

NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Minutes of the Meeting of the New Forest Association of Local Councils
Held at Hythe & Dibden Parish Council Chamber on 16 April, 2015 at 7.00pm

Parish/Town Council	Name
Ashurst & Colbury	Sally Arnold
Brockenhurst	Harry Oram
Burley	Neal Martin
Copythorne	John Goodwin
Denny Lodge	Mo Dawkins
Godshill	Bev Cornish Ann Cakebread
Hordle	Sue Bown
Hythe & Dibden	Stephanie Bennett James Binns Brenda Smith
Lyndhurst	George Bisson
Marchwood	Alison Hoare
Minstead	Richard Taylor
New Milton	Goff Beck – Chairman Graham Flexman (Clerk)
Redlynch	William Dunn
Sway	Barry Rickman
New Forest District Council	Dave Yates
New Forest National Park Authority	Steve Avery

Apologies

Sue Bennison	Bramshaw
John Korbey	Brockenhurst
Mike Derrick Kim Penna	East Boldre
Cllrs Lane & Spark	Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley
Malcom Connolly Helen Richards	Fordingbridge
Marion Still	Hordle
Vicky Eden	Sandleheath

1. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed representatives from New Forest towns and parishes, and thanked Stephanie Bennett, recently-appointed Clerk to Hythe & Dibden Parish Council for hosting this event. The Chairman also welcomed Steve Avery from the NPA and Dave Yates of NFDC, together with Barry Rickman, Leader of the District Council.

The Chairman referred to an email he had received from Steven Lugg, Chief Executive of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils, as follows:

This is for information only, and will not affect my employment with the ALC, but I am proud and honoured to announce that I am now a member of the Royal Household, and will be enrolled as a Yeoman of the Queen's Bodyguard on Tuesday 3rd March, taking a watching brief in Full Dress, at the State Visit of the President of South Africa. I will be lucky enough then, to be taking part in the ten-yearly Queen's Review on the lawns of Buckingham Palace on 9th July. I am very pleased to be again part of our 'Ceremonial' in London and a minor (very part-time) member of the large team supporting Her Majesty at her Royal Palaces and beyond.

Members expressed congratulations, and the Chairman will pass these on to Steven.

With forthcoming elections in May, the Chairman recommended that all Councillors be issued with the Good Councillors Guide, as below.

<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/publications/801-good-councillors-guide/file>

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January, 2015 were approved by those present.

The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

3. Presentation on Revital Hythe

The Chairman introduced Helen Bradley-Owers, Parish Project Officer for Hythe who provided an overview of the work being undertaken to deliver the RevitalHythe Action Plan

The Chairman thanked Helen for her most enlightening presentation regarding Hythe.

4. Reports of Ambassadors

A consultation was carried out by HCC last year to examine what was most important to Hampshire residents as the County Council had to save up to £1.5million from the public and community transport budget this year as a result of Government cutting its general grant to Hampshire by almost half.

As a result, from 1 April 2015 the previous weekday extension from 9.00am no longer applies but Hampshire older person's bus passes will be valid for free travel from 9.30am to 11pm on Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and public holidays.

Following 2 public meetings in Lymington, MoreBus were recently praised by Christchurch Council after a review of axed services led to some routes being restored. The changes ensured Sunday journeys would be re-introduced during the summer season and X1 journeys on Sundays would leave Lymington and return 4 times during the day. There would also be an extra route X1 bus from Lymington to Christchurch during schooldays.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Three new bus services are being launched in the New Forest in a move that will help plug the gap caused by previous cuts. See attached Press Article.

DAILY ECHO

New bus services to be launched in New Forest to help cut number of cars

Sunday 17th May 2015

THREE new bus services are being launched in the New Forest in a move that will help plug the gap caused by previous cuts. The National Park Authority (NPA) is using a grant from the Department for Transport to fund seasonal services that aim to increase the amount of car-free travel in the district. But the Government hand-out is a one-off payment that covers start-up costs. If the new services continue next year they will have to be funded wholly by ticket sales rather than relying on public money.

Forest Bus is a new improved service based on the existing Bluestar 6 route and will link Southampton and Lymington, via Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst. It will run hourly every day between May 24 and October 31. Forest Bus Baby is a new weekend service link Hythe and other Forest villages between the same dates. The X24 service will run from Southampton to Paultons Park via Romsey. Starting on May 23 it will initially operate only at weekends, becoming a daily service from July 27 to cope with extra demand during the school holidays.

Meanwhile, the award-winning New Forest Tour returns on June 27 and the Beach Bus between Hythe and Lymington, via Lepe Country Park, will resume on July 25. NPA chairman Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre said: "The three new services, along with the New Forest Tour and Beach Bus, mean there are now plenty of options for residents and visitors to leave their cars behind. It's very important that these services become self-funding. We've recently seen how buses which are too reliant on public subsidies can be vulnerable to cuts. Whilst some support is needed to establish these services, the aim is to make them more financially viable through ticket sales rather than rely on ever decreasing pots of public funding."

Some of the NPA-supported bus services are run in conjunction with Go South Coast. Andrew Wickham, the company's managing director, said: "We're delighted that our partnership with the National Park Authority goes from strength to strength. The New Forest Tour and Beach Bus enjoyed record passenger numbers in 2014 and we're sure that thousands more will hop on the Forest Bus and Forest Bus Baby."



5. Reports of Focus Groups

- a) **Dibden Bay** – Alison Hoare confirmed ABP had purchased two industrial estates, but Solent Gateway Ltd is being lined up to manage Marchwood Military Port. Under the deal, the company will seek to maximise the port’s commercial potential and share profits with the Ministry of Defence. Many campaigners are more concerned about the involvement of Solent Gateway’s partner, GBA (Holdings) Ltd as its main source of income was car imports and exports which could mean that their plans for the port are more or less the same as those previously drawn up by ABP.
- b) **Broadband** – Steve Avery said they are currently experiencing delays with the installation of a number of cabinets in the New Forest National Park area due to special circumstances and additional stakeholders involved specifically in this area, including: the National Park, New Forest District Council, Natural England, the Verderers, and the Forestry Commission.

Additional resources have been allocated to ensure timely delivery, but the time taken to establish the additional processes that need to be followed has caused a delay in the rollout within the Forest and it is estimated that the affected cabinets will now go live by December 2015. The Chairman reminded members that at the last HALC Board meeting, there was a presentation from HCC Link Cllr Andrew Gibson on Rural Broadband and the Co-ordinator was asked to write to him highlighting Minstead PC concerns in particular.

- c) **Cycling Liaison** – Neal Martin suggested that with work now complete, this Focus Group be discontinued.
- d) **Light Pollution** – In the absence of representatives from Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley, it was agreed to defer this matter until the next meeting.
- e) **HALC** – The Chairman referred to an overall reduction in electorate within Hampshire, about 2% down generally due mainly to Individual Electoral Registration (IER). On another matter, HALC are considering their position in relation to NALC that will become clearer after the HALC AGM (see attached letter from HALC).

6. New Forest District Council

Dave Yates confirmed the small change in numbers of the electorate, and talked about the forthcoming elections on 7 May, 2015 covering national, district and local elections.

In regard to the 70th Anniversary of VE Day on 8 May, NFDC were doing all they could to lessen the bureaucracy of holding street parties to mark the occasion, and will be joining in with the 2 minute silence being held nationally from 3.00pm.

NFDC are working with Hythe to commemorate a local serviceman with a commemorative stone recognising the gallant actions of Commander Edward Unwin being unveiled on the Promenade in Hythe during a ceremony on Monday 11 May.

7. National Park Authority

Steve Avery said the NPA were celebrating their 10th anniversary this year, and 3 wildlife films made by Simon King celebrate this milestone as reported on the front page of Park Life, that also includes an article on new and improved bus services within the New Forest and the latest news on updating the National Park Management Plan, per the following link and highlights below.

Wildlife films celebrating the world-class landscapes of the New Forest have been produced to mark the 10th anniversary of the National Park.

Broadcaster Simon King, best known for presenting Springwatch and Big Cat Diary, has produced three fascinating films, looking at the rich wildlife of the National Park's internationally-important patchwork of ancient woodlands, lowland heaths and diverse coastline.

New and improved bus services will be launched this year for New Forest residents and visitors.

Forest Bus will run hourly seven days a week from Southampton to Lymington, whilst the brand new Forest Bus Baby will run hourly across the Forest on weekends and bank holidays. The open-top New Forest Tour and Beach Bus will also return this summer, with great discounts and offers available on all services.

The buses will help the New Forest National Park Authority in its aim to encourage more car-free travel in and around the National Park. The services are supported by funding from the Department for Transport and by working in partnership with operators Go South Coast and Hampshire County Council.

About 500 ideas from nearly 80 people and organisations were sent in on how best to update the National Park Management Plan as part of a 'Call for Views' consultation at the end of last year.

The update is being produced jointly by many of the organisations in the Forest. It is not a complete re-write of the original 2010 Management Plan, but focuses mainly on a series of actions for the period 2015-20. The Plan covers a wide range of topics, from conserving landscapes and habitats to understanding the special qualities of the Forest, supporting local communities and businesses and improving transport. Overall the response to the 'Call for Views' consultation was very positive and has led to a number of changes, including:

- Updating the section on recreation
- Including new actions relating to land management, enjoying the special qualities of the Forest and sustainable travel.

A six-week period of consultation on the revised draft starts in mid-May, focusing particularly on the changes made to the Plan. For more information visit newforestnpa.gov.uk/ManagementPlan.

Steve Avery also reported on closer working links with NFDC following the establishment of a joint NPA design and conservation team via a Service Level Agreement (SLA), and another covering Geographical Information System (GIS). Commenting on the potential problems of feeding birds at Hatchett Pond, like feeding of ponies it is to be discouraged.

9. Quadrant Elections

The following time-table was agreed in respect of Parish Member Appointments to the New Forest National Park Authority 2015:

Nominations issued:	By post on Monday 18th May
Returned Nomination Form:	Closing date for receipt Friday 5th June
Ballot Paper and Election statement issued:	By post Friday 12th June
Closing date for return of completed Ballot Paper:	Closing date for receipt Tuesday 30th June

A letter will be sent to Parishes involved. The count will take place shortly after the closing date, and all candidates will be invited to attend.

10. Hampshire County Council

In regard to the HCC Parish Event held in Winchester on 26th March 2015 that both the Chairman and Co-ordinator attended:

Over 60 Hampshire parish and town councils attended a special 'focus group-style' event on 26th March arranged by the County Council's Department for Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) to consider future service priorities in light of the need for the County Council to secure an additional £100 million in revenue savings over the next two years.

Senior officers gave presentations on highways, traffic and transport, waste planning and environment services. These included questions about service activities and the parishes were invited to rank those activities in order of importance using hand-held voting devices. The intention was to obtain an early indication from parishes about their priorities for future ETE events. Parishes indicated they did not want any further cuts in services.

Steven Lugg, Chairman of Hampshire Association of Local Councils, who also attended the event, called on all parishes to be more active in working with the County Council to find local solutions and help manage rising service demands.

11. Any Other Business

Sally Arnold queried the timing of the Quadrant elections and will take the matter up with David Stone of the NPA. George Bisson said the HALC survey overlapped with an initiative that the NF Broadband Group was running.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the New Forest Association of Local Councils is the AGM to be held in the Council Chamber at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Thursday 16 July, 2015 at 7pm.

Chairman

Date