

# Local Access Forum Annual Review Form

## April 2018 to March 2019

Name of LAF	<b>Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum</b>
Name of LAF Chair	Richard Pushman
Name of LAF Secretary	Jonathan Clark

Total number of LAF members	14
Number of members representing users of public rights of way or access land	7
Number of members representing owners and occupiers of access land or land over which PROW subsist	2
Number of members representing other interests	5

Number of full LAF meetings held	3	Number of sub-group meetings held	0
Number of working groups led by others	0	Number of training days provided by the Appointing Authority	1
How many km of PROW have been improved due to LAF input?	0	How much funding did the LAF (or an associated body) raise?	£0.00
How many extra volunteer hours were committed to public access (not including LAF committee meetings)?			95

**Partners your LAF worked with during 2016/17** (click on a box or type 'x')

Local Nature Partnerships		Local Enterprise Partnerships	
Health and Wellbeing Boards		LEADER funding Local Action Groups	

**LAF achievements/making a difference?**<sup>1</sup> 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?

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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The main work of the LAF in this year has been providing advice and guidance in the consultation and drafting of the new ROWIP - 2020-2030 and help reviewing the existing ROWIP.

The LAF continued with their role to provide independent strategic oversight of public access in the county and overview and scrutiny of the work and performance of the rights of way teams. This will continue in the year ahead prior to publication anticipated in March 2020.

The July 2018 LAF was in the form of a workshop overviewing 8 chapters and - line by line - the plan's aims and objectives. The LAF highlighted successes, short-comings and lessons learned of the council's performance over the plan period. This was important in order to mark progress to inform the development of ROWIP 2. Fundamentally, the LAF reviewed the extent to which the rights of way network was improved for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, the partially sighted or those with reduced mobility was assessed and provided direct evidence to the subsequent ROWIP summary report.

The LAF were represented at the annual meeting of the Chiltern Society Area Secretaries and Rights of Way maintenance Team which reviews partnership working practices, reporting issues, surveying and weekly volunteering work parties.

Four members attended a BBQ and networking event at Black Park Country park celebrating the county's volunteers and providing opportunities to network.

The LAF provided advice on the requirements of the updated CAMS reporting system which many member organisations use to highlight issues on the network.

One LAF member led walks at the spring and autumn 2018 Chilterns Walking Festival.

The LAF regularly hears regular officer updates for which the members monitor progress and provide advice on the work of the Definitive Map, Maintenance and Strategic Access teams and how their work is prioritised.

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	0	0	
Transport (LTP, traffic management, rail, DfT, Highways Agency)	1	1	The Oxford Cambridge Exrassway and Growth Arc proposals were presented to the Forum for feedback on the proposed route choice. Comments were also sought on the council's baseline ROW strategy to mitigate the impacts.
Water / Coast (slipways, flood defence, EA, shoreline)	0	0	.

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Public open space (public space protection orders)	0	0	
Dog control/exclusion/on leads/fouling orders	0	0	
Planning applications /Housing development schemes	0	0	
Land use and planning matters (e.g. informal advice on land development)	0	0	
Local development frameworks and planning strategies	1	1	1. The LAF provided advice to the Slough Local Plan, Issues and Options Consultation regarding improved bridleway connections and access across the county boundary between authorities, in particular a road crossing between Black Park and Langley Park.
PROW creation, diversion or closure - number of each	1	1	LAF members commented upon proposed diversion routes as part of the East West Rail project.
Recording lost ways/historical rights - working towards the 2026 cut-off	0	0	
Right of Way Improvement Plan reviews	3	3	The LAF provided advice at every LAF this year: both reviewing the success of the existing ROWIP and on the timetable, structure, priorities and shape of the new ROWIP.
Route improvements (to PROW and other multi-user/cycling/horse-riding/walking routes)	1	1	1. Slough Local Access Forum consulted the LAF on a proposed multi-user bridge between Black Park and Langley Park, near Slough.
Promotion of access, open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area	1	1	The Ridgeway Officer and Cycling UK consulted the LAF on a Circular Routes Vision,

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			on promoting walks and rides that connect with The Ridgeway, highlighting landmarks and highlights that visitors may be interested when exploring the trail corridor.
Vehicular access and issues relating to motorised use of PROW	0	0	
Parish Council or other grant schemes	1	1	The Programme Manager for the HS2 AONB Review Group, Chilterns Conservation Board, had been looking to allocate £3m environmental mitigation from HS2 along a 3km corridor either side of the new railway through the Chilterns, including improvements to access and recreation and wanted to consult members.
Access for people with reduced mobility	0	0	
Commons, village greens	0	0	
Open Access land restrictions	0	0	
Coastal Access/National Trails	1	1	2. The Ridgeway Officer consulted the LAF on the Riding Route, providing access for cyclists and horse riders to connect between Goring on Thames and Ivinghoe Beacon.
NNR dedication	0	0	
Greenspace including Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves	0	0	
Nature conservation (including SSSIs)	0	0	

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Agri-environment scheme issues (HLS and new Countryside Stewardship) e.g. expiring permissive access agreements, effects of land management options on public access etc.	0	0	
Forestry and woodland	0	0	

Any other LAF activity (please specify):

**What are your top priorities for the year ahead?**

1. To be closely involved in the launch of the new ROWIP 2020-2030.
2. Maintaining the profile of the LAF to ensure they remain an important consultee on access to shape positive influences, such as Aylesbury being awarded Garden Town status. This is set against ensuring opportunities are seized to both improve and protect access in light of significant housing growth and and major development, such as HS2, East West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Growth arc.
3. Maintain a relevant and experienced membership.

**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?**

The four district and county authorities are proposed to be merged into one unitary authority on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. Members have been invited to comment, pending a decision by the Sec State, but as the LAF remains statutory and independent it is envisaged these organisational and political changes will have little impact on the running or influence of the Forum.

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

The National Land Access Centre had been launched by Natural England opened by Lord Blencathra at Aston Rowan, and attended by two LAF Members. A written guide was provided for as training material.

**Summarise any feedback received from section 94(4) bodies<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> 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

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None

### Comments from the Appointing Authority

The Forum took positive ownership reviewing The Buckinghamshire ROWIP 2008-2018. A workshop was held to review success and learn lessons in the lead-up to production of the new plan. The LAF also played close and positive role shaping the content and priorities of the new Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030. This work will continue throughout 2019.

The LAF continues to provide well-informed and relevant advice to the council. Members are active both in a professional and volunteering capacity to improve access. They undertake other access work, such as surveying, leading walks, practical work and sitting on other steering groups, such as National trails and other forums and bodies that positively inform their advice and networks.

Membership numbers continue to remain stable and meetings are positive and productive

We are pleased to see a new cycling representative join the forum from Cycling UK and have been lucky to have the Cabinet & Deputy Cabinet Members for Planning & Environment sitting on the Forum.

The council's Democratic Services continue to help LAF meetings with secretarial support while funding continues for meeting refreshments and provide a Speech-to-Text reporter for a LAF member with hearing difficulties.

### Comments from LAF Chair

### Any other comments

None

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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.