

**Minutes of the New Forest Access Forum Meeting – 12 June 2017**  
**Council Chamber, Lymington Town Hall**

**Present**

Members: Ruth Croker (Chairman)  
Ann Sevier (Deputy Chairman)  
Paul Brockman  
Joan Cundill  
Sam Dovey  
Alastair Duncan  
Gordon Garrett  
Gary North  
Steve Rippon-Swaine  
Alison Russell  
Peter Scott

Officers: Petronella Natrass (Hampshire County Council)  
Sam Jones (Hampshire County Council)  
Mark Holroyd (New Forest National Park Authority)  
Vicki Gibbon (New Forest National Park Authority)

In attendance:  
Jonathan Woods (Hampshire County Council)  
Natalie Hands (Hampshire County Council)  
Anna Parry (RSPB)

**1 Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were received from Mark Cowling, Heather Gould, Ross Mitchell, Hallam Mills and Rachel Pearson.

**2 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

2.1 The minutes from the last meeting were agreed as a true record and all matters arising from the last meeting had been completed.

2.2 Petronella Natrass informed members of the forum that Lynden Bowen had tendered her resignation, Steve Rippon-Swaine was not re-elected as Councillor and due to the sad passing of Sally Arnold the forum now has three vacancies. Recruitment would be taking place shortly.

2.3 Joan Cundill asked if there had been an update on minute item 4.4 from the last meeting. Mark Holroyd replied that this had been delayed due to purdah in the run up to the election and the consultation would soon begin regarding the widening of the west side of the A31 carriageway in Ringwood.

**3 Chairman's Report**

3.1 The Chairman advised the forum that she would continue to attend the sub-group meetings regarding the HCAF list of streets and would report back to the forum as necessary. The remainder of the report was taken as read.

## **4 Forum Officer's Report**

4.1 As per report.

4.2 A query was raised if the re-appointment of Chairman was required at this meeting, it was agreed that this would take place at the next meeting in September.

## **5 Update on Countryside Access Plan Implementation – Jonathan Woods (HCC)**

5.1 Jonathan Woods advised that in 2015 the Countryside Access Plan had been reviewed and updated and that HCC is monitoring implementation of the 3 main policy areas (Strategic approach to network management; Working with other organisations and volunteers; Listening, informing and educating)

5.2 In its Strategic area of work, he advised that a new planning team had been created with 2 staff (previously there had been only one officer) and have since responded to 600 applications affecting rights of way. The team is adopting a different approach to s106, seeking contributions for project officer time and ongoing maintenance as well as funds for mitigation and access improvements. to ensure no monetary impact would be felt on the Countryside Access Service. His team are also working with local planning authorities on diversions and extinguishments, providing training (in the form of technical briefings for local planning officers) and also processing Town & Country Planning Act diversions under contract.

5.3 Mr Woods highlighted that in the last 12 months there had been a significant investment in the bridge programme in Hampshire, with over £450,000 being invested. A new capital bid was being prepared to continue work from March 2018 this would include bridges, byways and coastal routes.

5.4 Volunteers prove to be highly valuable in the work they carry out for the Countryside Access Service. The Ramblers have been extremely helpful in surveying routes and advising what was happening on the ground and are about to start a full network survey. Jonathan stressed that without reporting, it was difficult to know what was happening with the 3000 miles of rights of way in Hampshire. The team also work closely with the British Horse Society to ensure bridleways are safe and that they understand the issues faced by horse riders.

5.5 Mr Woods advised that should issues be found on the rights of way network then they should be reported on CAMS <https://row.hants.gov.uk>

## **6 Community Engagement – Natalie Hands**

6.1 Natalie Hands introduced herself as one of three Community Engagement Rangers who promote the work of the access team and help to improve communication with local user groups. Natalie then gave a PowerPoint presentation which highlighted some of the work the rangers had carried out.  
*A copy of the presentation can be found on the website.*

## **7 Planning**

7.1 Petronella Natrass reminded the forum that at the last meeting it was agreed that a 'Statement of Principles' would be prepared to set out how access and rights of way should be considered within new planning applications. This is needed because the

forum is not able to respond to every planning application that affects rights of way and access. The forum welcomed the initial draft that had been produced by Sam Jones and Petronella and it was proposed that the forum should develop this further at a workshop to be held in July. It was agreed that Petronella would look for some local case studies for the forum to consider.

- 7.2 Mark Holroyd pointed out that although the main focus of concern has been development in the NFDC area immediately outside the National Park Boundary, a large development may be proposed at Fawley that straddles the boundary. Consultation on this may be taking place in the next 6 to 9 months, and the forum should aim to have an agreed statement of principles by then.

Action: MH and PN to confirm date and arrangements for Workshop
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## **8 Birdaware – the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership - Anna Parry**

- 8.1 Anna Parry gave a PowerPoint presentation to the forum highlighting that birds migrate to our shores during the winter to feed and to get fit and healthy in preparation for them to breed. The main issue for these birds were disturbance by people and dogs which could cause them to waste precious energy trying to escape and being unable to feed. It was not the number of people using the coast which caused this but the behaviour of those users.
- 8.2 Ms Parry advised that a partnership had been formed with 19 fellow organisations to help mitigate the disturbance to these birds. Development contributions would be sought on any new proposed housing developments, these could be bespoke or part of the Birdaware mitigation strategy. More information could be found at [www.birdaware.org](http://www.birdaware.org) and a copy of the presentation could be found on the website.

## **9 England Coast Path**

- 9.1 Mark Holroyd updated the forum on the recent Coastal Access sub-group meeting which had taken place, the route is almost complete apart from a couple of issues relating to land at Exbury and some landowners need to address some final formalities. The consultation had now been put back until July.

## **10 Local Issues**

- 10.1 Bridleway Gate Latches – Gary North  
Gary North explained that new latches were being trialled at various locations around the forest and would update the forum on findings at the next meeting.
- 10.2 Broadley Inclosure – Alison Russell  
Alison Russell advised that she had brought this issue to the forum as nothing had been done with regards to the sink hole even though it had been reported in August 2016.  
Gary North responded that remedial work wouldn't normally be carried out until all other works had been completed on that site and due to ground nesting birds this had not been completed. Gary would however look into this further.

## 11 Recreation Management Strategy and NPA update

- 11.1 Mark Holroyd informed forum members that the first stage of the RMS consultation would be taking place shortly; this would be in the form of questions asking the public what they believed were the main issues facing recreation management in the forest. It would give people the opportunity to put forward ideas on what their solutions would be to overcome some of these issues. The consultation opens 19 June and runs for 8 weeks until the middle of August. It was suggested that the forum draft a response as well as members in their individual capacity. The remainder of the report was taken as read.

Action: Mark: to email round dates and details, encouraging the Forum to respond as individuals as well as collectively

## 12 Regular Updates

- 12.1 a) HCC Countryside Access  
As per paper
- b) Forestry Commission  
As per paper
- c) Small Grants Scheme  
As per paper.
- d) Cycling Working Group  
The group have yet to meet
- e) Historic Routes  
As per paper

## 13 Regular Updates

- 13.1 a) *Hampshire*  
As per paper.
- b) *Wiltshire*  
Nothing to report
- c) *Dorset*  
Nothing to report

### **Date of next meeting:**

4 September 2017, 9.30 – 1.00, Venue: Lyndhurst Community Centre