

# Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum Annual Report 2005 / 2006

## Foreword

**By Sir Edward Nall (Chair) and Alex Staniforth (Vice Chair)**

It's been a busy time for the Local Access Forum since the annual report of July 2005. Our most important function this year has been the input into Nottinghamshire County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), for which we have been an active consultee.

The forum's sub-groups have continued to function. The Motorised Vehicles and ROWIP sub-groups have both developed in their respective fields, and a new Way Forward Sub-Group has redefined the Forum for the future.

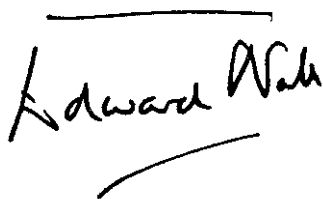
When dealing with a subject as vibrant and invigorating as rights of way, there's always something new to learn, and forum members have embraced this ethos. Members attended a regional training event at Kinoulton organised by the Countryside Agency and Defra, and Carolyn James attended training in Bristol on Changes to Guidelines for LAFs and in Birmingham for a National LAF Meeting. Nottinghamshire County Council provided training on Public Path Orders in the New Year.

Part 1 of the CROW Act (2000) commenced here in Nottinghamshire on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005, providing the new statutory right of access on foot – open country and registered common land.

Unfortunately we have had to say goodbye to two members, Russell Price and Steve Taylor both resigned as forum members this year. I'm sure I speak for the entire forum when I thank them for their input, and wish them well for the future. I would also like to thank Andrew Oliver and all members of the Environment Department who have helped us throughout the year.

The Environment Department has worked hard to promote the Forum in the public domain. LAF members attended the Countryside Access Conference in November 2005, and we have embarked on a recruitment drive for new members.

Lastly, I have decided to resign as Chairman, although I intend to continue as a LAF member. Alex Staniforth will be acting as Chair until January 2007, with Peter Hiley acting as interim Vice Chair. I am confident that Alex and Peter will lead the Forum in the right direction, and that 2006/7 will be a bountiful year for the LAF.



Sir Edward Nall



Alex Staniforth

## **Introduction**

This is the third report of the Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum, as required by the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Section 94).

The forum was established by Nottinghamshire County Council in July 2003. The primary purpose of the forum is to provide advice to Nottinghamshire County Council (as the appointing body) on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation. The Forum is a statutory consultee on various matters including; draft maps of Open Country and Registered Common Land and on Rights Of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP). The County Council must have regard to the advice of the Forum when carrying out its functions.

## **Membership**

Membership of the Forum (at July 2005) consists of 18 members who have been selected through a selection and shortlisting process. Currently, five members represent 'land managers and owners' interests, six represent 'users of rights of way and countryside access' and five represent 'other relevant interests'. Included in the 18 members are two nominated by Nottinghamshire County Council Members, representing Labour and the Conservative parties.

Since the last report two members have left the forum; Steve Taylor and Russell Price.

## **Members biography 2006**

### **Alex Staniforth – Walking**

Alex is an active member of the Ramblers' Association in the Nottinghamshire Area both at local and at county committee level. He has served as Area Secretary (for over eight years) and was instrumental in setting up new rambling groups in the county. He is a joint co-ordinator within the Area running Navigation and Leadership Courses to encourage potential walks leaders. Currently he holds the position of Area Countryside Officer dealing with many issues including all kinds of development which may adversely affect the countryside and the rights of way network. He recently completed a two-year course at Nottingham Trent University on Countryside Management and Conservation Skills, which is proving beneficial in his work. (*Other interests: conservation, countryside management, tourism*).

### **Carolyn James - Disabled Access**

In July 2001 Carolyn had a fall which resulted in a spinal cord injury and a fracture to her neck. Before the accident she was a keen mountain and country walker who enjoyed introducing the pleasures of the outdoors to the students she taught at a Nottinghamshire Secondary School. Now she is disabled she still tries to get out into the countryside despite the many obstacles that make it difficult. As medical science improves and people's life-span lengthens she knows that there will be increasing numbers of people like herself who will want to be able to get out and enjoy the 'great outdoors'. (*Other Interests: walking, youth and community access*).

### **Claire Herring - Estate & Visitor management**

Claire has worked in a variety of countryside management roles for the past 12 years, as a community woodland officer for BTCV, then heading up the Countryside Ranger Service

for Doncaster Metropolitan District Council and most recently as Property Manager for the National Trust at Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire. For the past 2 years, Claire has worked as an independent environmental consultant and training provider. Claire maintains an active voluntary involvement with a number of organisations, leading practical conservation projects for the BTCV and acting as the National Training Co-ordinator for the Countryside Management Association. In her spare time she enjoys the local countryside and rights of way network of Nottinghamshire walking her two dogs, cycling and horse riding. (*Other Interests: Forestry, Conservation, Walking, Tourism*)

### **Derek Ward - Cycling**

A keen cyclist covering around 5000 miles annually both on and off road, Derek has extensive knowledge of bridleways and other tracks throughout Nottinghamshire, particularly the Ashfield and Mansfield areas close to his home. He is a leader for Nottinghamshire County Council's Rural Rides programme and can be found most weekends on one of the rides. His interest in conservation and the reclamation of derelict land inspired him to complete an HND in Landscape Design & Management in 2000, leading to his employment as a Designer and Team Leader. (*Other Interests: Conservation*).

### **Francis Thomas – Rural Business**

Originally from Kent, Frank has lived in Nottinghamshire for 50 years, and after military service has worked as project engineer for Rolls Royce. Frank is a partner in a family-run rural livery and saddlery business at Bassingfield, south of Nottingham. The Chairman of Holme Pierrepont and Gamston Parish Council and Treasurer to West Bridgford Local Area Forum, Frank is also a member of the British Horse Society and the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and is on the regional consultative group for DEFRA. A keen walker, rider, cyclist, mountaineer and yachtsman for many years, Frank is keen to see better access to the countryside for all. (*Other Interests: Equestrian, Parish Councils, Walking*).

### **Geoff Stevenson – Walking**

Geoff is a retired soldier and civil servant and passionate about maintaining a strong countryside heritage, conservation and caring for the environment. He is realistic to the needs of all users and open minded about sympathetic development needed to meet the changing demands on the countryside. In particular, he is keen to see improved access for the less able bodied and those with children and pushchairs. He has a wide experience in dealing with Government Departments, Local Authorities, Statutory Bodies, land owners, pressure groups and the public, all of whom have an important role to play in protecting and developing our countryside. He is a keen Rambler and fisherman and his recent retirement has renewed his interest in inland waterways. (*Other Interests: fishing*).

### **Hilary Limb – Horse riding**

Hilary has many years experience dealing with rights of way issues for horse riders. She was the British Horse Society's County Access and Bridleways Officer for Nottinghamshire between 1993 and 2002 and also ran a local bridleways association campaigning for better access and road safety for horse riders. Hilary is a member of CPRE and is interested in all countryside issues, and she would like to see multi-user rights of way developed to improve access to the countryside for all users on a fair and equal basis. (*Other Interests: cycling*).

### **John Dunn – Conservation**

Conservation is one of John's primary interests, and he works for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. He is also actively involved in the practical work of the Countryside Restoration Trust, being Chairman of a committee which is managing woodlands and farmland in West Yorkshire. John is a member of Everton Parish Council, being Parish Path Warden, Tree Warden and manager of a closed churchyard nature reserve. He is also a member of the Woodland Trust, Friends of the Earth and the Notts Wildlife Trust. John has considerable experience of youth work through involvement in the Scouting movement, and is a keen walker. (*Other Interests: walking, parish councils*).

### **John Goddard - Farming**

John is an agricultural contractor from a farming family and has lived in East Drayton for 37 years. He has several public rights of way on his farm, and maintains these and other local paths through his involvement in the Wayfinder Farm Partnership scheme (set up by Nottinghamshire County Council) for the last 9 years. John is a long standing member and former Chair of East Drayton Parish Council, and has also served as a member of Bassetlaw District Council. (*Other Interests: land management and parish councils*).

### **Paul Ainscough – Land Management**

A land agent with Smith Woolley, Paul has been managing rural properties in the East Midlands since 1987. He is currently vice-chairman of Nottinghamshire Country Land and Business Association, and believes that sensible access improvements can bring opportunities to all. In addition to his professional interest in the land, Paul has a keen amateur interest in the environment, and can regularly be found walking his dogs on the footpath network near his home in Grassthorne.

### **Peter Dodsworth – Conservation**

Peter is from a farming family and has lived in South Nottinghamshire all his life. He still has strong connections with agriculture through three brothers-in-law who are farming in the county. Originally a physical chemist working on new agricultural and pharmaceutical chemicals, he became involved with the use of computers and information systems in research and before retiring was Research Information Services Manager. He is also an enthusiastic amateur photographer and, as such, has a keen interest in nature conservation and responsible access to the countryside.

### **Peter Hiley – Motor Vehicle Use**

A life-long resident of Nottinghamshire, Peter has been involved in the Trail Riders Fellowship, (TRF) a national organisation for those using legal motorcycles on legal vehicular rights of way, since 1979. In this capacity he was a delegate to the Nottinghamshire Rights of Way Liaison Group for 14 years. From 1986 to 2002 Peter served as a Magistrate. He also assists as a marshal at long distance and cross country horse events. (*Other Interests: walking and equestrian*).

### **Robert Clough – Farming**

Robert Clough runs a family-owned arable farm at Tuxford in northern Nottinghamshire, producing wheat, barley, oilseed rape, sugar beet and combinable peas. He attended agricultural college in Bedfordshire before returning to the family farm in 1985. Robert is currently the Nottinghamshire County Chairman of the National Farmers Union and branch chairman of Retford NFU. He is keen to ensure that farming in Nottinghamshire stays profitable and is environmentally aware. Robert is married and has one son and a black Labrador.

### **Russell Price – Farming**

Russell Price runs a mixed farm in the south of the County. He is married with two young children, and his interests include conservation and country sports. He is keen to see access to the countryside improved whilst striking a balance with farmers and landowners. (*Other Interests: conservation*).

### **Sir Edward Nall Bt – Land Owning**

Sir Edward's family have been landowners in Hoveringham for nearly 150 years. He has a variety of public rights of way across his land, which includes a small area of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). He is a trustee of Papplewick Pumping Station Trust, a member of the Country Land and Business Association committee and is the Secretary of the Notts branch of the Game Conservancy Trust. A retired soldier, he is now also the County Chairman of Macmillan Cancer Relief. (*Other Interests: conservation and shooting*).

### **Steve Taylor – Youth & Community Work**

Having worked in coal mining for 10 years, Steve started his own countryside and woodland management business in 1990. Steve is now a Community Ranger for the Forestry Commission, and has a broad experience of working with youth and community groups in rural and urban fringe areas. Steve's interests include woodland crafts, conservation and walking. (*Other Interests: Conservation, equestrian, landowning*).

### **Jim Napier**

Nottinghamshire County Councillor (Labour, Retford North). *Other interests: Heritage, Greenwood Community Forest.*

### **John Hemsall**

Nottinghamshire County Councillor (Conservative, Tuxford). *Other interests: Parish Councillor, Police Authority Member.*

### ***Brief summary of meetings***

The Forum has met 3 times since the previous annual report:

### **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005 at County Hall (7.00pm)**

#### ***Agenda***

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting 26<sup>th</sup> July 2005
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda
4. Open Access Presentation by Claire Herring
5. Defra LAF Consultation
6. Feedback from Sub Groups (Motor Vehicles / ROWIP / Role of the LAF)
7. Membership Matters (Chair / Vice Chair / Training)
8. Any Other Business
9. Future Dates, Timings and Venues

*Items discussed:* Open Access Land, Defra proposals for guidance for LAFs, ways to make the LAF more effective, Sir Edward Nall announced he would stand down as Chair in July 2006.

## **Tuesday 31st January 2006 at Brackenhurst College (7.00pm)**

### ***Agenda***

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda
4. M1 Widening Scheme: Presentation by Mark Praciak and Xavier Woodward from ARUP.
5. Introduction from LAF Members
6. The Way Forward Paper
7. Feedback from Sub Groups
8. LAF Membership (Chair/Vice Chair)
9. Any Other Business
10. Future Dates Timings and Venues

*Items discussed:* M1 widening presentation by guest speakers Mark Praciak and Xavier Woodward, determining the direction of the LAF, LAF membership

## **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at County Hall (7.00pm)**

### ***Agenda***

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda
4. Gating Orders
5. Report of LAF Sub Group and Defra training by Carolyn James
6. Feedback from Sub Groups (Motor Vehicles/ROWIP)
7. Publicity
8. LAF Membership (Chair/Vice Chair)
9. Any Other Business
10. Future Dates and Venues

*Items discussed:* The way forward for the LAF, press releases and LAF publicity, ROWIP local consultation and update.

### ***Information about the Forum***

The Chair is Alex Staniforth and the Vice-chair is Peter Hiley. Members of the forum are unpaid, albeit they are able to claim travel and subsistence allowances and expenses.

Neil Lewis is the Forum secretary and the Countryside Access Development Officer for Nottinghamshire County Council. Andrew Oliver is the Forum's administrator, who is also employed by the County Council as an Office Support Manager.

The minutes of all meetings are available from the Forum Administrator and on the website [www.nottslaf.org.uk](http://www.nottslaf.org.uk) Contact the administrator on 0115 977 4549 or e-mail [countrysideaccess@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:countrysideaccess@nottscc.gov.uk)

**LAF member meeting attendance 05/06***Notes: a – apologies received*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Oct-05</b>	<b>Jan-06</b>	<b>Apr-06</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Alex Staniforth	☺	☺	☺	
Carolyn James	☺	☺	☺	
Claire Herring	☺	☺	☺	
Derek Ward	☺	X	X	
Frank Thomas	Xa	X	☺	
Geoffrey Stevenson	☺	☺	☺	
Hilary Limb	☺	☺	☺	
Jim Napier	X	X	Xa	
John Dunn	☺	☺	Xa	
John Goddard	Xa	☺	Xa	
John Hempsall	☺	☺	☺	
Paul Ainscough	☺	X	Xa	
Peter Dodsworth	☺	☺	☺	
Peter Hiley	☺	☺	☺	
Robert Clough	Xa	X	Xa	
Russell Price	Xa	X	X	Resigned 2006
Sir Edward Nall	Xa	☺	☺	
Steve Taylor	X	Xa	X	Resigned 2006