

# **Bradford Local Access Forum**

**8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 6:30 pm**

**On line via Teams**

## **Minutes**

### **Present**

Members:	Pam Allen (PA)	Chair	Horse Rider and Walker
	Didy Metcalf (DM)		Horse Rider, Land Owner, Local History and Equalities
	David Sturge (DS)		Cyclist, Walker, Local History and Wildlife
	Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw (AR)		Portfolio Holder
	Jane Callaghan (JC)		Wilsden Parish Councillor
	Goodith White (GW)		Menston Parish Councillor
	Tim Sellors (TS)		Cyclist, Walker & MTB Trail Development
	Chris Moore (CM)		Walker, occasional cyclist
	Nick Dybeck (ND)		Walker
CBMDC	Tim Brooks (TB)		Forum Secretary
Officers:	Danny Jackson (DJ)		CRoW Manager

### **Apologies**

Owen Wells	Friends of Ilkley Moor and Ilkley Parish Cllr.
Steve Lax	Cyclist

## **1. Introductions**

Pam Allen opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, particularly Nick Dybeck as a new member. Introductions were made.

## **2. Minutes of last meeting, Matters Arising**

DM asked for an update regarding progress on licencing commercial dog walking on Council land.

DJ Progress on this proposal stalled during Covid. A report on how the licensing will work will need to go to the Strategic Director, however it is not clear yet which department will manage the system, the licensing team or estates. There will need to be a public consultation about any proposed charges.

DS thought there would be general support for licensing commercial dog walkers. PA said that it had been brought up some 11 years ago and has now become an issue. Charges need to take into consideration how much dog walkers were earning. GW said that in Leeds it was limited to four dogs. Dog walkers charge in the region of £12 per hour. DM wasn't sure that anything draconian, cost wise, was needed, but if there was a problem then the person responsible needs to be known. ND pointed out that if people are making money from Council resources it is only fair to license the activity.

The minutes of the last forum (March 2020) were agreed as a correct record.

## **3. Accessible Network, Council Motion**

This item was introduced as the Council has instructed the Strategic Director of Place to;

- Work towards ensuring that footpaths, access land and managed green spaces in its ownership are as accessible as possible, and report progress annually to the Local Access Forum and Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- Ensure that the work done to improve accessibility is done appropriately to the environment, avoiding excessive "urbanisation" of the countryside.
- Via the Local Access Forum, work with other organisations such as the Disabled Ramblers Association and the Ramblers Association to support their work in support of the British Standard 5709:2006 on Gaps, Gates and Stiles which requires the least

restrictive option for all potential users, including people with disabilities or limited mobility, where a path crosses a boundary and specifies high-quality standards where barriers are justified.

ARS has brought the LAF into the motion as the body with experience in managing rural and wilder landscapes with accessibility. It would be useful for interested members of the LAF to meet with relevant Councillors to discuss ways to implement the motion.

DJ pointed out how information can be essential for people to access the Countryside with confidence. The Access to the Dales website was mentioned <https://www.access-the-dales.com/> He also suggested drone footage of paths could be made available to show people the terrain and obstacles they will encounter. Working with organisations such as the Disabled Ramblers could be useful <http://disabledramblers.co.uk/>

PA said that her reason for joining the LAF was to encourage development of multi-use paths. By default, these are easily accessible. Not every existing path will be appropriate but any new routes should be created as multi-use.

GW asked if the many local walking groups would be able to have an input. ARS confirmed this would be the case.

DM via the Regional Access Forum, pointed out that the East Riding are having some success in replacing stiles with more accessible furniture. The Calderdale LAF has a person who uses a wheelchair attend their forum which is very useful for a different view.

DS backed the inclusion of Walkers Are Welcome, and pointed out that it shouldn't be limited to footpaths but all RoW including unrecorded ones. Improvements would be welcomed but not sanitisation.

ND agree with DS regarding avoiding sanitisation, are there any standards to follow? TB thought it would be resource dependent and done on a path by path basis. The

gates, gaps and stiles guidance would be a starting point. The current standard is BS5709:2018 explained here <https://centrewire.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Pittecroft-Trust-BS5709-2018-explained.pdf>

DJ includes managed green spaces not just linear routes. JC thought starting with bridleways would be worthwhile as there is a difference in surface requirements between different users. Supportive of the use of drones for an overview. DM agreed that knowing where you can go is key.

DJ suggested that any LAF members willing to work on this issue should let TB know so that a working group could be set up e.g. hold a workshop with user groups and Councillors. TS suggested that we invite someone from disabled Ramblers or someone with a disability to come and address the LAF – so we are more aware of the issues.

## **5. Recent CROW Work and Projects**

DJ had sent out an activity report before the meeting.

£250,000 has been provided from Covid recovery funds to repair areas that had been damaged through increase access during the last couple of years. It is hoped that any remaining funds can be carried over to the next financial year as there has been difficulty because of materials shortages and contractor availability.

The regulations on net gain for nature conservation when planning permission is granted has been implemented. This means that any development has to result in a biodiversity improvement. If this cannot happen on site, then other land or funding must be provided for off-setting elsewhere.

Nothing further on the Deregulation Act (this was just before the announcement from DEFRA regarding the scrapping of the 2026 cut-off date).

Funding availability means that much work has been done with natural flood management, particularly on Ilkley and Harden moors, as this benefits nature conservation as well as reducing flood risk.

PA queried the work done on the Aire riverbank, she thought it was done through the EA. DJ clarified it was in conjunction with the Aire Rivers Trust and helped by a donation from Denso Marsden's of £15k

DM was pleased about the Covid repair funds and queried a replacement for HLS was up and running. A small part of Ilkley Moor, Harden Moor and Trench Meadows are in the new Stewardship agreement. Baildon Moor needs all graziers to sign up and some are not willing.

DM asked if forestry grants were being applied for. DJ said much of the suitable Council land was already planted and efforts were concentrated on urban trees at present. DS pointed out that there was now a wider understanding that trees aren't the only answer to carbon capture and flood management, and that well managed moorland is just as valuable.

## **6. Current Consultations.**

The current consultation list was circulated before the meeting.

GW asked for clarification regarding the Menston Station proposals. Currently there is a planning application, that if approved, would mean changes to the public footpath. Changes to the position of the path would be done through a public path diversion order under the Town and Country Planning Act. The test for an order made under this legislation is "has valid planning permission been granted?" Therefore, if residents are not happy with the proposals they should object to the planning application. If planning permission is granted, although there is the ability to object to a footpath diversion order, the only grounds for turning down (not confirming) an order would be that no valid planning permission has been granted.

The district wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) regarding wildfire prevention will need renewing in March (PSPOs need renewing every three years). It will be going before the relevant committee in March before being put out for public consultation. The majority of the LAF were in favour of renewing the PSPO. A letter of support for the PSPO will be sent from the LAF.

DS asked if ground nesting birds could be added along with the notices about barbeques and fires? PS asked if a s.59 notice about unauthorised motor vehicle use could be added. DJ said the ground nesting bird signs are replaced in the spring as they are more effective if placed during the time birds are nesting and removed afterwards. The fire service will respond to a 999 call if barbeques are being lit on the moors.

DM raised concerns about the planned surface on the Salt Pie bridleway proposals. CM was disappointed to see it still on the agenda. TB pointed out that it was on a more convenient route than the original proposals, but as it will shortly be going out for pre-order consultation, representations are welcome.

## **7. Memorials Policy in relation to unauthorised bench on Hope Hill, Baildon.**

DJ introduced this item, pointing out specifics like this were not part of the usual LAF discussions. However, the LAF's guidance was sought before any action was taken on this potentially contentious enforcement.

A metal memorial bench has been placed on Hope Hill. Permission had been asked but it was refused in line with the memorials policy. Alternative locations had been suggested but the applicant was not happy with them and the bench was installed anyway. There are already two benches, a diorama and trig point on this location. A Freedom Of Information (FOI) request has been submitted regarding the Council's decisions around this matter.

PA suggested Tong Park or outside the veteran's bungalow in Baildon would be more suitable locations. DJ said it had been suggested. PA also mentioned an increasing numbers of ashes in various places. DS thinks it is hideous and is not

happy about it glorifying war, it looks inappropriate. The LAF is a statutory body that came to an agreement regarding memorials in countryside locations. The memorials policy went through Council process (Executive Committee) and public consultation. It's very cheeky to install it after being turned down. They are treating all others with disregard and it is a precedent to be dealt with. The LAF was in support of seeking removal of the bench.

The Council's memorial policy can be found here;

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/environment/countryside-and-rights-of-way/memorials-and-memorial-benches/> with specifics in the site schedule link..

## **8. Date of next Forum.**

7<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Following meetings 1st November 2022, then 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.