

The Right Honourable Alun Michael, MP
Minister of State for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality
DEFRA
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
LONDON
SW1P 3JR

6 September 2004

Dear Mr Michael

Access Management Grant Scheme

Local Access Forums in the far South West met together for a workshop at the end of June. During discussions concern was expressed that highway authorities in Area 6 had no certainty of Access Management Grant funding as monies were only guaranteed for the current financial year. Local Access Forums in the area were therefore very pleased to receive notification during August that the scheme had been extended up until 2006/07.

The Forums also welcome the modification of the scheme to include access management around disused mines and quarries and look forward to receiving the forthcoming supplementary guidance. Mines and quarries are a particular issue in parts of the south west.

National Park Authorities are not eligible to apply for the Access Management Grant and those within Area 6 are also planning for implementation of the right of access during 2005 without at this time knowing the amount of resources which will be allocated for this work, albeit that this money will remain 'hidden' within their overall National Park Grant.

There are a large number of potentially vulnerable sites in these Counties which are shown on the Provisional Open Access maps. Malcolm Bell, Chief

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Executive of South West Tourism Ltd., spoke at the workshop and highlighted the vital importance of access provision to tourism, a lesson clearly learnt during the foot and mouth crisis and confirmed by recent research. A number of these sites will require sensitive and appropriate management to accommodate increased or new access. The availability of the Access Management Grant Scheme will enable highway authorities to plan accordingly.

Yours sincerely

Bob Harvey, Chairman of Devon Local Access Forum

On behalf of:

Robin Moore, Chairman, Cornwall Local Access Forum

Alan Taylor, Chairman, Dartmoor Local Access Forum

Jeremy Holtom, Chairman, Exmoor Local Access Forum

Howard Brunton, Chairman, Somerset Local Access Forum

Patricia Doughty-Mortimer, Chair, Torbay Local Access Forum