

New Forest Access Forum – Dec 1st 2014

HCC Officers Update – Sam Jones Area Manager South and West Hants

Partnerships:

NFDC – Mitigation Strategy: HCC are working closely with NFDC in a 'Delivery role' for a number of potential improvements into the existing green space and access routes around proposed development sites. Funding is to be sought from the Developers Contributions, and the aim of the improvements is to off-set the impact upon more sensitive coastal and inland areas from the expected increased visitor numbers. Details of agreement and works is currently been confirmed. Further details to follow.

Historic Ways: The NPA have been successful in the preliminary rounds of the HLF bid to secure funding for the 'Historic Ways' project. The aim of the project being to improve the users access to and understanding of the path network; how it originated and how it has been used over the years. Following more feedback from the HLF panel, HCC have been working through a methodology with the NPA in order to progress the project for the next HLF panel meeting.

Major Projects:

Community Routes: There is approx. £120k from the DfT's Family Cycling money's awarded to this project. As previously discussed, this is been regarded as the first major investment into realising a Community Route network of key multi-user routes that provide essential links across the Forest and between key locations such as villages and places of interest. We are currently tendering for prices from our contractors for the planned improvements to 3 Bridleways in Minstead, Emery Down and Fawley. Works on the ground are planned for Spring 2015.

Contentious issues:

Fordingbridge/Puddleslosh Lane: Contentious land use change that is proving very unpopular with certain members of local community. We are involved because part of these changes has resulted in the enclosure of Footpath 78b with a new fence line. Normally this is not an issue we would be involved with, however, evidence suggest that the new fencing may have encroached upon the legal line of the Public Footpath. There are concerns over the path surface and available widths. We are currently working with the Landowners to ensure any encroachment/obstruction is removed.

Team operational work:

The Team have covered a significant amount of work over the last 12 weeks, closing approximately 10-15 reported issues/week, making significant headway into the back log of priority issues, bridge repairs/replacements and storm damage.

Highlights include new bridges built by the Team at Blashford lakes and Sopley, as well as 2 weeks improving and clearing drainage channels on key routes. The latter includes Hyde Bridleway 740 (a key Bridal route up to the open Forest) and Godshill Footpath 772 (linking into the new and long awaited bridge). Further work to these routes is planned for the spring/summer 2015. See project promotion sheets below:



ATS Blashford Bridge
Project Promotion She



ATS Sopley 13 Bridge
Project Promotion She



ATS New Forest
drainage Project Pron

Other:

Lymington Permissive Route to Pilley: Many of you may recall the very generous offer by Lynn Truell, for a permissive route across her land that sits on the eastern side of Lymington. The purpose being to enable the Public to avoid much of the busy B3054 Bealieu road.

To date, the route has been opened as a Footpath with signage and new gates. The long term aspiration is to explore its potential as cycle route. There are obstacles in this regard, including further connections that rely upon other landowners, as well as cost and suitability. We and the NPA are meeting with Ms Truell shortly to discuss next steps.