

Wales Coastal Access Improvement Programme (WCAIP) Conwy Steering
Group

Monday 20th October 2008, 6pm
The Great Orme Country Park Visitor Centre

Present

Colin Antwiss
Paul Bucknall
Chris Copeman
Mike Griffiths
David Firth
Peter Sellers
David Tindall

Helen Jowett CCBC
John Mitchell CCBC
Jennie Richardson CCBC
Peter Rutherford SNPA
Quentin Grimley CCW

Apologies:

Received from Jenni Frost and also retrospectively from Cllr Mike priestly and
Richard Hatton

Agenda Items

Minutes of last 2 meetings

Tues 1st April

DT pointed out that the role of the group stated in the 1st minutes is now out of
date and could be updated.

9th June

Item 26 (Llanfairfechan) on list of potential works needed clarification JR to
check meaning and alter accordingly.

Taking these points into consideration all members agreed the minutes and
that they should be translated and made publicly available on the Coastal
Access web site when it is updated.

Main Meeting

Introductions

There was a general round of introductions for the benefit of John Mitchell, new Coastal Access Project Delivery Officer (replacing Andy Barker) and Chris Copeman a new steering group member with particular interest in access for the blind and partially sighted, nature and walking.

John was asked to speak a little about himself and his previous experience.

Current works update

Path at Madryn Reserve (Llanfairfechan)

JM gave details of current work in this area, co-ordinating with together with Gwynedd CC and getting advice and permissions to carry out some preventative works at Madryn.

The issue of cyclists was brought up as many do try to use the area. While there are no plans to try to convert this area to bridleway due to its sensitive nature but the fact that cyclists are inclined to use the area needs to be kept in mind. Particularly when producing information (on and off site). The fact you can cycle close to the reserve area could be misleading.

Conwy Mountain Stile

This is now in place. The old ladder stile was replaced with a better standard step over H-stile.

Summit trails leaflet

The leaflet and associated waymarking of trails are nearly finished, the remained of waymarking to be completed with help from the Great Orme Wardens.

Brief summary of next works to be progressed

- The improvements to access on marine drive were discussed and some site visits arranged.
- Works on Sychnant pass to ease its use were mentioned.

Update on Full programme

The suggested programme, with various pre consultation adjustments has now been sent to the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) for discussion and approval.

PB queried if we will be getting the money to do it all.

QG commented that the last of the authorities had just submitted their full programmes and CCW would be arranging meetings with each authorities to discuss possibilities. Funding will only ever be confirmed on an annual basis. While it may be agreed in principle, the full programme will always be a working document subject to changes.

Concern was also expressed over the falling grant rates and that local authorities may not be able to meet the increasing requirements on their part.

QG stated that the staffing rate would remain at 75% percent for the remainder of the program, and not continue to decrease as was originally thought.

PR pointed out that many authorities would still have trouble meeting the 25% staff costs over the coming years.

The current funding priorities of the project were explained, i.e. e that currently the priority was for work on the Actual coast path before coastal zone works.

CCW are putting in an application for convergence funding, applying for approximately 4-5 million.

Route Information

It was stated that there was some uncertainty about the line of some of the paths on the Llanfairfechan side. This was noted for investigation.

The comment was made that some other counties didn't choose routes on existing Rights of Way and were striving to get routes created. This is generally where the counties in question do not have a suitable alternative already on a right of way. In most cases different tactics by counties are due to the different terrains.

In Conwy the route choices have been mainly due to major physical constraints (in particular the A55 and railway) though it was reiterated that due to current cycle path works on the coast that we still hope to be able to use the more coastal route from Conwy to Llanfairfechan in the future. At the moment the major engineering works to make it suitable are beyond the scope of this project but work being undertaken by other agencies may still make this possible..

Branding

QG said a few words about the path branding.

The symbol was being designed by a design company, Underground, who were awarded the contract to develop branding and philosophy by Visit Wales who are dealing with this side the WCAIP.

The symbol in favour is the 'Dragon Shell' which is designed like a whelk (thought the name whelk was not widely liked) but with a dragons tail incorporated.

Final report on the decisions and how it is to be used will be available soon.

Comment – that the shell will make a good tactile image, colours used will also be important.

Date of Next Meeting

To be decided nearer to the time, possibly February but depending on the current issues etc. Mondays were stated as a convenient day for many people.

AOB

Role of steering group.

To advise on how projects identified in each year of the programme should be carried out. To draw on the group's broad expertise for advice.

Aber to Ogwen

Comments from PR, not directly related to the project but the national park are considering the replacement of the old a frame stiles on this route. Need to be discussed with both counties involved and landowners.

Team merge

For information. The Countryside Service are moving to the Heath and joining up with the Rights of Way team to form Countryside and Rights of Way. The new address and contact details to be forwarded to all team members when the move happens.