

MINUTES OF THE FORTY FIRST MEETING HELD AT BRAINS SA SUITE,
SWALEC STADIUM, SOPHIA GARDENS, CARDIFF 10TH NOVEMBER 2011

Present:

Chair

Dyfed Elis-Gruffydd NAFW Chair / CCW Council Member

Members

Becca Mattingly	Sport Wales
Rowland Pittard	YHA
Ken Barker	Cyclists Touring Club
Ashley Charlwood	Outdoor Pursuits Group & Welsh Sports Association
Dave Liddy	Forestry Commission Wales
James Parkin	Welsh National Park Authorities
Tom Packham	Dwr Cymru
Matt Strickland	Environment Agency Wales
Jeanne Hyett	British Horse Society
Charles De Winton	Country Land and Business Association
Ruth Rourke	Institute of Public Rights of Way & Welsh Rights of Way Managers Working Group
John Evans	Elan Valley Trust
Ian Dutch	Welsh Local Government Association
Angela Charlton	Ramblers Cymru
Gwyn Smith	Sustrans
Elsie Little	Cambrian Caving Council
Elfyn Jones	British Mountaineering Council
John Ellis Roberts	Mountain Leader Training Wales
John Harvey	One Voice Wales
Dafydd Jarrett	NFU Cymru
Rhian Nowell Phillips	FUW
Jean Rosenfeld	Local Access Forums in Wales & Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
David Bateman	Open Spaces Society
Euros Jones*	Federation Welsh Anglers
John Watkins	Welsh Government
Jim Embrey	Welsh Government
Andrew Stumpf	British Waterways

* Deputising for nominated member

Guest Speakers

John Griffiths AM	Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development
Lee Waters	Director, Sustrans Wales
Ann Humble	Head of Branch for Tir Gofal and Glastir Targeted Element and Woodlands, Welsh Government

CCW Advisors

Carys Drew	Forum Secretary & Recreation & Access Advisor
Sue Rice	Access Programmes Manager
Arry Beresford-Webb	Health and Recreation Policy Officer
Jont Bulbeck	Recreation & Access Section Head
Elinor Gwyn	People and Places Group Head

Event Support

Ceri Lyn Jones	CCW
Gwilym Lovgreen	Translator

Observers

Mark Weston	British Horse Society
Richard Morgan	Welsh Government

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Dyfed Elis-Gruffydd welcomed everyone to the meeting. Carys Drew ran through arrangements for the day and noted that apologies had been received from Lisa Payne, Peter Ogden, Martin Key, Peter Jennings, Nick Wynne, and Christopher Smith.

Whilst waiting for the Minister to arrive to present the first item on the agenda, Dyfed invited Jont Bulbeck to deal with two short items.

2. AOB – CCW Enjoying the Outdoors Newsletter

Jont Bulbeck informed the meeting about the Enjoying the Outdoors newsletter produced by CCW. One of the newsletter's original aims was to update NAFW on CCW work. It is published 3 times a year prior to NAFW meetings and is now distributed further e.g. to Local Access Forums and on CCW's website.

CCW is seeking feedback on the newsletter to ensure that it is as useful and helpful as possible to those with an interest in access in Wales. To do this CCW had launched an online reader survey. It would be helpful if Forum members could pass on the survey link to the networks that they represent and encourage them to complete the survey: <https://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/ccw/etonews>

Action 41.1: All to pass the survey link to their organisation networks and respond to the CCW survey on the Enjoying the outdoors newsletter.

3. UPDATE ON PROPOSED SINGLE ENVIRONMENTAL BODY (SEB)

Jont Bulbeck started by giving members an update on the Natural Environment Framework (NEF), which was being developed alongside SEB, as the programme and approach to work which would be delivered by the SEB. A Green paper for the NEF was due to be launched later in November but was now expected to be released in January 2012. Jont noted that this work would in due course inform the Welsh Government Environment Bill. Pilot projects are also being developed to inform the NEF work and will be starting in the Spring 2012. Further information and updates are available on the Welsh Government Living Wales website (<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/nef/?lang=en>).

In terms of the SEB process: a draft business case had been submitted to and considered by the SEB Programme Board on the 31st October. The business case would also be discussed at the SEB Steering Group early in November. The case has gone to other agencies for consideration and will go to the Minister for his consideration at the end of November.

The Minister is expected to make a decision about whether or not to proceed to develop a SEB early in the New Year. If the decision is made to go ahead then the new organisation should be in place by April 2013. There has just been a request for existing staff to be seconded to the team that would do the preparatory work in the lead up to the new organisation.

Dyfed commented as a member of CCW Council that it had occupied many discussions in Council. Council had drafted a letter to Matthew Quinn and Dyfed read an extract of the letter to the meeting about points particularly relevant to the business case.

‘Council Members continue to be enthusiastic about the proposals for a Single Environment Body, and in particular we were pleased to see the Business Case making reference to the Natural Environment Framework as it is this that provides the strategic context within which the proposed Single Environment Body will operate. In simple terms the NEF is the “what” and the SEB is the “how”. Because of this the form and function of the SEB must be designed to deliver the NEF. We feel strongly that the SEB consultation must be linked to that of the NEF and the Project Team and Programme Board must have this in mind before considering how to respond to the delay in the NEF consultation.’

Action 41.2: Carys to circulate the link to the Living Wales website for the Natural Environment Framework:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/nef/?lang=en>

4. WELSH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES FOR ACCESS

On behalf of the Forum, Dyfed then warmly welcomed the Minister, the Forum were looking forward to having the opportunity to hear directly from the Minister and to ask the Minister some questions. Two particular matters which were of interest were the continuation of funding for ROWIP implementation and for the future management of the Wales Coast Path after the end of the current programme.

John Griffiths AM Minister for Environment and Sustainability (hereafter referred to as the Minister) said how pleased he was to attend his first NAFW and to discuss his priorities and to set out his interests.

He said it was a very important agenda and all are keen to increase participation in responsible outdoor recreation. There are three prongs to the approach being taken by the Welsh Government – the Economic, Social and Environmental elements of sustainable development.

The Minister stated that it was not so much about setting out what the benefits are but delivering projects in recognition of the benefits. Delivery is at the heart of the Welsh Programme for Government and there is a clear commitment to increase and improve access for everyone, a particular group which would need to be targeted was families with young children.

As examples of delivery, the Welsh Government would be introducing duties to increase the facilities available for walking and cycling, and the Wales Coast Path would be opened on the 5th May 2012. The Minister said that Welsh Government is serious about this agenda and wants to continue to work together so that Wales can benefit.

The Minister wished to offer assurance to those with particular interests that did not seem to be covered in the programme. He said that he is very committed to widening access comprehensively. Since only 25% of the population was being active there was a participation gap that needs to be addressed. We need to improve on progress and this will be addressed and include a full range of activities.

With 80% of the population of Wales living in urban areas there is a need to look at how to get more people to enjoy the great Welsh outdoors. As well as the opportunities, for example in National Parks and on National Trails, quality doorstep opportunities were also needed to make the difference.

‘Urban Greenspace’ needed to be safe and attractive. Work was needed to draw on urban greenspace audits and increase and improve current provision. Poor management of greenspace also needs to be addressed otherwise this can lead to antisocial behaviour and a lack of pride in the community. In support of this work the Minister was very pleased to make the Green Flag awards at the Royal Welsh Show during the summer.

The Minister said that a crescendo was being reached in the delivery of the Wales Coast Path, with Welsh Government working with CCW and coastal Local Authorities. All being well the Wales Coast Path will be launched on the 5th May

2012. He said that there was already a lot of interest, with the Lonely Planet putting Coastal Wales as the No. 1 region in the World to visit and that this needed to be built on. The Minister recognised the effort of staff in CCW, the Coastal National Park authorities, Local authorities and landowners in working together to deliver this. The commitment from Welsh Government will extend to the future management and maintenance of the Wales Coast Path to ensure the long term benefits are realised for Wales. Linking the path to inland routes is important so that communities as well as visitors make the most of the facility.

With regard to the general network of public rights of way, Welsh Government have made additional funding available for the implementation of ROWIPS in Wales for the 4th year which has contributed to over 1,000miles of paths being easier to use. Whilst he was unable to announce formally as the Welsh Government budget for 2012/13 has not been confirmed, the Minister said that he was hoping to secure funding for ROWIP implementation next year at the same level as this year.

The Minister stated that he was also keen to make progress on access to inland Water, and had already met with interest groups. He was very pleased to hear from angling groups of their willingness to enter into access arrangements and also that Canoe Wales had acknowledged the Welsh Government approach to creating new access arrangements as a way forward. The Minister was keen to look at and enabling increased participation in inland water activities with the Splash funding programme.

The Minister said that it was important to have quality, fit for purpose and effectively joined up facilities which can meet social justice and equality agendas. There are benefits of spending time in the outdoors and opportunities for responsible recreation no matter where in Wales you live, he reiterated the importance of the three pronged approach of sustainable development and emphasised the opportunity that responsible outdoor recreation had to bring benefits to individuals, communities, businesses and society in general. He was looking forward to working with all the Forum members to increase participation in responsible recreation in Wales.

Questions and answers

Jean Rosenfeld said that as the Minister had eloquently pointed out, health benefits of using the access in rural areas are needed by people living in urban areas. Services which are provided by rural areas are free but there was a need to find a mechanism to transfer funds in order to manage these facilities.

The Minister responded that any ideas that might exist in terms of an urban and rural split were misplaced. Wales is a cohesive country; wherever you live you are close to facilities for outdoor recreation. A better understanding of what rural areas provide is being developed in the Natural Environment Framework, the Environmental, Social and Economic services, this needs to happen so that people value the environment properly and protect it for the future.

Jeanne Hyett commented that whilst the programme for Government and priorities for access were admirable, there was an enormous omission with no provision being made for horse riding. She stated that there are 93,000 horses in Wales which produce a tremendous economic benefit of around £3,000 per horse and £300million

going into the rural economy for livery, feed etc so from the economic perspective horses put a tremendous amount into the Welsh economy. Very little provision is being improved for horse riding, with only 15% of the network classed as bridleway and a further 21% as restricted byway or byway open to all traffic which horse riders can use whilst walkers can access 100% of the network. New developments always seem to emphasise provision for walking and cycling not horse riders.

Jeanne added that horse riders are counted as vulnerable road users. As well as the economic points there are health benefits and horse riding provides an important opportunity to get people out in the open air. Jeanne said she would like to see Welsh Government producing more for horse riders.

The Minister responded that it is not possible to mention everything in terms of general policy but emphasised that he takes a rounded view to access provision including horse riding and pony trekking. He remembered the impact on the Welsh economy of the Foot and Mouth outbreak when rights of way were closed and the economic impact this had. The Minister said that he knew that Alun Davies AM Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and European Programmes who had responsibility for Rural Development Plan was mindful of the advantages of the horse riding industry and that there is recognition in the Welsh Government of the benefits it provides. He said that there is an issue that comes up about shared access and what the right balance is e.g. in access to water with canoeing and anglers. The Minister acknowledged the point that Welsh Government and local authorities have to address riding in the Welsh outdoors.

Dafydd Jarrett said he was very pleased to hear the recognition of the important role of landowners in the success developing the Wales Coast Path. He reiterated the Minister's point that only 25% of the population are active and the need to increase participation in responsible outdoor recreation. He suggested that increased participation would bring increased pressure on the land where activities were taking place and that it was important to acknowledge the other uses which the land has, particularly for agriculture. He felt that more maintenance was needed to maintain existing routes rather than create new routes. Dafydd also noted that most of the problems that farmers have relate to dog walkers and that he would like to see Welsh Government support for better management of dogs in Wales such as microchipping of dogs.

The Minister emphasised the need for balance in providing access facilities and a two pronged approach, firstly looking at what is already there and then also looking at what new opportunities there are. The Minister understood the issues relating to dogs and would always emphasise responsible use of the Welsh outdoors by people walking their dogs. He was keen to encourage more responsible owners and had recently met with the RSPCA. He thought that it was an important step forward to microchip dogs and he and his officials were looking at this. He added that Draft regulations were due to be issued on dog breeding, and the UK government were looking at the Dangerous Dogs Act 1968. Welsh Government would see what action was intended and also consider any Wales specific issues. Welsh Government was looking at these three aspects and did want to see more responsible behaviour from dog owners.

John Ellis Roberts said that he didn't believe that quality contractors were being used for footpath maintenance, money was being thrown away on poor quality work rather than using local teams and longer lasting jobs were needed in the countryside. He then pointed out that wildfires were an annual epidemic in South Wales he was concerned at the cost of this and the danger that this could spread to North Wales, and asked what was being done to address this problem.

The Minister said that he enjoyed walking and wanted to maximise the benefits in procurement and that of partners to see the wider local economic benefits. Carl Sargeant AM Minister for Local Government and Communities had responsibility for fire and rescue service. He noted that projections for climate change are that Wales will experience hotter and drier summers and the need to future proof.

Action 41.3: WG ESD officials to contact colleagues in Local Government and Communities, and provide a note for the Forum to explain the work being done to address the wildfires problem.

Ken Barker said that the Minister's predecessor Jane Davidson had taken a keen interest in walking and cycling and asked the current Minister what his views were to progress this agenda in transport policy.

The Minister replied that in terms of responding to climate change he had had discussions with an anchor company for electric vehicle plans and that there needed be more integrated transport including plans under the Highways and Transport Wales Bill. He pointed out that given his Ministerial responsibility for Sustainability, which was at the centre of Welsh Government policies, that he always talked to and worked with his Ministerial colleagues.

Rowland Pittard asked about the CROW Act 2000 which when it came into being included a requirement for open access land to be mapped and for that map to be reviewed, he asked when this review would be taking place.

The Minister replied that he was always keen to keep policy under review and the requirements under CROW were to review within 10 years. He said that there would be a review of open access and a further question was how often access maps should be reviewed. There was concern that reviewing every 10 years was not adequate and he was looking at how frequently this will be done in future.

Elinor Gwynn added that CCW's People and Places Group for which she is head, have just embarked on the review and said that staff would be opening dialogue with stakeholders over the coming weeks and months.

Dyfed thanked the Minister very much for his stimulating talk and responses and hoped that this would be the first of many meetings that the Minister would attend.

5. WALKING AND CYCLING: THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT (WALES) BILL

Lee Waters introduced himself as Director of Sustrans in Wales and started by explaining that Sustrans was a practical charity not just about cycling but included walking, cycling and public transport and a wide spectrum of activities. Sustrans had been instrumental in getting a commitment in the Programme for Government for a Highways and Transport Bill which he would be talking about.

One of Sustrans' activities was the provision of infrastructure and opening new paths using the European Structural Fund. Sustrans had been instrumental in getting the funding and providing high quality paths linking deprived communities. In the Llynfi Valley, art works had been installed along the route which linked the community and path. The Valleys Cycle Network is a £17million project in the old south Wales coal field to extend the National Cycle Network. They were now at the delivery stage of the project which had had a long gestation process including getting permissions etc. An example included providing a new bridge making it easier for local people to get to the supermarket on foot or by bike on Dowlais Top.

In carrying out practical projects Sustrans identified systemic problems. Firstly the lack of seriousness of highways agencies towards walking and cycling, rather they focused on providing for people with cars and secondly, the lack of maintenance for walking and cycling routes that are built which meant that local authorities are creating a liability which they cannot fund – and therefore often choose to do nothing.

Sustrans put in a petition for a Legislative Competency Order (LCO) to request that the National Assembly seek legislative powers to require Highways Authorities to mirror their duty to provide a network of roads with a duty to provide a network of routes for walking and cycling. When launching their petition Sustrans partnered up with organisations who would not normally be associated with the walking and cycling agenda including the Royal Mail and British Telecom to emphasise to politicians the cross cutting nature and wide benefits that could be achieved. The LCO process was painful and wearing, and the Welsh Government initially opposed the LCO. However, the Assembly's all Party Enterprise & Learning Committee supported the law making proposal and this built an alliance across all parties.

The Programme for the Welsh Government now includes a proposal for a Bill for local authorities to have a duty to develop and maintain a network for Walking and Cycling in key areas, this Bill belongs to Government and it is in their ownership to drive forward.

Lee hoped that by making his presentation he would open up everyone's minds to see the opportunity this Bill provides. He said that Welsh Government officials are open to considering possibilities and have 12 months to develop this draft legislation with a Bill in around 2013 that might come into force around 2014. He also hoped that alongside new legislation that there would be a broader resource commitment for walking and cycling in the National Transport Plan and that with only 2% of journeys being made by bike, if sustainable development is to mean something things have to

change. Two generations don't walk and cycle enough and obesity rates at epidemic rates are direct proof of this.

An English consortium had published evidence based research about understanding walking and cycling. It included information about attitudes to walking and cycling, factors that inhibit walking and cycling and what needed to change to increase levels of walking and cycling.

[View the research at:

http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/research/society_and_environment/walking_and_cycling.php]

Personalised travel planning is a marketing intervention which Sustrans is leading. They are going direct to the household and looking for a 10-14% reduction in use of the car, starting by asking people to consider swapping one car trip per week for sustainable travel.

There is also a need for infrastructure intervention, so that when someone is persuaded to swap their car journey for their bike that they are not put off by a bad experience. Walking and cycling needs to feel easier and more normal, and it needs to feel less normal to drive in the car.

The research showed that integrated routes were needed in looking at the large English towns. However, the authors had acknowledged that a suite of facilities needed to be available including traffic free routes. Roads needed to be made safer together with better off road provision for vulnerable road users.

Lee said that the Highways and Transport Bill will not be a panacea or solve everything, the Welsh Government need to increase their delivery on this agenda and meet rhetoric with action.

Lee finished by saying that he would like all stakeholders to start to push the Government when it comes to consultation, the Bill is not a minority pursuit and he hoped that Forum members could form an alliance to work on this.

Questions and answers

Rowland Pittard said that in looking at the development of cycle ways in the Llynfi Valley Railway so many paths and different purposes, these routes are very useful. He felt that highways engineers need to make routes safer for people use by including lighting.

Lee Waters responded that perception is one of the biggest barriers rather than safety. The more people that use a route, the safer it feels and this helps to tackle concerns. Actual levels of crime are low and in developing routes it is an overall concern to make minimum intervention and keep costs down. Although as the agenda steps up it may be something to think about on a case by case basis in order to attract people that might be put off some routes.

Mark Weston suggested that there would be potential for the Bill to include equestrian use and by including other users this would provide the best value for all.

Lee suggested that it was up to everyone to make their case to policy makers. Some of the National Cycle Network does provide horse riding which should be thought about on a case by case basis.

Jeanne Hyett commented that a route in Blaenau Gwent which had been multi user (including horse riding) for many years had been modified to include it as a cycle route and now had barriers preventing horse riding.

Gwyn Smith said that he wasn't aware of any such routes being managed by Sustrans in Blaenau Gwent but would be happy to look at this case in more detail with Jeanne.

Lee stated that barriers on new routes are a problem and that good practice in existence isn't always applied, he stated that the standards need to be raised and the Bill offered an opportunity to develop a Welsh suite of design standards.

Elinor Gwynn noted that the Bill mentioned a duty to develop a network in 'key areas' and asked Lee if he knew if the areas had been decided on?

Lee said that key areas had been included in the Labour manifesto possibly as a way of limiting costs but if the Welsh Government wanted to see nation wide improvements in sustainable travel choices then the network would need to improve across Wales. He also felt that Welsh Government would be opening themselves up to judicial review if they selected some areas above others. He said that the reference to key areas was meaningless and should be removed.

Jont Bulbeck asked whether there was any sense of how officials were considering what type of routes the Bill would apply to; in particular whether they were considering differentiating between recreation and transport use in drafting the Bill and if the scope of the Bill would include the rights of way network and adopted non-vehicular network?

Lee replied that case studies and evidence showed that use is different on routes at different times of day. The first step is giving people a facility that they feel is safe. He said it was a false dichotomy to talk about transport use versus recreational use and he was keen not to present it in those terms. He added that thinking on the Bill is in the very early stages and that officials are alive to the fact that rights of way legislation exists and the new Bill should complement it.

Ian Dutch asked how this Bill would link into the ROWIP duties. He added that Highway authorities already have duties in relation to paths which aren't always discharged.

Lee agreed that a duty is an empty vessel in of itself and there was a danger that it could look good but not do anything. He said that Carl Sargeant AM Minister for Local Government and Communities who had responsibility for delivering this Bill was determined this wouldn't happen. He felt that there was a sincere invitation from Welsh Government officials to get in touch with them to provide views and advise at this early stage in development. He added that ROWIPs have an important role.

Jont Bulbeck pointed out that the duty to prepare a ROWIP will stop in 2017, so that duty will cease around the time that this Bill would become an Act. This could therefore be an opportunity to build on the ROWIP duty and he would be interested to discuss this.

Ken Barker commented that there was some history of highways in Wales with highway engineers designing for mixed use and over engineering; he asked whether Sustrans were talking to these professionals to advise them on appropriate design.

Lee replied that Sustrans had been running training with SEWTA in south Wales in particular looking at design for streets and road safety audits. Sustrans are relating to them in that setting. He added that guidance was already available but this could be an opportunity to introduce standards and more training for staff to help increase capacity. He said that if the Bill was going to transform our culture more needed to happen alongside the Bill and Sustrans had prepared a paper on this.

Ruth Rourke asked how new routes would be recorded. She highlighted that the current processes for the List of Streets did not work well and is very archaic. There are also issues relating to the definitive map and she noted that highways do not keep adopted records in the same thorough way that the rights of way network is recorded on the definitive map. Cycle Path Orders are not often made, storing up issues for future management and maintenance. She said that there needs to be a proper procedure for recording these routes and where they are.

Lee acknowledged this matter and agreed to take the points back in his discussions.

John Ellis Roberts highlighted a problem with fell racing and mountain bike races on rights of way and asked whether any legislation would stop or control use, this needs to be thought about.

Lee responded that whilst we want to encourage use there is a tricky balance and a unilateral approach is not applicable. Thinking on the Bill has not developed that far but these points need to be included. He pointed out that this is the Welsh Government's Bill and it is up to representatives to make suggestions.

Andrew Stumpf said that use needs to be evaluated and related back to maintenance. He would be making sure that waterways appeared as they can be forgotten about.

Dyfed asked the Forum what they would like to do to take this matter up with officials and suggested inviting Carl Sargeant AM Minister for Local Government and Communities to a future meeting.

Lee added that it would be particularly useful and timely to write to officials with views from the Forum.

Jont Bulbeck then suggested, as had been done in the past, the formation of a subgroup of NAFW to take this work forward. CCW could draft a paper for consideration by this subgroup which could then be sent to the Welsh Government officials dealing with the Bill, this was then agreed as the way forward.

Action 41.4 : Carys Drew to invite Carl Sargeant AM Minister for Local Government and Communities to next meeting.

Action 41.5: Before the next Forum meeting: CCW to organise a NAFW Subgroup meeting with a view to producing a paper that should then go to WG Transport officials.

6. COASTAL ACCESS PROGRESS UPDATE

Sue Rice began her presentation updating the Forum about the delivery of the Wales Coast Path by telling the Forum about the very welcome attention received in the media. Bill Turnbull had talked about the Wales Coast Path (WCP) on BBC Breakfast News and then the Lonely Planet had voted Coastal Wales the best region to visit in 2012. There was a need to build on this opportunity for marketing.

The Wales Coast Path is 96% complete. There were some issues that would not be overcome in the space of the project and it is important not to see the 5th May 2012 as the end point. The future maintenance is being considered as is the need to put the path on the ideal route in sections where it would not be possible within the current project. For example a stretch of new route between Newport and Cardiff will be in place by 5th May but there is a green 'fall back' route in place.

With regard to marketing, a sheet was tabled which gave members a sneak preview of a WCP highlights sheet that would be in the WCP Press Pack. The WCP would have its own website but information would be on the CCW website whilst this was being developed. There would be three launch events were likely to be held at Flint Castle, Aberystwyth and Roald Dahl Place, Cardiff Bay.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park had won the marketing contract for the WCP and their officer Anna Mullarkey had set up activity on social networking. She encouraged anyone on Twitter to link up to WCP. There had been a great increase in interest on Twitter since the Lonely Planet announcement.

There would be charity events organised as part of the Big Welsh Walk being organised by the Ramblers to coincide with the launch of the WCP and the idea was to encourage as many local events as possible with Ramblers working with lots of other charities. Sue encouraged members to join their local walk and organisations to link into the Big Welsh Walk.

Wales would be the 1st Country in the world that you could walk the entire coastline and Sue highlighted two charity events taking in the whole of the route. CCW's Arry Beresford Webb was organising the Dragon Run which would be 39 marathons in 39 days taking in the Wales Coast Path and Offa's Dyke National Trail and Walk Wales which was being organised in memory of the late Gerry Quarrell who had been instrumental in getting the Wales Coast Path by his son.

Sue also said that a short marketing video would be available on CCW's website and would seek to put it on youtube. There would be a full item on the Wales Coast Path at the next NAFW.

Questions and answers

Dafydd Jarett voiced concern about the content of the leaflet showing Wales Coast Path highlights. There was no reference to the wider environment and other uses of the land being crossed by the WCP, particularly agriculture. He asked CCW to revisit the highlights and include references to agriculture rather than adrenalin.

Sue replied that the leaflet is an overview of the more detailed information in the press pack and that it isn't possible to include everything on the highlights sheet. She agreed to check that agriculture was included in the wider press pack. The activities included on the sheet are things you can do along the way as a user of the WCP and it is important to get information out that attracts people to use it.

Action 41.5: Sue Rice to check agriculture is included in the wider info in the press pack.

Ruth Rourke stated that in nearing the end of the WCP project, staff in posts that were being funded by the project in coastal authorities couldn't be expected to wait long before looking for other employment to know that funding and future contracts would be confirmed. She asked whether there was a time frame of when authorities would be told about future maintenance arrangements including funding.

Sue responded that there is ongoing work to look at maintenance requirements which Jont Bulbeck is looking at and added that funding offers to local authorities included funding for staffing until March 2013.

Jont confirmed that CCW has been asked to provide information to the Welsh Government.

Jean Rosenfeld said that local authorities can take the initiative. In Flintshire the authority had funded a staff member and this was encouraging private investment support. Local Access Forums have a role to play and could press their authorities to do the same.

7. MENTRO ALLAN – THE FINDINGS ARE OUT!

Arry Beresford Webb presented a summary and overview of the recently published Evaluation of Mentro Allan. Arry had circulated a paper prior to the meeting.

Mentro Allan was one element of a Programme called the Community Sport Initiative which looked at barriers to activity. Wales took the decision to look at general physical activity rather than just looking at sport.

Sport Wales managed the Mentro Allan Programme other partners with a Wales wide remit, public health and research and evaluation expertise.

The findings from the Mentro Allan may seem like a lot of common sense, but there are some very surprising findings which will be valuable when both developing new projects or in the evolution of existing projects encouraging physical activity in the outdoors . She noted that there was a big social aspect coming out across all the findings. In terms of provision, transport is a massive barrier which is important to note as often transport is one thing which grant funders often exclude from eligible costs.

The paper and presentation provided an overview and introduction to the large amount of documentation, case studies and practitioner guides which were available on the Mentro Allan website, when this website closed the information would be transferred to the websites of the national partners.

Becca Mattingley who attends NAFW for Sport Wales was also involved and could answer any detailed questions.

Questions and answers

Jean Rosenfeld mentioned that the Campaign for National Parks had recently obtained funding to extend their successful Mosaic projects to the Welsh National Parks. This project has been running in England for some years and is concerned with getting people (especially from deprived and ethnic minority communities) involved in the National Parks and outdoor activities in general. The CNP were currently recruiting staff for the Welsh projects and it would be useful for the Mentro Allan team to make contact with them.

Angela Charlton asked what had happened to the participants in the Mentro Allan pilots. Ramblers had seen a big increase in requests for organisation to become Ramblers groups in order to be sustainable after Big Lottery Funding had ended and this wasn't always appropriate.

Becca Mattingley said that nearly all projects had been able to continue in some shape or form.

John Ellis Roberts stated that he didn't think the Welsh Countryside could cope with the level of projects and use, there is no money there to fund maintenance. The Mountain Leader Training Board was struggling to get funding to get trainers to issue awards.

Rowland Pittard said that the YHA had benefited from Mentro Allan projects and that if we are going to support this work continued funding is needed.

Arry responded that in organising a project increasing environmental awareness can be incorporated into the activities so that participants better understand where they can go and what they can do. It is important to educate and raise awareness.

Dafydd commented that having more people would bring more pressure and more maintenance requirements.

Jean Rosenfeld said that this was the reason that he had asked the Minister about valuing rural services to the wider community and paying for these services.

Action 41.6: Carys to circulate the link to the Mentro Allan website:

<http://www.mentroallan.co.uk/>

8. GLASTIR

Ann Humble presented information about Glastir, the new All Wales Agri environment scheme.

Ann explained the structure within the scheme. Glastir is the overarching prescription, the main part of which is known as the All Wales Element (AWE) and the Welsh Government target is to bring 70% of Wales's farmland and common land into the scheme. She said that the largest group of farms taking up further commitments are likely to move the Targeted Element (TE). There was potential for woodland owners to access the AWE as part of the separate woodland scheme. Another part of the scheme was known as ACRES which was about energy efficiency, water quality and slurry storage. Ann highlighted the fact that Woodlands are now going into the Glastir umbrella scheme so landowners with only woodland have an opportunity to join.

The first intake of some 2217 applications for the AWE was currently being processed.

Under the AWE agreements, landowners must have their public rights of way open, this will be inspected and the routes will be shown on CCW's access maps (Outdoor Wales online).

Ann then spoke about the Targeted Element (TE) for which she is responsible. It is running a year behind the AWE or Commons contracts. In starting to look for further specific enhancements they can only go forward if landowners are signed up to the AWE or Commons. Under AWE farmers put together their own plans whilst under TE contract managers will provide the detailed technical advice and negotiate additional commitments on the farm.

The TE has a specific set of objectives which Welsh Government is trying to achieve. In each area of work WG have gone to the experts and objectives have been spatially defined by the experts to produce a set of Target Maps. Those farms that show that they have the most to offer in terms of delivery of TE objectives will be selected. The selection process takes farm size into account so that large farms are not favoured.

Access is an option as part of the TE, farmers do not have to take up on this option. In access target areas, TE contract managers will be proactively looking at opportunities of putting in new routes and infrastructure e.g. linking new routes to the Wales Coast Path to help manage the influx of people, links to the East to West Bridle route

Outside (and inside) the target areas, the WG team have identified that it is local people that know about where they would like to see new routes, so the team have gone to LAFs and asked them ahead of time where they think permissive access should be developed and if they know of any issues, that could be resolved with some intervention on offer from TE (such as improved surfacing, gates or resolving pinch points). Any suggestions and ideas for inclusion of permissive access needed to go through the LAFs. WG have already gone through the first draft of the LAF maps and taken forward suggestions.

New permissive access would be shown on CCW access maps (Outdoor Wales online) and Ann said that they were working on a way to feedback at a local level about where new permissive routes were created.

Since woodland was a new addition to the scheme, Ann would be going out to ask LAFs to consider access in woodlands especially considering urban access. The only way to gather local information was through the LAFs and any amendments to the LAF Access maps needed to be with WG by June 2012 electronically, paper maps can be submitted, but need to be with WG by the 1 May 2012.

Questions and answers

Elfyn Jones asked if access is just linear or if open access is included.

Ann replied that open access is also included.

John Ellis Roberts asked if the LAF access maps are they publicly available.

Ann said that not all LAFs got electronic maps. Access is publicised on CCW website and plaque on the start of the route. It is a challenge to publicise as OS wouldn't include permissive routes and the contract under Glastir is only for 5 years.

David Bateman asked about the Welsh Government target to bring 70% of Wales's farmland and common land into the scheme. Landowners on his LAF didn't feel the scheme was sufficiently attractive for the scheme to reach that target. He also asked what members of the public should do if they found a problem on any PROW crossing Glastir farms and whether there was any provision to let the Rural Inspectorate Wales (RIW) know about any problems.

Ann replied that there was provision for reporting problems, which was the same as under Tir Gofal, a form could be filled in and submitted to RIW or Glastir Contract Manager could be contacted who would fill in the same form. 70% is a target, at the moment farming is favourable and Glastir can only offer the rates they offer, it is a business decision for the farmer.

Ruth Rourke commented that the impression had been given the LAFs had been able to provide good quality information. She had a number of concerns. The last time LAFs were approached was 2 years ago and only 1 month's notice was given. LAFs are supported by information but it is the authority officers that provide this support and they are extremely busy with other work. There was no indication given at the time that this would be an annual requirement, this would have given LAFs and

authorities the opportunity to work on this in advance. She was concerned that local authority access officers would be the most appropriate first contact point for this work, to work with the LAFs. She added that she had offered to meet the Glastir team and provide maps but that meetings had been cancelled.

Ann responded that there was a problem in that information provided needed to be consistent across Wales, when her predecessor had asked, information was not available in up to date consistent way from all authorities.

Jean Rosenfeld was concerned that the LAFs were important to include as the local stakeholders shouldn't just be the local authority officers.

Ruth replied that she wasn't suggesting that the LAF be excluded but that LAFs are different across Wales, some are proactive but other are not. In asking the LAFs and authorities to look at the maps again in time for June 2012 this is a very big task, a lot of authorities cover large areas, if it could be honed down to more specific areas, by telling authorities which farms are being considered then this would make it more manageable, otherwise it is a huge task. She emphasised the need to be told where to target consideration of permissive access and know where they are. LAFs meet 2-3 times a year so it needed to be a more manageable task.

Ann reiterated that she did not have the resources to be able to share the information about where farms are on a case by case basis and that LAFs need to consider permissive access opportunities across the whole of their area.

Dyfed closed the item due to limited time and asked members to take up questions with Ann during lunch.

9. MATTERS ARISING

Carys updated the Forum on the actions from the last meeting.

Joe Roberts had passed the comments from the Forum about the Countryside Code Refresh to Natural England. NE was considering the Code prior to publication, no date had been given for when this would be issued. Joe was working on the Activity codes for Water access – swimming, angling, canoeing and this would be consulted on between Jan and April 2012.

10. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

Ruth Rourke said that IPROW was in discussion with the Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping. OS had agreed to add permissive access provided it was covered by an agreement of at least 5 years and from a Local authority ratified source. Ruth had suggested the Equality Act as an item for the next NAFW agenda as there are implications for access.

The Planning Inspectorate for Wales has decided to mirror the procedures used in England by adopting the spirit of the Rights of Way (Hearings & Inquiries Procedure) (England) Rules 2007. Although the Rules only apply to hearing and inquiries, the spirit of the Rules will apply to all cases in Wales, including those dealt with by way of written representations. To reflect this change, and to aid all parties who will be

involved in future Order submissions, they have produced new procedural guidance for Wales which takes effect from October 2011. This guidance is not on their website at present. However a copy is attached with the Minutes.

Jeanne Hyett circulated the executive summary of the BHS report of the Health Benefits of Horse riding in the UK and said that the full report was also available.

Tom Packham said that Dwr Cymru was now embarked on a definite project to provide a Llandegfedd Water Sports Centre and on 17th November there was to be a competition of architects for the award of the commission.

Dwr Cymru was working with Brecon Beacons National Park authority to forge access agreements for paddle sports and set up pilot schemes for BBNPA reservoirs starting on the 1st January 2012. Investment was also taking place in partnership with Denbigh CC to establish a Cycling Centre of Excellence at Llyn Brenig in North Wales.

James Parkin told the meeting that a joint scrutiny exercise on public rights of way service delivery in Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and Brecon Beacons National Park was being carried out which included consideration of value for money. Information would be available in 2012.

Dave Liddy said that the Forestry Commission Coed y Brenin Visitor Centre was being extended. Exciting developments taking place with a private sector venture of a bike park at Gethin Woodlands. He also informed the meeting that according to user counters on routes the last September had been their busiest ever.

Ken Barker said that the Welsh Cycling Festival had been a success. Next year it would be held in the Wrexham area.

Rowland Pittard said that the YHA were organising a number of activities around the Wales Coast Path with the National Parks and Ramblers.

John Harvey noted that LAFs have a concern about how Glastir will be applied and that time would be wasted by not knowing where the targeted element areas were.

Elfyn Jones said that BMC were starting work with Ystyby Gwynedd looking at inappropriately made 999 calls. Research was being carried out by medical students and with the Ramblers. Early next year a leaflet would be produced by the BMC to explain to landowners and occupiers the situation regarding Occupiers Liability issues from allowing rock climbing activities on their land, with contributions from CLA and NFU.

Angela Charlton said that Ramblers Cymru were organising the Big Welsh Coastal Walk. There was also work being supported at Plas y Brenin to provide free training for support and promotion of projects involved in the Big Welsh Coastal Walk. Opportunities to put forward projects for OS Geovation competition. Focusing on walking facilities and business on the Wales Coast Path.

Andrew Stumpf said that Welsh Government, via Transport funding through Powys County Council, were providing £220,000 funding for surfacing and access

improvements to the Montgomery Canal and a further £250,000 for similar improvements on the Llangollen Canal. A further £60,000 has been awarded through the Welsh Government's Ecosystem Resilience, Diversity and Compliance Fund to enhance the nature reserves on the Montgomery Canal.

British Waterways were working with all of the communities along the whole length of the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal to encourage events to celebrate the canal's bicentenary. Suggestions for events or activities to use, or new uses, of the route could be sent to david.morgan@britishwaterways.co.uk. David is being part funded by CCW as part of their work to encourage access to the countryside. Part of that work includes working with Monmouthshire County Council, Cadw, Visit Wales and the Forestry Commission (Wales) to look at the potential of Goytre as a destination.

British Waterways works closely with Sustrans and are currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding. As part of this work Towpath Guidance is being developed to look at the needs of users, including the Horse Boating Society, and the choice of appropriate surfacing materials. It is currently an internal document and consideration was being given to its wider use and dissemination. The waterways of Wales (and England) will transfer to a new charity in 2012. The name has now been released which is Canal and River Trust or Glandwr Cymru - the Canal and River Trust in Wales. Positions for the Chair of the All Wales Partnership will be re-advertised in 2012 after an initial low response.

11. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Dyfed announced the dates of the meetings for 2012:

- 6th March 2012, Conwy Business Centre, Llandudno Junction
- 10th July 2012, (Mid Wales location to be arranged)
- 13th November 2012 (South Wales location to be arranged)

Dyfed then thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.