

Terms of Reference for Monmouthshire Local Access Forum (as last approved 9th March 2021 and 26 January 2023)

Title

1. The Local Access Forum shall be known as the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum.

Roles and Responsibilities

2. The function of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum is to provide advice to the relevant local and National Park authorities, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and others as appropriate as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open—air recreation and the enjoyment of the area in ways which take account of land management, social, economic, environmental and educational interests.
3. The Monmouthshire Local Access Forum will fulfill this role by advising on issues of particular local relevance, including:
 - a. supporting the implementation of the new right of access to open countryside.
 - b. improving the rights of way network; and
 - c. developing recreation and access strategies that cater for everyone.
4. The Monmouthshire Local Access Forum will work to:
 - a. develop a constructive and inclusive approach to the improvement of recreational access to the countryside.
 - b. respect local circumstances and different interests whilst operating within national guidance.
 - c. provide advice on issues of principle and good practice.
 - d. engage in constructive debate and seek consensus wherever possible; and
 - e. where consensus is not possible, make clear the nature of differing views, and suggest how they might be resolved.

Membership

5. The membership will include:
 - a. a Chair and Deputy Chair elected in accordance with the LAF regulations.
 - b. a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 other members, which must include a balanced representation of i) recreational access users and ii)

landowners and occupiers - together with representation of other interests especially relevant to the area.

6. The membership will:
 - a. be balanced to avoid dominance by any single interest group.
 - b. represent a cross-section of interests in the area; and
 - c. live or work within the area or have a sound knowledge of the area.
7. Members will be expected to:
 - a. adhere to the sections relating to LAFs in the CROW Act and regulations and these Terms of Reference.
 - b. show commitment to achieving the aims of the Local Access Forum through constructive working with other members.
 - c. be able to devote the necessary time to attend meetings and to network outside meetings.
 - d. have sufficient experience of access to the countryside in the local area to be able to make an informed and constructive contribution to improving access provision; and
 - e. be capable of working with a wide range of interest groups.

Administration

Secretariat

8. The Monmouthshire Local Access Forum will have a Secretary appointed by the appointing authority who will be responsible for:
 - a. providing support to the chair of the Forum.
 - b. ensuring that the Forum is set up and run according to the CROW Act, Local Access Forum regulations and these Terms of Reference.
 - c. managing any resources dedicated to its work.
 - d. arranging and promoting meetings, including arranging the delivery of papers and information to Forum members and the public.
 - e. producing minutes of Forum meetings.
 - f. ensuring that any comments or suggestions made to the Appointing Body by the LAF receive an appropriate response within a reasonable time

Meetings

9. Meetings will be held at least two times a year, and more frequently as and when necessary, to be agreed by the LAF and the appointing authority.
10. Meeting agendas will be agreed between the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the Secretary — although any member may suggest agenda items for consideration.
11. Meetings will be advertised in advance and the minutes published.
12. The Chair will invite observers/advisors to the meeting when appropriate.
13. Observers/advisors will be able to contribute to the proceedings at the discretion of the Chair.
14. One representative of each of Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government and any officer of the appointing authority will automatically have observer status.
15. If necessary, Local Access Forum committees will be set up by the Chair after agreement with the members.
16. The chairing, membership and terms of reference of committees will be agreed by the Chair and members, based on the appended model improvement sub-group terms of reference.
17. All meetings of the LAF will be held in public. However, the person presiding, following a request from a member or members, may decide that the public should be barred for particular items for reasons of personal privacy or commercial confidentiality.
18. Should the need arise decisions will be brought to a vote by means of a show of hands.

9 March 2021 (TOR amended November 2013 and February 2017, with proposed change referencing sub-groups / TOR to reflect LAF decision on 26 January 2023)

Appendix: Monmouthshire Local Access Forum: Sub-Group Model TOR (as approved 26 January 2023):

Improvement Sub Group terms of reference

1. The sub-group is established as a committee of the Local Access Forum in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum.
2. As agreed at the Local Access Forum meeting on 26 April 2022 the *improvement* sub-group's purpose is *to assist in the implementation of the Countryside Access Improvement Plan, including:*
 - a. *Helping in the identification of routes for improvement*
 - b. *Assisting in working with local communities to assess these improvement opportunities*
 - c. *Assist in monitor and identify the benefits of schemes within communities*
 - d. *Assist in engaging with local path groups, community councils and others to facilitate volunteer engagement in resolving issue*
 - e. *Assist in formulating funding bids*
 - f. *Consider and prepare responses on the Local Access Forum's behalf to improvement proposals including consultations under forestry / farming schemes*
3. The membership of the sub-group is open to any member of the Local Access Forum and to any other individuals who would assist in the sub-group's work.
4. The appointment of non LAF members to the sub-group will be subject to approval by a simple majority of the full Local Access Forum,
5. Any additional sub-group members who are not Local Access Forum members will nevertheless be expected to adhere to the requirements on Local Access Forum members set out in the approved Terms of Reference for the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum.
6. The Chair of the sub-group will be a LAF member and agreed amongst the group's members and subject to approval by the Local Access Forum's Chair
7. The appointing authority will provide support to the sub-group, primarily through liaison *with the Community Links Officer and the Public Rights of Way Officer.*
8. The sub-group's Chair will be responsible for recording the group's considerations and reporting progress, and any issues requiring a decision, to the Local Access Forum on a regular basis.
9. The duration of the sub-group is at the discretion of the Local Access Forum and will end at the end of the Local Access Forum's period of appointment. The sub-group may be re-established, and any non LAF members reappointed, by the new Local Access Forum.