



HORSHAM AND DISTRICT *ACCESS FORUM*

The Horsham and District Access Forum brings together local people who work towards improving access to public places for everyone, whether they are disabled or able-bodied, parents with children in pushchairs, or the elderly.

MINUTES of meeting held on Wednesday 28 October 2009 at 10am

Present:	Margaret Alford	Chair of Saxon Weald Disability Panel
	Andrew Baldwin	HDC Councillor
	Damian Brewer	HDC Equalities Officer
	Phil Clements	HACVS
	Joyce Narborough	Independent
	May Pope	Independent (was Horsham Carers)
	Norman Raby	Independent
	Janet Raybould	4sight
	Terry Rixon	Local LINKs & Stakeholder NE Review
	Carole Robertson	Manager Evelyn Lancaster – Southern H

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Andrew Baldwin, Cabinet member for Housing and Community Development, Horsham District Council (HDC) chaired the meeting and took the Minutes. The Chairman welcomed everyone, especially Carole and Norman, and people introduced themselves. Apologies received from Peter Billington, Lilian Bold, Sue Carter, Gill Christonson, Roger Fellows, Jo Fisher, Jill Hardie, Margaret Killner, Yvonne Law, Joe Nash. Due to other commitments, Roger Ayres is no longer able to attend meetings.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2009 – agreed as a true record

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

The up date of the Actions from the previous meeting where circulated on 16.10.09 with the Agenda for this meeting.

(a) Terry raised the issue of disabled bays at Billingshurst library and the one immediately outside Park House. He alleges that they do not conform to legal requirement BS8300 (2009 version) regarding hatching/ safety zone and safe area to walk for all disabled zones and that we are not honouring the spirit of the law. Andrew said that if it is a legal requirement to have hatching/ safety zone then we would have to comply but did not believe it was a legal requirement because he is aware of disabled bays elsewhere in the country without hatching/ safety zone. Damian said it was not mandatory but good practice to have a safety zone.

Andrew to check with HDC

4. Access Forum meetings with the Press/media

In her role with LINKs, Lilian Bold wants all information made available to the public and together with LINKs's Communication Manager has recently met the Editor of West Sussex County Times. Lilian is producing for the newspaper a monthly report on health and social care and LINKs will publish their Minutes online once they have been approved. As we need to publicise the fact we exist, it was agreed that once our Minutes have been approved we

will publish them on the HDC website. Damian to arrange for HDC to put a copy of the Minutes of the 9.9.09 on the HDC website. Also agreed that if someone present at the meeting did not want their comments/views reported then they need to tell Andrew not to Minute their remarks. Damian to arrange for a link between the HDC website and the LINKs website.

5. “Street Design” meeting on 14.10.09 and East Street pedestrianisation

Joyce and Terry reported back. Interesting meeting but none of the streets shown resembled East Street, they were all much wider. It was felt that traffic flowed better without road markings. Concern expressed regarding;

- (a) access between the road and the pavement cafes -will the road still be wide enough for delivery vehicles? Have the dimension been properly checked?
- (b) steps into some shops – when Church Road in Burgess Hill was pedestrianised an incline was provided at each shop threshold to reduce as many steps as possible. Some shops hard to access with wheelchairs.
- (c) a few shops have glass skylights on the pavement – anything being done about these?
- (d) Guide dogs – RNIB have launched an active campaign opposing shared surfaces. Terry showed the Autumn edition of the Access magazine and Damian copied the relevant pages. Manchester City Council has banned shared surfaces. Guide dogs are not trained to monitor where kerbs are. If the pavement is clear, dogs trained to stay in the centre. If shared surface, dogs will go to the left or right.

Although Highways is the responsibility of West Sussex County Council, Damian to give a copy of the Minutes to Bob Sinclair at HDC to verify these points. Damian to confirm time, date and venue of the next East Street Liaison meeting and then to notify the people on the Access Forum i.e. Peter, Phil, Terry and Joe.

6. Suggestions/Complaints received

Some overgrowing trees, branches, bushes etc obscuring road signs and affecting some pavements. Any such cases should be referred to West Sussex County Council or the Parish council if in a parished area. We would like to see a representative from WSCC at future meetings of the Access Forum. We do not think WSCC have an Access Officer. Damian to enquire with WSCC to see if they have an Access Officer and whether they could send someone to our meetings.

7. Health update

Terry reported that the North East Review looked at capacity at the hospitals in Horsham, Crawley and East Grinstead. 45 recommendations to be implemented. Access audits now completed of Horsham and Crawley hospitals. A draft report has been produced and sent to the Audit Surveyor for final sign off. Should be issued end of next week. Update at our December meeting as part of a standing item on health. Terry mentioned the first meeting of the North East Partnership for Health Board took place in Burgess Hill on 15.10.09. Good positive meeting with the opportunity at the end for public to comment or ask questions. The next one will be in Horsham in about 6 months time with Andrew chairing it.

LINKs – things starting to happen. Initially bogged down in administration, terms of reference, codes of conduct etc but recently the first training session took place in Crawley. If people sign up to LINKs then they are sent an invitation to training sessions.

8. Any items for inclusion in next HACVS newsletter

Deadline is the end of November. Damian to write a brief article regarding Access for inclusion to try to encourage more people to attend our meetings and to raise awareness that we exist. Also to mention who people with their own mobility scooter need to contact in the event of a breakdown or problem.

9. Suggestion for future speaker

We have been contacted by Roland Higgins of the West Sussex Association for Disabled People to see if we are interested in supporting the idea of a West Sussex Access group forum whereby they meet 4 times a year to discuss cross county issues, views, success stories and issues. Agreed we need to know more about it, what is envisaged, where the funding will come from etc. **Damian to invite Roland to our first meeting in 2010**

10. Any other business

- (a) **Damian to do a letter to say that LINKs need a facility for people who having hearing impairment or who are deaf**
- (b) let Terry know if anyone has problems accessing the LINKs website
- (c) the new protocol for A Boards was due to start on 1 October but Janet said no evidence in the shops of the licences etc. **Andrew to check with Gary Mortimer-Cook of HDC**. Agreed we have an update at our December meeting
- (d) Car Parking for Access meetings – agreed that unreasonable to expect people who give up their time to attend our meetings to also have to pay to park. In future, those people attending and who do not qualify for free parking **MUST** let Andrew know 48 hours before the meeting their car registration number and he will leave at the reception desk at Park House a sign saying they have exempt for paying for the duration of the meeting
- (e) apart from the December meeting, it was agreed that we delay the start of our meetings until 10.30 in future. This should make it possible for more members to attend. They will still run for a maximum of 2 hours.
- (f) next meetings – Thursday 10 December 12 noon to 2pm then Wednesday 17 February 10.30 to 12.30. Both in the Wicker room, Park House.

The meeting finished at 12 noon. Next meeting is Thursday 10 December 12noon to 2 pm. Sandwiches and mince pies will be provided. For catering purposes please confirm your attendance at this meeting once the Agenda is issued.

Minutes produced and distributed by Andrew Baldwin on 31 October, 2009