



Local Access Forum Survey March 2013 Results






This report summarises the results of a survey of Local Access Forum (LAF) Chairs and Secretaries which ran between 8th to 28th March 2013. A total of 78 responses were received (77 online, 1 emailed) and thanks to everyone who took the time to complete it. Natural England (NE) will use this information to help it to prioritise its support to LAFs.

Local support from Natural England

Do you know who your LAF local contact is in Natural England?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		88.41%	61
2	No		11.59%	8
			answered	69
			skipped	9

How would you rate the level of support from your LAF local contact?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		16.42%	11
2	Good		34.33%	23
3	Satisfactory		31.34%	21
4	Poor		13.43%	9
5	Very poor		4.48%	3
			answered	67
			skipped	11

Common comments and suggestions re local support

- More local communication with LAFs, Secretaries and Chairs.
- A local NE contact be accessible to provide support, help and advice.
- Promote LAFs locally to help attract new members.
- Provision of training (e.g. Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE)) for LAF members and council support.
- A joint memorandum of understanding between LAFs, Appointing Authorities (AA), NE and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

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Regional support from Natural England

How would you rate the level of support from your LAF regional coordinator?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		52.24%	35
2	Good		34.33%	23
3	Satisfactory		13.43%	9
4	Poor		0.00%	0
5	Very poor		0.00%	0
			answered	67
			skipped	11

Common comments and suggestions re regional support

- Renew the Regional Coordination (RC) budget for 2013/14 – RC role essential.
- As well as regional Chairs meetings, ask LAFs if regional Secretaries meetings, training events and/or conferences would also be useful.
- Attendance at some LAF meetings.

National support from Natural England

How would you rate the level of support from Natural England nationally?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		7.25%	5
2	Good		28.99%	20
3	Satisfactory		49.28%	34
4	Poor		13.04%	9
5	Very poor		1.45%	1
			answered	69
			skipped	9






Common comments and suggestions re national support

- Quarterly 'update' newsletter.
- More communication from NE to LAFs.
- Conference in Sheffield was good and helpful – hold similar again this year.
- Promote national consultations to LAFs via Huddle.
- NE to provide a list of the variety of support provided for LAFs.
- Work on improving the national visibility of LAFs.
- Feedback on how annual reports have been used.
- LAF ideas taken to higher level and acted upon.

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Other contributions to LAFs from Natural England

How would you rate the level of support and advice from Natural England teams?



			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		5.88%	4
2	Good		33.82%	23
3	Satisfactory		41.18%	28
4	Poor		16.18%	11
5	Very poor		2.94%	2
			answered	68
			skipped	10

Common comments and suggestions re other Natural England support



- An organisational chart/map giving relevant NE contacts/teams in these areas.
- Newsletters from other NE teams on Huddle.

Defra guidance



Are you aware of the Defra guidance issued by the Secretary of State in 2007?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		85.51%	59
2	No		14.49%	10
			answered	69
			skipped	9

Do you use it?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		70.59%	48
2	No		29.41%	20
			answered	68
			skipped	10



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Does it need to be revised?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes (provide details below)		45.61%	26
2	No		54.39%	31
			answered	62
			skipped	16
Answers for: If you answered 'Yes', how should it be revised?			32 answers	

Common comments and suggestions re Defra guidance



- All sections should be checked to ensure up-to-date.
- Some LAFs are advising on matters that fall outside the originally envisaged remit. It might be worth issuing advice on this in the LAF handbook.

LAF handbook

Are you aware of the LAF handbook?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		94.20%	65
2	No		5.80%	4
			answered	69
			skipped	9

Do you use it?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		58.21%	39
2	No		41.79%	28
			answered	67
			skipped	11



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Does it need to be revised?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes (provide details below)		56.14%	32
2	No		43.86%	25
			answered	62
			skipped	16
Answers for: If you answered 'Yes' what do you feel is missing or needs to be improved in the current version?			40 answers	

Common comments and suggestions re LAF handbook

- Should be revised (shorter, punchier) and web based Wiki style that can be edited.
- Too large and should be discontinued. DEFRA guidance is more practical and should be the 'bible'.
- Produce version similar to Scottish LAF handbook.



Training

Does your appointing authority provide training for new LAF members?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		37.31%	25
2	No		62.69%	42
			answered	67
			skipped	11






If you answered 'Yes', how would you rate the training?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		8.70%	2
2	Good		43.48%	10
3	Satisfactory		43.48%	10
4	Poor		4.35%	1
5	Very poor		0.00%	0
			answered	23
			skipped	55

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Do you think some form of training should be organised nationally (or regionally) for new LAF members?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		82.09%	55
2	No		17.91%	12
			answered	67
			skipped	11

If you answered 'Yes', in what form would you like this training?






			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Booklet		52.46%	32
2	Website		62.30%	38
3	Job shadowing		4.92%	3
4	Mentoring		22.95%	14
5	Other, please specify:		45.90%	28
			answered	61
			skipped	17
Answers for: Other, please specify:			<i>28 answers</i>	

Common comments and suggestions re training

- Produce a new member training 'pack'.
- Update handbook to help new members.
- Training element at national conference.




Huddle

How would you rate Huddle for ease of use?





			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		11.86%	7
2	Good		22.03%	13
3	Satisfactory		45.76%	27
4	Poor		16.95%	10
5	Very poor		3.39%	2
			answered	59
			skipped	19

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How often do you use Huddle?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Daily		0.00%	0
2	Weekly		28.79%	19
3	Monthly		34.85%	23
4	Other, please specify:		36.36%	24
			answered	66
			skipped	12
Answers for: Other, please specify:			24 answers	



How do you feedback information from Huddle to your LAF?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Email		39.34%	24
2	At meetings		62.30%	38
3	Don't feedback		21.31%	13
4	Other, please specify:		18.03%	11
			answered	61
			skipped	17
Answers for: Other, please specify:			11 answers	

Do you feel confident to join in discussions or post comments?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		67.24%	39
2	No		32.76%	19
			answered	58
			skipped	20

Do you feel confident to upload files or create / update Whiteboards?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		50.00%	30
2	No		50.00%	30
			answered	60
			skipped	18

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How useful do you find each section on the LAF Workspace?						
	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very poor	Response Total
Overview / Calendar?	7.0% (3)	27.9% (12)	41.9% (18)	16.3% (7)	7.0% (3)	43
Whiteboards?	4.7% (2)	41.9% (18)	37.2% (16)	9.3% (4)	7.0% (3)	43
Tasks?	0.0% (0)	12.2% (5)	56.1% (23)	22.0% (9)	9.8% (4)	41
Discussions?	17.0% (8)	42.6% (20)	31.9% (15)	6.4% (3)	2.1% (1)	47
Files?	4.7% (2)	46.5% (20)	34.9% (15)	11.6% (5)	2.3% (1)	43
People?	4.8% (2)	47.6% (20)	31.0% (13)	14.3% (6)	2.4% (1)	42
					answered	47
					skipped	31






Overview / Calendar?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		6.98%	3
2	Good		27.91%	12
3	Satisfactory		41.86%	18
4	Poor		16.28%	7
5	Very poor		6.98%	3
			answered	47






Whiteboards?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		4.65%	2
2	Good		41.86%	18
3	Satisfactory		37.21%	16
4	Poor		9.30%	4
5	Very poor		6.98%	3
			answered	47

Tasks?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		0.00%	0
2	Good		12.20%	5
3	Satisfactory		56.10%	23
4	Poor		21.95%	9
5	Very poor		9.76%	4
			answered	47

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Discussions?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		17.02%	8
2	Good		42.55%	20
3	Satisfactory		31.91%	15
4	Poor		6.38%	3
5	Very poor		2.13%	1
			answered	47

Files?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		4.65%	2
2	Good		46.51%	20
3	Satisfactory		34.88%	15
4	Poor		11.63%	5
5	Very poor		2.33%	1
			answered	47

People?			Percent	Total
1	Very good		4.76%	2
2	Good		47.62%	20
3	Satisfactory		30.95%	13
4	Poor		14.29%	6
5	Very poor		2.38%	1
			answered	47






Common comments and suggestions re Huddle

- Promote Huddle and its use more.
- More pictures, graphics and graphs.
- Promote code of conduct/good practice of Huddle use – link related items, more focussed discussion, how to use Huddle more effectively.
- A 'what's new' summary digest of key issues.
- Have an 'expert' available to comment on a specific topic for a short period.
- Promote Huddle guidance that email alerts can be turned off.
- Promote that Huddle is open to all LAF members.



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Annual reporting process






How clear and easy to follow did you find the annual reporting process this year?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		4.41%	3
2	Good		38.24%	26
3	Satisfactory		45.59%	31
4	Poor		10.29%	7
5	Very poor		1.47%	1
			answered	68
			skipped	10

Did you see a benefit from using the proforma?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		60.29%	41
2	No		39.71%	27
			answered	68
			skipped	10

How did you rate this year's annual reporting process?

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Very good		7.35%	5
2	Good		30.88%	21
3	Satisfactory		45.59%	31
4	Poor		14.71%	10
5	Very poor		1.47%	1
			answered	68
			skipped	10

Common comments and suggestions re annual reporting

- Better and quicker feedback on how the information has been used.
- Rename the proforma so it is not confused with LAFs Annual Reports for public consumption.
- Promote the importance of Annual Work Plans for LAFs.
- Revise the proforma but keep it as simple as possible.

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Finally

Do you feel that you are fairly treated by Natural England?

		Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Yes	92.19%	59	
2	No	7.81%	5	
			answered	64
			skipped	14

Common comments and suggestions re possible additional support for LAFs

- Help and encourage AAs to support their LAFs.
- Reintroduce the English Access Forum.