

Rutland County Council

Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP

Telephone 01572 722577 Email governance@rutland.gov.uk

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A meeting of the **RUTLAND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM** will be held Via Zoom - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89909197340> on **Wednesday, 6th September, 2023** commencing at 2.00 pm when it is hoped you will be able to attend.

Recording of Council Meetings: Any member of the public may film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report the proceedings of any meeting that is open to the public. A protocol on this facility is available at www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/have-your-say/

Yours faithfully

Mark Andrews
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

1) WELCOME & APOLOGIES

2) APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4) MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To confirm the Minutes made at the meeting of the Forum held on 8th March 2023.

(Pages 3 - 4)

5) QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The public will be able to ask questions on the business at the discretion of the Chair, subject to a time limit of 3 minutes per person.

6) MILES WITHOUT BARRIERS

To receive written reports from John Law.

(Pages 5 - 18)

7) RUTLAND WATER

To receive a written report from John Law.
(Pages 19 - 20)

8) COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM LOGO

To receive a written report from John Law.
(Pages 21 - 22)

9) FARM LAND CONSTRUCTIONS

To receive a written report from John Law.
(Pages 23 - 24)

10) ANY URGENT BUSINESS

11) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 13th March 2024.

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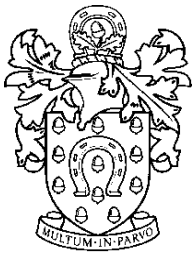
DISTRIBUTION

MEMBERS OF THE RUTLAND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

1.	Councillor S Harvey
2.	Councillor S McRobb
3.	Mr R Bancroft
4.	Mr R Brett
5.	James Buchanan
6.	William Cross
7.	Rosemary Harris
8.	William Kirstein
9.	Mr J Law
10.	Mr R Linford
11.	Sheila Storer
12.	John Williams

OFFICERS:

13.	Stuart Crook	Highways Asset Management and Policy Manager
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Minutes of the **MEETING of the RUTLAND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM** held via Zoom on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A Brown (Chair)
John Law
Rosemary Harris
Roger Linford
Richard Buchanan

ABSENT: William Cross
William Kirstein

OFFICERS PRESENT: Stuart Crook Highways Asset Management and Policy Manager
David Ebbage Democratic Services Officer
Mark Young Senior Facilitator – Neighbourhood Working

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from William Cross and William Kirstein.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8th March 2022 were considered and **AGREED** as a true record.

4 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

5 MILES WITHOUT BARRIERS

John Law introduced the written report on Miles Without Barriers.

He informed the forum that all the data for the Rutland PROW network was analysed displaying the individual PROW with their structural barrier/s. It was decided to categorise every PROW. This initial categorisation was to assist in understanding the PROWs that need no work or very little work to be undertaken, to make them more accessible for people with limited mobility.

Mark Young, Senior Facilitator for Neighbourhood working was happy to promote the service through the Rutland Integrated Social Empowerment Service and to make people in Rutland aware of leaflets and walks that are already out there. It was also agreed to potentially promote Miles Without Barriers through the Ramblers Association and Community Engagement events.

John informed the forum that the Lincolnshire Social Prescribing were doing a survey which could be joined up with Rutland and potentially could replicate something similar for the future.

It was agreed by the Forum for John to reach out to various groups for their input and to ensure what we provide is what was needed.

6 LEGAL ORDERS

Stuart Crook, Highways Asset Management and Policy Manager introduced the written report.

He updated the Forum on the current process for Legal Orders and that all rights of way orders must go through the Planning and Licensing Committee. A rise in applications under the Town and Country Planning Act had been received. He informed members that this potentially was down to the Councils current position with the Local Plan.

He informed the Forum that notice had been given on RCCDC/M17 (footpath between Main Street in Barrow and Sheep Dyke in Cottesmore), the consultant had recommended to make the order which would add a new footpath between Cottesmore and Barrow.

7 ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 6th September 2023 at 2pm.

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Chairman closed the meeting at 3.00pm.

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MILES WITHOUT BARRIERS – PART 1

GREEN SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

At the previous CAF meeting Rutland County Council staff, were made aware again of the green social prescribing opportunities offered by walk leaflets and the Countryside for All leaflets. The Lincolnshire leaflets are available through the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum. The Rutland leaflets are available from Stuart Crook. Although interest was shown at the time by Rutland County Council members of staff and the other contacts that were provided, there have been no requests for any of the leaflets.

Green Social Prescribing is recognised by Government, Natural England and many other local authorities as important to improve peoples mental and physical health. With the Countryside Access Forum working on providing further tools for the Social Prescribers to use, it is important to understand why the existing tools are not being used.

According to the RCC web site, on the RISE page (Rutland Integrated Social Empowerment Service) provision for this service is provided at the following surgeries:

The Uppingham Surgery

Oakham Medical Practice

Empingham Medical Centre

Market Overton and Somerby Surgeries

To ensure the Social Prescribing team are aware of the current green social prescribing tools that are available and should be used, **it is recommended that a member of the Forum attend the Social Prescribers team meeting and provide the team with the relevant information.**

Action: CAF to discuss the recommendation above.

Action: David - If the above is approved, to provide suitable Social Prescribing team meeting dates, for a member of the CAF to explain what's available and how to order.

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MILES WITHOUT BARRIERS - PART 2

DRAFT PROJECT DEFINITION DOCUMENT 6th AUGUST 2023

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this project is to inform people of the degree of accessibility of Public Rights of Way in Rutland. This will especially benefit people with limited mobility, whether they be disabled people or young families with buggies. It will also benefit people who may have little confidence in using the PROW network.

This project aims to identify physical barriers on the PROW network and provide an online map displaying routes with similar access standards. It will also provide data on where the accessibility of a PROW can be improved to enable more people to enjoy the network.

This will be achieved by providing an interactive display of the PROW network on the internet. The web page will be in map format. The user will be given the options displaying the PROW with access at a standard suitable for them to use.

OBJECTIVES

- a) To obtain funding for the project.
- b) To identify key milestones where set goals must be achieved.
- c) To update the Countryside Access Forum, project sponsors and other interested parties of progress, on a quarterly basis and at key milestones.
- d) To create a data capture App which enables all the data required to be captured and transferred/downloaded into the system that displays the web based map for the public.
- e) To create an interactive web based map for the public to use to identify the part of the PROW network that is suitable for them to use.
- f) To provide a process to enable Rutland County Council to make cost effective improvements, which will improve the accessibility of the PROW network.
- g) To develop and provide a training course for volunteers.
- h) To involve parish councils, community groups, disability groups, scouts, guides etc. in collecting the data as volunteers.
- i) Encourage volunteers that take part in the surveying to become Countryside Access Volunteers.
- j) To promote the web site to the people of Rutland and more widely.
- k) To investigate a means of measuring the number of people that may benefit and if possible evaluate the findings.

ASSIGNMENT

Pre Funding

- a) Check that the volunteers will be covered by Rutland County Council insurance
- b) Break down tasks and activities.
- c) Create a project plan and present to the CAF and sponsor for approval.
- d) Identify the information to be captured
- e) Identify, test and acquire the software required

- f) Develop the training manual and training course for volunteers
- g) Test the data capture format on site in line with the training manual
- h) Identify level of interest from parish councils and volunteers in assisting with the project.
- i) Evaluate the cost of the project
- j) Apply for funding
- k) Provide progress reports in a timely manner in accordance with the project plan.

Once Funding is Secured

- a) Set out the phases of the project in terms of those PROWs currently identified as the most accessible routes to be survey first and those that are currently classified as less accessible prioritized in accordance of their accessibility ranking.
- b) Train the trainer in the training which is required.
- c) Communicate with the parish councils and volunteers to set up dates and venues for training (Trainer that has been identified as suitable for this project is available between 20th January to 31st March 2024 – ex Fieldfare Trust trainer)
- d) Allocate groups of volunteers to PROWs in their local area and communicate with the groups
- e) Pilot data capture with the first group of volunteers and resolve any issues.
- f) Create and provide a training plan and schedule for the trainer and volunteers
- g) Respond to any queries raised by the trainer or volunteers
- h) Ensure the transfer of data from the survey goes to plan
- i) Ensure the transfer from the database delivers the required result on the mapping system of the web page
- j) Build the options for the public to use on the interactive web page
- k) Test the web page and options
- l) Launch the web page in phases as the data for each accessibility level is achieved on the map of the web page.
- m) Promote the web page and what it has to offer through news media, LAFs, Natural England, walking magazines, magazines for the disabled, IPROW other suitable media outlets and hopefully The Travel Show and Countryfile.
- n) Construct the accessibility improvements model and prioritization for the County Council to include in their PROW improvement plan.
- o) Provide progress reports in a timely manner in accordance with the project plan.
- p) Carry out a lessons learnt exercise

ASSUMPTIONS

- a) The funding required for the project will be obtained
- b) Members of staff from Rutland County Council will be available to work on the project
- c) A suitable trainer can be found to train volunteers
- d) The number of volunteers required for the project will be achieved
- e) Parish councils will provide the rooms for free or minimal cost for training of volunteers, which may include Parish councilors.
- f) The IT systems used will be suitable for collation of data and presentation on the Web.

IN SCOPE

All sections of PROW that do not include a ford or steps (a section of PROW is where part of a PROW has a section which starts and finishes at a public highway).

OUT OF SCOPE

Section of PROW which includes a ford.

Section of PROW which includes steps

CONSTRAINTS

Lack of funding

Lack of time available from members of staff

Lack of volunteers

RISKS

Risk	Impact on Project	Chance of occurrence	Risk Manager
Funding not available from external or internal sources	<u>Project fails</u>	?	?
Trainer not available for volunteers	<u>Project fails</u>	?	?
Member of staff not available to research and test suitable software			
Member of staff not available to create pilot web page/s			
Member of staff not available to manage the project			
Member of staff or CAF volunteer not available to respond to queries from the volunteers undertaking the survey			
Feedback on progress not given to volunteers undertaking the survey			
Rooms for training not available within budget at the locations required			
<i>Other risks identified by the CAF & RCC</i>			

The chance of occurrence is rated on a scale of 1 - 5 (1= low, 5=high). The chance of occurrence should be evaluated by the full CAF.

TIMESCALES

The timescales and workload will be displayed in the final project definition document following completion of the project plan.

DELIVERABLES

1. Project definition document.
2. Project plan.

3. Specification for the software
4. Cloud storage
5. Processes documented
6. Closer relationship with parish councils, user groups, local communities, land owners.
7. An increase in usage of the PROW network.
8. More opportunities for green social prescribing
9. Providing people with disabilities and young families with buggies more opportunities to enjoy the Rutland countryside.
10. Providing the opportunity for Rutland County Council to increase tourism from outside the County.
11. An additional aid to encourage people who find difficulty in walking enjoy the countryside.
12. The provision of accessible routes rather than just accessible PROW (a route being a
13. A plan for increasing the number of accessible routes.
14. A standard letter for land owners/farmers in relation to the project requesting replacement of stiles to accessible gates.
15. A method of prioritizing improving the accessibility of footpaths and bridleways.
16. Providing important information for future Rights Of Way Improvement Plans.
17. Providing a pool of volunteers who may be interested in becoming countryside access volunteers.
18. Measurement of the success of the project, appendix C
19. Lessons learnt exercise
20. Recommendations for improving the project template to enable other authorities to be more efficient.

CONTACTS

Project Sponsor (CAF chair):

Project Manager:

Project Quality Assurance Manager:

Project Team:

Stakeholders:

AUTHORISATION

Project Sponsors:

Member of Rutland County CouncilDate:

Chair of Rutland Countryside Access ForumDate:

PROJECT MINUTE TEMPLATE

APPENDIX A

The purpose of this template is to record the agenda and all actions that have been discussed at the meeting. Also it can be used as a reference during and a reminder of what was discussed at the last meeting and identify owners of actions.

Meeting Minutes					
		Date:			
		Time:			
		Location:			
Agenda		Invited to attend	Representative of Organisation	Organisation	Attendee (Yes/No)
Item No.	Topic				
Actions		Owner	Start Date	Due Date	Completion Date

EXAMPLE OF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES APPENDIX B

Whilst the roles below are examples of what are required, it is also possible for members of the project team to perform more than one role. It is also necessary for the team members to perform a variety of other related tasks to undertake the project, there may be a number of members without defined roles which could assist in any area.

Leader

The leader of the subgroup is responsible for the success of the project and reports direct to the LAF chair and the sponsors.

Deputy leader

The deputy leader assists the leader and is responsible for the leader's duties in their absence.

Auditor

Checks information prior to sending outside the project team, Checks tasks and activities are on track with the plan.

PR Expert

Prepares communications, identifies appropriate contacts to promote the web site to the people of Rutland and outside the County.

Co-ordinator

Sets up meetings with outside bodies, checks tasks and activities are on track with plan and reports immediately to the leader any drift.

PROW Expert

We definitely need Stuart as the PROW expert.

MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT **APPENDIX C**

This process is to evaluate the success of the project achieving its objectives. Further measures will be introduced once funding is obtained.

Measuring Parish Councils Assistance In Providing Training Facilities

- Number of parishes asked if they will provide the parish room for training = A
- Number of parishes that agreed to provide their room for training = B
- Percentage of parish involvement = $B/A \times 100$

Measuring Parish Councillors Involved In The Survey

- Number of parishes aware of the project that have a PROW in their parish = C
- Number of parish councilors that are in the survey teams = D
- Percentage of councilor involvement = $D/C \times 100$

Measuring Number of Trained Volunteers Undertaking The Survey

- Number of trained volunteers = E
- Number of volunteers taking part in the survey = F
- Percentage of trained volunteer involvement = $F/E \times 100$

Name of interested party

The Ramblers
Walking clubs
Health walk leaders and walkers
Social prescribers
Other LAFs
Natural England
Health centres and doctors surgeries
Age UK
U3As
Other Highway Authorities
Organizations for the disabled
News media

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MILES WITHOUT BARRIERS - PART 3

DRAFT SYNOPSIS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this synopsis is to inform possible funding sources of what we aim to do and see if they have an interest in funding the Miles Without Barriers project. The organizations that we are initially trying to seek support from are Visit England and Natural England, as we believe these are the organisations that have the most to gain from our project. This is due to it having the potential of being replicated across other highway authorities. This would enable more people across the Country to enjoy access to the countryside by using public rights of way..

In the synopsis I have stated that a member of the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum's Disability Sub Group will also be working on the project. The reason for this inclusion is to show other highway authorities are interested in exploring the options of introducing a similar project.

The main object of the synopsis is to attract funding.

Action: CAF to strengthen the synopsis below

Action: David to email to Visit England and Natural England once the synopsis has been revised

SYNOPSIS

The Rutland Countryside Access Forum, are aiming to make their Public Rights Of Way (PROW) more accessible for those with limited mobility and those who are not confident in using the PROW network . This will be done by displaying on the web site the legal structural barriers e.g. gates, stiles, bridges. The web site will be interactive. Members of the public will be able to identify routes with zero barriers or barriers that will not restrict them from using the PROW route.

We will involve parish councils and train volunteers from local communities, to enable them to inspect the routes and collect the data. The data will be transmitted to a new database and this will then be loaded to the mapping system on the web.

The outcomes will include:

1. More people aware of the PROW network.
2. More people with limited mobility (whether through disability or young families with pushchairs) able to access and enjoy the PROW network.
3. An increase in the green social prescribing tools available.
4. All the above contributing to a healthier Rutland through improving peoples health and general wellbeing.
5. The possibility of other highway authorities adopting the project, making PROW networks in other local authority areas more accessible. We have a member of the

Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum's Disability Sub Group working with us, to enable them to see how this project that can be undertaken in Lincolnshire.

Cost of the project, circa £10,000 includes:

1. Software and hosting
2. Hire of trainer
3. Hire of halls for training
4. Advertising to recruit volunteers
5. Promoting the web site

We are currently looking for funding to enable us to undertake this project. Please let me know if you would like further information if you are interested in funding this project. We can supply you with the detailed project definition document and project plan.

RUTLAND WATER

COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL

The survey for the Rutland Water Countryside For All leaflet, which is route from Normanton to Sykes Lane, was undertaken by Stuart Crook and a member of the South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum . From the details of the survey the Rutland Water Countryside For All leaflet was produced.

The Local Access Forum raised money to train organisations in surveying routes to create Countryside For All route leaflets.

Two members of staff from the Rutland Water Nature Reserve were trained and they went on to produce the Rutland Water Nature Reserve Countryside For All leaflet.

Both of the leaflets have been in high demand over the years. This year approximately 500 have been ordered from Lincolnshire libraries, tourist information centres and the social prescribing team. Unfortunately due to having no stock these orders cannot be satisfied.

During the pandemic we were told by Anglian Water, further surveys were undertaken to revise the two leaflets. We were also told that other routes had been surveyed around Rutland Water to create additional Countryside For All leaflets. When trying to find out when these leaflets will be available we have not been able to get an answer. The leaflets are a valuable source of information for those with limited mobility and it would be helpful if Anglian Water can produce the leaflets this year. They will help people with disabilities see the walking opportunities in Rutland Water. The leaflets will enable people to make a judgement on what walks are suitable for them.

Action: If the CAF member from Anglian Water is present at the meeting, they inform the CAF which leaflets are being produced and when. Also provide information on the number of leaflets that will be available for the Rutland CAF and the Lincolnshire LAF to distribute.

Action: If the CAF member from Anglian Water is not present at the meeting, the Chair of the CAF to write to Anglian Water requesting the information.

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RUTLAND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM LOGO

We were informed last year that RCC was producing the CAF logo. We have not seen the new logo or been given the opportunity to comment on what the logo should include. The Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum, Disability Sub Group is applying for funding to replenish their stock of Countryside For All leaflets and also create new leaflets. It has been agreed that the funding application can include replenishment of the Exton Countryside For All leaflet. We have the opportunity of including the Rutland CAF logo as well as the web address of the CAF on RCC's web site on the leaflet. Hence we require the logo to be available for the leaflet.

If the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum's Disability Sub Group is not successful in their application we will approach local businesses for funding.

Action: A council member of the CAF to resolve the issue prior to the end of December, as the draft version of the leaflet will need to be at the printers in January.

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Solar Farms, Distribution Centres and other building construction that takes up a significant area of farm land.

In February this year Natural England released their Guidance to help towns and cities turn greener with their <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx> web site. Whilst this is a step in the right direction for towns and cities, it does not appear to help rural areas.

We need to have legislation in place before large areas of farmland get swallowed up by large construction development sites. Rutland Countryside Access Forum on its own will not be able to exert much pressure, if any, on Government. However, if we work with other local access forums we may be able to persuade Government to listen to our concerns. With the CAF agreement I will pursue this matter with the CAF and the Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum and their Disability Sub Group. I will be asking for input from members as the need arises and these maybe between Forum meetings. The answers to these questions will help to construct a document stating what we require in the legislation, before opening the debate up to other LAFs. The final document will be submitted to the Lincolnshire and Rutland Forum meetings for approval before circulating to other LAFs for their input.

Action: CAF members to vote on whether John Law should work on the above project for the CAF

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