

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Who is on the Local Access Forum?

The North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum consists of 14 members of the public plus three elected members (two members of the ruling Group and one member of the opposition Group). Members are appointed, following open advertising, and the representation is balanced between those who use the countryside for recreation and those whose main interest or experience is in land management or farming. Other interests are also represented such as conservation, tourism and regeneration. There are currently three vacancies on the Forum.

Who are the Members?

Forum Members	Status	Expertise and Interests
Edward Anderson (Chairman) Guy Hoey	Landowner's Consultant Access User	Walking, landownership, conservation Walking, estate management, disabled access rights
Andrew Towns	Farmer, Landowner	Farming, landownership, cycling, walking, conservation
Richard Alderson	Landowner's Consultant	Walking, landownership, farming, cycling, conservation
Hazel Armstrong	Access User	Green tourism, health, riding, cycling, walking
Steve Ball	Access User	Rambler's Association, walking, cycling
Frances Ross	General Interests	Walking, Rights of Way, member of the Lincolnshire Field Paths Association
Mary Jenkinson	Access User	Walking, motorised vehicular use, disabled access rights
Giles Dixon	Access User	Tourism, conservation, farming
Suki Jackson	Farmer, Landowner	Walking, dog-walking, landownership, farming
Charles Appleby	Access User	Horse riding, Cycling, Conservation, Member of English Heritage
Cllr Mashook Ali	Councillor	Transport issues
Cllr Tony Ellerby	Councillor	Environmental issues
Cllr David Wells	Councillor	Conservation and environmental issues, member of English Heritage

LAF agendas, minutes and dates of future meetings can be viewed on:
www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Transportandstreets/Publicrightsofway/LocalAccessForum.

If you require any information please contact the Secretary on (01724) 296235 or email dinah.lilley@northlincs.gov.uk.

What is the North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum?

The North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum was established by North Lincolnshire Council in response to sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 and had its first meeting in December 2003. It works as an advisory body on the improvement of public access to land for open-air recreation and enjoyment, having regard to the needs of land management and the desirability of conserving the natural beauty of the area.



View of Alkborough Flats

Photograph – A Moody, North Lincolnshire Council

Chair's Introduction.

In introducing this year's report I hope readers will have enjoyed a good year using footpaths, bridleways and access areas in our county and beyond. I hope too that some of you are new readers and hopefully that could mean you are new 'walkers'.

There are many different and varied organisations – some statutory e.g. Natural England, and some voluntary e.g. The Ramblers Association, all of whom regularly put out newsletters and reports telling us about the success of schemes to improve or open up paths and areas in the countryside. The Local Access Forum aims are the same but with the added advantage of a specific duty to encourage the local authorities to ensure areas designated for open public access are actually available and accessible to the public.

North Lincolnshire has seventeen areas designated as open access however many are inaccessible to the public as there are no public rights of way to connect them to the public highway. Experience shows that the process of obtaining rights of access can take years and is often further constrained because of a lack of funds to create new paths etc. Clearly this year has seen many organisations and bodies chasing a limited amount of funding for projects, all worthy and beneficial, but often having to be delayed or shelved for a long time. It is probable this situation will deteriorate in this next financial year as budgets are further squeezed.

On a more positive note I am pleased to welcome new members onto the forum. Cllrs Ali and Ellerby, replacing Cllrs Regan and Smith to whom we extend our thanks, and Mr C Appleby. We are still looking for new members and if you are interested please contact our Secretary, whose details are at the end of the report.

Recently the weather has offered some challenging opportunities for those of us who enjoy walking and I have noticed in particular how many people have been out with their cameras photographing the snow covered scenery. It is my hope than many more people will discover the pleasure of walking throughout the coming year.

Edward Anderson
Chairman.



Middlegate, near Worlaby

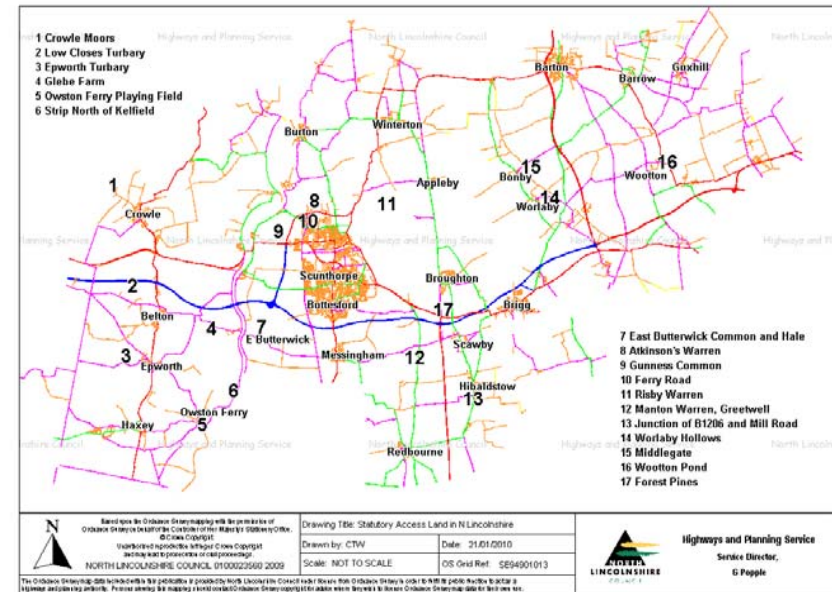


View from the Wolds

Open Access Areas

An area previously designated as Open Access in our area is at Gunness Common, lying to the north of the A18 as you leave Scunthorpe. Unfortunately there are presently no public rights of way to access this area. The rights of way team have during the past year been in negotiation with adjacent landowners and reporting progress to the Local Access Forum. It is hoped a public footpath can be created to enable the public to access this parcel of land within the next year and we look forward to completion of this work in due course.

As mentioned in the introduction to this Annual Report there are many such areas in North Lincolnshire which require much time and effort to create the necessary rights of access but this one at least looks to be near a successful completion.



Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

On 12 November 2009 the Marine and Coastal Access Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act of Parliament. Its aims are to (1) balance conservation, energy and resource needs and (2) improve access to the English coast. In our area of interest the provisions of the Bill regarding coastal access cover coastal land, which is likely to be from the east of the Humber Bridge to the North Lincolnshire boundary with North East Lincolnshire.

Natural England has been tasked to prepare a coastal access scheme which will set out how it will approach implementing new coastal access rights. As there already exists a public footpath from Barton on Humber through to South Killingholme we are thus not affected although the Access Forum has and will continue to monitor any proposals or changes which may affect this.