



The Cumbria Local Access Forum

Consultation from Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service on the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-2009

The Cumbria Local Access Forum has adopted three guiding principles:-

- *We are in favour of access as far as it is legally provided for and practicably sensible to provide it:*
- *We believe that access should be available (within the bounds of reasonableness) to all existing and potential future users; and*
- *We believe that access should be exercised in an informed and responsible manner.*

These guidelines, which incorporate a principled approach to access, have guided the LAF, the County Council, and the Partnership Board, in all their subsequent work.

Monday, 19 November 2007

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to be consulted on the Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-2009.

We are delighted to see that the development of a Wild Land Fire Strategy is one of your top priorities for next year, highlighted by such a visually strong front cover image.

Similarly, we applaud your acknowledgement of the effect of Wildfires on the rurality of the County and the “significant environmental and expensive damage” they cause. Your willingness to engage with rural partners in a multi-agency approach is also welcomed.

We are also heartened to be kept informed about the effective measures you are taking in terms of equipment provision; the four-wheel-drive vehicles together with the additional training for staff, as a commitment from the previous IRMP.

Moorland owners and land managers are much encouraged by your commitment and will no doubt put everything at your disposal in a joined-up force and we urge you to consider in your approach not just fell and heathland fires, but also those on peat and heather moorland.

In addition, Cumbria LAF look forward to working with CF&RS on issues of public education – both in terms of understanding potential fire risk and how to behave responsibly on public access land and public rights of way. Your work with children in schools and in community groups throughout the county can only help bring about a greater understanding of the devastating effects of wildfire on the rural environment, its ecology and financial viability. This, in turn, should lead to greater awareness of preventative measures that need to be taken at crucial times when conditions are such that the countryside is at its most vulnerable to the effects of wildfire.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with you and look forward to continuing to work with you on the above matters, through the emerging “Cumbria Wildfire Group” approach.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Ecroyd
Cumbria Local Access Forum Member