

# Public Document Pack



## **PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

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When telephoning please ask for: **Mr Ross Jago**

## **PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**MONDAY 14 JUNE 2010 10.30 AM,  
WARSPITE ROOM, COUNCIL HOUSE**

### **Committee Members–**

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair

Mr Stewart, Vice Chair

Mr Attrill, Cllr Browne, Mr Emery, Cllr Foster, Mr Goddard, Ms Hitchens, Mr Loze, Mrs Mickley, Mr Pawley, Ms Roberts, Mr Skinner, Ms Rodgers and Cllr Wheeler.

- 1. APOLOGIES:**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)
- 4. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**
- 5. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3 – UPDATE**
- 6. PROMOTED ROUTES PLYMOUTH** (Pages 5 - 10)
- 7. CONSULTATION ON THE ENGLISH ACCESS FORUM** (Pages 11 - 12)
- 8. LOCAL ACCESS FORUM INVOLVEMENT IN COASTAL ACCESS IMPLEMENTATION** (Pages 13 - 14)
- 9. WORKING GROUPS**

- (a.) POTENTIAL RIGHTS OF WAY WORKING GROUP –  
FEEDBACK
- (b.) PLANNING WORKING GROUP

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at 10:30 am Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> August in the Council House, next to the Civic Centre, Plymouth.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

To discuss any business that, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

- (a.) LOCAL ISSUES
- (b.) INFORMATION AND NEWS

## Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 12 April 2010

### PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr I Stewart, Vice Chair.

Mr N Attrill, Councillor Peter Berrow, Councillor Thomas Browne, Mr J C Emery, Mr R Goddard, Ms P Hitchens, Mr K R Loze, Mrs B Mickley, Mr D E Pawley, Mr J Skinner and Councillor George Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Beth Roberts

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.20 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

### 58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Minute no. and Subject	Reason	Interest
Mr Skinner	63 'Ramblers 1988' Map	Member of Rambling Association and open Spaces Society	Personal
Mr Emery	63 'Ramblers 1988' Map	Member of Ramblers Association and open Spaces Society	Personal
Mr Pawley	63 'Ramblers 1988' Map	Member of the Ramblers Association	Personal

### 59. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 8 February 2010 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments –

- (i) regarding minute 46, Mr Skinner and Mr Emery's declarations of interest as members of the Ramblers Association are added;
- (ii) regarding minute 51, having declared an interest Councillor Wheeler took no further part in the debate on the Extinguishment of a Public Footpath through Ridgeway School;
- (iii) Mrs Mickley attendance to be recorded;
- (iv) regarding minute number 45 and 55 the word committee should be changed to forum;
- (v) regarding minute 51 'a point of order is made' to be replaced by 'a formal order is made'.

### 60. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair recently attended the regional meeting of Local Access Forum (LAF) Chairs. It was reported that-

- (i) the majority of discussion was were focused around the issue of the English Access Forum (EAF) , its current perceived failings and future;
- (ii) Natural England was confident there was a need for the EAF and would consult with regional LAFs on how to move forward later in the year.

The Secretary recently attended the regional meeting of LAF secretaries. It was reported that-

- (iii) the way in which the Plymouth LAF is operated is in line with other LAFs in the region;
- (iv) a training day on the work and purpose of LAFs had been arranged. With the aim of helping new members to gain understanding of their role. The Secretary would circulate dates to interested members.

The City Planning department had invited members of the PLAF to attend training sessions which would have a focus on issues around public rights of way.

The following comments were made by members of the forum-

- (v) although this invitation was welcomed, there was still an issue around the interaction of the Planning Department and the PLAF. It would be useful for a protocol to be developed where members of the PLAF could be involved at an earlier stage in the planning process.

Resolved that the Secretary investigate how an inter-working protocol could be developed.

### 61. **STEPPING STONES TO NATURE PROJECT**

The Stepping Stones to Nature Project coordinator provided a verbal presentation to the forum on the achievements and future work of the project. It was reported that –

- (i) the Stepping Stones to Nature project was a £1.065 million partnership project seeking to deliver improved opportunities to access green space in and around the city;
- (ii) Stepping Stones brought together green space managers, with community engagement and health professionals. This partnership brought together expertise from public health, parks, protected landscapes, neighbourhood renewal, play, rights of way, and outdoor education;
- (iii) partners included the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), Dartmoor National Park, Groundwork South West, the National Trust, Open Air Laboratories network (OPAL), the Plymouth NHS Trust Public Health Development Unit, University of Plymouth, and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In response to questions from the forum it was reported that –

- (iv) the project had gained coverage in the local press. Projects had been advertised in the area they most affected through engaging with existing groups in the area and using libraries. Advertising was focused within a one mile radius of the project area;
- (v) there was no capacity in the budget to work with private land owners;
- (vi) although the capital improvements the project could bring were limited to six areas, it was an aim of the project to promote access to open spaces across the city;
- (vii) Stepping Stones had an agreement that any improvements made would need to be approved by the City Council's parks department and would continue to be

maintained at the end of the project;

- (viii) Police have been involved with the project with regard to anti social behaviour in open spaces;
- (ix) staff from the future jobs fund have been working to improve the open spaces and feedback has indicated that people feel much more involved with the open spaces, have a better understanding of them and ultimately can take ownership of the area.

Resolved that the forum is provided with regular updates on the project from the Stepping Stones project coordinator.

62. **CONSULTATION - COASTAL ACCESS REPORTS**

The forum considered the Coastal Access Reports consultation document and commented that the document was poorly written.

Resolved that-

- (1) any comments by forum members would be collated by the secretary and passed to the Chair to respond to the consultation;
- (2) in the future a short summary of large documents would be made available in the forums agenda packs with any requests for further information directed to the secretary.

63. **'RAMBLERS 1988' MAP**

The forum considered the ongoing work on the Ramblers 1988' maps. Thanks were passed to Mr Skinner for providing the format for volunteers to work from.

Resolved that -

- (1) work completed to date will be forwarded to the Secretary for collation, the secretary will also be the point of contact for any subsequent submissions;
- (2) the potential PROW would meet on the 10 May 2010 to discuss the submissions so far and identify any further work required.

*(Mr Skinner, Mr Pawley and Mr Emery declared a personal interest in the above item)*

64. **FEEDBACK FROM WORKING GROUPS**

There was no feedback to report from the working groups.

65. **LOCAL VALIDATION LISTS**

The forum discussed a consultation on Local Validation Lists. It was commented that there was no mention of public rights of way.

Resolved that the secretary of the forum respond to the consultation highlighting the following points-

- that public rights of way are not listed on the Local Validation List;
- the onus should be on the applicant to identify any PROW, potential PROW along with existing footpaths.

66. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Forum noted correspondence received. The forum highlighted the letter from the PROW officer explaining the reasons for no longer attending the forum. It was commented that-

- (i) the PROW officer would attend for specific agenda items that required officer input. This would entail the Forum developing and using its forward programme to inform its future agendas;
- (ii) the forum was now supported by a capable secretary and the forum would need to use the resource appropriately.

67. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved that the next meeting will be held on the 14 June 2010 at the Council House.

68. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The forum discussed the Oreston coastal footpath, it was suggested by members that landowners in the area should be made aware of the public rights of way crossing their land.

Resolved that a letter is written to the LDF by the Secretary in conjunction with the Chair, urging them to consider joining the coastal footpath with the existing footpath in Oreston.

## Promoted Routes in Plymouth

### PLAF Briefing Note

#### **Background**

There are currently a number of promoted recreational walking routes in Plymouth. These include the South West Coast Path, the Co-operative Way, the Erme-Plym Trail, the West-Devon Way and the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail. Plymouth City Council directly manages the South West Coast path but the other routes are managed through formal or informal partnership arrangements with neighbouring authorities and private sector bodies.

There are also a number of other less formal routes which are promoted by Keith Loze of the Co-operative Society of which 5 currently exist with 2 further routes being planned. These routes fill a niche for easily accessible shorter walks and are focused around the city centre area. They detail the history of the city centre, Sutton harbour and Barbican areas and essentially link points of local interest each with detailed interpretation available through route specific leaflets.

<b>Route Name</b>	<b>Promoter</b>	<b>Total Length</b>	<b>Length in Plymouth</b>
The Co-operative Way	Co-op/ PCC	15 Miles (24 km)	15 Miles (24 km)
Historic Plymouth Trails 1: Barbican	Co-op	3.4 Miles (5.5 km)	3.4 Miles (5.5 km)
Historic Plymouth Trails 2: the Hoe	Co-op	2.4 Miles ( 3.8 km)	2.4 Miles ( 3.8 km)
Historic Plymouth Trails 3: City Centre	Co-op	3.8 Miles (6 km)	3.8 Miles (6 km)
Historic Plymouth Trails 4: Old Plymouth	Co-op	1.1 Miles (1.7 km)	1.1 Miles (1.7 km)
Historic Plymouth Trails 5: Coxside	Co-op	2.2 Miles (3.5 km)	2.2 Miles (3.5 km)
Tamar Valley Discovery Trail	Tamar Valley AONB	30 Miles (48 km)	0.6 Miles (1 km)
The Erme-Plym Trail	Devon County Council	10 Miles (16 km)	1 Mile (1.6 km)
The West Devon Way	Devon County Council	36 Miles (58 km)	6 Miles (9.8 km)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104 Miles (167 km)</b>	<b>35.5 Miles (57 km)</b>

Plymouth City Council seeks to identify ways to better promote walking routes in Plymouth. Doing so supports the authorities remit to promote healthy living, reduce obesity levels, reduce congestion, improve air quality and promote modal shift.

#### **The Current Situation**

Promotion of existing walking routes by Plymouth City Council is at best limited. Both the South West Coast path and the Co-operative Way have detailed and popular walking guides (the latter being produced independently of the council) but there is little online information, no central source of information on recreational walking in Plymouth and no consistency between promotion

of various routes. The South West Coast Path, promoted as the Waterfront Walkway, presents a small commercial opportunity through sales of its walking guide through Tourist Information centres. The South West Coast Path Association have a detailed website which includes further information on the SWCP as a whole.

This year there have been a number of minor enhancements such as the Co-operative Way being formally recognised by the Ordnance Survey and capital investments on small sections of the Co-operative Way in the Forder Valley and Woodland Woods Local Nature Reserves. Further capital improvements are planned to be taking place in a further 4 sites most likely including Ham Woods and the Bircham Valley. We are looking to identify “soft” measures to promote use.

### **Evidence Base**

Extensive public consultation has taken place on walking and cycling habits in Plymouth as part of the Green Spaces Strategy, the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Local Transport Plan. There is a clear demand for recreational walking routes, specifically circular routes with helpful information available on where the routes go and how to get to them. Further details of the evidential basis behind this is available in **Appendix A** to this document.

### **Next Steps**

We are seeking to identify ways we can promote use, increase awareness and address latent demand for recreational walking in Plymouth. Given the evidence base we believe effective promotion of recreational walking is a fundamental part of our service delivery and is a cost effective way to address wider corporate priorities. We also believe that partnership arrangements will enable us to be more efficient in doing so. We have partnership arrangements in place with a number of neighbouring local authorities on specific routes which are successful.

We have arranged with the Plymouth University to put forward a number of projects for final year Arts and Media students related to the promotion of existing promoted routes within Plymouth. These projects will be supported and monitored by the University and will form part of the students final assessment in their studies.



The projects we have put forward include: -

- Design and publication of walking guides for the Plymouth Waterfront Walkway including PDF versions for use on our website. This includes scope for extending this brief to include the Co-operative Way.
- Production of digital “guided walks” encompassing downloadable podcasts suitable for use on mobile phones and mp3 players covering the SWCP, the Co-operative way and the 5 Co-op history trails.
- Inclusion of those podcasts within our website, the SWCP association website and iTunes.
- Production of theme based instructional videos (MP4’s) on walking for inclusion on the Plymouth and SWCP association’s websites covering topics such as backpack contents, using gps, safety guidance etc.

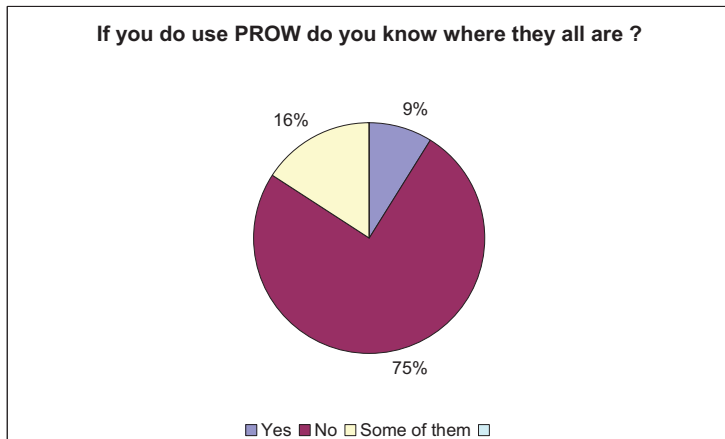
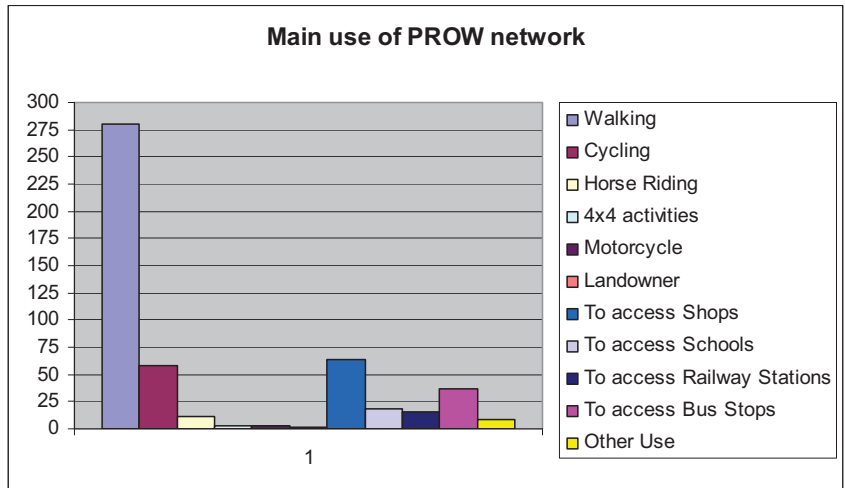
We also have a number of other areas where improvements can be made which include for example signage improvements (incorporating route identity, destinations, walking times etc) formal on-street route maps/interpretation, a city wide online “walking map” and new pages on the PCC website to incorporate walking leaflets and information. There will also be a longer term marketing strategy to promote the existence of this information.

### **Delivery and LAF Involvement**

We anticipate forming a steering group to work with and mentor the students that steering group being made up of a small number of PCC Officers, representatives of partners and the PLAF. In the first instance we anticipate the PLAF forming a small working group to discuss proposals and agree the way forward with PCC. PLAF members who sit on the steering group would report back to the full Forum to provide updates and set direction. The PLAF is therefore requested to consider forming a working group and to invite nominations from 2–3 members interested in this topic.

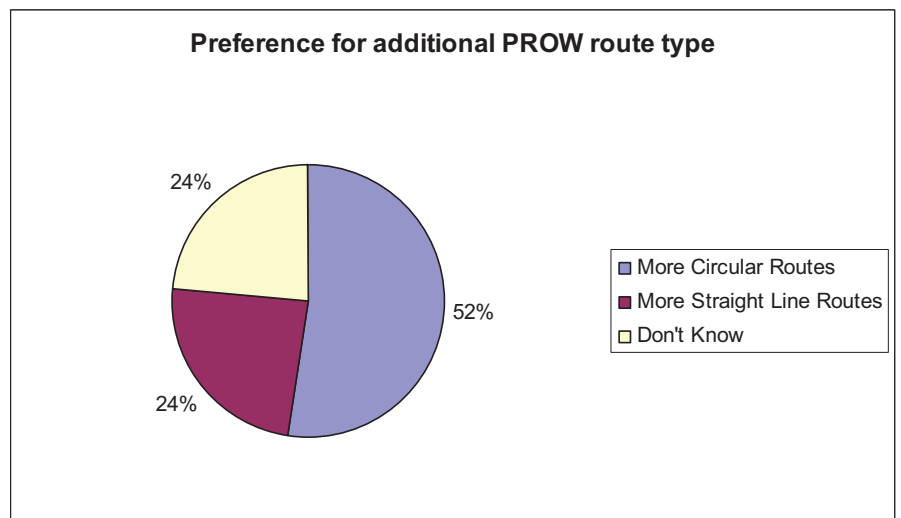
Appendix A – Evidence Base

Consultation from the ROWIP tells us that the vast majority of people in Plymouth who use our rights of way network do so by walking.

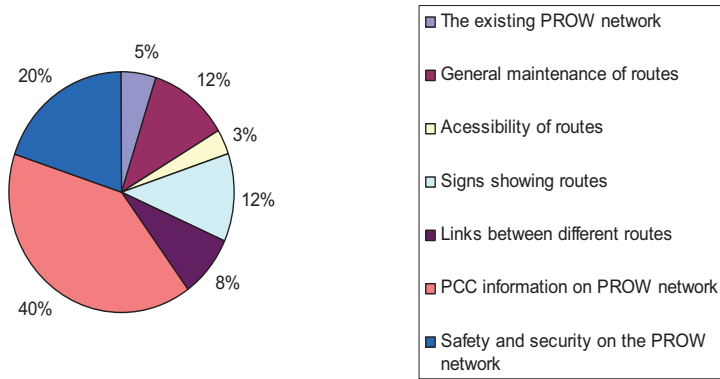


It also tells us that only 9% of people who use rights of way know where our paths are suggesting their knowledge of PROW is limited to their local area or to paths they use frequently.

When asked over 50% of people who walked recreationally told us they wanted us to provide more circular routes they could use.



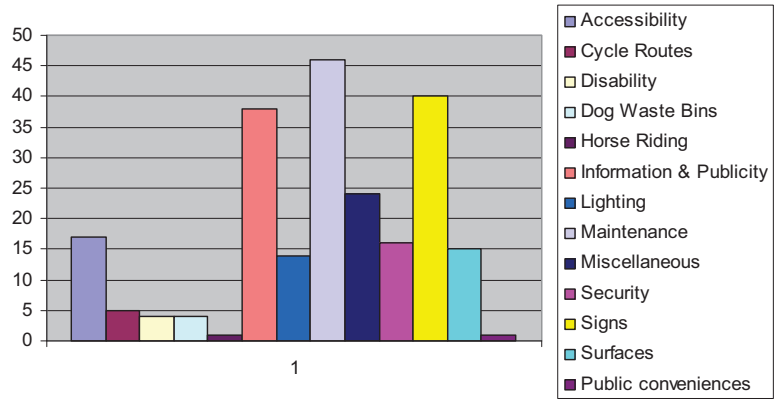
**Very Dissatisfied with PROW network**



When we asked people who walked recreationally what area they were most dissatisfied with 40% were most dissatisfied by the information available to them about where they could go.

Finally improving the information and publicity about where people can walk recreational was seen as the third most significant improvement we could make to our services

**Most important improvement to PROW network**



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Duncan Graham CBE  
Chairman of The England Access Forum

14/05/2010

Dear LAF Chair,

The logo for Natural England, featuring the words "NATURAL" and "ENGLAND" in white and purple text on a yellow background.

**Review of the England Access Forum:**

You will be aware from recent correspondence that Natural England and the England Access Forum are currently discussing future working arrangements. This is timely since it also corresponds to the decision taken at our formative meeting in May 2008, where we agreed to review progress after two years. We are now seeking your views as the Statutory Access Forums.

We recognise the good links between Natural England and LAFs which are developing regionally, and which we wish to continue to support.

In seeking your LAF's views we would be particularly interested in comments on

- The links between EAF and the LAFs through the regional coordinators.
- The effectiveness of the links between LAFs and Natural England at a national level through EAF.
- The added value that a national body representing LAFs can bring.
- The options for EAF's development.

The wealth of experience and knowledge resident within England's 81 Local Access Forums is invaluable and we believe that the England Access Forum has a key role to play representing the LAFs at the national level to Government, Natural England and other national bodies. We wish to see the EAF properly resourced, and your responses will help us assess what is needed.

Please do let us have your LAF's views and also any other comments you might wish to make. We would welcome your views by the end of September 2010 please to Andrew Mackintosh ([Andrew.Mackintosh@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Andrew.Mackintosh@naturalengland.org.uk)), the Natural England secretary to EAF.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Duncan Graham.

Duncan Graham CBE  
Chairman of England Access Forum

Handwritten signature of Rob Cooke.

Rob Cooke  
Director Environmental Advice and Analysis  
Natural England

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## **LAF Involvement in Coastal Access Implementation**

Natural England envisages LAFs being involved in the implementation process in the following stages (taken from Natural England's Approved Coastal Access Scheme).

LAFs have a number of statutory roles, outlining when they 'have to be involved'. Any discretionary involvement over and above this will be discussed and agreed with the relevant Access Authority.

### **Stage 1 Identifying issues and opportunities: LAFs have a statutory role here.**

Having established the delivery team (normally involving representatives of the local Access Authority) on a chosen stretch of coast, the delivery team (we) will begin the alignment process by identifying the main issues and opportunities on the stretch of coast. As soon as work starts on each stretch of coast, we will initiate discussions with those organisations Natural England is required to consult before preparing each report. These include the Access Authority, the District Council, Local Access Forum, English Heritage, Defence Estates and the Environment Agency.

### **Stage 4 Consultation on draft proposals: LAFs have a statutory role here.**

At this stage we will publish our draft proposals on the internet and invite all interested parties to comment on them including, in accordance with sections 51(4) and 55D(6), any local access forum through whose area the trail would pass.

### **Stage 5 Final report: LAFs have a statutory role here.**

Schedule 1A of the 1949 Act sets out requirements with respect to the final report. Paragraph 2 requires Natural England to advertise publication of the final report and to notify every Access Authority (obviously they are likely to be part of the delivery team) and Local Access Forum for an area in which there is affected land.

### **Stage 6 Representations and objections:**

**Any person will be able to make a formal representation to Natural England regarding the final report.** The time allowed for representations to be made will be determined by Regulations. Once the period allowed for representations is over, Natural England will send to the Secretary of State with its final report:

- copies in full of any representations made by the Access Authority, the Local Access Forum, English Heritage, the Environment Agency and any other bodies that may be specified in Regulations;
- a summary of any other representations that we have received; and
- Natural England's comments on the representations

### **Stage 7 Decision by the Secretary of State:**

Having made a decision, the Secretary of State must take reasonable steps to tell owners and lawful occupiers of affected land, or publish a notice to bring the decision to their attention. He/she must also notify any Local Access Forum through whose area the trail would pass.

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