

Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum

Background Information

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the "CRoW Act") requires local highway authorities and National Park authorities to establish Local Access Forums with a role as independent, statutory advisers on strategic access, rights of way and outdoor recreation issues.

Following consultation with interested organisations, Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council set up a joint Forum known as the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum in August 2003. The Forum advises both authorities and other relevant bodies on how best to improve public access to land so people can enjoy the wide variety of open-air recreation opportunities which the area has to offer.

The Forum is concerned with the land in Derby City and county of Derbyshire to the south and east of the Peak District National Park. The rest of Derbyshire is covered by the Peak District Local Access Forum, set up jointly between Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority.

In recruiting members to the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum, the two Councils are looking to ensure a reasonable balance between representatives of:

- users of local rights of way or open access land
- land owners and occupiers
- any other relevant interests, such as tourism, local community, business, water sports, nature conservation, public transport, sustainability, health, equality issues or access for disabled people

The Forum has been set up under the CRoW Act to be formally consulted on:

- Open access issues relating to the mapping of open country and registered common land, including long term directions and byelaws.
- Preparation, review and delivery of Rights of Way Improvement Plans produced by local highway authorities.
- Wider issues relating to the management and enjoyment of public rights of way, access improvements and outdoor recreation.

During its first twelve years in existence the Forum has been consulted on the various stages that occurred during the mapping of open country and is now working towards improving access to these areas. It has also played an active role in contributing towards the preparation, delivery and review of the Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs) for both authorities.

Forum members have commented on a variety of reports, ranging from the Government's proposals to build the high speed rail link (HS2), the County Council's Waterways Strategy, the new Countryside Service Volunteer Policy, the Pedal Peak II Cycling Project and more recent Draft Derbyshire Cycling Plan. The subject of recreational motor vehicles in the countryside has also been discussed, along with other issues affecting the management of public rights of way, including Lost Ways and Definitive Map Modification Orders.

The aim of the Forum is to debate many topics and achieve a consensus view on priorities and procedures. High on the agenda during the coming year will be exploring the links with public health, providing more accessible routes, better use of volunteers and the ten year review of both RoWIPs. Given the uncertainty which surrounds the continued availability of resources for rights of way and access work, Forum members will be providing advice on both prioritising workloads and delivering access improvement opportunities in order to meet the needs of different users, land managers and other sections of the community in the future.

The Forum can have up to 22 members. It currently appoints two Councillors (one from each authority) and allocates places for six members with landowner/ occupier interests, six members representing a range of different users and eight members representing the other relevant interests.

The Forum usually meets four times a year. Membership is voluntary, with expenses paid and members are appointed on renewable three year terms. The next meeting of the Forum will take place on Friday 18 March 2016 in Derby.

Further details about the current membership of the Forum and other information, such as the meeting agendas and minutes, can be found by visiting the Forum's web pages at:-

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/local_access_forum/default.asp

If you would like to join the Forum, please write explaining your interests and what you feel you can contribute, based on the Person Specification below. As part of the Recruitment Process you will be invited to attend a brief, informal interview.

You should write to: Gill Millward, Countryside Access Improvement Officer, Derbyshire County Council, Shand House, Dale Road South, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3RY
or email gill.millward@derbyshire.gov.uk

Person Specification

| REQUIREMENTS | ESSENTIAL | DESIRABLE |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| SKILLS | <p>Good communication and inter-personal skills.</p> <p>Ability to work constructively with competing interests to find agreed solutions.</p> <p>Ability to consider matters in a strategic manner.</p> | <p>Proven ability to liaise with wider interests.</p> |
| KNOWLEDGE | <p>Knowledge of countryside issues, concerning Derby and/or Derbyshire in particular.</p> <p>Knowledge of access to the countryside and the interaction between recreation, land management and conservation.</p> <p>Good knowledge of and/or network of contacts within the County or City in relation to a particular area of interest</p> | <p>Knowledge of administrative procedures in central or local government, or similar organisations.</p> |
| EXPERIENCE | | <p>Experience of attending formal public meetings.</p> |
| EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY | <p>Commitment to further equality and diversity issues in the work of the Forum.</p> | |
| OTHER REQUIREMENTS | <p>Willingness to commit to the four Local Access Forum meetings each year plus briefing and training events for up to three years.</p> <p>A commitment to making the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation in ways which address social, economic and environmental interests.</p> <p>A commitment to seeking a consensus approach to issues relating to access and outdoor recreation.</p> | |