

## NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

**Meeting:** Monday 5 September 2016

### Agenda item 5: HCC Countryside Access update (Sam Jones)

1. **Recruitment :** Helen Chalk – Senior Access Ranger

We are pleased to confirm Helen will be joining the Southern Area Team on 01/09/16, replacing John Cartwright who is now working in the Country Parks Team. Helen's primary duties will focus on managing the Ranger Team and our operational responses to network issues and active projects.

2. **Bridge Program:** 2016/17 Capital Works

This years Capital Bridge program is well underway, with the NFLAF's area seeing a significant proportion of the £375k investment going towards 2 of our bridges:

**Roydan Woods** – Pedestrian bridge beside Ford (Brockenhurst Bridleway 4)

- Span: 15m
- Cost: £17k
- Status: complete

New bridge:



Location:



## Avon Valley Path: Pedestrian bridge on Fordingbridge Footpath 56

- Span: 45m
- Cost: £42k
- Status: works to start Sept 2016

Location:



The complete bridge program will include 17 bridges, with further builds for the Southern Area Team in **Lockerly, Bishopstoke, Botley** and on the **Test Way**.

### 3. Seasonal Vegetation Clearance:

Works continue with the seasonal vegetation control on our rights of way network. Resources have been focused on the routes prioritised through consultation with the Parish Council's as well as building upon reports received through the public and user groups.

To date all the promoted routes have received their first cut, completed in house by the Ranger Team, with a further 165km of the remaining network cut in the South by our contractors – Grasstex. Grasstex's program will be completed by October with estimated total cut length of 275km.

### 4. Coastal Access:

Coastal Access delivery with Natural England:

Sam Jones and Jonathan Woods are working with Natural England to establish how we can support their Team in developing the coastal route through Hampshire. It is likely our time will focus on advising upon the physical suitability of the route proposed, taking account of factors such as suitability and durability of the structures proposed, impact of coastal erosion etc.

## Loss of Access between Barton and Milford on Sea:

Natural England's delivery is of key import in Barton following the further loss of cliff top between Barton and Milford on Sea. Whilst the right of way was lost 3-5 years ago, the more recent erosion has forced the withdrawal of the replacement permissive path that had been provided by the landowners.

It is anticipated The new Coastal access legislation- (Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/contents>), will enable a robust and long term solution to maintaining access along this vulnerable stretch.

The area Team are currently working with the landowners, NFDC Coastal Team and Natural England to ensure the site is managed appropriately and the public remain advised of the hazard and the progress being made to reopen the route.

## Location:



## Typical example of the current cliff top erosion:



## 5. New Forest Mitigation Strategy: Access Improvements in Sandleheath

The Area Team are continuing to support the District with their Development Mitigation Strategy. Acting as a delivery partner for the District, the Team are working with local community groups to identify and deliver improvements to local access in and around development area's.

Current focus is upon the upgrade of Sandleheath Footpath 78. This will include widening and resurfacing of the route as well as achievement of permissive cycle rights through negotiations with the landowner. The aim is to improve access on the existing local circular route and provide year round multi-user access to Fordingbridge. To date, permissions have been achieved and the surfacing contract will be out to tender shortly.

Location: Footpath 78



## 6. Other examples of network Issues:

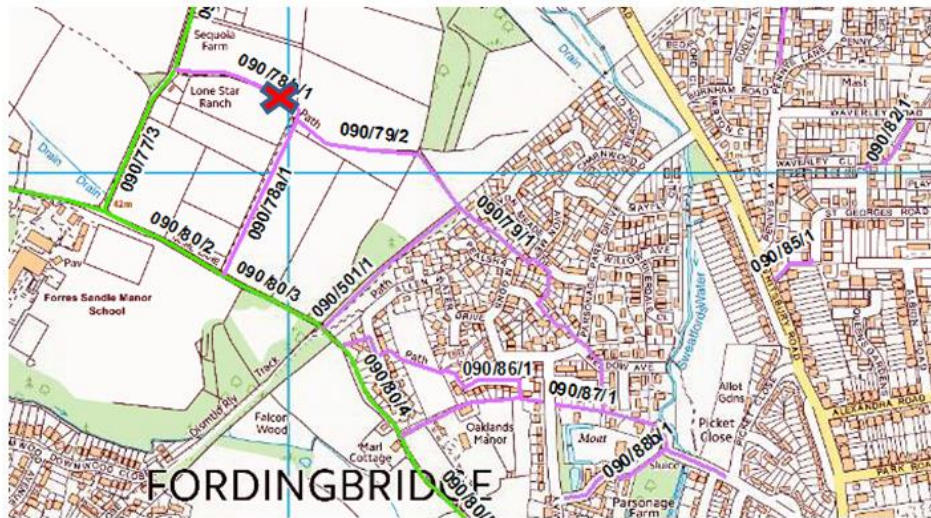
### Denny Lodge Rail bridges

The Access Team are responsible for the surface of several rail bridges which cross the Beaulieu line through Denny Lodge. Efforts to address the concerns on the slipperiness of the surface have been delayed due to problems of consent and support from Network Rail. Discussions ongoing, agreement has been achieved in principle.

### Fordingbridge Footpath 78b (Puddleslosh Lane)

An ongoing issue with 'new' fence line encroaching upon the Footpath. The Area Team have not been able to progress previously due to planning technicalities, but more recently due to seasonal pressures and staffing shortage. Expecting to follow up October 2016.

Location: Encroachments on Footpath 78b



**Ringwood Footpath 38:**

Concern reported by Ringwood and Fordingbridge Footpath Society as a new landowner has obstructed the previously agreed 'informal diversion', thus forcing walkers to exit onto a wet marsh area of the open forest. Sam Jones is currently working with landowners solicitors to establish legal position of the existing line recorded on the definitive map and options available, including the potential to divert the route formally.

Location: Footpath 38

