# Northamptonshire Local Access Forum

## Meeting 18th November 2016

### Minutes

**Attended:**
- Chairman: John Shenfield
- Debbie Taylor-Bond - NCC
- Lisa Fell - Lesley Elkington - NCC
- Chris Glasspool - Leon Jolly – Northants Highways
- Katie Angel – Northants Highways
- Steve Fowler – Northants Highways
- Hollie Darby – Northants Highways

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Apologies:</strong> received from Bob Martin, David Knight.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Minutes from last meeting:</strong> Accepted as true.</td>
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| 3    | **Follow-up actions from last meeting.**
  - **Letter to Parish Council’s** - Debbie Taylor Bond to review John Shenfield’s letter to Parish Councils proposing Path Wardens to negotiate minor issues land owners directly to save NCC Officer time.
  - **Highway Verges** - Leon Jolly explained that certain Highway verges were slightly overgrown to a change in contractors and the scheme being rolled out a week too late. Next year the scheme will start a week early but still in accordance with the seasons. Remote locations however do sometimes have difficulty in getting contractors out to them, so patience will be needed.
  - **Membership** - Confirmation of termination of membership for Sandra James & Paul Bush (ToR 3.4)
| 4    | **Brief summary update of Street Doctor reports.**
  - **General Issues** - Responses have been provided regarding all of the issues raised and will be considered 'resolved' where necessary.
  - **Spraying adjacent to footpaths** - It was agreed that any | DTB     |
outstanding enquiries regarding spray drift and any concerns with nationally approved products used should be taken up directly with and reported to the Health and Safety Executive. Landowners have a duty of care to persons not in their employment but who are in their work site under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

- **Byway Closures** - It was explained that Street Doctor reports are prioritised and therefore a byway that has been closed due to being unsafe for the public will take priority over a path that is missing half a metre’s width for example.

- **Communication** – It was acknowledged that Street Doctor needs more publicity. NCC is reviewing the digital forms of the service. The group will be kept advised as and when any new improvements or applications are available.

**Weed Control alternative proposal**

Northamptonshire Highways is to trial a new spray made up of heated coconut enzymes. If this does work, then it could be possible to suggest its benefits to Farmers.

**Scheme proposal for landowners and walkers**

This scheme would focus on land owners using walkers to their advantage, keeping an eye on live stock, gates, stiles, paths and crops. Walkers would report any issues directly to the landowner. A scheme proposal is to be drawn up by Lisa Fell.

**Land owner awareness campaign regarding RoW**

Proposal for a scheme regarding land owners knowing their responsibilities in areas such as ploughing widths and spray drift. Katie Angel explained that most Landowners/Farmers are aware of their obligations when it comes to their duty of care regarding Rights of Way. Sometimes enforcement is necessary when landowners purposefully obstruct or restrict access on a Right of Way.
PROW : Footpaths in Northampton
Comparison between Northampton and Leicestershire paths addressed to The Rambler’s Association. It is noted that the opinion of the letter is subjective and that there is no extreme difference between Northampton & Leicester. **Hollie to enquire as to whether a response has been received.**

Area Footpaths Secretary Annual Report

A diversion is causing issues and John Shenfield would like to see the RoW opened up. It is to be made clear that the letter’s credibility is questionable and it did not come from nor is the opinion of Highways Enforcement process for vegetation overhanging foot paths and dangerous trees

Advice was provided on the enforcement process. It was acknowledged that due to there being limited resources available, enforcement action is currently prioritised and safety issues will always be dealt with as a priority. **In relation to specific issues raised, Leon Jolly to enquire about Overstone Manor Restaurant and its overhanging ivy on behalf of John Shenfield.** 2 letters have been sent so action is now required.

Governance Review update

A Governance review is ongoing. The next stage is to circulate a document outlining the outcome of some of the first areas that have been reviewed and this will identify what NLAF need to do in order to meet set guidelines. The first main issue to tackle is around recruitment to ensure that membership of the group improves and within Government Guidelines. Advertising will commence once the **current NLAF members have submitted what areas of Northampton they are covering**, so NCC can find missing links. Other issues to be considered includes frequency of meetings, role of the group members, membership protocols and
reimbursement of expenses, the production of the NLAF annual plan, identifying the groups priorities for the forthcoming year and including setting longer term objectives and actions for the group, which can then be reported through the NCC Cabinet.

It was also discussed that the RoW Improvement Plan 2007-2017 will expire soon and NLAF input in the development of the new plan will be required.

Any other business

a) Northamptonshire Enterprise Zone: Vegetation on the riverbank causing concern. Confirmation that the Tow Path has been done from L17 to Briar Hill by Canal and River Trust. As lots of developments are happening, maybe NLAF could be brought into those meetings (as part of the Governance Review) to have more involvement of current projects. **Members to make a list of which developments they would like to know more about.**

b) Promotion of Healthy Walking

c) Route Management Strategy Study: The booklet contains items that never came to light but makes a good reference and would like to see if there is anything that could be developed from it.

d) Public Byway TB15 within the Parish of Doddington: **There is currently investigation taking place as to the correct legal alignment of this route.**

e) Various closures within the Parish of Lowick due to subsidence caused by historic mining in the area. **Highways are in negotiations with the landowners regarding a possible diversion.**

f) Public Byway ED29 within the Parish of Braunston is obstructed and incorrectly signposted. There is also uncertainty about its correct status. **Highways to investigate.**

The Chairman John Shenfield thanked everyone for their input into the meeting and attendance and the meeting closed at 20:15hrs.

**Date of Next Meeting** – to be confirmed.