

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
MINUTES FOR MEETING No. 114
Held on Monday 12th August 2013,
at The Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth

1. Introduction of those present

Mike Kelly (President), John Lambert (Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Steve Rook (Treasurer), David Dowle (Vice Chairman), Carolyn Harris, Ray Bartlett, Terri Bartlett, Sue Glynn, Ray Powis, Sheila Dyer, June Ryan, Graham Ryan, Pauline Haime, David Wallis, Carole Lord, Carole Chinn, Gill Penwell, Susan Ward-Rice (WPBC), Christine Pearce

2. Apologies

Cllr Anne Kenwood, Cllr Colin Huckle

3. Minutes of Previous meeting

These were accepted as a true record. The following updates were given:

A-Boards - A DCC Policy on A-Boards had been published. The situation seems to be that A-Boards which obstruct the highway by not being close to premises are illegal. There are local authority areas within the country where they have been banned. There seems to be no appetite in Dorset authorities for this approach. Our problem remains simply to ensure unobstructed travel on the highway (i.e. footway) for people with disabilities.

Dropped Kerbs - Pier Bandstand markings need repainting

Chapelhay steps - some restitution work has started, but restoring the slopes will take a long time, meaning a long detour for those on wheels.

No Bins in Disabled Toilet - Changing Places Toilet has no waste bins
Susan Ward-Rice would follow up these last three items.

4. President's Report

I look forward to working with our new Borough Council contacts, Councillor Colin Huckle and Susan Ward-Rice.

A-boards and Sitting Out Areas

With the County-wide policy now in place it is apparent that there are many contraventions especially concerning A-boards. I hope that the local authorities will enforce the policy well but also suggest that we provide them with help by providing evidence of contraventions. Once again we need to point out that contraventions are difficult to identify in the absence of approved areas being marked on the pavement. Cllr Huckle has been made aware of this.

After quite a long discussion, members are encouraged to report obstructions to WPBC on 01305 838000 say "highway obstruction" and what and where. All calls will be passed to appropriate person and followed up. If you can take photos to illustrate the problem - so much the better!

Post Offices

I am still waiting for the Post Office to respond to our concerns about accessibility to the new Weymouth Town Centre and Fortuneswell Post Offices.

Pharmacies

The long awaited improvements at Boots branches at Easton, Fortuneswell and Wyke branches have commenced. Angel Pharmacies have submitted a planning application for a pharmacy at Wyke Health Centre. I understand this will replace their Buxton Road branch. Does anybody have concerns on this?

Bus services

First Bus held an event with RNIB to discuss the needs of blind and partially sighted passengers and raise driver awareness. I attended on behalf of W&PAG. Also discussed were measures to improve wheelchairs and scooter accessibility, further staff training and information cards for passengers with particular needs.

Further cycleway / walkways

Works should start later this year on crossings for the A354 and a route from Chafeys to Manor Roundabouts and DCC are consulting on improvements to the footpath / cycleway route to Portland beyond the sections already done.

5. Chairman`s Report

Cllr Colin Huckle Officers of WPAG had met with Cllr Colin Huckle (briefholder for Social Inclusion WPBC) as he was unable to come to this meeting. We briefed him and Susan Ward-Rice, who also attended, on all the matters of current concern to the Group.

Parking charges in the borough - it was a matter of regret that recent parking charge changes made by WPBC had not had any great benefit for the disabled, indeed WPBC have made NO concession to blue badge holders with regards to parking charges. We need to get this borough to make provision more like that in West Dorset where up to 3 hours free parking could be available to Blue Badge holders by applying for a permit.

6. Access Officers report - none this month.

7. Investigations Officers report.

Budmouth Dropped Kerb - we'd received a report that after the completion of highway works around Budmouth College that there was a need for a further dropped kerb to make access consistent and safe from all directions. He had been to look at the situation, and there was a need. The kerb in question was actually in the West Dorset area, not WPBC. Susan Ward-Rice made a note of this.

Honest Mobility He had been to visit "Honest Mobility" after their request. The premises were basically a small office with some space for scooters. He had managed to get in and out OK in the wheelchair, and found no other impediments.

8. Treasurer`s Report

There had been only minimal changes since last meeting - the balances now are: Balance at the bank is £2318.23 plus £8.81 in cash.

9. AOB

Publicity Leaflets Sheila Dyer said that George had "discovered" a box of about 600 2/3 A4 and 100 A4 leaflets which had been stored some years ago. He had updated these with the current WPBC number and they were now available.

Coincidentally DH had produced electronic copies of our leaflet with the same basic

information - mainly so that it could be placed on the web site so anyone who needed a few could download it and print it off.

Old public bench As the council were restoring things after the Olympics, a "well rotted" bench was discovered in a storage area with WPAG name as original sponsor. After a short discussion it had been decided to let it be "put to rest" gracefully. [SD]

Abbotsbury closure of road 2014 The coast road through Abbotsbury was to be closed for four months (January - April) to permit a new water main to be laid through the village.[SD]

Tesco Portland - Dropped Kerbs - Access to the Portland store was poor for those approaching as pedestrians on the "opposite" side of Park Road. Sight lines were not good to see traffic approaching from the car park and there were no dropped kerbs.[David Wallis]

Fortuneswell roadway - Request for handrails to be considered to improve use of difficult steps off carriageway. [MK]

Wheelchair Dancing - There is to be a "taster session" in Dorchester on 22 August - contact Ray Bartlett if you are interested.

Joan Heynes - Long time member Joan Heynes has left the area to live closer to her family. [DH]

Weymouth CIL (Centre for Independent Living) - This project was thought to have fallen through as a note from the Access Dorset attached to a recent email to members of WPAG stated this. Member Gill Penwell, however, believed the project was still proceeding - more information needed.

Next Meetings (all start at 14.00):

Monday 11th November 2013 (Agenda below)

Monday 10th February 2014 (includes AGM).

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
AGENDA FOR MEETING No. 115
MONDAY 11th November 2013, 2pm
Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth**

- 1. Introduction of those present**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of Previous meeting**
- 4. President`s Report**
- 5. Chairman`s Report**
- 6. Access Officers report**
- 7. Investigations Officers report**
- 8. Treasurer`s Report**
- 9. AOB**