

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Monday 4 September 2017*

Agenda Item 12: *Regular updates*

a) *New Forest National Park Authority – report from Mark Holroyd*

- Our Annual Review 2016-17 is available to view online: http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/downloads/download/401/annual_review_2016_-_17 (if you would like a paper copy please let Mark know).
- Data from the Ashurst to Lyndhurst cycle route which was resurfaced in 2015 was used for more than 28,000 cycling journeys, more than double the number that used it in 2014.
- Our seasonal ranger team undertook ground nesting bird engagement work at 21 Forestry Commission/ National Trust/ HCC carparks between April and June for 46 sessions where they engaged with 1080 people, mainly local dog walkers.
- Mark Holroyd recently had a site visit with volunteers from Sustrans at the C10 Holmsley 'straight mile'.
- We have recently appointed Donna Neseiyif (former centre manager at Ferney Crofts Activities Centre) as our part-time Inclusive Cycling Project Manager and Gareth Jones (who used to be an instructor at Tile Barn Activities Centre) as Inclusive Cycling ride leader. Both members of staff will be driving forward our PEDALL Inclusive Cycling project over the next three years.
- The mixed weather of August is likely to have had an adverse effect on our visitor bus services, fingers crossed for an 'Indian Summer'.
- Separate updates have been given on progress with the Recreation Management Strategy work and Partnership Plan progress.

Mark Holroyd
August 2107

b) *HCC Countryside Access (South Area team) – report from Sam Jones*

1. Coastal Access:

Action/request to Forum: Awareness

Sam Jones is continuing to work with the Natural England Teams, advising upon the physical suitability of the route choices proposed.

The route alignment and design for the sections outside the NFNPA boundary are complete and ready for inclusion in NE's report. Only outstanding actions are to finalise estimated costs and ensure full account is given to the issues around preserving access in the Barton Cliff area (see info below)

2. Loss of Access between Barton and Milford on Sea.

Action/request to Forum: Awareness

Whilst the route was re-opened for the spring, unfortunately further cliff loss has again forced closure. HCC facilitated a stakeholder meeting in July to review options. Participants included NFDC Coastal Engineering team, New Milton TC representatives, John Truswell of NE Coast Path Team and County Cllr's Carpenter and Kendall.

The scale of the challenge the group face in maintaining cliff top access was effectively introduced by a presentation from Peter Ferguson – NFDC Coastal Engineer. Peter explained how their survey work as part of the Coastal Management Plan, has identified cliff loss of 1-5m/year for next 50 year period.

In efforts to move forward and establish some form of permissive access, the Team from NFDC, together with Sam Jones, John Truswell and the Barker Mills Estate will be visiting the site in early Sept to identify what boundary changes would be required to role back and provide a viable and safe route for walkers. It will also be used as an opportunity to explore means as to how this can be both agreed, but also funded.

Recent example of the cliff top erosion, with a loss of approximately 5m over a 2 day period:



3. Denny Lodge Rail bridges: dangerous surfaces improved for equestrians commoners.

Action/request to Forum: awareness

Thank you for the letter of support from the Forum. This combined with other written representations from the Verderer's Office, BHS and Equestrian Association helped Network Prioritise their consent for the team to proceed with the essential work.

The Team worked closely with the Verderer's Office, FC and BHS to identify the priority bridges, which include the main rail crossing points at: Deerleap Inclosure, Black Down near Beaulieu Road rail station and Perrywood Inclosure near Brockenhurst.

The work itself was completed as part of Access South's annual team day, and with all hands to the job (including the team mascot – Harvey), all 3 bridges were re-decked with anti slip strips in the one day. I believe the tally was approx. 250 strips and nearly 4000 screws!

The team would like to thank the support of the NFNPA, FC, Verderer's Office, Tony Hockley of the NF Equestrian Association and in particular Alison Russel and the BHS who worked hard in supporting the project and ensuring the challenges the access team faced were well explained amongst users.



4. New Forest Mitigation Strategy: Update

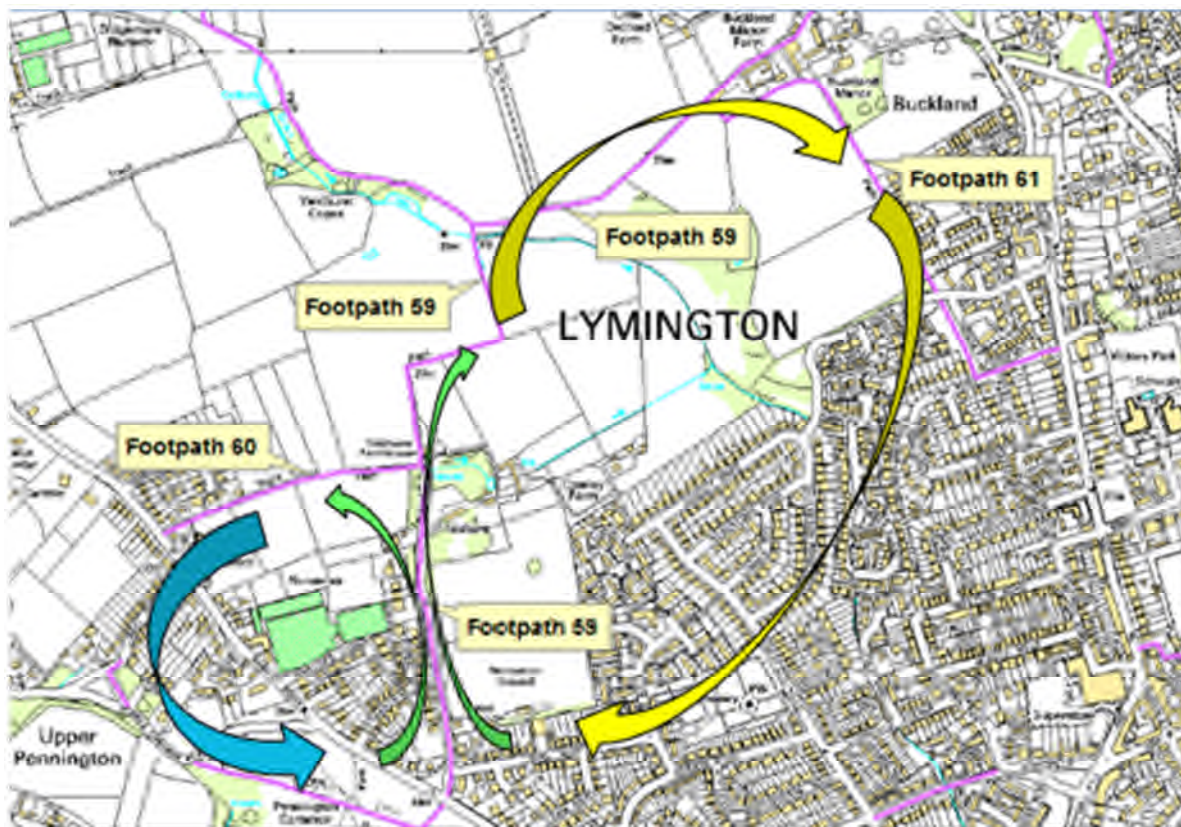
Action/request to Forum: Awareness & support

The Team are continuing to work closely with NFDC's Planning Team in delivering improvements to the access network, enabling local walkers to access and enjoy good quality local green space.

The earlier works providing a year round multi-user link between Sandleheath and Fordingbridge continue to receive positive feedback, and the Team are now moving towards the delivery of improvements to 2 circular routes on the North Eastern side of Lymington.

Esther Smeardon, our project officer is working hard on finalising details with local landowners but we hope to move towards delivery of works last 2017. Further details to follow, but the improvements will focus upon new surfacing, bridges and the removal of stiles to improve access for all.

Location details of the 2 circular routes:



Contacts: Access Team South

Office & general enquiries:

TEL. 02380 605110

Reporting of faults/issues on the network:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/rightsofway-reporting>

Sam Jones
August 2017

c) Forestry Commission – verbal report from Gary North

d) Rural Communities Fund (formerly Small Grants Scheme) for access improvements –
Joan Cundill

As reported in June the HCC Small Grants Scheme panel has been replaced by the RCF. There are no more scheduled meetings, with all future comments/recommendations to be made by e-mail.

I recently received 7 applications for approx. £4,475 for RCF access improvements (*on 88 pages, with a further 14 of CERs assessment forms!*).

One application was received from the New Forest area for £750 – total project cost: £1,450.

This was for Stage 2 of a previous application to improve the southern end of BOAT 743 in Hordle, by cutting back hedges and improving drainage and the path surface. Phase 1 of this project was approved by the SGS and was scheduled to start in August.

Joan Cundill
10th August 2017