



## **Recruitment and Application Pack – Contents**

- *Information and guidance for prospective members*
- *Application form for prospective members*
- *Guidance note on how to complete the application form*
- *Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form*

**Please also refer to the web site for the following additional information:**

- *Job description and Person specification for members, see: [www.hertslaf.org.uk/news.htm](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk/news.htm)*
- *Local Access Forum constitution see: [www.hertslaf.org.uk/Constitution.htm](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk/Constitution.htm)*
- *Guidance on Local Access Forums in England (best practice guide for Local Access Forum Members) see: [www.hertslaf.org.uk/news.htm](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk/news.htm)*

## **Information and guidance for prospective members**

### **What is a Local Access Forum?**

A Local Access Forum (LAF) is a group of people who meet regularly to discuss ways of improving public access into the countryside. In Hertfordshire the LAF advises the county council and the Natural England on aspects of public access and rights of way matters within the county. It also works with other organisations such as the Environment Agency, Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Lea Valley Regional Park.

### **Why have a LAF?**

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires all local highway authorities to create Local Access Forums and support their development and operation.

### **Who can apply to be a member of the Hertfordshire LAF?**

The county council is looking for people from all walks of life who can contribute positively to the work of the LAF, not just landowners or committed users of public rights of way. While both of these groups will be represented on the LAF it is important that

the LAF has a broad base of skills, interested and views to represent everybody who lives and works in the county.

With an interest in access issues across the whole of Hertfordshire, the LAF has a diverse membership. As the appointing authority the County Council aims to ensure a balance of interests on the Forum. We are looking for people who can contribute positively to the work of the LAF, without necessarily being either a land owner or occupier or a committed user of rights of way. Both of these groups will, of course, be represented but the Council recognises the need and importance of a broad base of skills and views to reflect all those who live and work in Hertfordshire.

For example other interests especially relevant to Hertfordshire (for example, tourism, sport and active recreation (on land, air and water), nature conservation, education, heritage, health, transport operators and local business interests whether agricultural or non-agricultural).

The information enclosed with this pack provides a detailed summary of the role of LAF members and the kind of skills we are looking for. Training and support will be provided as appropriate to enable individuals to participate fully.

### **What does the LAF do?**

A LAF is a statutory body that seeks to improve public access to land for open-air recreation and enjoyment, through the provision of advice to key organisations and authorities. Specifically, Hertfordshire's LAF will advise the County Council and Natural England on aspects of public access within the county and works with other organisations such as the Environment Agency, Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Lea Valley Regional Park.

Other areas of work might include:

- Rights of Way improvement plans
- Advice on wider access issues at a local and regional level
- The appointment of wardens and making of by-laws for access land

The detailed work programme will be determined by the LAF itself but, while the Forum will need to consider and take into account all forms of access, it is not expected to get involved in specific casework or individual routes. The Forum produces an annual report.

### **How does the LAF work?**

The forum meets formally four times a year and informally between meetings and to progress projects. LAF members are expected to attend at least 50% of the meetings in any 12 month period, substitutes are not allowed. The County Council provides dedicated administration support and pay reasonable expenses for members' travel, child / other dependants care and provides meeting venues etc.

A constitution for the Hertfordshire LAF is included on the web site and provides detailed information about process and procedure. It is based on the regulations and guidance provided by the Government and is informed by local authority codes of conduct and best practice for elected representatives.

An induction programme for new members will provide background information about the LAF and access issues in Hertfordshire.

### **What do I do next?**

If you want to find out more about the LAF, or have any questions regarding the appointment process, further information can be found at [www.hertslaf.org.uk](http://www.hertslaf.org.uk) or you can call the Rights of Way Service on 01992 555279 for an informal discussion.

If you are interested in applying to be a member of Hertfordshire's LAF then carefully read the job description and person specification. If you think you have the necessary skills, then complete the application form and return it to the Rights of Way Service at Hertfordshire County Council. Guidance and contact details are also provided.

### **What happens if I apply?**

Completed application forms should be sent to the Local Access Forum, c/o Rights of Way Service, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN.

All applications received will be considered by HCC Officers, the LAF Chairman and the LAF administrator. Depending on the level of interest it may be necessary to conduct an informal but structured interview which will be held at County Hall at a time to be arranged. These interviews will be conducted by the LAF Chairman and HCC officer and will explore the applicant's skills and competencies in relation to the person specification and job description. Reasonable expenses will be paid to those who attend an interview.

If you submit an application but are not successful, you will receive an email to that effect if you supply an email address.

### **Other issues to consider**

- Meeting venues will be decided by LAF members and while every effort will be made to ensure they are accessible by public transport this may not always be possible. Access to your own means of transport will therefore be advantageous.
- Meetings will be open to the public.
- It is expected that most meetings will take place on weekday evenings, although times and locations may be varied.
- While it is difficult to estimate the level of work the Forum will undertake, the members must be willing and able to dedicate time to both the meetings and dealing with issues (reports etc.) outside of these times.
- A Local Access Forum is publicly accountable and as such the highest standards of integrity are expected from all members and all business undertaken by the Forum will be a matter of public record.
- Members of the Forum may have their contact details made available to the public (via the LAF website etc).

The Guidance on Local Access Forums in England (best practice guide for members) on the web site provides further information and guidance. If you require any further information or help in completing an application, contact the Rights of Way Service at County Hall.

## **Application form for membership of Hertfordshire's Local Access Forum**

**\*PLEASE READ THE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE NOTE ON HOW\*  
TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION BEFORE PROCEEDING**

**Surname:**

**First Name(s) (in full):**

**Preferred title e.g. Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms:**

**Are you over 18 years old:    YES:     NO:**

**Telephone Number(s)** – please only give telephone numbers on which you are happy to be contacted.

Home:

Mobile:

Work:

**E-mail:**

**Current home address (including postcode):**

**Occupation and / or other interests including any memberships you may have with relevant organisations e.g. The Ramblers Association, British Horse Society, County Landowners Association, Primary Care Trusts, Conservation Bodies etc:**

**In no more than 200 words set out why you want to be a member of Hertfordshire's Local Access Forum and what you consider the most important issues are for the Forum to tackle.**

**Using the person specification as a reference, in no more than 200 words, please describe the relevant skills, knowledge, experience and personal competencies that you would bring to the Forum.**

**Are you a member of a County, District, Borough or Parish Council?**

**YES:**                       **NO:**

(Applications from County, District or Borough Councillors will not be considered as these appointments are dealt with under separate processes).

**Are you a relative or partner of any employee of the County Council and/or a County Councillor?**

**YES:**                       **NO:**

If YES, please give details, because we will exclude any person with whom you have declared a personal relationship from the selection process.

**Are you interested in being considered for the role of Chair or Vice Chair of the Forum?**

**YES:**                       **NO:**

I declare that all the information I have provided is true and that I have not canvassed a County Councillor or officer of the County Council directly or indirectly in connection with this application, and will not do so. I understand that any such activity, or failure to disclose any personal relationship with a Councillor or officer of the Council, will disqualify my application. I accept that if any of the information is found to be untrue or misleading, I may be liable for dismissal from the Forum.

Signature:

Date:

*Return completed form to the LAF Secretary, Rights of Way Service, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN.*

## Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form – optional

Hertfordshire County Council operates an Equal Opportunity policy and we are committed to recruiting the best person for the job, regardless of any factor other than the ability to do the job. The way we monitor this is to ask you to complete this form. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be used in any way in the assessment process. It will be used to provide us with statistics for checking how well our policy is working. Please help us by completing this form. Please ✓  box.

Gender:      Female                       Male

Disability:      This is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as "...a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse affect on a person's ability to carry out day to day activities". For example this can include diabetes, learning difficulties, hearing or speech impairments and arthritis and heart problems.

Do you have a disability as defined above:      YES:       NO:

Ethnic Origin: (tick one box only)

White:              British   
Irish   
Any other white background

Mixed:              White and Black Caribbean:   
White and Black African:   
White and Asian:   
Any other mixed background:

Asian or Asian British:      Indian:   
Pakistani:   
Bangladeshi:   
Any other Asian background:

Black or Black British:      Caribbean:   
African:   
Any other Black background:

Chinese or other ethnic group:      Chinese:   
Other:

Traveller (people from a travelling community):

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is your date of birth?

Do you live in Hertfordshire? YES:  NO:

If YES, in which District do you live?

- Broxbourne:  Dacorum:
- East Herts:  Hertsmere:
- North Herts:  St Albans:
- Stevenage:  Three Rivers:
- Watford:  Welywn / Hatfield:

Where did you see the advertisement for this position?

*Please return this completed form with your application form.*

## **HCC code of conduct for Local Access Forum Members**

### **A member should: -**

- Treat others with respect.
- Promote equality by not unfairly discriminating against a person or organisation.
- Provide an independent view, rather than reflect the views of any particular organisation.
- Exercise judgement and not be influenced by personal or prejudicial interests.
- Regularly and promptly deal with LAF correspondence and associated paperwork.
- Disclose specific interests, either direct or indirect, in specific LAF matters.
- Engage in constructive debate and seek consensus wherever possible.
- Take account of relevant specialist or technical advice.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that will ensure the highest standard and public confidence in their integrity.
- Be willing and able to undertake and participate in appropriate training and development schemes and opportunities as required or identified.

### **A member should not: -**

- In his or her official capacity or any other circumstance use his or her position as a member improperly to confer on, or secure an advantage for him or herself or any other person.
- In his or her official capacity or any other circumstance conduct him or herself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his or her office or the LAF into disrepute.
- Disclose any information given to him or her in confidence.

### **The County Council will: -**

- Prescribe a system of voting by which the LAF can take decisions.
- Appoint members according to a publicly available selection criteria that assess a candidate's competence, experience, skills and knowledge.
- Ensure the LAF operates openly.
- Publish an annual report on the LAF's activities.