

# Local Access Forum

2 June 2026

## Item 13, Yorkshire, Humber and North Lincs Regional Access Forum

### Minutes of meeting held at Leeds Civic Hall, Leeds

**Date:** 11 March 2026, start time 10.30, finish time, 3.30pm

#### Attendees:

Phil Maude (PM)	Leeds LAF	YH & NL RAF Acting Chair
Didy Metcalf (DM)	Bradford LAF	Acting RAF Secretary
Pam Allen (PA)	Bradford LAF	Chair
Steve Dennis (SD)	Barnsley LAF	Chair
Adrian Wright (AW)	Yorkshire Divide	
Vicki Franks (VF)	Active Travel England	WYCA Policy Officer
Ben Jackson (BJ)	Leeds CC	PRoW Manager
Julie Swift (JS)	Calderdale LAF	Secretary
David Campbell (DC)	Bradford MDC	Countryside & PROW Manager
John Toogood (JT)	NYMNP LAF	Chair
Pat Coulson (PC)	Nork Yorkshire LAF (Outside National Parks)	Vice Chair
Mark Corrigan (MC)	British Horse Society (BHS)	Yorkshire Regional Access Field Officer
Hazel Armstrong (HA)	ER & H JLAF	Chair
Mike Willison (MW)	Leeds LAF	Chair

#### Apologies:

Fran Ross	North Lincolnshire LAF	Vice Chair
Nick Blaney (NB)	Sheffield LAF	Chair
Will Scarlett (WS)	North Yorkshire (Outside National Parks)	Chair
Stephen Hill (SH)	Open Spaces Society (OSS)	Local Correspondent
David Jeffels (DJ)	NYC	Councillor
John Gatenly (JG)	East Riding & Hull JLAF	Vice Chair
Andy Beck (AB)	Leeds LAF	TRF
Hannah Gardner (HG)	YDNPA LAF	Chair
Emma Trickett (ET)	Leeds CC	Parks Technical Manager

## Actions:

**Item 5 - WWCT:** DM to contact Rachel Gibbons to ask if information is available regarding projects in development but not yet commenced such as the Wharfedale Greenway.

**Item 6 - All Party Parliamentary Group** DM to write to AM to ask if legislation is planned to legal revoke the 2031 Cut-off date for PRow. If so, whether Parliamentary time has been set aside?

### 1. Introduction/apologies

PM Welcome members

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

HA approved item7. The Local Authority (LA) access to private land for public path repair issue is now resolved.

### 3. Active Travel Presentation – Vicki Franks, WYCA Policy Officer

**VF** Explained her role as Policy Officer is to design Local Walking and Cycling Plans over the next 2 years. What is needed will be defined by evidence based research. She has begun by assessing needs of cyclists, with provision for walking to follow: both are using a priority mechanism set out under national guidance.

Currently she is prioritising improvements for cycling that will be published later this year. An important element is integrating cycling provision with useful connections to facilities such as schools and access to local transport. However, alignments are flexible and can change when population size, car ownership, work locations and areas of deprivation are factored in.

All the above elements provide an insight into ways to incorporate cycling into peoples' daily lives which creates the basis of the network. The aim is to connect all the populated areas of West Yorkshire, and then to provide links to the National Parks and other LAs outside our region.

Walking Zones will be the next phase. A template has been developed that can be used by all LAs because we want to understand where access is needed. The next phase is to link bridleway and walking networks, colour coding, connecting and continuing. The aim is to encourage the population to be as active as possible, and enabling them to safely access transport links and enjoy good air quality.

Our Walking and Cycling Plan will not be confined to urban areas alone, but aspires to reach out to rural areas. Issues dictating the priorities there are: connections to public transport (often poorly served), & providing better access to local shops and medical surgeries. The results of all the research and planning will then be published and fed into the WYCA Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (CWIP).

<https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/transport/walking-wheeling-and-cycling/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan/>

**PM** Do you work with North Yorkshire Council (NYC)?

- VF** We aim to. They are developing their own Active Travel (AT) team.
- HA** Is there a cross over between AT and the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (WWCT) (formerly Sustrans)?
- VF** Our funding is to design the plan. We don't work with their money. We share but are independent of each other.
- MC** Horse riders are explicitly included in the AT legislation. (MC quoted a passage from Hansard to that effect.) Whilst recognising that some of the provisions in CWIP plans might not be suitable for equestrians: horses are still being excluded from projects that could be useful to them and assist their safety.
- VF** I am aware of the problems, whilst not all routes are suitable we do try, for example, to link stables to safe access routes.
- PA** Many routes used by the less able and by horses are being made unusable by the WWCT. Canal towpaths are an example. Does AT work with WWCT?
- VF** Not as closely as people believe. The funding is separate.
- PM** Where is this going in terms of an implementable plan? How can the LAFs assist?
- VF** Work on the exact alignment will be fed to planners. To do that legally it has to be formally adopted. Ensuring the CWIP links into Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs) and Local Transport Plans (LTPs) will help.

#### **4. Natural England update**

- AM** The full NE Update was circulated with the Meeting papers. However, it included a couple of links that may be of interest copied below:

**Landscape Recovery Scheme** - There are 3 Yorkshire projects including the [Calder and Colne Landscape Links project](#) in West Yorkshire and a couple in North Yorks: Heart of the Dales [Our work in the Yorkshire Dales | Yorkshire | National Trust](#) and Yorkshire Peat Partnership Ure Dale projects. (no specific website as yet). As I've mentioned before, some contain potentially significant public access benefits and we advise that local authority rights of way and stakeholders, including LAF's, are consulted in the development of any access proposals.

**Access to Nature Green Paper** - is assisting Defra on this Green Paper which aims to strengthen the public's legal rights of access, and to deliver access to blue and green spaces within a 15 minute walk from home. I hope to be able to give an update on progress within the coming months.

**Government Consultation on Reviewing the law on Mobility Devices** - The consultation is open until 22 April 2026 [Reviewing the law for powered mobility devices - GOV.UK](#) with the actual consultation links here [Reviewing the law for powered mobility devices - GOV.UK](#) (confusing the same link title).

- PM** Following our meeting in October 2025 it was resolved that I write to the Defra Under Secretary Mary Creagh, CBE MP, to express our concern that much-valued

recreational spaces are vulnerable to being developed through lack of protection from Natural England. My letter and the Minister's reply will be circulated with these minutes.

## 5. Update Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (WWCT) formerly Sustrans

**DM** Since their re-branding exercise in Autumn last year we have lost our former contact Sarah Bradbury-Evans who has moved to another post. I managed to establish contact with Rachel Gibbons who provided news of "new projects in our area which will be starting April – June and some updates on current ones".

The update was circulated with the meeting papers. It was noted that progress on the Wharfedale Greenway was not included.

**Resolved** DM to contact Rachel Gibbons to ask if information is available regarding projects in development but not yet commenced such as the Wharfedale Greenway.

## 6. Matters arising

**MC** **Network Rail Crossings** - Reported that the impressive new bridleway and footbridge crossing the railway at Barrowby Lane, Garforth has opened with a cyclist the first person to cross. <https://thetrupgrade.co.uk/barrowbylane/>

**HA** Reported that a DMMO had been submitted for a bridleway crossing a railway line in her area, but Network Rail had objected. There are proposals to divert the route about 300 yards along the back of the platform instead of it going across the railway.

**PA** On a sort of related topic we are concerned about is the new West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) Mass Transit system that's been consulted on. The proposals entail a new tram system linked by what is being referred to as the Weaver Network, which will incorporate cycling, walking and wheeling. It could have a big impact which we will be monitoring. <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/transport/weaver-network/?tabindex=2>

**PM** **King Charles III Coastal Path** - The update we have on the current state of the path, suggests it's open, but we know there are problems along what NE calls "this dynamic coastline".

**HA** There are big gaps and serious problems with erosion in places

**DM** Our contact for this is Edith Denton, National Trails Officer East Riding. Opening the section at Skirlington has been pushed back to Autumn 2026, and the diverted section at Outray still stands for the foreseeable future. There appear to be some funding problems in addition to the challenging landscape.

**PM** **The Coast to Coast National Trail** - The trail is expected to be declared National Trail despite no bridge over the A19, creating a recognised hazard. Members expressed concern at designation without essential infrastructure.

**PM** **All Party Parliamentary Group** - <https://outdoors.inparliament.uk/> We were hoping that Hannah Gardner would be able to give us a report on progress, but

unfortunately she was unable to join us today. I did send her my comments on the Report that they published last year, but have heard nothing.

**HA** Legislation is still needed to make sure that the Cut-off date for claiming public rights of way will not be implemented in 2031. It is concerning as the deadline grows closer. We should press for this.

**MC** The Stakeholder Working Group on PRow still meets. I can ask our Director of Access who is a member for news.

**VF** Suggested we should ask Andrew Mackintosh (NE) when it is going through Parliament.

**Right to Roam – Open Spaces Society (OSS) report** - Stephen Hill a local OSS Correspondent sent a report on an OSS Right to Roam Conference that he attended in Hebden Bridge last November.

**PM** The extent of what is being campaigned for is it still unclear. A recent article in the  
**HA** Farmers Weekly suggests it is moving forward. As I recall we have previously voted on whether we would support the scheme.

**VF** It would seem they are asking for something similar to the open access in Scotland, but with clear restrictions on some property and crops of a certain type.

**JT** This is a massive issue which would create an added burden on landowners. There are fencing and biosecurity considerations. He noted the absence of farming/landowning voices at the meeting and suggested that NFU input is essential before any position on expanded access is taken.

The forum concluded they could not support the proposal without further clarification. Link to the OSS March Newsletter <https://mailchi.mp/oss.org.uk/your-may-update-from-oss-15651117?e=d0a9a443ba>

## **7. Yorkshire Divide Presentation – Adrian White**

**AW** Yorkshire Divide organises a series summer bike adventures in Yorkshire, which take place as one day events or extend to 2 or 3 days over a whole weekend, and offer camping facilities <https://yorkshiredivide.co.uk/>

The events are themed to tell heritage stories woven into the routes. They describe the environmental, historical, and landscape features. AW's talk was richly illustrated with pictures of the beautiful Yorkshire landscape explaining how it had developed: the geology, watershed and watercourses, moors and mills.

The events have attracted approximately 1,800 participants to date and are open to everyone: mountain bikers, runners, walkers and horse riders on the bridleway routes. AW has run around 45 events so far with a women's event last year which attracted 120 people. The events also generate economic benefits to cafes bike shops and local communities.

AW described an example named the Calder Divide, a 150 mile trail that can be traversed in sections, crossing 12 valleys, 6 moors and 1 floodplain on paths of

gravel, peat and stone. Once trading routes for coal, lead, salt and wool AW gave a fascinating account of the landscape history for over 800 years.

**JT** Linking trail development with eco-tourism is an interesting concept. Do you organise these commercially as a business? Do you run them on PRoWs and do you inform the Local Authorities?

**AW** People pay for actual facilities they use such as campsites. We do run our events on rights of way, and although we attract a lot of participants over the summer, the entries for individual events are not that large. Start times are staggered – it is not a race: people of all abilities join in at that own time.

**JT** My concern is the lack of notice for landowners; it would also be wise to coordinate events with the LAs. In the NYMNPA we have experienced problems with organised cycling events.

**AW** That is something to take on board.

**MC** As well as being a BHS member, I'm also a member of a cycling group and we pay an annual subscription: around £2,000 a year of which goes towards repairing bridleways. I'd like to see more joined up thinking from other cycling groups. It should also be remembered that it can be intimidating to meet an event run on a right of way when you're just out for a quiet ride.

**PA** Wondered if AW might like to join an LAF, which would be a good way of coordinating Yorkshire Divide's effort with other groups.

**PM** Thanked AW for his presentation.

## **8. Any other business**

**British Horse Society Report – Mark Corrigan** - The Coast to Coast Path: will hold its official opening on 26 March.

The final diversion near Fylingdales has been agreed, and I have approved the cost of some new gates from our gate fund.

Maltkin Village Development: it has been confirmed that proposals to build 3,000 to 4,000 homes centred on Cattal Station between Harrogate and York will incorporate some bridleway facilities.

TROS: Another thing that I've been coming across quite a lot is TROS and temporary TROS which have been put in place to simply stop maintenance where councils have run out of money. I contacted PINs about a couple, one of which has been in place for the last three years, and just keeps getting renewed. PINS have just been agreeing to this but have now changed their stance and are demanding councils actually carry out the repairs. One of these was in Barnsley and that's been on there for six years.

You're never going to get a 1 size fits all solution, but I think if something can be can be fixed reasonably easily with consultation with landowner or statutory bodies and

stakeholders, then it's better to talk to them. Try to get it resolved rather than just say no, it's closed to you.

I'll do a presentation for the next RAF Forum if that would be helpful.

I can base it on a section 56. Notice that I served and then followed through to repair and re-opening.

## **9. LAF reports: see appendix 1 for full reports**

## **10. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be on held Wednesday 7 October and 10 March 2027 in Committee Room 4.

## **LAF reports**

### **Sheffield LAF – Nick Blaney via email**

We now have 17 members.

Unfortunately due to illness within the PROW team we were unable to restart the LAF meetings in February as planned.

I have also become a member of the Peak District LAF. 30% of Sheffield is within the Peak District so important to have that link.

### **Bradford LAF – Pam Allen**

PA I extended an invite to David Campbell (BMDC Countryside & RoW Manager) who has joined us today via Teams. He has moved from a Biodiversity post within Bradford and has been involved in establishing the Pennine Gateway National Nature Reserve which extends to 1, 272 Hectares across sites in Bradford and the South Pennines. We have great hopes for the new direction of the LAF.

Queensbury Tunnel: the situation is again critical as the deadline nears for Historic Railways England (HRE) to begin its abandonment work to put the tunnel beyond use.

There is currently a petition to halt the <http://www.queensburytunnel.org.uk/>

Following a further recruitment drive, 2 new members from the cycling fraternity have joined us; we are very pleased that cyclists are getting involved with the LAF.

We have had no further updates on progress of the Wharfedale Greenway, which seemed reliant on funding for 2 new bridges to link Menston Burley and Otley.

We began looking at the review of our ROWIP and formed a small sub-group to help move things along. We submitted some initial comments and queries last Autumn, since things have gone quiet. The PROW Team is working on questions for the consultation process but no timeline has been established. We are concerned that Bradford might take the ROWIP in the direction of favouring style over substance. We would prefer it if it contained simply stated achievable objects.

PM We need to get ROWIPS up to date, so they can be embedded in Local Transport Plans, and other relevant strategies such as Walking and Cycling Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Barnsley LAF - Steve Dennis**

SD Since our last meeting we have met twice, on (10th Dec and 28th Jan), however our Secretary Sarah Ford is off work following surgery, so we don't know when the next one will be.

In December we had a guest speaker from Woodhead Mountain Rescue to give an excellent informative talk of the very important work they do. We had hoped he might join the LAF but his work commitments don't allow the time, but he's agreed to be our liaison officer. He's also offered to come to Leeds with me to give a talk.

We discussed a couple of future improvements to the PROW network. A Flexi Pave Active Travel path from Birdwell to Hoyland Common. Clever use to upgrade a footpath to bridleway. There are plans to improve the TPT from Penistone to Wharnccliffe Woods, hopefully finally sorting Wortley cutting bog.

In January Richard Ramsdale from Barnsley Rocks spoke to us about the borough's geological make up. He managed to explain to me why the mud around Royston is the stickiest I've ever come across. Boulder clay fetched down by a glacier.

We discussed a land reclamation project currently taking place on Ferry Moor Lane, Grimethorpe, which was beginning to have impact on local walkers and riders. It will eventually be new wood and grassland with plenty of new trails onto Cudworth Common. By raising the issue the PROW team have been down and negotiated a new temporary path to help the situation.

Our PROW is very actively involved in our LAF, with Senior Officer, Definitive Map Officer, Enforcement Officer all personally attending, & we have representation for Barnsley Transport Department.

From attending the Regional I saw the importance of having Sub Groups to look at particular issues. We formed such a group. Our LAF have been dealing with the proposed Little Don Trail on the A616 at Langsett. Well over a million pounds of Public money has been spent to make a lovely safe route. However National Highways paused the project a few years back, when only about 200 metres short.

Unfortunately in April 2025 our worst fears occurred when local Cyclists Eddie Hirst was killed directly outside the water works by an HGV. A driver has been charged and the HM Coroner is involved. We as a LAF said we would do as much as we can to help get this completed. We came up with an idea to get the local MP Marie Tidball involved and two of our members went to her surgery. She was very helpful and said she would arrange a meeting with interested parties, BMBC, National Highways, Yorkshire Water, Parish Council, SYMCA, Upper Don Trails Trust, Sheffield LAF and others. We had the site meeting a couple of weeks ago we are hopeful, though a lot is dependent on a DMMO application for Penistone Lane, as Yorkshire Water are

prepared to release a route to get to this lane from the underpass. We hope that Marie can concentrate minds to find a solution.

We also made enquiries to see why Mr Hirst was on the A616. Was he a Road Cyclist or a cyclist using the road to find the Little Don Trail? From what we discovered it looks he was turning to the water works to get on the trail via the underpass. We have passed our findings to the South Yorkshire Police. The fact that the Trail is incomplete appears to be a major contributing factor into Mr Hirst death. We need it to be completed. It shows why the work we all do to provide safer access is so important.

### **North York Moors National Park LAF – John Toogood**

I took over as LAF Chair in December, in the aftermath of the moor fire. In August 2025, the Langdale Forest/Fylingdales Moor wildfire had been declared a major incident in August 2025. Most of the PRoWs were re-opened in December.

The Coast to Coast National Trail will officially open on 26 March 2026.

<https://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/things-to-do/walking/coast-to-coast>

The Lyke Wake Walk Society is campaigning to get the whole route recorded as a right of way, at present some of it traverses Access Land where the line of the route is not legally defined. This 42 mile route from Osmotherley to Ravenscar was formerly very popular, but its use has declined over time and standard of the path has degraded. Public access to Access Land can be removed, hence the need to protect it for the future. <https://lykewake.org/the-route/>

A regular topic is the Northern Gateway which aims to attract more cyclists from the north.

Member vacancies: we would like to attract more members and re-invigorate the LAF. We are keen to explore ways in which we can assist the Park Authority.

## North Yorkshire (outside the NPs) – Pat Coulson

### Report from NYLAF for Regional Meeting 11th March 2026

Since the last regional meeting, NYLAF has met once, 21st January.

#### Membership of the Forum

We have just had another member resign, through being too busy with work, so we are now two members down, so I will be asking for a recruitment process to start

#### Local Plan/Planning/Consultations

Our involvement with the Local Plan is continuing, with our sub-group having recently met with the NYC team. This has proved very beneficial and as timelines start to be drawn up for public consultation, NYLAF will be involved. The sub group are actively looking at the NPPF consultation and framework and National Decision Making Policies that relate to PROWs, as these will be crucial as the plan develops. Two other key areas to look at will be The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) and Open Space Needs Assessment (OSNA). A follow up meeting is being arranged for April.

Our involvement with the large 3000 home development between York and Harrogate, "Maltkiln", continues with the same sub-group. and a further meeting with the NYC team was held in February. Concerns raised by NYLAF include the vision of a "20 minute" settlement for those on foot and plans for a settlement that stretch over several kilometres, overspill residential parking coming into conflict with walkways and cycle routes, and provision of access to recreation space beyond the settlement. We intend to continue involvement with the plan, so that ROW and Open Space Access do not get watered down as this development gathers pace.

NYLAF has now been involved in providing feedback to all Three National Landscapes Management Plans ( Howardian Hills, Nidderdale and the Forest of Bowland ) and we feel that we will be further consulted if needed, as the contact with NYLAF has well and truly established.

NYLAF have responded to a number of planning applications, which had implications on the ROW network. We are still struggling to engage with the planning department, since the amalgamation into the Unitary Authority and have requested attendance at our next meeting in May.

Humber Carbon Capture Pipeline Consultation - thanks to our colleagues in East Yorkshire, we were made aware of this consultation, but hadn't received any notification directly. The turn around was short, so our Vice Chair Pat, looked at the plans and put together a response on behalf of NYLAF which was duly submitted.

At our last meeting, we also reviewed the NYLAF terms of reference and also noted the Government Environmental Improvement Plan 2025, which may have work that NYLAF will need to be involved in.

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## **East Riding and Humber Joint LAF – Hazel Armstrong**

We have lost a Row Officer, but have a replacement.

We have a new Secretary.

RoWIP: Hull's is not yet ready.

LAF Annual Report: 2 years ago the Council made the decision to only publish the glossy version biannually due to cost savings. We found the glossy version very useful as we were able to circulate it widely and give it away at shows which promoted the work done by our members and the Council.

The dual carriageway from Jock's Lodge to Skidby will open in July. Provisions for non-motorised users have been incorporated into its design, with a walking and cycling route on the West side and a bridleway on the East. Pegasus Crossings are being provided. <https://www.a164jockslodge.co.uk/scheme-details/>

The Humber Carbon Capture Pipeline and the East Coast Hydrogen Pipeline are 2 major infrastructure projects that re keeping members busy.

## **Leeds LAF – Mike Willison**

The LAF has met twice since the last Regional meeting – 25 November and 24 February.

- We have welcomed Ben Jackson, the new Public Rights of Way Manager replacing Bob Buckenham who retired last July.
- Prompted by the LAF, the PROW Team has been looking at prioritising DMMO applications. Leeds currently operates a 'taxi rank' system. An assessment scheme has been developed but needs further work by the PROW Team.
- Footbridge across Pudsey Beck at Post Hill – Yorkshire Water (YW) is proposing a flagship integrated wetland development to treat combined sewer overflows that enter the beck. As YW wants to encourage public access to the final reed beds of the scheme, the LAF tried to get YW to provide a footbridge to link the PROW networks on both sides of the beck. Stepping stones already exist and there are well-worn desire lines to the stepping stones from definitive paths on both sides of the beck. After an initial positive response YW has declined to install a footbridge. The LAF has sent a s94 letter to Leeds PROW to encourage them to seek other sources of external funding.
- A new on-line version of the Definitive Map has recently been introduced. Unlike the previous version, it only shows definitive and permissive routes. A second on-line map now displays all the routes believed to have public rights, including all DMMO application routes. All routes on the second map are currently shown in green. The possibility of showing all the DMMO application routes in a different colour is being considered.
- Vicki Franks, West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Active Travel Policy Officer, gave a helpful presentation and update on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS).

- Enforcement is being picked up again after 10 years without a dedicated full-time officer. It now forms just under half the time of the Community Access and Engagement Officer's role. A large number of s130 notices have taken up much officer time highlighting a countrywide issue of conflict between the Equality Act providing access for the less able versus protecting against illegal use. Unfortunately, the officer has just left but will be replaced once the job description has been tweaked to bring out the enforcement element. Until then new inspections will be limited to high priority and health and safety concerns.
- Recent updates have been made to the LAF pages on the Council's website to help raise the profile of the LAF by making agendas and minutes more easily accessible by the public. Ways of allowing members of the to participate in Teams meetings (2 of the 4 meetings/year) are being investigated. Any help/advice would be welcome.
- ROWIP update – It needs a significant review and has been put on hold until the new PROW Manager is in post. It has been noted that the update provides an opportunity to incorporate the output from the emerging LCWIPS.
- A PROW guidance document has been prepared for developers.
- The LAF has commented on the initial consultation of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit – Spatial Development Framework Joint Development Plan Document being prepared by WYCA. There are 2 main issues:
  - Mitigation of PROW network severance.
  - Integrating stops and hubs with the existing PROW network, and including equestrians where necessary and appropriate.