

**Minutes of the South Snowdonia Local Access Forum Meeting held
on Tuesday June 17th, 2025, at 5.45 p.m
At Llew Coch Hotel, Dinas Mawddwy**

Present – Members:

Mr Hedd Pugh (Cadeirydd)	Cyng Dewi Owen
Mrs Gaynor Davies	Mr Alun Edwards
Mr Emlyn Roberts	Mr Aled Thomas
Mr David Coleman	Mr Huw Roberts
Mr Geraint Rowlands	Mr Rhodri P Jones
Mr John Pughe Roberts	Mr Alun Evans

Officers / Observers:

Peter Rutherford (SNPA)	David P Jones (SNPA)
Rhian P Williams (SNPA)	Naomi Jones (SNPA)

HP welcomed everyone to this evening's meeting. He announced that sadly our member Leslie Amison has recently passed away. He stated that she had always made a positive contribution to the LAF and as organiser of the Barmouth Walking Festival. He requested a minutes silence for some moments of reflection.

He asked if PR could organise a card of condolence to the family.

PR stated that he would arrange this on their behalf.

1. Apologies	Cllr Eryl Jones Williams	Mrs Janette Holmes
	Mr Delwyn Evans	Mr Tim Faire

PR announced that Delwyn Evans had advised him that he was standing down as a member (representing the disabilities sector). Therefore we would need a replacement from the sector.

HP stated that this was a loss but he asked if PR could write a letter to DE on their behalf thanking him for his contribution to the Forum over the years.

PR would draft a letter to him – he also expressed his thanks on behalf of the NP for his contribution to the business of the SLAF.

AE mentioned that he had made contact with the North Wales Society for the Blind and one of their representatives would be keen to join the LAF in that capacity. Huw lfor.

NJ added that they were keen to work with the NP on a project for the blind or partially sighted in the Betws Tourist Information Centre (TIC) and on one or two walks. They would hopefully work closely with the NP Volunteer Co-ordinator to explore what could be done in terms of activities.

HP recommended that PR make contact with a view to co-opt him if he was willing to stand as a member.

PR would inquire with HI

2. Declaration of Interest

None

3. Previous Minutes

P6 Bala Lake Railway Development. AE (not to be fussy) observed that the spend per night value per head quoted as £1.90 in the minutes may be incorrect.

HP concurred and asked if PR could confirm the value given by JB.

PR replied that he had thought that figure was low at the time but following AE's (eye for detail) he would recheck this with JB and report back. He was sure that the BR and the company would find the remaining funds to complete this project.

He added that there may be an additional benefit to the project. Parking on the back road and in Llangower in particular was chaotic throughout the season. If the parking was centred on the town near the new station then that may lessen the issues elsewhere along that back road as people would want to use the train from Bala by return.

Addenda. Following AE's query. JB from the Bala Lake Railway confirmed that the estimated figures was that for every £1 spend on the railway there would be knock on £1.90 per head spend in the town. The national figures for every £1 spend on infrastructure was nationally £2.70 per head but they placed a more conservative value on this for Bala.

4. Matters Arising

i) Llyn Trawsfynydd footbridge – update

PR announced that they had tried to get definitive information from Magnox which was proving difficult and subsequently there was no clarity on the matter. They would continue to press for updates. Neither the NP nor GC had been included or invited to any discussions with Magnox so communication had been via third parties.

He stressed that the bridge was not a formal Right of Way but was linked to the Public Right of Way near Bryn Ysgyboriau outside the village and was also part of the Traws Circular cycleway/walk.

He would contact Magnox again to see what the latest position was and copy in Gwynedd Council.

AE noted that the café had reopened and therefore it was a crucial that this issue was addressed to support that local business.

PR added that hopefully, we can have our next meeting at that location.

AT asked that was there a danger that by asking Magnox for two things we may only get one.

PR doubted this but they would attempt to try and resolve all the issues.

ii) Access issue Plas Tan y Bwlch – update

PR circulated a paper map and explained the current situation. The NP had reversed its original proposal and Plas would now be retained for the time being subject to future Authority decisions. It was his understanding that the NP will now retain the woodland and lake regardless of any future sale of the building itself.

This situation had prompted quite a reaction from users but hopefully the new arrangements i.e. the lake and woodlands being retained by the NP regardless of the sale of PTyB itself. He circulated a map of the site showing the boundaries.

The plan was to obtain additional grant funding and modernise the building and internal facilities.

JPR confirmed that the Authority had decided to rethink this and confirmed that they would apply for the grant funding to enable this but costs would be substantial. Once this was done then decide about repurposing the building if it was to be retained.

PR added that there were a few complications within the woodlands. There was a link to the Ffestiniog Railway halt that needed to be retained. It was important to note that all routes within the woodland were permissive routes only and none were Public Rights of Way. The link down Oakley drive to the main road needed to be retained. If the rest of the property was sold off then they would have to guarantee that those links could be maintained (running through the site north to south). There were also popular links northeast to the PRow leading to Tan Y Grisiau and Ffestiniog. If this became problematic then they would need to guarantee in some way the public access either by way of creation of Public Rights of Way or as access land under the CRow Act.

He would report back to members as things progressed.

ER commented that it was difficult to believe that the NP had not realised the implications of all of this on their own property when they frequently imposed various conditions on other landowners.

GD added that at least that if the HQ was moved to PTyB then at least it would be within the NP.

HP asked if there was enough space at PTyB if this was the case.

JPR stated that many more people these days were hot desking so that may make things easier but appreciated that parking was an issue.

NJ confirmed that a bid will be made to a grant funder regarding the refurbishment of PTyB. She stressed that this was a long and complex process.

HP thanks all for the update on what was an important issues.

5. Correspondence

- i) Letter to the minister- Government response taking Wales forward Sustainable Management Sustainable Management of Natural Resources Consultation – Access proposals.

PR mentioned that they had now received a response from the Minister *following a prompt after the lack of answer to the original letter.*

AE noted that the response was sent in English only.

PR stated that our letter had been bilingual so he would have expected the response to have been to same but unfortunately this is WG's standard practice.

It was unfortunate that following considerable input by various experts and organisations participating in the various subgroups (and LAF's) the whole exercise had come to nothing. This was one of the most difficult and time consuming consultations he had undertaken whilst in his role at the NP. It was deeply frustrating that nothing had emerged in terms of legislative changes that had been recommended.

HP added that the response was not positive given all the input and recommendations made following the ARAG¹ committees in 2019. It was unclear how this would move forward with a new government after the next election. If the opportunity presented itself then he would raise this issue with the Minister himself once again.

6. Eryri Landscape names Project – Update on the project.

NJ thanked the members for the opportunity to come and brief them on the project.

And she was aware that some LAF members had contributed to the project already.

¹ ARAG – Access Reform Groups – Welsh Government convened (via NRW) where various expert groups discussed and made recommendation for streamlining legislation relating to Rights of Way and other matters relating to access.

She explained that there were two separate projects i) in conjunction with Cardiff University and ii) to collect data and information about original Welsh place names.

It is recognised that the use of land frequently defines place names such as local fields, villages and hamlets, rivers, streams, hills, archaeological, industrial and agricultural features, local hills and mountains and Ffriddoedd², and the use of properties – religious buildings, mills & ponds, granaries, store houses, leats & weirs, lanes and country and tithe buildings and houses so it was important to record and preserve their Welsh place names as they reflected their local use and character. She gave various examples.

They had also been working with Ordnance Survey and the Welsh Language Commissioner to ensure that mapped names were correct in their location and that the spelling of the Welsh place names were retained and predominant wherever possible. This was a part of our National Park Welsh language policy and also that we should encourage other organisations to consider working with us in relation to this project.

When the Authority changed its name formally to Eryri and also to adopt the name Yr Wyddfa for Snowdon the Welsh Language Commission had asked if we would be interested in a wider place names project. It was unfortunate that there is no legal duty or statutory obligation in Wales to protect or record Welsh place names and the project is conducted on that basis and means that the work is even more important.

Within the NP they had started with accumulating names for lakes with over 200 recorded thus far. Based on the NP's recommendations the OS have agreed to use those names. However, there was a great deal of verification work involved in researching names *per se*. and sometimes had many variants. As an example Llyn Du as opposed to Llyndu and which was one was correct and there are many similar examples.

NJ also mentioned that the original Climbers Journal had made reference to the Welsh place names for various climbs and crags which was interesting. Quote (1965) below:

² Ffridd. - The upland fringe (or Ffridd/Coed cae as it is known in Wales) is the area between the enclosed more intensively managed lower fields and the unenclosed hill and moorland.

Welsh names for crags exist which are not recorded on Ordnance Survey maps. These crags hence may have names (often in Welsh) in use among climbers which were invented by the latter. Minor topographical features may have names which occur in mediaeval charters and other documents relating to land tenure, which are not found on present-day maps. Many such names, and numerous others, are still in use today to define the limits of the *cynefin* (sheep-walks: singular *cynefin*), or fields, or property, or for convenience: it is almost inconceivable that a crag which is large enough to afford rock-climbing should not have such a name. (For an illustration of the existence of such names, see the section on the *Carneddau*, below). A place-name in use among the local farming community, often of long standing or with an historical, literary or legendary background, or with an intrinsic beauty or aptness, is surely preferable to pigeon-Welsh or banal urban English names invented by climbers. Furthermore, when certain features appear to have no names, earlier names drawn from documentary sources should be introduced. An old and authentic place-name is often of first importance to historical studies in human settlement and land use, natural history and philology. These names therefore should not be cast aside in response to current whims of either the climbing or the farming community.

Another interesting example is Nameless Cwm (Ogwen) which is in fact Cwm Cneifion and we would encourage people and organisations to use the Welsh version.

They were still amassing a great deal of information and had run several public engagement workshops in various communities across the NP which had stimulated interest from various volunteers and groups who were now involved in this project to whom they were very grateful. It was interesting that there were many young people who had taken an interest in this work. If people felt that they had valid original names to contribute then they were welcome to bring them forward for consideration. To date they had amassed a total of approximately 4800 place names and the final number would be higher.

She added that both Rhys Gwyn and Myfyr Tomos had done work in collecting place names in and around the Cader Idris area by discussing these with the local residents, farmers and shepherds.

The importance of this issue was recognised and inserted into the Cynllyn Eryri – Eryri National Park Plan within the Welsh Language policy section.

Eventually all this information would be mapped. The Authority has also decided to adopt the Welsh place names only.

The project had also attracted a wider audience such as mentioned in the national press and media.

PR commented (through the Chair) that OS had been very accommodating in the past with including Welsh place names. Their only concern was map clutter so that things did not appear confusing. They had recently reviewed the Harvey Maps³ for the area and between all relevant staff they had found several anomalies – including mis spelt Welsh names and fed those back to Harvey who had taken them all on board.

HP commented that it was very important that all these names were recorded.

NJ added that it was also important to record who had given that information about specific place names as a point of reference – albeit she accepted that there was a risk attached to this. On occasion there may be several different local names even within a local community.

The Slate World Heritage sites and trail also had many unique names and it was equally important to note these and preserve them.

DWO mentioned that this had also happened in the Aberdovey area following home purchases and names had been changed. Those original names were related to the slate quarry industry of Corris ad Abergynolwyn and Aberdovey's maritime heritage. He had made the case with the homeowners to retain those names.

JPR mentioned that there were some houses and streets in Dolgellau which had always had English names which were related to their original builders or businesses from a long time ago and they were equally important.

AE asked if there was a role for the LAF to ask OS to consider the Welsh names.

NJ stated that she would return to the LAF with this but will continue to discuss this with the OS and other stakeholders. It was still a matter for the Westminster or WG to enact suitable legislation to help preserve place names.

PR added that whenever a problem had arisen OS had always been ready to assist when asked.

HJ mentioned that he has seen several publication in the past where the spelling for local names was incorrect which was disappointing.

PR mentioned that quite a number of publications (guidebooks) came to them for perusal in the past and was an opportunity to recommended some changes. However not all sought their views and digital online information was now the `norm`. When online information were blatantly incorrect or could lead people into difficulties then we try to get them corrected or removed but this was a difficult task and monitoring everything was impossible.

³ Harvey Maps are another provider of maps at a 40.000 or 25.000 scale. They can also produce bespoke maps for activities such as orienteering, fellrunning. - [HARVEY Maps - for walking, hiking, cycling and fell running](#)

AE stated that the OS did not change their maps very often.

PR stated that OS did change their digital map straightaway if changes had occurred due to map orders – paper maps were reprinted every 4 years. OS were informed about any legal changes by the respective local authorities across the UK as a matter of course. Whilst the system was infallible OS were generally very good.

HP thanked NJ for her interesting presentation and the importance of the project.

7. Update on the situation at Coed y Brenin – Elsi Grace NRW

PR announced that unfortunately EG was not able to attend this evening. She had promised to send an update as to the position in Coed Y Brenin as soon as possible. He would return to this at the next opportunity when he had received an update from the NRW.

8. Update on the South area Warden's work programme

DPJ announced that the NP's part time and weekend Warden Myfyr Tomos had sadly retired and this post was now held by Gerwyn Madog Jones. MT had given sterling service over the years.

Work continues on Mynydd Moel. More stone if required from the storage point in Cwm Rhwyddfor. They were currently awaiting a heli lift. There had been delays due to the hot weather and the helicopter companies undertaking water drops elsewhere. Subsequently there were a number of jobs piling up.

They were also looking at the possibility of pitching a stone path to Llyn Cau to alleviate the erosion.

Work had been ongoing on the existing all ability route in Dol Idris including new wildflower areas, tree planting and surfacing.

They had some monies allowed from the Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Place (SLSP⁴) fund. They had installed a new bridge - 8m in Ty Nant together with a new piped run for the stream to stop it overflowing and causing run off and erosion down the track.

AT asked if the bridge was gated.

DPJ stated that it was but it was gated at one end to stop cattle entering and damaging the surface decking.

⁴ a Welsh Government program funding projects in Designated Landscapes i.e. National Parks and National Landscapes (formally known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty-AONB's) to improve biodiversity, reduce carbon, promote sustainable tourism, and enhance community resilience.

PR mentioned that GC had received a claim for the Pony Path as a bridleway by a local riders user group.

DPJ stated that they had asked GC about the gate size and they had agreed to a size suitable for use by pedestrians.

Work continues on the Mawddach Trail by one of the footpath teams. They were cutting back vegetation and trees and some re surfacing in many sections as the widths had closed in many places and there were frequent potholes, standing water and blocked culverts that required attention. z

Some work was underway in access land – Talsarnau – Moel y Geifr in the Bryn Cader Faner area – part of Taith Ardudwy Way⁵ route. New gates with self-closers.

They were also currently reviewing the whole of the Aran route. This required some new furniture as old stiles had all deteriorated all at the same time. Some furniture is difficult to access given their locations.

He suggested that if landowners had any issues with furniture then they should contact the NP – they may not always be able to assist but they frequently worked closely with GC. He stressed that furniture was the responsibility of the landowner even if supplied and installed by the National Park or GC.

Additional work had been undertaken on Improvement work to steps in two lakeside locations on Llyn Tegid – Llanycil & Rhiw Bryn Du.

Some biodiversity work has also been undertaken such as wildflower and tree plantings. Some school liaison work has been undertaken in Trawsfynydd centred around local flora and fauna including fish. A similar exercise has been undertaken in Bala.

Cymdeithas Deillion – Society for the Blind. They were in the process of arranging some suitable walks for the group in the Llyn Trawsfynydd area and Cae Saeson.

The Volunteer Wardens have been out a great deal over weekends. Unfortunately, litter continues to be an issue. It has also notable that it is has been difficult to recruit local people as volunteers in the south of the NP. They had also employed two Seasonal Wardens and they were locally based and having them was very useful as they can cover weekends.

RPJ asked what the latest was regarding the parking at Llangower. This parking area was extremely busy at peak season and roadside parking was an issue.

⁵ Taith Ardudwy Way is a 24 mile mid-level route running from Llandecwyn to Barmouth. Instigated and led by local communities along its length and supported by the National Park. [Taith Ardudwy Way](#)

DPJ mentioned that anecdotally this year it may have been slightly less of an issue. It was unfortunate that certain maps and social media platforms directed people to park in Llangower instead of Llyn Tegid hence the confusion and numbers. They were looking at some form of pncr camera system for both Llangower and Llyn Tegid car parks. This potentially could control some parking. But stressed that this facility was still being explored.

JPR asked if there was any potential to open fields as over spills.

DPJ mentioned that they had looked at this – part of the community thought that it may encourage more cars and the other said it would be useful to have overspill. But having an overspill may be a way of generating more local income.

PR mentioned (through the Chair) that figures indicated that last year's figures were down considerably – as much as 10%. This could be put down to the poorer weather that we experienced but this value was reflected consistently across the NP.

He asked members if they had any information that could confirm this.

Both GR and GD stated that it had been quieter than usual.

GD commented that bookings were very much weather related and becoming more 'last minute' decisions.

HJ added that those that may have come for a week in the past are now down to 3 - 5 days. The new 180 day occupancy rules would adversely affect them and in his view were set too high. This would even more problematic if booking trends were down or varied each year and such factors are out of their control. This was grossly unfair.

DPJ added that in terms of Llyn Tegid exceptional weather often brought people in later in the day for parking. Uncontrolled barbeques had frequently led to fires. Having pncr cameras may help and identify antisocial groups/individuals vehicles when necessary.

They had discussed their issues with the North Wales Police representative attached to the NP and he had given them some good advice. It was also surprising how many offences they had found relating to vehicles and people within the NP car park.

HP thanked DPJ for his very informative update and was sure that the members appreciated the fact that so much was being achieved.

9. Rhyd yr Onnen – Cwrt – Update on work done on the Unclassified Road.

PR showed some slides of the Unclassified Road from the top of the Cwm Maethlon road up from Cwrt and led over to Rhyd Yr Onnen which and been problematic for several years and was in a poor state of repair.

It had been subject to a complaint and one of the formal off roading national groups had served notice to GC – as they have a duty to maintain even unsurfaced Unclassified Roads. This had forced GC to address this problem which had been costly for the ratepayers. He showed slides of the work. Although this section was complete there remained a considerable amount of other drainage works on the west side.

He further explained that they had agreed previously with all the user groups that a one way system be adopted on a voluntary basis and signs were erected to that effect – west to east. It was unfortunate that this was frequently ignored. So when two groups came across one another there was no option other than to pass by going off piste and making the track and also private land conditions worse. GC had also imposed a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) during this last 18 months to stop movement until this work was completed. However during that period some groups had ignored the signage and had continued to use it making matters worse. He had witnessed this for himself. It was unfortunate that the original solution proposed by the NP that was proposed did not come to a satisfactory solution.

Hopefully, this section would remain in reasonable condition for several years.

AEv mentioned that there was also a lot of work to be done on the east side lower down in terms of drainage. But many vehicles had been in difficulties on this western section.

DC confirmed that he had commissioned work on this track many years ago but plainly it had worsened. He had often found gulleys and drains deliberately blocked on purpose by users. This was accumulate water which is what they wanted as a challenge.

DPJ asked who the contractor was.

PR stated that he was not sure who had carried out the work but would find out. Bit he was very grateful to GC Highways for sorting this out.

10 Recommended Items of the next meeting

- i) Coed Y Brenin update from the NRW
- ii) Organised Events Guidance advice review
- iii) Llwybr Branwen – Harlech
- iv) Next year's SLAF meeting dates
- v) Ffermio bro is available.

Ffermio Bro - PR mentioned that he had already discussed Right of Way and

furniture issues the team. They did not want a repeat of what had occurred with previous agri schemes in terms of standards.

11. Any other business

AE commented that he had experienced many DoE groups passing through this year and their behaviour had been exemplary – closing gates, keeping to routes and being interested and respectful to landowners. This was a positive.

PR added that there had been some issues on one property recently in the north of the NP but that was the result of several groups setting off at timed intervals from the same site and then catching up with each other. It was poor timing - unfortunately, this was adjacent to a shearing shed which was in full swing at the time and the landowner were very busy. This was exacerbated when their maps were not current. He had mentioned this issue to their supervisors at the time and to check if their maps were current.

JPR mentioned that the British Fell Running Championships were being held in Dinas Mawddwy in September this year. This was a first for the area.

12. Date of next meeting – 21st October 2025

HP thanked all for their contributions to the meeting and closed the meeting.