

**Minutes of the New Forest Access Forum Meeting**  
**Virtual Meeting using Microsoft Teams**  
**8 March 2021**

**Present**

Members: Ruth Croker (Chairman)  
Ann Sevier (Deputy Chairman)  
Paul Brockman  
Mark Cowling  
Gordon Garrett  
Heather Gould  
Henry Mellor  
Ross Mitchell  
Gary North  
Peter Scott  
Richard Manley  
Richard Taylor (Local Authority Rep – NFNPA)

Officers: Adam Vasey (New Forest National Park Authority)  
Vicki Gibbon (New Forest National Park Authority)  
Alison Perry (Hampshire County Council)

In attendance: Jim Mitchell (New Forest National Park)  
Richard Burke (Forestry England)

**1 Apologies & Welcome**

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Fran Carpenter.
- 1.2 The Chairman advised that Jane Horton and Alastair Duncan would be standing down from the Forum, she thanked both members for all their input and support. Ms Croker reminded the Forum that Alastair Duncan had been a long standing member for over 10 years and as such a card and flowers would be sent to his house as a thank you from all Forum members.

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

- 2.1 The minutes from the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**3 Chairman's Report**

- 3.1 The Chairman gave a brief overview of her report which included the Freshwater Restoration Strategy Workshop which took place on 1 March and the virtual meeting of the Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum which took place on 2 March.  
The remainder of the report was taken as read.

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

- 4.1 Adam Vasey advised that the majority of forum members were now coming to the end of their three year term and therefore recruitment would begin for members to serve the next term of June 2021 – June 2024. He encouraged current members to reapply for their position on the forum if they so wished and all documentation for the recruitment process was available on the website - [New Forest Access Forum || Recruitment](#)
- 4.2 Mr Vasey went on to highlight the Calshot to Gosport section of the Coastal Path which should be approved by the end of March, with work to establish the two mile section beginning over the summer. PEDALL, the New Forest Inclusive Cycling Scheme had been provided with funding from the Heritage National Lottery fund to continue their work for the next three years and signage on the Lepe Loop had now been installed.  
The remainder of the report was taken as read.

## **5 Additional Reports**

- 5.1 Forestry England – Gary North  
Report was taken as read, a copy of which can be found on the website.
- 5.2 A question was raised regarding the CDA signage on the Forest regarding ground nesting birds, livestock and keeping dogs on leads. Gary responded the application for this signage was agreed for a year and then it would be reviewed, the CDA has once again applied for the signage to be out again during the summer which the FE were supportive of however some issues regarding display were currently being discussed.

## **6 Any Other Business**

- 6.1 None.

## **7 A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the New Forest – Jim Mitchell (NFNPA)**

- 7.1 Jim Mitchell gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Forum, a copy of which can be found on the website.
- 7.2 Mr Mitchell began his presentation by highlighting what was meant by an LCWIP and what the key outputs were; a Local cycling and walking infrastructure plan was a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at a local level. He explained how this would fit in with the New Forest and current issues surrounding Covid-19. The New Forest LCWIP would be produced over the coming year, a steering group had already been formed with partner organisations along with Parish and Town councils, with a draft report and formal consultation being available in the Autumn.  
*A copy of the presentation is available on the website.*

## **8 A Sustainable Cycle Network – Richard Burke (Forestry England)**

- 8.1 Richard Burke gave a brief introduction of himself, explaining that he works for Forestry England and had been in the forest for almost 20 years, working in the

land management sector originally and then into recreation management. His current role was the Programme Manager for the recreation management strategy for Forestry England, where his role is to deliver the actions which come out of the RMS.

- 8.2 Mr Burke went on to explain what a future vision for a sustainable off-road cycling network could look like in the forest. He began his PowerPoint presentation by explaining that in the RMS 22 strategic actions, there were four clear references to cycling, he said cycling was a very emotive subject and received many different views from different people. Currently there were limitations to the cycle network in the forest including not linking centres of population, not family friendly and some crossing points of major roads were a barrier.
- 8.3 To ensure a sustainable off-road cycling network the following points would need to be included; a true network which connects, having the support of cyclists and cycling groups, long term support from stakeholders, informed by data and insight and ensure that enforcement for off track activity is reasonable. Mr Burke went on to detail what the possible future visitor journey to the forest could look like.  
*A copy of the presentation can be found on the website.*

## **9 A Discussion on Cycling**

- 9.1 Members discussed cycling in the forest full details of this debate can be heard on the recording on the website.

**The Video of this meeting is available on the website**

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

7 June 2021, 9.30am – 1.00pm, Venue: TBC

The meeting closed at 12:45pm