



Minutes & Information
Teams - Thursday 5 May 2022
Present at the meeting

Forum Members:

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

Others & Observers:

Jennine Gardiner-IWC LAF Secretary, Dina Jung, Jan Brooks, Sheila Weedell, Trevor Ould, Pete Johnson, Alanna Higginson

Apologies – Darrel Clarke – IWC Rights of Way Manager, Cindy Bentley CLA, Carole Pierce, Helen Slade OSS, John Brownscombe IWC ECP Officer, Cllr Rodney Downer, Cllr John Medland.

Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meeting – Done

Declaration of Interests – None

ECP update:

Written update provided by Chloé Walker-Panse England Coast Path Lead Adviser- Isle of Wight chloe.walker-panse@naturalengland.org.uk

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

Members of the LAF will be aware that Length 1 has and continues to be delayed. We continue to hold dialogue with English Heritage at Osborne House. More than one meeting and site visits have taken place to explore and identify the issues relevant to them including significant historical assets. Within both organisations senior staff are actively engaged in dialogue to seek a proposal for the ECP.

Negotiations are taking a long time, but a fair balance has to be made when deciding on ECP alignment choices to balance the aspirations of various stakeholders, landowners and community needs. NE needs to exhaust every avenue – should a route through Osborne be identified, then NE will be in a position to discuss options with other landowners.

I'd like to thank the LAF members for their ongoing patience whilst we continue our discussions, I would also urge members or any of their contacts to call or email me if they have any questions, I would be more than happy for this to happen.

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

IOW 2-10- Wootton Bridge to the Medina (Led by Chloé Walker-Panse)

- There has been a recent landslip in Priory Woods (IOW 2) on the current PRoW and proposed route of the ECP. We are looking into the best options for realignment through the woods and discussions with landowners are taking place to resolve this
- In preparation for future establishment of the route at St Helens causeway (IOW 2), we have asked Isle Access to assess the current route and what developments could be made to improve access for all (we should have the report by mid-May). I am also in discussions with the landowner of the causeway and the Environment Agency, to assess what is possible in terms of improvements as we may be limited by the nature of the structure
- IOW 3 was submitted in January 2022, however, we still have not received any information from PINs as to when it will be approved
- IOW 4 and 5 were approved by the Secretary of State on 06/04/2022 England Coast Path: Isle of Wight - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Works are progressing well to reopen the permissive footpath and future ECP route at Brighstone Holiday Centre (IOW 4). There have been delays due to the increased amount of asbestos present which has been uncovered during the works, covid illness and members of the public accessing the site during works
- If you have any questions, please email me chloe.walker-panse@naturalengland.org.uk



Written update provided by John Brownscombe IWC Rights of Way Officer (England Coast Path) John.Brownscombe@iow.gov.uk

The IWC is now progressing with obtaining quotes for the **establishment works** needed for **IOW4 & IOW5** and will be using these as part of our grant bid to fund the works. This will include surface, furniture (steps, gates, bridges), signage (as per the previous consultation this will be the complimentary signage approach to retain our current IWCP signs), cutting back vegetation and in some areas dealing with identified tree works. It will also include three areas of verge improvement works where the route is still using short

sections. Currently, we hope to be starting works on the ground this summer and for these to be completed by financial year end. Works will then be checked and signed off and a request for formal opening of these two stretches as ECP made.

Bramble Chine - We are working in partnership with the landowner, Natural England and other local stakeholders to resolve the problem of the unsafe slipway. Plans are to demolish this (subject to all relevant permissions and consents) and for new free standing flights of steps to be installed from the remaining concrete apron on the cliff top. A contractor has been commissioned for the demolition and we are awaiting details of their Risk Assessment Method Statement to be used in discussions with relevant agencies. Natural England have agreed to cover the cost of the demolition as part of the ECP Planning Grant for this year as it will form part of the ECP. I suspect we are looking at the route remaining closed until late summer early autumn earliest before safe beach access is available again in this location but are doing our best to expedite this to minimise any unnecessary delay.



Signage: *The post mounted roundel will have white writing on a blue background and not blue writing on a white background as shown in the picture. This is to ensure that there is a standardised approach on the whole network. And the complimentary signage will be either a finial (post topper) or the banded/strapped roundel and not both with the finial being favoured in most locations.*

Comments and questions from the written updates:

LAF Member – John Heather: The East Cowes to Wootton section is a fiasco, frustrated by the length of time it is taking. Landowners in this section are bitterly disappointed with the delay. Dismay that one landowner (English Heritage) can hold up this section / the process for so long. Dismay at John Truswell’s non-attendance at LAF meeting, we need to re-empathise that English Heritage are holding up ECP process to the detriment of others.

LAF Member – Mike Slater: It is acknowledged that John Truswell must try and reach a voluntary agreement with English Heritage because of the registered parkland but actually how much of this land is actually parkland and not scrub or forestry woodland?

General -

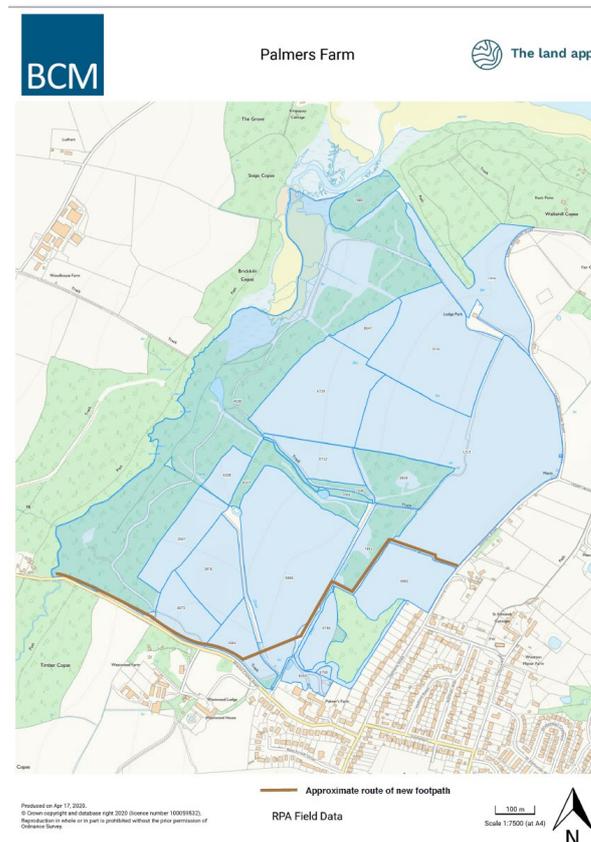
Are the local East Cowes Councillors supporting an ECP route along the coast?

3 Planning applications are underway, and all are potentially controversial to the ECP route:

5 Detached Properties Fort Victoria pier area: *looks like the houses will sit over the ECP?* (See planning application [22/00634/FUL](#) Proposed Pier Restoration and Shellfish and Fish Landing and Processing Facility, Shop and Café/Restaurant; Proposed Five Detached Dwellings and Associated Infrastructure and Amenities. Land At And Adjoining Fort Victoria Pier Westhill Lane Yarmouth - Public Consultation End Date Mon 16 May 2022)

Norris Castle development. *Important that Councillors and planners reviewing this application consider access i.e. follow coastline and back into East Cowes, as not much in the way of PROW in East Cowes, in its own right (not just ECP).* (See planning applications [21/02437/FUL](#) and [21/02438/LBC](#))

Brocks Copse Road gravel extraction. *General feeling that the proposed path on its own is a good path, but not as a substitute as the ECP, don't feel cyclists would be that interested in using as it is not a direct route and they will still prefer the road.* (See planning application [22/00654/FUL](#) Proposed extraction of sand and gravel and restoration to agriculture Land At Palmers Farm Brocks Copse Road Wootton PO33 4NP - Public Consultation End Date Mon 16 May 2022 (map of the proposed new path below))



ACTIONS:

- LAF to make a representation on Norris and Fort Victoria planning applications – Paul Fuller
- John Truswell and John Brownscombe to please attend at the next meeting (move LAF meeting to suit their availability)
- 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

LAF Disability subgroup update: Despite a wide consultation which asked “*The Isle of Wight Local Access Forum wants to know your views on creating better access to the countryside and Rights of Way. We would like to know what you would like to see done to improve access by removing barriers. Please tell us your five priorities to support those with mobility issues, for those with push chairs, children, older residents and those with other disabilities*” only 8 responses had been received, although there was quite a lot of information within these responses. Therefore, LAF’s 5 priorities have not yet been finalised as the information is still being reviewed.

Alana and Paul had been out canvassing and speaking to people about accessibility. They went to Newtown but the Newtown residents don’t want a bus service to their village or any additional visitors to the nature reserve. But at the Sportsman’s Rest the local Porchfield people complained about a lack of buses and lack of space on buses for wheelchairs, when pushchairs are on board. Other concerns were - a need to remove stiles to make access easier. Lack of public transport in rural areas.

Jan Brooks raised concerns about the specification of kissing gates as Kissing Gates on the IW are inaccessible, Jan says that there are kissing gates with larger dimensions for wheelchair access.

Need more changing places toilets or mobile changing places van at £40K

Pavement Parking Post Meeting Update – this was not discussed at the meeting (as time had run out) but we had been asked if there had been any updates on pavement parking and enforcement. The parking services manager had advised that to date there had been no changes and that both the Council and the Police have relatively few powers under existing legislation to tackle the problem. He had previously said:

At present, parking on the pavement (without a yellow line) is largely allowed in England and Wales. Driving on the pavement is illegal and enforceable by the Police. However, in order to enforce pavement parking, the Police need to observe a vehicle driving (and not parking) on the pavement. However, the Police could theoretically take action if a vehicle was causing an obstruction on a footway, but locally there has never been an appetite for this.

The DfT launched a consultation on pavement parking on 31st August 2020 with an end date of 22nd November. The previous administration fed into the consultation and supported the recommendation that Civil Enforcement Officers be granted powers to issue Penalty Charge Notices for 'unnecessary obstruction of the footway.' Local Authorities would have to work to strict DfT criteria as this could be open to interpretation.

The previous administration did not support a blanket ban, owing to the fact that many of the towns on the Isle of Wight established themselves during the Victorian era and many streets were not designed to accommodate today's high volume of traffic. Whilst not a perfect solution, inevitably some pavement parking is necessary to allow vehicles access along a number of narrow urban streets and rural lanes.

ACTION:

Paul to Send Jan Brooks a copy of the comments of the LAF disability scoping project

IW Bus & Rail Users Group – Dina Jung

- Thought there was legislation that wheelchairs have priority over pushchairs?
Post Meeting update: *Richard Tyldsley (General Manager of Southern Vectis) has advised that their policy is that anyone not in a wheelchair should be ready to vacate the space if a wheelchair gets on, and the bus drivers are trained to deal with (this if the non-wheelchair user is will not move). Ultimately, if the bus driver can't move the non-wheelchair user, and if the next bus is going to be more than 15mins, they will call an accessible taxi for the wheelchair user.*
- Failure to get grant funding. There was a joint grant bid between SV & IWC for a share of a Gov.UK grant for local bus services, but the actual grant application that was submitted for the IW was awful. There should have been a professional grant application writer to make this application to safeguard the chances of it succeeding - this was not a professional document.
- Bus user group doesn't have full range of different bus users within their membership. They need wheelchair and push chair users and people who can provide a varying view on bus use. **Looking for more members if interested contact: iwbususers@gmail.com**
- JH There is a need for attractive wooden bus shelters to encourage people out to catch buses, people won't stand out in wet weather (maybe AONB can look into this)
- Multi use bus shelters i.e. Wellow & Havenstreet – both have books
- ML – SV only interested in profit and will not consider a rural service as not profitable.
- The majority of rural bus stops still require people to stand in the road, they are still unsafe.
- Invite Richard Tyldsley (ahead of the new timetable) to a LAF meeting

- Less people using buses as the elderly still afraid of getting covid
- IWALC has joined the bus user group

ACTION:

Invite Richard to a future LAF meeting

Rights of Way Update

Current Closures: Unfortunately, we have a few forced path closures at the moment, but they are all being monitored, and action is being taken where practicable. Details below:

Path	Expected reopening	Information
B50 Adjustone	End May 22'	Unsafe bridge in process of being repaired
BS2 Coastal Path	Not known	Developer closure at Atherfield – bypass is available
F13 Brambles Chine	Not known	Included in ECP update
GL26 Hermitage	End May 22'	Collapsed boundary wall. Landowner repair.
N203 Rowridge Copse	Not Known	Unsafe surface and trees. ROW considering reopening options
R89 Priory Woods	Not Known	Included in ECP update
R105 Seaview	June 22'	Developer closure
T16 Headon Warren	Not known	Path lost to landslip - will remain closed pending ECP opening
V65a Bonchurch	Summer 22'	Landslip - RoW currently considering reopening options
V98 Woody Bay Steps	June 22'	Unsafe steps due to coastal erosion. Replacement beach access steps - contractor has been appointed.

Maintenance: As you have probably noticed things have started to grow rapidly. The summer strimming programme undertaken by contractors started on Tuesday (4 operatives strimming Monday – Friday between May to August). Two cuts of all paths in the programme is aimed for. For efficiency, they must keep to the programme. Depending on where a path is in the programme and the weather (growth rate) this will mean that there will be times when some paths could be overgrown, but a cut is planned.

RoW maintenance again find themselves one team member down following an unexpected resignation. Maintenance team currently consist of a Maintenance & Protection Officer and one Operative (plus one part time officer providing England Coast Path support). An additional Operative will be recruited but this will take time. This will place the team under pressure and backlog of work will occur.

Budget: RoW awarded £635k capital funding for the current year (2022/23) so we were very much hoping to complete some long outstanding larger schemes.

However, to date only £135k has been released and it is now uncertain if the remaining £500k will be available.

New Path: Following Yarmouth Town Council’s application for a modification order to add a path to the definitive map (based on long user evidence), Friars Lane (public footpath Y20) has now been recorded as a public footpath providing the public with an additional “sea lane” from the High Street to the shore. Map below:



Potential New Path: RoW were approached by the new owners of fields at Thorness over which public footpath CB5 runs to offer the path being changed to public bridleway status.

The path provides a route into the north of Parkhurst Forest and on to Mark’s Corner.

RoW have contacted the Forestry Commission with regard to the possible upgrade of the section of the path on their land.

This path has been in a poor state for some time so a sympathetic upgrade of the surface to enable it to be used by all users would be beneficial. The FC have agreed in principle.

Formalities and legals to be undertaken and budget required for works. Map below:

ACTION:

LAF support the £20K bid for this CB5 upgrade as it is a long awaited and very useful link.

Cycle Wight – Alec

1. CARISBROOKE & GUNVILLE GREENWAY: Cycling & walking routes between Gunville, Carisbrooke College and central Newport via Sainsbury's have been promoted by advertising Greenway Rideouts on three routes, leading rides on these routes and helping people to look after their bikes and ride safely.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/658254491844560>

2. MEWS LANE SHARED PATH: Linking between Mews Lane and The Riverside Centre, Newport, this has been upgraded with an all-weather **surface and has earned praise from residents, pedestrians and cyclists.**

3. THE WAYFARERS RANDONNEE on Sunday 1 May had 2500 entrants, including many who came from the mainland and stayed over the weekend. The event was first held in 1985 and benefits many charities. The Wayfarers say they would "like to thank the local community for their support, Businesses, Schools and Villages that let us use their premises and the Schools for providing the feed stations that are so enjoyed by the participants". <https://cycleisland.co.uk/>

4. THE TOUR OF BRITAIN will finish at the Needles on Sunday 11 September. <https://www.tourofbritain.co.uk/spectacular-needles-finish-unveiled-for-tour-of-britains-isle-of-wight-finale/>

IW Ramblers – Mike Slater

Volunteers work group – minor maintenance based on the availability of volunteers see website: <http://www.mmiwp.co.uk/>

Risk assessment and insurance cover for volunteers - MS said that the Rambler Association members that volunteer have third party insurance and there is a limited liability insurance for non-rambler association volunteers who are named on the ramblers records and are assisting with tasks (so you don't need to be a rambler member but if assisting with the minor maintenance you need to let them know and have your details recorded).

Path reps some are already on local Town or Parish Councils. Always keen for joint working maybe a dialog with IWALC.

[Walking festival starts](#) on Saturday and Ramblers have checked the route of the [Walk the Wight](#) route. All was in quite good order

NFU & CLA – no update

Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils ([IWALC](#)) - Had a public meeting 28/04/22 about health on the IW – health watch and living well, the NHS doesn't consider they have any duty to improve access to GP's, Pharmacies and hospitals. Resilience project is just for main centres of population so rural residents won't get anything out of it.

IW 4X4 Club – no update and replacement

AOB

Trespass Tricia made the group aware that there was a book review / article in the Times newspaper regarding the Book of Trespass by Nick Hayes (who is a very considerate trespasser, and on the mainland, there are huge blocks of land with no public access).

However, most of the general public who trespass are not considerate, leave litter and are a nuisance!

This has a backfire effect because when we then try to work with landowners to get additional definitive and permissive access the negative trespassing problems makes them unwilling to allow formal public access.

<p>Next meeting: 4pm Thursday's 7th July (may need to be changed to accommodate ECP) 6th October</p>
