



# Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)

## Minutes

**Title of meeting:** Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)

**Location:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Date of Meeting:** 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Present:**

Zoe Henderson, NRW (Chair)

Ruth Jenkins, NRW

Geraint Llyr Davies, NRW

Marc Williams, NRW

Sarah Hetherington, NRW

Dennis Matheson, TFA

Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru

Hedd Pugh, NFU Cymru

Anthony Geddes, Confor

Martyn Evans, NRW

John Browne, NRW

Bernard Griffiths, FUW

Fraser McAuley, CLA

Tim Kirk, Confor

Spencer Conlon, Welsh Government

**Additional Attendees Present:**

Paul Dann, NRW (Item 3 only)

**Secretariat(s):**

Bronwen Martin, NRW

**Apologies:**

Bob Vaughan, NRW

Vicky Jones, Welsh Government

Ceri Davies, NRW

Steve Ormerod, NRW

**Item 1 Introductions, Apologies and Declaration of Interest**

1. The Chair welcomed all to the Microsoft Teams meeting noting apologies.
2. No declarations of interest were raised in respect of Agenda items to be considered.
3. The group were reminded that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of capturing the minutes and the digital file will be deleted once the meeting minutes have been compiled.

**Item 2 Minutes from the last meeting and any matters arising**

4. The Group reviewed the minutes from the June 2020 meeting and approved as a true record. Zoe mentioned that she had some minor amendments which have been sent to Bronwen. Once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed they will be translated and published on the NRW website
5. Bronwen Martin, NRW shared her screen and the group reviewed the Action Log.
6. The Chair asked the members if they have anything to discuss regarding the information in the Update Paper. No comments were received.

**Item 3 Illegal Off-roading**

7. The Chair welcomed Paul Dann, NRW to the meeting to lead a discussion regarding the increase in illegal off-roading activities encountered across Wales. Zoe encouraged members to participate in the conversation around this topic.
8. Paul is a Land Management Team Leader in the operational side of NRW. Paul manages the Welsh Government Woodland Estate and the NNR Estate across parts of mid-Wales. Illegal motorised access is an increasing problem on NRW managed land, neighbouring land, and partner's land. The demand is far greater than can be accommodated on legal routes. Deliberate illegal motorised access is causing problems for different user groups, impacting on other recreational users and requiring

significant amount of resources to manage. Paul said lockdown changed people's perspective on this and there was a lot of media coverage regarding the topic. NRW have received support from the Police in combatting problems relating to illegal motorised access.

Paul mentioned there issues around existing legal rights of way. Off-roaders can legally go on Unclassified County Roads (UCRs), but these are sometimes hard to determine on maps. Other routes for public access can also raise questions around legitimate access for off-roaders.

Paul said that NRW saw an upsurge in illegal off-roading complaints following lockdown last spring and subsequent lockdown releases. Security patrols were introduced in some areas across Wales, targeting areas of particular concern. NRW have linked up with Police by carrying out joined operations. NRW have introduced more infrastructure at some sites including barriers and fencing to limit some off-road access. However, Paul said it is almost impossible to keep motorbikes out as people will just cut fences and gates. Colleagues have also installed trail cameras to monitor the problem and understand the numbers. NRW have also contacted some motor sport clubs and event organisers to try to communicate with their members. Although, many of the people encountered have come far afield from places like Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds, which makes communicating with the user group difficult. NRW have also worked with Wales off-road motor steering group to advocate continued support and they have advocated for robust enforcement.

9. Dennis Matheson, TFA recognised that this is an issue seen right across Wales and noted that the frequency of illegal off-roading has particularly increased recently. Dennis explained that some of the tracks these people use near him are legal rights of way which is the difficulty. Dennis was pleased to hear that NRW are having conversations with clubs because some of them have some say in the activities of their members (e.g. the use of codes of practice). Dennis mentioned that he is aware that many people travel great distances to use their off-road vehicles in Wales. Dennis mentioned that there are some who advertise themselves as guides or route leaders but often end up leaving their group to ride around the countryside. Dennis suggested that educating these users will be the best option to improve this problem.
10. Paul asked Dennis whether he has tried to communicate with these users to ask them to slow down or respect the routes. Dennis said he has tried to talk to several people, but it has been incredibly frustrating due to often receiving abusive responses.
11. Tim Kirk, Confor said it is not just motorised vehicles, many forest areas suffer from mountain bikes which are often more dangerous because there are pedestrians. In some cases, no one knows the cyclists are on the property and when they hurt themselves it can take a long time for them to be found and emergency service access is difficult. Some people also have no concept of private ownership. Tim mentioned that one of his clients purchased some signs but within a short time they had been vandalised and cyclists have also cut down trees and created illegal tracks.
12. Dennis said many people are very concerned about the plans to allow mountain bike racing on bridleways.

13. Ruth Jenkins, NRW asked whether it would be worth getting a bit more clarity at the meeting around the access issues and what is proposed regarding legislative changes. Zoe agreed that more clarity would be helpful for this group. Ruth mentioned that there is ongoing work to understand what the opportunities are for the multiuse of current legal access routes. Ruth suggested someone from the [National Access Forum for Wales \(NAFW\)](#) could come to a WLMF meeting to provide an update. Bronwen mentioned that a representative from the NAFW was invited to the meeting.
14. Anthony Geddes, Confor said there is a huge amount of legal and illegal access activity in his local area. Anthony said he is an active mountain biker, but he observes the correctly marked trails. Anthony described some of the routes off-road 4x4's use in his local area and how some areas have been changed or modified to suit these users. The loss of rangers is noticeable and there should be people in the forest to observe, interact and engage with users. Anthony suggested that this resource is a major challenge to proactively engage with users.
15. Hedd Pugh, NFU Cymru said this topic has been discussed at his local access forum regarding 4x4's and motorcycles. Hedd said they have sent a letter to the Minister, Lee Waters to see if anything can be done about it and suggested perhaps, they could arrange for motorcycles to use Welsh Government property instead of them using private land. Many farmers are concerned about the mess these people create as they do not stick to a track. Farmers are also concerned about cross compliance and whether these activities could affect their single farm payments.
16. Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru endorsed the comments and this is an increasing problem for NFU Cymru members. Rachel described observations regarding problems with scrambler bikes which can turn up any time day or night. They are causing ecological damage by not sticking to tracks and roads. Rachel explained that this is also an issue encountered on the urban fringe and these people cut fences to gain access. Rachel described a mapping system used by NFU Cymru for fly tipping and asked whether NRW have a similar system available to map illegal off-roading activities. Data and evidence could be collected to map the reported incidents across Wales which would help understand and monitor the extent of the problem. This is important because some of these areas are environmentally sensitive and even designated. Rachel suggested that they could help gather special data if it would help.
17. Martyn Evans, NRW said that this conversation shows that perhaps we are behind the curve and perhaps our interventions. There is an obvious resurgence of countryside use and perhaps route because analysis is required to improve the problems. Martyn mentioned that NRW have had conversations with the Chief Constable of South Wales Police and the Commissioner around getting ahead of this problem. Martyn suggested mapping the problem and building the evidence base through the National Access Forum for Wales. There are many concerns including liability, personal safety, private land damage and wildlife impact.
18. Bernard Griffiths, FUW recalled a situation encountered by one of their members, where a group of people came down with a trailer full of vehicles to go off-roading. The member decided to approach these people to do something about the situation. They just road around him in a circle and there was nothing this person could do about it. Bernard suggested that going forward, the only way to improve this situation is through new legislation.

19. Geraint Llyr Davies, NRW mentioned that he is the new Chairperson for the National Access Forum for Wales. Geraint said that this topic is already a concern for him, more people want more access to the countryside, but they need to understand how their activities can impact the countryside. People have already been hurt by off-roading activities both members of the public and those undertaking the activities. Geraint invited Paul Dann and Martyn Evans to the next National Access Forum for Wales meeting to discuss this topic further.
20. Zoe wondered what involvement the local County Councils have in this issue. Zoe suggested that this topic should be discussed again at a future meeting and asked Ruth, Martyn, or Paul to follow up this discussion and explore Rachel's idea on how we can better understand what is happening and where.
21. Paul said this is was a very important discussion. Paul reminded members that illegal off-roading is a crime which should be reported to the Police using 101. Reporting these incidents to the Police will help them gather evidence and map the issue. Paul said electric mountain bikes are becoming more affordable and now electric trail bikes are coming into the market which will need to be considered.
22. Rachel asked whether the advice to report incidents to the Police is on the NRW website because their members could be signposted to this guidance. Paul said he would have a look at the NRW website, but it is on the National Park websites and local Police websites. Paul mentioned that NRW generally use the police email to report on a local basis rather than phoning them.
23. Zoe thanked Paul for joining the meeting and suggested further discussion is required at the next National Access Forum for Wales meeting and suggested they could invite the Police to join the conversation. Zoe asked that perhaps an update could be fed back to this group.
24. Martyn mentioned the use of forestry powers which allows the issue of formal warnings and could potentially lead to vehicles being confiscated. Paul mentioned that colleagues would need to be enforcement officers. Paul noted that there are powers included within the Forestry Act 1967 in terms of enforcement within the by-laws which can be used but are not as strong as the Police powers under Section 59 of the Police and Reform Act 2002.

## Item 4 NRW Updates

25. The Chair mentioned that an Update Paper was circulated to members prior to the meeting which included links to further information. Zoe asked if there were any feedback or comments regarding the items in the document.
26. Ruth Jenkins, NRW had the following additional updates:
  - A reminder that the [Consultation on NRW's approach to regulating the shooting and trapping of wild birds in Wales](#) is live and closes on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
  - NRW will be attending the Climate Change Environment and Infrastructure Committee meeting at the end of the month. Sessions at the meeting will be on biodiversity and environmental governance and flood and climate change.

- NRW are also expecting to attend a session at the Economy and Rural Affairs Committee which will either be at the end of the month or in October.
- Ruth mentioned the Deep Dive into Forestry and Woodlands which was run by Lee Waters. Ruth said there are two further Deep Dives which have been announced on Biodiversity and Renewable Energy.

27. Fraser McAuley, CLA asked when will the Deep Dives be held. Ruth said the full timetable has not been received yet.

28. Dennis Matheson, TFA recalled the Deep Dive meeting with Lee Waters last month. Dennis mentioned that trees and tenants is a major problem and the TFA have offered to have a conversation to try to come up with some solutions but have not yet been able to liaise. Zoe asked whether this is being followed up. Dennis said the TFA have written to Welsh Government which was acknowledged but it has not moved forward. Zoe asked how the Deep Dives are followed up. Ruth said it is an intense look at a specific area and is being followed up by an action plan of steps which have been highlighted. John Browne said the whole concept of Deep Dives started about 18-months ago with a series of ten regimes which are important to consider Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR). John mentioned that of the ten, seven have been completed with three more to come. There is a draft paper for Welsh Government which includes suggested interventions which have come from these Deep Dives.

29. Anthony Geddes, Confor mentioned that one of the recommendations from the Deep Dive into Forestry and Woodlands was to set up a forum to look at land partnership, question external investment and afforestation and farming working together. The Terms of Reference have been sent out with the session being led by John Travis and chaired by Sarah Jennings, NRW. Anthony has suggested that greater stakeholder engagement is necessary for this ongoing work.

30. Dennis discussed a conversation he had regarding planting trees and felling licences. John said the vast majority of applications are done within 3 months and there were over 5000 felling licence applications last year. John welcomed any feedback or conversations with colleagues in the sector.

***AP September 01: John Browne and Dennis Matheson, TFA to follow up conversation regarding tree planting and felling licences.***

31. Tim Kirk, Confor said that there are some thriving bracken areas across Wales which have minimal use to farming, forestry and nature conservation. Tim suggested that this perhaps needs to be addressed as many of these banks would grow fantastic timber and create great conservation areas with new woodland. There used to be a bracken challenge fund and could be looked at afresh. Ruth mentioned that part of the process of getting the right tree in the right place is being able to identify what the 'right place' is. Martyn said there could be a potential way forward and suggested this should be looked into further. Ruth mentioned that in terms of the barriers, the 'where' has been highlighted. Anthony requested an update relating to the reported incidents of illegal felling to understand the scale of the problem.

***AP September 02: Ruth and Martyn to provide an update relating to the reported incidents of illegal felling to understand the scale of the problem, how NRW have responded and the level of resources on enforcement and operational teams.***

32. Martyn mentioned that NRW have seen an increase in illegal felling and are taking the appropriate enforcement action on a few significant cases. Martyn encouraged members to report any genuine illegal felling activity so that the appropriate action can be taken. Martyn mentioned that there is perhaps a lack of public misunderstanding of what can be done within the scope of a licence.
33. John mentioned that this was looked at within the Agri White Paper consultation to clarify the position with Ash. The current stance is to rely on very clear guidance which will become the mechanism for landowners to know what they can and cannot do.
34. Sarah Hetherington, NRW asked what the driver for this increased illegal activity is. Martyn suggested that many instances are linked to using timber for firewood and clearance for agricultural purposes. John agreed and mentioned that the price of timber has doubled in a very short time.

## **Item 5 Update from FUW / NFU Cymru / Wales YFC / Confor / CLA / TFA / Welsh Government**

35. **FUW:** Bernard Griffiths, FUW mentioned that colleagues have been busy preparing a submission for the Senedd consultation regarding the Agricultural Pollution Regulations. FUW have been looking closely at the UK trade deals with Australia and New Zealand and the possible step towards membership of the CPTPP.
36. **NFU Cymru:** Rachel Lewis-Davies mentioned that the enquiry on the water regulations is very important and NFU Cymru are working on their submission. NFU Cymru will be releasing their policy paper on tree cover in Wales in the next few weeks which makes a number of important recommendations. A number of areas in Wales have experienced farms being bought for complete afforestation which is an increasing area of concern. NFU Cymru members are keen to become part of the solution to climate change and are willing to increase tree cover on their farms with the appropriate support. The targets of tree planting on farms must be integrated rather than replacing them. Rachel will share the paper with the group once it has been published.

Tim Kirk, Confor said there has been a lot of publicity regarding large farms being bought by people from outside of Wales. Tim suggested that this is a false concern because these create employment opportunities. Unless farmers are on board with the Welsh Government's target of 40,000ha of trees planted, there is no hope in achieving it.

Rachel mentioned that this is about keeping farmers on the land for the multiple benefits they can deliver. This involves integrating tree planting and increasing tree coverage on Welsh farms to help deliver the ambitious government targets but also allowing rural Welsh communities to thrive.

Hedd Pugh, NFU Cymru mentioned that Welsh farmers are not against planting trees but do not want largescale afforestation. Welsh farmers do not want to export food

production to other parts of the world. Hedd mentioned that it is about planting the right tree in the right place.

37. Marc Williams, NRW mentioned that Wales YFC have been recruiting for a new CEO and there have been some extensive changes in officers. Marc said an invitation will be extended as soon as they have appointed a new CEO/Chairperson.
38. **Confor:** Anthony Geddes mentioned that part of the deep dive was to understand the route forward regarding afforestation. Confor continue to work with members of the deep dive team on work streams including an industrial strategy for timber and fibre. Other areas of work include looking at the replacement for Glastir and delinking planning and grant planting.

Tim Kirk, Confor said that to encourage farmers, we should mention the current status of the timber market; for a variety of reasons the timber market is booming.

39. **CLA:** Fraser McAuley said that the CLA are also working towards the same consultations mentioned by others along with responses to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee priorities and Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee priorities.
40. **TFA:** Dennis Matheson mentioned that TFA Cymru is currently working on finding solutions to the tenant farmers and The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021. Dennis recalled that after 4-months after these Regulations were introduced, Welsh Government provided the draft Frequently Asked Questions document for tenant farmers. This document lists the problems but did not provide any solutions which means tenants are in a very difficult situation. Tenants are in a situation where they either ignore the regulations and risk prosecution, comply with the regulations, and break the terms of their tenancy or give up farming. The TFA are trying to work with Welsh Government to try to come up with solutions but Dennis doubted there are any as everything stands. Dennis also discussed the challenges tenants face regarding tree planting.

Ruth mentioned there will be an update for those who usually received them from Chris Botting regarding the Glastir Verification Status Report.

### ***AP September 03: NRW to circulate the Glastir Verification Status Report to members.***

Geraint Llyr Davies, NRW said he feels that compared to England, Wales is a step behind regarding funding or financial support for farmers. Spencer Conlon, Welsh Government said they do look at what goes on in England.

41. **Welsh Government:** Spencer said Welsh Government are currently in the process of responding to both the committee review and the judicial review.

## **Item 6 WLMF Survey Responses & Stakeholder Engagement**

42. A questionnaire was created to help move the group forward, discuss immediate topics and work collaboratively to deliver actions. This provided an opportunity for the



members to review the survey responses and agree how the group will work together to progress.

43. Survey responses were summarised and sent to members in June and Bronwen Martin, NRW briefly recapped these so the group could consider the next steps.
44. Bronwen asked members to share their views on the direction of the group. Bronwen said that in order for the group to continue as a platform for information sharing, perhaps the dialogue between the meetings could be increased; for example, encourage the circulation of relevant news/information from stakeholders throughout the year.
45. Ruth said that the responses highlight a number of key themes which may present for some Task & Finish type opportunities which would look at the challenges and opportunities. For example, recognising the challenges and opportunities around topics like sustainable land management, farm management and food and timber production.
46. Zoe asked members whether they had any feedback and agreed that continuing communication with members will be very valuable. Zoe discussed the possibility of inviting new members to the group but suggested that instead of extending the membership, people could be invited to attend as guests when a relevant topic is being discussed. Zoe reminded the group that the once the meeting minutes have been agreed by the group (and translated into Welsh), they are published on the external NRW website for all to assess - [Wales Land Management Forum \(WLMF\)](#). Zoe said that NRW are looking at stakeholder engagement to make sure there is a plan in place and communication is proactive and positive.
47. Marc mentioned that NRW have recruited a Stakeholder Engagement Officer which will be key going forward to help us engage and share information whilst being transparent with the wider group. Marc said that the June WLMF meeting was interesting and worked well with a main theme and a panel discussion with guests. Marc asked the views of members and asked whether the group would like a similar format to the November meeting with a different theme.
48. Anthony asked if the summary of the survey responses could be recirculated.

***AP September 04: Bronwen Martin, NRW to recirculate the summary of the survey responses.***

49. Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru said that ahead of the Agricultural Bill next spring, it would be good to see the position papers that NRW have prepared and then discuss them at a future meeting.
50. Bronwen said the survey was very valuable exercise and thanked the members for their honest feedback and comments.

## **Item 7 WLMF & WWMF SuDS Workshop Update**

51. A 'one-off' collective workshop session is proposed to discuss SuDS, with both the members of the Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) and Wales Water Management Forum (WWMF) to attend.

52. Marc discussed the anticipated plan for the workshop including the proposed date/time and draft agenda.
53. The proposed date for the workshop is 12<sup>th</sup> October from 10am – 12pm and will be held on Microsoft Teams.
54. The draft agenda includes sessions on:
- Stakeholder interests and discussion on the use of SuDS from the perspective of those in the agricultural and forestry sectors
  - Background of current legislation and planned changes
  - River Basin Management Plans and the use of SuDS
55. Marc thanked Rachel and Anthony for their feedback, comments, and ideas. Rachel suggested inviting consultants to the workshop to make sure the messages are reaching a wider audience. Marc asked the group whether they agree to inviting others to the workshop, the group were in support of this.
56. Marc asked the group whether anyone else had some suggestions to help inform the agenda for the workshop.
57. Rachel asked what the output of the workshop will be. Rachel acknowledged that relevant Welsh Government officials will be there, but they also made the commitment to review the use of SuDS within a specific time period, which has now lapsed. Rachel suggested that any information captured is collated into something formal which could be presented to Welsh Government so that they start to recognise some of the difficulties with this legislation. Marc said he would take these comments back to Ceri Jones, NRW who is in communication with Welsh Government.
58. Anthony mentioned he will not be able to attend the workshop but will happily forward the invite and information to colleagues to there is wider attendance with good feedback. Marc mentioned that members can either submit the contact details of their colleagues to the team or they can forward the invite directly to them. Rachel confirmed that she will forward the invite and make a note of responses to provide to Marc.

## **Item 8 WLMF & Area Statement Workshop**

59. Marc mentioned that some internal discussions have been had since the last WLMF meeting regarding the proposed WLMF & Area Statement Workshop. Logistically, at the moment there are some concerns about the risk of holding a large event and some people may still feel uncomfortable in attending these types of events.
60. Marc outlined the updated proposed plan which includes holding five individual workshop sessions of each of the themes. These will be for a maximum of two hours and presented virtually on Microsoft Teams. This will allow members to contribute to multiple themes instead of splitting off into different 'rooms' and can now attend more than one session if interested.
61. The plan is to have these sessions over the next three months from October to December, but this can be extended if needed. The five themes include natural flood

management, woodlands, trees and hedges, common land, healthy hillsides, and food networks. Marc said each session will have an introduction followed by the workshop which will include videos, guest speakers and a discussion and feedback session. Marc asked the members for their thoughts on having these proposed shorter individual sessions. Dennis Matheson, TFA asked whether people will be able to dial in to these, Marc confirmed this will be possible.

62. Zoe said this plan sounds very interesting and will be good to dive into them in a little more detail during these sessions.

63. Geraint Llyr Davies, NRW suggested that hedgerows are a missed opportunity and the benefits need to be recognised. They are vital assets which can help deliver so many benefits. Dennis agreed with Geraint's comments and mentioned that planting hedgerows are more likely to be acceptable in a tenant-landlord situation.

Martyn said it is important to understand why hedgerows became benign and subsequently removed in the past. Geraint suggested hedgerow decline was predominantly linked to the food production policy of the government through the 70s and 80s and beyond, where more food production was required to feed an ever-growing population. Geraint mentioned that the circle is turning and there is more understanding. Where Geraint has put hedgerows back, his problematic fields have now benefitted.

John Browne, NRW agreed with Geraint's comments regarding benefits of hedgerows and there is a climate emergency and biodiversity emergency and hedgerows are vital. Regarding the profitability of woodlands, John said that it is not only the right tree in the right place but also for the right reasons. The landowner needs to look at the reasons for planting trees not just the profitability.

64. Bernard Griffiths, FUW asked what the healthy hillsides theme will contain that is not covered by the other four themes. Marc said that Healthy Hillsides is a project in South Central and will include discussions regarding management of hillsides such as bracken control. Marc said colleagues are in discussions regarding the content of each session and are working hard to limit the cross over between the themes for example with common land and healthy hillsides.

65. Hedd said there was a small intake of farmers and landowners who attended the last Area Statement meeting he joined so consideration needs to be given to the date and time of these sessions to make sure it is practical.

66. Anthony said that previous Area Statement events had a mixture of attendees, but however these proposed sessions are run, there needs to be good professional engagement because the voice of the local farmer and the local forester is often missing at these events.

Anthony discussed the consultation on NRW's review of Area Statements ([Position Statement - Keeping Area Statements Under Review](#)). Anthony said the PDF document attached to the consultation was impenetrable and difficult to understand. Anthony suggested the document needs to be clearer in order for people to respond to the consultation.

***AP September 05: Ruth Jenkins, NRW and Martyn Evans, NRW to feedback Anthony's comments regarding the consultation on NRW's review of Area Statements.***

Rachel agreed with Anthony's comments regarding the PDF document and found it very difficult to understand.

67. Zoe and Marc discussed the idea of including some short videos in the workshop sessions to try to bring the outside in. Marc said there are some existing videos which can be used but it would be good if some new videos can be created whilst out on a site which could include a panel discussion with members. Martyn asked members to suggest potential sites which link to any of the themes and can be included in a video.

***AP September 06: Members to suggest relevant sites linking to the workshop themes which can be considered for a video.***

68. Geraint suggested using his farm for a video.

69. Fraser McAuley, CLA asked whether dates have been decided. Marc said that dates are being considered but propose that the natural flood management and woodland, trees and hedgerows sessions are sometime in October with the common land and healthy hillsides sessions in November and the food networks session in December. Marc asked the group to let him know if they wanted to extend the timescales but, in the meantime, he would put together some dates.

70. Marc asked the group to get in touch with any suggestions of guest speakers and case studies for the themes.

***AP September 07: The group to suggest guest speakers and case studies for each of the workshop themes.***

## **Item 9 Any Other Business**

71. The next WLMF meeting will be held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

72. Zoe asked whether there were any thoughts on holding a meeting in-person. Asked whether in-person and virtual meeting could be combined. Zoe suggested a combined meeting would be beneficial. Marc said it would depend on the location/facilities of the meeting. Martyn mentioned that NRW are trying to lead by example by encouraging people to continue virtually due to the benefits linked to the reduction of car travel, the impact on the climate and reducing the covid risk. Should there be in-person meetings, Anthony said it would be good to coordinate them and making a day of it as gone are the days you would travel great distances for a two-hour meeting.

## **Close meeting**