



**asa**  
Association of  
SuDS Authorities

*Promoting Sustainable Drainage*

# **Membership Prospectus**

## **2019/20**

**“Reducing flood risk through fully integrated sustainable drainage systems”**

## **What this prospectus will tell you.**

The purpose of this prospectus for the “Association of SuDS Authorities” is to explain why it is being set up, how and who can become members of it and what are the benefits for them in doing so. This will be an interim document which will be developed following the formal launch of ASA in February 2019.

To help prospective members decide if membership is the right thing for them this prospectus sets out the background, the vision, benefit and requirements for members who decide to join.

It also sets out the criteria and costs for membership.

## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Benefits of membership – why join?
4. ASA - the Vision
5. ASA - how will it work?
6. Membership
7. How will it be funded?
8. How you can join ASA
9. How you can contact us.

## 1. Introduction

Through discussions with Lead local Flood Authorities (LLFA's) across the country support was given to the creation of a formal association supporting the delivery of sustainable drainage. This association will be known as the Association of SuDS Authorities (ASA).

ASA will be a member organisation made up primarily from Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA's) and Local Authorities to promote and develop the use of sustainable drainage within all new developments.

Varying levels of membership will be available for LLFA's and Local Authorities, other RMA's e.g. Water Companies and the Environment Agency and commercial membership will be made available to commercial organisations within the development industry.

It is hoped that ASA can provide one voice to promote SuDS Nationally.

## 2. Background

For implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act, Defra created working groups to assess matters, including National Standards for SuDS. These groups were active until June 2015 when Government elected to pursue alternative arrangements to deliver sustainable drainage. Many benefits were gained by the sharing of knowledge between the officers attending within the working groups.

With this background of partnership working, a wider group of LLFAs were approached to discuss the need for a national association and a committee of 20 authorities first met on 23 July 2014. Collectively this group became known as Local Authority SuDS Officer Organization (LASOO). Its main aims were:

- To engage with Government in developing policy and regulation for surface water management.
- To own and develop the guidance for the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- To share and promote good practice to enhance the effectiveness of sustainable drainage.

LASOO currently exists as a closed group within the online Knowledge Hub forum run by LGA. The LASOO membership includes over 120 authorities with over 300 officers drawn from LLFAs, district councils and some LPAs. The LASOO group provides a shared library of information on Knowledge Hub and a forum for questions facilitated by three officers. LASOO is free and does not have any formal governance.

A conference for LASOO was held in June 2017 with the assistance of CIRIA and attended by 120 officers from over 50 authorities. Attendees demonstrated the support for the establishment of a formal association supporting the delivery of sustainable drainage.

Given the voting of those in attendance at the LASOO Conference and the current capacity of the organising officers it was agreed that affiliation with an existing organisation represented the most viable option to take LASOO forward. Without support for administrative functions and a governance structure, the barriers to formation of a new professional organisation are substantial and are beyond the capacity of the current executive. Without any existing funding or reserves, there is no ability to implement any substantive program for policy development or provide services to a membership. The conference was difficult for LASOO members and facilitators to deliver on a volunteer basis.

Discussions within the LASOO committee focused on organisations which may provide support or be interested in partnership with LASOO. These options remain unchanged in 2017 and organisations considered included: ADA, ADEPT, TAG and CIWEM. Strengths and weaknesses for each of these organisations from a LASOO perspective were debated and assessed.

It was agreed and supported by delegate feedback (and vote) at the 2017 Conference that ADA would be most suited as an organisation to approach and discuss affiliation, specifically as: its priority is surface water management; technical matters are key issues; no restrictions in membership; membership fees are in line with current considerations; and it has administrative capacity.

Discussions with ADA have demonstrated that LASOO could sit separately to ADA and benefit from ADA's management team. On this basis LASOO has sought to establish a forward plan and requirements for ongoing sustainability of the organisation.

LASOO has had a close relationship with CIRIA since 2014. This support provided free technical secretariat and helped deliver the 2017 conference. It is recognised that this support needs to continue to provide access to good practice and to provide technical support for the organisation.

The current LASOO membership has been canvassed to assess the commitment to becoming a member of the new Association of SuDS Authorities (ASA) from the 1 April 2018. This commitment has been recorded by the provision of a letter of intent to join the organisation. Over 160 authorities have been contacted.

A meeting of representatives from interested authorities (reference group) was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 to progress the formation of ASA. At this meeting the reference group agreed and supported the election of an interim executive committee to take several work streams forward to develop the formation of ASA with a view to ASA becoming a formal organisation by February 2019.

It was further agreed that until the first Annual General Meeting in September/October 2019 where the executive committee can be formally ratified, ASA will operate with the interim executive committee and the wider reference group to represent the authorities across England to confirm actions.

### **3. Benefits of membership – why join?**

It is important to note that ASA is a membership organisation and the more LLFA's, Local Authorities and Risk management Authorities that join the larger the benefits of membership will be. It is hoped that members across the country will join from County, Unitary and District Councils.

The present Executive Committee and wider Reference Group has representatives from across the Country from County, Unitary and District Councils.

ASA will undertake the following main aims to support the Association:

- Engaging with government and other industry bodies (providing a single voice)
- Providing support via a closed group web portal to facilitate discussion between Association members
- Hosting a group of technical experts to support members on common issues

- Regional hubs for members (organised by local coordinators)
- Quarterly updates and newsletter
- Annual workshop and/or training courses and webinars
- Bi-annual conference
- Development of membership materials
- Technical support
- Assistance on event management
- Other activities as required

## **BENEFITS PROVIDED BY SUPPORT TO ASA**

<p><b><i>Local Authority Capacity</i></b></p> <p>Provision of a technical forum for members in assist them in developing their capability to advise on SuDS for new development.</p> <p>Supporting technical capacity building within the membership through newsletters, workshops and conferences.</p> <p>Support for members to develop their capability to deal with emerging issues e.g. advice on minor development and discharge of condition.</p> <p>Supporting the planning process by providing increased skills and capacity provide effective advice on SuDS for new development</p>	<p><b><i>Policy Development &amp; Delivery</i></b></p> <p>Access to a resource to inform and develop surface water management policy through technical groups.</p> <p>Provisions of a forum for the academic and technical community to resolve emerging issues and inform policy development.</p> <p>Access to a collection of case studies and evidence through member submissions from across England to inform policy development and delivery practice.</p>
<p><b><i>Central Government Capacity</i></b></p> <p>The provision of ongoing development of surface water management thinking to compensate for withdrawal of EA activity.</p> <p>Providing additional capacity for Defra to enable effective engagement with the Association’s technical groups and wider membership.</p> <p>Provision of a communications route to influence MHCLG on sustainable drainage matters and how these are dealt with in the planning system</p>	<p><b><i>Promotion &amp; Communication</i></b></p> <p>Provision of a clear communication channel to promoting consistency across all LLFAs</p> <p>The provision of an easy and efficient route to reach all members with future policy changes and relevant consultations</p> <p>Provision of a forum for the development community, including house builders, planners and surface water managers.</p>

**“The true benefit for members will be through engagement between all levels of the membership, the opportunity to input into the technical work of the association and for members to be part of the decision making processes of ASA”.**

#### **4. ASA – the Vision**

**“Reducing flood risk through fully integrated sustainable drainage systems”**

The main objectives of ASA to achieve this are:

- To support Growth.
- Delivering a consistent approach.
- Making development happen.
- Making drainage sustainable.

#### **5. ASA – how will it work?**

Since the initial reference group meeting of ASA in May 2018 discussions have taken place with ADA to discuss how both parties can assist each other.

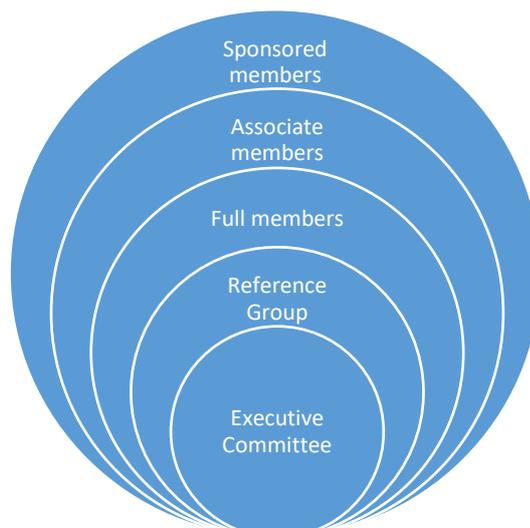
Although it is agreed that ASA and ADA see surface water management as a priority and share the same technical issues it was mutually agreed that it would be difficult for ASA and ADA to have a formal partnership. ASA will still have strong links with ADA who will be supplying administrative and financial support to ASA in relation to the membership and collection of annual subscriptions.

ASA will form as an independent entity and will be registered as a “Community Interest Company” (CIC), it will not be affiliated to any other public or private organisations.

As a Community Interest Company (CIC) ASA will have a board of Directors (the Executive Committee). The Executive Committee will be ratified at the first Annual General Meeting in September 2019. Each member organisation will have one vote at the AGM.

Until then ASA will operate with the interim executive committee and the wider reference group to represent the authorities across England to confirm actions.

ASA will have a formal governance structure until September 2019 (see below).



It is intended to develop the structure after September 2019 which may include a Technical Group and regional sub-groups to facilitate workshops and coordinate wider input into ASA.

## 6. Membership

The Association will have three categories of membership as follows:

**Full Membership** will be open to all Local Authorities or National Parks who shall nominate one officer or employee to act as their authorised representative. These Authorised Representatives will be officers having responsibility for or undertaking drainage consultation and promotion of sustainable drainage solutions within their Organisation.

**Associate Membership** will be open to other risk management authorities as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 who will nominate one officer or employee to act as their Authorised Representative.

**Sponsored membership** will be open to commercial organisations who are involved in the development and construction industry either being house builders, developers, professional consultants or other commercial providers who have interests in the delivery of sustainable drainage and operate outside of the remit of Risk Management Authorities. Affiliate Members may nominate one officer or employee to act as their representative but will have no voting rights.

Sponsored members will enjoy the following benefits:-

- Exhibition space at our annual conference marketplace.
- Attendance at our annual conference for 1 delegate.
- Inclusion of your company logo on ASA's website and a reference and summary on a dedicated page to sponsors.

- Opportunities to advertise CPD webinars.
- One article annually within ASA's quarterly newsletter.

Full members will have access to all areas on the website including the discussion forum and libraries. Associate members will have reduced access to but will still be able to access case studies and knowledge and resources and attend workshops and conferences.

## 7. How will it be funded?

ASA will be a non-profit making organisation. It will be funded by an annual membership subscription as set out below. The subscriptions will be used to fund the expenses of the Association such as workshops, update of website including Annual General meeting and conferences.

Membership type	Annual Cost
<b>Full membership</b> – Access to full membership benefits	£334 plus VAT
<b>Associate membership</b> – Access to some membership benefits	£667 plus VAT
<b>Sponsored membership</b>	£1500 plus VAT

The normal membership year will be from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> March each year and subscriptions will be payable by a single annual payment or as a 3-year block payment.

## 8. How you can join ASA

Details of how to join ASA can be found on the ASA website.

[www.suds-authority.org.uk](http://www.suds-authority.org.uk)

Once you submit your request to join ASA you will be contacted to confirm the details required to set your organisation up on the system and send an invoice for payment of your subscription fee.

## 9. How you can contact us.

Further information can be found on the ASA website [www.suds-authority.org.uk](http://www.suds-authority.org.uk)

There is a contact page on the website where you can make an enquiry.