

Local Access Forum Annual Review Form

April 2015 to March 2016

Name of LAF	Brighton & Hove Local Access Forum
Name of LAF Chair	Maire McQueeney
Name of LAF Secretary	Chantelle Hoppe

Total number of LAF members	7
Number of members representing users of public rights of way or access land	4
Number of members representing owners and occupiers of access land or land over which PROW subsist	1
Number of members representing other interests	2

Number of full LAF meetings held	4	Number of sub-group meetings held	2
Number of working groups led by others	1	Number of training days provided by the Appointing Authority	0
How many km of PROW have been improved due to LAF input?	1.6	How much funding did the LAF (or an associated body) raise?	£450,000.00
How many extra volunteer hours were committed to public access (not including LAF committee meetings)?			40

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 checked="" 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 Local Access Forum has been re-instated after a year long suspension of activity. The group has elected a new Chair and increased membership by one, with another in the pipe line. This will mean there will be representation from walking, cycling, mountain biking, equestrian, coastal access, health, archaeology and land management interests.

The Local Access Forum's role in helping to prioritise the agenda for improving access - in particular filling in 'missing links' on the Definitive Map - has meant that two major improvement projects have been completed this year.

The Transport Planning Team, in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority, drew down £450,000 of funding to surface the Drove Road Byway. The new 'Flexi-pave' permeable surface has drastically improved a route that consistently suffered severe drainage issues and rutting over the winter months. This is a very well used route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders accessing the South Downs.

Another surface improvement project was completed on a section of verge on the Saddlescombe Road (Devil's Dyke area). This is a popular route, but involved walkers having to traverse an uneven bit of verge on a very fast road, on a bend. To improve safety, the verge has been flattened and a road stone surface laid. With a small bund separating walkers from the road, this is now a far safer route. Legal proceedings are now on-going to extend the right of way to include this section of verge.

Other surface improvements include a well used commuter link path in Rottingdean. This route becomes very muddy over the winter and is heavily used by parents and school

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

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children on their walk to school. There were issues with the adjacent horse field fencing being pulled over as it was used as a 'hand-rail'. Negotiations with an adjacent landowner took place to cut back an overhanging hedge, and Community Payback were used to lay a new road stone surface to help alleviate the problems.

Five interpretation boards are being installed in the new dedicated Open Access area at Patcham Court Farm. These are being sited at key entry and egress points; to give the public more information on access and enjoyment to this area for recreation.

The Local Access Forum is contributing to improved access and enjoyment of open air recreation through consultations on the Stanmer Park Restoration Project (looking at access improvements e.g. increasing cycle access) and the creation of the Coastal Path National Trail in conjunction with Natural England.

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

Updating the 1995 Definitive Map of Brighton & Hove has been a major priority of the Local Access Forum. As part of this work 500 urban link paths (known as Twittens) have been mapped. Though these footpaths appeared on the List of Streets, they did not occur on the Definitive Map. The process is underway for a creation order to add these to the Definitive Map. This should be complete by the end of the calendar year.

Two working group meetings have been held to review the list of 'Missing Links' - to rationalise it and improve on it for inclusion in the review of the ROWIP. There are now currently 11 outstanding; 7 have been added to the Definitive Map; 30 have been resolved through permissive or open access agreements.

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)		1	New Cycle Map for Brighton & Hove
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			
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	508	0	Creation of 500 urban footpaths (from the List of Streets & historical records) 8 additional creation orders (Meadowview footpath, West Hove Golf Bridleway, Saddlescombe footpath, Hollingbury Woods - 3

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			Footpaths + 2 Bridleways)
Recording lost ways/historical rights - working towards the 2026 cut-off	500		(see above) Historical records from the original survey were found to record these ways
Right of Way Improvement Plan review	0		To be reviewed in 2017
Route improvements (to PROW and other multi-user/cycling/horse-riding/walking routes)	1		Drove Road
Promotion of access, open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area	1		Stanmer Park Restoration Project (HLF Bid)
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	1		Natural England's Coastal Path Project
NNR dedication			
Greenspace including Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves	1		Stanmer Park Restoration Project (HLF Bid)
Nature conservation (including SSSIs)			
Agri-environment scheme issues (HLS 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):

What are your top priorities for the year ahead?

Updated Definitive Map for Brighton & Hove
 Updating the Rights of Way Improvement Plan
 Stanmer Park Restoration Project - input and advice
 Coastal Path National Trail - input and advice

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?

Reduced Local Authority budgets to be able to maintain and improve the rights of way network
 Possible loss of future EU funding

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

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Information and training on the implications of the Deregulation Act, about to come into force

Summarise any feedback received from section 94(4) bodies²

The South Downs National Park Authority, East and West Sussex County Councils have expressed their support in the re-instatement of the Brighton & Hove LAF. They have provided much appreciated guidance as we continue to meet as part of the National Park Access Accord.

Comments from the Appointing Authority

This has been a busy year, re-establishing the Local Access Forum, and keeping the momentum of rights of way improvement works going. The Authority has recently re-instated the position of Rights of Way Officer (responsibilities previously devolved to the Ranger Team). This has greatly improved the Authority's ability to support the LAF and push projects forwards. It has been a pleasure to work with the re-instated group, and newly appointed Chair.

Comments from LAF Chair

It has been a pleasure to work with the re-instated group and to welcome a first new member who brings additional insights of countryside experience to those already embodied in the forum. We worked together to produce our first Formal Advice and I was pleased to represent B&HLAF at the Southern Conference in Bristol.

Notably, LAF member, Annie Brown was last year's recipient of the FWAG's Silver Lapwing Award for outstanding efforts to promote good habitat management on her farm. We agree with her view that improved understanding between those managing the land and those facilitating public access must be positive.

Throughout this year we have relied heavily on the amiable support and guidance of our newly-appointed Rights of Way Officer, and the hospitality of the BHCC Parks Team, for which we are grateful

Any other comments

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.