

Minutes of the New Forest Access Forum Meeting
21 June 2021

Present

Members: Ruth Croker (Chair)
Ann Sevier (Vice Chair)
Bob Damper
Sarah Hammett
Pippa Hutton
Gary North
Richard Taylor
Marcus Ward

Officers: Adam Vasey (New Forest National Park Authority)
Vicki Gibbon (New Forest National Park Authority)

1 Apologies & Welcome

1.1 Apologies were received from Peter Armstrong, Theresa Monks and Trudi Lloyd-Williams

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 Chair's Report

3.1 The Chair introduced her report highlighting the recent Farming in Protected Landscapes meeting she had attended in April, during the past year 19 projects had been supported with 11 being completed. Ms Croker had also recently been involved in the Woodcrate Felling Programme Consultation, the aim of which was to remove non-native conifers scattered on the site and to restore glades.

3.2 The remainder of the report was taken as read, a copy is available on the website.

4 Forum Officer's Report

4.1 Adam Vasey began his report by commenting on the work of volunteers, who had recently completed their May 'ease of path' surveys, the remainder of which would be completed in November. He was pleased to announce that the 3 mile section of the English Coast Path, Calshot to Ashlett Creek would be opening at the beginning of August.

4.2 The remainder of the report was taken as read, a copy is available on the website.

5 Additional Reports

5.1 Gary North, briefly outlined the report which was taken as read.

5.2 There were no further reports.

6 Public Representations

6.1 There were no public representations.

7 Inclusive National Parks – Jim Mitchell (NFNPA)

7.1 Jim Mitchell introduced himself to the forum and explained his job role as Interpretation and Outreach Officer. He advised that he was at the meeting to discuss inclusivity in the National Park and how it fit with the National Park Partnership Plan. The National Park was currently an inclusive place, however there was a need to work in conjunction with partner organisations to address any barriers and to ensure that it was a place for all.

7.2 Jim asked the group – what were the main issues to enable the New Forest to be more inclusive and what could we do to make this happen?

Following detailed discussion Forum members said a better cycle network with the Waterside and other areas outside of the forest, the need for all organisations to work together, the suitability of carriage and cycle routes and working with ethnic minorities. It was suggested that surveys could be undertaken to establish people's expectations and what we could offer. It was agreed that the forum would be a working group and help work on projects as necessary.

10 Any other business

10.1 None

11 Site Visit

Members of the Forum carried out a site visit along the Castel Hill promoted walking route. We used the New Forest Walks app to wayfind and noted on the potential to improve the route with improved gates and signage.

Date of next meeting:

12 September 2022, 9.30am – 1.00pm, Venue: Calshot Activities Centre

The meeting closed at 11.00am