



New Forest Access Forum Annual Report 2010

The New Forest Access Forum is an independent body that gives strategic advice on improving access to the countryside and coast of the New Forest National Park and south west Hampshire. The Forum's area stretches east-west from Calshot to Martin Down, and north-south from Whiteparish Common to Hurst Spit.

Since the formation of our Forum in 2006 we have seen a greater emphasis on access to the countryside by the different organizations with responsibility in our area, all of whom have continually worked towards improving the access provision.

The year 2010 saw the publication of the Recreation Management Strategy for the New Forest National Park. This is a vision for the next twenty years. The Forum anticipates that the Strategy will build on the good practice and the wealth of knowledge present in the New Forest. The Forum has been asked to be part of the Working Group for the implementation of the Strategy and we are pleased to add a practical and balanced view to this process.



Hampshire
County Council



Another important development in 2010 was the establishment of a Higher Level Stewardship agri-environment scheme for the New Forest. The five objectives of the scheme relate to nature conservation and biodiversity, landscape, the historic environment, public access, and habitat restoration. These objectives will be achieved through the implementation of a number of individual projects. The Forum is pleased to be represented on the themed working group that oversees the public access and historic environment project submissions. The Forum anticipates that the scheme will enable opportunities to improve the paths and tracks from which the public can view and enjoy the experience of the woodland and Open Forest.

In the summer we held our annual sub-region workshop. This year we looked at access in the Avon Valley. The Forum has covered the whole of its geographic area over the last five years and we have produced a list of desirable access improvements that have been fed in to Hampshire County Council's and Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plans. The Forum does realize that the cut back in public spending is likely affect what is possible, but we are pleased with the progress the highway authorities have been able to make so far.

Individual Forum members regularly attend the meetings of adjacent Forums and regional meetings of southeast LAFs, and report back to the other members at our meetings. The



Forum members are drawn from a wide cross-section of interests within the Forest. Members' representation is shown at the end of this report. This variety of interests and expertise ensures that a wide range of concerns and wishes are continually fed into the discussions that we have over different topics. It is this knowledge which has enabled the Forum to develop its balanced and independent view.

During 2010 we have looked at a very broad range of issues; for example, replying to national and local consultations. Consultations have included Coastal Access regulations, a review of the England Access Forum, and proposals for a local town access plan. We have proactively chosen to look at a theme of 'Encouraging

children to access the Forest', and made recommendations to the Forestry Commission and National Park Authority. We have been briefed on the process of developer contributions and how this is used by the planning authorities. We have also been briefed on how the proposed new Coastal Access will be implemented and managed in due course. We look forward to using our knowledge over the coming years, and hope to be able to offer useful advice on these and other topics over the coming years.

Ann Sevier

Chair



Membership of the New Forest Access Forum 2010

Forum member	Representing
Graham Bland (from June)	Access to water
Louis Bonney	Youth and diversity
Lynden Bowen	Tourism & camping/caravanning
Mike Bowles (until May)	Access to water
Ruth Croker	Walking
John Cropp	Dog walking
Joan Cundill	Disability
Sam Dovey	Farming
Alastair Duncan (vice chair)	Volunteering
John Durnell	Nature conservation
Gordon Garrett	Horse riding
David Harrison (from June)	New Forest National Park Authority
Wendy Hughes	Education
Gary North	Land management (public)
Vicky Myers (until June)	New Forest National Park Authority
Rachel Pearson	Land management (private)
John Pemberton	Land management (private)
Simon Pollock (until June)	Local business & camping/caravanning
Steve Rippon-Swaine (from June)	Hampshire County Council
Ann Sevier (chair)	Commoning
Pat Thorne	Commoning / Verderer
Peter Walsh	Cycling

All members can be contacted via the Forum Secretary on:

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More information and all papers relating to the Forum can be found on the New Forest National Park Authority's website www.newforestnpa.gov.uk Select *Looking After* and then *New Forest Access Forum*.

All Forum meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak at a meeting, please contact the Forum Secretary at least two weeks in advance.

The New Forest Access Forum is the Local Access Forum for the New Forest National Park and Southwest Hampshire, and is a requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.