



Torbay Local Access Forum Meeting
to be held in public on Thursday, 26 May 2016
6.00 pm in the Meeting Room 12, Paignton Library,
Great Western Road, Paignton, TQ4 5AG

If you are unable to attend this meeting please inform the TLAF Secretary.

Telephone: (01803) 207064 E-mail: torbaylaf@torbay.gov.uk

The meeting will be open to the public in accordance with the provision of Regulation 7 of the LAF
(England) Regulations 2002
(under Sections 94 + 95 of the CROW Act 2000)

Agenda

1.	To elect a Chairman/woman for the meeting.	
2.	To receive any apologies for absence.	
3.	To declare any interests on matters on the agenda.	
4.	To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015.	(Pages 3 - 4)
5.	Healthy Torbay Action Plan – discussion topic Andrew Gunther attending.	
6.	Local Access Forum National Conference To note the feedback provided by Bob Harvey.	(Pages 5 - 6)
7.	Local Access Forum Annual Review Form	(Pages 7 - 10)
8.	Updates from Area Co-ordinators	
9.	Any Other Business	

Agenda Item 4



Minutes of the Local Access Forum

17 September 2015

-: Present :-

Councillor Ian Doggett, Margaret Forbes-Hamilton, Bob Harvey
and Bobby Singh

118. Election of Chairman/woman

Councillor Doggett was elected Chairman for the meeting.

119. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Mellor, Robert Boyd, Mick Lear and Alan Robinson. The Forum welcomed a new member Bobby Singh.

120. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2014 were accepted and agreed as an accurate report of the meeting.

121. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan - Discussion Topic

Tracy Brooks, Senior Strategic Planner for Torbay Council attend the meeting and provided a presentation on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan. Members were advised that AONB designation is recognition that an area needs to be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of the community. An AONB provides the context for long term management of areas, local authorities have the responsibility to manage the areas, however the management has been undertaken in different ways e.g. joint boards. South Devon have formed a unit consisting of a partnership of local authorities and various other interested parties to steer and co-ordinate the work of the AONB.

Members were informed that there is a statutory duty to produce management plan, the South Devon management plan is a living document for 2014 to 2019 and presents a vision for the future and reflects the range of views of stakeholders. There are several themes to the management plan such as access, recreation and tourism, transport and highways. All the themes are supported by policies that provide a framework to guide delivery of the themes.

Members were informed of a number of initiatives in the Torbay vicinity such as working with land owners and the National Trust to secure access paths over the Brixham peninsula as well as a number of community fund raising initiatives which

were vital as previously DEFRA provided significant amounts of funding however this has been withdrawn leaving the AONB to be funded solely by local authorities and the generosity of the community.

Agenda Item 6

Local Access Forum National Conference (South)

Natural England, Temple Quay House, Bristol (100 yards from Temple Meads Station))

Tuesday 23 February 2016

Over 60 delegates attended this conference including representatives from Plymouth, Exmoor and Devon LAFs, also from Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks.

This report is a personal impression by Torbay Local Access Forum delegate Bob Harvey and does not necessarily represent TLAF views.

Matt Heard, Natural England, introduced the day with a 20-minute talk. He had previously been involved with the disastrous "Lost Ways" which, despite substantial funding, had failed to establish public access to a single one "Lost Way".

Jonathan Tweeney from DEFRA has been involved with LAFs since their inception and outlined the RoW Reform Package and the Deregulation Act 2015. This needs a lot of interpretation in practice but it does allow for the possibility of extinguishing PRowS. A Stakeholder Group has been established and LAFs will not be consulted individually. The British Caving Association (BCA) is mounting a campaign to have caves recognised for public access under the CRoW Act 2000; this would not need a change in the Act.

John Cuthbertson and Arthur Lee gave a thorough presentation on the need for improved facilities for disabled access, but this concentrated almost entirely on catering for physical disabilities which required wheelchair access. Modern aids such as the "Tramper" have the ability to cope with rough terrain, but the photographs projected showed that this appeared to cause substantial damage to muddy footpaths. I also questioned the provision for the slightly disabled/aged who simply need a 'leaning bar' to take a rest at intervals, and those with perceptual difficulties of hearing and sight. These appeared to have been overlooked.

Nicola Greenwood from Wokingham outlined her stakeholders' guide to influencing your local council. While this demonstrated commitment and effort it was concerned almost wholly with improving the availability and quality of bridleways.

John Dennis outlined alternative funding sources for access projects, which linked with the Workshop on charitable status for LAF sub-groups. He encouraged LAFs to get away from the image of being concerned only with country RoWs, and urged links with sport, health and tourism interests. The cost : benefits ratio for public open air exercise has been established as around 1:3 or 1:4 - a very good investment for the central government but not as easy for local government. One suggestions justifies particular note, that OS maps showing footpaths should be on display in all hospitals and doctors' surgeries.

Workshop 1 Charitable status.

Seamus Elliott and Martin Sullivan from Norfolk outlined the enormous effort they had invested in enabling Norfolk LAF to "get things done". However, they acknowledged that establishing charitable status and preparing a legal constitution to form an operational arm of a LAF takes "time and dedication", and demands a detailed evidence base.

Workshop 2 2026

Phil Wadey and Sarah Bucks of the Open Spaces Society emphasised that the deadline date of 2026 is critical for the identification and registration of "white roads" to become

Other Routes with Public Access (ORPAs). Much research is required but the benefits can justify it. Look for breaks in routes and list them systematically. Also check the 1910 Finance Act which lists Turnpike Roads, and the records of previous local authorities such as Rural District Councils.

The main impression I brought from this conference is that Government policy is a juggernaut of privatisation of services beneficial to the public, even to the extent of privatising statutory services such as responsibility for LAFs. The convenient justification is that the footwork can be undertaken by volunteers who have a better understanding of local needs. An example is a Neighbourhood Plan which can be drawn up by volunteers and would have influence equal to the Local Plan. However, a Local Plan has funding, officer time and expertise provided by the local authority whereas a Neighbourhood Plan depends almost entirely on a dedicated band of willing and able volunteers over a period of many years.

Could this be a convenient method of Government abrogating its governmental responsibilities under the guise of "localism" ? You may form your own opinions.

Bob Harvey

March 2016

Agenda Item 7 Local Access Forum Annual Review Form April 2015 to March 2016

Name of LAF	Torbay Local Access Forum
Name of LAF Chair	Chairman are currently being chosen on a meeting by meeting basis
Name of LAF Secretary	Lisa Antrobus

Total number of LAF members	8
Number of members representing users of public rights of way or access land	3
Number of members representing owners and occupiers of access land or land over which PROW subsist	1
Number of members representing other interests	4

Number of full LAF meetings held	1	Number of sub-group meetings held	0
Number of working groups led by others	0	Number of training days provided by the Appointing Authority	0
How many km of PROW have been improved due to LAF input?	0	How much funding did the LAF (or an associated body) raise?	0
How many extra volunteer hours were committed to public access (not including LAF committee meetings)?			

Partners your LAF worked with during 2015/16 (click on a box or type 'x')

Local Nature Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Enterprise Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Wellbeing Boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	LEADER funding Local Action Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>

LAF achievements/making a difference?¹ Please give examples to illustrate how your LAF has improved public access to land for the purpose of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. Do you think your LAF has made a difference to public access in your area via its discussions and actions?

The LAF has successfully recruited two new members, recruitment has always been difficult so we were pleased to attract two new members.

What activity did your LAF undertake to help record historical PROW before 2026?

¹ These achievements form an important part of the national annual report that is submitted to Defra/Minister and help to promote the work and good practice of LAFs

Local Access Forum Annual Review Form

April 2015 to March 2016

None

Please add numbers to the following differentiating between formal consultations and general advice given by the LAF on particular subjects. If a consultation covered more than one subject area, please count separately.

	Consultations	Advice	Optional Detail
Green Infrastructure strategies			
Transport (LTP, traffic management, rail, DfT, Highways Agency)			
Water / Coast (slipways, flood defence, EA, shoreline)			
Public open space (public space protection orders)			
Dog control/exclusion/on leads/fouling orders			
Planning applications /Housing development schemes	2		
Land use and planning matters (e.g. informal advice on land development)			
Local development frameworks and planning strategies			
PROW creation, diversion or closure - number of each			
Recording lost ways/historical rights - working towards the 2026 cut-off			
Right of Way Improvement Plan review			
Route improvements (to PROW and other multi-user/cycling/horse-riding/walking routes)			
Promotion of access, open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area			
Vehicular access and issues relating to motorised use of PROW			
Parish Council or other grant schemes			
Access for people with reduced mobility			
Commons, village greens			
Open Access land restrictions			
Coastal Access/National Trails			
NNR dedication			
Greenspace including Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves	1		
Nature conservation (including SSSIs)			
Agri-environment scheme issues (HLS			

Local Access Forum Annual Review Form

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and new Countryside Stewardship) e.g. expiring permissive access agreements, effects of land management options on public access etc.			
Forestry and woodland			

Any other LAF activity (please specify):

Presentation on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

What are your top priorities for the year ahead?

Forming relationships with other agencies that view open space and access to such land as being key to a healthy lifestyle and mental wellbeing.

Do you foresee any issues or challenges that may affect your LAFs operation and/or its ability to deliver improvements to public access in the coming year?

Decreasing resources to support the LAF, the loss of the regional co-ordinator has impacted greatly. The Clerk is part of a much wider multi skilled team where the LAF is competing with other priorities such as income generation, regulatory committee's, member development/support and elections.

Is there any particular support or training that you need to deliver your priorities or work program for next year?

Summarise any feedback received from section 94(4) bodies²

Comments from the Appointing Authority

We support the LAF to fulfil its statutory duties but do not have resources to extend the role of the LAF. It is hoped that the new members we have recruited will bring a new dynamic to the Group and will help to expand the work of the LAF beyond its statutory role. The loss of the regional co-ordinator has significantly reduced the amount of support and information provided to the LAF as we do not have the expertise and capacity to carry out the research that this person previously provided.

² The Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000, Section 94(4) specifies that it is the function of a local access forum, as respects to the area for which it is established, to advise the appointing authority; the local highway authority; other bodies exercising functions under CROW Act Part 1 (Natural England, Forestry Commission and English Heritage) and such other bodies as may be prescribed. These other bodies are set out in the LAF Regulations 2007, paragraph 21, and include: any conservation board established by the Secretary of State, any parish or town council in the area covered by the LAF, and Sport England.

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Comments from LAF Chair

Any other comments