

Countryside Access Group Meeting
Wednesday 18 October 2023

In Attendance: AH (DOI) Chair
FW (DOI)
HQ (BHS)
JW Visit Trail Riders, (VTR) (motorcycles)
TS (MWT) Teams
NK (Druidale Motor Club)
SG (DEFA)
AC-S (DEFA)
DL (MFCG)
SM (MNH)
HA (MNH)
HG (Note taker)

Apologies: RC (DOI/4WD)
YM (DfE)
PC (MFCG)
SW Wooden Spoon Wheelchair Sports Club (WSWSC)
GW (DEFA)
MK (DEFA)
LH (ACU)
SC (MNFU)
GW (DEFA)
AHen (MMBC)
DLo (Wild Life Crime Officer)
JS (Wild Life Crime Officer)

Item	Description	Who
1.	Apologies – noted as above.	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting - agreed as a true record. SG introduced Anna Clarke-Smith the new Uplands Ranger to the group. Both Anna and Sarah Hickey will be attending future meetings on a rota going forward.	
3.	Actions from previous meeting held on Wednesday 19 April 2023. 4.5 Consultation on proposed coastal footpath legislation FW commented no further on consultation and a meeting to be set up with the Environmental Land Committee (ELC). FW waiting to hear back from SC. <i>This meeting is still to be arranged and will possibly be way laid due to Tesco takeover. Carry forward to next meeting.</i>	SC
4.	Proposed Work and Orders	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upper Billown Farm. Removal of bridge and install new one plus fitting of styles and new signage. Jurby beach at the end of next week to place new steps behind rock armour (down from sewer work near Sartfield Farm). Public Orders. Ballacannell, Poyll Dooley, Onchan, Ramsey, Heritage trail and St Johns to Kirk Michael. Currently all delayed due to staff covered long term sickness. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Rushen Road is currently closed to vehicles, but horses, cyclists and pedestrians are permitted. Waiting for information on Greenway status. JW commented there are no road closed signs when you come out of pipeline and turn left (Glen Maye to picnic area). PRoW to Black Hut. DEFA going out to mini competition for 130 metres of boardwalk and making PRoW more accessible. DEFA looking to employ a full time Peat Land Officer within the next few months. The question was asked is it more mountain bikes or walkers on the Uplands route. DEFA looking at popular routes and will sanction them and will also need to engage with stakeholders. 	
4.1	WINTER CLOSURES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballacob. Closure in the week and looking at mid-November start. Any emergency closures FW to inform JW. 	
4.2	TT PREP	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FW informed the group the need to meet with R Clyne and come up with a Green Lane map. SG commented the need to communicate better before next TT due to some groups not adhering to maps/signage. The group discussed this issue (addressed in the previous minutes) and a comment was made that the Welcome Centre ran out of the supply of maps last year due to the lack of funding. HA asked are more bikers riding off road and SG responded that this is hard to say as DEFA do not have any counters to judge and it was a police issue. It was noted there has been little damage to Uplands and JW commented that a lot of people are trying to educate the minority. <i>Ongoing.</i> 	
4.3	ILLEGAL RIDING/ACCESS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SG reported a lot happening on social media last weekend and bikers jumping the wall at bottom of Sloc. There has been reports of lots of fresh tracks on South Barrule and SG has spoken to tenant who is going to check area for any tracks. JW commented it is a shame that no permit system can be enforced and again SG responded only the police can legally assist. JW commented on how at Heysham they are very thorough to check vans over nominal size for contents. FW said it is complicated due to legislation/licencing and we would need to define motor cross riders from other bikers such as TT/MGP riders/spectators. <i>Work in progress – ongoing.</i> 	
4.4	IOM COUNTRY CODE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FW thanked everyone for their feedback. FW received some questions and will feedback at next meeting together with more information on Green Lanes. It is a long drawn document and FW commented this was the basis for the slimmed down versions for walkers, cyclist etc that you find in the UK. SM asked if this will be tailored to schools and FW said yes, the Farmers Union have already visited schools and we envisage to go off the back of their publication. The next stage is for the Cabinet Office design team to form a booklet and possibly look at putting in QR codes for shops and location sites. Going forward FW to use this group as a sounding board. 	
4.5	CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED COASTAL FOOTPATH LEGISLATION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with the Environmental Land Committee (ELC) covered under item 3 (actions from previous meeting). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SG reported on illegal riding by e mountain bikers, knocking walls and breaking fences. SG asked if anyone sees any illegal bikers to raise with DEFA. There had been suggestions of putting in raised cattle grids but that would not deter illegal mountain bikers. Signage also is not a deterrent as in the past DEFA have been asked to remove from a political level due to complaints from their constituency. 	
4.6	Public Isle of Man Greenways, Track & Trials Facebook Group	
	SG asked on behalf of GW if anyone was a member of this group as they have posted comments in relation to last weekend, covered under 4.3 Illegal Riding/Access. None of the group are members and JW volunteered to see if he can join and report back any significant information to the group as this is about protecting this past time and avoid any further damage.	
5.	Any Other Business	
	<p>SG asked if we have enquired as to a representative from MUA due to their ownership of land. AH commented they have been consulted in the past and FW to make enquiries.</p> <p>ACU have nominated JW as ACU Representative and Rights of Way Officer and JW has accepted. The group congratulated JW on his new appointment.</p> <p>TS reported somebody gathering sheep above Glen Dhoo in one of the streams reported damage off the Slieu Dhoo track. SG to pass onto MK.</p>	<p>FW</p> <p>SG</p>
6.	There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.30pm and the date for the next meeting to be held on Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 5pm.	