



Minutes & Information
Teams - Thursday 01 December 2022
Present at the meeting

Forum Members:

Alex Lawson, Paul Fuller, Mike Slater, Mick Lyons, Tricia Merrifield, Helena Hewston, John Hobart

Others & Observers:

Jennine Gardiner, Darrel Clarke, John Brownscombe, John Howe, Helen Slade, David Cheek, Chloe Walker-Panse, John Truswell, Dina Jung, Trevor Ould, Robyn Munt, Vivian (guest on teams)

Apologies – Cllr Rodney Downer, Jan Brooks, Richard Grogan, John Heather

Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meeting – Done

Point arising from 05/05/22 minutes: in the ECP section in an action points read:

Get formal comment from Whippingham Parish Council and East Cowes Town Council and the Members (Cllr Love (East Cowes) & Cllr Price (Whippingham) regarding their view of the ECP route – Paul Fuller to contact them

John Truswell had received a question from a member of the public that the minutes of the LAF on 5th May 2022 gave the impression that a route for the England Coast Path had been shared with the LAF (ahead of any discussions with landowners)! This is NOT the case. The action was simply the LAF chairman saying he will seek out the thoughts of the local parish councils and councillors about the forthcoming coastal path.

We make it very clear that the LAF has not had any information about the Osborne / Norris / Barton possible route alignments shared with it by Natural England.

Cllr Fuller confirmed he had spoken to Mrs Taylor who is the clerk to Whippingham parish council, and she has expressed an interest that John Truswell engages with the parish council (which he will do once he has the landowners onboard and knows the alignment of the route)

Declaration of Interests – Not done

ECP update:

IOW 1- East Cowes to Wootton Bridge – (Led by John Truswell)

John Truswell - john.truswell@naturalengland.org.uk - 07717694247

Osborne House is a registered park and garden. Registered parks and gardens are *excepted* land, and this means under the terms of the ECP scheme public access is excluded from the new coastal access rights, unless the landowner agrees or dedicates some of their land.

Extensive discussions taken place with English Heritage and an in-principal alignment has been agreed. Now the in-principal agreement is in place with English Heritage, Natural England (John Truswell) can start to negotiations with adjoining landowners and on the 17/01/23 John has a meeting with a number of landowners to discuss where alignment could be. As always excepted land and properties, topography and land management will affect the alignment.

Mike Slater asked if there had been landowner meetings prior to the upcoming 17/01/23 meeting? John Truswell says there has been a lot of background stuff and correspondence going on.

Paul Fuller – Can LAF have an update at the end of Jan 23 – JT will provide an update

ACTION: John Truswell to provide the LAF with an update at the end of January 2023

POST MEETING UPDATE 10/02/23 Arising from the ‘in principle’ agreement (subject to detail) with English Heritage regarding ECP alignment through Osborne House. John Truswell and other NE staff held a joint meeting on 17/01/23 with some residents and land owners potentially affected by the England Coast Path proposals for Length 1, East Cowes to Wootton Bridge. This gave an opportunity to ask questions which gave NE staff the opportunity to answer and provide information and clarity when needed.

Following this meeting arrangements will be put in place as soon as possible for follow up meetings ‘on the ground’ to discuss the ECP proposals.

IOW 2-10- Wootton Bridge to the Medina (Led by Chloé Walker-Panse with contributions from John Brownscombe)

Chloé Walker-Panse England Coast Path Lead Adviser- Isle of Wight chloe.walker-panse@naturalengland.org.uk John Brownscombe is Rights of Way Officer (England Coast Path) at the Isle of Wight Council John.Brownscombe@iow.gov.uk .

IOW 2 (Wootton Bridge to Culver Down)

- A survey of St Helens causeway has been undertaken by [Isle Access](#) as it is very narrow, and ideally access should be improved to help less mobile people. Discussions are under way with Island Roads who are undertaking a feasibility study to look at suggestions in the Isle Access report, which should be done by the end of this year
- A realignment took place in Priory Woods, works done and it is open

Report not yet submitted by NE to DEFRA but will be once the Island Roads feasibility study for the St Helens Mill Dam wall / causeway is completed. DEFRA will then have to forward the report for IOW 2 to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a decision as this section had 2 objections against it.

IOW 3 (Culver Down to Binnel Bay)

Had objections and the report and has been submitted by NE to DEFRA and on to (PINS) but now, because of more landslips along this section, the previously proposed route needs to have modifications made to its alignment

IOW 4 (Binnel Bay to Chilton Chine)

This section of the scheme was approved, and the establishment works are underway but wet weather is hampering progress but hope the majority of works will be completed and route formally opened by end of 2023.

IOW 5 (Chilton Chine to Colwell Bay)

This section of the scheme was approved, and the establishment works are underway but wet weather hampering progress. In the area of the lost section of Public Footpath T16, Totland a slight variation on the new route. Hope the majority of works will be completed and route formally opened by end of 2023.

IOW 6 (Colwell Chine to Hamstead)

NE still to submit their report to DEFRA.

Brambles Chine slipway closed (path F13) since Feb 2022 a MMO licence has been obtained for the works to remove the unsafe slipway and install new steps, the works at Brambles is preparatory work for the ECP and NE are funding this along with potential monies for the steps from Linstone Chine Management Committee.

Mike Slater -IW Ramblers have made representation to say main path should go along top of cliff between Brambles and Linstone Chine.

IOW 7 (Hamstead to Thorness Bay)

Has objections and representations a lot of works done revising the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) - walk the course needs to be conducted.

IOW 8 (Thorness Bay to Gurnard Luck)

Awaiting DEFRA decision, but this should be very soon, which means John Brownscombe can start to contact contactors to get quotes for the schedule of works to submit with a grant application to NE with an aspiration to start works in 23/24. Lots of surfacing works, narrow paths in some locations. Mike Slater raised concerns over the regular flooding of the concrete footbridge at Thorness see below.

IOW 9 (Gurnard Luck to West Cowes Chain Ferry)

Awaiting DEFRA decision but should be very soon. Discussions with landowner at Spencer Wood to use 'loop' alignment which will also be dedicated as a PROW. Main infrastructure works confined to Spencer Woods and then the rest of the route is mainly signage.

IOW 10 (Medina)

Quite straight forward, walk the course completed in September – objections and representations written up and will be submitted to DEFRA next year. Discussions taking place on best approach to establishment works between Island Harbour and Folly as known to flood.

Financing ECP - 100 % planning and establishment works will be funded by NE. Once the trail is open it becomes part of the family of national trails and there is a funding formula which gives an annual budget. There shouldn't be no significant out of pocket expenses placed on Town or Parish Councils.



John Brownscombe IWC Rights of Way Officer (England Coast Path)

Mike Slater had raised the matter of the intermittent high tide flooding of the bridge at Thorness. After the LAF meeting John Brownscombe has provided the following update for the minutes based on an email sent to Mike following his email raising his concerns: *I can confirm that the bridge at the western end of the beach, closest to Thorness Bay Holiday park will be replaced as part of the ECP Establishment works. The route for the ECP will then go into the field on the landward side of the beach before exiting back out on the beach as shown on the map.*

The concrete bridge at the Whippance end of the route has no action associated with it as far as proposed ECP establishment works. Chloé has confirmed that no reference was made to any inundation/flooding problems on this length as part of the consultation process on the ECP proposals in 2020. I also believe that the ROW service has not received complaint regarding high tide access here in terms of the current Isle of Wight Coastal Path and its use?

Chloé has also confirmed that Natural England would not consider the temporary short term loss of the use of the route at Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) events to constitute an issue in terms of the promoted National Trail route as these will only occur infrequently and walkers would be able to wait for conditions to subside to then use the route. If the structure was not available at every high tide event (like the beach in front of the field to the west of this location where the route is shown branching off of CB24 to join CB30 using the field rather than the beach) then works would either be suggested or an alternative route proposed.

That said, I will endeavour to visit the site at the next MHWS event and assess how flooded the structure in question is during these periods. We will also keep this under review to ensure that as coastal conditions and sea levels change this doesn't constitute a more frequent obstruction to the use of the PROW and ECP. Works to significantly alter any bridge in this location, if felt needed, will require HRA, SSSI assent, MMO licence and EA FRAP due to its location at the coast and in designated land. It would seem that this bridge also provides private vehicular access to the beach at this location so any changes to profile or height would, I suspect, also need to obtain landowner approval to allow this to continue and as they have not been included in the consulted on ECP proposals.



LAF Disability subgroup update:

Paul Fuller will circulate the notes from the meeting

Rights of Way Update

We have seen a lot of damage to path surfaces due to the wet weather and this seems to be a continuing and worrying trend. Coastal erosion is also concerning with the damage to the coastal path at Appley Steps, Shanklin and the revetment at Ventnor, which has already been discussed.

Our Autumn hedge cutting programme will be finished by Christmas. If any overgrown paths are spotted in the New Year then please contact us as we will do our best to cut paths before the start of the bird nesting season.

We have completed some capital projects which have resolved some long outstanding problems. These include new surfaces at the Niton end of Ashknowle Lane, Play Lane at Ryde and at St Georges Down. A new bridge at Adgestone and new beach access steps at Woody Bay have been installed. Schemes to be completed in the New Year include new boardwalk at Troopers Copse, Shorwell and surfacing of a bridleway leading to the church at Whitwell. We are waiting for confirmation if we have additional capital moneys in the New Year and for 2023/24.

We continue to work on two schemes which will result in new bridleways. The first one is public right of way CB5 from Porchfield into the northern end of Parkhurst Forest and the other one is the old railway line running parallel with Embankment Road at Bembridge. Agreements have been reached in principle with all interested parties and it is hoped that legal completions will take place in early 2023.

We have recently reopened the coastal path at Binnel Bay thanks to John's hard work and landowner cooperation.

We continue positive works with IW Ramblers and IW Bridleways Group and I will let them update you on current schemes

IW Bridleways Group – Tricia

Appreciative of the surfacing work completed, hope work is not damaged by the torrential rain.

National Trust has purchased Dunsbury Farm at Brook and the bridleways group is working with the NT to create a link route between Coastguard Lane (BS87) with bridleway F67 (permissive route) the bridleways group will fund a couple of gates

CB5 upgrade will allow riders from Whitehouse area into Parkhurst Forest – working with Forestry England as equestrian accesses is very much needed

Cycle Wight – Alec Lawson

1. RYDE TO YARMOUTH CORRIDOR

It is reported in media that the Isle of Wight Council want to open a Ryde to Yarmouth corridor for sustainable travel, and has bid for "Levelling Up" funding. There are Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans for Ryde, Newport and elsewhere and the scheme from Newport Centre to Mews Lane has been delivered.

The Fairlee and Whippingham Councillor has stated one of his top three priorities is to "progress the Newport to Wotton cycle path on the old railway route." The local MP has lobbied the government for funding from the Safer Roads fund.

If the West Wight Greenway is realised, then the bottleneck for a cross-island cycle route is the Fairlee Road footway (pavement). The IW Bus and Rail Users Group in their stakeholder response to the "Restoring your Railways" consultation proposed using part of the old Ryde – Newport railway alignment parallel to Fairlee Road could provide a westbound guided busway. This would enable buses to by-pass 0.9km of road on which there is often a queue of traffic, particularly during the morning peak period. If this was possible the route could also be used for walking and cycling. This would substantially speed up travel schedules on the important bus routes from Ryde and from East Cowes to Newport AND would benefit cyclists and walkers by removing a dangerous stretch of shared footway alongside the narrow part of Fairlee Road.

The IWC Transport & Highways Manager, addressing the Cyclewight AGM, confirmed that it is hoped to move away from shared space on pavements to dedicated walking & cycling routes.

I would like the Local Access Forum to ask for urgent planning to eliminate the Fairlee Road sustainable travel bottleneck.

ACTION – LAF supports this action

ACTION – Cllr Fuller asks AL to email Cllr Price and copy him in

2. OTHER NEWS

The Transport & Highways Client Manager Stewart Chandler addressed the Cyclewight AGM. The maintenance contract for the cycle track with Island Roads was discussed. It is hoped to upgrade part of the cycle track by Blackwater next year.

Road Safety Officer of the IW council has run Go Wider for the Rider campaign to encourage drivers to share the road.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS) have been prepared for Ryde, Newport, Cowes, and are in preparation for Bembridge, Brading & St Helens.

A campaign by Cyclewight aims to identify barriers on cycletracks which can be removed to make it easier for wheelchair users and others. This is in accordance with DfT guidance in LTN 120.

John Howe asked about the West Wight Green Way

ACTION – Graham Biss to provide an update

UPDATE – Graham will attend the next LAF meeting but has advised that currently one of the key landowners has withdrawn their support, so the eastern end of the route is having to be reconsidered.

IW Ramblers – Mike Slater

Mike gave an update of some projects the ramblers are looking into:

Lost Ways – This was about systematically researching old / historical documents to find evidence that paths have been missed off the definitive map, but as the 2026 cut off has been scrapped this is now not urgent.

- Question from Helen Slade – DEFRA has proposed cut-off date is abandoned but if this current legislation is not repealed in time what is the position? IPROW was speaking about new regulations coming in April 2023 and a taskforce is drafting them.

ACTION: Keep on minutes so we can ensure the 2026 cut off is lawfully repealed by new legislation.

Gaps and Links – a new project called gaps and links and over the next 2 years they will be looking for high value potential routes to enhance the network. A pilot study is in progress and once completed Mike will update the LAF

- Question from John Hobart who asked if downgraded footpaths can be upgraded back to bridleways? Mike said he will engage with other use groups

Minor Maintenance team – Very proactive installing steps and a bridge

NFU & CLA – Robyn Munt – the beaver introduction has the LAF had any thought to the potential damage to the PROW and cycle network

ACTION – Cllr Fuller would like to attend the meetings and JG will contact H&IWWT to get Paul on the distribution list

Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils (IWALC)

Can landowners be persuaded to allow footpath to be upgraded to BR due to safety reasons?

PROW check the planning list every week and engage with planning

IW 4X4 Club – no update

AOB

Paul Fuller had asked if we have any outstanding actions (as there has been quite some in-between meetings). The outstanding action from the last meeting 05/05/22 was to invite Richard Tyldsley (ahead of the new timetable) to a future LAF meeting
ACTION: Chairman to advise when we want to ask Richard along

John Howe has asked if he can be added to the distribution list and wants to be a regular member

ACTION: John Howe to supply his contact details to the LAF so the application form can be sent

The highway water running off the Shanklin Road has damaged some of the America Woods bridleway (NC37a). Question raised by Trevor Ould

ACTION - Island Roads have said that 12m of new kerbing is required to stop water running off the carriageway into the bridleway and this has been **added to the Highway Safety and Improvement Register so that it can be considered for future funding.**

ACTION – a job ticket has been sent to Rights ofWay maintenance to check the bridleway surface

<p>Next meeting: 4pm Thursday 13th April 2023 Location to be confirmed</p>
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