

National LAF Conference (South) 23rd February 2016, Bristol

Charitable status for sub-groups

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Background and brief description

Norfolk LAF presented an interesting workshop on setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This is in its early stages but will potentially raise funding for Rights of Way Improvement Plan projects and other outdoor access.

Its mission statement is to “improve opportunities for outdoor recreation, appreciation and enjoyment of the countryside for the public benefit of people visiting and living in Norfolk.”

The aim is to create and support partnerships with businesses, outdoor activity providers and others to create entrusting partnerships.

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation is an operational part of the LAF but not a sub-group as such. It will be the enabling, public-facing part of the LAF. Five members of the LAF are on the Trust, together with an officer from Norfolk County Council and a Professor from the University of East Anglia. Trust members have limited liability. Project to establish a CIO has full support from the County Council.

Things to consider

- Set early priorities
- Develop a business plan targeting projects and groups where early benefits could be achieved
- Capture economic data to get political support. (The Norfolk LAF used data from a University of East Anglia/Sheffield Hallam University project looking at the benefit to the community from outdoor activity. Research showed a £1 spend by visitors realised £10 benefit to the community).
- Create a brand presence – communications and marketing plan with clear ideas of priorities.

Discussion

- LAF Chair raised concern about risk of potential involvement in statutory duties put out to tender – barrister advice. Criminal Records Bureau checks on LAF members also recommended.
- A funding arm of the LAF could be a constituted sub-group within the LAF for small amounts – up to £20,000 mentioned.
- Economic evaluation of the Paths for Communities scheme indicated £7.5 million gross value added for £2 million grants awarded.

Norfolk LAF has a standard set of articles and constitution to share.