

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP  
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018  
At Weymouth Fire & Safety Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth**

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Marguerite Brown (Vice Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Mike Kelly (President), Marguerite Brown (Vice Chairman), Sue Ward-Rice (WPBC), Julie Hursthouse (WPBC), Phil Goodland (DCC Highways) Sheila Dyer, Graham & June Ryan, Ian White (Investigations Officer), Bob Irwin (Investigations Officer), Gill Penwell, Sylvia O'Conner, Pauline Haime, Jean Spain.

**2. Apologies**

Carole Chinn, (Chairman), David Dowle, Carolyn Harris

**3. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 13th February 2017**

Members were invited to show approval of the minutes of the last AGM. Some printed copies were available. The minutes were approved by a show of hands.

**It was agreed that we should move directly to the Election of Officers and cover the President and Chairmans report within the February meeting immediately following.**

**4. Election of Officers**

The following persons were all proposed by Graham Ryan and seconded by Jean Spain. They were each elected to position by a show of hands.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chair	Carole Chinn
President	Mike Kelly
Secretary	Dave Harris
Vice Chair	Marguerite Brown
Investigations Officer	Ian White

The meeting concluded at 14.25.

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING No 137**  
**Monday 12th February 2018**  
**At Weymouth Fire & Safety Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth**

1. Welcome and Introduction (as AGM above)
2. Apologies (as AGM above)
3. President's Report

**Susan Ward-Rice**

Susan is leaving her post as Equalities Officer but will be taking up the post of Diversity and Inclusion Officer with Dorset County Council in early March. On behalf of Weymouth and Portland Access Group I would wish to thank her for her information, support and encouragement and to wish her well in her new job. The Group will, I am sure, continue to benefit from her advice and help in future.

**D Day Centre, Castletown, Portland**

I have previously reported the limited access to the D Day Centre. The Access Group understands that this is a new museum run on a not for profit basis in old and small premises but it was felt that if the Centre proves successful that efforts should be made to improve its accessibility. Although I was not informed of this by the Centre or the Council I have found that a planning application has been submitted for some limited extension. I have contacted the planning agent and the D Day Centre to say that, in my opinion, the application should have referred to the subject of disabled access, and even if this cannot be improved at the present that some statement of aims or intent would be much appreciated. To date I have not received any reply but I shall report further at the meeting.

**Weymouth Museum**

The Museum is applying for Lottery Funding in respect of proposals to enlarge and improve the museum within the wider works required to repair and convert Brewers Quay. I understand that improved accessibility is proposed and have said that the Access Group may wish to support the lottery bid. I shall report further when more information is available.

**Radipole Park and Gardens**

The Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens were successful with their Stage 1 Lottery Bid for improvement works including a café and toilets. The Access Group supported that bid and I look forward to hearing how we can help FRP&G and W&PBC move this forward to the next stage. A related subject concerns the safety benefits of reducing the speed limit on Radipole Park Drive.

**Seascape Café, Greenhill Gardens**

A planning application has been submitted to extend this café creating an enlarged upper floor and balcony with WCs including accessible toilets. The upper level would be accessible from street level. I suggest that a letter should

be sent to support these proposals. Regrettably I have to report that handrails have not been positioned to help people to use the stepped path immediately to the south of the café, a subject we discussed many meetings ago. This path is presumably the responsibility of DCC as Highway Authority or W&PBC as owner of Greenhill Gardens. Suitable handrails for these steps should be provided as soon as possible.

### **Rail franchises**

I responded to the consultation by South West Trains, on behalf of the Access Group, on their proposals for timetable changes. Whilst some faster trains to London would be helpful this is likely to be offset by the disadvantages of fewer trains stopping at smaller stations such as Upwey and Moreton. The smaller stations would be served by a proposed service to Portsmouth. This might also be of some benefit but overall the proposals are likely to require more people to change trains, and this would be a nuisance to many passengers, and in particular to people with disabilities, to people travelling with children, and to people with luggage.

A related concern relates to the trend towards 1 person operated trains. Removal of a second member of staff acting as a Guard is likely to make rail travel more difficult for many people with disabilities and I would suggest that Weymouth and Portland Access Group should make representations on this to the franchise holders for the Weymouth – London service, and the Weymouth – Bristol and Gloucester route.

## **4. Chairman's Report**

Welcome everyone to the Weymouth and Portland Access Group.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend today because of illness. However I'm sure Marguerite will do a sterling job.

Over the past year I have been very concerned about the lack of support for the management team; there are the same few people doing the majority of the work. Hopefully the joint event we are planning to hold with Ed Warr, Town Centre Manager; Steve Hyde, Regional Assistant Campaigns Officer (SW) RNIB and ourselves will give us a much needed boost. To this end I am inviting Ed Warr to come to our April meeting to give a brief outline of his role.

Due to ongoing health problems I am cutting down the time I spend on Weymouth and Portland Access Group, however I will continue for another year as Chair.

At our last meeting our lack of funds was mentioned and The Weymouth and Portland Access Group cannot continue without an injection of funding. To this end I propose the outgoings we continue to pay are:

- 1 The hire of the hall
- 2 Our insurance
- 3 Upkeep of our website
- 4 Disability Rights Handbook (until year end March 2018)

and that payment for taxis and miscellaneous items are stopped with immediate effect.

I am in contact with Steve Hyde, Regional Assistant Campaigns Officer (SW) RNIB regarding an ongoing query with Southern Gas Networks on behalf of one of our members. Apparently there are guidelines that utility companies have to adhere to to prevent accidents happening; Steve has made contact with southern Gas to establish what their particular guidelines are so that if they are not being adhered to we can inform them personally. We are still waiting to hear from him.

## 5. Access Officer's Report

Sue Ward Rice confirmed that this week was her last week working for WPBC. She would be taking up her new post as Diversity and Inclusion Officer with Dorset County Council and as such would no doubt be often in contact with the group.

There was a review in progress about the complex subject of allowing dogs on the Central Beach in Weymouth. Central Beach is the area between the two boat hull shaped cafes. The expectation was that dogs were likely to be banned all year on this section. The all-year round dog friendly zone towards the Pavilion end would not change.

Sue had no further news on the Local Government Reorganisation front. Adaptations to the Shire Hall building in Dorchester were in progress to allow wheelchair users to see the cells below the courtroom. These changes involved the provision of a platform lift and the modification of doorways at the lower level.

## 6. Highways Officer's Report

Phil Goodland of the DCC Highways team introduced himself – he was attending in place of Alaric Little. He reported that the teams budget for the current financial year was exhausted and little more could now be done. The team would continue to take information about locations with access problems and factor them in to work for the coming year.

## 7. Investigation Officer's Report

Ian mentioned difficulties at the upper exit from the Southill car park it was not possible to safely cross or use it in a wheelchair. Would the highways team see what can be done please. With regard to the Chelmsford Street drop kerb, work has been done and he now considers it to be a good solution. He reminded members that Highways faults and problems could be reported on the Dorset For You website.

## 8. Any Other Business

### 1. Data Protection Regulation & Training

A meeting has been arranged for March 9 at St Aldhelm's church hall to present to local groups the requirements of the new data protection regulations. WPAG should attend and two places were normally allowed for each organisation. Groups need to consider ways to ensure members data (name & addresses etc.) were used appropriately and with members knowledge and consent. This may require asking members by letter to

approve future use of their details. Groups also probably need to publish a data policy and accompanying privacy statement.

## **2. New Wheels in Motion event**

Julie Hursthouse asked if another such event was wanted – much support for another event, with the meeting wanting to ensure real people on real scooters were a part of the event and also wanting to ensure some utility teams were represented to make sure access issues around work sites were better understood.

<b>Next Meetings (All start at 2pm)</b>	
<b>at The Fire &amp; Safety Centre:</b>	
<b>Monday 9th April 2018</b>	<b>Monday 10th December 2018</b>
<b>Monday 11th June 2018</b>	<b>Monday 11th February 2019</b>
<b>Monday 13th August, 2018</b>	
<b>Monday 8th October 2018</b>	

**Help Line Phone numbers: DCC highway emergencies: 01305 221020**  
**WPBC Help Desk: 01305 838000**