

**Minutes of the Northern Snowdonia Local Access Forum Meeting  
held on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 5.45p.m  
at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog. LL41 3YU**

**Present - Members:**

Mr Edwin Noble	Mr Dafydd Gwyndaf
Mr John Gladston	Mr Mark Jones
Mrs Fiona Davies	Mrs Maggi Barry
Mr Tim Jones	Mr Arthur Davies
Mr Richard Williams	Mr David Firth

**Officers / Speakers:**

Peter Rutherford (ENPA)	Eben Muse (BMC)
Rhian P Williams(ENPA)	Dion Roberts (ENPA)
Adam Daniel (ENPA)	Tom Carrick (BMC)

EN welcomed all members and Officers/speakers to the meeting this evening.

**1 Apologies**

Mr Robin Parry	Mr Callum Muskett
Mr Paul Williams	Cllr Beca Roberts
Mr Dafydd Jones	

**2. Previous Minutes**

**Approved**

**3. Matters arising**

i) Latest information regarding a) Bwlch y Moch and b) Crib y Ddysgl

**a)** PR informed the members that the second wall at ByM had now been completed and that they were monitoring its use. It now required a more deliberate thought process to turn and access Crib Goch route rather than do this by accident or by `following on`<sup>1</sup>. He showed pictures of the site.

**b)** Following several incidents below Crib Y Ddysgl the Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team has asked the NP to consider any ideas for diverting walkers away from a newly developed line which was apparent at the west end of Bwlch Crib Coch area. This was potentially leading people into difficulties further along it and leading to a number of call outs. He showed pictures of the site.

After reviewing this they had decided to block this path up with large boulders as a deterrent. Although this is a difficult area to access a heli lift will be planned for March to enable this. He would update the members when this work was concluded.

*MJ asked if the placing of stone was going to be a pitched effect.*

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<sup>1</sup> `Following on` where some inexperienced walkers may decide to follow others which may be in the wrong direction and at that point finding themselves ascending Crib Goch (instead of the Pyg Track as they may have intended and end up in difficulties.

PR stated that these were 12 X 200kg - 250kg boulders which would be laid across one another in what would appear to be a random arrangement. Similar to the mock up he had shown.

*DF asked if they would attempt any landscaping so as to avoid them looking like an unnatural feature or path.*

PR replied that they would attempt to bed these down and try to landscape them as best they could with the materials on site and in the very short space of time they would be there. It was likely that the boulders will also accumulate dust and debris over the coming years to appear more natural in the long term.

*MJ added that this was not as much of an issue in the winter months but appreciated that it was tempting to those who were unfamiliar with the site to take that line as it was now looked like a normal mountain path - albeit it leads people into difficulties.*

PR added that they had also decided to put information on their website, for the first time, to point out that both Crib Coch and also Crib Y Ddysgl were Grade 1 scrambles and required some skills to negotiate.

*MJ also asked about the legality of this activity.*

PR stated that they had taken legal advice for this and there was still a reduced liability under the CRoW Act. And the situation was being made safer than it was before. The landowner had also asked that we conduct regular inspections to which we had agreed.

There was also the notion of '*volenti non fir injuria*'<sup>2</sup> where any person undertaking a risk such as climbing a mountain or other potentially dangerous activities could not attribute blame to others – other than if the danger was created i.e. man made and known to be dangerous beforehand.

*TC (BMC) stated that if required they were willing to assist with providing volunteers on the day.*

PR appreciated the offer and would come back to them if required.

#### **4. Correspondence**

i) The NP had received a request from Welsh Government (WG) asking LAFs for their opinion about the type of material that should be used for furniture on Public Rights of Way within the sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

PR stated that given the short time frame to obtain opinions from the Rights of Way Officers across Wales and the Local Access Forums. It was decided to call together all three Chairs – Edwin Noble (north), Hedd Pugh (south) and Vincent Mears (Arfon Dwyfor LAF) for their opinion on this matter and get a combined response.

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<sup>2</sup> *Volenti non fir injuria* - is a common law defence in tort law, translating to "to a willing person, no injury is done". It means if someone voluntarily consents to and assumes the risk of harm, they cannot later sue for damages, acting as a complete defence against liability.

Given the issues that had arisen with wooden furniture in the past provided by various schemes and authorities (Tir Gofal, Glastir etc) the longevity of wooden furniture was questionable. There was a consensus that furniture should be metal wherever possible in that so many issues have arisen from using wooden furniture which have proved to have short life spans and the costly to replace for local authorities, landowners and NP's in the future. The response was sent.

The joint response had been sent by Gwyn Lloyd Evans – Rights of Way Team Leader at GC. PR was highly appreciative for his assistance in this matter.

Subsequently they had received a response from WG. They had taken this advice on board and had now decided to advise that metal furniture should be used wherever possible.

This was a successful response. However, given the looming election it is difficult to see into the near future in terms of SFS.

*JG asked if the least restrictive option was a NRW policy. And what were the standards used.*

PR stated that the least restricted option was a joint (UK) National Parks initiative which had been adopted some years ago where all the NP work towards reducing barriers to people accessing the countryside. They appreciated that there were limitations to this given our terrain but when considering any replacements then least restrictive options must always be a consideration. Certainly the ENP and other NP's have come a long way in recent years towards this end.

In terms of standards the minimum should be the British Standard 5709 2018 (for Gaps, Gates and Stiles) which everyone should be using. Albeit some bespoke furniture is used where appropriate. There is no longer a standard for ladder stiles and in lowland areas they would only supply a gate or kissing gate. In upland areas where the terrain is mountainous (where the terrain is worse than a stile) then they would consider replacing stiles for stiles.

## **5 Ffermio Bro – an introduction to the scheme - Dion Roberts**

DR stated that he was the Agricultural and Natural Resources Officer within ENP and was managing the Ffermio Bro scheme both within the National Park and also administering the scheme within National Landscapes (formally Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – AONB's) in Pen Llyn and Ynys Mon.

He outlined the basics of the Ffermio Bro schemes. This was available in 8 parts of Wales including the 3 National Parks and 5 areas of National Landscapes. He was managing the north area of the scheme. They were on a good trajectory in their current spending regime and farm schemes.

A key component was what they deemed to be 'collaborative working.' The scheme was very much a pre cursor for the later implementation of the WG's Sustainable Farming Scheme.

The 4 principle components were:

- Deliver collaborative activities that span multiple farms to achieve a common goal
- Support the recovery of nature and the resilience of ecosystems
- Help farm businesses become more sustainable and resilient
- Create opportunities for people to enjoy the Landscapes and their cultural heritage.

**Activities may include:**

- Low density targeted tree planting where improving habitat. This could include on steep banks, upland gullies and streams, field corners, and creating wood pasture.
- Woodland restoration
- Natural regeneration.
- Restoring and creating hedgerows.
- Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) removal and eradication.
- Natural flood risk management (NFRM) interventions.
- Enhancing and creating wetland through re-wetting measures and supporting ponds, lakes, reed beds and fens.
- Enhancing and creating riparian habitat.
- Enhancing upland and unenclosed habitat & peatland.
- Enhancing and creating lowland habitat.
- Restoring traditional hay meadows, and creating wild bird, wildlife and pollinator strips and plots.
- Traditional boundary restoration, stone walls, earth banks and slate fences.
- Improving access to the countryside through upgrading/enhancing public paths, open access land and green spaces.
- Targeted measures to support the recovery of the wildlife species and habitats set out in the such as creating and establishing nesting and feeding habitat; including unavoidable predatory controls to support those species as part of the wider landscapes scale actions.
- Targeted measures to improve water quality such as stock control.

These are examples only and not a comprehensive list.

He explained that they could undertake access work but it would always have to revolve around improving the ecosystem. Typically where a PRoW goes through a hedgerow or along side it.

They were also keen to get groups of neighbouring landowners in a scheme with joint outcomes for environmental management. This would also be beneficial for access and Rights of Way management.

Within Eryri they can only offer schemes within the NP boundary and up to 1km overlap.

FBro schemes have a 3 year life cycle.

26/27 they have some £710k for those years and the same for years 27/28. So in total about a million and a half within Eryri. There are separate pots of monies for the other areas outside of the NP such as Pen Llyn.

Although SFS and Ffermio Bro are different schemes all the work on the universal actions within Ffermio Bro will count towards the SFS scheme outcomes. Typically hedgerow management, soil quality management, tree cover etc.

The joint groups will be working towards the themes and access could be an example of this. He cited Cwm Prysor as an example where this could be done. Improving habitat such as planting new hedgerows, clearing culverts, wall repairs along alongside a PRow or creating a permissive path.

They would also like to see increases in grazing by cattle in the uplands and ffridd<sup>3</sup> land. They are also promoting the use of electronic collars to manage areas for regenerative farming and to monitor stock.

Within SFS there will be a 10% score for habitat regeneration and all the Ffermio Bro activity will help towards these goals. This will also include the selective replanting of more trees in the uplands but will be in places where existing remnant of woodlands remain. However, many of those old copses are single age structure without natural regeneration and they require new planting to develop a mixed age range of tree cover. It is unlikely that such planting will affect any agricultural activities or production. He showed anti stock measures to avoid damage to newly planted trees by stock.

They are mindful about access land and how fences can affect routes and they will always consider those issues within any schemes.

It is considered important that wherever mature woodlands should be grazed.

Water courses such for example a nant (a stream or brook) may be fenced out to protect water quality and banksides and these are important habitats in themselves.

Some additional planting is also important in terms of natural flood management. By retaining water and enabling slower release.

Rainwater harvesting and slurry control are also part of the schemes themes.

Candidate schemes are assessed by using a scoring matrix which are then further assessed and scrutinized by a panel. Anything under £10k can be decided by the Officer concerned.

DR invited questions.

*EN asked if the tree guards would stop cattle eating as they would have to be higher.*

DR stated that they were about 1.2m and by that time and size they should be more robust. The tree guard material was also a deterrent as it was sharp.

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<sup>3 3</sup> Ffridd land - is a Welsh term for the upland fringe or margin, referring to the mosaic habitat found on steep slopes between enclosed lowland fields and open mountain moorland. It is characterized by a mix of bracken, heather, acidic grassland, scrub (gorse/hawthorn), and rocky outcrops, serving as a crucial wildlife corridor and traditional grazing land.

*EN asked who would be liable in terms of fencing if for example a walker was injured or clothing was caught up in fencing.*

*MJ asked what the position was regarding barbed wire fencing.*

*EN stated that those before CRow may afford you some defence but any new materials would require some thought. He acknowledged that there were rules for barbed wire on Public Rights of Way.*

PR asked DR where the new tree stock was going to come from as local provenance<sup>4</sup> was crucial to each region/locality. If there was so much planting required then the demand may outstrip what was available supply so how would that be addressed. Would there be an encouragement to create micro nurseries?

DR stated that currently tree stock came from two sources – in the autumn months volunteers and NP staff collected seed from the local area and then planted in various cells – some in Pembroke in poly tunnels and some in our own nursery. The second source was to buy stock from commercial nurseries who collect seed from the area and plant in their nurseries in Whitchurch and they are then brought back as seedlings.

There are a few micro nurseries in the area – Plas Tan Y Blwch, Henfaes (Abergwyngregyn), in Saron (outskirts of Caernarfon) and Glynllifon. But there is an appetite for more.

EN thanked DR for his presentation.

## **6. Wild Camping – BMC (Cymru) perspective**

EM introduced himself as the Campaigns and Policy Officer for Wales for the British Mountaineering Council (BMC). Membership for 2026 is in the region of 81,000 and represent climbers and walkers).

He was keen to make the distinction between what is termed fly camping and wild camping in its truest form. If camping can be seen from the roadside or close by other nearby areas then this is highly likely to be without consent and fly camping.

He stated that Dartmoor National Park has recently won the appeal to maintain the right camp on commons given by their bylaws and this has opened up the debate about wild camping in many other wilder places in the UK.

There is legal right to wild camp in Scotland under the Scottish Outdoor Code.

The National Park does attract wild campers in the truest sense and they are all versed in the way wild camping should be undertaken and adhere to the code of conduct. Particularly the leave no trace philosophy.

However, currently wild or fly camping is viewed as a civil offence under current legislation. Fly camping has given rise to increases in litter, open fires, verge side parking and anti-social behaviour.

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<sup>4</sup> Local Provenance – locally grown stock from indigenous trees or plants.

They had set up a wild camping members forum for which indicates that this activity had a good deal of support within the membership.

They were keen to promote best practice and prepare for any consultation in relation to any potential changes in legislation. And they were more than happy to take part in education regarding this activity.

He acknowledged that the NP did carry the wild camping code advice but that it was not for the BMC to dictate but they were ready to assist and advise the sector on this issue.

They were also lobbying the respective governments to consider this issue.

*The BMC are calling for **six key changes**:*

- *Government to recognise the social value of responsible wild camping*
- *A legal right to wild camp to be extended to areas designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and in appropriate areas of our designated landscapes*
- *National Park Authorities to be given the power to create wild camping zones to help manage responsible wild camping and tackle fly camping*
- *Guidance on how to wild camp responsibly to be included within an updated version of the countryside code*
- *Additional funding for National Parks, National Landscapes, and land managers to support responsible wild camping in the right place*
- *A substantial new investment in young people's outdoor education to help improve understanding and skills needed to wild camp responsibly*

Source – extract from BMC website re wild camping.

He thanked the LAF members for their time and invited questions.

*MJ stated that the BMC may be targeting the people who already fully understood the notion of wild camping. As we are all aware there are many others who come to 'wild camp' following those outdoor social media influencers and other sites and it is those people who need to be giving the correct information and this was the messaging that needed addressing.*

*To get this information out to a new generations of potential 'wild campers' they needed to truly understand this activity and what is expected of them. i.e. to understand and respect their environment. If it came to the fore then a reasonable balance needed to be struck between the needs of landowners and users.*

EM acknowledged that the education of how to undertake this activity with some considerable understanding and respect was key to this issue.

*GJ ask EM if the BMC were asking to lift any bans on wild camping. And added and asked if there was a definition for wild camping per se.*

EM stated that for clarity that this responsibility did not lie with the National Parks. It was neither was a prescribed activity within the CRoW Act.

*GJ mentioned outdoor education centres and their expedition camping practices.*

EM added that Dartmoor NP referred to this activity as `backpacking`. Some people may also refer to this as `bivouac camping.`

PR commented that there was no ban – the current status quo was the legal position in that this activity was not a legal right unless by landowner consent.

*TJ added that true practitioners understood and stuck to the principles of wild camping and acknowledged that it was the other people's activities who failed to meet those standards and this had reflected badly on those true practitioners who are respectful of their environment and making the distinction between the two activities was important. There was no doubt that some social media vectors had been less than helpful in this sector.*

*He added that if this became a legal activity then our problems may be compounded and he appreciated landowners concerns.*

*If it did come to fruition then that may increase those difficulties and then there was the matter of having additional resources to manage it in a situation where resources were already stretched. It would be useful to get DNP perspective on this.*

EM mentioned that he had several discussions with people in Dartmoor and Scotland (Loch Lomond) with a view to further this.

*TJ added that within the US parks there are zoned places for camping which was strictly controlled.*

PR commented that in relation to wild camping in Dartmoor. He stressed that this situation was an exception both within England and Wales. This activity can only be undertaken within some designated commons as part of the bylaws afforded to the DNP and recently upheld to be lawful following legal challenge by one specific landowner.

He noted that EM had made reference to Loch Lomond. Following the inception of the Land Reform Act (Scotland) in 2003 and the subsequent Scottish Outdoor Code this gave wild camping as of by legal right (which also included access to inland water).

However, following the code the Loch Lomond area was subject to a great deal of antisocial behaviour and has had led the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park reimposing camping restrictions including a permitting system for camping in the area. This was costly and very labour intensive in terms of managing all their sites but given the level of issues they felt that they had no option.

In terms of other wilder areas of Scotland they had the expanses of areas where wild camping may not present issues especially for true practitioners. It was arguable whether Wales had the same landscapes – certainly, it was more intensively farmed even in the uplands with smaller landholdings.

In terms of Dartmoor then he could ask their lead Officer to give us an update on the situation if available for the next meeting or send a precis. It was notable that DNP had lost the first round of legal challenges but this was subsequently overruled by the High Court.

He posed the question/scenario – typically Yr Wyddfa sees some 560,000 walkers per annum (in one direction) if only 1% decided to camp in and around its environs then how would some 5800 be managed. The resource implications alone are substantial.

EM commented that it would be similar to Scotland. Wild campers would not wish to camp in such high density areas. There may be various options that could be explored.

*EN commented that if wild camping became a legal right then this also raised other issues such as liability. And also ho would profit from this activity on what would be private land. It would be up to landowners to try to regulate this activity as the NP Wardens could not be expected to be everywhere. Even with legislation it was unlikely that the current issues would change. There would also require significant resources if this if allowed in NPs and other areas.*

*MB asked if wild camping would fall under the guise of tourist taxes and how would this affect landowners?*

EM replied that it was thought that if there was no need to collect a tourist levy unless by a contract – booking etc. Typically wild camping and the use of mountain bothies may be exempt. So it was unlikely that this would be affected by the proposed visitor tourist tax.

PR added that the Bothies Association<sup>5</sup> were free to use but you could enrol as a member. There were currently 4 bothies in Eryri.

He asked if the BMC had discussed this with Welsh Government and was this related to open access land only.

EM mentioned that the WG currently was more concerned with the access reform issues as per the previous consultations in 2029 so this discussion was in its infancy.

*DF mentioned that he had wild camped regularly across the NP for the last 50 years. He fully understood that true wild camping was undertaken by real practitioners. However, in recent years he has seen considerable changes in this activity and now there is great deal of poor practice. If legislation was changes he could not see how the current situation could be changed for the better and this is a worrying trend.*

EM acknowledged that there were two groups of people in relation to this issue. The issue would be to make everyone more aware and responsible regardless of the camping activity.

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<sup>5</sup> Mountain Bothies Association - an organisation who maintain simple shelters in remote country for the use & benefit of all. These are free to use. There are currently 4 bothies within Eryri. [Mountain Bothies Association | Wales](#)

*EM commented that he fully understood this position.*

*EN thank EB for his presentation.*

## **7. Update on the internal review of the ENP Events Guidance – Peter Rutherford**

PR explained that the original document was written some 6-7 years ago and had served as a basis of information for all event providers and had served its purpose well. However, as with all documents/policies the NP had decided to review this and that process was now concluded.

After internal consultation and some external discussion they had now amended the Guidelines information and brought it up to date. They had also inserted additional text recommended by the Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team (mostly relating to events and their First Aid provisions) and from others with and some changes of our own and also changed various graphics to real pictures.

The intention was also to carry this not only as a whole document pdf on the website but also as a complete text on the website where people could download information they required more readily.

If members wished to view this then PR would send links once the website was completed and/or the document as a pdf.

AD commented that the NP did not have any legal powers to restrict events.

PR agreed that the NP had few powers but that most event providers came to them for information and what could be described as ethical endorsement and bringing all the factors together.

Larger events were also encouraged to come to us and Gwynedd Council if it was felt that other departments or organisations required input – such as the North Wales Police, the Ambulance Service, Environmental Health, Highways and Trunk Roads, In terms of the NP we outline what was important in terms of sustainable event management such as sustainable transport (including parking arrangements), mountain safety, early communication and landowner dialogue, points of contact, litter and waste control, supporters plan, emergency plan, signage management, environmental plans where relevant and post event management.

The NP was asking for best practice and most large events do their homework and most pass off without incident. By today all major charities employ professional organisers to run their fund raisers e.g. Red Cros, Alzheimer's, Marie Currie and many others which is the ideal.

It is the smaller groups (20-50) who are sometimes problematic – i.e. no preplanning, little knowledge of the area or Yr Wyddfa, little in terms of risk assessment, little awareness of mountain safety and no realistic idea of what staging any size or event entails. Hence the information we provide is essential.

We do invite people to register on our joint Gwynedd/National Park data base so there is some form of contact/group information. This includes who they are, their dates, routes, contacts and numbers. There is a meeting planned soon with

Gwynedd Council to decide if we can share this information with the North Wales Police and the Llanberis Mountain rescue and occasionally our Wardens in Pen Y Pass. There may be some Gdpr<sup>6</sup> issues but if this is limited then that could be overcome.

## **8. Membership of the Access Forum**

PR mentioned that this was now the last meeting of this LAF membership as their 3 year tenure was now at its end. As required by the statutory regulations pertaining to the LAF's under the CRoW Act they would now have to advertise and recruit new membership. Advertisements would be placed in local papers and on social media.

He stressed that continuity was an important element for the LAF membership and appreciated that members had been on a steep learning curve throughout with many topics relating to access discussed and some being sometimes complex.

He hoped that many existing members would reapply and he thanked all members for their invaluable contribution to the LAF business over the last three years and hoped that they would all reapply. All existing members would receive an application form sent by RW.

PR mentioned that the LAF had been instrumental, post Covid, in creating and holding the wild camping information on the NP website. This sort of advice was invaluable to the Authority. The access to water issue (Penmachno/Rhydlanfair in particular) was another where the LAF opinion had influenced what the NP had undertaken on site to help matters. And all the formal consultations that had arisen from time to time for which he was very grateful.

## **9. Recommended Agenda items of next meeting**

- i) Potential update on Dartmoor wild camping/backpacking issue.
- ii) Update on Crib Y Ddysgl

## **10. Any Other business – This to be kept as short as possible and was at the discretion of the Chair.**

i) PR informed the members that it had been agreed with the MRT Llanberis that an additional pillar should be installed at the top of Allt Goch rise. This will help people find the correct way down in poor visibility and lead to less confusion. They are planning to mark this off within the coming weeks. The selected stone is on its way to Pwllheli for engraving and from there it will be taken up and placed at that location sometime in May.

ii) *EN took the opportunity to thank all the members for their support and contribution to the LAF over the last three years and hoped that all would reapply to become members. And also thanked PR and RW for their work and support.*

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<sup>6</sup> Gdpr – General Data Protection Regulations – where certain information cannot be shared without consent. That means that any private data held for individuals means strict handling of that data by organizations

**11. Date of next meeting – June 8th 2026 – Venue to be advised.**

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