

County Durham Local Access Forum

At a meeting of the **County Durham Local Access Forum** held at the Green House, Annfield Plain on **Monday 20 August 2007** at **6.00 p.m.**

Present:

Geoff Hughes in the Chair

Members of the Forum

Roger Cornwell, Barbara Crozier, Alan Dougherty, Gael Dixon and Steve Scoffin

Officers

Barry Charlton, Victoria Lloyd and Mike Ogden

Observers

Jo Bird and Chris Pope (Natural England)

Apologies for absence were received from, Brian Harwood, David Maughan, Bob Pendlebury and William Salvin

1. Hedleyhope Fell

The Secretary informed the Forum that Craig Best of Durham Wildlife Trust had submitted his apologies and was unable to attend the meeting as result of illness. Arrangements will be made for him to attend a future meeting.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2007 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

Warcop Training Area –The Forum were informed that a reply had been received from MOD Estates (for copy see file). Any issues arising from the reply can be followed up at the next meeting.

Regional Local Access Forum Letter – The Forum were informed that an acknowledgement had been recently received and that it was hoped to have a substantive reply before the next Regional LAF meeting on 4 September.

Open Access – In relation to the review of restrictions on open access Mike Ogden explained that Natural England is considering removing or amending the restrictions on a number of sites. Voluntary rangers have received training and will be carrying out monitoring of the sites to find out how much

they are used. Once the monitoring is completed it is expected that the Forum will be consulted on the review of the restrictions.

4. Rights of Way Improvement Plan

County Durham ROWIP – The Forum supported Steve Scoffin's view that the ROWIP was an excellent document and were pleased to be associated with it. The Chairman explained that he had co-ordinated responses received from LAF members on the draft ROWIP and that these comments would be drawn together and submitted as the LAF response to the ROWIP. *(A copy of the comments is attached)*

It was felt that the Forum should continue to be consulted on the ROWIP particularly on the implementation of the plan and that the item should be standing item on the agenda.

The Chairman expressed the view that it needed more specific actions and needed a stronger corporate identity. He also suggested that might be helpful to identify partner organisations and include their logos.

One of the issues that arisen from the consultation related to equestrian access to the County network of railway paths. Barbara Crozier explained that not all of them are available for equestrian use but was of the view that all routes should be available. In particular riders are not able to use the Haswell/Hart railway walk through Castle Eden. Victoria Lloyd advised that discussions have started with Easington District Council colleagues who own the walkway. She explained that this was not a conflict between different users but a conflict between access and nature conservation as part of the route was board walk. Gael Dixon also mentioned that carriage drivers had also been prohibited from using the same walkway. Steve Scoffin referred to problems with maintenance of walkways and expressed his concerns that vegetation was not being cut on the Lanchester Valley walkway and that there was insufficient width to allow walkers and other users to pass comfortably.

The ROWIP lead officer advised that the consultation ends on 8 October 2007. The process to be undertaken prior to the approval of the ROWIP by the Cabinet on 1 November 2007 was also explained. The Forum discussed the launch and the possibility of using a celebrity in order to raise the profile of the ROWIP and of the Forum. Roger Cornwell suggested using the new bridge being erected over Old Durham Beck as a photo opportunity for the launch of the plan. It was agreed that the comments forming the Forums response to the ROWIP will be circulated with the minutes.

Darlington ROWIP – The Forum were advised that the Darlington ROWIP was also out for consultation and available on their website. Members of the Forum mentioned that the document did not address cross boundary routes/issues and agreed that this should be raised with Darlington Borough Council.

ACTION – That a response be made on behalf of the LAF to Darlington Borough Council.

5. Regional Co-ordination

Chairs/Vice Chairs meeting on 12 June 2007 – The Forum received the notes of the meeting held on 12 June 2007 (for copy see file).

Regional Training Event – Members of the Forum were reminded of the training event which is to be held on Wednesday 10 October and were asked to respond to Natural England as soon as possible.

6. Access to the Coast Consultation

The Forum discussed the DEFRA Access to the Coast Consultation event held in Durham on 2 August 2007. Three other consultation events had been held prior to the Durham event. The event was well attended and representatives found it useful to hear the views of DEFRA and Natural England on what is being proposed. The Forum was represented by Roger Cornwell, Barbara Crozier, Alan Dougherty, Geoff Hughes, William Salvin and Steve Scoffin. Members were subsequently requested to forward any comments to Steve Scoffin which will form the LAF's formal response to the consultation.

The main issues which arose were around liability and compensation for landowners. It was agreed that the Forum's response to the consultation will be circulated with the minutes. *(The response is attached)*

7. DEFRA Consultation - Implementation of the right to apply for orders to extinguish and divert public rights of way, and associated rights of appeal

Mike Ogden informed the Forum that DEFRA are consulting on a proposal to implement a new statutory right of application to local authorities and national park authorities, for orders to extinguish or divert public rights of way. The new rights, which are intended to benefit certain categories of landowner/occupier/lessee are contained in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The deadline for response is 31 August 2007.

Mike explained that the new right was being proposed because some local authorities would not consider applications for diversions/extinguishments from landowners. The County Council already considers applications from landowners and it is not expected the new right will have a great impact within the County. The new right will allow the authority to charge for making orders from the start of the process even if the order is not confirmed. There was concern that the right may result in additional work for local authorities and could distort priorities with the result that non statutory work is delayed. It was agreed that the Forum would respond to the consultation raising this issue.

ACTION - That a response be made to DEFRA.

8. Annual Report 2006/07 and Action Plan 2007/08

Steve Scoffin advised the Forum that he expected to complete the draft annual report and work programme by the end of September. This will be circulated to the Forum for comment.

ACTION – Steve Scoffin to complete the Annual Report/Work Programme.

9. Recruitment to the Forum

Mike Ogden advised the Forum that following articles in Countywide applications had been received from seven applicants. Four/five of the applicants are recreational users and two are from the health and community sector. There have been no expressions of interest from land managers.

Approaches will need to be made to organisations and individuals with a background in land management who are interested in joining the Forum. The Forum will be updated on any further progress.

ACTION – That approaches be made to appropriate organisations and individuals before the Authority complete the selection process.

10. Access to the Countryside Scrutiny Project

Mike Ogden circulated a note (for copy see file) updating the Forum on the progress made in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group.

- **Dedication of land** – The Forum felt it would be helpful to have maps showing County Council land which had potential to be dedicated for open access. In addition it was suggested it might be helpful to have a member of staff from Estates attend the next meeting of the Forum and that an item be placed on the agenda. It was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair would prepare a letter to be sent to Estates seeking maps of suitable land and the attendance of an appropriate member of staff.
- **Other Issues** – There was a delay in the publication of the Medium Term Financial Plan and there was no indication when a decision would be made on the business case for additional funding. In relation to the recommendation to engage with the Area Tourism Partnership, it was agreed that an approach should be made to the Chief Executive of the ATP to arrange a meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum.

ACTION – That the Chair and Vice draft a letter on behalf of the LAF to Estates seeking maps of land suitable for dedication and the attendance of a member of staff at the next meeting.

11. Logo for the County Durham LAF

The Forum considered a number of logos for the County Durham LAF. The Forum supported the logo which is a design based on routes dissecting an area and makes the shape of an 'A' (for access). It was suggested that blue to represent access to water be incorporated within the logo. This will be progressed with reprographics.

12. Rights of Way Liaison Group

Mike Ogden explained that there was some overlap of membership of the Forum who attends the meetings of the Rights of Way Liaison Group. The Group meets twice a year and is chaired by the Chair of the Highways Committee and helps exchange information between the authority and a wide range of organisations. The minutes from the meeting held on 17 July are not yet available but will be circulated as soon as they are finalised. The item will be included on the agenda when there are any minutes to circulate.

ACTION – That a copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July be circulated to the Forum.

13. Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at County Hall Durham at 6.00 p.m. on Monday 19 November 2007. It was suggested that County Council land suitable for dedication should be included on the agenda.

14. Natural England Consultation

The Forum was advised that Natural England had circulated a consultation on the activation and expiry of fire prevention restrictions under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Chris Pope explained that forecasting errors under the fire severity index did not allow the activation of restrictions when fires were already burning. Alan Dougherty was concerned that restrictions were being applied when they were not needed and suggested that a response should be made by the Forum. Alan agreed to draft a response to be sent by the Forum.

ACTION – That a response be made to Natural England

LAF Feedback on Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

General

- Support careful consideration given to producing the document
- Pleased to be identified as partners
- Wish to be consulted at all quarterly meetings about progress
- Look for ways to working with others to implement
- Needs more specific actions in some cases
- Very workman-like document
- Write as County Council not Countryside Group
- Needs summary

Overall an accessible workman-like document, it will need a little proofreading as I spotted some errors e.g. it's instead of its.

Specific (by page)

Page 4

- include logos of all partners inside front cover or on back cover

Page 7 1.1

- “.....document prepared **on behalf of** Durham County Council.”

Page 32

- Remove section on Fibredec surfacing
- Change wording of Policy 2 to “Provide high quality surfaces on railway paths”. Need to be able to be monitored.

Page 33

- Explain what CAMS is.
- Change Policy 3 to “To keep the Definitive Map and Statements up to date”.

Page 34

- Action OI3 change 2007 to 2008.

Page 36

- Support Action CN2!

Page 37

- Action DM3 Add “...and implement a programme of improvements.”

Page 43

- Change Policy 6 to “ Ensure an annual maintenance budget to enable the maintenance of the resource to a standard suitable to all users.”

Page 45

- Action OA1 Change to “Produce a plan for Open Access links”.

Page 47

- Action PA1 Change to “Establish good working practise on permissive and access routes with Natural England”.

Page 48

- Action D1 Change to “Include the access element pf the SPD to form the basis of future guidance on access and development and ensure its adoption by the planning authority”.

Page 50

- Change “Countryside Group” to “County Council”.

Page 51

- Action PW2 Change “Seek” to “Commit”.

Page 59

- Policy 14 Change “To continue to work with partners to deliver” to “To continue a partnership approach to deliver....”.
- Action W3 Add “including”
- Action W7 Change “Seek ways to engage....” To “ Develop joint working between Highways...”
- Add Action W8 “Develop and promote opportunities for circular walks associated with public transport routes”.

Page 62

- Add Action C7 “Publish a design guide for cycle infrastructure and provision.
- Add Action C8 “Link the disjointed bridleway network for cyclists.”

Page 63

- 6.6.3 – some railway paths are still not open for equestrian use (e.g. Castle Eden Walkway)

Page 64

- 5-10miles is the optimum

Page 65

- Add Action EQ6 “Establish all railway paths as multi-user routes.”
“horse **riding** and carriage **driving** at Hardwick Park”.
- Add EQ6 Seek to establish all railway paths as multi-user routes

Page 68

- Action NU1 Change to “Use existing research to develop a strategy to engage non-users.”

Page 71

- Action AA3 Change Countryside Group to County Council.

Page 73

- Add “riding” and “cycling” to second paragraph.

Policy 20 Change “sports” to “physical activity”.

- Action S2 Change to “Support events that use the access and rights of way network.”
- Add Action S4 Include information on walking/cycling/jogging routes at leisure/health and fitness centres and hotels.

Page 73

- List of informal sports could include hacking and long distance riding.

Page 74

- Action H2 Add “In partnership with PCT seek to....”

Page 75

- Action T2 Change to “Commission work with tourism providers to produce promotional materials”.
- Add Action T7 “In conjunction with hotels, seek to provide display maps and information on local access and rights of way.”

Page 76

- Change Action ED1 “Produce an Access and Rights of Way School Pack for every secondary school and implement a programme of promotion.”
- Action ED3 Change “Include” to “Promote” and add “with six schools per year”.

Page 79

- Actions P2 – P6 How will this be achieved?
Policy 26 Change “undertake” to “establish”.

Page 80

- Action PS1 Support Action, but where will this take place?
- Add Action PS2 To investigate the potential for multi-user access on Co Council land.
- Change Policy 28 to “To fulfil the Dedication of Land and Demonstration Project by (give date).”

Page 81

- Chapter 8 (Action Plan), objectives not all SMART.

Page 84

- Change DM3 to Priority 1

Page 86

- Change OA1-OA3 to Priority 3

Page 87

- Change D3 to Priority 1

Page 94

- Change H3 to Priority 1 and PCT as lead

Page 103

- Add BHS, BBT, BDS

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Consultation on Proposals to improve access to the English Coast Response proforma

Please use this proforma to answer the questions in the above document. The closing date for the submission of responses is **Tuesday 11 September 2007**.

Responses should be clearly marked in the subject field **Consultation on access to the English coast** and should be sent:

- by email to: coast.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- or by post to: Andrew Crawford , Coast and Open Access Team, Zone 1/01, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EB

The email address may also be used for general queries relating to this consultation. Please mark the subject field **Consultation on access to the English coast**.

To help us analyse responses, please provide details of yourself or your organisation (*if appropriate below)

In line with Defra's policy of openness, at the end of the consultation period copies of the responses we receive may be made publicly available through the Defra Information Resource Centre, Lower Ground Floor, Ergon House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR. The information they contain may also be published in a summary of responses. If you do not consent to this, you must clearly request that your response be treated confidentially. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in email responses will not be treated as such a request.

You should also be aware that there may be circumstances in which Defra will be required to communicate information to third parties on request, in order to comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations.

Defra's confidentiality statement in full can be found at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/coast-access/letter.htm>

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Date of response	21 st August 2007

NB: on the form below, please leave the response box blank for any questions that you do not wish to answer. Responses including any general comments you might wish to make are welcome on any number of the questions.

For each question it would be helpful if you could please indicate whether you agree, disagree or are uncertain by marking the box (as appropriate).

Chapter 2: Vision and Outcomes					
1 Do you support this vision? If not, what vision do you have for improving access along the English coast?					
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Do you have any comments on Outcome 1?					
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>There is a need to clarify which areas will be excluded and how often there will be a review of these areas.</p> <p>This is perhaps the single most important element of any future costal access arrangements</p>					
3 Do you have any comments on Outcome 2?					
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		

There is a need to be clear about how barriers to access will be overcome and how routes will be created to reach the coast. There is a need to avoid temporary closure which will make clarity of information difficult (cf Open Access Land).

4 Do you have any comments on Outcome 3?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The mechanism for creating routes over private land and impact on property rights needs to be clarified. This is particularly the case where spreading room is proposed. It is not clear how this will be addressed.

The links between landscape, access, biodiversity and coastal management are to be welcomed - however, there is a need to also highlight links with cultural heritage and archaeology.

5 Do you have any comments on the relative importance of the three Outcomes?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Outcome 1 is most important for the LAF. However, there are clear linkages between all 3 outcomes.

Chapter 3: Factfinding and conclusions drawn

6 Are there any other sources of information you are aware of which you consider should contribute to the evidence base?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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7 Do you agree with Natural England’s overall picture of the current access situation on the coast? Any there any other studies that might support these conclusions or add to them?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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There is a need to consider issues of other activities where the potential may be unlocked by improving access eg sea angling, canoeing.
The issue of dogs needs to be addressed.

8 Do you agree with Natural England’s strategic conclusions? If not, what aspects of Natural England’s strategic conclusions do you disagree with, and why?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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It is important to stress how dynamic the coast is as both landscape and habitat, and how it may be affected by future climate change. We support the need to retain 'future-proof' solutions to maintain coastal access.

There is a clear need for the proposed Coastal Access Code.

9 Are there any other perspectives or factors that you think should be considered?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Resourcing is a key issue, both in the first ten years where financial resources should be 'hypothecated' to coastal access, and beyond the ten years to ensure continuity and sustainability of delivery.

Chapter 4: Work undertaken on benefits and costs

10 Do you have any comments on the benefits and costs identified in the partial Regulatory Impact Assessment?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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11 Are there any other benefits and costs that are relevant to the options which should be considered?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The benefits of higher rights needs to be assessed.

Chapter 5: Option 1 – Highways Act 1980

12 Do you agree with Natural England's assessment of option 1 – use of the Highways Act 1980?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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13 Do you agree with our assessment of the likely scale of effect?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Chapter 6: Option 2 - Section 3 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

14 Do you agree with Natural England's assessment of option 2 – the use of section 3 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The CROW Act approach giving landowners the entitlement of 28 days closure, while giving landowners flexibility, may not be practical in allowing continuous access, and may prove difficult in managing visitors.

Landowners may have difficulties with issues of mapping without compensation.

15 Do you agree with our assessment of the likely scale of effect?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Chapter 7: Option 3 – Voluntary measures to create permissive access

16 Do you agree with Natural England’s assessment of option 3 – the use of voluntary measures to create permissive access?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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17 Do you agree with our assessment of the likely scale of effect?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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It is unlikely that full access to the coast will be achieved through this measure.

Chapter 8: Option 4 – proposal for new primary legislation

18 Do you agree that the Government should introduce new primary legislation to allow for a tailored access regime around the coast? If not, which of the options would you prefer?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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This is the only option that is likely to achieve the vision of coastal access put forward by Natural England. However, there are a number of issues relating to liability, compensation, existing higher rights and resourcing in and beyond the first ten years that will need to be resolved.

19 Do you think that spreading room (such as headlands, viewpoints or uncultivated land) along the coast is important?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Vital for the enjoyment of the coast for a range of activities. Management of vegetation in these areas (ie how and by who) will need to be clarified.

20 Do you believe it is important to formalise access to beaches?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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This will help clarify access provision.

21 Do you have any comments on the proposal for a statutory methodology?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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22 Do you agree there should be a right of appeal against Natural England's application of the statutory methodology?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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23 Do you have any views on this approach to protecting important wildlife and habitats?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
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There is a need to secure the best of both worlds. There is also a need to clearly identify protection of archaeological features where not covered by planning and other legislation.

24 Do you agree that planning and implementation should be undertaken through access authorities wherever possible and funded by Natural England?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Access authorities are best placed for this, and need to be properly funded to be able to carry this out.

25 Do you agree that Natural England should have powers to do such work itself where the access authority was unwilling to act?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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26 Do you think it is important that local solutions should be designed in consultation with local interests?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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27 Are there any partners that you consider Natural England should particularly involve in its consultations?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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LAFs, statutory and other area based initiatives (National Park Authorities, AONBs, Community Forests, Countryside Management Services etc), local authorities, landowners (including CLA and NFU), government agencies at regional and/or local level, user groups

28 Should any legislation enable conditions to be placed on access if necessary (eg seasonal diversions to protect sensitive species or permanent diversions as a result of coastal change and realignment)?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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29 If so, should it be the responsibility of Natural England or the access authority to plan for and implement such conditions?

Natural England for planning.
Access authority for implementation

30 Do you agree 10 years is a reasonable timescale for implementation? If not, what period should the implementation programme be over?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5 Years

31 Do you have any comments on Natural England's assessment of costs?

Yes

No

Given the underestimation of costs relating to the implementation of CROW Act measures, the proposed £5 million per year may well also significantly underestimate the real costs.

32 Do you agree that compensation should not be paid in respect of the new right of access?

Yes

No

Not sure

33 If you disagree, in what circumstances do you think compensation should be paid, and why?

Compensation should only be paid at the outset where there are clearly definable and measurable costs to the landowner. Payment would not be made on loss of 'hope value' for development, or through perceived rather than real costs. Care should not offer up the opportunity for 'ransom' payments as with the re-notification of SSSIs following the introduction of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

34 Do you agree that the reduced level of occupiers' liability introduced for access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 should also apply to coastal access?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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35 Do you have any comments on Natural England's proposals for complementary work to enhance coastal landscapes and wildlife?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Agree with the principle, but need to extend this to cultural and archaeological features

36 Do you have any other general comments on Natural England's proposals for new primary legislation?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Identification of any land that is excepted for coastal access needs to be made clear.

37 Do you agree with Natural England's assessment of the outcomes its recommended approach would deliver?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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38 Do you agree with our assessment of the likely scale of effect?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Chapter 9: Other issues

39 Do you believe there is a need for higher rights (rights other than a right of access on foot for open-air recreation) around the coast?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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40 Do you have any information on demand for, and opportunities to provide for higher rights?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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41 Do you consider there is a need for more advice or information on possible visitor safety risks being available to the public if access to the coast was improved? If so, are there any particular issues that the advice and information should cover?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The proposal for a new Coastal Access Code is sound, and would stress the need for the public to be aware of, and to take seriously, their responsibilities in relation to coastal access.

42 Do you agree with Natural England's advice that improving access to salt marshes and mudflats should not be a national priority in its own right?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Access to these habitats may be problematical due to risks of access to these areas, potential conflict with other users and disturbance to wildlife. However, this means that solutions need to be found as a priority rather than not.

43 Are there any other issues we need to take into account in assessing how we might improve access to the English coast?