



NATIONAL RIGHTS OF WAY MANAGERS' WORKING GROUP

Minutes Wednesday 22nd January 2025 from 10:00 – 12:00 Meeting via
Microsoft Teams

Present:

Pete Hobley	(PH)	SW Group (Chair)
Edwin McWilliam	(EMW)	E Mids Group (Vice Chair)
Andrew Kelly	(AK)	List of Streets Task Group
Andy Mackintosh	(AM)	Natural England
Adrian Walls	(AW)	Wales Group (minute taker)
Becky Fuller	(BF)	W Mids Group
Daniel Ashman	(DA)	List of Streets Task Group
Gillian Blundell	(GB)	List of Streets Task Group
Graham Rusling	(GR)	SE Group & IPROW
Julia Murch	(JM)	DEFRA
Kylie Russell	(KR)	ADEPT
Mike Ogden	(MO)	Northern Group
Paul Ballinger	(PB)	DEFRA
Shona Butter	(SB)	W Mids Group

Apologies:

Hannah Bartram	(HaB)	ADEPT (Chief Operating Officer)
Richard Cuthbert	(RC)	IPROW
Paul Rochfort	(PR)	Staffordshire
Harry Wood	(HW)	PINS
Carys Drew	(CD)	NRW

TABLE OF ACTIONS

26 July 2023	
2	Bridges Group: Alan McClean of Surrey CC keen to lead the group now. PH to initiate contact to reconvene the group. DONE
3	DEFRA: <i>to circulate drafts of new SIs once drafted??</i>
25 October 2023	

3	ADEPT/IPROW: Need to work together on producing Deregulation Act guidance to help practitioners.
24 January 2024	
10	PH to raise with OS policies around incorrect/ inconsistent mapping re bodies of water. PH to circulate inquiry letter to OS and the OS response. Kate Noss at the OS is discussing the issue internally – response that OS don't realign PROW symbol where there are new bodies of water or buildings, but also don't show symbol across existing water/buildings. PH to respond further.
17 July 2024	
2	GR/PH: IPROW&ADEPT to write joint letter to SoS on bringing forth the Deregulation reforms DONE
	16 October 2024
1	Regional chairs to share links in chat re HSE/cattle DONE
25 Jan 2025	
1	PH - Provide link to Integrated Transport Strategy call for ideas consultation – DONE see item 5
1	PH – Provide ADEPT T&C Board contact details to AK/DA/GB
4	PH to contact SoS with regard to TCPA s247 apps & orders
5	All – volunteer required to attend the PINS Specialist Casework Stakeholder meetings. Let PH know if interested
5	PH – Prepare ADEPT response to Integrated Transport Call for ideas consultation
5	PH – provide link for Applied Information Group – Pathways project inclusivewayfindingtoolkit.co.uk DONE

1. Welcome/introductions

Andrew Kelly, Daniel Ashman and Gillian Blundell were welcomed as guest speakers from the List of Streets Task Group.

SB confirmed it was her last meeting as she is taking voluntary redundancy. PH expressed thanks on behalf of the group for all her work with and for the group over the years. BF (in attendance) most likely to represent W Mids at future meetings.

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

16th October 2024 meeting minutes agreed and arising matters on Agenda.

Item 1: List of Streets Task Group update



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%20ADEPT%20presen

List of Streets and Highway Authorities' Responsibilities

- DA introduces the topic of the List of Streets and its responsibilities with a slide presentation (embedded above), noting that authorities often lack answers to questions about their streets.
- BF raised her experience at National Highways, emphasizing the importance of the National Street Gazetteer and its regulatory functions, including sections 36 and 53.
- BF highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of the Gazetteer's purpose and its role in transport planning and public rights of way.
- BF suggests involving the Department for Transport (DfT) in discussions about the Gazetteer's purpose and the benefits of a fully integrated network.

Historical Context and Central Guidance

- AK provided a historical overview of the List of Streets requirement, starting from the 1925 Act and subsequent amendments in 1959 and 1980.
- BF mentions the DfT and HAUC code of practice, which defines the Gazetteer's content and purpose, but not the List of Streets.
- EMW raised concerns about the conflict of interest in maintaining the List of Streets by the same authorities responsible for their maintenance.
- DA and AK discussed the need for a conversation with Geoplace and other authorities to address these issues.

Geoplace and Data Management

- KR mentioned a message from Geoplace about the 'Find my street' widget, which allows the public to check the status of a street based on the National Street Gazetteer (NSG).
- AK and EMW discussed the importance of funding and the need for government oversight to ensure the integrity of highway records.
- GR emphasised the need for guidance on inputting data into the NSG to ensure a reliable subset for the List of Streets.

- DA and AK suggested involving the Department for Transport (DfT) in discussions to address these issues.

Resource and Governance Challenges

- PH highlighted the need for improved governance and resourcing to manage the List of Streets effectively.
- EMW and MO discussed the impact of forthcoming retirements and the need for better documentation and processes.
- AK suggested that legislative changes may be necessary to address the current challenges.
- PH mentioned the potential for a consistent approach to the List of Streets within the DfT's integrated national transport strategy. PH to provide AK/DA/GB with ADEPT Transport & Connectivity Board contact details vis-à-vis a presentation to them to help identify next steps.

[The Street Works \(Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

Item 2 – DEFRA update

Access and Agri-Environment Schemes

- PB and JM provided an update on the repeal of 2026 cut-off and the Access and Agri-Environment Schemes, including the new options for permissive access within countryside stewardship.
- PB highlighted the challenges of managing the available budget and the need for publicity to ensure the new routes being created are well-known.
- MO raised concerns about the sustainability of new routes and the need for better publicity to avoid confusion.
- GR and PH discussed the importance of proactive promotion by LAs and the potential for inviting applications for the new schemes.

Item 3 – Natural England Updates

Landscape Recovery and Access Improvements

- AM discussed the landscape recovery projects, which include access improvements as a secondary objective.
- AM highlighted the early stages of the implementation process and the need for engagement with local groups and highways authorities.
- BF raised concerns about the process of encouraging landowners to create permissive paths, conflicts with PROW enforcement, and the potential impact on the definitive map.

- PH and AM discussed the importance of ensuring that new routes are properly documented and maintained.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-higher-tier-get-ready-to-apply/countryside-stewardship-higher-tier-actions#permissive-access>

Item 4 TCPA 1990 S257 PPO applications

Challenges with Path Orders and User Evidence

- SB and MO discussed the increasing trend of land agents going directly to the Secretary of State for path orders, leading to poorly drafted orders.
- GR and PH emphasised the importance of objecting to the resulting poorly drafted orders to ensure their quality.
- MO raised concerns about the interpretation of "interested party" by PINS and the potential for misuse of accompanied site visits.
- PH suggests reaching out to the DfT casework team to address these issues and improve the consistency of path orders. Agreed as an action for PH

Item 5 Routine meeting updates as applicable

PINS Specialist Casework Stakeholder Meeting

- SB had been unable to attend the meeting nor were there deputies so there was nothing to report.
- With SB stepping down from the group a new volunteer is required.

It was asked if the consistency guidelines could be published. It was confirmed they are available at: [\[Withdrawn\] Definitive map orders: consistency guidelines - GOV.UK](#)

Transport Connectivity Board and Active Travel

- PH provided an update on the Transport Connectivity Board and the 'Integrated National Transport Strategy call for ideas' consultation.
- PB suggested drafting an ADEPT response to the consultation, focusing on the rights of way perspective. KR confirmed this would need to feed into a wider ADEPT response.
- BF and PH discussed the need for better engagement with the DfT to address the challenges of digital TROs and other initiatives.
- PH highlighted the importance of active travel funding and the need for a cohesive approach to wayfinding and highway signage in urban areas with a Pathways Project and way finding tool kit. There'll be a presentation from Mark Hardie of the Applied Information Group on this at the April meeting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/integrated-national-transport-strategy-a-call-for-ideas#ways-to-respond>

Level-Crossing Strategy Group and Network Rail MOU Survey

- PH presented the results of the Network Rail ADEPT/IPROW MOU survey, noting the low response rate and the need for better communication.
- MO discussed the challenges of bridge maintenance and the increasing workload for rights of way officers as more responsibility is pushed from engineering teams.
- PH emphasised the importance of addressing these issues to improve the effectiveness of the MOU and the relationship between local authorities and Network Rail.
- The meeting concludes with a call for further engagement and collaboration as part of a revised MoU to help address the ongoing challenges.

Discussion on Bridge Inspection Training

- PH requested participants to join the ADEPT working group on bridges.
- GR suggested providing rudimentary bridge inspection training and mentions potential trainers in the South East region.

Item 6 Feedback from the Regions

- SB shared feedback from the West Midlands, including erosion issues and the impact of weather on major structures.
- SB mentioned discussions about local access forums and their effectiveness, noting mixed views on the topic.
- BF added that the English devolution white paper also includes Secretary of State involvement in traffic orders.
- GR reiterated the need for clear guidance on creating rights for cyclists on public footpaths.
- AW mentioned the upcoming first meeting for a while in Wales and promises to provide a report at the next meeting.
- PH noted that there hasn't been a meeting in the Southwest since the last one, so there isn't much to report.

Item 7 Horizon scanning

Discussion on IPROW's Involvement and Local Government Reform

- Richard Cuthbert had asked for devolution/unitary to be discussed with a view to lessons learnt / sharing experiences – agreed as an agenda item for April meeting.
- GR emphasized the importance of learning from other authorities' experiences with local government reform and mayoral regions.

- MO shared his experience with unitary status and the impact of merging county and district councils, mentioning the North East combined authority.

Item 8 Next meeting

- PH and AW confirm the next meeting date scheduled as April 16 may need to be changed, with Graham Rusling noting the potential conflict with Easter holidays. PS: Next meeting now April 9th
- SB suggested finding someone else to take minutes at the next meeting due to the likely absence of the listed designated minute taker.
- PH and GR discuss the logistics of the next meeting, including the need for perhaps someone from the South East to attend to help.
- AW mentions using AI meeting transcribing tools like Otter.ai for creating the meeting record, which may reduce the burden.
- BF suggests involving Paul from the W Mids as a backup minute taker.
- Finally, all present noted it being the last meeting for our long standing member and past Chair Shona Butter. Sadly, the reorganisation of her service has meant she will be moving on and those left in the meeting all thanked her for the sterling effort she had put into chairing and supporting the group over many years.

Dates of Next Meetings: 22 January 2025, ~~16~~ 9 April 2025, 16 July 2025, 13 October 2025

SECRETARY ROTA FOR ROWMG

Date	Secretary	Completed
24 January 2024	East Midlands	Yes
17 April 2024	West Midlands	Yes
17 July 2024	Eastern	Yes
16 October 2024	Northern	Yes
22 January 2025	Wales	Yes
16 April 2025	MAG?	
16 July 2025	IPROW	
13 October 2025	South East	