

Minutes of the New Forest Access Forum Meeting

The Beach Hotel, Milton on Sea, Lymington, SO41 0PT

14 September 2026

Present

Members:

- Caroline Rackham (Chair)
- Lucy Kennedy
- Gordon Bird
- Brian Tarnoff

Officers:

- Adam Vasey (New Forest National Park Authority)

1 Apologies

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Vicki Gibbon (NPA), Ann Sevier, Sarah Hammet, Pippa Hutton, Richard Shirley, Ruth Croker, Bob Damper, David Bennett and Paola Palma.

2 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting on 9 March 2026 were agreed as a true record.

3 Member & Officer Reports

3.1 Adam Vasey provided the Forum with an update on current NPA access projects including works on the England Coast Path, Volunteer work on PRoW, Access For All spending and upcoming LEI scheme works.

3.2 Lucy Kennedy provided the Forum with an update on the work undertaken by Forestry England. She reported that, despite ongoing advice and awareness campaigns, some visitors continue to disregard guidance regarding fires and barbecues within the forest

GB – Will we get a post-impact assessment of Car Park charging?

LK – An annual report will be produced to detail the effects.

CR – The Forest seems quieter. Seems like there have been reduced number of people using the car parks.

LK – The heatwave put people off coming in the middle of the day but car parks are still busy mornings and evenings and many new people have purchased membership.

4 Fire Severity Index

4.1 Adam Vasey advised the members on the procedure for closing CRoW Open Access Land in the case of extreme temperatures and the fire severity index reaching 5 (on a scale of 1-5). This does not apply to newly created Coast Access following the England Coast Path.

5 Presentation of HIOWWT about the Coastal Nature Reserve project.

5.1 Trace Cooper-Williams, Project Officer HIOWWT, provided a fantastic presentation on all the various and valuable works to protect wildlife along the Coast Nature Reserve in collaboration with many other organisations.

5.2 Members discussed the potential merits and implications of the Keyhaven project to what can be done on the Crown Lands. Protective penning wouldn't work on the grazed landscape of the New Forest but engagement does seem to have an effect both at Keyhaven and with Forestry England Recreation rangers.

6 AOB

6.1 Brian Tarnoff mentioned an item brought up at the Consultative Panel about google maps directing traffic through small villages such as Minstead. This was exacerbated by the recent closure of the A31. He suggested that the NFNPA might be able to coordinate a solution and/or that Traffic Regulation Orders be applied to roads so that the google algorithm avoids directing people down them.

GB – Vehicles keep getting bigger which doesn't help.

LK – Businesses often welcome passing trade

CR – Highways are for everyone as they're paid for by the public purse.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 14 December 2026, 9.30am – 1.00pm – Lymington Town Hall, Lymington