**MINUTES**

**Meeting: Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)**

**Joint Local Access Forum (DLAF)**

**Time: 1.00pm – 4.00pm**

**Date: Monday 28 July 2025**

**Venue: Hybrid meeting (Dorset Council Offices Committee Room 2 & Microsoft Teams)**

<https://youtu.be/k_ORJcKTKdo>

**Invitees:**

**DLAF Members** **Local Authority Officers**

Philip Hackett (PH) (chair) Russell Goff DC (RG) (Greenspace Manager)

Janet Davis (JD) (vice chair) Graham Stanley DC (GS) (Senior Ranger)

Chris Slade (CS) Vanessa Penny DC (VP) (Definitive Map Manager)

Nathan McCormick (NM) Philip Elias BCP (PE) (Senior PRoW Officer)

Paul Tomlinson (PT) Ruth Wharton BCP (RW)

Christopher Tucker (CT) Cllr Alex Brenton DC (AB)

Mandy Willis (MW) Cllr Andy Hadley BCP (AH)

Nicola Harper (NH)

**Items:**

1. **Welcome and introductions, apologies, declaration of interests – Chair**

Apologies from Alex Brenton and Russell Goff.

2. **Chance for public questions – Chair**

None

3. **Minutes of the last meeting, actions & matters arising not covered elsewhere – Chair**

* **Access at Will Woodlands (JD) RG to raise access at Wills Woodland with Stuart Semple**

Closed - The DLAF’s function is not to approach local landowners. The approach is to advise authorities, Dorset Council (DC) and BCP. Unless DC wants to take it up with Will Woodlands it can’t be taken any further. This is something for Stuart Semple to pursue. It should be removed from the agenda unless Stuart has any success in approaching them.

* **Transport and travel links at the Millhams Mead site - (re Stour Valley Partnership) Awaiting feedback from Natural England (RW)**

Nothing to add.

* **Trailway assessment to Cllr Hadley (not yet complete) – (GS)**

The North Dorset Trailway, getting sections of it recognised on the definitive may. The Trailway Charity are carrying out an audit of the trailway.

* **Info on LAF to Amy Smith, Nature Recovery Team – (Was FB….?)**

Leave open.

* **Philip Hackett and Jade North to discuss equestrian access on SANGS (PH)**

Leave open.

* **Russell Goff to pick up issues with the bridleway at Organford which crosses the A35. (GS) What are the issues? No live jobs on Cside for any bridleway cross A35 between Bere Regis and Lytchett Minster.**

Leave open. Graham Stanley to find the report for the next meeting.

* **Bridget Betts to arrange for councillors to visit the High Angle Battery (RG)**

Leave open.

* **Circulate stats of number of jobs currently being worked on. (RG)**

Leave open.

* **Follow up wheelchair accessibility of the path at Radipole. (RG)**

Closed - It has been inspected and there is nothing more to be done. The path has been resurfaced.

* **Add Dorset National Landscape management plan to the next agenda (JD)**

Closed – To be discussed on the agenda.

4. **LAF recruitment plan. (GS)**

More members of the LAF are needed. The regulations required between 10-22 members, approx. 15 or 16 members would be ideal. There are currently 8 members. Members can be appointed for a minimum of 1 year, maximum of 3 years. Members can be re-elected at the end of the 3-year term. The application form and cover letter have been updated. Plan to advertise in August and will hopefully recruit new members for the November meeting. DC’s E Ploy online recruitment system can be used for the recruitment. Will need to know if BCP have anything similar. Would also like to ask other organisations and Local Access Forums for help with advertising. Will advertise in the local papers and the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils.

PT - Rights of Way officer list could be consulted.

NH - It’s more inclusive if members attend face to face meetings.

**Action - GS to circulate docs to members**

5. **Dorset Council Greenspace Management & Maintenance – Russell Goff (Greenspace Manager) and Graham Stanley (Senior Ranger), to include in particular the latest on the ROWIP.**

Graham Stanley read out a statement from Russell Goff regarding the draft ROWIP:

*Apologies that I’m unable to attend the meeting in person. Please find below an update*

*regarding the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).*

*Firstly, thank you for your continued patience and engagement with the ROWIP process. I truly*

*value the LAF’s long-standing support and recognise the understandable frustration caused by*

*the delays over recent years.*

*In response to your email dated 4 July 2025, I want to be clear that I see the ROWIP as one of*

*the most important documents we have. While earlier drafts were produced by others, I made*

*the decision to pause and rework the document entirely. Those versions did not meet the*

*standard I believe this plan should achieve, and I am committed to delivering a document that*

*is fit for Dorset and our rights of way network for the next decade.*

*I hope you will appreciate that I am not willing to put my name to a document that falls short of*

*the ambition and quality our communities deserve. I want this ROWIP to be strategic,*

*ambitious, and robust, a plan that reflects the scale of the opportunity we have to improve*

*access, support active travel, enhance health and wellbeing, contribute to economic growth,*

*and respond meaningfully to the climate and nature crises.*

*I am grateful for the LAF’s ongoing support and constructive input, and I look forward to sharing*

*the draft document with you in the near future. A full update on the draft will be provided in*

*August.*

Updates:

Sophie Isaacs – Numbers of unresolved reports are average.

Dave Ackerley – Central area - More time spent on C sides as staffing has been increased on

grass cutting. High percentage of user requests, hopefully getting through these more quickly

than in previous years.

West – The coast path is in places falling into the sea - issues around Fleet Lagoon, Loders and West

Bay area. The coast path is continually being worked on to keep it up to national standard status.

PT raised the issue of crops encroaching on public rights of way.

Landowners are informed of their duties regarding public rights of way that have been encroached on by crops.

GS – The legal requirement is for the right of way to be re-established within 14 days.

GS – North and Purbeck area – Vegetation clearance and work on bridges being carried out. Meetings being held on the possible extension of the North Dorset Trailway.

6. **BCP Council Greenspace Management & Maintenance – Philip Elias (Senior Rights of Way Officer) Presentation.**

New Rights of Way Officer, Kirsty Tyre, will be starting work on 1 August 2025 and will

administer the DLAF. Kirsty has events management experience and surveys public rights of

way on a voluntary basis.

PE and Kirsty will discuss advertising for recruitment of DLAF members.

Google Streetview Survey – Photos of public rights of way. Video surveys will help with

surveying all the paths for access issues and inclusion on Google Streetview. Will help raise

the profile of public rights of way, help people make better informed decisions on public rights of

way, and help with enforcement on encroachments.

Planning application for Alice in Wonderland, south of Bournemouth International Airport – A

natural-themed visitor park. Planning a new bridleway to follow the public right of way.

Requesting contributions to make the path better for a year-round route.

7. **Legal Record Team - Definitive Map & Statement – Vanessa Penny (Definitive Map Manager). Presentation (latest DMMO and path order statistics).**

Parish boundary changes project is almost complete except for a few issues in Weymouth yet to be resolved. Changed 137 paths, with 9 outstanding in Weymouth.

**Confirmed DMMOs**

Recently confirmed a small network of footpaths at Home Plantation in Spetisbury. No objections were received from the landowner.

**Public Path Orders**

Verse Farm (Foundry Lea) development – No objections at the order-making stage for the diversion of the footpaths across the site, they have been confirmed. Once the paths have been completed, they can quickly have legal status.

**Case Figures**

**DMMOs**

* 240 cases not started.
* 26 on the active waiting list.
* 45 cases in progress - 1 is with the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) – Mill Lane, Chideock.
* 28 other cases waiting to be submitted to PINS, 9 are with DC’s Legal department.

**Public Path Orders**

* 6 cases not started.
* 38 cases in progress - 5 Highways Act orders have been made and are awaiting works before confirmation. 7 Town & Country Planning Act confirmed orders awaiting works before they come into operation.
* 1 public path order with PINS – Chantry Farm, Beaminster.

NH - Vinegar Quarry – Planning permission for a new piece of land to be given in exchange to quarry the existing common land. Two bridleways were part of the requirement of the planning permission. They have not been dedicated yet and are not on the rights of way map. Is this included in your cases?

**Action – Vanessa Penny to investigate the status of the bridleways at Binnegar Quarry.**

PT - What is the processing time for PPOs?

VP – Waiting time of 2-3 months before we start new cases. DMMOs waiting times are slightly longer. Application waiting time would probably be approx. 5 years before we could start it, with documentary evidence this may be longer.

PT - Are the delays static or coming down?

VP – Public path orders – recently the waiting times have increased slightly, they tend to vary. Often waiting times are fairly low. Tend to receive more in the summer.

DMMOs – The rate of new applications has slowed down dramatically in the last year. DMMO waiting times are generally static.

PH – What is the waiting on DMMOs to clear the backlog?

VP – At the current rate of progress, we are processing approx. 6-8 per year. It would take approx. 24 years to clear the backlog. We are streamlining our processes as much as possible and have fantastic support from Legal Services.

8. **Update on KCIII ECP. The paperwork relating to the commencement of the Kimmeridge to South Haven stretch has been made available by NE. Attached.**

JD – An email received at the beginning of July outlined what was proposed from Lulworth

Cove to Kimmeridge through the ranges. Proposals were formally published on 23 July 2025.

The LAF now has the opportunity to respond to what they are saying.

JD – There needs to be communication for users before they reach the footpath closure. A response should be put together to say this.

PT – Are Natural England going to put together a dedicated website?

NH – The national trails were outsourced.

Dave Ackerley – Appropriate signage at appropriate points along the coast path.

JD – Could have signage with a QR code to information on where the restrictions on the

ranges are advertised.

JD – Do we want to say something about the coast path disappearing into the sea?

GS – There is some relatively new survey data from South West Coast Path Volunteers.

JD – Should make a statement about the state of the coast path through the ranges, ‘please act

on the information provided by the South West Coast Path Volunteers’.

PT – Who would be responsible for maintenance through the ranges?

GS – The MoD.

JD – I can draft a response for circulation. We have also been notified that the new access

rights between Kimmeridge Bay and South Haven Port have commenced on 4 June 2025.

**Action – Janet Davis to draft a response to the KCIII ECP proposal and ask what the**

**process is to ensure the infrastructure upgrades happen.**

9. **Loders Transport Group – campaigning for a non-road route between Loders and Bradpole.**

Rebecca Watkins – Co-Chair of the Loders Transport Group.

In 2023 the parish council held a public meeting and Loders Transport Group was formed, all

members are volunteers.

1 km country lane between Loders and Bradpole – 60 mph speed limit, narrow,

steep hill, no pavement and blind bends. DC provide a free bus service for pupils to attend

Bradpole school.

Proposal - Loders to Bradpole Greenway – 1 km non-road route connecting Loders to Bradpole

along a disused railway line.

On the DC Active Travel Plan the route is shown as a route for recreation. It is much more than

a recreational route.

The Parish Council have previously considered the route. There are some concerns from one

of the landowners about security on their farm.

Community Engagement – An information leaflet has been created which was distributed to the

whole parish. Positive feedback from the school and youth club. Overwhelming support from

families with school-age children. Carried out a public walk of the route and held a public

meeting. A group of residents raised concerns about the wider stretch of route from Maiden

Newton to West Bay so now the focus is for a shorter stretch from Loders to Bradpole. A

public meeting was held which was well attended. Ongoing community engagement.

Ongoing discussions with landowners, Eggardon and Bradpole ward councillors, local MP and

DC on the proposed route. Create Dorset Greenways Forum to connect with similar groups.

Continue local active travel community engagement.

Can this group recommend any forums or organisations particularly relating to wheelchair

users?

Podcast by Laura Laker – Streets Ahead.

It is proposed for the route to be a public right of way.

**Action – Graham Stanley to circulate a note on the North Dorset Trailway to members.**

PH - The DLAF supports the proposal.

JD - The proposal can be included in the DC Travel Plan if it is designated as a cycleway.

10. **APPG For Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature – Report on response JD/PH.**

A response was submitted, thank you to everyone who contributed to it.

11. **Member feedback from associated groups/meetings**

**Dorset National Landscape – Oral report (JD)**

Janet – They have just published their draft management plan, it is now out for formal consultation.

**Action - Janet Davis to circulate the link to the Dorset National Landscape consultation.**

**Cranborne Chase National Landscape – Oral report (NH)**

NH – Not been notified of anything since the management plan was published.

**Action – Graham Stanley to email Cranborne Chase National Landscape to put NH back in touch.**

**Local Nature Partnership**

Following the resignation of Fiona Bowles, we need to nominate a new representative to attend this group - Postpone until new LAF members have been recruited.

**Action – Janet Davis to circulate the Local Nature Partnership Annual Forum Report.**

12. **Ratification of responses made since last meeting and matters for info only: (JD)**

(i) A new trail has been established on Purbeck: ”Quarry to Castle”. See here

[New walk from quarry to castle to celebrate Purbeck stone – Swanage News](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.swanage.news%2Fnew-walk-from-quarry-to-castle-to-celebrate-purbeck-stone%2F&data=05%7C02%7C%7C082c8ee623624f6db9f308dd9c6b65de%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638838707249927454%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=vQNafOwR%2Bba5uPi6Zvnc575oE0rO6PJWB7dndoOjl08%3D&reserved=0)

(ii) There has been much publicity about the withdrawal of access at Bridehead, Little Bredy JD to comment.

JD – The landowners have made it very clear that the access was permissive and there

were signs that everyone knew about. Ramblers would see if there was a path there

pre-1950. The likelihood of doing anything is very remote.

(iii) We were asked to help in the matter of the withdrawal of a bus service (the No. 70 serving Boscombe Pier) but since it was a commercial decision by a bus company we felt it was beyond our remit. I wrote to explain this and Cllr. Hadley kindly responded to the correspondents with the BCP view.

Beyond the LAF’s remit.

(iv) We were consulted about the draft of the Hampshire Countryside Access Plan, but we decided that it was beyond our remit to seek to advise an appointing authority other than our own.

Beyond the LAF’s remit.

13. **AOB – Closed Consultation**

GS – An island where there is beef cattle - the owners would like to exclude access because it’s a danger to public safety.

NH – There is advice on the Natural England website. The council could create access to the island.

JD – This was renewed in 2020 for British white bull and cattle, cattle are kept outside all year round. Dogs on a short lead restriction is not sufficient.

**Action – Graham Stanley to circulate restriction proposal to LAF members for comment and a decision.**

GS – Highway rail crossing order in Motcombe.

NH – Binnegar Quarry – Two bridleways. Two exchanges of land to extend the quarry. The quarrying of the piece of land has been completed. There are new proposals for the land.

14. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 27 November 2025, 10:00-13:00.

Committee Room 2, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.