



Devon Countryside Access Forum
c/o Public Rights of Way team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382771

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk

www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Fifty-Ninth meeting **Devon Countryside Access Forum**

Tuesday, 21 September 2021 at 10.00 am

Virtual meeting

Please contact the Forum Officer for joining instructions and information on public participation.

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. Apologies
2. Declaration of interests
3. Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth meeting held on 27 April 2021 (Pages 1 - 12)
4. Matters arising
 - 4.1 Teign Estuary Trail
 - 4.2 Lower Otter Restoration Project
 - 4.3 Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan
 - 4.4 Exe Estuary Trail accessibility
 - 4.5 Countryside Code refresh
5. Meetings attended by DCAF members

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.

- 5.1 East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, launch of National Nature Reserve
- 5.2 Training Day, Exeter
- 5.3 Restoring Stover Park project event
6. Correspondence Log (Pages 13 - 22)
7. Public questions
8. Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee meeting held on 1 July 2021 (Pages 23 - 24)
9. Public Rights of Way update (Pages 25 - 26)
10. Presentation by Chris Woodruff, Manager, East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Focus on the Glover Review, Farming in Protected Landscapes and recreational access.
11. To note and approve responses
 - 11.1 Northbrook Approach, Exeter. Devon Wildlife Trust (Pages 27 - 30)
 - 11.2 Teign Estuary Trail planning application, Devon County Council (Pages 31 - 34)
 - 11.3 Planning application number 21/1392/FUL – car park improvements (Pebblebed Heaths), East Devon District Council (Pages 35 - 38)
12. Current consultations
 - 12.1 Exe Estuary Management Plan 2022-2027 (Pages 39 - 42)
13. Work Programme 2021-2022 (Pages 43 - 44)
14. Dartmoor Way progress
15. Any other business
16. 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.



Agenda Item 3.

Devon Countryside Access Forum
c/o Public Rights of Way team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382084

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk

www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth meeting of the Devon Countryside Access Forum

Virtual meeting
Tuesday, 27 April 2021

Attendance

Forum members

Andrew Baker
Joanna Burgess
Chris Cole (Vice-Chair)
Tim Felton
Lucinda Francis
Sue Leith

Sue Pudduck
Tino Savvas
Lorna Sherriff
Sarah Slade (Chair)
Bryan Smith

Devon County Council Officers and others present

Helen Clayton, Senior Officer, Public Rights of Way, DCC
Marta Gawron, Public Rights of Way, DCC
Ros Mills, Public Rights of Way Manager, DCC
Hilary Winter, Forum Officer, DCC

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Gordon Guest, Jo Hooper, Cllr Tony Inch and Cllr Philip Sanders.

2. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January were approved and would be signed at a later date.

Agenda Item 3.

4. Matters arising

4.1 Public question / British Horse Society - equestrian access to recreational trails and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

The Forum had written to Devon County Council about equestrian use of recreational trails and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. Mr Hulland, Transportation and Road Safety Manager, had responded confirming lack of resources and funding to undertake a review of older trails. The Cycling and Multi-use Strategy would be refreshed, taking into account equestrian use and new guidance. Useful statistics on horse riding access had been provided by the Public Rights of Way team.

Mr Hackett, BHS, had emailed thanking the DCAF for its support. He asked what measures the DCAF could adopt to ensure the multi-use policy is complied with as progress to roll-out multi-use retrospectively had been virtually at a standstill. It was noted the DCAF did not have the power to enforce compliance.

Although suggestions had been made at the last meeting of quick wins or a priority list, Mr Hackett had expressed a strong preference for an overall approach.

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed trails post 2012 were subject to a transparent assessment to see whether horse riding could be included. The DCAF had a potential role to monitor this audit in any ongoing trail development. The network of trails pre 2012 would be resource intensive to assess retrospectively as they had been designed primarily for walking and cycling.

The DCAF resolved to maintain its interest in the review of the Cycling and Multi-Use Strategy.

4.3 Teign Estuary Trail

The results of the public consultation had been analysed. DCC is working on minor changes to the alignment with a view to putting in a planning application later in the year.

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed the multi-use assessment was being carried out and advice was being given to the Transportation and Road Safety team and associated consultants.

4.2 Lower Otter Valley update

Following planning approval, archaeological surveys and ground investigation works to obtain geotechnical, archaeological, buried utility and highway construction information were being undertaken. The main scheme is due to start in May/June.

The Public Rights of Way team were involved in advising and commenting on legal and infrastructure detail.

4.4 Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan

Survey results had been analysed and a revised Plan would be going to the Strategic Management Committee of East Devon District Council for approval on 27 April. More information will be available after that meeting.

The analysis stated that “we can reassure DCAF that safety and user audits are routine as part of project development; the Engineering Design Group at Devon County Council are assisting with this process.” A new section titled ‘Traffic-free network – standard and types’ had made explicit what is meant by the terms ‘traffic-free trail’ and Sustrans guidance had been included to support the text. ‘Quiet Lanes’ had been re-titled ‘Quiet Ways’ to make explicit the difference between the former (a statutory designation) and the latter (an informal designation).

Detailed plans of projects had been replaced by key diagrams which express the connection between trail projects more clearly.

The new Plan had included additional text to support objectives to meet the needs of those with disabilities. Horse riding was included in the health and well-being objective.

Measures will be put in place to increase resilience to flooding and improve public safety. New trail infrastructure would be planned to avoid the floodplains as much as possible.

A delivery group or board will be overseeing next steps in this ambitious and multimillion-pound project.

5. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Forum Officer took the Chair. Sarah Slade was elected Chair, proposed by Sue Pudduck and seconded by Tino Savvas. Chris Cole was elected Vice Chair, proposed by Lorna Sherriff and seconded by Sue Pudduck. Everyone was in agreement. Sarah and Chris were thanked for their work during the challenges of the past year.

6. DCAF representation at meetings

6.1 Defra Access and Inclusivity workshop

The Chair had attended the Defra Access and Inclusivity Workshop. This was a virtual meeting with a large number of attendees. Attendees were split into small groups for discussions on matters such as how to encourage people into the countryside and how to positively engage with new audiences, especially those that feel disconnected from the countryside. The training and support that might be needed to deliver that was discussed, as well as the likely partnerships necessary for delivery. The value of existing

Agenda Item 3.

organisations, such as LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) and Countryside Access Forums (which bring people together from different disciplines and with different skills) was recognised.

Discussions took place about how to engage landowners in various schemes, but no landowner organisations were represented. There may be additional work in the future.

6.2 Pebblebed Heaths National Nature Reserve (NNR) Board

The National Nature Reserve (NNR) opening event planned for May 2020 had been postponed and a virtual launch event would be taking place in May 2021. The NNR covered the Pebblebed Heaths, primarily owned by Clinton Devon Estates but with some parcels leased or owned by the Devon Wildlife Trust, RSPB, and others. A project board had been established, chaired by Chris Woodruff (East Devon AONB Manager), and including a range of representatives including the Marines. There was a need to improve the environmental condition of the site. The DCAF had been invited onto the board to represent access interests and Sarah Slade had agreed to participate and would report back, as appropriate. The NNR had witnessed a huge increase in access users during 2020, at a level anticipated in ten years' time.

6.3 Exe Estuary Trail accessibility

Gordon Guest had been in discussions with Kirstie Pritchard, Natural Environment Officer, with a view to assessing some routes for disabled users which could be promoted on the Explore Devon website. Three dates in May had been proposed for the wheeled access group (WAG) to look at routes centred on Dart's Farm, Lymphstone and Exmouth. Members of the DCAF were welcome to attend.

Tino Savvas expressed interest in participating. Jo Burgess was unavailable but interested in any future dates.

7. Correspondence log

Questions were raised on the following:

Item 5 – Tarka Trail planning application

Although the planning application had been withdrawn, Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed that the stretch between Meeth and Hatherleigh remained a key link. Any revised alternatives needed to go through proper process and surveys and be handled sensitively. The DCAF could comment on a future application but it would be inappropriate for it to be involved at this point.

Item 13 – Foreshore at Teignmouth

Helen Clayton, DCC, said the footpath leading to the foreshore was a cul-de-sac route and during CoVID-19 increased numbers had been using the route. She and the PRoW warden had met with partner agencies; the Harbour Office, Teign Estuary Officer, the Parish Council and landowners to clarify the situation. The Crown own the foreshore and permit access but there is no right to be elsewhere when the foreshore is not available. The Teign Estuary Officer is working on wording to explain that access to the foreshore is permissive and to remind people of their responsibilities. The wording will be agreed by all parties. It was confirmed that there will be no access from the proposed Teign Valley Trail to this footpath due to access and physical constraints and sensitivities on the designated wildlife site.

8. Public questions

There were no public questions.

9. England Coast Path

The decisions made by the Secretary of State on the stretches between Combe Martin and Marsland Mouth, Cremyll and Kingswear, and Kingswear and Lyme Regis were noted. Some stretches had not yet been determined, including the Avon Estuary. The agenda paper set out Natural England's comments on the DCAF responses plus the Secretary of State's comments.

Rolling out the England Coast Path was a statutory process. Much of Devon already had the infrastructure in place but there would be a formal opening once Natural England had agreed all the infrastructure. There was no timescale for this. Access to the coastal margin was a responsibility of the local authority.

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed a funding bid had been put in for improvements to infrastructure on or near existing paths and the DCAF would be briefed on progress.

A specific question was asked about access to Lighthouse Beach. The decision to include this as coastal margin had been welcomed by the local community. Helen Clayton, DCC, confirmed that the authority had power to seek landowner agreement to secure access to the margin. In the absence of an agreement the authority had power to take action, but the landowner had a right of appeal. The coastal margin at Kingswear bridged the gap between the beach and the existing footpath as the Definitive Map and Statement shows that the footpath does not proceed onto the foreshore. In the first instance, the Public Rights of Way team would seek to negotiate to secure the removal of the current gate and fencing. There was no timescale for this at the moment.

The authority did not have a power to negotiate on coastal margin issues until the path was formally open but there was nothing to preclude earlier negotiations.

Ros Mills, DCC, said the DCAF would be informed of progress and any requirement for DCAF support. Negotiations were sensitive and had a long history. There had been a village green application at one point and the planning inquiry had been adjourned pending case law. Whilst some members expressed a keenness for

Agenda Item 3.

greater DCAF involvement, it was recognised that it was important not to jeopardise or prolong the process. The matter would be put on a future agenda to ensure members were kept informed.

10. Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee

Minutes of the PRoW Committee were noted.

11. Public Rights of Way update

Ros Mills, DCC, said the network had been very busy and this had been noted by councillors. Wardens were endeavouring to keep paths cut back to help social distancing. The DCC PRoW website pages were being used to convey important messages to the public. Other issues were managing people, pop-up car parks and camping but these were not the responsibility of the PRoW team.

The new PRoW Framework contract was being rolled out and contractors were being asked to register with ACDC to ensure health and safety and insurance matters were managed properly.

The wardens used approximately 1/3 of the revenue budget for annual grass cutting. Hedges were the landowner's responsibility. Budgets for the current and following year are good. A secondee from the Engineering Group was assisting the team with big capital projects such as the resurfacing of off-road trails and advising on engineering works.

The DCAF support for the Stover Country Park Heritage Lottery Fund bid had been appreciated. Gary Prescod, Project Manager, is procuring advice from consultants to explore the development part of the project before putting in a bid for part two, the delivery project. DCAF support for this would be helpful later in the year. Jon Avon, Stover Park Manager since 1990, was moving to a new job and the post was being advertised.

The Grand Western Canal was being well-used as people discovered local places on their doorstep.

In answer to a question about whether ACDC could be used by P3 and volunteer groups such as the Trail Riders' Fellowship, Ros Mills said she would discuss this with Steve Gardner, PRoW.

Helen Clayton, DCC, explained that the PRoW Team had recently restarted consultations, following the relaxation of 'stay at home' / 'stay local' restrictions, which had had an impact on the ability to comply with statutory requirements for advertising and could have put the Council at risk of legal challenge. The Definitive Map Review Team was therefore now able to publish informal consultations and legal orders but there would be a knock-on effect on the parish review progress and production of reports to the next PRoW Committee meeting in July.

The first Planning Inspectorate blended Inquiry in Devon would be held in East Down on 15 June. Blended Inquiries had been held elsewhere in the country, but this is possibly the first one in a rural area. A local venue with facilities for people to

participate would be available plus online options. The Inquiry may be available to view on YouTube and will be advertised early in May. It will also be publicised on the DCC 'Have Your Say' webpage with links to all documents. It was not known whether Planning Inquiries will be online in future but having electronic copies of documents had been useful, although time consuming to scan. A paper copy would still have to be made available for inspection. People were often more willing to speak at an in-person inquiry.

A number of planning applications had been received for temporary planning, such as camping sites. These created additional work.

There had been an increase in section 31(6) applications from landowners and greater awareness of this process, probably due to the increased use of the countryside during the pandemic.

12. Devon's unsurfaced, unclassified road network (uUCRs)

Helen Clayton and Steve Gardner from the Public Rights of Way team were thanked for their informative briefing paper. uUCRs provided valuable assets which do not have the profile of public rights of way.

Ros Mills, DCC, confirmed that the public rights of way team received a lump sum budget and had to make a balanced decision on funding for rights of way, off-road trails and uUCRs. More of the highway network had been passed to the PRoW team as some highways deteriorated. Some discussions had taken place as to whether it was cheaper to resurface some and keep them within the roads team rather than remove poor surfacing.

Reference was made to the Changing Lanes project whereby some surplus roads had been downgraded and not maintained, becoming recreational routes. Ros Mills said that some routes were popular with cyclists but they did not like the deteriorating surface. The carbon plan agenda had arisen since 'Changing Lanes' which has a particular aim to connect communities without using cars and this could produce some funding if such aspirations were incorporated into Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and other plans.

Members raised comments about signage for uUCRs, stating that signs needed to be clear and consistent so that the public are aware of distinctions. uUCRs were not always clear on maps. Ros Mills said uUCRs in Devon were on the county council's List of Streets (there was confidence that this designation was correct due to a particular process in the Devon original process to establish the Definitive Map). The OS key depicts these routes in green or red dots depending on the map scale. She agreed the network had evolved and there would be opportunities to review the signage to be more consistent. It became complicated when public rights of way fed off uUCRs. It might be possible to link in with the new Countryside Code images in the future. There is, however, no legal duty to sign roads unlike PRoW where there is such a duty.

Helen Clayton, DCC, clarified that public rights of way were a particular category of highways shown on the Definitive Map, of which Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT) were one type. Like uUCRs, these also carried vehicular rights, although are mainly

Agenda Item 3.

used as footpaths and bridleways. A BOAT was generally an old road, but one which had not been recorded on the Council's List of Streets. PRow were a subset of highways.

Reference was made to the graph showing ease of use of uUCRs. It was noted that in some areas degradation of uUCRs had occurred with gullyng or poor tarmac. These required a huge amount of money to achieve a reasonable surface. Ros Mills said problems could be reported on the DCC 'report a problem' webpage so that wardens could investigate any reports. Often dramatic weather events accelerated deterioration.

It was noted that some roads are signed as unsuitable for motor vehicles. This could be a result of decisions to rationalise the network where budgets were under pressure, maintained solely for residents' access, (these decisions were made through a local consultation process), or it could be that the route is in disrepair with insufficient funds to maintain at present. The Neighbourhood Highway Managers were involved in such decisions. Any Traffic Regulation Orders are available on the DCC website [Search - DCC Services Portal \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/search) as was the List of Streets [Land charges - Environment \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/land-charges-environment)

It was confirmed that uUCRs and BOATS had legal rights for vehicles and the usual driving laws would apply.

Members discussed the range of electronic maps available including the PRow interactive map and other applications such as Memory-Map and ViewRanger. These were improving in quality and speed of download. Google maps did not differentiate between status and Helen Clayton said people could put inaccurate information on Google Maps which presented a new challenge. People might carry out-of-date maps.

Forum members were reminded that that the legal record is held by the County Council - this information can be used by the OS and other mapping products (not the other way round).

13. To note and approve responses to consultations and updates

13.1 Parks and Green Spaces, Exeter City Council

The response was noted and approved.

13.2 Devon Interim Carbon Plan

The response was noted and approved.

An Interim Consultation Report had been prepared with a view to a final report in May. A Citizen's Assembly is planned for July online.

13.3 Countryside Code refresh

The response was noted and approved.

The Code had been published with media resources made available to authorities and other partners. The intention is that the Code should be an evolving document and there may be further opportunities to contribute. Marian Spain, Chief Executive of Natural England sent her “personal thanks to all of you for taking the time to share your insights and support us with this important piece of work over the last few months.”

13.4 Planning appeal - Pennsylvania Road, Exeter

The response was noted and approved.

Whilst this was a specific planning application, it had a particular impact on the bridleway network. The response was couched in wider terms too using the DCAF position statements.

14. Current consultations

14.1 Northbrook Park, Exeter City Council

Gordon Guest had supplied some comments on accessibility. He wished to ensure new structures or improvements were considered at the outset and that the park was accessible for those with wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

The park included the Exeter Green Circle walking route and public rights of way.

The consultation documents and proposals were praised for their links to initiatives and mental well-being.

It was noted that there was no reference to finance, potential partnerships and timescales for work. It would be useful to indicate this, particularly as the Devon Wildlife Trust had recently terminated its involvement with Seaton Jurassic.

A discussion took place about re-wilding and tidier, more developed areas and increased interest in the countryside and nature. Although conservation itself was not part of the DCAF remit, it would be appropriate to mention a balanced approach and the need to ensure the park was not urbanised and there was good public access through dedicated space or wildlife corridors. The wildlife aspect was part of the experience.

The range of laudable proposals presented an excellent opportunity to educate about responsible use.

A discussion took place about safe access to the park, avoiding the

Agenda Item 3.

crematorium road, and it was noted there were plans to improve the signal crossing on Topsham Road.

The park provided an important strategic link with Ludwell Valley Park and the Riverside Valley Park and there was the opportunity to learn lessons from other green space areas.

Concern was raised that it might be just a dog walking area and, in this context, there might be scope for exploring areas where dogs might be less welcome. It was noted that the park had some current recreational use for pitch and putt, dog walking, a cycling route and also existing public rights of way.

It was agreed the proposals were impressive and should be endorsed. The closing date was 3 May which gave limited time to draft and agree the response.

Action: Forum Officer to circulate draft response.

15. Devon Countryside Access Forum Annual Report

The Annual Report was approved and would be published following inclusion of additional photographs.

Action: Forum Officer

16. Training Day

It was agreed that a Training Day in Exeter would be useful, centred on the valley parks. The Chair and Forum Officer would discuss potential dates and plans and circulate.

Action: Chair and Forum Officer

17. Work Plan 2021/22

Items for the work plan 2021/22 included:

- 1) Multi-use and equestrian access. Keep under review and contribute where appropriate.
- 2) Continue to encourage working with landowners.
- 3) Consider increased use of the countryside and how to encourage responsible use.
- 4) Maintain links with the public rights of way team.

Action: Forum Officer to circulate a plan.

18. Any other business

Members

Recruitment to the DCAF had not taken place in 2021 due to the pandemic and the lack of face to face meetings. Andrew Baker and Sue Pudduck, due to end their three-year term in March 2021, had been offered a further term and it was much appreciated that they had both accepted.

Huddle

The Huddle interactive site for local access forums had been terminated by Defra at the end of March. Individual licences had been expensive. It was hoped to replace this with a SharePoint collaborative site.

Ramblers 'Don't Lose your Way'

Helen Clayton, DCC, confirmed the project officer is aware of not overwhelming authorities with claims. These needed to be prioritised and volunteers were working on this to enable quality Schedule 14 applications with accompanying evidence. There were resource implications for the PRow team if information is requested. Helen would be meeting with the Devon coordinator shortly to advise on historic records and where to find them. It is hoped that coordination can take place if the Definitive Map review team are working in a parish. Nationally the project will need to cross-reference with current applications, where routes have been diverted or stopped up in the past, and look at the List of Streets. Not all is available online, but records can be extracted from committee reports. It was noted a route shown on a member's land had been previously extinguished.

The basis of the project is focussing on routes which had not been recorded on the original Definitive Map and required evidence to claim them – in contrast to the RoWIP approach where the wish to record them is through desire or need.

It was noted that Kirstie Pritchard, Natural Environment Officer, had data to support the value of PRow to the economy.

RoWIP (Rights of Way Improvement Plan)

In response to a question about the RoWIP review, Ros Mills, DCC, said legislation says an authority shall, not more than ten years after first publishing it and subsequently at intervals of not more than ten years –

- a) make a new assessment of the matters specified in subsection (2), and
- b) review the plan and decide whether to amend it.

As the RoWIP was last published in 2012, it would be reviewed next year but the decision may be made not to amend it. The review may be better after publication of the refreshed Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Strategy and the Devon Carbon Plan. Implementation of the Deregulation Act is still awaited and this would also have a significant impact on the legislative process. A rolling programme may be appropriate and there may be future opportunities to do more consultation. There is

Agenda Item 3.

no longer a dedicated RoWIP Officer and communities are being directed to the 10 Steps Community Guide.

Retirement

Attention was drawn to the retirement of Ros Mills, Public Rights of Way Manager in May.

Ros Mills said she had enjoyed the many challenges of the job. She thanked DCAF members and previous members for their help and for developing excellent policies. The mix of members' backgrounds and balanced approach were very useful. Interviews would be taking place shortly and she would ask her line manager about incorporating a question about working with the DCAF.

The Chair thanked Ros on behalf of the Forum for her cheerful and positive approach and willingness to respond to DCAF comments and try and find solutions. Other members thanked and complimented Ros on her achievements. Ros was wished a happy retirement.

19. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be on Tuesday, 21 September at 10.00 a.m. A decision on whether this would be virtual or face-to-face would be made nearer the time.

Devon Countryside Access Forum
CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND RESPONSE
(not specifically on agenda)

Available to view on request subject to General Data Protection

	Sender	Subject	Action and any feedback
1	Tees Valley Local Access Forum 16.04.21	Email to all Local Access Forums expressing concern about plans by Highways England to infill or demolish historic railway bridges, some of which have use as part of trail proposals.	Emailed to ascertain impact in Devon. The response from the Historic Railways Estate (on behalf of the Department for Transport) stated "We have no current plans to infill or demolish any structures in Devon."
2	Member of public 27.04.21	Disability access on Dartmoor.	Advised person to contact Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Dartmoor Access Forum.
3	East Devon District Council 27.04.21	Colyton Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to East Devon District Council. (Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.	The Neighbourhood Plan position statement had been sent previously. No action required.
4	Member of public 05.05.21	Query regarding permissive path in Jacobstowe.	Email passed to Senior Officer, Public Rights of Way, to respond.
5	East Devon District Council 6.05.21	Dalwood Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to East Devon District Council, in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.	Reiterated comments made to the Pre-Submission consultation on the Public Rights of Way map design (figure 11). (Some of the rights of way are obscured by the parish boundary). The policy on footpaths and bridleways was supported, which included disabled mobility vehicles.
6	Land Charges DCC 10.05.21	Commons Act 2006 – Section 15. Registration of Greens. Application has been made to the Registration Authority, Devon County Council, by Dartmouth Town Council under Section 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006 and in accordance with the Commons Registration (England) Regulations 2014.	For information. No action required.

Agenda Item 6.

		The Applicant seeks to register the land in their ownership known as Dartmouth Community Orchard, College Way, Dartmouth as a town or village green.	
7	Cullompton Town Council 12.05.21	Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum held on 6 May was 87.3% in favour of the plan. The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan (referendum version) now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Cullompton area, alongside the Mid Devon Local Plan and the Devon Waste and Minerals Plans, and carries full weight for guiding planning applications submitted to the Council for determination and the decisions made on these. Mid Devon District Council formally made (adopted) the Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan (referendum version) at its meeting on 30 June.	For information. No action required.
8	Member of public 17.05.21	Query concerning legal access rights, permissive access and signage near Loddiswell.	Referred to Senior Officer, Public Rights of Way, to respond.
9	Member of public 17.05.21	Query about the definitive line, status and maintenance responsibilities for certain paths in Exbourne and Jacobstowe parishes in connection with report to the Parish Council.	Referred to Senior Officer, Public Rights of Way to respond.
10	Land Charges Devon County Council 26.05.21	Application has been made to the Registration Authority, Devon County Council, by the applicant Widecombe-in-the-Moor Church House and Lands Charity under Schedule 2 (7) of the Commons Act 2006 and in accordance with the Commons Registration (England) Regulations 2014. The Applicant seeks to de-register land that had been wrongly registered as common land under the Commons Registration Act 1965, being part	For information. No action required.

Agenda Item 6.

		of CL69, land in the Manor of Dunstone comprising Blackslade Down & part Dunstone Down.	
11	Land Charges Devon County Council 26.05.21	<p>Application has been made to the Registration Authority, Devon County Council, by the applicant Mr Short under Section 15(2) of the Commons Act 2006 and in accordance with the Commons Registration (England) Regulations 2014.</p> <p>The applicant seeks the inclusion in the register of Town or Village Greens of the land described in the application as, The Causeway, Upton Pyne, which is claimed to have qualified for registration as a Town or Village Green. To be so registered, the Registration Authority will need to be satisfied that a significant number of the inhabitants of the locality, or of a neighbourhood within the locality, have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for a period of at least 20 years, and continued to do so at the time of the application.</p>	For information. No action required.
12	Kingsbridge Town Council May 2021	Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission regulation 14 consultation.	Consulted with Chair. Sent DCAF position statements on Neighbour Plans and Disability Access. Suggested a key to the public rights of way maps would be useful and alerted the Council to some statements which required greater clarity from the legal perspective e.g. upgrading footpaths to multi-use. Advised that accessible gates would be preferable to stiles, with landowner consent.
13	Mid Devon District Council 21.05.21	Public Spaces Protection Order to tackle dog behaviour.	Consulted with Chair. Sent response based on previous agreed responses to dog PSPOs. No response was

Agenda Item 6.

			made to the question about a proposal to have a seasonal or time restriction on dogs on leads in parks as DCAF members had not previously considered this issue.
14	Ringmore Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 8.06.21	To confirm careful consideration had been made to points raised in response to the Ringmore Parish Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 14 consultation. South Hams District Council will be carrying out a Regulation 16 consultation.	Following submission of the DCAF Neighbourhood Plan position statement an additional statement has been added to the Ringmore Parish Neighbourhood Plan – “The South West Coastal Path transverses the parish next to the sea and several other public and permissive paths give interesting walks in and around the area. A detailed map of these can be found on OS Map OL 20 or on DCC Map ED/PROW/02/54.” A brief response was sent giving the public rights of way interactive map weblink.
15	North Devon Council 07.06.21	Georgeham Neighbourhood Plan	Consulted with Chair and Vice Chair. Sent Neighbourhood Plan position statement. Georgeham NP includes a useful map of public rights of way and aspirations for improvement. There was no reference to landowners so a comment was made about whether landowners had been approached about these. Also suggested that the text stating that ‘routes for walking and cycling’ are part of the multi-functions of green infrastructure should include horse-riding
16	Teignbridge District Council 15.06.21	Public consultation on Part 2 of the draft Local Plan – 2020-2040: Creating Quality Places-Site Options.	No response. Not central to remit.

Agenda Item 6.

17	<p>Marine Management Organisation 23.06.21</p>	<p>On 23 June, the government formally adopted the North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans.</p> <p>Plan link <u>South West</u> Adoption of these marine plans is the culmination of four years of engagement and policy development with stakeholders representing relevant interests and sectors.</p> <p>The entire English marine area now has an adopted marine plan in place to guide decision-making.</p>	<p>For information. No action required.</p>
18	<p>South Hams District Council 29.06.21</p>	<p>Totnes Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 consultation in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).</p>	<p>Consulted with Chair. Sent Neighbourhood Plan Position Statement and suggested inclusion of a Public Rights of Way map to complement the Local Green Spaces map.</p>
19	<p>East Devon District Council 2.07.21</p>	<p>East Devon District Council has formally ‘made’ (adopted) the Neighbourhood Plans for Farringdon, Newton Poppleford & Harpford, and Otterton. This decision is effective from 18 June 2021.</p> <p>Accordingly, these Neighbourhood Plans now form part of the Local Development Plan and will carry their full weight in the determination of planning applications in their respective parishes.</p> <p>This brings the total number of ‘made’ neighbourhood plans in the district to twenty-one.</p>	<p>For information.</p>
20	<p>Land Charges DCC 8.07.21</p>	<p>Application has been made to the registration authority, Devon County Council, by the applicant, Shaugh Prior Commoners Association under Section 19(2) of the Commons Act 2006 and in accordance with the Commons</p>	<p>No action required.</p>

Agenda Item 6.

		<p>Registration (England) Regulations 2014.</p> <p>The Applicant seeks to correct a mistake in common registers made by the registration authority. The mistake has been made in entry number 27a of the commons register known as Hentor Warren, Willingswell Warren, Trowlesworthy Warren, Shaugh Moor, Wotter Common, The Ruts and part Crownhill Down (CL190). The applicant claims the word OR has not been included within the entry to describe the number of rights that can be grazed from this entry onto CL190.</p>	
21	<p>East Devon District Council 8.07.21</p>	<p>Acknowledgement of receipt of response to the Regulation 16 consultation on the Dalwood Neighbourhood Development Plan, and to advise that the independent examination of the Plan has now commenced.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
22	<p>Luppitt Neighbourhood Plan Committee member 12.07.21</p>	<p>Luppitt Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council has agreed to include a map of public rights of way as suggested by the DCAF.</p>	<p>To note.</p>
23	<p>South Hams District Council 13.07.21</p>	<p>Rewilding survey.</p>	<p>Passed to DCAF members resident in the district to respond individually.</p>
24	<p>Marine Management Organisation 15.07.21</p>	<p>The first Three-Year Report on the South Marine Plan was published by Defra on 14 July 2021. This covers inshore and offshore from Folkestone, Kent to the River Dart in Devon.</p>	<p>For information.</p>
25	<p>Neighbourhood Plan Officer Broadclyst Parish Council 17.07.21</p>	<p>Thanked for response to the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan Reg 14 document.</p> <p>All responses have been processed by the Overview Steering Group with all the sites</p>	<p>For information and to note reference to quiet lanes.</p>

		<p>being allocated being finally processed on 2 July 2021.</p> <p>Feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan Overview Steering Group.</p> <p>“We will be working with the Clyst Valley Regional Park to make Elbury Lane a quiet lane, and money from housing (CIL) has been designated in a Community Project: Policy Project 4: Community Infrastructure money from EM2 to go towards the provision of infrastructure near the site to enable Elbury Lane between the Elbury Farm site and Heath crossroads to be downgraded as a quiet lane for pedestrian and cycle and access use only. Potential for joint project work with Clyst Valley Regional Park.”</p> <p>“Thank you for details on permissive paths and we agree that the Killerton Estate Masterplan providing further NT centres within the Parish will enable further paths to be developed.”</p> <p>“We have mapped out future active routes in T4 which are hugely supported and driven by the local communities within the Parish.”</p>	
26	Soil Association 20.07.21	<p>Forest Management carried out by Forestry England (SA-FM/COC-006972, SA-PEFC-FM/COC-006972)</p> <p>In October 2021 a Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) will be carried out. The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC™) of forest management by Forestry</p>	<p>Discussed with Chair as access elements included in the survey.</p> <p>On-line survey completed after consultation with DCAF members. Initiatives at Haldon to encourage use through dedicated trails for different user groups and educational and fun trails for</p>

Agenda Item 6.

		<p>England in the United Kingdom. They will be assessed against the requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) - V 4.0.</p> <p>Notification of survey to inform this process.</p>	<p>families and children were welcomed. Use of other forests for recreational use were noted.</p> <p>Removal of any remaining barriers to disability use was raised, as in the DCAF's Disability Access position statement.</p> <p>The DCAF noted that Forestry England is exploring the possibility of introducing event zones in its woods to manage pressures during the summer on sensitive and protected wildlife sites. Comment was made that this seemed a balanced response. Further information on the progress of these proposals would be welcome and the DCAF trusts that consultation with affected groups and other interested bodies will take place.</p>
27	<p>South Hams District Council 22.07.21</p>	<p>Better Lives for All – A vision for South Hams.</p>	<p>Consulted with Chair. Submission of position statements not appropriate so forwarded to individual members resident in South Hams to complete in a personal capacity.</p>
28	<p>Member of public 23.07.21</p>	<p>Query over development plans in Okehampton and identified 'lost way' on the Ramblers' website.</p>	<p>Passed to Public Rights of Way team to respond.</p>
29	<p>West Devon Borough Council 27.07.21</p>	<p>A Plan for West Devon.</p>	<p>Consulted with Chair. Submission of position statements not appropriate.</p>
30	<p>Open Access Centre 8.09.21</p>	<p>Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and</p>	<p>For information. No action required.</p>

Agenda Item 6.

		<p>Luppitt Common for the following dates: 21 September 2021 7, 14, 21, 28 October 2021 4, 11, 18, 25 November 2021 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 December 2021</p> <p>20 of the 28 days allocated to this case have now been used.</p>	
31	<p>Open Access Centre 8.09.21</p>	<p>Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and Luppitt Common for the following dates: 6, 13, 20, 27 January 2022 1 February 2022</p> <p>5 of the 28 days allocated to this case have now been used.</p>	<p>For information. No action required.</p>

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.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

1 July 2021

Present:-

Councillors L Hellyer (Chair), R Chesterton, J Bradford, J Brook, I Chubb and D Sellis

Apologies:-

Councillors D Thomas

* **157** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 be signed as a correct record.

* **158** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item requiring urgent attention.

* **159** **Announcements**

The Chair announced as follows:

- (a) Mr R Walton was welcomed as the new Public Rights of Way and County Parks Manager.
- (b) Mrs H Clayton, Senior Public Rights of Way Officer, would be leaving the Council after 18 years' service and wished her success for the future.
- (c) Tribute was paid to the previous Chair of the Committee, Mr P Sanders.

* **160** **Devon Countryside Access Forum**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the virtual meeting held on 27 April 2021. The next meeting would be held on 21 September 2021.

* **161** **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2018-2021 - Parish of Wembury Part 3**

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure and Waste (HIW/21/34), which examined a proposal to upgrade the current Footpath No. 28 Wembury to a public bridleway.

Agenda Item 8.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE
1/07/21

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Brook, **SECONDED** by Councillor Chubb and

RESOLVED that a Modification Order be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by upgrading Footpath No. 28, Wembury to a public bridleway as shown on drawing number HIW/PROW/20/27A.

* **162** **Parish Review: Definitive Map Review 2019-2021 - Parish of Thornbury**

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure and Waste (HIW/21/35), which examined the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Thornbury.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Brook, **SECONDED** by Councillor Chubb and

RESOLVED that completion of the Definitive Map Review in the Parish of Thornbury be noted and that no modifications are required.

* **163** **Modification Orders**

The Committee noted the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/21/36) on a Modification Order confirmed as unopposed under delegated powers.

* **164** **Public Path Orders**

The Committee noted the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/21/37) on confirmed Public Path Orders made under delegated powers.

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

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

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 2.26 pm

Devon Countryside Access Forum

Tuesday, 21 September 2021

Public Rights of Way and Country Parks Service Update

Richard Walton, Public Rights of Way and Country Parks Manager

Introduction

I am pleased to have started in post with Devon County Council (DCC), having joined on 1st July 2021; and would like to thank my predecessor, Ros Mills, for her excellent leadership and support in developing such a skilled, hard-working team.

As DCAF members will be aware, I joined DCC from my previous role as National Trail Officer for the South West Coast Path (SWCP). I am especially pleased to be able to continue to contribute to management of the National Trail as part of a partner organisation.

In addition to work on National Trails, I have been fortunate to contribute to activities led by various organisations delivering wide ranging recreational and access management services. This includes Bracknell Forest Council (heading up the parks and countryside service, including public rights of way), New Forest National Park Authority (as policy advisor), Cornwall County Council (with responsibility for multi-use trails and countryside facilities), and the Forestry Commission (looking after woodland trails and associated infrastructure in Cornwall and North Devon).

My main formal qualification is in Town and Country Planning (specialising in countryside management), this being followed by an in-job training placement as an assistant public rights of way warden at Devon County Council.

Initial Priorities

Priorities for the Public Rights of Way and Country Parks service are determined through a combination of measures including national and local policy, legislation, and stakeholder consultation. My current focus is on

Consistency: providing effective management to enable the Public Rights of Way and Country Parks teams to continue to deliver agreed priorities. This includes ensuring quality standards remain high, with positive working relationships sustained.

Collaboration: supporting, strengthening, and developing working arrangements and partnerships with stakeholders, interest groups and local communities – including through the DCAF.

Policy and Practice: reviewing and updating the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other relevant documents to recognise and optimise the strategic importance and value of access and recreation. As part of this, maintain and improve access and recreational infrastructure to better connect people and places.

Linked to the above, the aspiration and intention is to continue and improve on work to provide an inclusive and proactive service that

- increases opportunity and outcomes for underrepresented, socially excluded audiences

Agenda Item 9.

- optimises health and wellbeing value of enjoying the great outdoors
- positively contributes to biodiversity gain and climate change mitigation and avoidance

Current and Upcoming Activities

Recent recruitment for a new Public Rights of Way Senior Officer (Legal & Development) did not generate a significant number of suitable applicants and so it was not feasible to draw up an appropriate shortlist and appoint. This seems to reflect a wider national picture, possibly in part linked to the pandemic. August can also be a difficult time for recruitment due to the holiday season. A temporary pause has been taken, with the intention of readvertising this Autumn.

There is an additional vacancy in the team due to our PRow Assistant Officer moving across to legal services. Service activities, and the associated staffing resource, are considered to be of importance, and so the funding for this post will remain available to secure a replacement.

The mild, wet summer resulted in significant vegetation growth impacting on the path network. The wardens have been very busy organising contractors to carry out seasonal cuts and responding to related customer reports.

As we move into the Autumn, work plans include

- England Coast Path and South West Coast Path: Working with Natural England, landowners and other groups to implement access improvement projects to finalise the designation process for the new access rights. This includes works at key locations such as Croyde and Torcross. Once the new access rights are in place, DCC will be able to assess and utilise the additional powers available to address longstanding issues where legitimate public access is currently restricted.
- Definitive Map Review: Complete the parish-by-parish review. Alongside this, we will be working closely with stakeholders regarding the 1st January 2026 deadline for registering historic paths.
- Extending the shared use trail network: Supporting work led by the Transport Planning team to extend and improve the shared-use trail network e.g., the Tarka Trail up to Woolacombe.
- Dead Slow: liaising with the Road Safety team and the BHS to help promote the campaign to reduce the number of incidents involving horses and riders on the road network.
- A38 Corridor Access Opportunities Consultation: liaising with Dartmoor National Park Authority on consultation to identify potential recreational and access improvements on the moorland fringe, and beyond the National Park boundary.
- Capital Programme: Works to improve the rights of way and trail network across Devon including surfacing, drainage and bridges.
- Restoring Stover Park: Completing the development phase as funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Subject to a progress review with the NLHF in January, the delivery phase bid is due to be submitted in Spring / Summer 2022.



Devon Countryside Access Forum

c/o Public Rights of Way Team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382084

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk
www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Ms A Oliver
Business Development Officer
Devon Wildlife Trust
Cricklepit Mill
Commercial Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4AB

30 April 2021

Dear Ms Oliver

NORTHBROOK APPROACH CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a statutory local access forum set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. Its members are volunteers, appointed by Devon County Council, to provide independent advice on “the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment”. Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, one of which is City Councils.

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 considered this consultation at its meeting on 27 April. The Forum welcomed the excellent consultation document and its laudable objectives, particularly the number of potential initiatives and evident benefits for health and well-being. The proposals for mixed use and the proposed ‘range of features’ to make the park as attractive as possible to a broad cross-section of people and the local community are welcomed. Northbrook Approach also provides

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 11.1

an important strategic link to Ludwell Valley Park and Riverside Valley Park and therefore offers considerable potential to achieve wider gains.

Detailed planning of the site, and development of specific projects, provide an opportunity to ensure that lessons are learnt from other green spaces in the City and elsewhere.

The Forum advises that the following should be considered as part of further deliberations on the future use of the site:

1. Disability access

The consultation document makes brief reference to more accessible paths but does not specifically make reference to mobility scooter and wheelchair access. It is important that the design of gates and bridges is factored in at the outset, together with funding to change any existing structures or obstacles. A mobility scooter route could be part of design proposals and improvements.

Kissing gates prevent access to much of Ludwell Valley Park yet Northbrook Park offers the potential to create new mobility scooter routes from the River Exe up to this area.



Inaccessible kissing gate

It is estimated that by 2030 one in five people in the UK (21.8%) will be aged over 65. In Exeter the estimate is 18.4% but adjacent authorities have figures going up to 33.8% (East Devon) (Office for National Statistics Subnational population projections for England - Office for National Statistics) More people will be using modern mobility scooters with increased range and durability for a wide range of reasons including recreation. The Forum advises that Northbrook Park should have minimal kissing gates or other obstructions and that improvements to path furniture should be made at adjacent parks to provide greater accessibility.

The Forum's position statement on Disability Access is attached for information.

2. Finance

There are clear initial and long-term funding implications for this project but there are no indications as to the sources of this funding. The Forum advises that it would be helpful to identify not only funding but also potential partnerships and timescales for works.

3. Health and wellbeing

The COVID-19 lockdowns encouraged people to exercise locally and numbers using local parks and rights of way have increased significantly. Such benefits should be available to all sections of the community, including the physically disabled.

4. Education

The project provides an excellent opportunity to educate users about responsible use of green space.

The Forum would recommend that on-site rangers are part of the project plan to assist in realising the ambition of “engaging with hundreds of thousands more people in greenspaces around the city.”

5. Public Rights of Way and the Green Circle

Plans for improving Northbrook Park should recognise the existing public rights of way and the Green Circle route.

6. Wildlife and access

The Forum recognises that people may have different wishes with regard to the proportion of wildlife areas and more tidy or developed parts of the park. The Forum advises that there should be a balance between re-wilding and ensuring good public access through dedicated space. With the evident growth of interest in the countryside it is important that the park and its paths are not urbanised. The more natural areas and wildlife corridors present part of the experience and enjoyment.

7. Dog walking

Providing and improving green space areas inevitably means that the park will be very popular with dog walkers, particularly as dogs have increased in number during lockdown. The Forum advises that there may be scope to have areas in the park where dogs are less welcome.

8. Connections

The Forum welcomes improved and strengthened connections between Northbrook and the adjacent valley parks, including safe crossing of Topsham Road.

Agenda Item 11.1

The Forum looks forward to seeing further plans for the area. In the meantime it would appreciate feedback on its comments.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

c.c. Exeter City Council

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum
Chair: Sarah Slade
Vice Chair: Chris Cole*



Devon Countryside Access Forum
c/o Public Rights of Way team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER
EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382771

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk

www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Ms H Stokes
Senior Planning Officer
Devon County Council
County Hall
Topsham Road
EXETER
EX2 4QD

7 July 2021

Dear Ms Stokes

Teign Estuary Trail. Planning application number DCC/4238/2021

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...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice and this list includes county councils.

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

This response has been agreed by Forum members and expands on comments made during the earlier consultation in December 2020. It will be put on the agenda for formal approval at the next meeting in September 2021.

Support

The Devon Countryside Access Forum wishes to re-emphasise its strong support for the development of the Teign Estuary Trail. The project will have significant health

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 11.2

and economic benefits by providing opportunities for recreational access, sustainable transport and tourism. The application builds on public consultation, background work and detail that has already been carried out.

In 4.2.17 of the Public Consultation Report there is a statement that DCAF would prefer a route to the south of the railway line. There is now an overwhelming rationale, and degree of planning, for the trail to be located to the north of the railway line, and the DCAF would endorse this route.

Multi-use

The particular factors which mean that the design of the Trail from Passage House Inn to Bishopsteignton and onwards to the A381 will not include facilities for horse-riders are reasonable and appropriate. Whilst this does not reflect the intention for planning of multi-use trails in general, a policy the DCAF supports, the response given to the Road Safety Audit makes the rationale clear.

The DCAF welcomes design features and chicanes allowing full use by mobility scooters and wheelchair users.

Interpretation and Street Furniture Strategy

The DCAF welcomes the Interpretation and Street Furniture Strategy. Within that strategy, there is reference to a long-term maintenance and management plan to cover these aspects (1.3). As the DCAF has previously stated, it is hoped that this commitment is extended to the on-going maintenance and management of the Trail as a whole, to ensure its longevity, as referenced within 3.11.1 of the Design and Access Statement.

The DCAF is pleased to see that viewing areas and seating will be included in the design.

Safety matters associated with the planning application

Whilst the section of the Trail from La Roche Maurice Way east to Morrisons and west to Bishopsteignton is covered by permitted development, it is hoped, primarily for reasons of health and safety, that engineering work subsequently takes place within a similar timeframe to the section of the Trail from Passage House Inn to Bishopsteignton and which is the main focus of the planning application.

The Road Safety Audit does not make reference to the current safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists walking along any part of the A381 between Metro Motors in Bishopsteignton and the A380 at Kingsteignton. The potential safety benefits of the scheme are clear, as well as those which relate more widely to mental and physical health.

The plan refers to upgrading Footpath 13 to provide a link to Bishopsteignton. Whilst potentially covered by permitted development, the DCAF advises that it would be helpful to include reference within the plan to the short, 100m, section of footpath running along the south side of the A381 from Footpath 13 to the pedestrian crossing at Michael's Field, which is just to the east of Metro Motors. This short section of

path should be of the same design standards as other parts of the scheme. This would improve safety and enable better access to the Trail from the pedestrian crossing and to the substantial public car park at Michael's Field.

Landowners' concerns

The DCAF notes that some provision has been made to address landowners' concerns about land management and access and trusts that on-going negotiations will seek to address any outstanding matters.

Car parking

The Forum notes no new parking areas are planned in association with the Trail and that visitors arriving by car are encouraged to park in the nearest designated carpark locations.

The DCAF hopes that discussions have taken place with Morrisons and Jack's Patch Garden Centre to ensure Trail users parking at their sites are welcome.

The Forum would appreciate feedback on its comments.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum.

Chair: Sarah Slade

Vice-Chair: Chris Cole



Devon Countryside Access Forum
c/o Public Rights of Way team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER
EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382771

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk

www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Planning Central
East Devon District Council
Blackdown House, Border Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1EJ

23 July 2021

Dear Mr Stephenson

Planning application number 21/1392/FUL – car park improvements

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...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice and this list includes district councils.

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

This response has been agreed by DCAF members and expands on comments made during the earlier consultation in November 2019. It will be put on the agenda for formal approval at the next meeting in September 2021.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum notes the planning application for works at Joney’s Cross, Four Firs, Stowford Cross and Frying Pan car parks. The Forum supports this Phase 1 application for sympathetic improvements to the layout, entrance points and surfacing, particularly at Joney’s Cross and Four Firs which are the two main car parks on the Pebblebed Heaths. The proposed works will encourage people to use those car parks. Having these car parks as ‘hub’ sites with interpretation boards and dog bins will enable responsible use of the heaths to be promoted.

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.

supported by
Devon
County Council

Agenda Item 11.3

In line with its Disability Access Position Statement, the Devon Countryside Access Forum welcomes the provision of designated disability parking spaces. Improved, regraded surfaces will also assist use by people with wheelchairs, pushchairs or motorised mobility scooters. Some access users use transit vans to transport mobility scooters and it is therefore important that the dimensions of the disabled bays accommodate such vehicles and allow side clearance to off-load a scooter. This could be achieved by allowing extra room on the end of row disabled parking space. The Forum has previously made comments about earth bunds and advises that any exits from car parking areas to the heaths should not preclude disability use. Suitable gates, 1.5m wide, would allow easy access for all users.

In accordance with previous advice the Devon Countryside Access Forum has given, road safety for vulnerable access users is critically important. The drawings for Joney's Cross specify a 3m wide pavement and a visibility splay with drop kerbs. Improvements at Four Firs are also outlined. The Forum trusts that these will provide a safe refuge and good lines of sight of approaching traffic.

It would be helpful if signs from car parks could indicate the direction of key walk routes, with a wheelchair symbol to show whether they are suitable for such use. This is particularly important if a road crossing is needed to reach a route.

There appears to be a mismatch between the line of the bridleway (Newton Popleford and Harpford bridleway 29) and where it exits the car park, shown on the Public Rights of Way Definitive Map (www.devon.gov.uk/prow) and the bridleway exit marked on 70079322-0100-007_REV P04 (Joney's Cross Car Park General Arrangement). Extracts from these are shown in Appendix 1. It would be helpful if this could be clarified to ensure certainty and safety for equestrians (and cyclists and walkers using the route). Exiting as shown on the Plan, closer to the road junction, appears to pose road safety issues as access users using the minor road from Joney's car park, seeking to cross the A3052, could be at greater risk from vehicles and poor visibility on this section. The Car Parking Strategy states "retain this path", in other words the bridleway, "through gorse and along roadside for access to Aylesbeare Common and East Devon Way." It is also proposed to block an informal path nearby which exits onto the A3052 roadside grass verge and which currently provides a refuge with good visibility.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum would welcome feedback on its comments.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum.

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

Appendix 1 – Bridleway (Newton Poppleford and Harpford bridleway 29)

Joney's Car Park – Devon County Council Public Rights of Way interactive map



Joney's Cross Car Park general arrangement - 70079322-0100-007_REV P04



Exe Estuary Partnership Management Plan 2022-2027 Consultation

Full details on

[6-week Exe Estuary 2022-2027 Management Plan consultation is now OPEN. - Exe Estuary Management Partnership \(exe-estuary.org\)](https://exe-estuary.org)

Who is the Exe Estuary Partnership?

The Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) coordinates management of the estuary, on behalf of local authorities, government agencies and conservation, commercial and recreational interest groups, as well as providing a contact point for local communities of the estuary. The EEMP, which has been in place since 1995, takes an impartial approach to help ensure that there is a balance between human use and the protected nature of the Exe. The work of the partnership is guided by the Exe Estuary Management Plan and a Partnership Committee

The Partnership seeks to conserve and enhance the estuary's special nature and promote sustainable economic and social activity by managing competing demands and addressing any conflicts as they arise, to ensure that interests and activities are harmonised.

What is the Management Plan?

The Exe Estuary Management Plan details management measures to guide key and statutory organisations in delivering their statutory duties in a co-ordinated manner. It outlines policies, issues and five-year objectives to ensure sustainable use of the Exe for the future. The plan incorporates the Management Scheme for the Special Protection Area (Regulation 34, Habitats Directive), identifying policies which aim to achieve favourable condition of the protected wildlife and supporting habitats.

The Exe Estuary Management Plan is written to provide guidance on delivering statutory compliance and best practice in managing this special place. It will:

- Promote the sustainable use of the Exe Estuary, balancing the demands made on its natural resources and resolving conflicts of interest where they arise.
- Provide a framework for the co-ordinated management of the Estuary and improve communications between users and organisations with authority over the Exe.

Why Renew the Plan?

The old plan covers the period of 2016-2021 and was based on the scientific report, the 'State of the Exe Estuary 2014', which detailed the information available on the condition of the environment at that time. However, things will have changed considerably since then. The environmental conditions of the estuary will have changed, and policy and legislation are different today than in 2014. Not only this, stakeholders have also changed, with new emerging user groups and businesses being present on the estuary.

Agenda Item 12.1

Consultation details

The consultation is open for 6 weeks - closing on 10 October, 23:59
All responses will be considered but may not be included in the Final Plan in order to reflect a balanced approach.

The Plan incorporates sub-themes under three sections:

- **Partnership**
- **Environment**
- **People.**

From the Devon Countryside Access Forum's perspective the sub-theme on Public Transport, Access & Land Based Recreation (People section) is most relevant and falls within its statutory remit.

Public Transport, Access and Land Based Recreation sub-theme

Below is an example of an issue from the existing 2016-2021 Management Plan and an action which was taken to address this:

Issue: Lack of promotion of accessibility of Exe Estuary Trail.

Action: Produce an improved version of the Exe Explorer leaflet including more detailed insets showing the route of the Exe Estuary Trail through built-up areas, e.g. Topsham.

Q: Using bullet points list up to THREE current issues for this Sub-Theme

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Q: Using bullet points please list up to THREE actions which could be taken to address the issues mentioned above

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The existing Policies in the 2016-2021 Management Plan are as follows:

PTA1: Promote use of the bus and train networks to access the Estuary from outside the area.

PTA2: Encourage walking and cycling as a means of accessing and exploring the Estuary through improved information and signage, including promotion of accessibility of the Exe Estuary Trail for all abilities.

PTA3: Develop partnerships to make the best of opportunities presented by the completion of the Exe Estuary Trail including integration with public transport and ferry service improvements.

PTA4: Investigate and mitigate the effects of public transport on the SPA, SSSI and SAC.

PTA5: Identify and provide input into addressing the effects of natural and physical changes on public transport and access provision, including extreme events.

PTA6: Encourage greater access and the provision of facilities for less able users of the Exe Estuary Trail, for example, wheelchair accessible toilets and convenient electric charging points for electric mobility vehicles.

Q: Do you feel the existing Policies for this Sub-Theme are relevant for the next 5 years?

Yes/No

Q: Can you provide examples of any additional or amended Policies within this Sub-Theme which could be included in the 2022-2027 Management Plan?

Devon Countryside Access Forum
DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22

ACTIVITY	TIMING
Consultations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment Bill? ○ Cycling and Multi-use Network Trail Strategy ○ Local Development Framework documents and Neighbourhood Plans (district/borough councils) ○ Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review (10 year)? ○ Other consultations 	Early 2022 2022? Throughout year 2022 Throughout year
DCAF proactive work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disability access ○ Multi-use trails and equestrian use 	Throughout year
Project updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clyst Valley Regional Park ○ Countryside Code ○ England Coast Path ○ Exeter Valley Parks ○ Killerton 'historic landscapes' project ○ 'Don't Lose Your Way' (Ramblers) ○ Lower Otter restoration project ○ Stover Country Park restoration project ○ Multi-use trails 	As appropriate
Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pebblebed Heaths ○ P3 workshops 	2022-2023 As arranged 2021-2022

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Nature Partnership (Naturally Healthy theme) ○ Other workshops and training events ○ Definitive Map Review (Devon Archives and Local Studies) 	<p>As arranged 2021-2022 To be offered to members 2022</p>
<p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ P3 ○ Planning, accessibility and green space 	<p>January 2022 2022-2023</p>
<p>General aspirations 2021-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 encourage working with landowners ○ Consider increased use of the countryside and how to encourage responsible use ○ Contribute to green infrastructure policy development throughout the County ○ Continue the link with the Public Rights of Way Committee ○ Liaise with neighbouring local access forums, as appropriate ○ Raise the profile of the DCAF 	<p>Throughout year</p>
<p>Publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual Report 	<p>April 2022</p>