

# Hertfordshire Local Access Forum



ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09

[www.hertslaf.org.uk](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk)

This is the sixth annual report of the Hertfordshire Local Access Forum and contains details of the work and the advice given, in the period 2008-2009<sup>1</sup>.

## Introduction

*The Herts LAF has had a busy year with members involved in a wide range of activities and events at a local, regional and national level, whilst continuing to support the ROWIP in Herts.*

*Attendance at our public meetings has improved significantly thanks to a new approach to advertising, and members are showing their commitment to the LAF by their regular attendance.*

*A new regional co-ordinator - Nicky Rowbottom - has been appointed to assist LAF work and development and the England Access Forum, which I attend as one of 2 regional representatives, is beginning to feel its feet in meetings with Natural England.*

*HCC continues to provide excellent support to both formal and informal LAF meetings and our secretary, new to us last year, is ensuring that our administration is managed in a highly professional way.*

*Earlier in the year, Roger Thomas (LAF vice chair) and I gave a presentation to a regional LAF meeting on our LAF - how we worked, the issues we were dealing with and our relationship with HCC - and we were pleased to note the positive response we received from other LAFs.*

*For the next 12 months we are hoping to recruit new members to cover currently unfilled areas of interest, and to take forward various projects through our subgroups.*

*We will be monitoring the progress of new Heartwood Forest, and also keeping abreast of new building developments planned in Herts.*

*We have had lively discussions about controversial issues and are finding a way of managing differing views of members, which I believe reflects the maturing of the LAF which is now entering its 7th year.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liddy Lawrence'.

**Liddy Lawrence, Chair**

<sup>1</sup> This report fulfils the requirements of the "Local Access Forum (England) Regulations 2007" and guidance set out in "Guidance on Local Access Forums" from DEFRA dated February 2007

## Who are the Members of the Forum?



Liddy Lawrence (Chair)	Needs of elderly and minority groups, walking and cycling
Roger Thomas (Vice Chair)	Estate management
Diana Collingridge	Estate management
Tony Ferrari	Cycling and Motorised users
Cllr Rosemary Gilligan	District Councillor, representing the Herts LGA
Debbie Hougie	Countryside recreation education, walking
Norman Jones	Walkers, non car owners and public transport.
Lynn Myland	Land owner, horse-rider
Cllr Bill Storey	County Councillor, Chilterns AONB



*Herts LAF members at the June Public Meeting*

Tony Ferrari has been appointed Herts Rep for the Green Lanes Association (GLASS) as well as continuing to be Press Officer for the same group.

Marian Whittaker resigned during the year and the LAF would like to thank her for her contribution during the past years. There are currently vacancies on the Forum for representatives in the following fields: cyclists, land managers and disabled access needs. The Forum is running a recruitment campaign and is hoping it will attract interests and lead to new members (for more information on how to apply, please log on to: <http://www.hertslaf.org.uk/news.htm>).

## What has the LAF been doing?



The Forum has been consulted advising on the following topics during the year:

<b>Project/Subject</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>RoWIP, Gating orders</i>	Ongoing
<i>Heartwood Forest, Sandridge</i>	Ongoing since Summer 2008
<i>Local Transport Plan</i>	
<i>Chiltern Cycleway</i>	
<i>Planning 106 PROW for the Oaklands Development</i>	
<i>Commons: Fencing &amp; Grazing</i>	Debated issue. Consultation yet to come

## LAF Sub-Committees



Members of the LAF have divided into smaller Sub-Committees to be able to take forward projects.

Safer Road Crossings:	Norman Jones, Debbie Hougie, Lynn Myland
School Award Competition:	Debbie Hougie, Diana Collingridge, Roger Thomas
Safer Routes to School:	Debbie Hougie, Diana Collingridge
LAF Website:	Norman Jones, Lynn Myland

## Meetings and Attendance



Four Public Meetings took place:

- **9<sup>th</sup> Sept 2008** - Conference Room, Hatfield Sports Village, de Havilland Campus, University of Hertfordshire (UH), Hatfield
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2008** - Conference Room, Hatfield Sports Village, de Havilland Campus, UH
- **25<sup>th</sup> February 2009** - Room B154, College Campus Lane, UH, Hatfield
- **17<sup>th</sup> June 2009** - Room C152, College Campus Lane, UH, Hatfield

Agendas were circulated to all county libraries and Parish Councils as well as a frequently updated list of interested parties, and on the pages of the newly launched website. Also, a regular press release has been published in local papers with the help of the press office at county hall. All these have produced the desired effect with 14 members of the public attending the June meeting. All Forum members have attended meetings or sent apologies when unable to attend. Richard Cuthbert (Head of Rights of Way) and Bob Fenton (Countryside Access Team leader) have been, between them, providing technical support to the LAF. One of them was at each meeting and worked with the LAF to develop work programmes, events, etc.



*Members of the public at the June LAF Public Meeting at College Campus Lane, UH, Hatfield*

Over the year there have also been two informal meetings attended by LAF members:

- **6<sup>th</sup> November 2008** - Jonathan Tiley (head of the county council Forward Planning Unit) was invited to give a more in-depth perspective on Regional & Local Planning;

- **1<sup>st</sup> April 2009** – where the members focused on the projects in hand together with R Cuthbert and B Fenton from RoW, HCC. Also discussed, the possibility of another LAF conference in the future.

## Training and Outside Events



<b>Date</b>	<b>Event/Training</b>	<b>Attendee/s</b>
Sept 2008	RoW Law Review workshop	Rosemary Gillian
2008/09	Long Distance Trails	Liddy Lawrence
2008/09	England Access Forum (EAF)	Liddy Lawrence
Jan 2009	Woodland Trust Environmental Impact Assessment	Lynn Myland
17.02.09	Parks in the Credit Crunch Conference	Roger Thomas
05.03.09	Chiltern ANOB Access Conference	Bill Storey, Norman Jones
03.05.09	South East LAF Conference	Diana Collingridge
--	Grazing	Lynn Myland
--	Countryside Recreation Network (CRN)	Debbie Hougie
--	Hertfordshire Rural Forum	Norman Jones
--	Future Shape of the Countryside, Hemel Hempstead (workshop)	Norman Jones
--	AGM, The Friends of Chorleywood Common	Lynn Myland
--	Transport Conference	Norman Jones
--	Proposed Strategic Rail Freight terminal meeting	Lynn Myland

## LAF Events



Twice a year LAF members have Field Trips where they have the opportunity to look at areas of relevance to current issues.

### Field Trips:

- **28<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009** - survey and information gathering on **Heartwood Forest, Sandridge**. This was also attended by County Councilors N Agar and B Hammond, as well as several members of the Woodland Trust who explained the various phases of the project.



*LAF members on one of the fields comprising Heartwood Forest, with Woodland Trust officers detailing plans of the Project*

- **13<sup>th</sup> July 2009** - **Ayot Greenway**, J Thornton of RoW, HCC highlighted the work and efforts made over the past few years between Herts and Beds Councils and various landowners to reach an agreement and create a path suitable to walkers, horse riders and cyclists. At the end of the morning, a couple of areas were identified where LAF Members could be of help in negotiating and possibly reaching an agreement with landowners where, so far, there has been limited success.



Members of LAF with J Thornton and R Cuthbert, on the Ayot Greenway

## Cost of the Forum



The Forum is a voluntary body, with members giving up their time for free. Hertfordshire County Council, as Appointing Authority, contributes officers' time and pays for any costs for administering the LAF using money allocated for the '*fulfillment of duties arising from the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000*'.

In July 2008 HCC and the LAF appointed a new Secretary/Administrator: Ms Anna Mangini, who has been working ad-hoc with the Members and RoW Officers to ensure the success of the Forum.

In 2008/2009 the costs of running the LAF was £6,806.

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Costs (£)</b>
<i>Meetings - venues, refreshments</i>	931.94
<i>Training</i>	494.00
<i>Transport</i>	403.70
<i>Administration &amp; others</i>	4,976.36

In addition, costs such as postage and stationery have been absorbed by the RoW Service at HCC.

## What's in store for the coming year?



Dates for the next Public Meetings:

- *Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009*
- *Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010*
- *Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010*
- *Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010*

All meetings are now held at College Campus Lane, UH, Hatfield. With the help of one of the members we have managed to find a good, accessible location, which is free; which means we only have to provide for the refreshments.

*Informal meetings take place in-between Public meetings.*

## LAF Website



Since last December the LAF has had its own dedicated website: [www.hertslaf.org.uk](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk). Its pages are regularly updated and are full of useful information on what is happening with the LAF.

If you cannot find what you are looking for contact the Local Access Forum via the link on the Contact Us page. Alternatively, if you wish to contact any of its members, and do not have access to the internet please write to the address below:

LAF Secretary/Administrator: Ms Anna Mangini

Tel: 07778 241768

Email: [administrator@hertslaf.org.uk](mailto:administrator@hertslaf.org.uk)

***Alternatively you can write to:***

Hertfordshire LAF Secretary, c/o Rights of Way Service, Environment Department, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN