

# MINUTES OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING

## 9 JULY 2025

### HELD AT THE COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE, WORCESTER

#### Attendees

Lyndon Bracewell (LB)	Cycling & walking Interest
Gordon Bunker (GB)	Motorised use of minor highways and byways interest (4W)
John Cuthbertson (JC)	Social inclusion interest
Stephen Glazzard (SG)	Motorised use of minor highways and byways interest (2W)
Tony Kerbey (TK)	Secretary
Rowena Lloyd (RL)	Representing Worcestershire County Council PROW
Bobbie Matulja (BM)	Chair
Karl Perks (KP)	Councillor and Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways
Linda Robinson (LR)	Councillor Interest (Southern District Councils)
San Starkey (SS)	Youth Interest
Glynn Thomas (GT)	Walking Interest
Wendy Bannerman	British Horse Society casual attendee
Gary Mascall	Worcestershire Byways and Bridleways Association casual attendee

**Preliminaries** – The secretary covered fire alarms, trip hazards, building facilities and recording.

#### ITEMS

##### 1. Apologies

Peter Hughes (PH)	Business Interest
Julian Grubb (JG)	Waterways Interest
John Jeffrey (JJ)	Parish Interest
Georgina Britten-Long (GBL)	Landowner Interest
Robin Drew (RD)	Councillor Interest (Northern District Councils)

##### 2. Declaration of Interests

The Chair asked members to declare any personal or business interest in the agenda items. **None declared.**

##### 3. Confirmation of Minutes.

The Chair asked members to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting 5 February 2025 – **carried.**

#### 4. Actions.

No outstanding actions related to the last full meeting. Remaining sub-group action on the Secretary to inform members when the first phase of the RoWIP consultation goes live – completed post-meeting 5 August 2025.

The Chair welcomed the new Cabinet Member Representative, Councillor Karl Perks (KP), and invited those present to introduce themselves.

#### 5. Matters Arising

- **Ratification of the WLA Annual Report FY 24/25.** Passed
- **Findings of the BHS gates trial.** The Chair invited Wendy Bannerman to provide a summary of the trial's findings and then expanded on a few points. JC covered a subsequent site meeting with 'Securafield' to discuss accessibility and advantages/disadvantages of existing gate design. Wendy Bannerman also covered a BHS scheme to support the purchase/repair of bridle gates.

#### 6. Speakers - The National Trust Sandscapes Project – James Lawrence

James delivered an engaging and detailed account of the project and its place in wider National Trust environmental reinstatement programmes. He took questions on:

- **Connectivity between NT sites and access areas in general (RL).** James explained that NT are looking at the wider landscape beyond NT boundaries and read out the top level aims which include improving accessibility for all.
- **NT's policy regarding the dedication of permissive routes, equestrian access and shared routes (Chair).** James agreed to check the policy and provide more information post-meeting.

**Contact details:** James Lawrence, Sandscapes Project Manager, Land & Nature  
[james.lawrence@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:james.lawrence@nationaltrust.org.uk)

#### 7. Public Rights of Way Team Report

Report presented by RL. Questions were taken covering:

- **Recruitment of a new Enforcement Officer (Chair).** RL explained that the paperwork to recruit to the empty posts had been submitted and was awaiting approval.
- **Volunteer defect resolution numbers seemed unexpectedly high (GT).** RL explained that, although supervised work parties were not yet reinstated, individual PPWs and self-managed parties were still able to tackle minor tasks.
- **Deregulation Act and cut-off date for historic path claims (GB).** No update on

implementation of the remaining PRoW legislation. The responsible role at DEFRA is reported to be vacant.

- **Closure of bridleway bridge in Abberley (Chair & Gary Mascall).** RL touched on the complications surrounding this long-standing case, but detailed discussions of specific closures is outside the usual remit of WLAF.
- **The advantage of online recreational route guides over hard copy books (LB).** RL agreed to look at the benefits of online guidebooks.
- **Split between footpath and bridleway DMMO claims for ongoing cases and prioritisation criteria (Chair).** RL said that applications are prioritised according to the publicly available scheme and determinations follow the evidence.

**8. Feedback from the Active Travel Stakeholder Working Group** Nothing to report

**9. Items for Noting**

- Natural England – Release of ‘Unlocking Nature’ Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-KVut1hCJA&t=6s> (3 mins).

**10. Topics for Future Meetings**

- De-Regulation Act and impact on PRoW policy.
- Infrastructure Projects Team - LCWIP Progress Update
- NT Update on access and connectivity.
- NT 8 Hills Regional Park Project update (e.g. paid for access).
- Quarry Restoration Projects including access.

**11. Any Other Business**

- **MHT Presentation overview** – The Chair provided feedback from Susan Satchell’s presentation to the LAF Sub-group in May.
- **Powick Bridge update** – Bullet points distributed to members pre-meeting.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

In accordance with the rolling programme, the next meetings are proposed for:

- LAF Main Meeting – Jan/Feb 2026 date TBC.
- Extraordinary RoWIP Sub-group –date TBC (dependent on RoWIP development schedule).