

## Minutes of the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

### Present

#### *Members*

Graham Flatt (GJ)  
Gail Johnson (GJ)  
Alan Marlow (AM)  
Jim Morey (JM)  
Gill Plumbley (GP)  
Alan Taylor (Vice-chair) (AT)  
Aileen Wood (AW)  
Andy Whincup (AWH)  
Rachael Bryan (RB) (Chair)  
Anna Hammond (AH)  
Paul Knipe (PK)  
Mark Ludlow (ML)  
Sue Coles (SC)  
Jaqueline England (JE)  
Sandra Nichols (SN)

#### *Officers attending all or part of meeting*

Jonathan Woods (HCC) (JW)  
Kim Dawkins (HCC Admin Assistant)  
Harry Goodchild (Map review Officer)  
Elliott Rowe (Central /East - SCAR)  
Jo Heath (Head of Countryside)  
Nick Scott - Portsmouth City Council

#### *Observers*

Helena Barker

### 1 Apologies, welcome and introductions

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Robin Edwards, Melanie Fortescue, Nigel Wolstenholme, Lyndsey Marshall, Cllr Edward Heron and Cllr Alicia Denny.

The Chair welcomed the following new members:

Jaqueline England - Tourism, business and education  
Anna Hammond – Disability, dog walking and volunteering  
Sandra Nichols – Land Management and Farming

### 2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- 2.1 **Minutes:** Amendment to apologies: Paul Knipe added. Subject to the agreed amendment, the draft minutes were approved as a true record.
- 2.2 **Matters arising:** All had either been completed or would be covered later in the agenda, other than the following:

- **Byways Management:** James Emmett to set up a meeting of the Byways Management Sub Group

**ACTION:** James Emmett to arrange a meeting with the Byways Management sub-group.

- **Strategic Transport (Highways) Workshop** - some concern was expressed about what will happen next following the workshop. It was suggested that a similar workshop on highways maintenance may be useful.

- **Sub-groups:** It is felt that clearer protocols are needed for the Forum's sub-groups. The following should be defined for each group:
  - Key purpose
  - Members
  - Lead member

**ACTION:** PN to work with individual sub-groups to achieve this.

- In September 2016 HCAF wrote to East Hampshire District Council stating "that as a principle all newly created routes should be considered for multi-use purposes ensuring that walkers, the less abled, cyclists and equestrians enjoy equal access where appropriate." GJ asked how the Forum might ensure that this advice is considered?

**ACTION:** PN to investigate further.

- **England Coastal Path:** Highcliffe – Calshot section postponed until March.
- **Reappointment to Forum:** it was felt that appointments to HCAF should be confirmed earlier so that members are informed prior to AGM.

**ACTION:** PN to note for when the Forum is next re-appointed in 2020.

### 3 Local Access Forums and how they work

- 3.1 JW gave an informative talk on Local Access Forums, their origin and function, how they work and the role of the Forum officer. Petronella's role (as the Forum secretariat) is to facilitate the work of HCAF, encouraging members to take the lead and collaborate with other LAFs. She provides support for HCAF whilst keeping an eye on the business and sharing information with the Forum. The updated Member Information Pack had been circulated to all members, both new and re-appointed. This is also available, without individual members' contact details, via the [HCAF web-page](#).

### 4 Member introductions

- 4.1 All members of the panel introduced themselves and gave descriptions of their interests and motivations for joining the Forum.

### 5 Outgoing Chair and Vice Chair stepped down

- 5.1 Jonathan Woods took over and hosted the meeting until new Chair and Vice Chair were appointed.

### 6 Overview of Hampshire County Council Countryside Service (*Jonathan Woods*)

- 6.1 JW's presentation provided an outline of Hampshire's size, scale, politics and place, the role of the Countryside Service and its challenges, the big 7 parks, the countryside sites and an introduction to the next 2 presentations.

6.2 PDF of the presentation attached with minutes

## **7 Rights of way and the Definitive Map** (*Harry Goodchild*)

HG provided an overview of the Definitive Map and Statement, the processes involved in the management and maintenance of the documents including modification orders and diversion orders. He also covered the Countryside Service's role as Commons and Village Green Registration authority and its roles and duties in this area.

7.1 PDF of the presentation attached with minutes

## **8 The work of the Area Teams** (*Elliott Rowe*)

8.1 Presentation provided an overview of the work of the county's 3 Area Access teams, including the structure of the teams and their role, purpose and main areas of work. ER also described the team's work with volunteers and communities and the use of the Countryside Access Management System (CAMS) to target time and resources and to monitor performance.

8.2 PDF of the presentation attached with minutes

## **9 Transforming the Countryside Service to 2019 and beyond** (*Jo Heath*)

9.1 PDF of the presentation attached with minutes

## **10 Annual General Meeting**

### **a) Election of chair and vice-chair**

There was a resounding vote for Rachael Bryan to be re-appointed for the position of Chair and Alan Taylor to be re-appointed for the position of Vice-Chair, both for a second year.

### **b) Meeting dates and work programme for 2018**

Proposed meeting dates for 2018:

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March (United Church, Winchester SO23 8RZ)

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June (Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley)

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September (Mitchell Room, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester)

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December (Mitchell Room)

10.1 Forum members were asked to email RB, AT or PN if they thought any changes or additions should be made to the draft Work Programme for 2018.

**ACTION:** ALL to forward any proposed amendments or additions to RB, AT or PN.

10.2 There was some discussion about the future of access post-Brexit, especially on farmland, and it was suggested that Deborah Watkins (HCC Countryside Sites Group Manager) should be invited to join in future agenda items on Brexit.

## 11 River Hamble Country Park riding permits

- 11.1 JW outlined the background to this issue and the original reason why the Countryside Service had proposed the removal of the permit system. It was confirmed that the County Council had stepped back from this position and was reviewing the justifications and the impact on local riders and livery businesses, and had committed to a continuation of horse riding on the site. A letter had been sent to all permit holders and a meeting had taken place between HCC staff, BHS Reps and local livery stables. In discussions with the livery yards JW had outlined the user pressures facing the site, both now and in the future and the challenges that this posed. JW and the sites team are looking at options to facilitate riding on the site, possibly using the HCC farm estate adjoining the current site.
- 11.2 GJ thanked Jo Heath for the Service's commitment to the continuation of horse riding on the site and to Jonathan Woods, for his work in facilitating discussions.
- 11.3 More discussions will be held in 2018 and local riders consulted on any proposed changes to routes. Safety of riders and other users of the park to be considered, particularly in relation to vehicle movements.
- 11.4 A more general discussion followed as to how HCAF should be kept informed of proposed changes and what role the Forum should have in informing and representing the public. Some members feel there is a lack of awareness of HCAF and a need to raise the Forum's profile with local councils.
- 11.5 It was agreed that RB should draft a letter to local authorities (Parish and Town Councils and Local Planning Authorities) reminding them of who HCAF are and what they do.

**ACTION:** RB to draft a letter for PN to circulate via email to Forum for sign off.

## 12 Portsmouth City Council ROWIP (Nick Scott)

- 12.1 Nick Scott gave HCAF an update as to how the council are looking at improving the RoW network within Portsmouth. Portsmouth's network is disjointed, they are looking at the Coastal walks and claims for PROW including those that aren't currently on the maps. There are currently formal and informal routes across the city.

The Forum noted that members and the user groups they represent could give advice and guidance to NS and Portsmouth City Council on the types of users and benefits to the public from RoW, and how best users can be provided for.

**ACTION:** NS to continue consulting with HCAF

## 13 Project/sub-group updates

- 13.1 **Equestrian guidance** – GJ has nearly completed the draft Equestrian Guidance and asked if the Forum would consider adopting the completed Guidance as a HCAF document. Forum decided that as many members had not seen the recent draft of the document (and also the meeting had already overrun) this would be discussed at the next meeting in March.

**ACTION:** GJ to provide PN with a copy of the draft Guidance to circulate ahead of the next meeting in March

- 13.2 **Highways Workshop** – the Forum discussed the Workshop that had taken place on 27 November and agreed that this topic should be kept on the agenda for more detailed consideration in March.
- 13.3 **MOD liaison group** – a copy of the minutes of the meeting on 11 October was given to all members. Since their last meeting there have been issues with the fencing around the training estate. (AT never received the email, SC to forward it to him)
- 13.4 **List of Streets** – SC asked how to progress this and requested a meeting with JW, who suggested that Mark Housby (HCC Asset Information Manager) should join the meeting. There was further discussion of the project, and the process for removing adopted un-metalled roads from the network.

**ACTION:** PN to coordinate a meeting between SC, GJ, JW and Mark Housby in the New Year

- 13.5 **Planning** – the Forum discussed the New Forest Access Forum’s draft Planning Principles and asked for a copy to be re-circulated.

**ACTION:** PN to circulate a copy of the NFAF’s draft ‘Planning Principles’ document

## 14 Forum Officers Report

- 14.1 **Rural Communities Fund:** The Forum discussed PN’s report. The Panel have some concerns about how much they are contributing to the process, but agreed to continue their involvement in this phase of transition between the Small Grants Scheme and the RCF until March 2018. It was suggested that in due course the Panel could leave oversight of the process to the Community Engagement Rangers, while keeping the process under review. (*Note from PN: This could be done as usual through the Forum Officer’s Reports.*)

## 15 Reports from other LAFs

**ACTION:** PN to circulate written reports from other LAFs

- 15.1 **New Forest Access Forum** - Alan Marlow emailed an update
- 15.2 **Mid and West Berkshire LAF** - Helena Barker circulated notes below following the meeting

### **Brexit and access (update)**

Elaine Cox, Senior Rights of Way Officer at West Berkshire Council, suggested she should share the MWBLAF paper at the next meeting of the South East Regional PROW managers, who had apparently expressed interest in the work. West Sussex LAF have asked to use parts of the paper to draft something similar to send to their MPs.

Richard Benyon, MP for Newbury, forwarded the paper to Michael Gove, whose reply mainly outlined the history of permissive access. He did add that “Future funding for rights of way will also be discussed as part of the EU exit negotiations.

The meeting closed at 15:45 hrs.

***Date of next meeting: Tuesday 20 March 2018 at the United Church, Jewry Street,  
Winchester SO23 8RZ***