

## Local Access Forum (LAF) Annual Review Form: April 2012 to March 2013

Name of LAF: Slough Local Access Forum

Name of LAF Chair: David Munkley

Name of LAF Secretary: Jacqui Wheeler

Number of LAF members: 8

### 1 - Involvement and Representation

What interests does your current membership cover? walking, cycling, accessibility and environmental

What skills, sectors, interest groups, experience are missing? local business, landowners, equestrian, and representatives with mobility problems.

Describe any difficulties you had recruiting members from particular sectors: difficulty in recruiting in general and particularly equestrian due to urban nature of area.

### 2 - Operation of LAF

What procedures (e.g. expense claims, new applications etc) do you follow that help you work effectively? Are these effective?

How do you ensure that your members are able to work as a team? A small membership, with fairly informal meetings which can be quite vociferous on occasion. Nothing specific is done to ensure team working.

In what ways do you reach consensus? when something requires a consensus view the members are asked to vote on a particular point. if no consensus can be reached a balanced description of all views is minuted.

How do you ensure proper conduct and/or resolve any conflicts? There have not been any occasions of improper conduct, though members have been reminded that they must declare any interests and exclude themselves from a vote if they are compromised on a specific item.

Give up to 3 examples of where you have encountered operational difficulties (e.g. lack of resources); explain what mechanisms could be put in place to alleviate such issues:

1 - The success of actions is dependent on the time that the support officer can devote to the LAF between meetings. The LAF Support officer role is not a dedicated role, but a portion of the Rights of Way Officer role.

2 - pressure on the time available to members due to being volunteers and the time available during evening meetings to get through long agendas. Daytime meetings are not viable due to members working. Members decided to try to hold 4 meetings a year and keep agendas shorter.

3 - The difficulty in attracting certain types of member interests can limit the perspective of the LAF as a whole. Selective promotion of the LAF, targeting members from particular groups.

### 3 - Partnership and Progress

Do you work well with the access authority? If not, why not? Yes

Do you work well with your planning authorities? If not, why not? yes, generally

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**Have you established a clear role for the LAF in the local area?** The clarity of the LAF role is continuing to develop, though has improved over the last year.

**Were you successful in meeting the achievements set out in your work programme (please provide supporting information)?** There has been no work programme up to this point though it is recognised to be a valuable tool to be developed. It has been a year of determining the main issues that are important to the LAF in the Slough area, namely; specific schemes, improvements to the integrated sustainable transport network (including PRow), improving and promoting access to open spaces, cross boundary issues, partnership working with other organisations/community groups.

**Have you achieved something else?** As an urban LAF, the members focus has been on looking at issues within the urban infrastructure, commenting on LSTF & Road Safety schemes.

**Main or notable achievements?** Joint letter with Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead LAF to a multi-national company who provide an important permissive cycleway link. This helped to ensure long overdue improvement works will be carried out and communication links improved.

### 4 - Profile and Direction

**Has anything changed over the last year?** An increased focus on pavement parking issues

**What changes / barriers can you see ahead?** A tendency to be specific rather than strategic

**What are your priorities for the year ahead (list up to 3)?**

- 1 - Develop a useful work programme with appropriate targets
- 2 - Increase engagement on access issues with local Trusts and community groups
- 3 - Continue highlighting the LAF's role and profile to Council and other organisations.

**What support or training do you need to deliver your priorities?** Training on all areas of access and equality of access, managing meetings and agendas effectively.

### 5 - Section 94 Bodies

**Give up to 3 examples of advice given by your LAF to section 94 bodies:**

- 1 - Comments given to Network Management team on elements of an experimental one way road scheme in a congested part of Slough, such as the use of green tarmac on the contra flow cycle lanes. LAF members feel this is a waste of resources which could be more effectively used on improving walking/cycling infrastructure elsewhere.
- 2 - Comments given to Transport Planning on LSTF schemes aimed at providing wherever possible off-road cycle routes, junction/crossing improvements for pedestrians/cyclists. Long term aspirations were discussed with LAF making it's support clear for this approach to ensure that as many officers as possible are aware so that should future opportunities develop there is the greatest chance aspirations can be secured via planning gain.
- 3 - Comments given on various Transport schemes including the Heart of Slough (a multi-million £ scheme) to alter the road network for the benefit of pedestrians/cyclists and public transport. LAF members went on a cycle about the scheme with council officers highlighting the issues and difficulties faced by the experienced cyclist due to the Council's inclination in providing off-carriageway facilities.

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### 6 - Open Access Work

How many Restriction Cases have you been consulted on? 0

How many cases have you responded to? 0

Detail any informal involvement with Open Access Restriction cases: n/a

### 7 - Number of consultations, meetings and initiatives your LAF has been involved with over the year (please add numbers into the boxes below)?

Public meetings		Working groups	
Training days		Definitive map modification orders	
Highway orders		Green Infrastructure strategies	
Gating orders	7	Local transport plans and traffic management schemes	10
Cycle projects		Disabled access	
Dog exclusion/on leads/fouling orders		Housing development schemes	
Planning applications		PROW network and projects	3
ROWIP planning and objectives		Local development frameworks and planning strategies	
Local Nature Partnerships		Recording of paths and promoting use	
Expiring permissive agreements under Higher Level Stewardship schemes - assessing the value and future of and liaison with landowners to improve access		Flood defence works - Environment Agency consultations and planning applications regarding	
Slipways and landing stages - public access to		Improvement of access through the Paths for Communities (P4C) scheme	
Disposal and development of land owned by the Council		Parish Council or local improvement grant schemes	
Shoreline management plans		Rail freight interchange strategic development	

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Network rail and rail crossing closures	1	Access and nature conservation	
Horse routes and equestrian provision	1	Multi user routes	1
National Parks		Coastal access	
Motorised vehicle access	1	Access to MOD land	
New town & village green registration government consultation		Natural England consultations	
Defra consultations	1	Commons grazing proposals	
Highways Agency consultations		Department for Transport consultations	
Other (please specify):			

**8 - Final comments from Appointing Authority:** The profile of the LAF continues to grow as its role develops, with a variety of Council departments aware of its existence and regarding it as a useful consultative tool. Promotion of LAFs via national/regional media would help the Council as a whole recognise its value.

**9 - Final comments from LAF Chair:**