00 – 3.20	<b>(4)</b>	<b>Right to Apply - Consultation</b>	All
3.20 – 3.40	<b>(5)</b>	<b>Access to English Coast – Consultation</b>	All
3.40 – 4.00	<b>(6)</b>	<b>Cross-fields Paths Improvements</b>	Kevin Ascott
4.00 – 4.15	<b>(7)</b>	<b>Definitive Map Presentation Questions</b>	All
4.15 – 4.25	<b>(12)</b>	<b>Future Agenda Items</b>	All
4.25 – 4.40	<b>(13)</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	Jo Carrington / Mick Brash
4.40 – 4.50	<b>(14)</b>	<b>Public Questions</b>	
4.50 – 5.00	<b>(15)</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	All

**Close**



Minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007  
at 2.00pm in the Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

**Present** Mick Brash (Chairman), Jo Carrington (Secretary), Bob Drane, Susan Pattrick, Paula Cheesman, Richard Tattersall, Tracy Mann, Alan Adcock, Lawrence Hammond, Kevin Ascott.

**Apologies** Norman Hunt, Hazel Jarrold, Jenny French, Charles Gooch, John Victory, Cllr. Hume, Edward Woods, David Anderson.

### **Agenda Item**

(1) **Welcome**  
MB welcomed everyone to the July meeting of the Essex LAF. MB introduced Mr. Adrian Liddle from the Epping Forest Riders Association. MB introduced Paula Cheesman who had volunteered to take on the role of Essex LAF Secretary as JC would shortly be starting a new job on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

(2) **Minutes of Previous Meeting**  
The minutes of the Essex Local Access Forum 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 were accepted and signed by the Secretary as correct. MB and BD approved the minutes.

#### **Matters arising**

ROWIP future funding – a discussion took place concerning the request by Geoff Wilkinson that the Essex LAF should research possible funding streams to accommodate future PROW work that has been highlighted by the ROWIP consultation. It was pointed out that as a result of the CROW Act extra money has already been given to Local Authorities to carry out such works. The Forum agreed they should ask ECC where this extra ROWIP money was before they started to find additional funding for the ROWIP.

**ACTION – MB – Letter to ECC regarding ROWIP funding issues.**

Byway improvements – the Forum decided that as BD had not received any answers to his questions on byway repairs in Uttlesford Essex LAF would write to the West Area Highways office to gain an update on the situation.

**ACTION – MB – Letter to West Area Highways office regarding byways.**

(3) **ROWIP - Consultation**

MB read out GW letter which addressed several points raised by the Forum's response to the ROWIP Public consultation report. Mb explained that he had asked GW if the ROWIP was going to be a strategic documents or a user friendly document and that he had been informed it would be a strategic document.

PC added that although it was going to be a strategic document it would be a concise document with actions for implementation. PC reiterated that the PROW team did not want to produce a giant, wordy document or wish list. The ROWIP would list achievable objections and actions based in resources and finances available.

MB asked if this meant that the document would not be aspirational.

PC replied that the ROWIP would be an aspirational document and it will reflect what people had requested, i.e. a 10 year plan but the document would have to fit in with ECC's strategies, policies and the LTP too.

SP asked if the monies that were allocated to the ROWIP came from the Highways department.

PC explained that the ROWIP development work currently has its own budget and that it will not be until the action plan and network improvements stage that additional will need to be found.

SP asked if the ROWIP would form part of the LTP.

PC said that it would form part of the LTP and that Highways would need to discuss and allocate money accordingly.

MB enquired if the next step would be to wait for the statement of actions?

PC confirmed that it was and that officers are now looking at things that had be raised by the user group workshops. PC announced that information was available on the website and this would be updated regularly.

AA expressed his concern about the way money was being spent on PROW, especially as some are impassable. He stated that he could not understand why they had not been levelled out and vegetation cut-back.

A discussion then followed by all the members concerning PROWs maintenance and the pros and cons of artificially surfacing PROWs.

It was suggested that maybe the Forum could look at the TRO policy and provide comment to ECC and also maybe the byways leaflet?

MB added that if the Forum did this the members must consider all users.

**ACTION – JC – provide copies of documents to all members.**

**ACTION – All – read and review TRO & byway documents.**

**(4) Right to Apply - Consultation**

MB announced that Essex LAF had set up a sub-group to respond to this consultation. Before the matter was discussed MB read out a letter from Carol King regarding the Right to Apply consultation.

MB commented that the Forum needed to carefully consider the point Carol King had raised in her letter in their response to the consultation as Carol King felt the new process would benefit the landowner rather than the user.

RT spoke on behalf of the sub-group and begun by explaining that the proposals in the current consultation are not new proposals and that they were always present in the CROW Act when it came into force in 2000, so really this is not a new concept.

RT went on to explain that this consultation is about how the changes will be brought into effect, this process will create a consistent process/system for all.

PC added that the process will still have the same set of criteria as it does currently, the tests will still be the same.

RT stated that this process aims to standardise the existing process, the fundamental process will not change. The new process will ensure that all County Councils will have to carry out the same process.

MB asked if it was just the Definitive Map team who would be responsible for these applications.

PC replied that it would be the definitive Map who would be responsible for these applications.

MB asked the members of the public if they had any questions or comments.

Mr Liddle replied that he took the same view as that of Forum regarding the Right to Apply consultation. He felt that rationalisation could only be a good thing although he was aware that other individuals had interpreted the consultation differently.

RT offered to speak to Gary White, Definitive Map Team Leader to discuss this consultation. He will also send a draft response to JC and MB for circulation to Defra.

MB said he would write to Carol King expressing the views of the Forum. He would explain that the Forum would be supporting the changes to the process so long as the existing tests are not changed.

**ACTION – RT – to contact Gary White regarding the Right to Apply consultation and prepare the consultation response for Defra .**

**ACTION – MB – to write to Carol King regarding the Right to Apply consultation.**

## **(5) Access to the Coast – Consultation**

As EW was not at this meeting it was agreed that JC would contact EW and gain his views on the consultation as he attended the Coastal workshop run by Defra and then circulate these view to all Forum members as the consultation ends before the next Forum meeting.

**ACTION – JC contact EW and gain feedback from coastal workshop. Circulate feedback to all members and pull together response for Defra incorporating comments from all Forum members.**

## **(6) Cross-Field Paths Improvements**

KA introduced the issue of cross-field path re-instatement in Essex and gave his views on the current problems.

The statutory right to plough, or otherwise disturb is contained in Highways Act 1980 s134 as amended by the ROW Act of 1990 but many farmers, where practical with the way the field is worked, are now leaving the paths undisturbed. What the law also says in Section 137A Highways Act 1980 is that paths across grass crops do not have to be defined.

Cross field footpaths should be defined to a minimum of 1m and be free of crop and bridleways going cross field should be defined to a minimum of 2m. Getting land occupiers to make good and mark that line is the crunch of the problem before us.

The time allowed for this work varies, if the disturbance is the first for that particular crop the time allowed for reinstatement is 14 days from the first operation. This allows for a succession of operations to be undertaken, which is sensible. Once that period is over then any subsequent disturbance has to be rectified in 24 hours. There is an extension caveat but it has to be applied for before the 14 days has expired.

Both making good the surface and defining the line of the right of way are easily resolved by running a tractor across the field and back again, making the centre line firmer by over-running. That will suffice even on a corn crop until it is established, when either spraying or cutting will have to be undertaken to meet the requirements of the law.

Highway Authorities are given a specific duty to enforce these provisions of S134 Highway Act 1980 but largely default. There is unfortunately some farmers who will not define their paths until leaned on every year.

A simple method was devised a couple of years ago in Essex whereby those who default would be given a warning (Yellow card). Any subsequent breach would lead to a 24 hour notice to restore (Red card). KA understanding is that only 12 such notices were issued last year. KA stated that he personally, submitted 26 reports of non-definition during the early growing season of 2007. Some landowners do make some half-hearted late definition, such as a tractor line, through standing corn.

Failure to comply should lead to the County Council entering the land, doing the job themselves and then recovering costs through the Courts but it is likely that our County Council Legal Department would be unable to cope with such an increased work-load.

However, it is in the County Council's own interest to resolve this problem because it is the one issue that is spoiling the BVPI figures and these, in turn, affect the standing of Highways in the overall Government Performance Indicators and can incur monetary penalties.

Following his introduction KA then asked the Forum to advise Essex County Council that in order to improve cross-field definition of paths their District Officers should be encouraged to issue 24 hour notices and carry out clearance procedures, subject to the approval of their Area Manager. Should the Manager refuse such consent, then the reason for so doing should be on record for future reference. KA felt that if the work is presently being left to the one Enforcement Officer or the whim of Area Managers whether to do anything or not in this regard, then he fears there will be little chance of serious improvement.

**ACTION – MB – Letter to GW regarding cross-field paths**

## **(7) Definitive Map Presentation Questions**

Mr John Dowding pointed out to the Forum that Essex County Council's website showed only formal applications, no telephone enquiries or informal applications. He also added that some of the formal applications he was aware of were not shown on the website.

MB added that the Forum needed to compile a list of questions and proposals for Jacqueline Millward, Essex County Council legal Team, including the DAA comment raised by HJ at the last meeting.

**ACTION – All – comments and questions to JC as soon as possible for collation.**  
**ACTION – MB – letter to JM regarding the application process.**

## **(8) Future Agenda Items**

None received.

## **(9) Correspondence**

Crispin Downs had sent an e-mail to JC offering to meet with MB and the Forum and inform them of the work he is involved with in landscape design.

**ACTION – Secretary – arrange for Crispin Downs to attend a LAF meeting.**

Cllr Martin wrote to inform the Forum that Keith Lawson will be attending a LAF meeting to give a presentation on Rights of Way and Planning Process.

Hainault and Havering Riders Association wrote to LAF over their concerns regarding the Right to Apply consultation being held by Defra. MB agreed to respond to the letter detailing LAFs view on the consultation.

**ACTION – MB – Letter to Hainault and Havering Riders Association regarding the Right to Apply consultation.**

A letter was received from The Kennel Club concerning asking Essex LAF if they would consider becoming a member and support their work on Dog Control Orders. It was agreed that this may be an interesting angle for the Forum to explore and it was decided that a letter should be sent to The Kennel Club requesting more information in addition to bringing their attention to next months application period for new Essex LAF members.

**ACTION – MB – write to The Kennel Club regarding their proposal and invite organisation to join Essex LAF.**

Carol King had written to Essex LAF expressing her concern over the Right to Apply consultation being held by Defra. MB agreed to respond to the letter detailing LAFs view on the consultation.

**ACTION – MB – Letter to Carol King regarding the Right to Apply consultation.**

An e-mail was received from Mr Adrian Liddle, Chairman of the Epping Forest Riders Association asking of the Right to Apply consultation to be included in the July Essex LAF meeting and also that he would be attending the meeting.

Mr Geoff Wilkinson from Essex County Council had responded to MB letter and response to the ROWIP consultation. He explained that he would be holiday and could not attend this meeting but that Paula Cheesman would attend in his place and could answer any questions the Forum may have.

The letters sent out by Essex LAF following the last meeting were also read out to all members, Lucy Miles of Kent County Council, Jacqueline Millward of Essex County Council and Geoff Wilkinson of Essex County Council.

- (10) Public Questions**  
No one received at this point
- (11) Any Other business**

There was a discussion regarding the summer site visit and it was suggested that the Forum may take a trip on the Stour.

SP asked to be filled in on the G2 workshops and the report MB had written.

MB asked JC to e-mail all members the relevant list of Ministers concerned with access.

It was also agreed that the Forum needed to cut down on amount to of refreshments supplied after the meeting.

JC explained that MB and herself would be arranging the new Forum members application forms and adverts to be published over the next few weeks. Any individual who has completed a three year period of membership of the Essex LAF would be informed over next few weeks and an application form will be sent out.

BD and MB offered their thanks that of the Forum to JC for her work over the past few months and wished her well in her now position.

**Meeting closed**



Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN

## AGENDA

18<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
2pm – 5pm

2pm Arrival and coffee.

2.15. Meeting Starts.

2.15-2.20 (1)	Welcome and Apologies.	MB.
2.20-2.30 (2)	Minutes of Previous Meeting.	MB.
2.30-2.40 (3)	Public Questions	
2.40-3.00 (4)	ROWIP - Discussion and update upon Progress of Draft ROWIP. ALL.	
3.00-3.10 (5)	Discussion how ELAF will deal with consultations which do not fit effectively within the meeting schedule.	
3.10-3.30 (6)	Essex ROW Dept current staffing levels and imminent changes.	ALL.
3.30-3.40 (7)	Applications for New Members and how ELAF will raise profile and influence the actual improvement of the network.	ALL
3.40-4.00 (8)	Future agenda items and possible site visit.	ALL
4.00-4.15 (9)	Correspondence.	MB.
4.15-4.30 (10)	Any other business.	ALL.

Close.



Minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
at 2.00pm in the Central Baptist Church, Chelmsford.

**Present** Mick Brash (Chairman), Paula Cheesman (temp Secretary), Bob Drane, Susan Pattrick, Richard Tattersall, Alan Adcock, Kevin Ascott, Norman Hunt, Hazel Jarrold, Jenny French, Charles Gooch, John Victory, Edward Woods, David Anderson.

**Apologies** Tracy Mann, Cllr. Hume,

### **Agenda Item**

**(1)** Welcome and apologies

MB opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

**(2)** Minutes of previous meeting

Proposed by KA and seconded by SP as a true record of the meeting.

**(3)** Public questions

There were no public questions

**(4)** ROWIP

It was established that the Draft ROWIP had not been circulated as a result of staff changes and PC agreed to send them out by mail after the meeting.

### **ACTION: PC to send Draft ROWIP**

The draft ROWIP will appear on the ECC website and ought to appear on the LAF website also. Members of LAF agreed to consider the draft report and submit any suggestions by email. The draft will be considered by the policy development group on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007, Susan Pattrick was concerned to know who would carry the ROWIP forward after Geoff Wilkinson's (GW) departure from ECC and KA asked whether the steering group has any further role. GW suggested that there may be some further role after the consultation period however that by 2012 the ROWIP may be integrated with the LTP.

**(5) Sub group and responses to consultation**

MB was concerned that consultations often fell outside LAF meeting schedules and sought approval for sub group generated responses to be acceptable and sent off. RT suggested that the draft should be emailed out and provided there were no objections to the content it should be considered to be an approved document.

The coastal access response was approved and PC will email to DEFRA.

**ACTION: PC to send response to DEFRA**

**(6) PROW Staffing levels/changes**

MB explained that he had learned that GW would soon be leaving ECC and this follows closely upon the loss from the department of Jo Carrington and Cassandra Robinson and not far behind the reductions in staff due to redundancies (which LAF had expressed concern about) and illness. EW was concerned that it would take some time to replace these staff and that the earlier redundancies were possibly inappropriate. MB to write to Cllr Hulme expressing concern that lack of staff will result in the PROW dept being stretched beyond their limit and this having an adverse affect upon the improvement of the network and access to the countryside.

**ACTION: MB to write to Cllr Hulme**

**(7) Application for new members**

Members whose term expires this year were asked to reapply if they wish to serve again. PC confirmed that adverts were placed. It was noted that the link on the website for submitting applications was defective, PC confirmed having drawn this to the attention of the web administrator. He had agreed to delete and replace with a downloadable version.

MB informed the forum that Southend Unitary Authority were unable to find sufficient people to form a LAF and DEFRA had suggested they may be able to combine with Essex LAF. They have had between 4 and 7 applications. It was quite clear that they would assist with funding and provision of secretariat services however it was not clear how the 2 areas would be operated. MB will let Southend UA know that there was no dissent to the proposal and that they should decide whether they wish to make a formal approach.

MB raised the question of how LAF should raise its profile? Comment made by NH that CPRE had never heard of the LAF! It may be viewed as a statutory group with no teeth. Need to give info to countryside groups. The draft ROWIP may concentrate the issue and remind these groups that we can do things to help and represent their interests with regard to access and countryside issues.

**ACTION:** invite interest groups to future meetings

KA suggested maybe if we have a speaker on certain topics that may interest them specifically. SP suggests we invite these people as members of the public rather than groups.

**ACTION:** Do an article for the Wildlife Trust, Parish Councils etc.,

### **(8) Outstanding Issues**

Police/enforcement – no response.

Country Parks educational ranger talk – not dealt with.

Environmental Agency workshops on waterways – EW went along and this has been dealt with.

Members site visit – still outstanding

4x4 Use – influence by responding to articles in magazines – not done yet. Anyone else is welcome to respond on behalf of Essex LAF. As Suffolk has no RUPPS now and people may now come to Essex.

Improving the availability of off-road sites – conversation with planning – should be district level.

KA quad bike course proposed. Planning authorities need to allow for it in the local plan review – CG.

ACTION: MB to draft letter out to districts

LAF leaflets – we don't have any could do with some. Can LAF contact go on ECC PROW literature?

Jo sent round the 'Making the best of Byways' and TRO information to all LAF members – overlooked on the agenda so deferred to next meeting.

ACTION: MB to add to next meeting agenda

Discovering lost ways project – 8 year project and no new PROW as yet. Natural England are due to consult LAF to suggest ways to defer costs. Not received anything yet.

Some UCR's fall into this category. RT to pass the report on when read.

JD mentioned about taking things out of turn for the definitive map if supported by the Parish Council.

### **(9) Correspondence**

Letter from GW re funding.

Write to Karl Raby regarding the ECC Contract

Arrangements for PROW – MB

Crossfield paths – GW

BHS – response to coastal access.

### **(10) A.O.B.**

Future agenda items – anyone?

Meeting Closed at 4.45pm