

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at 2pm on Monday 13th February 2012 at
Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth

1. Introduction of those present

Mike Kelly (President), John Lambert (Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Steve Rook (Treasurer), Carolyn Harris, Julia Willoughby (WPBC), John Thraves (Dorset Cycling Network), Dave Thompson (Access Dorset Development Manager), Kate Weller (Cllr), Ray Bartlett, Terri Bartlett, Peter Glynn, Sue Glynn, Graham Ryan, June Ryan, Ian White, David Harris (Cllr), Peter Bennett, Gordon Lake, David Dowle (Vice Chairman)

2. Apologies

Lindy Treasurer, David Baxter, Alan Christopher

3. Approval of Minutes of SGM held on 14th February 2011

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the 2011 Special General Meeting.

4. President`s Report

John Lambert MBE

Congratulations John. He modestly said that the Access Group is a team effort but I do not believe the Group would have survived without his commitment.

5. Chairman`s Report

It was pleasing to see that the group had been re-invigorated over the last year or so and was now well positioned to move on. Our main task this year would be to make sure that as the Olympics and Paralympics "came to town" we could make the most of the opportunities presented on behalf of all disabled persons.

6. Treasurer`s Report

Steve Rook presented the examined accounts and said that the account was healthy due to the injection of the grant from Synergy Housing. Monies had not yet been received from the work done by our volunteers at Weymouth Carnival, but this was expected to provide an amount of several hundred pounds as it did last year. Approval of the accounts was proposed and seconded by David Dowle/Peter Bennett.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st December 2011

2010	Income	2011	2010	Expenditure	2011
£		£	£		£
300.00	Donation re Carnival		17.64	Refreshments	0.00
			31.45	Postages & Stationery	42.70
	Synergy Housing	2000.00	25.00	Subscription RADAR	25.00
			172.5	Insurance	174.46
100.00	R Brotherwood (sponsor of website)	100.00	70.99	Web-Site - M Golsby	100.00
			20.80	Travel	18.40
			20.00	Carer costs	30.00
					390.56
	Excess of expenditure over income		41.62	Excess of Income over expenditure	1,709.44
400.00		2,100.00	400.00		2,100.00

CASH ACCOUNT

2010		2011	2010	Represented by:	2011
1008.75	Bank balance b/f 1.1.11	1,055.37	1055.37	Bank balance 31.12.11	2,772.81
21.81	Cash in hand b/f 1.1.11	16.81	16.81	Cash in hand 31.12.11	8.81
		1,072.18			
400.00	Add income	2,100.00			
1430.56		3,172.18			
358.38	Less Expenditure	390.56			
1,072.18		2,781.62	1,072.18		2,781.62

S Rook

Hon. Treasurer

These accounts have been examined and agreed in accordance with vouchers and documents presented for examination:

SignedD Furley

Date6.1.2012

7. Election of Officers for the Coming Year

The following were approved to the posts for the coming year:

Post	Nominee	Proposer	Second
Chairman	John Lambert	David Dowle	Ian White
Vice Chairman	David Dowle	John Lambert	Mike Kelly
Secretary	David Harris	Ray Bartlett	Peter Bennett
Treasurer	Steve Rook	Mike Kelly	Peter Bennett
Publicity Officer	John Lambert	David Harris	Ian White

The meeting was declared closed at 14.20.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP

MINUTES FOR MEETING No. 106

**Held following the AGM on Monday 13th February 2012
at Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth**

1 Introduction of those present

Mike Kelly (President), John Lambert (Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Steve Rook (Treasurer), Carolyn Harris, Julia Willoughby (WPBC), John Thraves (Dorset Cycling Network), Dave Thompson (Access Dorset Development Manager), Kate Weller (Cllr), Ray Bartlett, Terri Bartlett, Sue Glynn, Graham Ryan, June Ryan, Ian White, David Harris (Cllr), Peter Bennett, Gordon Lake, David Dowle (Vice Chairman)

2 Apologies

Lindy Treasurer, David Baxter, Alan Christopher

3 President`s Report

Pharmacies

Boots have advised that proposals are being worked up for the improvement of their Easton branch and that they are looking at the access issues at their other pharmacies in the Borough. Thank you for the comments about access to other pharmacies and for taking up the subject with those shops where problems exist.

Public conveniences

Despite financial constraints Weymouth & Portland Borough Council is continuing its programme of investment. Councillor Kate Wheller, the Community Facilities Spokesman, Julia Willoughby and others concerned are thanked. However the closure of the Littlemoor toilets is of concern.

Café sitting out areas

Ian White and I have asked to speak to the committee meeting of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council on 20 February.

Improving access routes

I attended a recent Connect 2 meeting concerning cycleways and accessible off-road routes. The Rodwell Trail bridge over Newstead Road was lifted into position over the weekend of 11/12 February. May 6 has now been identified for the official opening (though the bridge should be open for use much earlier). As one of the original supporters of the project it is hoped that many the Access Group members will be able to attend. The toucan crossing on the A354 at Ferry Bridge is now in use. With the works associated with the Chesil Beach Centre, including the new traffic islands on the A354, we continue to press for a better route south towards Portland as the existing shared path is close to fast moving traffic.

Talks to Local Groups

We have seen a most encouraging revival of the Group over the last year or two. One initiative we discussed was to promote the Group and its objectives through talks. As part of this I have, this year, given talks to the Weymouth and Portland Senior Forum and to the BTEC Architecture students at Weymouth College.

4 Chairman's Report

Access Dorset AGM

a) Ian White is attending the (inaugural) AGM with a new leaflet he has prepared, which he will show us for comment**. Details of the AGM are: Thursday, 16th February, 12.00 – 15.30 at Hamworthy Social Club, Magna Road, Canford Magna, Wimborne, BH21 3AP Lunch will be provided, and the achievements of the last year will be celebrated and “exciting plans for the future” will be discussed.

** Details agreed for leaflet - printing options would be confirmed later.

b) New issue of the Access Dorset magazine will be out soon - DH will distribute electronic version to members.

c) A survey group called "AD100" was being established to provide rapid information gathering relating to a range of disabilities to allow Access Dorset to respond to requests for information about specific situations.

e) During the discussion of Access Dorset's web site it emerged that the site had been set up so it could be presented in different ways to help legibility for those with sight impairment. DH agreed to ask Mark Golsby if similar principles could be applied to the WPAG web site.

Sitting Out Areas

Hopefully Ian White, Cllr Kate Wheller and Mike Kelly will attend a meeting at WPBC Council Offices on 20th February at 6.30pm. Charlotte Peach has organised this meeting.

Old Ship Inn

Following my complaint to the tenant of the Old Ship Inn in Upwey regarding the parking space that blocks the only accessible entrance to the pub, I contacted Punch Taverns who own the pub to pass my complaint to them. The following is part of their response:

"Our tenant has agreed that he will erect signage to be positioned in clear view of the parking space in front of the entrance explaining that should an individual park in this area then they may be asked to move to allow relevant access. He has also confirmed that there are two access areas to the property, the one you have indicated in your email and another to the side of the property, which is a level access.

In this way our partner believes that he has complied with the regulations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requiring small to medium sized businesses to make all 'reasonable adjustments' so they do not discriminate against disabled customers or employees.

Thank you for your feedback and we hope that you continue to enjoy your

experience at the Ship Inn"

Obviously, I'm not happy with this response as the side entrance only accesses the restaurant from which there are steps up into the bar. I will continue my efforts to get the parking changed.

Olympics

JW asked for two Key Points to be noted:

- a) Dropped Kerbs were now a DCC responsibility
- b) DCC are upgrading "major routes" around the town. DH(Cllr) offered to set up meetings for IW to discuss these on the group's behalf.
- c) The Paralympic events would be contained entirely within Portland Harbour. There would be no sight of them from Weymouth beach or town. Transport planning was focused on getting spectators to Portland.
- d) IW had been in touch with Natural England about the possible improvement of the old railway track bed alongside Portland Harbour into a smoother footpath. No promises had been made, but Ian was hopeful that there might be some chance of an improvement being allowed.

Disabled Toilets for Refurbishment

A list of toilets to be refurbished has been reported in the Dorset Echo. ALL toilets listed were: Greenhill Gardens, Bond Street, underground toilets near the Kings Statue, the Swannery, Cove Street, the Nothe, Portland Bill and Fortuneswell.

There was discussion of the various location on Portland which the group had surveyed previously. After discussion, it was resolved that public Disabled Toilets will be available from this year on Portland at the following locations:

- Chesil Beach Visitor Centre (under construction)
- Fortuneswell
- Chesil Promenade (not 24 Hr)
- Portland Bill

Disability Rights UK

John concluded his report with a reminder that RADAR had merged with other organisations into "Disability Rights UK"

5 Treasurer's Report

See AGM information. Our previous subscription to RADAR had cost £25, now that we are to be members of the merged organisation Disability Rights UK the fee will be £50.

6 Access Officers Report

- a) JW reminded meeting that the list of dropped kerbs provided to DCC was a means of indicating priority, not a fixed list - items should be reviewed regularly.
- b) Town Centre on-street parking - Many of the supposed suitable locations suffered problems (e.g.no nearby dropped kerb). IW volunteered

to gather information on all the places where it was possible to unload a wheelchair or scooter satisfactorily. He would also document those places which were unsuitable.

c) Julia told the meeting that due to changes within the council she would be giving up the liaison role with the Access Group. JL thanked her for all the work she had done for the Group in the years she had worked with us. JW would be introducing Sue Bickerell as the new contact at the next meeting.

7 **Complaints Officers Report**

a) IW passed photos of the recently installed accessible kissing gate at Radipole RSPB. (See photos below)

b) ASDA - The Store Manager had now agreed to get a mirror fitted into the lift / There was a hearing loop in the Pharmacy but the noisy nature of the location was not likely to change / The road crossing outside the premises was a local authority responsibility - Councillor Christine James would be reviewing it.

c) WH Smith - a mirror has now been fitted in the lift, making use of a scooter much safer for all. IW will thank both the store manager and head office.

d) St Marys Church - still "pending" - no change this period.

e) The Countryside Mobility Scheme provides easy access to the countryside for people with disabilities living in and visiting South West England through a mobility scooter hire scheme. Annual Membership costs £10. "Tramper" scooters can then be hired to members from a range of locations for £2.50 per hour. Portland is about to become such a location, with scooters being available from the Heights Hotel, and possibly the Pulpit Inn also. It is hoped that access into the quarries and around Portland Bill will be enabled by the provision of these machines.

8 **AOB**

a) **ADDITIONAL MEETINGS** - much is happening at the moment and there is need to keep on top of things as the Olympic period approaches. Extra Meetings have therefore been arranged for Monday 19th March and Monday 23 April. Members are asked to put these in their diaries.

b) **TAXIS** DD reported that Weyline Taxi was no longer taking advance bookings for accessible taxis. This leaves Steves Taxi as the only pre-bookable service.

c) **DURLSTON PARK** R&TB had been to Durlston to do a "visually impaired" assessment. A significant range of problems had been found - this was a shame because the project has been completed - leaving much which is still needed to make the site "friendly" for those with sight difficulties.

d) **HARDYS COTTAGE** R&TB The National Trust has invited them to provide input to a renovation/development of Thomas Hardy's birthplace BEFORE the work has started, so they were hopeful of a much more

positive result in that case.

e) **DROPPED KERBS** R&TB The Dorchester access group had been participating in the prioritising of Dropped Kerbs for several years now, but budget restrictions had prevented any work from being done.

f) **A BOARDS** R&TB A board proliferation was a major problem in Dorchester (as it is in many places). An initiative called "Give us back our Streets" was being set up to focus on the issue of highway obstructions.

g) **ELECTRIC BUSES** R&TB New electric buses had been found to increase pedestrian hazards in some places as they cannot be heard at all - can we check with operators that sounding devices will be fitted and used by such vehicles?

h) **ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE** DT Access Dorset have managed to make an accessible vehicle available. The vehicle is currently located on Portland where it was recently vandalised as reported in the Echo. Damage has been repaired thanks to a donation (£1K) from JP Morgan bank in Bournemouth.

The Vehicle is due to be located in Weymouth for a 3 month period. The intent is to operate it using volunteer drivers and to provide transport for parties which include a disabled person. The vehicle can seat 6 people including one wheelchair or scooter.

The plan is to work with (not against) local organisations, so co-operation will be sought if there is already a pool of volunteer drivers Portland ICA and Weymouth Community Volunteers were mentioned as such possibilities.

i) JT was a member of a Disability Club in Wareham . There was a strong aversion in that group to linking with "Access Dorset". He believes it is based on some history long before he arrived. He proposes to see if Swanage area might be more amenable.

Date of Next Meeting 19 March 2.00pm Acorns Day Centre



Ian White's photos of the newly installed Kissing Gate at Radipole Nature Reserve