

VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 4th JUNE 2026

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Set out below for the consideration of Members are the Terms of Reference as agreed by the Forum previously in 2022. They are based on the model terms of reference for Local Access Forums as contained within the Advice and Best Practice published by Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government and have been revised over the years to reflect changing circumstances.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the following Terms of Reference continue to be adopted:

Title

1. The Local Access Forum shall be known as the Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum.

Roles and Responsibilities

2. The function of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum is to provide advice to the relevant local authorities, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and others as appropriate as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area in ways which take account of land management, social, economic, environmental and educational interests.

3. The Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum will fulfil this role by advising on issues of particular local relevance, including:

- (a) supporting the implementation of the new right of access to open countryside and the coast;
- (b) improving the rights of way and coastal access networks; and
- (c) developing recreation and access strategies that cater for everyone.

4. The Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum will work to:

- (a) develop a constructive and inclusive approach to the improvement of recreational access to the countryside and to the coast;
- (b) contribute to, and help facilitate, the work of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and its partners where appropriate;
- (c) respect local circumstances and different interests whilst operating within national guidance;
- (d) provide advice on issues of principle and good practice;
- (e) engage in constructive debate and seek consensus wherever possible; and

- (f) where consensus is not possible, make clear the nature of differing views, and suggest how they might be resolved.

Membership

5. The membership will include:
- (a) a Chair and Vice- Chair elected in accordance with the LAF regulations;
 - (b) a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 other Members.
6. The membership will:
- (a) be balanced to avoid dominance by any single interest group;
 - (b) represent a cross-section of interests in the area; and
 - (c) live or work within the area or have a sound knowledge of the area.
7. Members will be expected to:
- (a) adhere to the sections relating to LAFs in the CROW Act and regulations and these Terms of Reference;
 - (b) show commitment to achieving the aims of the Local Access Forum through constructive working with other Members;
 - (c) be able to devote the necessary time to attend meetings and to network outside meetings;
 - (d) have sufficient experience of access to the countryside and coast in the local areas to be able to make an informed and constructive contribution to improving access provision; and
 - (e) be capable of working with a wide range of interest groups.

Administration

Secretariat

8. The Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum will have a Secretary appointed by the appointing authority who will be responsible for:
- (a) providing support to the Chair of the Forum;
 - (b) ensuring that the Forum is set up and run according to the CROW Act, Local Access Forum regulations and these Terms of Reference;
 - (c) managing any resources dedicated to its work;
 - (d) arranging and promoting meetings, including arranging the delivery of papers and information to Forum Members and the public;
 - (e) producing minutes of Forum meetings.

Meetings

9. Meetings will be held at least two times a year, and more frequently as and when necessary, to be agreed by the LAF and the appointing authority.

10. Meetings agendas will be agreed between the Chair (or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice- Chair) and the Secretary – although any Member may suggest agenda items for consideration.
11. Meetings will be advertised in advance and the minutes published.
12. The Chair will invite observers / advisors to the meeting when appropriate.
13. Observers / advisors will be able to contribute to the proceedings at the discretion of the Chair.
14. One representative of each of Natural Resources Wales and the Senedd Cymru Welsh Parliament and any officer of the appointing authority will automatically have observer status.
15. The LAF will appoint, if desirable, Local Access Forum Sub Groups.
16. The LAF will appoint the Chair and agree the Terms of Reference of any Sub Groups.
17. All meetings of the LAF will be held in public. However, the person presiding, following a request from a Member or Members, may decide that the public should be barred for particular items for reasons of personal privacy or commercial confidentiality.
18. Should a Member of the Forum feel they might have a conflict of interest relating to a specific agenda item, such an interest should be declared.
19. No business may be conducted by the Forum unless the number of members present, excluding the person presiding, exceeds one-third of the total membership.