



Report to Torbay Local Access Forum A.G.M. 13 October 2010

Members of the Torbay LAF: Dominic Acland (Chair), Robert Boyd, Leon Butler, Cllr. Ian Doggett (Torbay Council), Margaret Forbes-Hamilton, John Gibson (resigned 24.02.10), Bob Harvey, Peter Huff (retired 24.02.10), Wanda Hollingworth, Mick Lear, John Mellor, Carole Williams.

The members represent the following specific areas of interest:

- Torquay Area Co-ordinators – Margaret Forbes-Hamilton and Leon Butler
- Paignton Area Co-ordinator – Wanda Hollingworth
- Brixham Area Co-ordinator – Robert Boyd
- Coastal Lead – Mick Lear
- Tourism Lead – Leon Butler
- Environment Lead – Margaret Forbes-Hamilton
- Health and Recreation Lead – Wanda Hollingworth
- Access for the Disabled Leads – Robert Boyd and Carole Williams

This Report covers the period from the last A.G.M. held on 8 July 2009 to 12 October 2010.

1. Meetings Held

Since the last AGM, meetings of the LAF were held on the following dates:

- 4 November 2009
- 16 December 2009
- 24 February 2010
- 5 May 2010
- 21 July 2010
- 15 September 2010

Notes of meetings are posted on the Torbay LAF's webpage www.torbay.gov.uk/localaccessforum.

2. Appointment of Chairperson

At the July 2009 AGM John Gibson agreed to continue as interim Chair of the LAF until the November 2009 meeting, as no other candidates had stepped forward for the post. The post of Vice-Chair remained vacant. Dominic Acland joined the LAF in November 2009 and subsequently offered to take up the role if that was the wish of the members, as John Gibson wished to retire. Dominic Acland was elected Acting Chair at the February 2010 meeting and John Mellor was elected Vice-Chair at the same meeting. John Gibson was able to stand down, with the warm thanks of the LAF for his chairmanship during a difficult period of transition. John decided not to remain a member of the LAF.

3. Membership

Good progress was made during the year in recruiting new members to the LAF, largely as a result of Torbay Council's proactive approach to the Community Partnership network in Torbay. As a result the LAF has now

reached sufficient numbers to operate properly. Peter Huff sadly had to step down due to ill health during the year.

4. Consultations

Torbay LAF commented on the following national and regional issues:

- Local Transport Plan 3 for Devon
- Coastal Access (Amendment to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)
- Role of the England Access Forum
- The Public Rights of Way Code of Good Practice for Torbay

5. Training

A successful workshop for members was held in December 2009 to focus on how the LAF could operate smoothly and what the roles of the various partners were. Further training for members was planned for 2010 in partnership with Natural England and Dartmoor but this had to be cancelled. Further news on this is awaited.

6. Regional Meetings

Wanda Hollingworth and Teresa Buckley (Democratic Services) attended the South West Regional Local Access Forum Meeting on 20 October 2009. Unfortunately the Chair and Secretary were unable to attend the Regional Chairmen's Meeting on 22 February 2010.

7. Support

The LAF supported a bid by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust for Access to Nature funding. The bid was successful and a grant of £234,000 secured for engaging people from disadvantaged areas with the natural world.

8. Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The LAF continues to monitor the ROWIP, receive reports from the Rights of Way team and to advise Torbay Council on priorities for the future. During the year the LAF looked at the entire Torbay rights of way network and agreed five priority areas where new links could be formed to create improved circuits. Members of the LAF have each adopted specific sections for more detailed survey and this process is ongoing, with the intention of revisiting the ROWIP with refreshed priorities. This work also connects with the emerging Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan.

9. Advice

Various issues affecting rights of way and open spaces in Torbay were commented upon by the LAF including:

- Footpath diversion adjacent to Astra-Zeneca, Brixham
- Footpath Modification Order, Dainton, Torre
- Installation of cattle grids at Berry Head, Brixham
- Play area on Paignton Green
- Dedication of footpaths as bridleways in Torbay, in order to accommodate cyclists
- Disposal of areas of land owned by Torbay Council
- Development of the Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan
- Circular walking routes promoted by the English Riviera Tourist Board

10. Torbay Local Access Forum Breakdown of Costs 2009/2010

	£
Staffing Costs	1,976.34
Expenses and Mileage	226.5
Refreshments	21
Printing	133.31
Stationery	123.39
Postage	30.69
Mobile Phone	38.93
Recruitment Costs	693.1
Total	3,243.26

The costs have been met from Torbay Council's Public Rights of Way budget.

Management of the LAF's Secretariat is undertaken by Torbay Council's Democratic Services team.

Conclusion

After a difficult period of transition the LAF has performed well in the last year, attracting new members, gaining good support from Torbay Council, engaging with important issues in Torbay and adding its voice to the national perspective. Thanks are due to its efficient secretary, Valerie Simpson, her line manager, Teresa Buckley and the Rights of Way team in Torbay Council.

Dominic Acland, Chair