

# Local Access Forum Annual Review Form

## April 2017 to March 2018

Appendix 1

Name of LAF	Norfolk Local Access Forum
Name of LAF Chair	Martin Sullivan
Name of LAF Secretary	Chris Walton
The period this report relates to is between April 2017 and March 2018	

Total number of LAF members (October 2018)	17
Number of members representing users of public rights of way or access land	9
Number of members representing owners and occupiers of access land or land over which PROW subsist	1
Number of members representing other interests	7

Number of full LAF meetings held	4	Number of sub-group meetings held	8
Number of working groups led by others	0	Number of training days provided by the Appointing Authority	1*
How many km of PROW have been improved due to LAF input?	***	How much funding did the LAF (or an associated body) raise?	£10,000
How many extra volunteer hours were committed to public access (not including LAF committee meetings)?			**463 hours

In addition to NLAF meetings, over the reporting period the NLAF's charity, Pathmakers held 7 full meetings including an AGM and one communications meeting (Pathmakers Annual Review is appended to this document) and directed the launch of the Burgh Castle Boardwalk on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to which the full NLAF membership was invited.

\* The April NLAF meeting was held at Burgh Castle village hall to permit members to view progress with boardwalk project

\*\*Time estimate of volunteer hours **not** including LAF committee meetings:

- (i) Pathmakers meetings and Burgh Castle boardwalk launch: 212 hours
- (ii) Pathmakers trustee involvement with Geovation involved 3 day attendance at an event in London to pitch for funding from Ordnance Survey: 81 hours (conservative estimate).
- (iii) the NLAF was represented at the LAF National Forum in June: 15 hours
- (iv) Subgroup meetings: 8 meetings: 135 hours
- (v) Work on the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan: 20 hours (conservative estimate)

\*\*\* Direct improvement has been made at Burgh Castle where 600 metres of new boardwalk was installed.

**Partners your LAF worked with during 2017/18** (click on a box or type 'x')

Local Nature Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Enterprise Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Wellbeing Boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	LEADER funding Local Action Groups*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\*Norfolk Local Access Forum member Pat Holtom is chair of the Waveney Valley LAG.

**LAF achievements/making a difference?**<sup>1</sup> Please give examples to illustrate how your LAF has improved public access to land for the purpose of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. Do you think your LAF has made a difference to public access in your area via its discussions and actions?

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The Norfolk Local Access Forum (NLAF) has a keen and dedicated membership and benefits from good support from Norfolk County Council officers and democratic services staff.

It has 3 subgroups: Public Rights of Way; Permissive Access; Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP)

The NLAF has set up an independent charity – Pathmakers (CIO) - which has a legal identity and can make direct improvements to access (or seek funding for access improvements). The NLAF makes trustee appointments to Pathmakers.

Over the course of this year, the NLAF has made many significant achievements:

1. Pathmakers launched a significant all-access 600metre boardwalk at Burgh Castle Roman Fort near Great Yarmouth in June 2017

[http://www.norfarchtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Pathmakers%20Burgh%20Castle%2014\\_s.pdf](http://www.norfarchtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Pathmakers%20Burgh%20Castle%2014_s.pdf) and between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, held 7 full meetings.

2. Pathmakers continued to look for appropriate opportunities to improve public access and started an application to the Resilient Heritage Lottery Fund to develop trustee skills. It was successful with a £10,000 bid to the Ordnance Survey's 'Geovation' fund in December 2017 to explore use of Trails and Public Rights of Way by communities/users that need to become more active. Over 3 intense days, Pathmakers developed their pitch for 'Community Friends Walks', a walking scheme making use of Ordnance Survey data that matches people with local knowledge with those with inactive lifestyles. Judges awarded fund for 7 out of 10 ideas which they believed had the most potential for success as a sustainable business model. The £10,000 prize money is being used to pilot the Community Friends' Walks model on the northern edge of Norwich where the Marriott's Way long distance trail passes through the Mile Cross and Drayton communities.

3. A closer working relationship between the NLAF and Pathmakers has been developed with Pathmakers trustees becoming members of each of the 3 NLAF subgroups.

4. Planning for the new Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) – Norfolk's new Rights of Way Improvement Plan - got underway and the subgroup advising Norfolk County Council on content and production held 4 meetings over the period of this report. Consultation on the new draft plan took place over a 12 week period starting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018 <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/naip/> . The NAIP incorporates the Council's vision for cycling and walking (Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan).

5. The NLAF was represented at the Local Access forum National Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017, hearing from a range of speakers on topics from statutory access to health and the natural environment.

6. The NLAF continues to work closely with the Norfolk County Council Highways, Definitive Map team and Norfolk Trails.

7. Planning for a parish paths seminar by the PROW subgroup (which will increase the effectiveness of total input into path monitoring and maintenance and build up a network of people interested in monitoring and maintaining publically available paths) is well underway.

8. Access audits of walks on the Weavers' Way long distance trail was part funded by

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Pathmakers (with Norfolk Trails), leading to 5 new publications which describe with clear text and photos what access difficulties might be encountered on each of the routes to allow users decide if the walks are suitable for them e.g <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails/access-tested-walks>

9. The NLAF provided valuable user feedback which directly led to improvements in NCC's fault-reporting and tracking system for Public Rights of Way. The system now allows users to track progress with faults reported, through to resolution.

**What activity did your LAF undertake to help record historical PROW before 2026?**

At their April 2017 meeting the NLAF agreed to support the establishment of a first point of contact for co-ordination of claims.

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<sup>1</sup> These achievements form an important part of the national annual report that is submitted to Defra/Minister and help to promote the work and good practice of LAFs

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Please add numbers to the following differentiating between formal consultations and general advice given by the LAF on particular subjects. If a consultation covered more than one subject area, please count separately.

	Consultations	Advice	Optional Detail
Green Infrastructure strategies	1		River Wensum Strategy  Green infrastructure plan for Norfolk described to NLAF at a meeting by NCC Environment team.
Transport (LTP, traffic management, rail, DfT, Highways Agency)			Norfolk Cycling and Walking Plan presentation at NLAF meeting
Water / Coast (slipways, flood defence, EA, shoreline)			
Public open space (public space protection orders)			
Dog control/exclusion/on leads/fouling orders			
Fly tipping			Presentation from Waste Reduction Officer on fly tipping
Planning applications /Housing development schemes			
Land use and planning matters (e.g. informal advice on land development)			
Local development frameworks and planning strategies			
PROW creation, diversion or closure - number of each	1	1	Thompson case (advice from Legal Orders and Registers Team sought)
Recording lost ways/historical rights - working towards the 2026 cut-off	1	1	The Chair of the PROW subgroup (Ken Hawkins) is the point of contact for the co-ordination of claims. One complex claim submitted by PROW subgroup members (Helen Chester, Ian Witham, June 2017)
Right of Way Improvement Plan review (= Norfolk Access Improvement Plan NAIP)	1	1	Extensive text supplied for the document draft by NLAF members, and assistance provided by the NAIP subgroup.  Public consultation on draft plan March 14 <sup>th</sup> for 12 weeks.
Route improvements (to PROW and other multi-user/cycling/horse-riding/walking routes)	1	1	Response to the CTC regarding access for cyclists to public paths (April 2017)

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Promotion of access, open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area			Planning underway through the PROW subgroup for parish seminars
Vehicular access and issues relating to motorised use of PROW	1		Communication on white roads
Parish Council or other grant schemes			
Access for people with reduced mobility	1		Audits commissioned by Pathmakers for Weavers' Way
Commons, village greens			
Open Access land restrictions	2		Stone curlew and Stanta
Coastal Access/National Trails	4		Updates provided by Norfolk Trails team on the National Trails at each NLAF meeting
NNR dedication			
Greenspace including Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves	1		Examples of SANGS (suitable alternative natural greenspace) in Norfolk to meet daily recreational needs of residents presented to NLAF.
Nature conservation (including SSSIs)	3		Titchwell nature reserve – review of direction Holme Dunes – Review of direction Holme Bird Observatory – review of direction Presentation to NLAF on impact of recreation on internationally designated wildlife sites in Norfolk.

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Agri-environment scheme issues (HLS and new Countryside Stewardship) e.g. expiring permissive access agreements, effects of land management options on public access etc.	1	1	Select Committee call for evidence on the NERC Act 2006. the NLAF drew attention to the need for rural grant programmes for economic and rural protection post Brexit – especially in relation to funding permanent improvements to England’s recreational access infrastructure.  The Chair wrote to the Minister concerning the loss of permissive access through changes to the Countryside Stewardship scheme.
Forestry and woodland			
Natural England	1		Role of Natural England. Response commenting on the role of Natural England

Any other LAF activity (please specify):

**What are your top priorities for the year ahead?**

**Recruitment to fill member vacancies and ensure that there is a good spread of interests and skills to help fulfil the NLAF’s remit and Pathmakers aspirations. Completion of the rights of way improvement plan (Norfolk Access Improvement Plan), Statement of Actions and Delivery plan and the making use of it as a blueprint for action. Supporting Pathmakers.**

**Do you foresee any issues or challenges that may affect your LAFs operation and/or its ability to deliver improvements to public access in the coming year?**

**The NLAF has been proactive in its approach to funding, having set up Pathmakers.**

**Is there any particular support or training that you need to deliver your priorities or work program for next year?**

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Support to develop Pathmakers.

Summarise any feedback received from section 94(4) bodies<sup>2</sup>

Comments from the Appointing Authority

Many thanks are due to the all volunteers of the NLAF for their diligence, energy and commitment throughout the year and especially to those who have taken on extra responsibilities or roles such as chairing and organizing meetings and through involvement with Pathmakers.

Comments from LAF Chair

We have a strong membership with mixed interests in access to the countryside. During this period, we have unfortunately had three resignations, all regrettably due to changes in their employment or moving home out of Norfolk.

NCC will begin a recruitment drive in the coming months with a refreshed LAF in the new year. We hope to find further diversification in the new membership, by looking, for example, for members with in interest in the hospitality business.

Our thanks go to the officers and staff on Norfolk County Council for their continued support and administrative help, without such we would we would not be in the very good position we are today.

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Any other comments

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<sup>2</sup> The Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000, Section 94(4) specifies that it is the function of a local access forum, as respects to the area for which it is established, to advise the appointing authority; the local highway authority; other bodies exercising functions under CROW Act Part 1 (Natural England, Forestry Commission and English Heritage) and such other bodies as may be prescribed. These other bodies are set out in the LAF Regulations 2007, paragraph 21, and include: any conservation board established by the Secretary of State, any parish or town council in the area covered by the LAF, and Sport England.