

Local Access Forum (LAF) Annual Report Proforma

* Reporting year	2011
* Name of LAF	Plymouth Local Access Forum
* Name of LAF secretary	Ross Johnston

Review of Current reporting year

Were you successful in meeting the achievements set out in your Annual Report or LAF work programme? Please provide supporting information.

A formal work programme was introduced in January 2011 to enable the PLAF to monitor its success against objectives in a more effective manner.

With regard to objectives for 2011 the forum have had success in:

1. The Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2016) – received presentations, responded to consultation requests and had an input in developing the plan.
2. Coastal Access – received presentations, responded to national consultations and developed local authority's website.
3. Saltram Countryside Park – responded to consultation and nominated members to attend workshops and now three members form part of the Saltram Countryside Masterplan Workshop Forum. The PLAF got involved in this topic via the Green Infrastructure Plan.

*** How many Open Access Restriction cases have you been informed about/involved with?**

The PLAF have dealt with no open access restrictions however they have been involved in a number of access cases in 2011 including:

1. Statutory Land Transfers for Ridgeway School and Coombe Dean School
2. Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order – Gleason's Lane
3. Royal William Yard South West Coast Path extension
4. Access to water sites – slipways
5. Public Path Diversion Order application on Hooe Lane, Plymstock
6. South West Coast Path – Jennicliffe Landslip Diversion
7. Carnock Road – establishment of a PROW

*** Give up to three examples of advice given by your LAF to section 94 bodies:**

The Forum has given some very comprehensive advice in 2011 including, but not limited to:

1. Plymouth's Local Transport Plan 3 – as mentioned above.
2. Access Whitleigh – provided formal advice from a working group on delivering sustainable transport improvements in Whitleigh (a local Plymouth neighbourhood).
3. Rights of Way Improvement Plan – responded to the PROW Officer in response to a consultation request at a formal LAF meeting.

Give up to three examples where you have encountered difficulties; explain what mechanisms could be put in place to alleviate this issue:

The forum have encountered a few issues in 2011 including:

1. Slow movement of defining paths on the Definite Map.
This has been attempted to be alleviated by requesting that the CEX of Plymouth City Council to consider employing an intern from the University of Plymouth to assist the PROW Officer in speeding up the process of adding footpaths to the definitive map.
2. Interaction with PCC Planning Department regarding applications which have implications for footpaths:
This has been attempted to be alleviated by responding to a Barrier Busting consultation, meeting with Senior Planning Officers and a request for a Senior Planning Officer to attend a future meeting in 2012.
3. Responding to consultation deadlines that fall in between LAF meetings:
This has been attempted to be alleviated by discussing position statements that will be agreed at a future LAF meeting in 2012.

Do you have any issues with recruitment of members from particular interest groups? Does this hinder your work in any way?

Landowners.

They are seen as an important group whose views have been missed and has perhaps made the PLAF a slightly biased forum. However, the PLAF have recently appointed a new Landowner and now have three landowners out of its 16 Forum members.

Comments from appointing authority

This has been a very positive year for the PLAF where it has met on five occasions, arranged three separate working groups and appointed three new members.

The success of the PLAF over the past year has been founded on significant change resulting in more structured and formal meetings, clear and direct chairmanship and a more effective administration set up.

It is hoped that this success will be built on in 2012 with the PLAF taking a lead role in the development of a Local Nature Partnership in Plymouth and also through having a continued role in the promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods throughout the city.

Forward Look

What are your priorities for next year (list up to 3)

The PLAF have many priorities in 2012 with the most important considered to include:

1. Closer dialogue and improved relations with the City Planning Department – improved information on footpaths that should be on the Definitive Map.
2. Implementation of Local Nature Partnerships.
3. Examination of local schemes - Plym Valley Cycle Track and South West Coast Path development

*What support/training will you need to be able to deliver these priorities?

The PLAF feel that training in 2012 should be delivered on the following topics:

1. HUDDLE
2. Definitive Map Modification Orders
3. PROW in Plymouth
4. Public Access legislation
5. Procedure for the creation/extinguishment of public paths

Do you perceive any barriers to delivering your priorities?

The PLAF feel that a lack of resources in developing the Definitive Map presents a significant barrier to improvements with footpaths being acknowledged in Planning Applications, as well as a barrier for footpaths more generally across Plymouth.

The PLAF have a concern about the future of regional co-ordination.

Any other comments

Documents that are produced by national bodies such as Natural England and DEFRA would be more easily understandable if they were written more concisely and in plainer English.