



**TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE &  
ENGINEERING SERVICE**

Department of Development

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**Date: As Postmark**

**TO:** Applicants for the Plymouth Local Access Forum

When calling or telephoning please ask for: **Robin Pearce/Peter Tracey**

My Ref: **TIE/DEV/RP/LAF**

Your Ref:

Dear Applicant

## **Plymouth Local Access Forum**

Thank you for your interest in the Plymouth Local Access Forum. This information pack is provided to those who have requested further details on the formation of the Forum, which is a significant step forward for public access in Plymouth.

You will find enclosed an application form through which you may apply for membership to the Forum

Please do not hesitate to contact us for an informal discussion on the Local Access Forum or if you require further information.

Yours Sincerely

Plymouth Local Access Forum Secretary

**The information in this letter is also available in Braille and large print (this size) upon request. To obtain a copy please telephone (01752) 307730**

# Plymouth Local Access Forum

If you have an interest in the great outdoors and would like a say on how to make Plymouth more accessible and enjoyable for open-air recreation then your help is needed.

Plymouth City Council is seeking to recruit members for the Plymouth Local Access Forum. This Forum is an independent advisory body which provides the authority with advice on how to make the most of the City for purposes of open-air recreation and carries significant weight in the formation of policy and in the prioritisation of resources within the Council.

In recruiting to the forum, the Council is seeking to provide a reasonable balance of members whose interests are considered to be representative of the many varied, and potentially conflicting views of the local populace. Applications will therefore be considered from representatives of any local interest. Applications from those people representing local business, local community, tourism, those on a low income, young people and people with disabilities will be especially welcome. Further information regarding the Plymouth Local Access Forum including person specification and an application pack can be found by visiting Plymouth City Council online via: - <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/prow.htm>

The Forum will meet a minimum of twice a year. Membership is voluntary, with paid expenses, and members are appointed for up to 3 years.

If you would like to join the Forum or would like further information please contact our Rights of Way department using the details below or download the application pack on our website.

Public rights of Way

Department of Development

Civic Centre

Plymouth PL1 2EW

Tel: 01752 304233

Email: [PROW@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:PROW@plymouth.gov.uk)

Website: [www.plymouth.gov.uk/prow.htm](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/prow.htm)

# Plymouth Local Access Forum

## Background Information

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) requires every local Highway Authority and National Park Authority to establish an advisory body known as a Local Access Forum.

The Local Access Forum has a formal advisory role in strategic access and recreation issues. It acts as an independent statutory advisor to Plymouth City Council and its partners on the improvement of public access to land for the purpose of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area.

Plymouth previously benefited from the existence of a non statutory Rights of Way Forum which ran, with great success, for a number of years and advised the Council, albeit informally, on a number of issues relating to the provision of public access within the area. It is intended that the Plymouth Local Access forum continue this work within the guidelines of the CROW Act.

In recruiting members to the Forum the City Council is seeking to provide a reasonable balance of members whose interests are considered by the Council to be representative of the many varied (and potentially conflicting) views of the local populace. These include:

- Users of public rights of way or access land;
- Land owners or occupiers of land over which public rights of way or access land subsists;
- Other relevant interests, defined as, tourism, outdoor education, sport and recreational provision, disability awareness, local business interest, the military, health promotion and wildlife and cultural heritage.

Members are expected to engage in debate with the intention of seeking a consensus of opinion on the matters raised. The views of the Local Access forum will carry significant weight in decision making within the Council.

There are currently 18 appointments available of which 3 will be taken by Plymouth City Council elected Members. The aim of the Forum is to debate many topics and advise Plymouth City Council on priorities and procedures. High on the agenda for coming meetings will be input into the Cities Definitive Map Review and work on the Plymouth Rights of way Improvement Plan. Forum members will be providing advice on prioritising access (both existing and new) in order to assess and ultimately meet, the needs of access users, landowners and other affected interest groups in the area.

# Membership Selection Criteria

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Good communication and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Ability to work as part of a team.</p> <p>Ability to consider competing interests in a strategic manner to find agreed solutions</p>	<p>Proven ability to network and liaise with wider interests</p>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>Knowledge/appreciation of countryside issues with particular reference to Plymouth</p> <p>Knowledge of the conflicting interactions between recreation, land management and conservation.</p>	<p>An understanding of administrative procedures in central or local government</p> <p>An understanding of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p>
<b>Experience</b>	<p>Experience of using public rights of way or access land for recreational purposes</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Experience of managing land over which public rights of way or access land subsists</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Experience of tourism, outdoor education, sport and recreational provision, disability awareness, local business interest, the military, health promotion or wildlife and cultural heritage.</p>	<p>Experience of public speaking</p> <p>Experience of attending formal public meetings</p>
<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	<p>A commitment to further equal opportunity issues in the work of the forum</p>	<p>Knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995</p>
<b>Other Requirements</b>	<p>Willingness to commit to attending Local Access Forum meetings and training events for up to 3 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>	

# APPLICATION FORM

## PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEMBERSHIP



**TO:** Public Rights of Way  
Development  
Road safety Team  
Civic Centre  
Plymouth  
PL1 2EW

**Data Protection Act** Information from this application may be processed by computer for purposes registered by the authority under the data protection legislation. Individuals have the right of access to computerised personal data concerning them.

**Full Name:** .....

**Age:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Tel No (day)** .....

.....

**Tel No (eve)** .....

.....

**Email** .....

.....

**Occupation:** .....

**Postcode**.....

**Organisation you represent (if any)** .....

**Would you prefer your initial appointment to be for one, two or three years?**

**Which area(s) of interest would you be representing?**

User of access land or public rights of way

Owner and/or occupier of access land or land crossed by rights of way

Other Interest (please specify) .....

**Please provide brief details of the nature of your interest**

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# **Plymouth's Local Access Forum**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **1. Title and Forum Area**

- 1.1 The Forum shall be known as the Plymouth Local Access Forum
- 1.2 The area to be covered is the whole of the area within the boundaries of Plymouth City and that area for which Plymouth City Council is the responsible authority.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Plymouth Local Access Forum shall be to advise Plymouth City Council on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open-air recreation, in ways that address social, economic and environmental interests, and with regard to issues of particular local relevance.
- 2.2 The Plymouth Local Access Forum shall:
  - Contribute to the development of any Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Plymouth;
  - Promote a constructive and inclusive approach to the improvement of recreational access to the countryside which can be implemented through Community Strategies, Local Transport Plan, and AONB Management Plans, Structure and Local Plans;
  - Advise upon the management and maintenance of access, balancing the provision of access against the needs of conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and the needs of residents, landowners and land managers;
  - Identify and respect local circumstances and different interests while operating within national guidance;
  - Advise on developing additional opportunities for everyone to enjoy the rights of way and access network;

2.3 In providing advice the Local Access Forum will have regard to:

- The needs of land management
- The desirability of conserving the natural beauty of the area
- The management and maintenance of access whilst balancing this against the needs of biodiversity, wildlife management, the interests of landowners and managers, and countryside management projects in Plymouth.
- Guidance issued by the Secretary of the State.

2.4 The Forum will promote liaison with any Local Access Forums established in Devon, Cornwall, Torbay, South Hams, West Devon and Dartmoor and actively encourage the attendance of such authorities to Forum meetings with observer status.

2.5 The Role of Plymouth City Council

- To advertise and appoint members to the Forum taking into account the need for fairness transparency and compliance with the Council's policy on social inclusion and diversity
- To take account of the advice given when making decisions
- To provide a secretary for the Forum, and ongoing Officer support, training and advice.
- To provide a meeting venue and refreshments where necessary.
- To publicise the Forum
- To reimburse Forum members expenses for travel and child care and subsistence cost directly incurred in respect of members' duties.

### **3. Membership**

3.1 Membership to the Forum will be representative of one or more fields of interest as defined below rather than any particular organisation of which they might also be a member: -

- Users of rights of way, or the new access right;
- Owners and occupiers of access land, or land over which local rights of way subsist;
- In addition to this Plymouth City Council will encourage fair representation of other interests considered to be relevant to Plymouth. These include tourism, outdoor education, sport and recreational provision, disability awareness, local business interest, the military, health promotion and wildlife and cultural heritage.

3.2 Within these interests the City Council would encourage the representation of younger people, woman, people with disabilities and those on low incomes. Representation in any category from at least one individual with experience of the needs of the disabled will be strongly encouraged.

3.3 Members shall be appointed to the Forum by Plymouth City Council in accordance to the Member Selection Criteria in Appendix A. The purpose of the Member selection process is designed to ensure a fair distribution of interests and ensure members have the knowledge and experience necessary to enable them to make an informed and constructive contribution to the work of the Forum.

3.4 Members shall be appointed for an initial period of either one, two or three years after which they will be eligible for appointment for a further period of three years only. In the event that a seat becomes vacant during the initial term of appointment the replacement member shall continue that same term of appointment.

- 3.5 A member may resign his/her seat by the giving of notice in writing to the Secretary of the Forum.
- 3.6 Plymouth City Council may terminate the appointment of a member of the Forum if:
- He/She becomes an elected member of Plymouth City Council
  - He/she is absent from all meetings of the Forum in a 12-month period without the prior agreement of the Council.
  - He/she fails to comply with the requirements set out in clause 3.8 below.
  - He/she has failed to comply with clause 3.11 below.
- 3.7 The Plymouth Local Access Forum has places for 15 members with three places reserved for Plymouth City Council Elected Members. Provision to extend membership beyond this, but within the statutory maximum of 22 members, is reserved for the Forum at their discretion.
- 3.8 Before appointment members shall confirm:
- Their ability to devote their own time to attend meetings and training events as required.
  - Their commitment to represent the Plymouth Local Access Forum over any other organisations of which they may be a member.
  - Their ability and willingness to network with a wide range of interests outside of Forum meetings.
  - Their commitment to working within the Terms of Reference.
  - Their consent for a photograph, brief biography and E-mail address/contact details to be made available to the public, including the Forum website.
- 3.9 The first Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be appointed by election by the Forum at its first meeting and shall hold office for one year. Subject to their continued membership to the forum they shall be eligible for re-election annually thereafter. Elected Members of Plymouth City Council will not be eligible for appointment to either position but shall be entitled to vote in elections.

3.10 The method of appointment for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Local Access Forum shall be as follows:

- Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- Election for the post of chairman shall take place first, with all members of the Forum (including those standing for the position concerned) being entitled to vote. A member may vote for him/herself.
- The secretary will announce the result of the election to the post of Chairman.
- In the event of a tie on the first round of voting for the post of chairman, a second round of voting will be held in which the only candidates standing will be those whose scores were tied. Again, all members may vote including those standing.
- Election for the post of vice-chairman will then take place and the only candidates eligible to stand for the position would be those drawn from a different category or type of interest (set out in paragraph 3.1) to that of the newly elected chairman.
- The secretary will announce the result of the election to the post of vice chairman.
- In the event of a tie on the first round of voting for the post of vice chairman a second round will be held in the same manner as that of the chairman's election.

3.11 Members shall disclose the nature of any direct or indirect interest in any matter brought up for consideration at a meeting of the forum.

3.12 Members shall identify their own training needs.

## **4 Administration**

- 4.1 Plymouth City Council shall provide a secretary responsible for the administration of the Forum who shall be neither a Member of the City Council nor a member of the Forum.
- 4.2 The Forum shall normally meet twice a year but additional meetings shall be arranged where necessary.
- 4.3 Meeting agendas shall be agreed between the Chairman and the Secretary.
- 4.4 Meetings shall be advertised in advance and held in public.
- 4.5 Agendas, papers and minutes of the meeting shall be available to the public.
- 4.6 The public shall be able to ask questions on the business of the Forum at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 4.7 The Chairman may, where appropriate, invite observers to the meeting who shall be able to contribute at the meeting at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 4.8 The declaration of interests shall be an agenda item at the start of each meeting.
- 4.9 All papers for meetings will be sent to members at least five days in advance and should be supported by a clear recommendation wherever possible.
- 4.10 A consensus should be reached on all matters discussed but where this is not the case opposing views will be recorded.
- 4.11 The quorum for meetings of the Forum shall be 7 members with a minimum of 1 member from each of the interest groups - users, landowners/managers and others, represented at that time.

## **5 Allowances**

- 5.1 Members may claim travelling costs for attending Forum meetings and authorised training events and where appropriate a carers allowance is payable at rates in line with City Council Members Allowance Scheme.

## Appendix A – Membership Selection Criteria

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Good communication and interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Ability to work as part of a team.</p> <p>Ability to consider competing interests in a strategic manner to find agreed solutions</p>	<p>Proven ability to network and liaise with wider interests</p>
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