



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
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**Fiftieth meeting**  
**Devon Countryside Access Forum**

**Norman Room, The Kenn Centre, Exeter Road, Kennford, Exeter, Devon**  
**EX6 7UE**

**Thursday, 26 April 2018 at 10.00 am**

The meeting will be open to the public in accordance with provisions of reg.7 of The Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007 (under s 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

**A G E N D A**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies
3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
4. To approve minutes of the forty-ninth meeting held on 25 January 2018. (Pages 1 - 10)
5. Matters arising
  - 5.1 Explore Devon website (4.3 25.01.18)
  - 5.2 Correspondence log (5. 25.01.18) (Pages 11 - 12)
  - 5.3 Dawlish Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) (7.1 25.01.18)
6. Public questions

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment

7. Correspondence log (Pages 13 - 14)
8. Reports from meetings attended by DCAF members
  - 8.1 Understanding the Health and Well-being Value of the Pebblebed Heaths
  - 8.2 Local Nature Partnership Conference (Pages 15 - 16)
9. Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee held on 15 March 2018 (Pages 17 - 20)
10. Public Rights of Way update

To include feedback on budget scenarios from previous meeting.
11. Presentation by Paul Davis, Asset Manager, Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste, DCC. 'Devon County Council's role in maintaining the highway'.
12. To note and approve responses to consultations and note feedback
  - 12.1 Response to Natural England on coastal access (Pages 21 - 32)
  - 12.2 South West Coast Path funding (Pages 33 - 42)
  - 12.3 Exe Estuary Partnership Dog Walking Code (Pages 43 - 48)
  - 12.4 Torridge District Council Public Spaces Protection Order (Pages 49 - 50)
13. Current consultations
  - 13.1 Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit. Defra (Pages 51 - 58)
  - 13.2 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) safety review. Department for Transport (Pages 59 - 64)
  - 13.3 National Planning Policy Framework - draft revised text. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (Pages 65 - 74)
  - 13.4 Developing a national approach to physical activity for children and young people. ukactive (Pages 75 - 76)
14. To approve draft Annual Report
15. To discuss and agree Work Plan for 2018-19 (Pages 77 - 78)

16. Invitation to a training workshop on the Definitive Map process and 2026

To be hosted by Somerset Local Access Forum and led by Sarah Bucks and Phil Wadey, authors of 'Rights of Way -Restoring the Record.' Date not fixed.

17. Training Day

18. Any other business

19. Date of next meeting

Notice of questions from the public should be submitted in writing four working days before the Forum meeting. At the discretion of the Chair members of the public may be invited to ask a question or make a statement.





Minutes of the Forty-Ninth meeting  
of the Devon Countryside Access Forum  
held at County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD  
Thursday, 25 January 2018

**Attendance**

*Forum members*

Simon Clist  
Sean Comber  
John Daw  
Gordon Guest  
Jo Hooper

Chris Ingram  
Sue Pudduck  
Councillor Philip Sanders  
Sarah Slade (Chair)  
Maggie Watson

*Devon County Council Officers and others present*

Lloyd Batten, DCC apprentice  
Helen Clayton, Senior Officer, Public Rights of Way, DCC  
Ros Mills, Manager, Public Rights of Way, DCC  
Hilary Winter, Forum Officer

**1. Apologies and resignations**

Apologies had been received from Mark Bullock, Chris Cole, Andrew Cox, Linda Lee and Mark Simpson.

The resignations of Mark Bullock and Andrew Cox were noted.

**2. Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

**3. Minutes of the Forty-Eighth meeting held on 12 October 2017**

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2017 were approved and signed.

**4. Matters arising**

**4.1 Minor road network (4.3 12.10.17)**

An email response from DCC had been received stating that a review of the minor road network had not started due to competing demands. It was intended to make it a high priority with an internal consultation in April. No major impact on public rights of way was anticipated.

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Concern was expressed at the rapid deterioration of the minor road network and the danger to cyclists, and young people in particular, due to the scale and depth of potholes. Any incremental decline would inevitably become a maintenance issue for the Public Rights of Way team if minor roads became unsurfaced, unclassified County roads. It was noted potholes could be reported and tracked on the DCC website.

It was agreed it would be useful to invite the relevant officer from DCC's Highway Asset Group to the April meeting, to discuss the impact on users of minor roads and on the connectivity to the Public Rights of Way network.

*Action: Forum Officer to invite DCC Officer.*

## **4.2 Disability access position statement (7.1 12.10.17)**

The position statement is on the DCAF website and would be a useful document to raise awareness. The Chair thanked everyone who contributed.

## **4.3 Explore Devon website (7.2 12.10.17)**

Chris Ingram reported that she had looked at the Explore Devon website which included excellent information on how to ride, accessible beaches and road safety. It was geared primarily to tourists. Improvements could include a link to the Public Rights of Way website; an explanation of multi-use and where riders can go; and codes of conduct. Parking of horse-boxes was a major issue.

It would be useful to see better links to available riding areas on Forestry Commission and National Trust land. The Forum Officer had written to several organisations but had received a limited response. Some dealt with web information on a site by site basis.

Ros Mills, DCC, and the Forum Officer had attended a meeting with DCC Officers involved with Explore Devon. DCC would have to ensure any information was accurate before it went on the website due to liability concerns. User groups could provide more useful detail and weblinks were an option to provide such information. The same concern about accuracy applied to photo sites. Ensuring information remained accurate was a major consideration but electronic media ought to be the way forward. Time constraints in inputting details were acknowledged.

It was agreed P3 parishes may like to talk to landowners and check details of where horse box parking could be accommodated. It was acknowledged however that such provision should not impact on the management of adjacent land.

Linking to the PRow website did present some challenges, for example bridleway routes on Hollow Moor and Whiteleigh Meadow were not easy or

were seasonal. A caveat to cover this could be considered.

It was noted that some user groups, such as the Trail Riders' Fellowship, had up-to-date line mapping and encouraged responsible usage.

It was agreed the Forum Officer would liaise with Ros Mills, DCC, about contacts in the Forestry Commission and National Trust.

Chris Ingram agreed to look at the wording of the Explore Devon website.

*Action: Chris Ingram to follow up. Forum Officer and Ros Mills to discuss further links with the Forestry Commission and the National Trust*

## **4.4 Trail principles (7.2 12.10.17)**

The revised version was approved, subject to typographical correction. The principles would be sent to Ros Mills, Public Rights of Way Manager.

*Action: Forum Officer to forward to Ros Mills, DCC.*

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed that carriage driving was not currently promoted within the SW region on multi-use trails. However, several authorities had responded saying that if there was a demand for it they would no doubt consider it, provided the path was able to accommodate carriage drivers with regard to surfacing; widths; laybys; turning bays; land owner agreement and other factors.

## **4.5 Parish Paths Partnership (P3) workshops (9. 12.10.17)**

No one from the Forum had been available to attend the P3 workshops but these had been very successful with positive feedback. The days were a mixture of case studies, networking and a walk.

## **4.6 Verges (15. 12.10.17)**

The letter from the Forum was noted and approved. The response from DCC was discussed.

Although it had been a DCC decision to save money, it was noted that the Weeds Act 1959 was still in place and there was a concern that moving material around the countryside was spreading various types of weed. There appeared to be a general disregard for the value of verges for recreational access. Dumping on verges may render them unusable for walking or as a safe refuge and encourages fly tipping. The importance of supplying evidence, preferably photographic, where incidents had been identified was raised.

It was agreed a representative of the Highway Asset Management Group, DCC, could also discuss this issue and it would be useful to invite Skanska,

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new highway contractors, too.

*Action: Forum Officer to include this matter in the invitation to attend the next meeting.*

## 5. Correspondence log

Attention was drawn to item 11. The BHS Officer for Dartmoor had expressed concerns about the use of smooth tarmac, particularly on hills, which made roads more difficult and slippery for horses to use. A top dressing was preferable. It was agreed this was also an issue in Devon where SMA (stone mastic asphalt) had been put on. However, Highway Management had top dressed some areas and are aware of, and have experience of, the problem.

This was an additional area to discuss with the proposed speaker at the next meeting.

*Action: Forum Officer.*

Attention was drawn to the recommendation under number 12 and it was resolved to send a letter advising that a safe crossing is designed across the main A road, linking the proposed multi-use trail and West Down. Planning permission for the trail section had been approved by the Development Management Committee on 24 January.

*Action: Forum Officer to send a letter to DCC.*

## 6. Public questions

No public questions had been received.

## 7. DCAF member attendance at events/meetings

### 7.1 DCAF working group - Dawlish Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

Sarah Slade, Chris Cole, Simon Clist, Gordon Guest and the Forum Officer had been on a very interesting site visit to the Dawlish SANGS, accompanied by ranger staff from Teignbridge District Council. It was impressive that the three district council areas had got together to form the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee and deliver SANGS sites. The new Country Park was very accessible.

The recommendations made in the letter to Teignbridge District Council were approved. A positive response had been received from the Senior Ranger outlining some changes that could be made to improve accessibility.

The DCAF noted that the purpose of a SANGS site is primarily to accommodate dog walkers and discourage dog walking on more sensitive and designated wildlife sites. Therefore, its suggestion of incorporating cycling routes was seen as difficult to achieve and likely to generate conflict.

The Chair thanked everyone who made comments.



## 7.2 DCAF working group - England Coast Path

A small working group had met and produced initial draft comments. The draft was agreed and would be sent to Natural England. It was noted that an easy access route parallel to the South West Coast Path at Selworthy Beacon, Somerset, had been provided on National Trust land.

*Action: Gordon Guest agreed to provide photos to accompany the report. Forum Officer to submit response to Natural England.*

## 8. Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee held on 9 November 2017

Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee were noted.

## 9. Public Rights of Way proposed budget reduction 2018-2019 - impact assessment.

Ros Mills, Public Rights of Way Manager, spoke about agenda paper 9; an impact scenario for a potential budget cut of £50,000 to the Public Rights of Way revenue budget. The revenue budget amounted currently to £627,000 to maintain just under 5000 km of public rights of way (including bridges); 560 km of uUCRs and 225 km of off-road cycle routes. In addition, allocations of funding were made to the National Parks; 25% match funding for the South West Coast Path; a contribution to East Devon District Council to maintain the coast path; and the P3 scheme. No reduction in the capital budget was proposed.

There were statutory duties involved in maintaining the public rights of way network and lack of maintenance could result in legal challenge. Community engagement through P3 is seen as very important and it was not proposed to reduce that commitment, a view supported by members.

Ros Mills suggested that a reduction in the maintenance of uUCRS could be one way of dealing with the budget cut but might not achieve the proposed amount. Otherwise there could be reductions across the board or for particular types of route or spend. Currently the spend per person (resident of Devon) on public rights of way maintenance in Devon is £0.93, amounting to £125/km. The positive economic impact of the PRoW network and access was significant, as evidenced from closures during foot and mouth. The fifty or so small contractors who do work on public rights of way were part of the wider economic effect.

Ros Mills confirmed there was no money from Public Health or Sustrans for maintenance, despite the evident health and well-being benefits of public rights of way. The Local Nature Partnership, of which Public Health is a member, had commissioned much useful work on the health benefits of access to countryside/green space. The South West Coast Path Association carried out successful fundraising to assist with capital schemes. A quarter of staff in Public Rights of Way were lost in 2012 but levels have been protected for the past few years.

Members expressed reservations about even cuts across the board as this could result in poor standards overall and increased complaints.

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It was agreed it would be useful to ascertain the views of young people on this matter and suggested avenues were the Youth Parliament; British Trust for Conservation Volunteers; DoE and Ten Tors participants; and the National Citizenship Scheme. It was recognised there was a shift in how younger people use public rights of way and other trails with more organised and activity based use. There was a need to increase awareness and find out whether people do value PRow. Use of social media and incorporation of information into the National Curriculum were also suggested.

It was noted that Parish Councils had the opportunity to put money on the precept and it was acknowledged that some already so do. Public rights of way could be considered part of their responsibility as custodians for the future.

Ros Mills asked members to use post-it notes to crystallise ideas. Members duly undertook this task and put forward a variety of proposals for consideration. These fell under several main themes:

- Reducing a particular budget heading, or budget for a type of route, would be preferable to cuts across the board;
- Route functionality and use should be identified to prioritise those routes in greater demand. PRow mapping would assist in this task;
- There was the potential to increase partnerships with landowners, user groups, communities, parish/town councils and others to ensure continued maintenance, either through funding/sponsorship of work, employment of a dedicated 'warden' or use of volunteers;
- Signs and waymarking could be prioritised. (Signing and waymarking is a legal duty).
- Expert services of the Public Rights of Way team could possibly be sold to other authorities;
- Novel ways of fundraising should be explored, for example donation boxes, crowdfunding, card type payments etc.;
- Raising awareness of who provides and maintains paths.

*Action: Ros Mills to consider the budget cut implications in the light of DCAF comments and report back at the next meeting.*

## 10. Public Rights of Way update

Helen Clayton and Ros Mills, DCC, provided an update.

Wardens were particularly busy. In north Devon some rights of way had been affected by the recent extreme rainfall. Wardens were involved in the coastal mapping exercise. Training undertaken included CDM (construction design manual) and 4 x 4 vehicle use. Inspections were behind schedule.

Natural England had proposed a reduction in funding for the South West Coast Path for 2018/19 of 50%. It was noted that if additional DCC money is spent to bridge this funding gap on the SWCP this would have an impact elsewhere on the network. It was also noted that if no extra resource is put in then DCC would maintain the route to standard public rights of way criteria. Members expressed concern at the potential reduction in funding for a National Trail and resolved to send a letter to Natural England, the Secretary of State and MPs.

*Action: Forum Officer to circulate draft letter to members.*

The Definitive Map Review team is working on reports for the next Public Rights of Way Committee meeting on 15 March. A Public Inquiry would be held in Berryarbor on 10/11 April. DCC was neutral and had been directed to make an Order.

The Parish Paths Partnership events had been successful and provided opportunities for networking. Highway colleagues had attended. P3 parishes were currently submitting yearly returns.

DCC had agreed the next section of the Pegasus Trail could be constructed by the landowner.

Section 31(6) deposits were being scanned by a DCC apprentice and will go on the interactive map. Section 31(6) records were now a standard search enquiry for conveyancing and this work will improve the on-line information.

The Public Rights of Way section continued to be involved in many planning applications.

The Chair thanked the Public Rights of Way staff for their hard work.

## **11. To note and approve responses to consultations**

### **11.1 Cranbrook Development Plan: Preferred approach. East Devon District Council.**

The response was noted and approved.

### **11.2 Sidmouth - Alma Bridge replacement. Devon County Council.**

The letter was noted and approved.

## **12. Current consultations**

### **12.1 Dog walking code, Exe Estuary Partnership**

A consultation on the draft Dog Walking Code for the Exe Estuary had been launched. Following discussion, several points emerged to be included in the response.

- There seemed to be a fair balance between areas where dogs were excluded and other areas. Wardens were frequently out on site at Dawlish Warden to explain restrictions.
- The map was useful to plan a walk.
- Some people continued to ignore beach restrictions.
- Some concern was expressed about the design of the leaflet and suitability for people with visual impairment/colour blindness.

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- The Environment Agency should be added to the organisations to contact in the event of pollution.
- To ensure conformity with national guidance it would be preferable if the section on 'Walkies' referred to effective rather than close control.
- It would be useful to include the statement from the national guidance about not approaching people, cyclists etc. uninvited.
- Devon and Cornwall police website had a section on how to be safe around dogs.
- 'Want to know more' could be smaller with 'Walkies' a more prominent section.
- Regular worming of dogs should be added.

*Action: Members were asked to provide any further comments and the Forum Officer would circulate a draft response.*

## 13. Invitations to meetings

### 13.1 Exe Estuary Partnership Winter Forum - 6 February 2018

No-one present at the meeting offered to attend. The invitation would be sent to members who had given apologies.

*Action: Forum Officer.*

### 13.2 Understanding the Health and Wellbeing Value of the Pebblebed Heaths - 28 February 2018

Sarah Slade and Gordon Guest agreed to attend. A further place was available.

*Action: Members to advise Forum Officer if they wished to attend.*

### 13.3 Devon Local Nature Partnership - 16 March 2018

Maggie Watson expressed interest in attending and details would be forwarded.

*Action: Forum Officer.*

## 14. Dates and venues for meetings 2018/19

Meeting dates for 2018/19 were agreed as Thursday, 25 April; Thursday, 11 October and Thursday, 24 January. Due to parking difficulties at County Hall, other venues would be explored.

A Training Day would be held in the week commencing 18 June, on the theme of health and well-being.

## 15. Any other business

### 1. *Rights of Way*

A book had been received from Natural England entitled 'Rights of Way – Restoring the Record', 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by Sarah Bucks and Phil Wadey. A letter from Pippa Langford, (Principal Specialist (Commons and Public Rights of Way), Natural England), encouraged local access forums to share their work on the Definitive Map process on Huddle, the local access forum national website. She thanked members of LAFs for the time they give. The book is available to borrow from the Forum Officer.

DCC is in the process of completing its Definitive Map Review on a parish by parish basis and is in a reasonable position to meet the 2026 deadline.

### 2. *Environment Plan*

The Twenty-Five Year Environment Plan had been published by Defra. It included a brief mention of recreational access and public rights of way. It included new ways in which people use access, the importance of encouraging young people to connect to the environment, and mental health and well-being.

### 3. *British Standard for Gaps, Gates and Stiles*

The revised version of the British Standard was awaited following submission of comments and additional work by the expert committee. This will apply to all new gaps, gates and stiles and enable the Equality Act to be taken into account.

### 4. *Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS)*

Simon Clist raised concern about maintenance of SANGS after the initial funding period. Continued funding to ensure sustainability was important. This was primarily a remit for the district rather than County Council. Gordon Guest confirmed there was an ongoing discussion in Cullompton about the funding for green infrastructure associated with 8000 new homes.

Funds needed to be provided in perpetuity to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and, whilst there was recognition of this in some parts of the construction industry, it was not so across the whole industry.

Helen Clayton, DCC, said a lot of development schemes do not specify routes dedicated as public rights of way. Often recreational access proposals are area based. If public rights of way are involved, DCC would ask for a commuted sum for future maintenance.

It was noted all aspects should be agreed at an early stage, at Outline Planning Permission, and this could control the future management. Development offered more Council Tax for authorities. Ways of securing local funding, possibly through the Parish Council precept, were raised.

This would be an agenda item or presentation at a future meeting.

### 5. *Recreational access improvements*

Sean Comber, Trail Riders' Fellowship, raised the importance of improvement

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work being carried out on public rights of way and unsurfaced unclassified county roads by voluntary groups, such as the Trail Riders' Fellowship, working with DCC. Funding from the organisation and working with communities, landowners and DCC staff gave the opportunity to help with budget cuts and deliver projects. It was noted many people have useful skills and some people involved with P3 had health and safety accreditation.

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed that P3 volunteers inspected against set criteria designed for the scheme.

DRAFT



## Devon Countryside Access Forum

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Mr R Richards  
Highways Intelligence Group Manager  
Highways, Capital Development and Waste Management  
Lucombe House  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter  
EX2 4QD

8 April 2018

Dear Mr Richards

**DCC/3858/2016**

### **Buttercombe Barton to Spreacombe Bridge, West Down, Ilfracombe, EX34 8NU**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...”

The DCAF currently has fifteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum discussed the Buttercombe to Spreacombe planning application at its meeting on 25 January, following correspondence from a member of the public expressing concern that the safe road-crossing connection towards West Down had been excluded from the scheme submitted for planning. It was noted that the application had been approved at the Development Management Committee on 24 January.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.



## Agenda Item 5.2

The Forum is aware of the desire from the local community and Parish Council for a safe crossing of the A361 to enable a link between the village and the Tarka Trail. Enabling residents to access the Trail will be beneficial to health and well-being and may bring economic benefits to the village pub and community shop.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that this matter should be re-considered once funding is in place to enable the scheme to proceed.

It would be helpful if you could provide feedback and updates on progress with this project.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade  
Vice Chair: Chris Cole*



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**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**  
(not specifically on agenda)  
Available to view on request

	Sender	Subject	Action and any feedback
1	Open Access Centre 19.01.18	<u>Case number 2017098519</u>  Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and Luppitt Common for the additional date of 6 February 2018. 7 of the 28 days allocated in this case have now been used.	No action required.
2	Teignbridge District Council 29.01.18	Consultation on a draft Teignbridge Design Guide to guide development schemes and to clarify the requirements of Teignbridge Local Plan policies.	Local Development Framework and Planning position statement and Disability Access position statement sent to Council.
3	Public Rights of Way from Geoplace 5.02.18	Consultation on the National Street Gazetteer, GeoPlace DEC-Streets Consultation Version 4.0	Technical consultation on datasets and presentation. Public Rights of Way, DCC, responded through the ProW section of the Adept group. (Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport)
4	Mid Devon District Council 21.02.18	Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension. Consultation on removal of housing clusters from the Adopted Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document.	Not relevant to remit.
5	SW Devon Neighbourhood Planning 22.02.18	Bickleigh Neighbourhood Plan. Consultation on Neighbourhood Plan submission.	DCAF position statement on Neighbourhood Plans previously sent.
6	South Devon AONB 26.02.18	Review of the AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.	Insufficient time to consult. Copy of the DCAF position statement on AONBs submitted. Further consultation with AONBs to take place later in the year.
7	Mid Devon District Council 27.02.18	Consultation on the Schedule of amendments made to the Sustainability Appraisal Update 2017. Modifications made to the Mid Devon Local Plan review.	No action taken.

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8	Torridge District Council 01.03.18	<p>North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011-2031 – Proposed Main Modifications: consultation in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and Regulation 13 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.</p> <p>Following on from the second set of hearing sessions in January 2018 the Inspector has identified the need for consultation on two further proposed Main Modifications. The modifications relate to the method for calculating the five-year housing land supply and the deletion of a non-strategic housing site (Land between Staddon Road and Watertown, Appledore).</p>	Not within remit.
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*In addition, the DCAF Forum Officer receives a large quantity of e-mail updates from Devon County Council and other organisations. Relevant information is extracted and circulated to DCAF members via regular newsletters or forwarded direct.*

## Local Nature Partnership Conference, 16 March 2018

### Meeting Report

This meeting pulled together a broad range of people interested in Devon's natural assets, ranging from scientists and researchers, economists, health professionals, conservationists, policymakers and private sector representatives right through to organisations promoting more active lifestyles.

Prof **Iain Stewart** (he of TV fame, and also Director of the Sustainable Earth Institute at Plymouth University) gave a key note talk, **urging everyone to do far more to engage the general public in environmental and countryside issues**. As a 'thought provoker' he put up the famous hockey stick graph of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels, and asked the room when they thought the issue of climate change was first mentioned by senior politicians at international level. The answer was the 1960s, a time when, compared with now, you could hardly see any change at all. At that point, the American President told Congress it was likely that humankind was permanently changing the balance of gases in the atmosphere. Since then of course, the graph has skyrocketed, but little has actually been done. Prof Stewart's point was that it is **much harder and slower to change behaviour than it is to find out that change is needed**.

**Rebecca Waite**, Head of Local Delivery on **DEFRA's 25 year environmental plan** talked. She stressed that the PM's launch of the 25 year plan signalled government ownership of the initiative, rather than DEFRA's ownership, and that this was going to be a serious commitment. She also reminded us that the government plan to make **2019 a Year of Green Action**, through a **youth-focused** campaign to drive more involvement with environmental issues. It seems pretty clear that 'Natural Capital' and a 'Natural Capital Approach' are the new buzz words.

Prof. **Matt Loble**, from Exeter University, talked about changes in agriculture, describing a widespread shift in farming demographics, in which the average age of farmers is shifting up, and farmers are taking control of land later in life. He also discussed the trend for fewer, larger farms. Nationally, **42% of the smallest farms (about 41,000 small farms) produce only 2% of agricultural output. In other words, losing these small farms has little impact on productivity, but potentially large impacts for communities, rural roads, land management norms, etc.**, There was also discussion of how housing pressures affect natural capital and agricultural productivity. **Population growth in the South West is double the national average**, again bringing implications: for landscape scale changes in demand for access to the countryside; for pressures on roads and natural capital; and for pressures on farmland.

There were other shorter talks:

On the **benefits of outdoor learning**;

On a new move to be '**naturally healthy**' (**May is Naturally Healthy month, using the hashtag #stepoutside**);

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On **invasive species** - we get 10 new invasive species each year, and 40% of these are aquatic, hence the importance of the **Check, Clean, Dry campaign** for anglers;

On **Devon's special species** - species for which Devon has a particular responsibility, either because they are rare/threatened everywhere including Devon, or because Devon is a stronghold and they are threatened elsewhere. For conservation purposes, the list of 'top priority' species is about 106 long, and includes some things most people won't often see, and others that are more familiar (like dormice, barn owls, rare orchids etc).

The rest of the day was workshops, including one on **Using Behaviour Change Tactics to Help People Connect Actively to Nature**. It split people into groups according to their role - from those who interact face to face with countryside visitors through to those making policy about access to the countryside. It was a surprisingly long chain, which can produce weak links. Someone from Public Health England gave the example of how new developments can sometimes put in all the infrastructure to help people use bikes to link into public transport - bus stops, train stations, cycle routes and racks etc. but then fail to specify houses that work with this. So if there's no garage, no shed and no garden there's nowhere to store bikes and it's back to car journeys.

Maggie Watson  
DCAF delegate

## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

15 March 2018

### Present

Councillors P Sanders (Chair), T Inch, I Chubb, P Colthorpe, A Dewhirst, R Edgell, M Shaw and C Whitton

### Apologies

Councillor J Brook

### In Attendance

Councillor P Twiss

### \* 54 Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2017 be signed as a correct record.

### \* 55 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

(An item taken under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972)

The Chair had decided that the Committee should consider these items as matters of urgency so that the Committee would be apprised of recent events.

The Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste reported on the following items, namely:

#### (a) Adverse weather conditions

The damage to the public rights of way network following the recent adverse weather and the work undertaken by the Wardens in both the north and south of the County. Also, that additional funding had been received from central government for the south of the County, by way of Bellwin funding, which was funding paid to local authorities in exceptional circumstances.

#### (b) Revenue Budget

Although the Revenue Budget for public rights of way had been reduced by £50,000 for 2018/19, this had been offset by the increase of £6.5m to the Highways 2018/19 budget, where access to revenue funds would be allocated in partnership working with Neighbourhood Highways colleagues to deal with drainage and surface issues caused to and from the public rights of way network.

#### (c) South West Coast Path Grant

The Council had just been notified that the amount of the grant received from Natural England would be the same as the previous year and that pressure would continue to be applied in order to achieve a three-year grant programme.

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PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE  
15/03/18

(d) English Coastal Access Mapping

Natural England was undertaking a mapping exercise of the coastal path from Dartmouth to the Tamar River in the south and from Combe Martin to Welcombe in the north.

\* **56**      **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair announced that Public Rights of Way Officer, Nick Steenman-Clark would be retiring from the Council at the end of April and the Committee extended their thanks to him for his 16 years of service.

\* **57**      **Devon Countryside Access Forum**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018.

\* **58**      **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2016-2018 - Parish of Coldridge**

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/10) which examined the route referred to as Proposal 1 arising out of the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Coldridge in Mid Devon.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** by Councillor Dewhirst and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification Order be not made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by the addition of a Byway Open to All Traffic A-B-C-D-E as shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/17/026 (Proposal 1).

\* **59**      **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review - Parish of Bittadon (Part 2)**

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/11) which examined an anomaly which had come to light during the current Review in the Parish of Bittadon in North Devon.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** by Councillor Shaw and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification Order be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by adding a footpath between points AA-AB as shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/17/53 (Proposal 4).

\* **60**      **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2016-2018 - Parish of Buckerell Part 2, with part of Gittisham Parish**

(Councillor Twiss attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item in support of the recommendations.)

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure and Waste (HIW/18/12) concerning a claim to add connected footpaths, referred to as Proposal 1, arising out of the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Buckerell and part in the adjoining Parish of Gittisham in East Devon.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** by Councillor Inch and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification Order be not made in respect of:

- (a) Proposal 1 in Buckerell, for the claimed addition of footpaths from the Parish boundary on the River Otter, passing Colhayes to Footpath No. 15 and the end of Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) No. 20, Orchard Lane in Buckerell, between points B-C-D and C-E shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/17/021; and

- (b) Proposal 1 in Gittisham, the claimed addition of a footpath from old A30 to the Parish boundary between points A-B shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/17/021.

\* **61**      **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2016-2018 - Parish of Gittisham**

(Councillor Twiss attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item in support of the recommendations.)

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/13) concerning a claim to add a footpath, referred to as Proposal 2, arising out of the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Gittisham in East Devon.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** Councillor Dewhirst and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification be not made in respect of Proposal 2 to add a public footpath between the minor road Hayne Lane at Hayne Farm to the minor road Parsonage Lane at Goldcombe Farm, points C-D shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/17/024.

\* **62**      **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2016-2018 - Combe Martin, North Devon**

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/14) examining the last two proposals arising from the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Combe Martin in North Devon.

The Chair advised that the Local Member and Combe Martin Parish Council were now content with both proposals.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** Councillor Dewhirst and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification Order be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by adding a Footpath between points A-B-C as shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/18/7 (Proposal 22).

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Sanders, **SECONDED** Councillor Shaw and

**RESOLVED** that a Modification Order be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by adding a Restricted Byway between points D-E as shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/18/8 (Proposal 24).

\* **63**      **Public Inquiry, Informal Hearing and Written Representation Decisions; Directions and High Court Appeals**

The Committee noted the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/15) on decisions and directions received from the Secretary of State.

\* **64**      **Public Path Orders**

The Committee noted the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/18/16) on Public Path Orders made under delegated powers.

**\*DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 3.25 pm







## Devon Countryside Access Forum

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### Coastal access

#### Cremyll to Kingswear & Combe Martin to Marsland Mouth

#### *Initial response from the Devon Countryside Access Forum January 2018*

*A Devon Countryside Access Forum working group discussed the coastal access provisions for the above lengths of coastline in Devon, currently being investigated by Natural England. This response was approved by the Forum at its full meeting on 25 January 2018.*

#### **General considerations**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises Natural England that the following considerations should be borne in mind in assessing the coastal access stretches from Cremyll to Kingswear and Combe Martin to Marsland Mouth.

#### **Users**

1. The DCAF recognises that a route for walking is enshrined in the Act. However, improved access for horse riding or cycling might be achieved in some locations and Natural England is requested to discuss this with appropriate landowners.
2. Bearing in mind Equality Act requirements, efforts should be made to improve access for disabled people. Natural England should consider where improvements to access for those with mobility vehicles could be achieved, particularly associated with viewpoints or nearby parking areas. See separate paper on disability access and the coast.

#### **Information**

- a) Route information is important. Appropriate signage, particularly where there are route options, is vital.
- b) Information boards should be provided at access points, for example in car parks. These should also refer to the public rights of way website. Use of Apps, QR codes and other technology should be explored by Natural England.

#### **Land management matters**

- 1) Negotiation with landowners should take account of their interests and livestock systems.

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- 2) Areas where dogs are free to roam and where there are restrictions should be identified for wildlife and land management reasons.
- 3) Implications for economic uses such as shooting and tourism should be considered.
- 4) The implications for future development should be made clear.
- 5) The new coastal access rights will have reduced liability for landowners. This should be made clear to landowners and Natural England has an important role in educating the public as this is a significant change from the existing liability criteria.
- 6) Where the current South West Coast Path route is inland there is, in some cases, a significant area of land seaward. Excluding excepted land, the DCAF advises that the route and extent of coastal margin in such instances may not be a 'fair' balance between private and public interests.

## **Path surfacing and design**

- The England Coast Path through Devon should retain a feeling of wilderness with appropriate surfacing.
- Where realignment of the coast path is being considered, links to existing public rights of way should be a key consideration in determining the route.

## **Consultation**

- ✓ Where roll-back is proposed, landowners further inland should be advised of the potential for roll-back. The DCAF notes that Natural England usually bases its roll-back provisions on the Environment Agency's data which predicts coastal changes up to 2025-2030. The DCAF is concerned that this is a very short time scale and advises that it is critical to understand the implications for landowners in the medium term. There have been some unexpected slippages and erosion along the coast recently. The Forum advises that landowners beyond the line indicated by the EA data should be informed about roll-back.

## **SPECIFIC ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum has assessed some of the issues and opportunities presented by Natural England and has the following comments.

### **Come Martin to Marsland Mouth**

1. Where the route on the ground is not clear this should be clarified e.g. *Combe Martin*. The path should be easy to walk without a map.
2. *Watermouth Castle and The Warren*. Routing the path through The Warren might be an option if landowners are in agreement, and subject to considerations for the caravan park.
3. *Lantern Hill*. It was felt it would not be necessary to route the England Coast Path round Lantern Hill as this area would constitute spreading room anyway.
4. *Ilfracombe Tunnels*. There is currently a charge to access Ilfracombe Tunnels and the cliffs and beaches below. Natural England will need to assess the impact on business interests.

5. *Shag Point*. There are issues around the stability of the cliffs but a more seaward route merits investigation with landowners.
6. *Putsborough Sands*. The current route of the SWCP affords good views and it is felt these are better than a route further seaward.
7. *Chesil Beach*. The DCAF agrees it would be good to improve safety, where possible, and look at alternative crossings of the main road. If more land is included as spreading room with a new crossing Natural England is advised to consider whether restrictions on access are necessary.
8. *Saunton*. The Forum would welcome further consultation on options at Saunton due to economic interests – the golf course and tourism – and wildlife considerations.
9. *Horsey Island*. There are likely to be more land management issues if the route is moved inland. It may not be feasible to move back the existing path due to ground conditions. There is some concern about spreading room if the route is moved to one of the alternatives and a query over balance.
10. *Chivenor*. The DCAF advises that the airfield and wildlife interests should be taken account of. It advises that there may be little gain to the benefit of enjoyment.
11. *Barnstaple*. The DCAF recognises that Natural England will be obliged to use the first crossing, the new bridge. This will take the route away from the town which is a concern from the economic point of view. Natural England is advised to work with the Town Council to create a signed local trail.
12. *Penhill Point*. Access to this area could be explored with the landowner. However, the DCAF is mindful of the fact that the existing SWCP route is also a popular cycle path and the balance between private and public interests would need to be borne in mind as this route is unlikely to change or be dispensed with. The DCAF does, however, recognise that this section of the current route is in an embankment with limited views.
13. *Home Farm Marsh*. There is an existing cycleway so again the balance issue comes in as this route is unlikely to change. There are already good views and wildlife considerations on the marsh itself.
14. *Instow*. As with Combe Martin it would be good to clarify signage on the ground.
15. *Appledore*. The DCAF advises that the route may be best to continue going through the town to ensure benefits of passing trade.
16. *Hobby Drive*. The Forum recognises the commercial interests here associated with a shoot in the spreading room and Natural England should consider this. Clovelly would be included in spreading room but should have exclusion of access as an attraction.

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17. *Hartland Point*. It is unclear where the boundaries of the curtilage of the lighthouse fall. Some areas would be open access and spreading room. The DCAF considers that the current path is reasonably convenient.

18. *Sandhole*. Taking the route off the road would be advantageous but the route needs to be safe. Advice should be sought on erosion alongside landowner consultation.

## **Cremyll to Kingswear**

a) *Cellar Beach*. There would be options to take the route closer to the coast, subject to discussion and agreement with the landowner.

b) *Yealm Estuary*. The DCAF recognises the complexity of using discretion to create a continuous path around the estuary. There are both wildlife and economic issues. There are some permissive paths on the west side of the estuary but the curtilage of hotel grounds and riverside homes would create difficulties in developing a path. The Warren Point gap would require bridging and there are sailing considerations. Cofflete Creek is also extensive. On the east side there is no obvious footpath. The roads are narrow and would not necessarily provide views. Taking the path round the estuary would be an expensive and difficult option as well as being of considerable length.

Improving the ferry to ensure it is less seasonal may be a better option and would have wider community benefits. If a continuous path round the estuary is provided there is a danger the ferry link could be lost or become less economic. Natural England is advised to explore the potential of increasing the service across more of the year and providing a weekend service in the winter.

c) *Ivy Cove*. A shoot exists on the cliffs. The DCAF advises that the current path is in good condition, is wide and offers good views. Views may be lost on a lower path and there would be a commercial impact.

d) *Meadowsfoot Beach*. Natural England is asked to check that the mapped route is the one walked on the ground. Existing access arrangements and restrictions should be considered.

e) *Erme Estuary*. The DCAF is aware of historic parkland and SSSI issues. It would be useful to identify an alternative route for when the tide is not suitable to allow wading across. This would not give rise to spreading room. Natural England is advised to investigate whether an alternative route is possible through local villages and in discussion with landowners.

f) *Burgh Island*. The DCAF consider that the island will be coastal margin land anyway and it is not necessary to route the coast path to include the island.

g) *Avon Estuary*. Designating the route up the estuary would give rise to a lot of spreading room and this may not be acceptable to landowners. There is an existing and well-promoted Avon Estuary trail walk, developed by the South Devon AONB and the leaflet for this is commended by the DCAF. There would

be some legal issues if this was the formal alternative route due to use of permissive access and private driveways. The Forum would encourage Natural England to work with the AONB to support its local initiative in promoting the route and ensuring the route continues.

- h) *Bantham*. Bantham Ham would be spreading room and there is currently a footpath Thurlestone Footpath 1 around the Ham. The Forum does not feel it is necessary to include the Ham as part of the formal England Coast Path.
- i) *Hallsands and Beesands*. The Forum recognises the problems associated with coastal erosion. It is not for the Forum to identify where roll-back routes should go but alternative routes should take place through negotiation. If it is decided to implement roll-back on these sections consultation should take place at this point with landowners who own potential routes inland.
- j) *Slapton*. A full variation report should be submitted, with full consultation, if the road is breached. The DCAF advises that this should not be designated as roll-back.
- k) *Matthew's Point*. This is a steep site and tight with buildings. The DCAF feels it may be difficult to achieve a route closer to the sea but spreading room may be an issue on the existing route. If spreading room is a concern for landowners this may be worth exploring.
- l) *Strete*. The DCAF advises working with landowners to see whether it is possible to make route improvements to avoid the main road.
- m) *Stoke Fleming*. The DCAF recognises this area is particularly difficult as large houses and curtilages make it difficult to achieve a more seaward route. It would be useful if options could be explored, even if some use still had to be made of the existing road. The Forum would welcome the opportunity to discuss options once these have been explored with landowners.

One route has been identified as offering opportunities for disability access and should be explored with the landowner. The Forum understands the National Trust is the owner.

- *Little Dartmouth*. The DCAF understands there is an accessible path from the car park towards Dartmouth Castle, but the coast path itself (which forms a nice circular walk from the Castle back to the car park) could do with some improvement as there are a few ruts in places. However, there is a stile from the upper path connecting to the coast path, (just beyond the houses/small holdings), thus restricting access down to part of the coast path and closing off any potential for a circular walk for disabled users.

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The DCAF currently has fifteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.





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## **ENGLAND COAST PATH – ACCOMMODATING DISABILITY USERS**

### **Response from the Devon Countryside Access Forum**

**January 2018**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a statutory local access forum established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act 2000). Its specific remit is to provide independent advice on the “improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.”

The Forum currently has sixteen voluntary members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of land owners/managers, access users and other relevant concerns such as health and tourism.

The England Coast Path roll-out in Devon presents the opportunity to consider whether improvements can be made to make better provision for disability users.

This response was agreed by DCAF members and was formally ratified at its meeting in October 2016. The comments are still current. A few site-specific references have been changed.

Detailed advice on disability access was provided by Gordon Guest, DCAF member, who uses both a wheelchair and mobility scooter to access the countryside. The Forum advises that these matters should be included in Natural England’s discussions with landowners.

### **Introduction**

Increasing numbers of people use wheelchairs and motorised mobility vehicles. These are now able to tackle more difficult terrain and gradients. The Department of Transport has rules for wheelchairs and mobility scooters [www.gov.uk/mobility-scooters-and-powered-wheelchairs-rules/overview](http://www.gov.uk/mobility-scooters-and-powered-wheelchairs-rules/overview) governing weight, width and speed for the three classes of vehicles. A Trampler buggy, as used by Countryside Mobility, has a length of 151.7cm (60 inches), width of 71cm (29”), a ground

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clearance of 16.5 cm (6.5 ") and a range of 30 miles. The maximum width for a Class 3 vehicle is 85 cm. Other mobility vehicles within that class have differing dimensions.

Much of the existing South West Coast Path is not that accessible to wheelchairs and mobility scooters. There will be some places where the coast path drops steeply from cliffs to a valley and the path may be too steep for scooters to use safely. However, there will be many stretches that are reasonably undulating and quite safe for scooters to use.

Improved access to and from car parks for mobility scooters onto the coast would help also.

### **Landowner/land manager considerations**

In its consideration of the England Coast Path and improvements to the existing South West Coast Path as part of this scheme, Natural England is required not just to discuss proposals with landowners and land managers but to take account of their views.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that discussions should take place with landowners about path furniture. Stiles and gates may often be specified by the landowner because of an agricultural need, usually stock control. If a new path has to be created or an existing path widened to accommodate access or access points, such as easy access gates, then it may have an impact on that landowner or result in loss of land. Landowners may well be willing to accommodate these extra requirements if they are made aware that such path furniture could meet the needs of disabled users.

In discussion with landowners, Natural England is advised to consider whether the following improvements could be achieved to improve access to the England Coast Path.

### **Key footpath and gate issues**

#### ***Type of furniture***

- 1) Avoid using kissing gates and stiles wherever possible. Kissing gates can be adapted for scooters but need to have 2 m clear behind the scooter to open and close the gate and a minimum width of 1.2m.
- 2) Make the gate as wide as possible and consider scooter width and length. 1.5 m gates are good. Gates of 1m are too narrow. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends a blind person with a guide dog needs 1.2 m wide walking space on footpaths and through gates.
- 3) Fit the best possible handle for the location, considering whether stock control is needed and whether use includes horses or is just for walkers and scooters. Trombone type handles are good; possibly double ones at the end and middle for horse use. There can be a tension between the needs of multiple users. Some disabled users have very weak arms, so strong spring loaded gate levers, even with trombone type handles, are too difficult to open.



However, for stock control gates with strong latches are essential. It is possible to combine different options depending on the site.

- 4) Consider easy latch systems as part of the handle, unless stock control makes that an issue.
- 5) Consider which are the best type of hinges; 2 way, 1 way, self-closing etc. It should be possible with a 1.5 m wide gate, and the correct hinges, to get the gate to fully open with plenty of room for a scooter, and/or horse, and/or person with a dog or guide dog.
- 6) Consider barge boards on the bottom of gates so scooters can drive into the gate and push it open by pushing the barge board with the front of the scooter.
- 7) Consider adding simple rope handles so scooters can pull the rope and have space to reverse away from the gate whilst opening it. (This would be extra to latches). Often a gate has to be pulled back toward you to open. This means the mobility scooter has to approach the gate, grab the handle, hold the gate with one hand and reverse until the gate is open, then manoeuvre past the gate and go through. They then have to go through the gate, turn around, approach the gate and pull it closed. All of this is difficult.
- 8) Where there are small footbridges make sure there is either an earth ramp or wooden ramp for the scooter to get up onto the bridge. Make sure footbridges are wide enough for scooters to use.

### ***Positioning of path furniture***

- a) Improve alignment on both sides of the gate. Try and make this straight on for 2 m either side of the gate. Try and remove roots, boulders, and ruts caused by erosion. If the gate alignment is off centre then the scooter cannot get through, even if the gate is wide enough. So if the scooter has to approach the gate at a 45 degree angle this will prevent access. Similarly if the footpath curves away quickly then the scooter does not have enough space to turn.
- b) Try and have gates on a flat piece of land, not down a bank or on the edge of a ditch, where possible.
- c) Consider actual clearance space within the gate between fence posts, gate latch and when the gate is swung back open. A 1m wide gate that does not fully open may only have an 80cm clearance which might not be enough for a scooter.

### ***Other obstacles and considerations***

1. Consider beach access for scooters. There may be obstacles such as kissing gates, earth banks in car parks, barge boards to control beach sand flow etc. Many beaches have nearby car parks and link to the SW coast path. Often access is very difficult or impossible for wheelchairs. In the Thurlestone and Hope Cove area in the South Hams there are often earth banks at car parks or near gates which prevent access. There are kissing gates which completely stop mobility scooters and wheelchairs from accessing a beach, and make life more difficult for parents with pushchairs. Often there are also barge boards to control sand movement, but at the same time there are wooden board walks through sand dunes down to the beach. If a scooter /wheelchair could get

past the barge board / kissing gate / stile they could get onto the board walk and access the beach.

Quite often in these coast path / beach car parks there are designated blue badge disabled car parking spaces. But once parked the access onto the footpaths or beach paths is restricted by obstacles.

Most normal scooter / wheelchair tyres will not work on soft sand. But to be able to get to the edge of the beach in a wheelchair or scooter would often be more than enough for the person and family.

2. Many modern mobility scooters can drive over rough grassland quite easily and that often can be a better route than a narrow rutted footpath.

When implementing the England Coast Path please consider gates, footbridges, car parking, path and gate alignments, width of footpaths and flat grass areas beside footpaths. Many small changes can significantly improve access.

### **Suitable gates**

Centrewire produce a range of gates [www.centrewire.com/product-category/pedestrian-and-mobility-access-gates/](http://www.centrewire.com/product-category/pedestrian-and-mobility-access-gates/) used widely by Public Rights of Way wardens.

At the moment the best Centrewire gate for mobility scooters is the Milton Keynes 2 way with an opening of 1.5 metres. The second best gate is the Centrewire Aston 2 way at 1.2 m metres wide with trombone type handles. The gates need to open at least 90 degrees, but 180 degrees is better to allow a wheelchair scooter through. Gates opening with a Radar Key is an option but this means buying two gates. The Centrewire York 2 in 1 has a farm tractor gate and a pedestrian gate beside it which has no step and is a better type of gate to install where needed for vehicle and pedestrian access. There are also wooden versions of these 2 in 1 farm gates.

### **Path signing.**

There is no reason why simple extra signposts or little noticeboards for disabled users cannot be installed e.g. this section of the coast path has a number of kissing gates and is not suitable for wheelchairs. For example, the Victorian Carriageway at Heddon Valley, North Devon, runs parallel to the SW Coast path. It is fully accessible to Trampers, even though it climbs steeply and runs high up along the cliffs, but it is a there and back route and this is made clear at the start of the walk. In the Tamar Valley there are some footpaths that are very steep, Trampers are advised to use an alternative route, which is possible.

So consider some kind of signposting code for wheelchairs scooters that could go onto existing posts or way marks giving information where needed. Alternatively routes could be signed to indicate where they are suitable for disabled users. For example, the easy use path at Selworthy Beacon on Exmoor. (See photos below).









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Mr J Cross  
Chief Executive  
Natural England  
County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
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WR5 2NP

22 February 2018

Dear Mr Cross

### **Funding for the South West Coast Path National Trail**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum, a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, met on 25 January. Members were extremely concerned to learn that it is proposed to reduce funding for SWCP maintenance by 50% in the next financial year.

The South West Coast Path is an iconic National Trail, the longest in the country, which attracts many walkers from all over the world as well as local residents. It is vitally important to the tourist industry in Devon, making a significant contribution to the local economy as well as supporting many jobs, both directly and indirectly.

The South West Coast Path Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Year 5 (2015), produced by South West Research Company Ltd in October 2016, showed that in Devon there were over 3m users of the SWCP, spending over £179m and supporting business turnover of just over £279m and supporting around 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs. These figures illustrate the importance of the path.

Members of the Devon Countryside Access Forum feel strongly that national Government, through Natural England, should be retaining or increasing its contribution to the SWCP. Any funding reduction will have a major impact on the Trail as it is likely that existing standards would be difficult to deliver without having a severe impact on the maintenance of other public rights of way across the County, including in the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Public rights of way elsewhere in Devon are also important to the economy and it is a legal obligation to keep these in a good state. Population increases in Devon and higher levels of short

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break holidays are likely to lead to more use of the South West Coast Path and associated rises in erosion and maintenance costs.

As the SWCP will form part of the England Coast Path, a Government aspiration, funding for the path at an adequate level will help to ensure that this ambition can be properly delivered.

The DCAF urges Natural England to reconsider its financial commitment for the forthcoming year.

The Forum would welcome your feedback.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade*

*Vice Chair: Chris Cole*

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The DCAF currently has sixteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.



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Rt Hon Sir Hugo Swire MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Your ref: HS473318  
Our ref: MC2018/05240/SH

26<sup>th</sup> March 2018

*Dear Hugo,*

Thank you for your letter of 23 February to the Secretary of State on behalf of Hilary Winter of the Devon Countryside Access Forum about future funding for national trails. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

I recognise that our national trails are valued by many people. They provide public enjoyment for walkers from this country and abroad and bring local economic benefit through tourism. They also provide opportunities for improving the environment and for getting local communities involved in caring for them.

Central government funding for the ongoing management and maintenance of national trails is agreed on an annual basis and distributed as grant-in-aid by Natural England in line with a national funding formula. I can confirm that for 2018/19, Natural England will continue to support national trails according to the new deal funding formula as recommended by the Funding Formula Review Group in 2015, with additional budget available for the maintenance of stretches of the new England coast path as the new access rights come into force.

Natural England has now written to the Chairs of each of the national trail partnerships to let them know that Natural England will be funding the partnerships in 2018/19 at the same level of funding as in 2017/18. A meeting with the partnerships, Natural England and the Department will be arranged to discuss longer-term funding.

Going forwards we will work with the national trail partnerships, the new coastal access authorities and other stakeholders to explore options for a more sustainable funding model, to ensure that these important national assets are maintained in future years while making them less reliant on the public purse.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*John*









HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

RECEIVED ON

26 MAR 2018

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Hilary Winter, Forum Officer  
Devon Countryside Access Forum  
Lucombe House  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
EX2 4QD

Peter.heatonjones.mp@parliament.uk  
01271 327990

20 March 2018

Dear Mr Winter

Thank you for providing me with a copy of your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> February to Mr Cross,  
Chief Executive of Natural England.

I thoroughly enjoy walking along the South West Coastal Path and so I recognise its value to both my constituents, and tourists who come and visit our wonderful coastline. Following your letter, I tabled a Written Parliamentary Question raising the matter with the Minister, Therese Coffey. I have enclosed a copy of the question and answer for your information and if I can be of further assistance, do let me know.

Thank you again for taking the time to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Heaton-Jones MP  
Conservative, North Devon

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (130535):

**Question:**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure continued funding for the South West Coastal Path national trail. (130535)

Tabled on: 28 February 2018

**Answer:**

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Business planning and financial allocations have not yet been completed and Natural England is not yet in a position to announce the level of funding for the South West Coast Path national trail for 2018/19.

Natural England wrote to each of the national trail partnerships last December making an interim offer of 50% of the funding made to each of the national trails in 2017/18. The offer was an advance contribution towards the costs the partnerships would incur in 2018/19 in the absence of Natural England being able to confirm its overall funding position for 2018/19.

**Dr. Sarah Wollaston M.P.**

Member of Parliament for Totnes



House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

Email: [sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk)

Hilary Winter

SW/ns  
7<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Forum Officer

Devon Countryside Access Forum

Letter by email: [hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk](mailto:hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk)

Page 1 of 2

Dear Hilary,

I have received a response from Natural England and I am enclosing a copy for you.

I hope this clarifies the situation.

Best wishes,

[Redacted Signature]

**Dr Sarah Wollaston MP**

Email: [sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk)

Website: [www.drSarah.org.uk](http://www.drSarah.org.uk)

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Tel : 0207 219 5129  
Fax: 0207 219 5019

Constituency office:  
Station Road, Totnes TQ9 5HW  
Tel: 01803 868378

**James Diamond**

[James.Diamond@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:James.Diamond@naturalengland.org.uk)

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018



Natural England  
Sterling House  
Dix's Field  
Exeter EX1 1QA  
Tel: 07771 838 526

Emailed to: [nina.smith@parliament.uk](mailto:nina.smith@parliament.uk)

Dear Dr Wollaston,

**Funding for the South West Coast Path National Trail**

Thank you for your letter of 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to James Cross on behalf of your constituent Hilary Winter, regarding our funding for National Trails in 2018/19. Hilary has also written directly to James Cross on this matter. James has asked me to respond on his behalf as Director of Operations.

I believe that there has been a misunderstanding. To clarify, our funding offer of 50% of the 2017/18 allocation for National Trails is an interim, not a final offer. We wrote on 6<sup>th</sup> December to National Trail Partnership Chairs, explaining that:

'This is the amount we can offer at this stage of budget negotiations and we will review this again once we have agreed our final funding position for 2018/19. At that time we will advise of our further offer and we will also review the Terms and Conditions and confirm the claim process.'

Budget negotiations with Defra are still ongoing, but we expect to be able to confirm later this month the full National Trails budget for 2018/19.

I do apologise for any confusion caused to your constituent by our interim offer, which was made in response to a specific request from the National Trail Partnership Chairs group. Please be assured we fully recognise the benefits that National Trails bring to local economies, and we will continue to work to ensure that these national assets are protected into the future.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be "JD" followed by a stylized flourish.

James Diamond  
Director, Operations

Email: [sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:sarah.wollaston.mp@parliament.uk)

Website: [www.drsarah.org.uk](http://www.drsarah.org.uk)

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Constituency office:  
Station Road, Totnes TQ9 5HW  
Tel: 01803 868378

## **Funding for the South West Coast Path National Trail**

### **Response from Natural England**

**From:** Diamond, James (NE)  
**Sent:** 05 March 2018 16:48  
**To:** Hilary Winter <[hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk](mailto:hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Natural England Correspondence Unit  
<[NaturalEnglandCorrespondenceUnit@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:NaturalEnglandCorrespondenceUnit@naturalengland.org.uk)>  
**Subject:** Funding for the South West Coast Path National Trail

Dear Hilary Winter,

#### **Funding for the South West Coast Path National Trail**

Thank you for your letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 to James Cross regarding our funding for National Trails in 2018/19. James has asked me to respond on his behalf as Director of Operations.

It would appear that there has been a misunderstanding. Our funding offer of 50% of the 2017/18 allocation is an interim, not a final offer. Our letter of 6<sup>th</sup> December to National Trail Partnership Chairs explained that:

‘This is the amount we can offer at this stage of budget negotiations and we will review this again once we have agreed our final funding position for 2018/19. At that time we will advise of our further offer and we will also review the Terms and Conditions and confirm the claim process.’

Budget negotiations with Defra are still ongoing, but we expect to be able to confirm later this month the full National Trails budget for 2018/19.

I do apologise for any confusion caused by our interim offer, which was made in response to a specific request from the Trail Partnership Chairs group. Please be assured we fully recognise the benefits that National Trails bring to local economies, and we will continue to work to ensure that these national assets are protected into the future.

Yours sincerely

James Diamond

Director of Operations  
Natural England  
[www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england)

**We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.**





## Devon Countryside Access Forum

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[hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk](mailto:hilary.winter@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

Ms S Clark  
Exe Estuary Management Partnership  
c/o Devon County Council  
Lucombe House  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter EX2 4QD

22 February 2018

Dear Ms Clark

### **Draft Exe Estuary Codes of Conduct – Dog Walking**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...”

The DCAF currently has sixteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum was pleased to be consulted on the draft Dog Walking Code and welcomes the useful and positive information that will be made available to dog walkers in the Exe Estuary area. At its meeting on 25 January 2018 members agreed to make the following comments in response to the consultation.

#### **1. ‘Walkies’ section**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that:

- a) This section should be more prominent and extended as it is a dog walking code. It is a good opportunity to reinforce messages in national guidance.
- b) Dogs should be kept under ‘close’ control should be amended to ‘effective’ control. This would reflect the national guidance adopted by a range of organisations following extensive discussion a couple of years ago. See [www.dogwalkingcode.org.uk](http://www.dogwalkingcode.org.uk) The text should explain that ‘effective control’ means on a short lead or close enough for you to call your dog back on command.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.



# Agenda Item 12.3

- c) A statement on worming should be added, for example 'Please keep your dog's worming up to date'.
- d) The Exe Estuary is a very busy trail. A statement along the lines of 'Prevent your dog from approaching cyclists, other people and their dogs, children and horse-riders unless invited to do so' would be very helpful.
- e) It might be useful for the instruction 'Do not allow your dog to chase birds or other wildlife' to be in the 'Walkies' section. The Forum advises that that this should include livestock e.g. 'Do not allow your dog to chase birds, wildlife or livestock.'
- f) The 'Walkies' section should include a statement along the lines of 'Please look at the map to see where dogs are not permitted for nature conservation reasons, or where there are lead or seasonal restrictions.'
- g) A link to the national dog walking code would be useful. See [www.dogwalkingcode.org.uk](http://www.dogwalkingcode.org.uk) for more information.
- h) Devon and Cornwall Police have some helpful dog advice on their website. <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/advice/parenting/dogs/>

## 2. Text and visual comments

- a. When the code is finalised, it would be helpful if the on-line version is easy to read without any sections being upside down. Html format would be good.
- b. It is not clear how the leaflet is intended to fold for easy use. It would appear that the dog picture is a front cover but other sections on page 1 do not follow the right layout to permit easy reading if folded. The wildlife sections appear to be separated and would be better following on from each other.
- c. Some information could be conveyed in fewer words e.g. there is some repetition in the section on the Exe Estuary and the section on codes, and between 'Be Bird Aware' and 'Watch Out for Wildlife.' It may be possible to increase text size by expressing some information more concisely, or perhaps by moving from the active to passive voice.
- d. The DCAF advises that the colour and text of the leaflet should be checked for ease of use for people with visual impairment, for example colour blindness. The red with pale red tint may not be sufficiently clear on page 1 and likewise use of greens and reds on the map.
- e. A small point but there is some inconsistency in the use of capitals. For example, 'Want to know more' has only a capital for the first word, unlike other sections
- f. Under pollution, the Coastguard is mentioned as the only contact. The Forum advises that the Environment Agency should be added.

## 3. General comments

- A. There seems to be a fair balance between areas where dogs are excluded and other areas. Wardens are frequently out on site at Dawlish Warden to explain restrictions.
- B. The map is useful to plan a walk.
- C. Forum members noted that some people continue to ignore beach restrictions.



The Forum hopes that its advice will be considered in developing the final code of conduct. If you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to make contact.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade*

*Vice Chair: Chris Cole*



**EXE ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP – DRAFT DOG WALKING CODE**  
**Feedback from the Exe Estuary Officer 05.04.18**

Dear Hilary,

Thank you so much for providing feedback and guidance for the Dog Walking Code. Your comments were most useful.

I thought I would respond to your individual comments, to let you know about the amendments we have made. The numbers correspond to your comments in the response letter you sent.

**1. 'Walkies' section**

- a) This section was kept in this prominent position and extended slightly. Unfortunately it could not be extended further due to the available space and other information which was deemed necessary to include. I have tried to reinforce messages in national guidance within this section.
- b) Text amended to "Always keep your dog under effective control, on a short lead or close enough for you to call your dog back on command."
- c) A number of additional statements were suggested for more general upkeep of dogs, however, the group decided that the advice should focus on more estuary-related guidance, rather than health and wellbeing. The limitation in space and request to reduce the amount of words also led to this decision (text size was increased).
- d) Text for the Exe Estuary Trail on the map was amended to:  
"**The Exe Estuary Trail** provides a fantastic scenic route around the entire Exe Estuary for mixed users. Always keep dogs under effective control on a short lead and consider those who are wary or nervous around dogs. Remember to 'Share This Space' by being considerate of other users of the trail, more information can be found at [www.traveldevon.info/cycle/safe-cycling/share-this-space](http://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/safe-cycling/share-this-space)"
- e) In the **Watch out for wildlife** section, text was amended to read:  
• **Do not allow your dogs to chase birds, wildlife or livestock.**
- f) In the **Watch out for wildlife** section, sentence was added to read:  
"Refer to the map overleaf for areas you can walk your dog and areas to avoid for nature conservation reasons."
- g) There is a Devon dog code also, so it may get confusing to provide a link to two other dog codes within a local code. We have provided a link to the Devon Loves Dogs website, could we look at whether the national dog walking code could be added to this website?
- h) Great advice, but very specific to children and dogs, so would like to avoid overloading the Exe code with too much information.

**2. Text and visual comments**

- a. Agreed – will work with designer to produce online-friendly version.
- b. The leaflet has been designed to allow easy reading when folded. Wildlife sections have now been moved to make more sense in the structure.

- c. I agree that avoiding repetition and reducing the word count would be beneficial. I have reduced the wording somewhat, however, the partnership have requested that certain information be kept in the code. For example, the description of what disturbance is and why it matters.
- d. Agreed on the colour and text of the leaflet, this will be amended and checked.
- e. Use of capitals has been amended.
- f. I have been asked to reduce the amount of contacts within this section, and therefore advised by the partnership to just include the Coastguard for safely/pollution.

Again, thank you for your guidance. I hope that you are happy with the amendments that are being made, and understand the reasoning behind the few points that the partnership had advised to not take on, there are a number of comments that have factored into the decisions made. If there are any outstanding concerns, please do get in touch with me to discuss.

The final codes should be completed ready to print at the beginning of next week.

Best wishes,

Steph

**Stephanie Clark**

***Exe Estuary Officer***

Exe Estuary Management Partnership, c/o Devon County Council, Lucombe House, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD

**email:** [stephanie.clark@devon.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.clark@devon.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 01392 382236 / 07967 456376

**Web:** [www.exe-estuary.org](http://www.exe-estuary.org)

**From:** Hilary Winter

**Sent:** 22 February 2018 13:27

**To:** Stephanie Clark <[stephanie.clark@devon.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.clark@devon.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Exe Estuary Dog Walking Code

Dear Stephanie

I am attaching the response from the Devon Countryside Access Forum to the draft dog walking code.

I should be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt.

Regards  
Hilary

Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer  
Devon Countryside Access Forum



## Devon Countryside Access Forum

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Torrridge District Council  
Environmental Health Department  
Riverbank House,  
Bideford  
Devon  
EX39 2QG

28 February 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

### Public Spaces Protection Order – Proposed Dog Control Order

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...”

The DCAF currently has sixteen members who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

The timing of this consultation did not coincide with a meeting of the Forum but this response will be on the agenda for approval at the next meeting on 26 April.

The DCAF welcomes the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order to control dog fouling and the additional measure to ensure dogs could be put on leads by direction across the whole district. These measures would accord with the Forum’s remit to improve public enjoyment of land.

The dog exclusion areas for children’s play spaces and parts of Westward Ho! beach (seasonal) and dogs on leads in Victoria Park and Westward Ho! promenade (seasonal) are also welcomed. These appear to be a good balance to ensure health and safety in children’s play areas and enjoyment by the wider public, particularly in the summer months when tourism is at its peak.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.



# Agenda Item 12.4

The Forum is aware that not all the specified children's play areas are fully enclosed and advises the District Council to ensure such areas are fenced, or otherwise protected, so that the dog exclusion zones can be fully effective.

Yours faithfully



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade*  
*Vice Chair: Chris Cole*



## Devon Countryside Access Forum

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## Defra consultation

### Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit

#### SUMMARY

Closing date: 8 May

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-for-food-farming-and-the-environment> (64 pages)

Defra is seeking views on the future of agricultural policy. One document on that link contains a wide range of facts and figures about the agricultural industry which illustrate its importance in terms of food production and the economy; the health and quality of the environment; and support for the rural community. Pages in *The Future Farming and Countryside Evidence Compendium* are referenced after paragraphs as EC:xx). See [here](#) There is also the main consultation document.

The Government aims to introduce a new environmental land management system following the end of the current Common Agricultural Policy and transitional arrangements.

Chapters in the consultation document focus on:

1. Agriculture: The case for change
2. Reform within the Common Agricultural Policy
3. An 'agricultural transition'
4. A successful future for farming
5. Public money for public goods
6. Enhancing our environment
7. Fulfilling our responsibility to animals
8. Supporting rural communities and remote farming
9. Changing regulatory culture
10. Risk management and resilience

# Agenda Item 13.1

11. Protecting crop, tree, plant and bee health
12. Ensuring fairness in the supply chain
13. Devolution: maintaining cohesion and flexibility
14. International trade
15. Legislation: the Agriculture Bill

The Government proposes for its “new agricultural policy to be underpinned by payment of public money for the provision of public goods. While environmental enhancement and protection are of key importance, better animal and plant health, animal welfare, improved public access, rural resilience and productivity are also areas where government could play a role in supporting farmers and land managers in the future.”

The area most pertinent to the work of the Devon Countryside Access Forum is public goods and the relevant sections are quoted below, followed by the consultation questions. **Text relevant to recreational access is in bold**. Some reference is also made to recreation in Chapter 6 and some quotes and questions follow.

Consultation responses to the questions can be made online or it is possible to respond by email. The Government sees this consultation as the beginning of a conversation on the future of farming, food and the environment.

## **5. Public money for public goods**

Protection and enhancement of our environment could be considered the pre-eminent public good, providing value for farmers, land managers, citizens and taxpayers alike. The actions of farmers and land managers now can help to preserve our natural landscapes and capital for future generations. Environmental public goods underpinning our approach to future agricultural policy could include:

### i. Improved soil health.

Healthy soil is essential in underpinning a huge range of environmental benefits, including food production; biodiversity; carbon storage; and flood protection. However, the ability of soil to perform these functions is reduced when it is degraded, eroded or lost. Soil health can be affected in a number of ways, including by erosion from water or wind; poor land management practices that increase compaction; or even an inappropriate amount of vegetation cover [EC:61].

### ii. Improved water quality

Maintaining and improving the quality of our water has a wide range of important benefits, including protecting our supply of clean drinking water; improving public health; providing increased recreation opportunities; underpinning sustainable food production; and preventing loss of, or damage to, habitats and species that rely on the water environment [EC:60].



## iii. Better air quality

Clean air is vital to human health and the environment. When ammonia is released into the air, it reacts with nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide and forms 'secondary particulate matter' which has a significant impact on human health [EC:65]. Most notably, ammonia contributes to smog in urban areas. In addition, when deposited on land, ammonia can cause acidification or overload soils and watercourses with nitrogen, leading to biodiversity loss in sensitive habitats.

## iv. Increased biodiversity

Biodiversity describes the variety of life on Earth – of ecosystems, species and of the genetic diversity they contain. Biodiversity 2020 commits us to 'take steps to halt biodiversity losses', both because it is valued in its own right, and because biodiversity provides a range of other benefits such as supporting pollinators, which have an estimated value of between £700 million to the UK economy, or even climate regulation. Land management practices can have major impacts on biodiversity.

## v. Climate change mitigation

Nitrous oxide and methane greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture have fallen by around 15% since 1990, and agriculture currently contributes 10% of UK emissions [EC:63]. Whilst it remains incredibly important that we continue to reduce carbon emissions from the farming sector, environmental land management could play a pivotal role in responding to climate change by increasing the ability of farmland and the countryside to sequester carbon, thereby enhancing the benefits and value of our natural resources.

## vi. Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment

**Agriculture and farming practices shape our rural historic environment, our distinctive landscape features and our historical monuments [EC:55-6]. The conservation and enhancement of our cultural heritage contributes directly to a healthier environment, benefitting people, offering support to thriving rural economies and national prosperity.**

**Woods and forests offer many benefits to society and the economy.** They offer the potential for very significant benefits in carbon sequestration; **provide outdoor spaces for exercise and recreation**; and also contribute to improving agricultural productivity and rural business diversification.”

In addition to environmental enhancement, our new policy could also work towards achieving any or all of the following outcomes:

*Better animal and plant health and animal welfare*

## i. World-class animal welfare

# Agenda Item 13.1

The public has an expectation of high animal welfare standards and consumers want to know what they are buying. Better welfare can contribute towards healthier animals and this can drive up farm productivity and profitability.

## ii. High animal health standards

Poor animal health and endemic disease costs millions of pounds each year in lost productivity for the livestock industry, with the extensive grazing sectors in particular suffering low incomes. For example, mastitis alone costs industry £180 million each year [EC:32]. Action that helps to improve animal health and the capability of farmers to manage the risks posed by disease can help to create a more productive, resilient and self-reliant livestock sector. It helps strengthen the nation's biosecurity, protecting society from the impacts of external pest and disease risk.

Animal health also has a wider impact on public health. For example, the use of veterinary medicines to tackle endemic diseases contributes to the development of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). This poses a risk to the future effectiveness of antimicrobial medicines for both animal and human use, and thus places a burden on the National Health Service [EC:32].

## iii. Protection of crops, tree, plant and bee health

Managing and reducing the impact of pests and diseases on the farming and forestry sectors helps protect the value that healthy trees and plants contribute to the UK economy, society and environment, estimated to be at least £8 billion per year [EC:33]. In addition to the wider benefits of healthy woods and forests outlined above, better biosecurity reduces the risks of dealing with costly outbreaks and promotes more productive and self-reliant farming sectors.

### *Improved productivity and competitiveness*

Alongside its responsibility for regulation and taxation, the public sector provides or funds many of the foundations of productivity – including education, vocational training, transport and other infrastructure, and scientific research. Investment in research and development can improve productivity and bring environmental benefits. This matters, because our natural capital is an essential basis for economic growth and productivity over the long-term.

There are a range of innovations across farming (e.g. technology, data science, gene-editing, improved tracking and traceability of livestock or new plant biosecurity measures) which can increase productivity; help us to safeguard the public goods of animal and human health; and ensure we better protect the environment.

### *Preserving rural resilience and traditional farming and landscapes in the uplands*

Agricultural land is rich in a social and cultural relevance beyond just the economic and environmental. Farmland has shaped and continues to shape England's unique

natural landscape. The identity of England's natural landscape is locally dependent and is a place where past generations have toiled to shape future ones. The beauty of the upland farm is often in inverse proportion to the fertility of its soil and the profit margins of their businesses. Hill farmers maintain a panorama of dry stonewalls and grazed moorlands. The upland way of life, the unique food produced, and the great art that these landscapes have inspired attract visitors from around the world.

Areas such as the uplands deliver many public goods that are worthy of public investment: not only are they a beautiful and rich part of our heritage, they can encourage biodiversity, protect water quality and store carbon. Farm businesses and communities in rural areas can face particular challenges, including physical and digital connectivity. Improved connectivity increases innovation and productivity across the economy, bringing significant economic rewards.

### ***Public access to the countryside***

**With agriculture accounting for more than 70% of land use in the UK, farmland forms an important amenity value for those who are accessing it and farmers and land managers can have a vital part to play in facilitating a deeper connection with the countryside. This may be through the maintenance of public rights of way, which can improve public health through access to clean air and exercise, for instance horse riding or providing opportunities for recreation and tourism. In 2010, England's National Parks accumulated 104.2 million visitor days and attracted spending of £2.2 billion.**

The UK's unique landscape also makes it a widely sought after location for film and television, thus providing an important advantage for the UK's creative arts industry over its international competitors. Initiatives such as Open Farm Sunday can also act as an important vehicle to educate the general public about where their food comes from and the natural environment.

**Consultation questions Which of the environmental outcomes listed below do you consider to be the most important public goods that government should support?**

**Please rank your top three options by order of importance:**

- a) Improved soil health
- b) Improved water quality
- c) Better air quality
- d) Increased biodiversity
- e) Climate change mitigation
- f) Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment

# Agenda Item 13.1

**Of the other options listed below, which do you consider to be the most important public goods that government should support?** Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) World-class animal welfare
- b) High animal health standards
- c) Protection of crops, tree, plant and bee health
- d) Improved productivity and competitiveness
- e) Preserving rural resilience and traditional farming and landscapes in the uplands
- f) Public access to the countryside

Are there any other public goods which you think the government should support?

## **Chapter 6: Enhancing our environment**

“The principal public good we want to support in future is environmental protection and enhancement. A new environmental land management system, underpinned by natural capital principles, would contribute to delivering against many of the key outcomes set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Clean Growth Strategy. These include clean air; clean and plentiful water; thriving plants and wildlife; reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement for the natural environment and mitigating and adapting to climate change.”

**“We can conserve and enhance our landscapes and rural heritage and increase the quality, diversity and access to nature-based recreation and tourism.”**

This chapter looks particularly at how landscape and catchment level approaches could deliver environmental outcomes and asks some additional questions relevant to public access.

A number of case examples illustrate the potential to deliver in these areas. The example covering enhancement of the environment and engagement is the National Forest.

### ***Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment***

The National Forest is creating a vast, new forest for the nation across 200m<sup>2</sup> of the Midlands. Since 1991, the area has been transformed through the planting of 8.5 million trees, with forest cover increasing from 6% to 20%. 70% of the new woodlands have been planted by private landowners, including around 320 farm woods, which range from 0.25 ha to 100ha in size. Many landowners have moved

from being purely farmers to tree planters and increasingly woodland and tourism managers.

Farm woodlands have often been planted to provide the setting for landowners to diversify into leisure, tourism and biodiversity land uses. 79% of the Forest's new woods have some public access. 2,200ha of wildlife habitats have been created or brought into management. Many schemes have featured community tree planting and educational activities for schools – contributing to improved health, recreation, wildlife and air quality benefits across the area. This includes the sequestering of 66 thousand kilo tonnes of carbon between 1990 and 2010. Farm-based forestry, leisure and tourism schemes are also significant elements of a growing visitor and woodland economy. The National Forest now attracts 8.16 million visitors a year, which supports around 4,850 tourism jobs and contributes £395 million to the local economy. Management of farm woods is also supporting a growing woodland economy, with around 70% of woods now in active management.

## Consultation questions

**From the list below, please select which outcomes would be best achieved by incentivising action across a number of farms or other land parcels in a future environmental land management system:**

- a) Recreation
- b) Water quality
- c) Flood mitigation
- d) Habitat restoration
- e) Species recovery
- f) Soil quality
- g) Cultural heritage
- h) Carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction
- i) Air quality
- j) Woodlands and forestry
- k) Other (please specify)

Three other challenging questions are part of the response for Chapter 6. These are outlined below:

*What role should outcome based payments have in a new environmental land management system?*

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*How can an approach to a new environmental land management system be developed that balances national and local priorities for environmental outcomes?*

*How can farmers and land managers work together or with third parties to deliver environmental outcomes?*



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## Department for Transport

### Consultation

### Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy safety review: call for evidence

### Moving Britain Ahead

Closing date: 1 June 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy-cwis-safety-review>

### SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

#### Introduction

1 Britain has some of the safest roads in the world. Casualties have fallen substantially over the last 10 years, with a 44% reduction in fatalities on Britain's roads since 2006.

2 The Government wants walking and cycling to be a normal part of everyday life, and the natural choices for shorter journeys - such as going to school, college or work, travelling to the station, and for simple enjoyment. As part of our aim to build a society that works for all, we want more people to have access to safe, attractive routes for cycling and walking by 2040.

3 The aim of this Call for Evidence is to support an open and comprehensive review of how we can address the issues that cyclists and pedestrians face, or perceive, when using our road infrastructure, to support the Government's aim of increasing cycling and walking.

The Government has invested significantly in cycling and walking infrastructure through several schemes and details are available in the consultation document. In addition, the Government has published guidelines on the preparation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

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## A few facts and figures

- In 2016 there were 448 pedestrian road fatalities in Great Britain (accounting for 25% of all road deaths) and 102 cyclist road fatalities (accounting for 6% of all road deaths). In addition, [5,140 pedestrians and 3,397 cyclists were seriously injured and 17,962 pedestrians and 14,978 cyclists were slightly injured](#). Whilst casualty rates are low compared with the number of miles travelled, both pedestrians and cyclists have much higher casualty rates per mile travelled than motor vehicles (excluding motorcycles).
- 1/5<sup>th</sup> of cyclist casualties occur at junctions when a motor vehicle is turning
- Two-thirds of pedestrian casualties occur when a pedestrian is crossing a road.
- Cyclist fatalities are most likely in rural areas.
- In 2016, 59% of British people agreed with the statement “it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the roads.” (Older people, females and non-cyclists were most likely to agree).

## Key themes

The Government has identified the following key themes.

- Infrastructure and traffic signs
- The law and rules of the road
- Training
- Educating road users
- Vehicles and equipment
- Attitudes and public perceptions

## Infrastructure and traffic signs

### Current situation

- Responsibility for the road network in England lies with Highways England and the local highway authority.
- Highways England is responsible for the Strategic Road Network in Great Britain. Strategic roads are the highways that link cities, areas of population, ports and airports. Most motorways and some “A” roads are strategic roads. Some motorways, classified and unclassified roads are the responsibility of the highway authority.
- Responsibilities of Devon County Council under S39 of the Road Traffic Act (1988)
  - to promote road safety;
  - to undertake collision/casualty data analysis;
  - and to devise programmes, including engineering and road user education, training and publicity, which will improve road safety.



Guidance available:

1. Interim Advice Note 195/16 'Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network'. Highways Agency. This aims to ensure needs of cyclists are accommodated in future schemes.

"The Highways England Cycling Strategy will enable cycle-proofing of the Strategic Road Network in England and reduce any severance from new road schemes by enhancing access for a variety of users, including pedestrians, horse riders, and people with disabilities or health conditions. Highways England is also committed to upgrading and increasing the number of safe crossings on the network in the interests of the safety and convenience of more vulnerable road users, as well as ensuring they integrate with other transport networks, including local roads and existing and new rail links."

2. [Manual for Streets](#) and [Manual for Streets 2](#). Department for Transport. These focus on street design but include "the concept of a hierarchy of provision which puts pedestrians and cyclists at the top."
3. Inclusive Mobility. Department for Transport 2002. Currently being updated.
4. Local Transport Note 2/08 Cycle Design. Department for Transport 2008. Currently being updated.
5. The [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans Guidance](#)
6. Local Transport Note 1/12 Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists.
7. Planning Practice guidance supporting the National Planning Policy Framework highlights "the importance of cycling and walking infrastructure in delivering healthy communities."

## Traffic signs

- Traffic signs are placed by the traffic authority, through the powers provided by the Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984), to provide warnings, information and details of restrictions to road users.
- Signs "must conform to the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (201), as amended (TSRGD). Authorities may only use signs of a size, colour and type prescribed in legislation or specially authorised by or on behalf of the national authority." "TSRGD prescribes many new cycling and walking measures, including new designs for Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs), cycle 'early start' signals, a new parallel pedestrian and cycle crossing and low-level mini cycle signals."

## Consultation question 1

Do you have any suggestions on the way in which the current approach to development and maintenance of road signs and infrastructure impacts the safety of cyclists and other vulnerable road users? How could it be improved?

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## The law and rules of the road

Road safety law is enshrined in the Road Safety Act 2006 and other legislative instruments. Enforcement is split between the police and local authorities depending on the nature of the offence.

- **The Highway Code**

Rules for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists, incorporated in the driving theory test.

“Some countries apply different rules aimed at protecting vulnerable road users such as requiring vehicles to give way to cyclists and pedestrians when turning into the junction, as set out in British Cycling’s Turning the Corner campaign”.

- **Civil liability**

“Liability for accidents is predicated on the establishment of the defendant’s negligence. In order to prove negligence, it is necessary to prove that the defendant owed the claimant a duty of care, that they breached that duty and that the claimant’s injuries or damage to property were caused as a result.”

- **Speed**

Research commissioned by the Department for Transport is currently underway to evaluate speed awareness courses and the use of 20mph limits. Both are due to report later this year.

Department Circular 1/2013, gives guidance on considering and reviewing speed limits. Authorities are advised to take into account: “history of collisions; road geometry and engineering; road function; composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users); existing traffic speed; road environment.”

### Consultation question 2

Please set out any areas where you consider the laws or rules relating to road safety and their enforcement, with particular reference to cyclists and pedestrians, could be used to support the Government’s aim of improving cycling and walking safety whilst promoting more active travel.

## Training

### Current situation

- A driving licence is required to operate most motorised vehicles on British roads.
- Those wishing to ride a motorbike or moped must first take a Compulsory Basic Training (CBT), ... before a theory and two practical tests. Younger riders take additional tests if they wish to ride large motorbikes.
- Drivers who wish to operate larger, heavier vehicles such as minibuses, lorries or cars with a trailer are required to take additional tests. Qualified lorry or bus

drivers must do 35 hours of periodic training every five years to keep their Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC).

- Advanced driving course of Pass Plus is a 6-hour training course developed by the DVSA, which is aimed at helping new drivers improve their skills, are voluntary.
- Drivers must renew their driving licence at age 70 and then every three years. There is no test but drivers must meet the minimum eyesight standard.
- A banned driver may be required to take another driving test or an extended test.
- Bikeability is the Government's national cycle training programme, underpinned by the National Standard for cycle training. The Government has provided funding of £50 million to cover cycle training from 2016 - 2020.

## Consultation question 3

Do you have any suggestions for improving the way road users are trained, with specific consideration to protecting cyclists and pedestrians?

## Educating Road Users

### Current situation

- Road safety is not part of the national curriculum but may be incorporated in other topics. "A 2015 survey of teachers showed that 70% of primary schools and 55% of secondary schools had taught road safety in the previous 12 months. Schools also provide the main delivery channel for Bikeability."
- Other people and organisations have a role e.g. Road Safety Officers; the Scout Association and the RAC Cubs Road Safety Activity Badge; Living Streets road safety education and 'School Route Audits'; and various 'safety' related weeks.
- National Driver Offenders Rehabilitation Scheme – re-education courses.
- The Government's THINK! campaign aimed at encouraging safer behaviour.

## Consultation question 4

Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve road user education to help support more and safer walking and cycling?

## 7 Vehicles and equipment

### Current situation

### New vehicles

- Standards for new vehicles.
- Consumer information programmes such as EuroNCAP for new cars and SHARP motorcycle safety helmet rating scheme.
- United Nations (UN Economic Commission for Europe) work on improved requirements for new vehicles to give better protection to vulnerable road users.

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- Government is considering ways to “improve the requirements for sideguards on heavy goods vehicles being used on UK roads.”

## Vehicles in-use

- Use of roadworthy vehicles – Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations and Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations.
- MoT – after three years for cars/motorcycles and after one year for heavy vehicles and large passenger carrying vehicles.

## Bicycles

- Pedal Cycles (Construction and Use) Regulations. Braking on front and rear wheels; definition of lights and reflectors; bell to be fitted at point of sale.
- Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (EAPCs) are defined in separate regulations.
- “Riders are advised to wear a helmet and to wear light coloured/fluorescent clothing in daylight or poor light and to wear reflective clothing or accessories at night.”

### Consultation question 5

Do you have any suggestions on how Government policy on vehicles and equipment could improve safety of cyclists and pedestrians, whilst continuing to promote more walking and cycling?

## 8 Attitudes and public awareness

### Current situation

- Different types of cyclist – commuter; cycling to school; leisure.
- Drivers “have a tendency to stereotype cyclists negatively; characterised by supposed failures of attitude and competence, even while recognising that cyclists are a diverse population.”
- Those who ride “may believe that car users are often dangerous, reporting intimidation, abuse and poor practice of motorists around cyclists. For example - inattention and failing to look, to driving too close when passing, to specific acts of aggression...”
- Pedestrians are frequently segregated from vehicles, particularly in urban areas. Cyclists are likely to have to share, either with vehicles or pedestrians.
- “Some organisations have attempted to improve understanding between different road user groups through campaigns or codes of conduct. This includes initiatives such as Exchanging Places, where cyclists and HGV drivers are invited to experience the road from each other’s perspective in order to understand safer road use better.”

### Consultation question 6

What can Government do to support better understanding and awareness of different types of road user in relation to cycle use in particular?



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## National Planning Policy Framework - draft revised text

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

### Consultation proposals

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

Closing date: 10 May 2018

### Summary

The draft new Framework implements the Government's reforms to planning policy, taking into account proposals from previous consultations, changes to planning policy implemented through Written Ministerial Statements since the first Framework was published in 2012 and the effect of caselaw on the interpretation of planning policy.

The purpose of the planning system remains to achieve sustainable development through economic, social and environmental objectives.

The draft provides guidance on the strategic, local and neighbourhood plans and how these should be shaped to deliver sustainable development. The guidance goes on to discuss the planning application process, delivery of homes, economic growth and the vitality of town centres.

There are four chapters which are particularly pertinent to Local Access Forums:

**Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities**

**Chapter 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport**

**Chapter 11. Making effective use of land**

**Chapter 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

To a lesser extent, **Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment** also has some relevance.

Changes to the original National Planning Policy Framework are highlighted, with the

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explanation in italics. Paragraphs which are particularly pertinent to the Forum's remit are in bold. The paragraph numbering relates to the published document. Footnote numbering has been retained but not the footnote itself.

## **Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities**

*Paragraph 92 gives additional recognition to the role that planning can play in promoting social interaction and healthy lifestyles*

### **92. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:**

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for multiple connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

### **93. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should**

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community;

c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;

d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and

e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

*Paragraph 94 reflects the housing White Paper proposal that policies and decisions should consider the social and economic benefits of estate regeneration, and that authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.*

94. Planning policies and decisions should consider the social and economic benefits of estate regeneration. Local planning authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.

## ***Open space and recreation***

**97. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is required, and which plans should seek to accommodate.**

**98. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:**

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the former use.

**99. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.**

**100. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Identifying land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.**

**101. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:**

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- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

102. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

## **Chapter 9 - Promoting sustainable transport**

**103. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:**

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
- b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
- c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
- d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for mitigation and for net gains in environmental quality; and
- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

104. The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

**105. Planning policies should:**

- a) support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within strategic sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;



**b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;**

c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;

**d) provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking – drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans;**

106. If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

a) the accessibility of the development;

b) the type, mix and use of development;

c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;

d) local car ownership levels; and

e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

*Paragraph 107 incorporates the Written Ministerial Statement of 25 March 2015 on parking standards.*

107. Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network. **In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.**

## **Considering development proposals**

*Policy on assessing the transport impact of proposals (now at paragraphs 108-110) has been amended to refer to highway safety as well as capacity and congestion in order to make it clear that we expect that designs should prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements, followed by access to high quality public transport (so far as possible) as well as to reflect the importance of creating well-designed places.*

**108. In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:**

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**a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;**

**b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and**

**c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.**

109. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network or road safety would be severe.

**110. Within this context, applications for development should:**

**a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;**

**b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;**

**c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;**

**d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and**

**e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.**

111. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

## **Chapter 11. Making effective use of land**

*This chapter combines existing policy with a number of proposals from the housing White Paper or and previous consultations. The housing White Paper proposals include: a) expecting plans to have a clear strategy for using land (paragraph 117); .....*

117. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic plans should

contain a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land <sup>35</sup>.

## **118. Planning policies and decisions should:**

**a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land**, including through mixed use schemes and **taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access;**

**b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation**, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;

**c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land;**

## **Chapter 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

*This chapter has been updated to align with the 25 Year Environment Plan. It includes additional policy on strengthening existing networks of habitats (paragraph 169) and taking air quality fully into account (paragraph 180), clarifies that development within National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be limited (paragraph 170); and also clarifies the implications for policy on areas defined as Heritage Coast (paragraph 171).*

## **168. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:**

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality);

**b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;**

**c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it;**

d) minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality; and

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f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

**169. Plans should: allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework <sup>45</sup>; take a strategic approach to maintaining and strengthening networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries**

**170. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.** The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads <sup>46</sup>. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. **Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:**

**c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated**

171. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 170), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

**178. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health and living conditions, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:**

a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life<sup>51</sup>;

b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

**c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.**

179. Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. **Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at**

**the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications.** Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

## **16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

*Paragraph 182 has been revised to clarify that World Heritage Sites are recognised internationally for their Outstanding Universal Value and that this forms part of their significance and should be taken into account.*

*Paragraph 189 has been revised to clarify that when considering the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset, decision-makers should give great weight to the asset's conservation irrespective of whether the potential harm to its significance amounts to 'less than substantial harm' or 'substantial harm or total loss' of significance.*

182. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value <sup>53</sup>. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. <sup>54</sup>.

189. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of potential harm to its significance. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

***The consultation questions relate to the specific changes to the NPPF, highlighted, and ask whether there are any additional comments on the overall draft text.***





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### ukactive consultation

#### Developing a national approach to physical activity for children and young people

Closing date: 1 June 2018

### Summary

<https://ukactivekids.com/>

“ukactive, the UK’s leading not-for-profit health body for the physical activity sector, is working with local and national partners to develop a policy-driven, practical approach to increasing accessibility and providing more opportunities for children and young people to be physically active.”

It wants “to learn from the experience and knowledge of national and local organisations and individuals to create an approach built on what works across the settings, institutions and social environments that children and young people experience.”

“Childhood inactivity is a shared problem and evidence shows the need for changing the way our communities and institutions support children and young people to promote and provide positive physical activity opportunities.”

ukactive is seeking feedback in three areas: organisations and institutions, the physical environment and the social environment.

The Forum could most usefully comment on the physical environment. There is a 500-word limit for each response, with the opportunity to upload supporting documents.

### **Organisations & institutions**

This section looks at how specific organisations and institutions can support children and young people to be more physically active.

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To consider:

- Early years settings i.e. nurseries, play centres
- Schools i.e. Primary and Secondary
- Colleges and Universities
- Healthcare
- Community clubs i.e. youth centres, social clubs
- Faith-based and religious organisations

**Part 1: The current offering- Please identify any challenges, barriers and any examples of what is currently working.**

**Part 2: The future offer- Please identify any solutions, unseen barriers, and any changes you think should be made, including areas of investment in the future.**

## **Physical environment**

This section looks at how the physical environment can support children and young people to be more physically active.

To consider:

- Transport and travel
- The built environment i.e. housing, leisure facilities, community centres
- Natural spaces i.e. parks and green spaces

**Part 1: The current offering - Please identify any challenges, barriers and any examples of what is currently working.**

**Part 2: The future offer - Please identify any solutions, unseen barriers, and any changes you think should be made, including areas of investment in the future.**

## **Social environment**

This section looks at how different social environments and social influencers can support children and young people to be more physically active.

To consider the role of:

- Family, carers and guardians
- Social networks
- Teachers and school support staff
- Coaches, Activity professionals and fitness professionals
- Youth and Community workers

**Part 1: The current offering - Please identify any challenges, barriers and any examples of what is currently working.**

**Part 2: The future offer - Please identify any solutions, unseen barriers, and any changes you think should be made, including areas of investment in the future.**



## Devon Countryside Access Forum

### Draft Work Plan 2017-18

	April – June	July - September	October - December	January - March
<b>DCAF Meetings</b>	Thursday, 26 April		Thursday, 11 October	Thursday, 24 January
<b>Speakers</b>	Paul Davis, Asset Manager DCC		National Trust?	?
<b>Coastal Access</b>			?	?
<b>Training Day</b>	Mid/late June - health theme			
<b>Consultations - ongoing</b>	Food and Farming – Defra Cycling and Walking Strategy – DfT NPPF – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Govt. Physical activity - Ukactive Kids			
<b>DCAF proactive work</b>	Explore Devon website		?	?
<b>Other</b>			Review AONB position statement Deregulation Act – ProW changes?	

#### General aspirations 2018-19

- Respond to consultations, using working groups where appropriate
- Support the Public Rights of Way section, DCC
- Ensure integration between the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other strategies and policies
- Continue to work with DCC on multi-use route development
- Continue to take opportunities to encourage improved disability access
- Contribute to green infrastructure policy development throughout the County
- Continue the link with the Public Rights of Way Committee
- Raise the profile of the DCAF

