

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Monday 11 June 2018*

Agenda item 5: *Forum Officer's Report*

1. HCC Countryside Service update

- **Rural Communities Fund (RCF) / Small Grants Scheme (SGS)**

2017-18 summary: in the year to 31 March 2018 a total of £36,697 was awarded for access improvement projects across Hampshire: £9,076 in the first quarter to 9 projects under the Small Grants Scheme; £17,246 from HCC under the Rural Communities Fund (15 projects), £10,000 from a separate fund for 'non-rural' schemes and an additional £375 from the New Forest National Park Authority, being 25% towards a scheme within the New Forest National Park.

The 24 schemes involved £20,170 of match funding plus £3,911 in volunteer hours.

There were two schemes in the New Forest area:

1. **Hordle 743:** £750 from RCF plus £375 from NFNPA towards byway improvements (total project cost £1,444).
2. **Milford on Sea:** £2,992 for footpath improvements in the Pleasure Grounds (total cost £6,992).

2018-19: since 1 April 2018 one application has been approved, for £500 to replace 2 stiles with kissing gates on East Dean footpath 6 (total project cost £1,018). The area teams report that a number of other applications are on their way, although none at present in the New Forest.

2. LAF news

- **National LAF conference** – a number of people have asked if this is taking place this year. Natural England are waiting to hear whether this is to be funded and will issue an update as soon as the position becomes clearer.

3. Consultations

- **Defra consultation on "Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit"** – The Forum's response to this was sent/acknowledged on 8 May
- **England Coast Path, Highcliffe to Calshot** – consultation response forms completed and sent/acknowledged on 9 May.
- **New Forest District Council Local Plan Review 2016-2036** – the pre-submission draft Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy will be reported to Cabinet on 6 June 2018, and to a special Council meeting arranged to follow the Cabinet meeting on the same day.

[The report including the committee version draft Local Plan document is available here.](#)

For more information [see our supporting documents and evidence base.](#)

Subject to Council's decision the Local Plan pre-submission representation period will start as soon as practicable after the meetings on 6 June (around the end of June).

Petronella Natrass
May 2018