



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 9 September 2009 at 10am

Present:	Margaret Alford	Chair of Saxon Weald Disability Panel
	Andrew Baldwin	HDC Councillor
	Peter Billington	HACVS
	Lilian Bold	Local Link
	Damian Brewer	Horsham District Council Equalities Officer
	Phil Clements	HACVS
	Jill Hardie	Strawford Centre
	Yvonne Law	Independent
	Joyce Narborough	Independent
	Joe Nash	Independent
	May Pope	Independent (was Horsham Carers)
	Terry Rixon	Local Link and Stakeholder NE Review
	Janet Raybould	4sight
	*Gary Mortimer-Cooke	HDC Town Centre Manager
	**Nigel Weston	HDC Project Engineer
	**Luke Rogers	West Sussex County Council

* present for items 2 and 6

** present for item 2 only

1. Welcome & Apologies

Andrew Baldwin, Cabinet member for Housing and Community Development, Horsham District Council (HDC) chaired the meeting and took the Minutes. The Chairman welcomed everyone and people introduced themselves. Apologies received from Robin Ayres, Helen Gladhill, Pat Rutherford

2. **East Street and Market Square update** – Gary Mortimer-Cooke explained that he Chairs the Reference Group to ensure the interests of everyone are represented. The Scheme now proposed is a compromise. The Access Forum will continue to be involved and consulted with the East Street Advisory Group. Our current representatives are Peter Billington, Phil Clements and Terry Rixon. Andrew Baldwin asked that Joe Nash also be invited to attend as another of our representatives and this was agreed. Budget is £500,000 jointly funded by West Sussex County Council and Horsham District Council (HDC). This is the largest town centre project since major regeneration work about 10 years ago.

Three phases. The first phase whereby the road is closed to traffic between 10am and 4pm will cease in October, a few months earlier than planned. Then the street will be open all day for deliveries to traders and access for vehicles displaying the blue disabled badge. All other traffic will be banned. Speed limit 20mph.

There will be one level surface. Janet Raybould mentioned that the RNIB are opposed to shared surfaces. Construction work to regenerate this area will start around March 2010 and is estimated to take 4 – 5 months. Same finishes will also be used in Park Place where there is presently a trip hazard. The new scheme will provide for two bays for blue badge holders. Intention is to minimise street clutter – will be cycle racks near Barclays bank but no street lighting columns or sign posts. Initially one litter bin at the entrance to East Street and some spaces in Market Square for some blue badge holders. Envisaged that restaurants will provide some litter receptacles. There will be 5 seating benches provided – everyone agreed the seats need to have arms and backs on. These seats will be in the road either end of the parking bays and the loading bays. Suggestion made to have a litter bin next to some of the seats but to start with this will not be the case.

Gary Mortimer-Cooke will continue to work closely with the businesses/ traders to make this area a real jewel in Horsham's crown. Focus will be on night time economy with emphasise on drink with food with 5 or 6 areas for alfresco eating. No pub planned in East Street. Once all the work has been finished it will be marketed as a destination called "the quarter" aimed at the over 25s.

Nigel Weston brought along samples of some of the proposed paving. He will take them along to a meeting of 4sight on 7 October. On Wednesday 14 October at 5.30pm in the Studio at the Capitol will be a seminar by Ben Hamilton-Baillie dealing with "the broader perspective and principles of integrated street design, the changing philosophy concerning places and movement and the opportunities and challenges this presents". All welcome.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 10.6.09 – agreed as a true record

4. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda –

It was agreed that in future Damian will supply a written update of the present position regarding previous "actions" before the meeting.

- (a) Item 6 (a) – agreed we write back to WSCC and ask them to reconsider their refusal not to take remedial action. **Damian to deal and to copy in the local County Councillor**
- (b) Item 6 (b) – WSCC won't take action as they say there is enough dropped kerbs
- (c) Item 6 (d) – WSCC have agreed to increase the size of the bulb. No time scale
- (d) Items 6 (e) to (h) – no update provided. **Damian to check on these then circulate up to date position to everyone who attended this meeting before 1.10.09. Damian to check with Chichester District Council how successful the Selsey scheme has been.**
- (e) Item 6 (i) – done
- (f) Item 12 (c) – the traffic wardens will be given a map showing all the disabled bays in Horsham town centre. **Copies of the map to be made available on the HDC website (in pdf form) and in the library, museum, Age Concern offices, Saxon Weald and the people who are invited to these meetings – Damian to action**
- (g) Item 12 (d) – the 6% figure is a suggestion, not a statutory requirement. HDC monitor the number of disabled spaces to see if there is a need for more. Presently 4.6% are allocated for disabled badge holders. Terry Rixon asked for more spaces at Park House but Andrew said there are already enough – there are 6 for 80 spaces and also 2 across the road next to the Capitol. It was agreed that we need a sign at the front of the hedge outside Park North showing where the 2 disabled bays are. **Damian to arrange.**

(h) Item 12(h) – Damian is working to reinstate this project but it will take a while as he has other priorities.

5. Suggestions/ complaints

(a) Library car park Billingshurst – Terry said that the staff bays have been painted out and wondered if some could be reallocated as disabled. [Damian to make enquiries.](#)

6. “A” Boards

Gary Mortimer-Cooke gave an up date. West Sussex County Council is responsible for Highways but Horsham District Council is responsible for planning and enforcement and has been delegated to licence activities in Horsham town centre and to control/ place restrictions on advertisements. Andrew Baldwin said he did not think it was HDC’s responsibility to pass moral judgement on the sign outside the Candy Box in the Carfax but Gary Mortimer-Cooke said that we are trying to encourage shoppers from places like Crawley to come to Horsham and some people could take offense at some of the signs.

In the past HDC has tried to control “A” Boards for example giving advice on legality and danger of signs and to undertake a voluntary control. Need to strike a balance between support for the local economy but also not to have the place cluttered up with lots of boards many of which can cause obstructions particularly to people with impaired vision or in wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

There is no wish to ban all “A” Boards or to encourage more but we need a protocol to control them. [Damian Brewer to circulate a copy of the proposed protocol to all Access Members for their information.](#)

Intention is to start on 1 October 2009 for a 6 month trial. It has been trialled in Shoreham. No licence fee for a board during the trial period. HDC is reserving the right to charge for ongoing licencing. At a recent meeting of the Senior Council they agreed that they did not wish to see extra costs loaded on traders. Each shop front will be limited to one board and it will have to be within a metre of the shop front, adjacent and abutting the shop front. In the Carfax the boards will be in a line. Traders must prove they have the necessary public liability insurance and will need to display a notice in their shop window. Action will be taken against traders who persistently breach the protocol. In principle the Access Forum agreed to support the proposed protocol. Gary will be invited back to the December meeting to provide an up date.

7. Health update including Stakeholder Forum, LINK by Terry Rixon and Lilian Bold –

Terry confirmed that disabled access audits have been carried out at Crawley hospital but at Horsham hospital the audits won’t be finished until the end of this month. If people have any adverse comments to make regarding Horsham hospital to let Lilian know – there are a couple of issues regarding the car park. Once the audits have been done, not clear how the recommendations will be implemented.

LINK – an assessment has been carried out. Looking at setting up an advocacy group. Apart from commodes, second hand equipment can be sold or passed on. If the value is less than £100 free to advertise, if over £100 it costs £10. Can be advertised in the WSAD magazine. Because of the risk of infection, some NHS equipment will not be taken back by the NHS.

Contact Damian for more information. It was suggested and agreed that an article in the next Chronicle could mention the situation regarding equipment.

8. Reinstate the Planning review Panel?

Apart from Terry, no one keen to be involved with this. Andrew said that HDC is no longer able to supply an Officer to review these with anyone from the Access Forum. All planning applications can be seen on the HDC website and if anyone has any comments to feed them into Damian. Damian does check the weekly lists of applications.

9. any items for inclusion in the future HACVS newsletter – this item was inadvertently not covered at the meeting.

10. Any other business

- (a) Damian has arranged for the Access Forum leaflets to be updated and reprinted
- (b) SEEDA – South East England Development Agency are having a meeting on 8 October to consider mental health issues like access to work for people with mental health problems. For more details contact Lilian.
- (c) Access Forum – agreed we will include an article about the work of the Access Forum in the next HDC News. **Damian to liaise with Richard Morris at HDC**
- (d)** Dates and times of future meetings – we agreed to continue to hold future meetings on Wednesday mornings but to avoid the first Wednesday of each month as this is when 4sight meet. Agreed on two more meetings this year – Wednesday 28 October 10am to 12 noon (apologies from Yvonne Law) and then Thursday 10 December from 12 noon to 2pm. **HDC to arrange some sandwiches and mince pies for the December one**
- (e)** ICIS invite – there is an information and innovation event at Billingshurst Village hall on Monday 26 October 10am to 3pm. Contact ICIS on 0800 859929 for more details. If you want lunch, £2 contribution, please contact ICIS.
- (f)** Communication with the County Times – Lilian said that the West Sussex County Times have asked her for a report on these meetings on a regular basis. Andrew said he personally didn't have a problem in them seeing the Minutes. However, after the meeting, Andrew sent an e mail to all on 11.9.09 to say the Minutes won't be approved until the next meeting and so we should wait before sending them anything. We need to discuss communications with the press/ media in more detail at our next meeting. The Minutes are a public document so if we add them to the HDC website the WSCT can see them. In the meantime, any approaches from WSCT should be made to Damian.

The meeting finished at 12.15. Next meeting 10am Wednesday 28 October, Park House, Horsham District Council.

Minutes produced and distributed by Councillor Andrew Baldwin on 12 September 2009

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