**Rights of Way Managers Group meeting, 18 April 2018**

The ROWMG working group met in Birmingham on the 18 April – venue kindly hosted by Birmingham City Council.

The Chair welcomed the group and thanked Jon Perks (SE region) and Virginia Mouton (MAG) who have stood down as regional Chairs and welcomed their replacements. The group were saddened by the unexpected death of David Jones, a member of the West Midlands group, and sent their sympathies to his family. Ros Mills (National Chair) announced her intention to stand down from the role – Paul Newark (MAG) agreed to take on the role at the next meeting and Shona Butter (West Midlands) agreed to be Vice Chair. All were thanked.

The Chair reported on discussions from the Rights of Way Review committee relating to the necessity of being involved in drafting Green Brexit strategies for access and decided that a position statement should be drafted from the ROWMG; the NSG and prow data was also discussed.

There was feedback from the ADEPT National Conference, and it was decided that the group should suggest a ROWMG topic to the Transport Board. Training and requests for future ADEPT funding were noted and agreed that bids should be made.

Attention was drawn to current Consultations which may be of interest for rights of way teams a) Health & Harmony: The Future for Food, Farming and the Environment in a Green Brexit; b) Cycling and Walking investment strategy; c) National Planning Policy Framework – draft revised text; d) Developing a national approach to physical activity for children and young people. (*Summary documents can be found* [here](http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=311&MId=3267&Ver=4) *on the Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) agenda papers – see agenda item 13)*

A DEFRA officer attended and updated the group on the latest progress in relation to the legislative changes currently going through parliament and discussed the response to the DEFRA consultation on the cost recovery regulations relating to the Deregulation Act. The group were pleased that Natural England has agreed the funding formal for 18/19 National Trails - (*see correspondence DCAF agenda item 12.2*[*here*](http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=311&MId=3267&Ver=4)*)*

Updates were received from Natural Resources Wales and from around the regions about various matters of mutual interest which were noted and will be shared across the country.

The representative from the Institute of Public Rights of Way and Access Management drew to the group’s attention that the 2018 Annual Survey will be circulated in May, which will assist in collecting benchmark data. All regional chairs were asked to encourage participation within their areas.

Dates of future meetings at Birmingham were agreed: 12 July; 11 October; 24 January 2019.