

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

NOTTINGHAM LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 18 October 2017 from 6.30 pm - 8.28 pm

Membership

Present

Ruth Thurgood (Chair)
Katie France (Vice Chair)
Hugh McClintock (Vice Chair)
Ian Bussey
David Hunt
Nick Hynes
Margaret Knowles
Ken Marsden
John Rhodes
Steve Rhodes
Roger Sexton
Giselle Sterry
Chris Thompson
Hilary Yates

Absent

Zoe Bremer
Shaun Bryan
Liz Cordle
Kayleigh Dickinson
Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Sally Longford
Diane Moore
Councillor Jane Urquhart

Others in attendance:

Gary Cragg - Reserves Officer, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
Laura Marshall - Observer
Zena West - Governance Officer

1 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

Gary Cragg, Reserves Officer at Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, gave a presentation to the Forum on access and habitat improvements at Harrisons Plantation Local Nature Reserve (distributed with the first publication of the minutes).

The forum fed back with questions and comments, and further information was provided on the project:

- (a) there is a fine balance between encouraging people to enjoy local nature reserves, and sites where access has to be restricted for the sake of local wildlife. For this site, Nottinghamshire Wildlife still wanted people to access the site, but some changes were made to encourage further vegetation. Viewing platforms were also introduced to help with this balance. There isn't a desire to restrict access further, as the pond is a well-used local resource. In areas where rare species are present, often barriers and fencing are used to make certain areas quitter, but most sites are completely unrestricted;
- (b) radar gates on the perimeter can open for any visitor, but when opened with a special radar key they will open wider to allow access for those using wheelchairs or motorised scooters;

- (c) the Stonepit Plantation is owned by the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, but it has not been well managed in recent years due to a lack of access. With the new housing development there are plans for greater access, once this is in place, the land can be managed and made more accessible for the general public. At the moment the site attracts some fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour issues;
- (d) anyone wishing to become a member of the Wildlife Trust can do so by visiting the website: <http://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/>

RESOLVED to note the information in the presentation and thank Gary for the update.

2 APOLOGIES

Zoe Bremer
Councillor Brian Grocock – other Council business
Councillor Jane Urquhart – other Council business

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

4 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the new members of the Local Access Forum.

John Lee showed the history of Local Access Forums as detailed on the website (<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/localaccessforum>) which will be updated soon.

5 UPDATE FROM THE WALKS SUB-GROUP

Katie France, the new coordinator of the walk sub-group, presented an update to the Forum, including distribution of a leaflet about the new Clifton Walk:

- (a) the launch event for the Clifton Walk will be held on 4 November, with Margaret Knowles leading the first walk;
- (b) the Clifton Walk leaflet can be downloaded from the website, along with leaflets on other walks developed by the sub-group: <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/localaccessforum>;
- (c) two new walks are also being developed, one in Sherwood and one in Bestwood. There will also be launch events for these walks once they are finalised;
- (d) if anyone would like to suggest a new walk, join the sub-group, or get involved in any other way, please email Katie: katie.s.france@outlook.com.

Further information was provided, following questions and comments from the Forum:

- (e) the walks sub-group currently has 5 members, and meets 4 times per year;
- (f) the other walks are listed on the website, but could also be listed at the end of leaflets in future, so that citizens are aware of all of the walks available;
- (g) the Martin's Pond walk leaflet may need updating in light of recent work on paths and gates;
- (h) shorter walks or walks on suitable surfaces for those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters may prove popular;
- (i) the original ambition of the walks sub-group was to develop a walk for each area. The sub-group is well on the way towards achieving that aim;
- (j) funds for publicising the walks are limited. 200 leaflets are produced for the launch of each walk, and these are distributed in libraries and health centres. Beyond the launch, publicity relies on citizens downloading leaflets or accessing the information from the website.

RESOLVED to note the information and thank Katie for the update.

6 UPDATE FROM THE PLANNING APPLICATION SUB-GROUP

Steve Rhodes and Margaret Knowles presented an update on the Planning Application sub-group, including detail on a large scale planning application, and the revised publication version of the Local Plan Part 2:

- (a) an application has been submitted for further quarrying near the banks of the Trent, opposite the Attenborough Nature Reserve. The application and accompanying documents are extensive, but the focus of the sub-group is on the impact on existing rights of way. One particular bridleway is a cause for concern, as the description talks about a ramp to allow horses over a conveyor belt. It looks more like a tunnel going over the conveyor belt on the plan, which would be inadequate as horses can be easily spooked. The sub-group has asked that more detail is submitted on the construction and if there is a similar construction anywhere else that the sub-group can see;
- (b) one other area of concern is the possible impurity of the water, and how this may affect local ponds (including Holme Pit which is a site of special scientific interest) and other smaller waterways. Both banks of the Trent flooded in this area a few years ago, and the planning application gave no indication of an assessment on exceptional conditions such as those which led to the flooding. The sub-group has asked that one be provided;
- (c) the observations, objections and comments have all been submitted and the sub-group is awaiting a response;

- (d) the Local Plan Part 2 will guide the shape of development of the city, and it has a wide range of policies that decides how planning applications are decided. The sub-group has been involved for some time in its development. It is out for consultation until 10 November 2017 due to some changes. The revised consultation document is 350 pages, so the sub-group has not finished reviewing it yet. There are some proposed changes to the policy wording which will have to be examined more closely. It is proposed that the sub-group will circulate comments to any Forum members who are interested, before providing final comments. PEDALS have been consulted separately and are providing their own feedback.

Further information was provided, following questions and comments from the Forum:

- (e) although the sub-group is not privy to detail on objections made by other groups at this stage, it is known that Natural England have raised significant concerns, and have stated that they will object to the quarry planning application if they are not provided with the information and evidence they have requested. It is understood that the Wildlife Trust have also raised concerns, and that there have been around 1,000 objections to the proposals so far;
- (f) if it goes ahead, the quarry will involve around 140 vehicle movements per day for 20 years. The application has also been forwarded to Jane Baines at Nottinghamshire County Council to see if their Local Access Forum is aware of the proposals;
- (g) guidance is available for what to look out for in planning applications. A Nottingham City Council colleague is able to help those interested in joining the sub-group with a brief training session for what to look out for, especially which particular key documents to inspect. Anyone interested in this coaching should email John Lee for further information:
john.lee@nottinghamcity.gov.uk;
- (h) the sub-group members take it in turns to look at the monthly and weekly planning application lists. Most are minor extensions, change of use etc. One person can scan to ensure nothing has been missed which may require comment. If a planning application does require comment, usually the sub-group will work together to discuss it. Some applications have a few documents, some have hundreds of documents. The training will help identify which documents to focus on. If there is an impact on public rights of way, the law states this should be declared in any application;
- (i) in October there was an outline application for redevelopment of the Denewood centre, which possibly could have rights of way implications. This will be investigated further by the sub-group;
- (j) anyone wishing to join the sub-group or get involved should email Margaret (ttyymak1@yahoo.co.uk) or Steve (rhodes969@btinternet.com).

RESOLVED to note the update and thank Margaret and Steve for the information.

7 UPDATE FROM THE DEFINITIVE MAP SUB-GROUP

Nick Hynes and Chris Thompson presented an update to the Forum on the Definitive Maps Sub-Group:

- (a) the sub-group is working to record all paths by 2026. Any paths that are not recorded on the definitive maps by 1 January 2026 will be extinguished. The work is intended to make sure as many paths as possible are recorded. Urban area paths are historically less well recorded. John Lee has done a marvellous job, if you compared maps of the rights of way network with a map from 12-14 years ago, there were only around 14 paths recorded, now there's around 200;
- (b) if anyone is interested in joining the sub-group or helping in any way, they can meet one afternoon with Nick, Chris, and John Lee to talk through what the sub-group wants to achieve;

John Lee then gave some further background information on the national requirements and history of the definitive map:

- (c) as an example, a map from an 1865 railways act shows a path as an occupational road and bridleroad, so this would be adequate evidence to record that path as a bridleway today. The task involves going through archives and trying to make an assessment of the available evidence, then making an order to add a path to the definitive map to have it protected. Priority should be given to routes used by citizens daily for walking and riding. The date may be extended for urban areas like Nottingham, but at the moment the deadline is 1 January 2026 and no assumptions should be made regarding an extension. This is the third attempt to create a comprehensive set of definitive maps across the country since 1949, previous attempts have all failed. The cut-off date is a way to encourage local authorities to engage with the process.

RESOLVED to thank Nick, Chris and John for the update and note the contents.

8 MEMBERS OF FUTURE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM SUB-GROUPS

Ruth Thurgood presented information on the current sub-groups, and advised anyone wishing to join a sub-group to contact either that group's coordinator(s), or John Lee (john.lee@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) for further information.

Sub-groups were originally formed based on suggestions from Forum members. If there is appetite and energy for a new sub-group, this can be arranged. None of the current sub-groups are exhaustive and Forum members are welcome to suggest or create sub-groups for areas they are passionate about.

RESOLVED to note the information on the sub-groups and thank Katie France and John Lee for their hard work bringing the information together.

9 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP2)

John Lee and Hugh McClintock presented an update on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to the Forum. There is ongoing commitment to add this item to the agenda, and it links in well with the definitive map work, and to forthcoming local cycling and walking infrastructure plans.

There is a 30 year aspiration for new and upgraded walking and cycling routes, and identifying short term and long term priorities. D2N2 is the local LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership). When the system was launched, funding was available to encourage local authorities to start preparing bids. D2N2 made a bid on behalf of four authorities, and there will be an inception meeting with stakeholders in the next few months.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank John and Hugh for the update and note the contents;**
- (2) invite John Bann from Transport Strategy to a future meeting of the Forum to provide further information.**

10 UPDATE ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY SCHEMES, IMPROVEMENTS AND ORDERS

John Lee provided an update on public rights of way schemes, improvements and orders to the Forum:

- (a) the bridleway between Clifton lane and Fabis drive has been re-surfaced;
- (b) work has been carried out on revetments on the bridleway along the Trent Valley, Clifton, as part of the escarpment was falling onto the bridleway;
- (c) a number of motorcycle barriers have been widened to allow for greater disabled access;
- (d) the Clifton and Wilford signage scheme is almost complete;
- (e) parts of The Big Track (a 10 mile circular route) are frequently used by a fishing club, so the surface wears away more quickly in these areas. This is being monitored;
- (f) the Council has used an internal deed of dedication rather than an order at Broxtowe Country Park, following the same principles in place at the Attenborough Nature Reserve. The route is recorded as a public footpath, and the Council has also declared it as a permissive route for cyclists for 100 years. This is considered to be the best way of having the footpath legally recorded on the definitive map and statement whilst catering for cyclists at the same time. The same action will take place for a route at Clifton and Trent Valley, though as a bridleway;

- (g) there is some developer guidance on the website, listing the dos and don'ts of public rights of way: <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/rightsofway>

RESOLVED to thank John for the update and note the contents.

11 UPDATE ON THE FOOT / CYCLE BRIDGE PROPOSALS, LADY BAY TO TRENT LANE

Hugh McClintock and John Rhodes presented and update to the Forum on the proposals for a foot and cycle bridge between Lady Bay and Trent Lane, highlighting the following points:

- (a) for the last 3 years, several groups have been working on a feasibility study, linking the hook area of Lady Bay to Trent Lane. In August 2017, the steering group met with Sustrans and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jon Collins;
- (b) another site has also been evaluated, around 100 metres further upstream. The original proposed site encountered some resistance, and reluctance to release the small amount of land required for the landing of the bridge and the disabled access ramp. Rather than abandon the idea, new residents at the site have asked if there's an alternative location;
- (c) the land at the alternative proposed site is already public space, so would likely meet less resistance. If the bridge is linked to the bridge across the entrance to the development, a small amount of public realm may be set aside to facilitate the bridge landing;
- (d) a circular / spiral ramp, similar to the one at Queen's Medical Centre, would be ideal.
- (e) the estimated cost of a cable stay bridge is between £2.6 million and £2.8 million. This would be the most economical and aesthetically pleasing option. There is a £1.5m Bridge Estate Fund, but there are difficulties releasing funding;
- (f) a letter has been requested from Nottingham City Council requesting support in principal (not tied to funding).

RESOLVED to thank Hugh and John for the update and note the contents.

12 SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Any suggestions for future agenda items should be forwarded to Ruth Thurgood or John Lee (john.lee@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

The HS2 project team will be invited to attend the January 2018 meeting, and the Health team will be invited to the April 2018 meeting.

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) the 2018 meetings of the Local Access Forum will be held on 10 January, 11 April, 27 June and 10 October 2018. The meetings will be held from 18:30 to 20:30 in the Ground Floor Committee Room, Loxley House, unless advised otherwise;
- (b) anyone wishing to receive access to papers using the ModGov app for iPad or Android devices should email the clerk, Zena West, for further information: zena.west@nottinghamcity.gov.uk;
- (c) Diane Moore recently handed in her notice as a member of the Forum, She did an excellent job as the Chair and will be missed.