

Wales Coastal Access Improvement Programme (WCAIP) Conwy Steering
Group

Thursday 26th November 2009, 6pm
Colwyn Bay Cricket Club

Attendance:

Members
Paul Bucknell (Chairman) (PB)
Chris Copeman (CC)
Mike Griffiths (MG)
David Tindall (DT)
Peter Sellers (PS)
David Firth (DF)
Officers / Observing and advising
Helen Jowett CCBC (HJ)
Jenny Towill CCBC (JT)
John Mitchell CCBC (JM)
Alun Price (AP)

1. Apologies:

Colin Antwiss (CA), Jenni Frost, Hillary Davies

Not present:

Peter Rutherford SNPA (PR), Cllr Joan Vaughan

Jenny Towill was introduced to the group.

2. Current Works (JM)

Due to a delay in receiving funding, confirmation of which did not arrive until September, all of the 09/10 works have to be done in 6 months (Sep – March), so staff are currently very busy aiming to get all works completed before the end of the financial year.

2.1 The Gyrach works in Dwygyfylchi have now been completed. DT – Pointed out that at Gyrach there was some barbed wire on the wrong side of the fence.

JM – This was nothing to do with the works that the Coastal Access Project had carried out there, but was from separate works by another landowner.

2.2 Marine Drive – With the help of Mike Griffiths supplementary dropped kerbs have been added to last years works to provide extra passing places and enable users to turn around..CC- There is still overhanging vegetation on Marine Drive, near the shelter above Llys Helyg and between the toll gate and the pier. To be followed up by JT.

2.3 Little Orme – Works on the incline are still currently in progress, path to be widened for ease of access, stile replaced and benches to be installed.

PB – Is there going to be surfacing works on the incline?

JM – This was discussed with all quoting contractors and decided against.

DF and DT commented that there should not have been a stile installed but that it should have been a gate.

JM – This was due to stock control as there have previously been problems in this area. It was also pointed out that the grazier and the landowner had both been very helpful in letting Conwy carry out works, and that without this co-operation it would have been very difficult.

PB pointed out that Conwy had replaced an obstruction with another obstruction.

It was agreed that Conwy need to check back with the RoW department on the legality of the stile. JM to discuss this further with Rights of Way team.

3. Forthcoming works

3.1 JM – In the New Year works will be starting on the Little Orme to improve less able access to this area, this will include the installation of a radar gate. There will be a press release going out regarding these works.

DF – The radar gate is all very good for those who have a radar key, however it is not good for the use of pushchairs, has a weighted gate been considered?

JM/MG – A radar gate is the only way of preventing motorbike access, which could cause considerable damage to the area and irritation to the neighbours of the site and users of the site. The idea is to put a key in the local co-op, and signage on site to say that this is where people can borrow a key from (JM).

CC - this could cause problems if it got into the wrong hands or people took the key away and used it in other areas.

HJ- suggested this should be trialled, to see if there are problems.

JM thanked MG for all his input with this project.

3.2 PB - asked if there had been any budget problems

JM - no, time constraints on spending the money will be more of an issue.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

These were agreed to be a true record.

5. Early Opening

5.1 JT – There will be an early opening of the Wales Coast Path from the Offa's Dyke office in Prestatyn to West Shore, Llandudno. This will take place over the weekend 26th – 28th March 2010. Visit Wales are organising events surrounding the opening. It is likely that there will be some kind of ribbon cutting at either end.

Monthly meetings are being held between Conwy, Denbighshire, CCW and Visit Wales regarding the early opening. The main job will be to get the route way marked.

5.2 HJ – Brought up the fact that there will be coastal engineering works possibly starting next year along Colwyn Bay Promenade, however because the timescale of this is not certain, the early opening of the coastal path in this area will proceed as planned. When the promenade works do eventually take place it will be important to make sure that coastal path waymarking is re-instated.

5.3 PB asked if those present knew of any progress on Foryd Bridge.

JT/HJ The design has been done but timescales and start dates are unknown.

5.4 PB asked whether branding for the coastal path was now confirmed.

JT informed the group that the branding manual is now available.

JT said any input from the Steering Group would be much appreciated regarding the early opening.

5.5 MG asked if passing places around the Great Orme had been mapped, this would mean that people would know how far it is to each next passing place. This could be explored.

5.6 DT asked about dog and litter bins for the Marine Drive and that it would be good to get some of these installed before the early opening. This would be particularly good close to seating areas.

Parking on the kerbs is a problem on Marine Drive and may be worse now due to there being more dropped kerbs present.

DF – Could this be resolved by parking tickets?

HJ- This could be a hard one to resolve as Marine Drive is a private road.

It could be easier on the part that is a two way road as this section is a public road.

JT to put a letter together to the Manager of the Marine Drive expressing the concerns of this group with regard to parking on the pavement, litter, and dog bins.

PB wishes to see a copy of this letter prior to it being sent.

6. Legal Issues (JT)

6.1 Horton's Nose – The route of the Coast Path at Horton's nose follows the prom until it reaches the sand dunes at Horton's nose, the route then turns southwards following the tarmac path to meet the road. The road that it joins up with is currently in the process of being adopted by Conwy's Highways Department. As there is a gap between the adopted road and the path we need to join the two up. To do this Conwy are going to create a RoW which will start where the prom ends and the route turns southwards and finish at the adopted road. This is currently in the hands of Conwy's RoW department.

Blown sand is a big problem here, we are looking into seeing if it can be cleared more regularly but it is unlikely to be possible to have the clearance done often enough.

6.2 Deganwy Gap – We have a legal document which states that Conwy are allowed to cross this section of land and this has been agreed to be suitable as the route for the coastal path by CCW.

PB – asked why this could not be properly adopted?

This would be a very long and difficult process and was already looked into by Conwy's Legal department when the cycle track was being built, and it was then decided that with the access that Conwy had it was unnecessary to pursue the RoW creation further.

DT - will ask HD (sustrans) if they were happy with this.

6.3 Sychnant Pass – The route was going to follow a PRow here but this does not actually exist on the ground, and as this is a very steep area covered in shale and bracken it would be very difficult to create a new path where the original RoW exists. Therefore it has been decided to use a desire line which already exists on the ground to join up the Jubilee Path with the RoW into Capelulo.

This has been agreed with the landowner and is now in the process of being created.

6.4 DT – pointed out that there had been issues above Llanfairfechan that the route had not been on a RoW, definitive map to be checked by JT.

7. Update on programme (JM)

7.1 The full programme is essentially the same as before, with a few changes to the route, CCW have asked us to re-submit a full programme. We are going to adopt the new cycle bridges from Pen – Llanfair as an alternative route.

AP - There should be no problems with getting both routes from Pen – Llanfair. This is the best of both worlds.

PB-will we also be able to link Conwy back to the coast, this enhances the route as there are then two options? – this is currently uncertain.

DT mentioned there are currently disagreements over whether Pen prom should be part of the cycle route this would be worth us keeping an eye on. This was in the Daily Post.

7.2 JM-next year it is hoped that funding will go towards getting Conwy Marine Walk re-surfaced. If this goes ahead it will be a substantial part of the budget.

PB made the point that this was a bridleway, which JM was aware of.

7.3 PB asked if we foresaw any problems with funding.

HJ – Funding has not been easy; we did not get this years funding until Sep. We are currently uncertain as to whether there will be funding for two staffing posts next year and have asked CCW for confirmation on this asap. Also there is now double the paper work as funding is coming from both WAG and WEFO.

PB expressed concerns as to how much money is actually being spent on the path and wanted this concern registered.

AP explained that it was hard to know whether these things would be available when they don't yet know the under spend. Also unsure yet as to what other LA's will put forward. It will be up to Conwy to justify their requirements.

PB stated that with the level of bureaucracy it is unlikely that works will be completed by 2012. This view has been forwarded to WAG as the view of a number of the LAF's.

7.4 PB asked about Conwy's interface with Gwynedd and Denbighshire?

JM - Relationships are good between the neighbouring authorities with this project.

There is currently a feasibility study taking place at Madryn, hopefully this will give a definitive answer as to where the route should be taken around the reserve.

Whatever is decided for this part of the route in Gwynedd should not be problematic for Conwy to link in with.

8. Any other business

8.1 CC - Asked about the cycle and walkway from Penrhyn Bay to Rhos. Cyclists use the raised walkway, there is a no cycling sign at the Rhos end but there does not appear to be one at the Penrhyn Bay end.

DT thinks there is a sign at the Penrhyn Bay end but thinks the reason many people cycle on the walkway is because the cycle way has a corrugated surface.

PB asked if this should be re-done.

DT/HJ Think this was probably in the design specification as it was used from re-cycled materials.

DT thinks it could be an idea to have a zig-zag barrier.

HJ - Conwy will look into it to see if there is a sign at the Penrhyn Bay end and to ask Highways about the surface.

9. Date of Next Meeting

This is to be held at the end of Feb so that members can be updated on the early opening plans.