

AGENDA: *Tuesday 20 June 2017*

VENUE: *Wellington Room, Elizabeth II Court South, The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UU*

10:00 MEETING COMMENCES *(Tea/Coffee available from 09:45)*

- | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Apologies, welcome and introductions | <i>Admin</i> | <i>10 mins</i> |
| 2. | Minutes of last meeting and matters arising | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 10.10 | | | |
| 3. | Bursledon Accessibility Audit <i>(Aileen Woods, Rachel Bryan)</i> – presentation on this local research initiative | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>15 mins</i> |
| 10.30 | | | |
| 4. | Draft Equestrian guidance <i>(Gail Johnson, Gill Plumbley)</i> | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 10.45 | | | |
| 5. | Planning – report from the sub-group meeting on 22 May / approval of Aims and Remit | <i>Information / decision</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 11.05 | | | |
| 6. | Hampshire Walking and Cycling Strategies – update <i>(Jonathan Woods)</i> | <i>Information</i> | <i>5 mins</i> |
| 11.25 | | | |
| 7. | Project/sub-group updates
<i>a) Providing Access to Hampshire's Heritage (PATHH); b) MOD Liaison Group (17 May); c) Multi-user routes; d) Coastal access; e) List of Streets</i> | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 11.30 | | | |
| 8. | Hampshire Highways – preliminary discussion to identify relevant areas of interest/concern, prior to inviting Highways manager to next meeting | <i>Workshop and next steps</i> | <i>25 Mins</i> |
| 11.50 | | | |
| 12.15 | LUNCH | | <i>45 mins</i> |
| 9. | County Estates and Access <i>(Josie Palmer, Countryside Rural Estates Manager)</i> | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>25 mins</i> |
| 13.00 | | | |
| 10. | CAMS Mobile demonstration <i>(Rachael Hawkes)</i> | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 13.25 | | | |
| 11. | Countryside Access Plan update <i>(Jonathan Woods)</i> | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 13.45 | | | |
| 12. | South Area Access Team <i>(Sam Jones)</i>
Update on work of the South Area team | <i>Information / Discussion</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 14.05 | | | |
| 13. | Forum Officer's report <i>(Petronella Natrass)</i> | <i>Discussion / Decision</i> | <i>10 mins</i> |
| 14.25 | | | |
| 14. | Reports from other LAFs
<i>a) New Forest LAF; b) South Downs LAF; c) Wiltshire CAF; d) Surrey LAF; e) West Berks LAF; f) Other</i> | <i>Information</i> | <i>20 mins</i> |
| 14.35 | | | |
| 14.55 | FINISH | | |

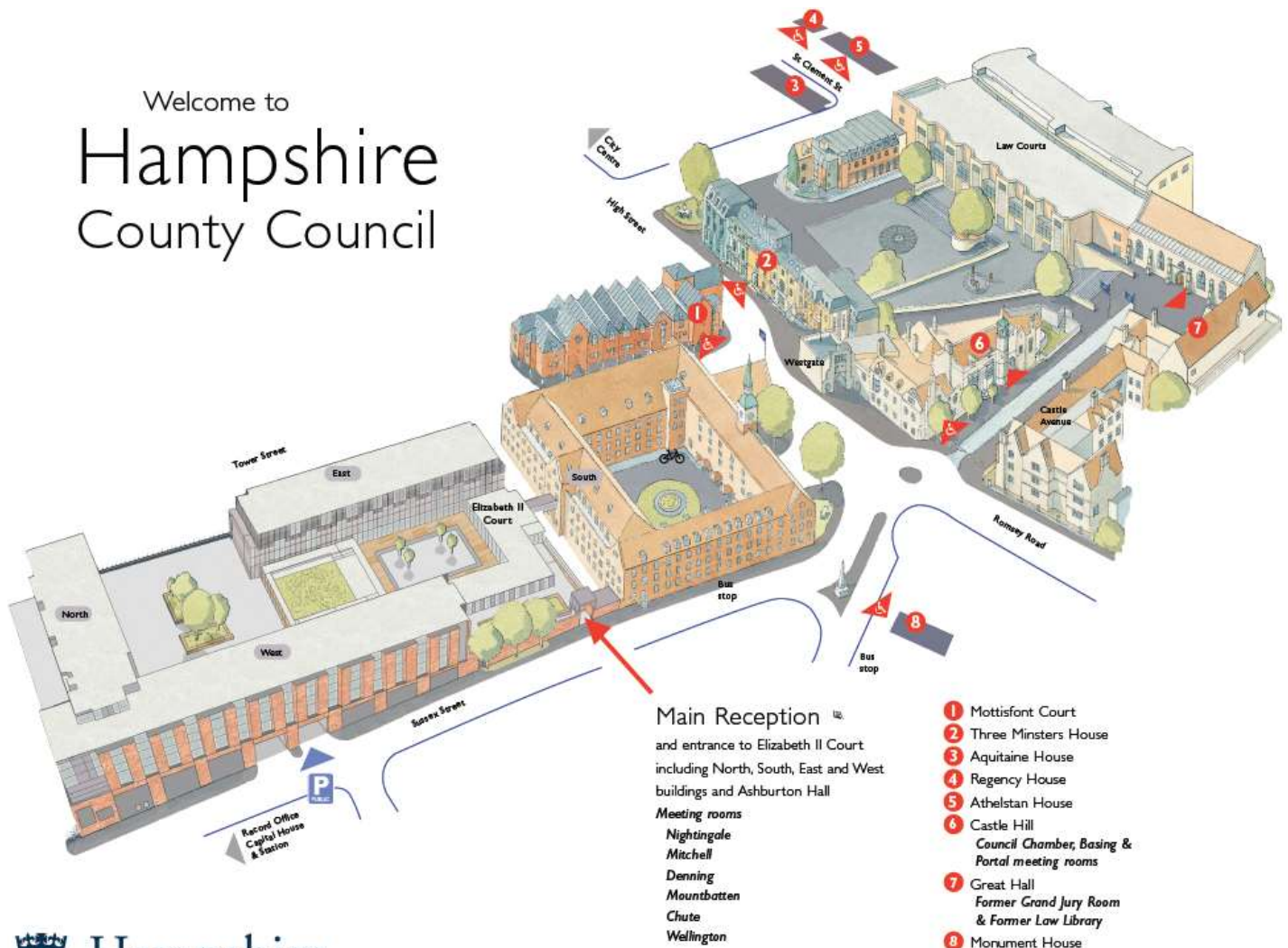
Contact: *Petronella Natrass; 01962 845326; petronella.natrass@hants.gov.uk*

Future meetings: 12 September (Royal Victoria Country Park), 12 December (AGM – Winchester))

Directions: Elizabeth II Court (Wellington Room), Winchester, SO23 8UJ

Please report to the Main Reception as marked on the map below.

Welcome to Hampshire County Council



By Rail - the County Council offices are about a five minute walk from Winchester station. Leave the station via platform two and follow the signs to the County Council offices.

By Bus and Coach - areas surrounding Winchester have regular bus services that stop within easy walking distance of the County Council's Castle complex. For more information, please call the Bus Information Line on 0870 608 2608.

By Road (**PARKING IN CENTRAL WINCHESTER IS VERY LIMITED, YOU ARE ADVISED TO USE THE PARK AND RIDE - www.winchesterparkandride.co.uk**).

- **From the north (via M3)** - leave the motorway at junction nine, join the A272 and follow signs for central Winchester. The County Council offices are at the top of the High Street; follow signs for Hampshire County Council.
- **From the west** - leave the M4 at junction 13 and travel south along the A34, then join the B3420 Andover Road which takes you straight into central Winchester; follow signs for Hampshire County Council.
- **From the south (via M3)** - leave the M3 at junction 11 and follow signs along St Cross Road and Southgate Street into the city centre. Turn left at the traffic signal junction with the High Street. The County Council offices are 200 yards up the High Street on the right.

Park & Ride

- The South Winchester Park & Ride is located off Junction 11 of the M3.
- The East Winchester Park & Ride (St Catherine's and Barfield) are located off Junction 10 of the M3.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Tuesday 20 June 2107*

Agenda item 2: *Matters arising*

Actions of the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum meeting, 28 March 2017

Reference	Action	Status
2.3 Matters arising	ACTION: Petronella Natrass to contact Josie Palmer about a response to the Forum's letter about access rights on Council land.	To be addressed under Item 9
	Petronella to add Jim Morey to the Planning sub-group distribution list.	Completed
	Petronella to enquire about the legal status of the new cycleway between Petersfield and Queen Elizabeth Country Park.	Update in Forum Officer's Report
2.5 Work Programme for 2017	Gail Johnson to send details of BHS Rights of Way training to Petronella	Completed
3 Planning – next steps	Petronella to finish drafting the letter ready to send out to LPAs.	
	Petronella to set up a meeting date for the Planning sub-group members. (NB: SC suggested Andy Whincup should be invited to represent cycling rather than her, owing to the number of other sub-groups she is currently involved in.)	Completed – sub-group met on 22 May
	Planning sub-group to meet and agree a set of Aims/draft a sub-group Remit for approval by full Forum.	See item 5, report of sub-group meeting on 22 May
	Planning sub-group to work on producing a schedule (maximum 2-3 pages) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what planners and developers should provide / avoid within new development examples to help planners and developers identify appropriate mitigation and worthwhile opportunities for access improvement 	
7 Equestrian Guidance – 1st draft	GH/GP to work on a list of principles of what developers and planners should PROVIDE and what they should AVOID in new planning proposals	Report under Item 4
8.5 North Area Access Team	Jim Adkins to provide Gail Johnson with details of HCC promoted routes.	
9.2 Bridges	Jonathan Woods to circulate report on bridge work to Forum.	Completed
9.6 County RoW Survey	Jonathan to forward a report on the proposed Survey to Petronella for circulation to Forum.	
11 Former MoD Marshalling Yard, East Dean	Petronella to amend and send the letter to Natural England. Also to check whether any response was received to the Forum's previous letters, and ask that reasons be given should Natural England choose to ignore the Forum's advice.	Completed

12(b) Mod Liaison Group	Graham Flatt to circulate a link to the Byelaws web page to the whole Forum.	
	MoD Liaison Group to put some ideas together for general guidelines or a statement on byelaws	Members of the sub-group were asked to let Alan Taylor have ideas by the end of June, to discuss at the next meeting on 11 October and present to HCAF in December
12(d) Coastal access sub-group	Petronella to arrange meeting of Coastal access sub-group.	Meeting on 5 June
12(e) List of Streets sub-group	Sub-group to draft a letter to Hampshire Highways. Petronella to investigate who to address it to.	Letter should be addressed to Stuart Jarvis, Director of Economy, Transport & Environment
	Forum members to contact Sue Coles if they would be prepared to help with Desktop Research	
13(e) Report from West Berks LAF	Petronella to contact National LAF conference organisers to propose a topic of 'Future farm subsidies post-Brexit' (provided that timing is such as to provide a degree of clarity about what is happening)	Completed

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Tuesday 20 June 2017*

Agenda item 4: *Equestrian Hampshire*

The draft (v.5) of the Equestrian Hampshire document is a work in progress, but has reached the stage where the authors would welcome feedback from other HCAF members.

We have attempted to give it gravitas and authority so that planners and developers will find it helpful as a reference document. The Hampshire County Council/Kennel Club 'Planning for dog ownership in new developments' has provided one model for this guidance document, but we have since moved away from this format as we felt that the summary of key points should be kept in one place for easy reference.

We acknowledge that we need to include case studies to help make the document relevant and to bring it to life.

Gail Johnson, Gill Plumbley
June 2017

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Tuesday 20 June 2017*

Agenda item 5: *Report from Planning sub-group*

Notes from the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum Planning Sub-group Meeting held on the 22 May 2017

Attendees:

Jim Morey – HCAF Disability Representative
Sue Coles – Road Cycling Representative
Gail Johnson – Carriage Driving Representative
Alan Marlow – Walkers Representative
Andy Whincup – Off-road Cycling Representative
Graham Flatt – Community Planning

Apologies:

Alan Taylor
Nigel Wolstenholme

There was a general discussion at the start of the meeting as to the sub-group's purpose with examples of the types of issues HCAF should be engaged with in relation to planning matters, highways, etc.

It was agreed that HCAF needed to raise awareness of its statutory status with planners, developers, Highways and other decision makers that there is a duty (under the legislation that establishes LAFs) to take proper account of any advice HCAF may give them.

Item 1 - Terms of Reference

Aims:

To raise the awareness of HCAF's statutory status with Unitary Authorities/ Borough/District planners, Highways, developers and other decision makers.

To provide assistance in helping Unitary Authorities/District/Borough Councils to achieve their objectives in encouraging healthier lifestyles

To provide guidance and assistance to the above audience that emphasises the requirement to mitigate the adverse effects of development, and where possible improve access to the countryside for all users.

This guidance should address the need to consider all legitimate users of all means of access. This includes unclassified, adopted, unmetalled and metalled roads (T and U roads) which are managed differently by HCC Highways and not through Countryside Service and are often forgotten about. It was agreed that these roads are kept separate from public rights of way but the guidance being produced by the sub-group should remind planning authorities of them.

The above guidance should assist decision makers in achieving their objectives in encouraging healthier lifestyles

Remit:

It was agreed that the remit of the group is to develop the guidance identified in the Aims by –

- Identifying issues that are particularly applicable in Hampshire (largely by drawing on the material generated from the HCAF workshop in December 2016)

- Using this list, together with any issues raised in response to the HCAF letter to planning authorities (see ITEM 2 below), to identify particular points for guidance

- Identify opportunities to improve Local Plans in order to better achieve the desired outcomes.

- The sub-group will meet as and when required supported by e-mail communication. The next meeting will take place in July once responses have been received from district councils to the HCAF letter.

Timescales:

It was agreed that the sub-group could not set any timescales for the production of guidance material until it has received responses to HCAF's letter (see below).

ITEM 2 – Draft letter to Local Planning Authorities

At the HCAF meeting held in April 2017 it was agreed that HCAF would send a letter to all Planners in Borough/District Councils to seek what stage each of these Councils are currently at in its Local Plan Review. This letter was discussed in detail and the following points made:

The letter should be sent to Unitary Authorities as well as Borough/District Councils before the next HCAF meeting on the 20th June.

The letter should be sent to named people with responsibility for planning

The letter to be sent to other Hampshire LAF's to discuss with the national parks' authorities and district/borough councils within their areas.

The opening paragraph needs to be reviewed to reflect a more robust approach by HCAF. The group recommended that we should review previous introductory text to more accurately reflect the status of HCAF, as follows:

'The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum (HCAF) is the Local Access Forum (LAF) for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton as defined under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and as such is the statutory advisory body on countryside access issues. It draws its membership from individuals with a wide range of interests and expertise, including land owners/managers, conservationists, representatives of user groups and those with disabilities. In giving advice it seeks to provide a balanced view that reflects the combined view of individual members.'

It was also agreed to recommend including the official Defra LAF guidelines as follows:

'Forums perform a statutory function and all section 94(4) bodies are required, under section 94(5) of the CROW Act, to "have regard, in carrying out their functions, to any relevant advice given to them" by a forum. „Having regard" means that although not bound to follow such advice, section 94(4) bodies are legally required to take it into account in carrying out their functions'.

Comments on paragraph 2 should be divided and read as follows:

'HCAF is concerned about the impacts of new developments in Hampshire on the network of public rights of way, multi-user routes, accessible greenspace and carriageways that together enable residents and visitors to explore and enjoy the countryside on foot, cycle, horseback, etc. It believes insufficient mitigation of adverse effects is leading to poor outcome and deterioration of the public rights of way network.

The Forum is, therefore, in the process of preparing a document from a perspective of both users and landowners that is intended to help planning authorities to achieve their outcomes. It will provide consistent guidance/advice to assist in the minimising of these adverse effects on important recreational and valuable sustainable transport links.'

Paragraph starting with the words 'The Forum

HCAF is here to help support local planning authorities in developing strong policies in line with the National Planning Policy Framework

Next paragraph to read:

'To that end, I should be grateful if you would let me know what stage (*insert authority name*) is at in its Local Plan Review. Could we please have this information by the 30 June 2017.

Point 2 to read: 'Are there any particular issues that you wish the Forum to assist in addressing.'

ITEM 3 – reporting to HCAF

The agreed version of these notes is to be presented to HCAF at its June meeting for ratification.

Regular status reports/updates will be given to future HCAF meetings as appropriate.

ITEM 4 – Developing guidance – initial thoughts.

The sub-group felt that it could not cover this aspect at this meeting. It needs to be better informed about the status of local plans and issues faced by them. Whilst the group needs to remain independent of Countryside Services, it would like Owen Devine to attend the next meeting to share his knowledge.

In the meantime it was agreed to circulate links to existing planning guidance documents and websites to sub-group members.

ACTION by ALL Sub-Group members who are aware of such material

To view the status of local plans go to:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/mineralsandwaste/local-plans.htm>

Click on the list of unitary/district boroughs on the right to see the local plan documents and their status

Date of next meeting:

Mid/late July – actual date to be confirmed.

Notes prepared by Gail Johnson and amended by members of the HCAF Sub-planning Group

31 May 2017



*'improving opportunities to enjoy
Hampshire's countryside and coast'*
www.hants.gov.uk/hcaf

Replies via: Petronella Natrass
Telephone: 01962 845326
E-mail: petronella.natrass@hants.gov.uk
Reference:
Date: May 2017

Hampshire County Council
Countryside Service
Castle Avenue
Winchester
SO23 8UL

To: Head of Planning
[...Borough/District Council]

Dear ...,

Re: Planning for Countryside Access

The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum (HCAF) is the Local Access Forum (LAF) for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton as defined under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CROW Act) and as such is the statutory advisory body on countryside access issues. Local government bodies (and others) are required by the CROW Act, to "have regard, in carrying out their functions, to any relevant advice given to them" by the Forum.

The Forum draws its membership from individuals with a wide range of interests and expertise, including land owners/managers, conservationists, representatives of user groups and those with disabilities. In giving advice it seeks to provide a balanced view that reflects the combined view of individual members.

HCAF is concerned about the impact that new developments in Hampshire are having on the network of public rights of way, accessible greenspace and carriageways that together enable residents and visitors to explore and enjoy the countryside on foot, cycle, horseback etc. It believes that insufficient mitigation of the adverse effects of development is leading to poor outcomes and a deterioration of the public rights of way network together with the wider minor roads network.

The Forum is, therefore, in the process of preparing a guidance document from a perspective of both users and landowners that is intended to help planning authorities to achieve their desired outcomes. It will provide consistent guidance and advice to assist in the minimising of these adverse effects on important recreational and valuable sustainable transport links.'

HCAF is here to help support local planning authorities in developing strong policies in line with the National Planning Policy Framework requirement **'that public rights of way and access should be protected and enhanced with opportunities sought to provide better facilities for users, including by adding links to existing networks'** ([NPPF](#) paragraph 75).

To assist us with this work I should be grateful if you would let me know -

1. what stage [*local authority name*] is at in its Local Plan Review, and
2. whether there are any particular issues that you believe the Forum could assist you with

I look forward to hearing from you and would be grateful for your response before the 30th June.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Taylor

Alan Taylor
Vice-Chair, Hampshire Countryside Access Forum

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Tuesday 20 June 2017*

Agenda item 7(b): *Minutes of MoD Liaison Group meeting on 17 May*

Meeting: **MOD - HCAF Liaison Group**

Date: 17th May 2017

Location: **QE Country Park**

Attendees:

Lt. Col. (R) Mark Ludlow (ML)	(DIO South East Security and Public Access Officer)
Mark Sumner	(DIO Access and Recreation Advisor)
Graham Flatt (GF)	(HCAF representing community planning)
Alan Taylor	(HCAF representing land management)
Gillian Plumbley	(HCAF representing equestrians)
Sandra Smith (SS)	(representing equestrians)
Sue Coles (SC)	(HCAF representing cycling)
Alan Marlow (AM)	(HCAF representing walkers)

1. Apologies

Graham Butler	(Surrey LAF)
Nigel Wolstenholme	(HCAF representing landowners)
Roger Mullenger (RM)	(South Downs LAF)

2. Actions from previous meeting 15.02.2017

- Training Estate Public Safety Campaigns (TEPS): Websites and social media was being used to get messages out to the general public.
- Bylaw Review: Discussed later in the agenda
- General principles/ guidelines" document – discussed later in agenda

3. Access across Chilcomb Ranges

ML circulated diagrams showing the overshoot area for Chilcomb Ranges. As firing still extended onto and over the bridleway, this bridleway remained subject to closure during range firing and so could not be considered for the South Downs Way. Retesting is not imminent.

As this is within the South Downs National Park, it was agreed to ask Roger Mullenger (Chair SDLAF) to write to the National Trails Officer Andy Gattiker advising that use of this bridleway was impractical and to ask for an update on possible alternatives.

Action: RM

4. Byelaws

ML reported that the order in which bylaws would be reviewed had changed and Long Valley would no longer be in the first phase. The bylaws covering the area of interest of this group had been divided into two with the northern part (e.g. Long Valley, Aldershot) being review first but not imminently and the southern part (Bordon/Longmoor) after that.

It was reiterated that all bylaws would be based on similar principles but include local differences. ML suggested that members of the Liaison Group look at the bylaws for Brize Norton as it had already been reviewed.

The current versions of the bylaws are at

www.gov.uk/guidance/ministry-of-defence-byelaws

For information: Some bylaws for Hampshire (e.g. Aldershot and District) are classed as Surrey.

The website has a separate tab on the L.H. side for “reviewed byways), e.g. Templeton, Brize Norton.

Concern was expressed that the further delay in the review of the bylaws in Hampshire and Surrey meant that any opportunity afforded by the review would be lost for some time. ML pointed out that the access permissions would not change and that banned groups would still be banned under the revised bylaws, e.g. all cyclists, although local commanding officers could still make exceptions and grant access permission.

Draft bylaw review plan: MS would seek to obtain a copy of this plan in time for circulation before the next meeting of the Liaison Group.

Action: MS

5. Local concerns

Gates at Woolmer: ML reported that gates should now be unlocked although a second phase of work was imminent and one gate would be closed then. Signs would be erected.

The Hankley Common User Group (HUG) was working well. Members of HCAF expressed the view that a similar group or groups was needed for the other Hampshire and Surrey areas and should include local authorities, residents and user group representatives.

ML and MS expressed the view that the situation was much different in Hampshire and Surrey generally, given the much larger urban population in close vicinity and it would not be practical to have such a group or groups.

ML referred to the ongoing problems with irresponsible cycle use. HCAF members suggested that if the MOD were to engage with responsible cyclists and seek a constructive dialogue, it might make it easier in the long term to reduce irresponsible use. The value of getting local residents and user groups on board was stressed.

It was also pointed out that there was little enforcement of bans and so irresponsible use continued unchecked.

The idea of zoning was discussed. MS expressed his reservations with regard to zoning and preferred the idea of linear or circular routes where compatible with military training and site requirements. ’

At a meeting between MOD and the TAG advocacy group, the idea of circular routes for the Long Valley area had been put forward but no further information was available.

Guidelines/Principles: The HCAF members present agreed that it was urgent for the LAF members to draw up a set of guidelines and principles for submission to the MOD. This would include advice on consultation with user groups in advance of the bylaw review.

It was agreed that representatives of HCAF on the Liaison Group would submit draft guidelines/principles for their particular user group to Alan Taylor by the end of June and he would produce a draft version for consideration by HCAF

Action: All LAF representatives

6. Equestrian Access Whitehill/Bordon

A draft document from Hampshire County Council had come to the attention of the Liaison Group entitled Whitehill and Bordon Transport Delivery Strategy – Making Provision for Equestrian Access that had been prepared by the Whitehill and Bordon delivery partners – DIO, EHDC, HCC, Enterprise M3 LEP, Homes and Communities Agency and the Whitehill and Bordon Regeneration company. It related to the lack of equestrian provision in the area and a request from the BHS that the Green Grid and Green Loop should be made available to equestrians as well as walkers and cyclists.

The Liaison Group was disappointed to note that based on this document, HCC had rejected this request. It appears that HCC Highways is still failing to make adequate provision for equestrians.

As the status of this document and its precise provenance was unknown, it was agreed to forward it to the HCAF Forum Officer Petronella Natrass so that it could be discussed at the HCAF Chairs meeting and subsequently at the full HCAF meeting.

7. AOB

The MOD and Hampshire Police had developed a communications' plan to avoid combat training being misunderstood by members of the public as a terrorist attack.

8. Date of next meeting

As several members indicated that they would be away for the next scheduled meeting in 20th September, it was agreed to postpone the meeting until October. The provisional date agreed was Wednesday 11 October*

*Post meeting note: there are no rooms available at QE2 on that date and so the meeting would either have to be rescheduled or a new venue found.



Stuart Jarvis, Director, Economy, Transport and the Environment
Karen Murray, Director, Culture, Communities and Business Services

'improving opportunities to enjoy

Hampshire's countryside and coast'

Replies to: Petronella Natrass
Telephone: 01962 847165
E-mail: petronella.natrass@hants.gov.uk
Reference:

Countryside Service
Hampshire County Council
Castle Avenue
High Street
Winchester

SO23 8UL

DRAFT

Dear Mr Jarvis and Ms Murray,

Accessibility of information held on the List of Streets (CHALIST)

In 2012 and 2015, the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum corresponded with Colin Taylor and John Tickle regarding the accessibility of information on the List of Streets.

As a result of this correspondence, the GIS layer for adopted roads (A, B, C, U, T and W) was added to the Rights of Way online mapping. This has made it much easier for the public to access information on unclassified, unmetalled adopted roads (T category) and HCAF remains very appreciative of the support from your Department in bringing this about.

At the time, the issue of the incomplete depiction of T category roads on OS mapping was outstanding and so HCAF recently reconvened its sub-group in order to look at whether this issue could be resolved and so improve further information for the public.

Many but not all T category roads are shown on the OS maps as Other Routes with Public Access (ORPAs). HCAF members previously did a pilot study of two parishes (Bighton and Hurstbourne Tarrant) that showed that several T roads are not shown on the OS mapping as ORPAs.

For that reason, HCAF would like to run a volunteer project to look at all parishes in Hampshire to identify the T roads not currently on OS maps with a view to their addition to OS mapping. The OS will only add ORPAs if the source of the information is a public body such as Hampshire County Council.

The first stage of this project will be to draw up a Project Plan.

Before we do this, we should like to seek your support for the principle behind the Project. We are not seeking any resources but would value both comment and advice on the issue and also confirmation that Hampshire County Council would support the project by submitting additional routes to the OS for inclusion on their maps.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor
Vice-Chair HCAF

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Tuesday 20 June 2017*

Agenda item 13: *Forum Officer's report*

1. Small Grants Scheme Countryside Access – the Panel met on 9 May to consider 9 applications with a total value of £9,075. These included:

- £947 to install a 30m boardwalk along a waterlogged section of Durley FP 9 which is currently unusable for 9 months of the year.
- £252 for new information sheets on existing map boards on Chilbolton Common, West Down and War Memorial Playing Field, Chilbolton.
- £1,744 to replace broken paving stones on the section of footpath Havant FP 90 that runs through St Mary's churchyard, Hayling Island.
- £292 for handrails alongside steep (and sometimes slippery) steps at each end of Buriton FP17 where it emerges onto a road with no footway.
- £922 to replace 4 stiles with gates in Cheriton.
- £289 to repair/renovate steps on Worldham FP 32.
- £1,790 to repair a 140m, deeply rutted section of Froxfield BOAT 43.
- £849 to upgrade a section of the permissive path from the Science Centre to Chilcomb BW 12.
- £1,990 to extend an existing boardwalk in East Woodhay FP 9 to complete this section of footpath.

There were no applications from within the New Forest National Park area in this round.

All applications were approved, with conditions on the following three:

- Chilbolton – Community Engagement Ranger (Abby Sullivant) to check board content meets standards and shows routes for all users including equestrians and cyclists;
- St Mary's Church must take on responsibility for the future surface maintenance;
- Cheriton: check to be made that there will be a latch fitted rather than the 'lock' requested for one of the gates.

The future of the Small Grants Scheme (SGS)

Jonathan Woods joined the meeting to give the Panel an update on the changes to the SGS from April 2017:

Hampshire County Council has been reviewing its offer of funding to rural communities and how it promotes grants generally, with all grants to those communities being handled through a single system and process, under a new '**Rural Communities Fund**'. The Countryside Service has been looking at how the SGS can be incorporated into this offer, which would potentially put the SGS on a more stable, longer-term footing.

The Hampshire Countryside Access Forum and the current SGS Panel are aware of the budgetary pressures being faced by the Countryside Service and by local government as a whole. With their support, the Countryside Service has operated the SGS in Hampshire for 12 years, and both the Service and the Council are keen to ensure that this fund continues into the future.

The Hampshire County Council 'Rural Communities Fund' is a new fund that will incorporate a number of existing community grant streams including:

- Community Challenge Fund
- Flood Alleviation Scheme
- Rural Retailers and Community Enterprises Grant Scheme

- Small Grants Scheme – Countryside Access

There are a number of challenges within this new approach that the Access Team are currently working to resolve:

- a) **Limitations of the grant:** as its name implies, the Rural Communities Fund is available only to 'Rural' communities (parishes), defined as those with fewer than 10,000 residents. The Countryside Service is keen to ensure that funding should still be available to larger, urban fringe or satellite communities.
- b) **Grant available:** within the Rural Communities Fund the former SGS will allocate £36,000. It is proposed that an additional £10,000 will be held by the Access Team Manager for projects within larger communities (i.e. those with more than 10,000 residents).
- c) **Minimum grant size:** For the RCF this is currently £1,000; we have negotiated a reduction of this threshold to £500 if the Community Engagement Rangers (CERs) process the grant offer.
- d) **Application process:** this will use a Hampshire County Council corporate online grants system, which will require revised guidance and a pre-application expression of interest (EOI) to be developed. We have negotiated that the CERs will be able to review the applications and express views at EOI stage.
- e) **Grant decision:** at present all grants are awarded by the Leader of the Council, Cllr Perry. We have suggested that this be devolved to Cllr Rob Humby (Rural Portfolio holder), with Cllr Edward Heron (who sits on HCAF) providing a report to the Forum. In practice this will mean that:
 - The grant fund remains similar to current levels
 - It is a corporate grant, so will gain greater exposure
 - The outputs from the SGS will be more visible to elected Members and senior management within HCC
 - Because of its greater exposure, we believe that this will ensure the future sustainability of the scheme
 - Where there are underspends within the corporate grants programme we will be seeking to optimise benefits for the SGS

This is essentially a new grant process which the Access Team are aiming to apply in a way that will continue to deliver improvements to countryside access. It will mean a change in the level of HCAF involvement in the process. We are keen that the Forum retains an advisory role, but this will have to be through a more streamlined process than the current system of quarterly Panel meetings.

We are optimistic that this change will be a positive development for the SGS, but there is some work to be done over the next few months to get this new programme up and running. This will start with the development of improved guidance for the CERs and ACAMs to apply at the EOI stage. The SGS Panel will be asked to help with this; the aim is that the guidance will enable schemes that comply with agreed specifications to go forward directly for approval. For other, non-standard schemes it is envisaged that the Panel's advice will be sought via email.

We remain very grateful to HCAF and in particular the SGS Panel for the time that they have invested in the SGS to date and the many projects that have been funded as a result.

There was some discussion of the proposed changes, after which the Panel agreed to keep the 8 August meeting date pencilled-in but to cancel the November and February Panel meetings.

2. HCC update

Petersfield-QECP cycleway – at the March meeting I was asked to find out more about the legal status of this new route (an initiative led by the Strategic Transport team, who consulted the Access Team in the early stages). The route is split into sections; most of it is classed as a shared use footway-cycleway, but the Forestry Commission asked that a

section linking to other tracks suitable for horses be widened and a surface suitable for use by horses included. This has been done and this part of it dedicated as bridleway. This section then links to other tracks suitable for horses and from those points onwards the track becomes shared use footway-cycleway.

3. National LAF news

- **The National LAF Conference** in Birmingham on 21 June is being organised by Natural England and chaired by Steve Jenkinson, who many will know as an experienced access and countryside management professional. Rachel Bryan and Ruth Croker will be attending on behalf of HCAF and NFAF respectively. The theme of the conference is 'Making the most of your LAF' and the day is intended to be about LAF members from across England sharing their knowledge and experience with each other, through workshops and discussions, to help further the work of their LAFs.

The programme will include:

- Natural England update
- Making the case for Access
- Public access and the health agenda
- Two Workshop sessions
- Defra (deregulation)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Maximising LAF influence and effectiveness

Delegates will attend two Workshop sessions on topics including Urban Access issues, Multi-user routes, Opportunities for Public Access after Brexit, Commons, Towns & Village Greens (issues and registration), Rail Crossings (issues and solutions) and LAFs in changing times (new challenges, new approaches).

4. Government Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

The Government has published the results of last year's public consultation on the draft of this Strategy

(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602440/cwis-consultation-government-response.pdf).

Forum members may wish to review paragraphs 2.2 to 2.15 of this document, which set out a Summary of the responses received and the Government response.

Petronella Natrass, Forum Officer
May 2017