

Minutes of the New Forest Access Forum Meeting – 8 September 2014
Lymington Town Hall

Present

Members: Alastair Duncan (Chair)
Lynden Bowen
Ruth Croker (Vice Chair)
Joan Cundill
Gordon Garrett
Heather Gould
Gary North
Tracey Pearson
Alison Russell
Ann Sevier
Peter Walsh

Officers: Marilyn Meeks (Hampshire County Council)
Sam Jones (Hampshire County Council)
Nigel Matthews (New Forest National Park Authority)
Vicki Gibbon (New Forest National Park Authority)

In attendance: James Brown (New Forest National Park Authority)
Sarah Manchester (Hampshire County Council)

1 Apologies, introductions and minutes of last meeting

- 1.1 Apologies were received from members Sally Arnold, Sam Dovey, Cllr Steve Ripon-Swaine and Gillie Hayball. The chairman introduced Val Rawlings from New Forest Access for All and welcomed her to the meeting.
- 1.2 The minutes from the last New Forest Access Forum meeting of 9 June 2014 were agreed, with one amendment, offered by Joan Cundill she would like to see in minute item 10 that Alastair Duncan was reported to have given a presentation at the South East LAF Conference. All members agreed and the minutes would be changed to reflect this.

2 Matters arising

- 2.1 No matters arising were discussed on this occasion.

3 NFNPA Update – Nigel Matthews

- 3.1 Nigel updated Forum Members on item 4.3 of the June minutes (regarding the Charter for Cycle Event Organisers). The NPA is currently waiting for confirmation of support from HCC. Members of the Authority had previously agreed that there should be a cap of 1000 riders and that riders should have numbers on their front and back.
- 3.2 Item 13.1 of the June minutes regarding the permissive footpath at Mill Lane, Brockenhurst was discussed during the meeting and supported Nigel Matthews' offer to make one last attempt to persuade the landowner to re-open the path, which

had originally been opened against payment of a HLS grant and which had been closed due to anti-social behaviour, and the ending of the grant.

Action: Nigel Matthews to contact the landowners to try to resolve some issues in order to re-open the path alongside Mill Lane.

3.3 Nigel re-confirmed that the NPA will continue to support the Forum. An SLA with HCC is almost ready to be signed. Nigel would also be raising awareness of the Forum with NPA Officers.

3.4 Following rejection of the bike-docking scheme by the National Park Authority, Nigel informed the group that the NPA is making a renewed effort to find ways of spending the £2million grant from the Department of Transport that was originally marked for the scheme. This includes looking at the cycle route infrastructure and ensuring safety for cyclists. Cycle route signage between Salisbury and the New Forest is also being looked at, and the Forum's advice on this would be welcomed, possibly at the December Forum meeting.

Action: All – to let Nigel know of any roads / tracks that could be made more suitable for cyclists

3.5 The NPA is currently in the process of updating the Management Plan for the New Forest, in preparation for renewal in 2015. There is to be a 'call for views' informal consultation which would run from mid-October until mid-December. A public consultation would then follow in February to mid-March with the final document being signed off in June 2015. Nick Evans (NFNPA) would be happy to attend the December Forum meeting should it be required.

4 NPA Bike Docking Station – Alastair Duncan

4.1 Alastair Duncan raised his concerns that he had written a letter to the NPA and asked that the NPA's Member representative on the Access Forum read its contents at the recent Authority meeting, but that this had not been allowed to happen. He had been advised that if the Forum wished to comment on the bike docking station scheme then a Forum representative should have been present at the Authority meeting to read it. Forum members agreed that the NPA should keep the NFAF informed of issues and that lines of communication should be improved. Nigel Matthews agreed to take this forward.

Action: Nigel Matthews and Alastair Duncan to look into how the NFAF can submit comments to the Authority and how to improve the lines of communication.

5 NFNPA HLF Project Update – James Brown

5.1 James Brown highlighted that the Our Past, Our Future is a proposed £4.5m Landscape partnership Scheme for the New Forest. The concept has been approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and funding has been provided by the Lottery to "work-up" the scheme for final approval. This multi-faceted scheme is lead by the National Park Authority with ten partner organisations. This is the biggest pot

of money that has been granted by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and will help to undertake around 20 different projects to benefit the forest.

- 5.2 Currently 21 small projects had been identified which fall under the following programme strands; restoring lost landscapes, developing forest skills and discovering forest heritage and inspiring a new generation. Officers are presently undertaking a lot of survey work and data for this is now available.
- 5.3 Alastair suggested to the Forum that he and Ruth would talk to James to find out which projects would relate to the Access Forum for discussion in future meetings – all Forum members were in agreement.

Action: Alastair Duncan to follow up with James Brown on projects that would relate to the NFAF.

6 Officers Report – Marilyn Meeks (*paper 37/1*)

- 6.1 Marilyn Meeks commented that the Coastal Access project completion date had been brought forward by the Government to 2020. Members agreed to take the rest of her paper as read.

7 Regular Updates

- 7.1 HCC Update – Sam Jones
Sam Jones asked Forum members what they would like to see in future HCC updates. All members were in agreement that they would like to see regular updates on projects, working with the NPA and bridleway networks within the forest. Alastair suggested that all would benefit from a longer time slot being allocated to Sam's report on a periodic basis
- 7.2 FC Update – Gary North
Gary North commented that some of the drifts had been cancelled due to the recent outbreak of strangles, the rest of the paper was taken as read.
- 7.3 PATHH – Ruth Croker
Paper taken as read

8 Reports from other LAF's

- 8.1 Paper taken as read.

9 CAP Workshop – Sarah Manchester

- 9.1 Following the main meeting Forum Members attended a workshop which was not minuted.

Date of next meeting: Monday 1st December 9.30am – 1.00pm Venue TBC