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Local Access Forum Coordinators

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From Richard Benyon MP  
Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries

*Dear Chair*

I would like to thank you for your work and achievements during the period of April 2011 to March 2012 in providing a local level body of expertise on public access and outdoor recreation issues.

The annual report by Natural England summarises this range of achievements including good partnership working on Coastal Access Paths, proactive working on the Pennine Bridleway, value for money use of a budget for countryside access improvements, and assurances of a better deal for access and rights of way along the HS2 line.

The Government recognises the important role of the Forums in contributing to improvements to greenspace, open access and connecting routes. These improvements contribute to local economic growth as well as the health and wellbeing of the population by attracting visitors to explore the landscapes, wildlife and heritage in an area. I also welcome your contribution to the successful delivery of the Paths for Communities scheme which has awarded 28 projects aimed at improving the network of public rights of way. In order to make the most of your expertise in these and other areas I would encourage you and your members to continue to develop relationships with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, and Health and Wellbeing Boards.

I look forward to hearing about the continued achievements of LAFs in the future.

*Yours sincerely*

*Richard Benyon*

**RICHARD BENYON MP**

