

Advising on how to make the New Forest countryside more accessible

The New Forest Access Forum is the Local Access Forum for the New Forest National Park and South West Hampshire (New Forest District Council area), as required under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The appointing authorities are the New Forest National Park Authority and Hampshire County Council.

The New Forest Access Forum is an independent advisory body, operating on a statutory basis. Membership of the New Forest Access Forum is voluntary.





Public Access to Meetings

We have four meetings a year, two of which are at various places in the national park and the other two are held at the New Forest National Park Authority headquarters at Lymington Town Hall.

All forum meetings are open to the public. Please bear in mind that only LAF members can participate in discussions.

If you wish to make a representation to the forum then please submit it in writing to the Forum Support Officer two weeks before the meeting date (you will have a maximum of five minutes). All representations will be at the discretion of the chair.

Consultations

The forum regularly responds to various consultations from many different organisations including;



The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.



The New Forest National Park Authority.



Hampshire and Wiltshire County Councils.



Local Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



There have been 4 meetings of the full LAF during the year and a number of sub groups have met.

The full LAF considered the Local Plan Reviews for both the National Park and New Forest District Council. We have and continue to take a particular interest in the plans for a large development in the Fawley/Calshot area.

We have produced "Guidance on Access for Planners and Developers". This has been published online. While recognising the need for additional housing we seek to protect the special habitats of the New Forest.

To this end we have taken a particular interest in the Mitigation Strategy and a new Dog Walkers Charter as well as having a keen interest in the Development of the Recreation Management Strategy. The Recreation Strategy in particular has been the subject of considerable debate.

The development of a route for the England Coast Path has involved a sub group as well as being a subject of debate by the full LAF.

Additional concerns have been the Wetlands Restoration and the possible undergrounding of pylons in Hale.

Ruth Croker
Chair of the Local Access Forum

The Future Forest consultation New Forest National Park Authority

A survey asking a wide range of questions regarding the future actions to manage recreation within the National Park.

Support for a Heritage Lottery Fund bid

Cranborne Chase AONB

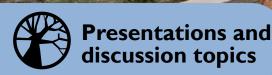
The £2.5 million pound project will celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the area, promoting places to visit and the towns that surround it to help people learn, appreciate and enjoy this important landscape.

Support for Section 38 consent Martin Down National Nature Reserve

Works include erection of two sections of fence line, a corral for cattle and the restoration of a dew pond and associated protective fencing on registered common land.



Ruth Croker



Implementing the Green Way New Forest Habitat Mitigation Strategy

Esther Smeardon, Hampshire County Council

The Green Way project is New Forest Districts Council's work to ensure new housing development does not impact negatively on the New Forest Special Protected Area.

People and Wildlife Ranger

Dawn Rayment, New Forest National Park Authority

Dawn introduced herself to the Forum as the People and Wildlife Ranger for the National Park Authority. Much of her engagement work is to help mitigate the potential impacts in the Forest by dog walkers.

HCC Draft Enforcement Policy

Jonathan Woods, Hampshire County Council

Jonathan explained that HCC was looking at bringing forward an enforcement policy as over the last three years there had been a considerable increase in officer time being taken up with negotiating with land owners and developers.

National Grid's Visual Impact Provision Project

Sarah Kelly, New Forest National Park Authority

Sarah reminded the Forum that OFGEM (via National Grid's Visual Impact Provision project) was providing £500 million to mitigate the visual impact of the high voltage transmission infrastructure in England and Wales' protected landscapes (National Parks and AONBs).

Public Rights of Way and Access in the New Forest

Adam Vasey, New Forest National Park Authority

Adam gave a short summary of the state of PRoW and how they can be improved by targeted allocation of resources and better partnership working.

Transformation at Lepe Country Park

Stephanie Rogers,
Country Parks Transformation Programme Manager

An overview of the Country Parks Transformation project at Lepe, followed by a guided tour of the new facilities.

Fawley Waterside Development Proposals

David Illsley,
New Forest National Park Authority

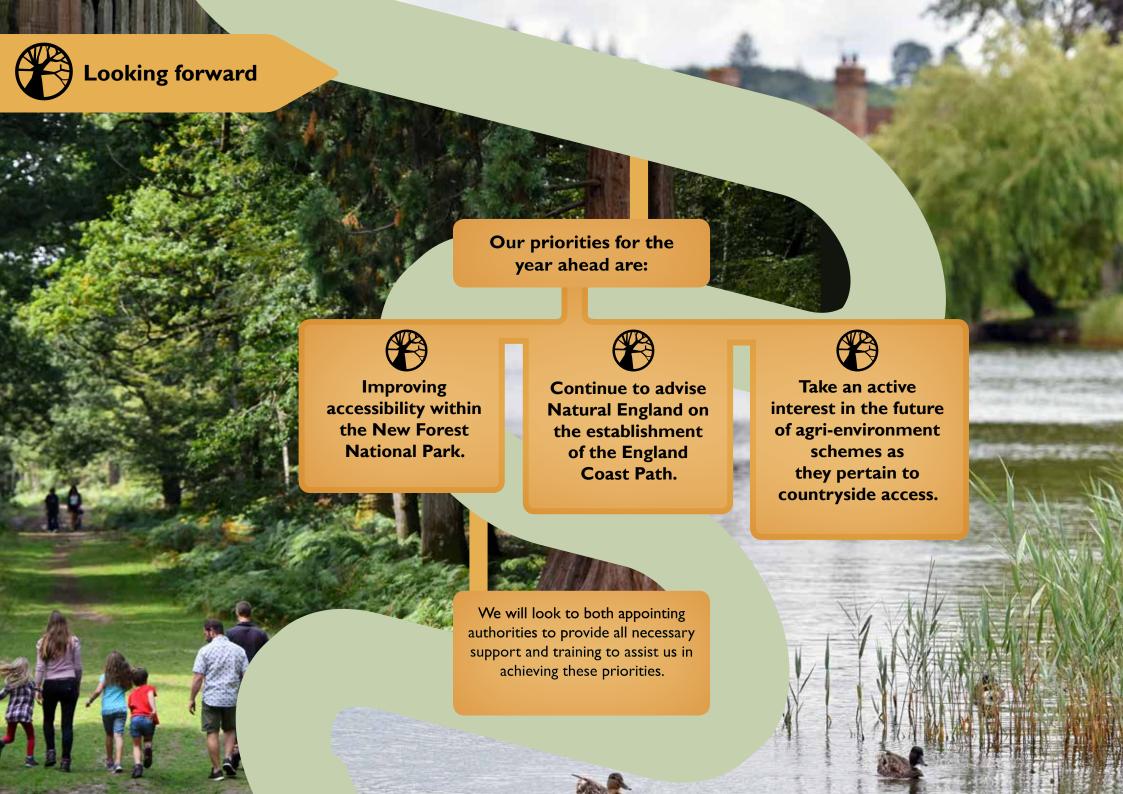
David advised the Forum that a Fawley Waterside Access and Nature Conservation Plan had been produced as part of the supporting documents for the site proposals which detailed the proposed green infrastructure provision and access improvements that would be provided.

An introduction to the draft Professional Dog Walkers Charter

Dawn Rayment, New Forest National Park Authority

Dawn presented the draft of the charter which seeks to promote best practice amongst the many professional dog walking businesses who operate in the National Park.







Our Members

Forum members represent a wide range of relevant interests and expertise. Members are selected in an individual capacity to represent a particular interest. They do not represent any specific organisation or group. Forum members should recognise the validity of the views of others and work together to achieve consensus.

Members of LAFs are volunteers and include a range of people from the local community, including:



land owners and land managers



cyclists and horse riders



those representing other interests, such as health and conservation

Members are usually appointed for a three year term. Members are unpaid, although reasonable travel expenses and a carer's allowance may be claimed for attending meetings and training events.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the New Forest Access Forum then please contact the Forum Support Officer.



Access Forum Member	Representing
Paul Brockman	Youth & Education
Mark Cowling	Cycling
Ruth Croker	Walking
Alastair Duncan	Conservation & Volunteering
Jacqui England	Tourism
Gordon Garrett	Countryside Access
Heather Gould	Dog walking
Hallam Mills	Landowning & farming
Rosemary Mitchell	Health & wellbeing
Gary North	Public land management
Rachel Pearson	Estate management
Peter Scott	Coastal access
Ann Sevier	Commoning
Nick Tomalin	Wildlife and Conservation
Jane Horton	Equine interests
Henry Mellor	Easy Access / Accessibility

If you would like the New Forest Access Forum to consult on your organisation's access plans then please contact the Forum Support Officer



Forum Support Officer

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If you require further information please contact:

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