

### **Planning and Travel Committee**

After a flurry of very demanding applications etc., during the autumn things have quietened down a little. We still await a response from Network Rail in respect of their proposals for the Barrow on Soar crossing. We have given advice to NW Leicestershire D C in respect of two medium sized housing development pushing Whitwick out towards Mt St Bernard Abbey. These were just in our generic form as appropriate but with suggestions for links in the rights of way network

We have been invited to the hearings on the proposed Freight Gateway near to East Midlands Airport but the first hearings are just procedural and we will not be attending.

## Network Opportunities Committee

### 1. UNRECORDED WAYS

Stan continues to add records to the master spreadsheet, which will be the foundation for our research work. Jim Storer has joined the subgroup from the Ramblers. As well as developing the way we manage the data, Jim has also volunteered to add grid references to the master spreadsheet.

It has been confirmed that the parish returns held in room 700 are now being scanned by the LCC. This will be a great help when working on the project.

Roy has emailed the Charnwood Roots Project, stating that we will be using similar records and suggesting that we should explore how we can work together to help each other.

Stan has invited the two members of the Leicestershire Footpaths Association to join our subgroup at the next meeting, as they have a wealth of knowledge which could help the project going forward.

### 2. OPEN ACCESS LAND

The Access Land surveys team have approached all the land owners involved in the sites visited during 2014 with some success. We have written to both the Clerk and the Chairman of Markfield Parish Council and have not even had the courtesy of an acknowledgement. It has been heard via a third party that they are to put a stile in to afford public access to their at present completely closed 'Access Land'.

We have had a detailed response from the Leicestershire Wildlife Trust which is attached to this report. They explain their difficulties and problems and do invite us to put up signage and indeed imply that furniture at somebody else's expense would be acceptable. The group need to meet to digest and discuss the issues raised some of which require a dialogue with the Access Authority. Some of their points invite further comment from us. (Sites: Altar Stones, Loughborough Meadows, Charnwood Lodge) We have met on site with a representative of Hinckley and Bosworth at Billa Barra- We walked over some adjacent land we think should be brought formally into the park although not of course part of the Official 'access land'. This land to the south of Billa Barra Hill, is neglected scrub land owned as a residue by a quarry company and is well walked by locals and has a right of way through it. It could be used to make really good new links to the footpath network.

H&B initial thoughts are that even if they could get this land for nothing, there would obviously be certain costs that would need to be met for the ongoing maintenance of the area as well as public liability issues etc, and they would have reservations about taking on further areas of land with the limited resources they currently have. Their Green Spaces team will forward the details to their Asset Management team to enquire what their policies are for taking on additional areas of land. On the strength of this response we have raised the possibility with the National Forest and their funds are committed for next year if their ambitions come off. They might be interested in the future if there is capacity on this sizeable plot to plant more trees which we feel there is. The last possibility is that when we talk to the LRWT further we explore any interest there.

Paul Scragg from Hinckley & Bosworth is to organise some new information boards and to look at better signage within the park. Some now unnecessary barbed wire fencing can be removed and the line of the right of way mown out. He is also to replace a brand new kissing gate which has 'gone missing'. He is to consider an extra gate into the summit area where we suggested. We showed him the two entrances to the wider park which seem to have been forgotten and are certainly neglected. He is happy we put up 'Access Land' notices when LCC as the Access Authority can produce some.

The roadside verges common land is still being checked by Vicky Allen. Burrough Hill and Burbage Common will be checked early next year.

### 3. COUNTY FARMS

Possible route for the disabled at Quorn:-

The cost estimate for the route should be available within the next three months. A follow up meeting will be arranged after the cost estimate has been determined to identify funding streams.

Plans for tenancies due to end in 2015:-

These included farmland at Mowsely, Broughton Astley and Husbands Bosworth. The subgroup recommended a PRoW on the land at Mowsely, but felt there were no opportunities of enhancing the PRoW network on the other farmland.

Hall Farm Blaby:-

With the planning permission rejected it was felt that it was an ideal time to re-examine the holding and to identify a suitable PRoW. The subgroup has recommended a number of PRoWs on this land which includes dedication of the permissive path.

#### 4. COUNTRYSIDE FOR ALL

Leicestershire and Rutland Community Forum:-

This is a forum run by the Leicester-Shire & Rutland Inclusive Sports Association (LARISA) which is the support structure for disability sport and physical activity throughout Leicestershire and Rutland. Whilst there was a very poor attendance in terms of numbers, all appeared to be very keen on Countryside For All route literature being created for Leicestershire. The members of the Forum that were present thought that promoting Countryside For All routes at health centres where there is a visual display calling system, incorporating health promotion topics would be useful.

Leicestershire Physical Activity Development Officers:-

A presentation was given to the Physical Activity Development Officers in relation to the "Countryside For All" routes.

Brocks Hill Country Park:-

Brocks Hill Country Park are running a training session for those who wish to create "Countryside For All" routes in April 2015

National Forest Company Access and Recreation Working Group:-

Discussions were held relating to the Countryside For All route literature being created for the National Forest and the Woodland Trust sites within the National Forest. The members of the working group appeared to be keen to adopt the Countryside For All route literature for the National Forest.

Heart of the Forest Forum (Meeting due to take place):-

Countryside for All routes and the opportunities to make the countryside routes more enjoyable for the blind will be discussed.

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