

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Monday 9th March 2020*

Agenda item 5: *Forum Officer's Report*

a) Forum Officer's Report – *report from Adam Vasey, National Park Access Ranger*

The New Forest Access Forum

- Website updates have finally happened so now we have a news page which we can update and use to support our work streams.

The Lepe Loop MOM Project

- We have received a quote for the production and installation of signs from local craftworker Jed Burrows. Jed is producing a signpost according to our specifications so we can see if the design is suitable.
- In addition to the rights of way signs we will have a Trail Head by the lookout to encourage people to walk the route.

LEI New Forest Access & Landscape Enhancements Project (National Grid).

- We have submitted an expression of interest for the Landscape Enhancement Initiative project curated by the National Grid. This bid is to restore and improve the landscape character, wildlife diversity and public access on seven sites across the North and West of the New Forest.
- The work is mostly focused around five promoted routes within the national park, three of which are historic routes created by the OPOF project. We are also working in partnership with the National Trust to transform a newly gifted piece of land, adjacent to Plaitford Common, called Long Meadow Bottom.
- We'll find out in a month's time whether we'll be asked to submit a full bid. If we are successful, then the project will start in 2021 and run for three years.

Countryside Access Volunteers

- Our partnership with HCC is going well. There are over 28 Path Wardens in the New Forest who investigate reported issues and gather more information.
- We have a working group who meet every month to clear vegetation and/or do practical tasks such as installing ditch crossings.
- We have two training days planned in March offering an NPTC City and Guilds qualification in the safe use and maintenance of hedge-trimmers.
- New volunteering opportunities include being an Access Surveyor and helping the national complete an 'Ease Of Use' survey.

Accessibility

- We have updated the [national park website](#) to include better information about accessibility options in the New Forest area. We intend an making several more improvements to the content of these various pages.
- I am giving an interview to Clive Upland from [Living With Disability](#) to talk about the New Forest.