

**NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK AND COUNTRYSIDE
JOINT LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

Working Group Three

Notes of meeting held on 2 October 2006
Percy Arms Hotel, Otterburn

Present: Richard Cross, George Astbury, Alasdair Mitchell, James Boulton

Apologies: Alison Carter, Keith Stevenson

Discussion points

Members discussed three issues at the meeting:

1. Lost Ways

After a brief by Alasdair the group decided to recommend that the JLAF expressed its concerns to Natural England that the whole project was:

- Worthy in its ambitions but over ambitious
- Creating uncertainty, fear and distrust
- Extremely expensive.

2. Alasdair Mitchell's Paper

The group recommends that the JLAF take note of the paper and members report on any cases where inflexibility is discriminating against the rural population.

3. Ted Liddle's Paper

The group noted that Ted's paper and felt that the first priority of the JLAF work plan was to vigorously examine the ROWIP and comment on it. The process of examining and commenting on the ROWIP will be the best way of highlighting the problems raised in the paper. However, it must be remembered that delivery of the ROWIP depends on priorities and funds.

R Cross
2 October 2006

12th Meeting Northumberland Coast AONB Partnership

Craster, 14 September 2006

"I attended the above meeting as your JLAF representative. The only carry-over point of note from the last meeting concerned the beach huts at Beadnell and Seaton Point. The National Trust are now drawing up tighter leasehold agreements concerning style and footprint issues; the situation at Seaton Point is still somewhat confused.

The North Sea Trail is now fully open; there is a booklet available and also individual walk leaflets as well as an excellent book on plant life – really worth a read.

The AONB are holding their Annual Forum on 16 October in Alnmouth. The AONB are seeking schemes for their Awards of Excellence in Building Design, Farming and Land Management and Visitor-Community Facilities – awards to be presented at the Annual Forum. A Design Guide for the Built Environment was issued for public consultation – comments by 20 October.

The Country Mile has now recruited five groups and three Community Woodlands Schemes have been selected. The Young Ranger Scheme is due to start in September 2006 in partnership with North Sunderland Community Development Trust. The Shelter Belt draft guidance is expected in the Autumn for both AONBs. The Green Tourism Business Scheme is underway and it is hoped to have a dozen clients in the pilot phase.

There was a presentation by Steve Lowe of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust with special reference to the almost unique Whin Grassland and associated Coastal Heath in the AONB. There is to be a conservation scheme on these areas led by NWT.

The next meeting of the Coastal AONB is 6 December 2006."

B Harwood, 19 September 2006

Please follow link to the Northumberland Coastal AONB web page for further information on some of the initiatives above.

[Northumberland Coast AONB](#)

**Meeting with Chairman of Cumbria Local Access Forum and
the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

AONB Office, Stanhope, Thursday 28 September 2006 at 1400

Present: Duncan Graham, Chairman Cumbria LAF
Simon Boyd, LAF Administrator, Cumbria LAF
Simon Wilson, North Pennines AONB
Richard Cross, Chairman Northumberland JLAF

1. Aim of Meeting

To see the colour of each other's eyes before we are faced with some potentially divisive issue.

2. Items discussed

- Wind farms – agreed that when windfarms affect access LAFs will comment. Where a windfarm does not affect access LAF members may comment if they wish.
- Fire risk – Cumbria have not had this.
- Long term closures – LAF should request English Nature bring forward their review.
- Pennine Bridleway Northern Extension – agreed need to 'keep after' the Minister.
- Lost Ways – general feeling that it was not feasible and too expensive.
- Signage – raise through the RoWIP.
- RoWIP – Cumbria LAF have direct access to the Cabinet Portfolio members for Highways and Access.
- Note – North Pennines AONB very strong on publications – take their advice

3. Follow-up

All parties found the meeting helpful and decided to meet again and to ask Durham LAF to give a time and date in February 2007 with a Hexham venue

R Cross, 5 October 2006

**JLAF ACTION PLAN 2006 – 2007
PROGRESS AS AT 1 OCTOBER 2006**

Priority One

- i) ROWIP – comments on the scoping document; draft ROWIP awaited
- ii) Parish Pride – programme launched and comments coming in

Priority Two

- i) Raising Profile – 13 July; visit to Director of Highways and Transportation; attendance at Area Meetings
- ii) Working Group Projects
 - WG1 – strategy – ongoing
 - WG2 – ROWIP, Parish Pride, Lost Ways – ongoing
 - WG3 – Implementation of strategy/rights of way – ongoing.
- iii) Training – visit to Kielder to see investment in access in operation; visit to Otterburn to see how access is managed on a major military training area.

Priority Three

- i) Liaison – visit to North Pennines AONB and meet neighbouring LAF Chairmen
- ii) Oversight of National Trails – lobbied Minister for decision on Pennine Bridleway Northern extension
- iii) Lostways – start in Northumberland deferred until 2009
- iv) Detrimental developments – none so far
- v) Ongoing - Closures - 11 this year; no current closures; Consultations – recently completed DEFRA's Outdoors for All: Diversity Review.

R Cross
1 October 2006

For JLAF Meeting
19 October 2006
Agenda item 14.1

**NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK AND COUNTRYSIDE
JOINT LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

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Chair: Richard Cross Vice Chair: Pamela Brookes Administrator: Marion Hume

28 September 2006

Karen Lee-Bapty
Countryside (Recreation and Landscape) Division 5
DEFRA
Zone 1/01
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6EB

Dear Karen

DEFRA Consultation on Outdoors for All? Draft Diversity Action Plan

On behalf of our members, please find enclosed the response to the above consultation document from the Northumberland National Park and Countryside Joint Local Access Forum.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the document and we look forward to the findings in due course.

Yours sincerely
on behalf of the Northumberland National Park and Countryside
Joint Local Access Forum

Marion Hume

MARION HUME
JLAF Administrator

Marion.Hume@nnpa.org.uk

Cc NNPA, NCC Countryside Support Team, Kevin Heyman

Northumberland National Park and Countryside Joint Local Access Forum

Response to the DEFRA Consultation Document 'Outdoors for All? Draft Diversity Action Plan.

General

It would be difficult to dissent from most of the sentiments in the Consultation Document but sadly, visions, sentiments and words cost little. Achieving the aims require commitment and commitment costs money. Until central government agrees to fund programmes for improving diversity, little will happen.

Specific Comments

Q 1: Is this a vision that your organisation can subscribe to:

Yes, the JLAF feel this is a vision we could subscribe to and we can help you achieve it by advising our access authorities, Northumberland National Park and Northumberland County Council.

Q2: Are these outcomes realistic and are any missing?

Missing are:

- Economic benefit
- Challenge and fun
- Need for sustained funding

Q3: Are these objectives ones which your organisation can subscribe to and help deliver?

Yes – within the advisory role of the Joint Local Access Forum.

Q4: Are these targets realistic and ones that your organisation is able to work towards, with others, to achieve?

The JLAF believe that this is achievable.

Q5: We do not think a quantified national target for the increase in under represented groups is appropriate. Do you agree.

Yes. We feel individual service providers should only set targets if these are measurable and achievable. As we are not a service provider, we can't comment on the level of increase we think would be feasible to achieve.

Q6: Do you think the milestones are realistic and the timescales for change appropriate?

We can't comment as no milestones are given.

Q7: What would be the best mechanism for keeping you up to date as the plan is implemented and reviewed?

The JLAF feel short and meaningful reports would be the best mechanism.

Q8: Do you agree with these priorities for guidance and training?

- a) We feel different training would be required for different audiences e.g. regional audiences. Also, the training for service providers themselves should be tailored to the needs of the groups who might access those

services. These groups, however, are those most likely to be under represented for whatever reason (e.g. location, financial, health).

- b) We feel training for a number of other decision makers would also be required to enable them to see where money might need to be allocated and where it fits within their remit. These other decision makers could include public and private organisations as well as individual groups.

Q9: Do you have a preference for how these are delivered?

The JLAF have no preference.

Q10: Can we link this work to existing training or guidance in this area?

The JLAF feels this is unlikely.

Q11: Are there any further activities that would help embed diversity and equality principles?

The JLAF feel that diversity and equality principles should be added to education curricula at all stages.

Q12: Is it practical for existing forums to assist and develop the diversity agenda?

The JLAF feel it would only be practical within the limitations of any forum. We are unable to comment on any we consider to be potentially the most effective forums.

Q13: Are new types of forum needed, at what level should they be created and how would they work?

The JLAF feel no new types of forum are needed; keep within the existing areas of governmental responsibilities.

Q14: What other types of information might target groups find helpful?

The JLAF feel positive information about the site itself would be helpful – why it is good, why it should be used – as well as profiling reviews and intimidating events, activities, networks etc. The site should be keep abreast of current issues and legislation and be user-friendly.

Q15: What assistance or guidance would your organisation need to develop or improve its own marketing information to under-represented groups?

A JLAF Is an advisory body not a provider.

Q16: Do you agree that there is a need to improve the baseline data on participation in outdoor recreation?

The JLAF feels there is a need to improve this.

Q17: Does your organisation collect data on visitors and/or the awareness of provision by under-represented groups? If so, in what form?

The JLAF members would make use of our Access Authorities' data.

Q18: Should the Action Plan be extended to cover carers for the elderly and children and young people in inner cities?

The JLAF feel this should certainly be the case.

- Q19: What should the priorities for any further research be?
The JLAF feel it is extremely important that the links between education and health be looked into and considered.
- Q20: Which existing funding programmes do you consider to be the most relevant for helping deliver the diversity agenda?
The JLAF believes that core government funding is the most relevant.
- Q21: What should the priorities be for spending in this area?
The JLAF feels the priority should be educating the target groups.
- Q22: Does your organisation have specific targets for diversity and do they cover access to outdoor recreation as a service?
Yes.
- Q23: Where would the introduction of new diversity targets make most impact?
The JLAF feel most impact would be in the education sector.
- Q24: Are champions needed?
The JLAF feel these are not desirable.
- Q25: Does your organisation have a diversity champion that we could keep in touch with during the delivery of this plan?
The JLAF Administrator would be the person to liaise with.

Conclusions

The key to encouraging wider access for diverse groups is the knowledge which gives the confidence to make use of what is available and knowledge is a factor of education. Education on access, therefore, requires long-term involvement and commitment by central government.

28 September 2006