

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING No 139
Monday 11th June 2018
At Weymouth Fire & Safety Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth

1. Welcome and Introduction

Carole Chinn (Chairman), Marguerite Brown (Vice Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Mike Kelly (President), Ian White (Investigations Officer), Bob Irwin (Investigations Officer), Kathleen Boston - Mammah (W&P, WDCC, NDC), Graham Ryan, June Ryan, Sheila Dyer, Jean Spain, Carolyn Harris, David Dowle.

2. Apologies

Sylvia O'Conner, Gill Penwell

3. President's Report

Equalities Officer

I am pleased that Weymouth & Portland, West Dorset and North Dorset Councils have now appointed Kathleen Boston-Mammah to replace Susan Ward-Rice who took up a post with Dorset County Council. It is hoped that we will meet Kathleen at our June meeting and that Susan will also be able to attend..

Contact with RNIB Regional Office

I was disappointed that the joint event planned with RNIB did not go ahead. As well as discussing this event with RNIB I had hoped to engage them on subjects including A Boards and other highway clutter, use of Braille in signs (Councillor Christine James raised this subject at a previous meeting), the use of Real Time Information Key Fobs for information about train and bus services (a subject raised by Councillor David Harris), and the consultation carried out by the Borough Council on the Seafront Lighting proposals. I will continue to pursue RNIB as their advice would be of value on these subjects.

Supermarkets

ALDI has said that planning permission will be sought to build a supermarket in Mercery Road near the New Look offices to replace their supermarket at Jubilee Retail Park. I don't know whether the Access Group would wish to comment. I also don't know whether the Borough Council would be successful on an appeal if they resisted the proposals. I consider that there is a problem with distribution of supermarkets in the Borough with 3 medium to large ones already near Manor Roundabout whilst Wyke, Fortuneswell, Preston, and even Weymouth Town Centre, are only served by smaller supermarkets or convenience stores, whilst Littlemoor no longer has a supermarket. This situation is likely to be of particular inconvenience to many older people, people with disability, and to many people caring for young children, or without access to a car.

Community meeting and Walking Groups

I have spoken to Julie Hursthouse of W&PBC concerning meetings planned to assist networking of organisations such as ours, a subject which Sheila and I have been

discussing with the aim of improving the Access Group web-site. There is also an initiative to extend the programme of walks as these are proving popular and are helpful for fitness and well-being.

Parking on pavements

We have discussed this problem before. For good reason the Fire and Rescue Service has been warning car owners about the problem of obstruction caused by on-street car parking in some locations. However rather than people parking with more consideration it appears that other problems are resulting. I have noted an increase in parking partly on pavements in Longcroft Road, Emmadale Road, Franklin Road and Cromwell Road, Westham. This can result in pedestrians or wheelchair / mobility scooter users being forced onto the carriageway, with consequent dangers. Are there similar issues in other areas?

Greenhill Gardens

I reported that planning permission has been granted for the extension of the Seascape Café to make use of the upper floor of the building with level access from the upper area of the Gardens and provision of an accessible W.C. We had also asked whether continuous handrails could be fitted to the steps adjoining the south end of the Gardens. I have not heard further about this and would wish to remind the local authorities that this would be helpful. I suggest that we should also speak to the Friends of Greenhill Gardens about this.

4. Chairman's Report

Weymouth Library

I have been in contact with Weymouth Library. They are very happy for us to have a stand, either by the door or in the window area. If we give them a few dates they will let us know which is the most suitable for us; we cannot have a collection or raise funds in the Library as unfortunately it is against Dorset County Council's Policy.

RNIB

I am still waiting to hear from Steve Hyde, Regional Assistant Campaigns Officer (SW) for the RNIB, regarding a query with Southern Gas Networks.

Joint Event

This is a separate Agenda item.

5. Treasurers Report

Although we did not mention this during the meeting, both Carole and I have been kept up to date by email. Since the April meeting, Richard has found and recruited an Auditor, he has also brought our accounts up-to-date. He intends to produce a full financial report at a future meeting.

6. Access Officer's Report – No report

7. Highways Officer's Report – No report

8. Investigation Officer's Report

Ian has used the Dorset for You website to report places where maintenance work was needed. He did not think that the response given by the site was accurate. When underbrush needed clearing, he did not think that the task was being done well.

9. Joint Event

We were unable to get enough resources to run this event - there were also problems with communication between ourselves and the RNIB. We now are in the planning stages of running events inside Weymouth Library and looking for other locations where we might promote WPAG to the public..

10. Any Other Business

- a) **Website.** Sheila Dyer was prepared to review and update the web site and proposed a sub-group to do this. The meeting supported this course of action.
- b) **Other contact Groups.** A general idea was put forward to provide links on the web site to other local groups reciprocally, each would link to the other. In this way there would be mutual benefit.
- c) **Gill Penwell had passed a report to Carole which was read out.** This concerned the consultation meeting about the future seafront lighting scheme. Gill felt that the comments made by residents was not being listened to. The people running the meeting tended to be arrogant and were not prepared to consider other points of view. This was particularly so in the case of considering the reinstatement of a fairy light scheme.
She did establish that the proposed lights would change and there would be some flickering, but this would only be visible from the seaward side.

Next Meetings (All start at 2pm)	
at The Fire & Safety Centre:	
Monday 13th August, 2018	Monday 11th February 2019
Monday 8th October 2018	
Monday 10th December 2018	

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