



PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Date: Monday 29 OCTOBER 2018
Time: 10.30 AM
Place: Warspite - COUNCIL HOUSE

Committee Members

Mr Attrill, Mr Curno, Mr Pawley, Mr Skinner, Mr Stewart, Mr Abraham and Ms Cawthorn

Councillors Morris, Vincent and Wheeler.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf

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PLYMOUTH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:

2. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Forum Members.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this Agenda.

4. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 4)

The Forum will be asked to confirm the minutes of the 5 March 2018.

5. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

6. COASTAL ACCESS UPDATE - CREMYLL TO KINGSWEAR (Pages 5 - 8)

To note an update report from Natural England on their progress to date and next steps of the English Coast Path Project

7. CO-OPERATIVE WAY IMPROVEMENTS:

8. WORKING GROUPS

To agree any working groups for items on this agenda.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

Members are invited to add items to the work programme.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

To consider any correspondence received and note any correspondence sent by the Forum.

11. ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS

To discuss any issues brought forward by members of the Forum.

Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 5 March 2018

PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr I Stewart, Vice Chair.

Mr Curno, Councillor Jonathan Drean, Councillor Ken Foster, Mr Harvey, Mr Pawley, Mr Abraham and Councillor George Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Mr Skinner, Mr Attrill and Ms Cawthorne.

The meeting started at 10:30 and finished at 12:30.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

46. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declaration of interest was made in accordance with the Code of Conduct –

Name	Subject	Reason	Interest
Mr Pawley	South West Coast Path	Representative for the South West Coast Path Association	Personal
Cllr Jonathan Drean	Plymouth Airport	Former employee of Plymouth Airport.	Personal
Mr Curnow		Royal Yachting Association	Personal

47. **MINUTES**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2017 be confirmed.

48. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Under this item Mr Fairchild informed members that the future for food, farming and the environment consultation is underway. Mr Fairchild will send initial draft to members for their comments and will submit on behalf of the LAF.

49. **THE FUTURE OF THE LAF**

The committee discussed the future of the Local Access Forum.

The committee agreed the proposal of reducing to two formal public meetings a year with secretarial support and resolved to arrange their own informal meetings to progress forum business as and when required.

50. **HOOE LAKE BRIDGE**

Mr Abraham provided members with a presentation on Hooe Lake Bridge.

Mr Abraham to arrange a walk around Hooe Lake.

51. **THE ENGLISH COAST PATH UPDATE**

Robin Pearce (Public Rights of Way Officer) provided members with an update on the English Coast Path project.

Members noted the update and invited Natural England's TEC project lead to a future meeting.

52. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

Members noted this item.

53. **WORKING GROUPS**

Members noted this item.

54. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted the work programme attached to the agenda and will add dates next to items to help with planning future meetings.

55. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Members noted this item.

56. **ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS**

Members discussed:

- Stover Lake experiencing lots of pollution.
- Recent sheep worrying issues that have taken place in Devon and the impact of public rights of way near operational farms.
- An application for planning permission having been submitted for the Forder Valley Link Road scheme which contained further information about the proposals.

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Coastal access and the England Coast Path - Cremyll to Kingswear Update on progress – September 2018

Introduction

Natural England is investigating how to improve coastal access along a 107km stretch of the Devon coast between Cremyll and Kingswear. This new access is expected to be ready in 2020. Officers from Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council are providing Natural England with expert local advice and helping to make sure there is full consultation with local interests during the development of the route.

We have completed stage 1 for the stretch. This has included:

- holding discussions with national and local organisations as well as interested individuals to get their ideas and concerns about current access along this stretch;
- assessing the problems, opportunities and constraints for improving access along this stretch of coast; and
- seeking to identify owners and occupiers of land that might be affected.

We are currently in stage 2 which is the main stage for dialogue with local landowners and other legal interests in potentially affected land. We share with them any initial thinking and ask for their views on coastal access. The route of the existing South West Coast Path National Trail (SWCP) is likely to be followed by much of the proposed England Coast Path (ECP) in this area and we will inform landowners where this is the case. Where improvements could be made to the existing SWCP route we will meet with landowners to discuss the best approach and ensure sensitive features are protected.

There will be a formal opportunity to comment on the proposals to improve coastal access at the end of stage 3, when a report for the stretch will be written up and submitted to the Secretary of State. This will be in 2019.

Estuaries

As there are a number of estuaries on the Cremyll to Kingswear stretch, it is worth summarising Natural England's position on these. Under the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act, there is no requirement for the trail to extend up any estuary further than the seaward limit of the estuarial waters. But Natural England has a discretion to propose that the trail could extend from the seaward limit as far as the first bridge over which there is a public right of way or a public right of access to cross the river on foot. In exercising this discretion, Natural England must have regard to the considerations in the Coastal Access Scheme (the statutory methodology that underpins delivery of the England Coast Path).

One of the key considerations of the delivery of coastal access is to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, interruptions to the route are kept to a minimum. So if the presence of an estuary would interrupt this continuity of access along the coast then we need to look at whether the trail should serve the estuary too. We look at various criteria to make our decisions, including the nature of the land that would be affected, the topography of the shoreline, the recreational benefit, the extent of adjoining land that would be 'excepted land' and the existence of a ferry service – the existence of a ferry service is an important factor in our decision, if it crosses the estuary at a convenient place downstream from the first bridge and is available to foot passengers.

Update on progress

The Cremyll to Kingswear stretch has been split into 10 working chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1: Cremyll to Mount Batton Point
- Chapter 2: Mount Batton Point to the River Yealm
- Chapter 3: Yealm Estuary
- Chapter 4: River Yealm to the River Erme
- Chapter 5: Erme Estuary
- Chapter 6: River Erme to the River Avon
- Chapter 7: Avon Estuary
- Chapter 8: River Avon to the Kingsbridge Estuary
- Chapter 9: Kingsbridge Estuary to Torcross Point
- Chapter 10: Torcross Point to Kingswear

Progress to date on each of the chapters is summarised below.

Chapter 1: Cremyll to Mount Batton Point

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests in Plymouth are ongoing.
- A study of the estuary based on the above criteria has been undertaken. A regular year round service such as that provided by the Mount Batton Ferry meets our requirement for a convenient crossing point and we are minded to propose that the ECP will cross at the ferry point between Plymouth and Mount Batton Point. However it is the preference of Plymouth City Council and stakeholders for the South West Coast Path, for the SWCP to remain on its current alignment along the Waterfront Walkway to the crossing point on the A379 at Laira Bridge and so we will be proposing that the England Coast Path and the SWCP will diverge. The SWCP would retain its current approved route and the England Coast Path would utilise the ferry crossing.
- There are a number of waterfront sites currently being redeveloped in Plymouth or planned for redevelopment in the future. When proposals for development, including redevelopment, are being considered, we fully support Plymouth City Council's approach to include provision for the trail to be on the seaward side of any development wherever practicable.

Chapter 2: Mount Batton Point to the River Yealm

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. The route of the SWCP is likely be followed by much of the proposed ECP in this area and we are informing landowners where this is the case.

Chapter 3: Yealm Estuary

- A study of the estuary based on the above criteria has been undertaken. The conclusion is that we are minded to propose that the 'ordinary' route of the ECP will use the ferry crossing and an alternative route will be in place for when the ferry is not running. The alternative route around the estuary will follow public rights of way (PRoWs), a National Trust permissive route and part of the Erme-Plym trail.

Chapter 4: River Yealm to the River Erme

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. We are informing landowners where the route of the SWCP is likely to be followed by the proposed ECP in this area.

Chapter 5: Erme Estuary

- The Erme Estuary can only be crossed on foot by fording at low tide, the best route being roughly between the two slipways at Mothecombe and Wonwell. If crossed within an hour of low tide the water is generally no more than knee deep, although this can differ depending on weather and floodwater conditions. Information boards are situation at each side of the estuary.

In coming to a decision whether to exercise our estuary discretion, we have held discussions with the major landowner and considered the various criteria relating to the estuary, including the nature of land that would be affected, the topography of the shoreline, the recreational benefit and the extent of adjoining land that would be excepted (eg. historic parkland).

We are minded to propose that the ECP will cross the Erme Estuary at the low tide crossing point on foot as it does at present. We will work with the landowners and key stakeholders to look at improving existing information provision for users.

Chapter 6: River Erme to the River Avon

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. The route of the SWCP is likely be followed by much of the proposed ECP in this area and we are informing landowners where this is the case.

Chapter 7: Avon Estuary

- Discussions with the major landowner are ongoing. looking at the opportunity to bolster the current ferry crossing and to include an alternative route based on the Avon Estuary Trail.

Chapter 8: River Avon to the Kingsbridge Estuary

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. The route of the SWCP is likely be followed by much of the proposed ECP in this area and we are informing landowners where this is the case.

Chapter 9: Kingsbridge Estuary to Torcross Point

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. We are informing landowners where the route of the SWCP is likely to be followed by the proposed ECP in this area.
- There are a number of areas where we are holding discussions with landowners and looking at improvements to the route of the SWCP following the effects of Storm Emma earlier this year, notably at Hallsands, Beesands and Torcross.

Chapter 10: Torcross Point to Kingswear

- Discussions with landowners and legal interests along this part of the stretch are ongoing. We are informing landowners where the route of the SWCP is likely to be followed by the proposed ECP in this area.
- Following discussions with landowners and stakeholders we are minded to propose that the route of the ECP at Strete will follow the existing route of the SWCP through the village.
- We have held discussions with landowners and are working with Devon County Council regarding the realignment of the SWCP at Slapton Ley.
- There are some areas where we are looking at making improvements to the route of the SWCP/ECP and holding discussions with landowners about possible options, including at Stoke Fleming.

Jane Beech
Natural England
31/08/18