

# West Sussex Local Access Forum



PROTECTING AND IMPROVING YOUR ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

## Representing :

Walkers  
Cyclists  
Horse riders  
Landowners  
Conservation  
& Other Interests



## Covering :

Footpaths  
Bridleways  
Byways  
Access Land  
Country Parks

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[www.wslaf.org](http://www.wslaf.org)

# West Sussex Local Access Forum



## What is a Local Access Forum?

West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) is an independent official body, set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Our members are volunteers who represent the interests of everyone in the county concerned with public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) and wider access to the countryside.



## What does the Forum do?

We advise all levels of local government, national government and other agencies by commenting on policy proposals and any other access issues such as:

- improving public access to land for informal outdoor recreation
- encouraging the enjoyment and understanding of the countryside
- promoting safe access to the countryside
- considering the needs and concerns of land managers, tenants and owners
- enhancing and conserving the natural environment
- developing the rights of way network, working through the West Sussex Rights of Way Management Plan
- reviewing major planning applications to protect, and seek opportunities to improve, the rights of way network
- broadening access to the rights of way network

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## How do we achieve this?

- we work with West Sussex County Council and local organisations and groups to identify potential access improvements and promote their implementation
- we act as a bridge between different interest groups, seeking consensus wherever possible
- we adopt a constructive and inclusive approach to the improvement of recreational access to the countryside
- we respect local circumstances and different interests while following national guidance

## Who does the Access Forum advise?

As a 'statutory advisory body', WSLAF can comment officially on relevant matters to various public agencies, which must have regard to our advice, including:

- county and district councils
- town and parish councils
- government - including Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Highways England and Ministry of Defence
- Forestry England
- Natural England
- other conservation/environmental bodies

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## Do we take up individual issues?

Yes. We work with the County Council and other public bodies on both strategic and specific issues where we believe they are of importance to access in the county. To do this, we need your help to let us know about your ideas and concerns.

## Does the Forum cover the South Downs National Park?

No, the South Downs National Park has its own Local Access Forum - details on the [Southdowns website](#).

Neighbouring counties have their own Access Forums, listed on the [Natural England website](#).



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## Who does the Forum represent?

We are local volunteers who represent fields of interest rather than any particular organisation. We can have up to 22 members, including Council representatives. We aim to maintain a balance of members representing different interests who either:

- enjoy countryside access activities, such as walkers, horse riders, cyclists, carriage drivers, wildlife enthusiasts, orienteers, runners and other legal users
- own, farm or manage the land, including landowners, tenants, farmers and other occupiers
- have an interest in local community and conservation issues, promoting health, the environment, public transport, disabled access and tourism



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**Can I attend a meeting of the Forum?** Yes, you would be very welcome. All Forum meetings are open to the public as observers. Observers can speak at meetings - please contact the Forum Officer beforehand for guidance

**Can I get something onto the agenda?** Yes, please discuss with the Forum Officer

**Can I become a Forum member?** We welcome applications for membership. Details of how to apply and what being a Forum member involves are on our website

**How often does the Forum meet?** Normally four times a year, usually in Chichester or Horsham. We also attend sub-groups, site visits, workshops, training events and conferences as appropriate

**How can I find out more?** Find out what we've been up to. Sign up for regular updates. Download our Annual Report and other documents

[www.wslaf.org](http://www.wslaf.org)

## Or you can contact:

Forum Officer:

**Steve ALEXANDER**  
**Public Rights of Way**

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**WSLAF Members represent a wide variety of interests**