

# WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP

## MINUTES OF MEETING No. 132

Held at 2pm on Monday 10th April 2017

At Weymouth Fire & Safety Centre, Radipole Lane, Weymouth

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

Marguerite Brown (Vice Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Steve Rook (Treasurer), Mike Kelly (President), David Dowle, Carolyn Harris, Dawn Atkin (DCC Highways), Cllr David Harris (DCC), Graham & June Ryan, Bob Irwin (Investigations Officer), Gill Penwell, Sylvia O'Conner, Pauline Haime.

### 2. Apologies

Carole Chinn, Ian White (Investigations Officer), Sheila Dyer, Sue Ward-Rice (WPBC)

### 3. Minutes of Previous meeting

Proposed: David Dowle, Approved - All by show of hands.

### 4. President's Report

#### Local Plan Review Consultation

I have responded to this on behalf of the Access Group, to meet the consultation deadline. As previously I have supported the efforts of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council and West Dorset District Council to ensure the provision of more accessible and adaptable housing to help meet the needs of a growing population of elderly people, increased expectations of people with disabilities for independence and mobility, and provide better space standards (given that since about 1980 Britain's new housing has had about the lowest space standards in Europe). I hope that this time the Councils will succeed with these initiatives but the Access Group will need to provide necessary support as some developers are likely to object to the measures with evidence being heard at a Public Inquiry.

The Local Plan Review also seeks to identify additional housing sites. These include sites in Weymouth, Portland and Chickerell. I have expressed concern that some of these sites, including land between Southill and Wessex Stadium, and at Southwell and Perryfields, Portland, are rather remote from shops and services. In particular a site above Brackendown Avenue, Preston is not only some distance from shops and services but is on high sloping ground with the likelihood that any development would be inconvenient to elderly or disabled residents or visitors.

#### Parks and Gardens "Friends Groups"

Following from my previous report the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens have said that they would like to meet members of W&PAG to discuss their proposals and intended Lottery bid. 21 April was identified as a possible date for a meeting but with Carole Chinn and Ian White out of action I propose that we ask for another date to be arranged.

**NB A new date of 19th of May at 10am has been arranged, if wet meeting will be inside the nearby Centenary Club.**

### **Portland Quarries Nature Park**

We have previously discussed the Nature Park which extends from the present visitor attractions of Tout and Kingbarrow Quarries to an arc of land of high landscape and nature conservation value extending to take in the proposed MEMO and Jurassica Projects. Ian tried out the off-road Tracker which provides accessibility across the rough terrain of these former quarries but I suggest that W&PAG should again approach those involved to hear about the latest proposals and how people with disabilities can gain as much accessibility and enjoyment from the extended Nature Park as reasonably possible.

### **Town Centre Seating**

I have noticed that the provision of outside public seating in the Town Centre falls short of what is needed. I also consider that there should be more or better seating at Weymouth Station and near busy bus stops. There is also a need for a seat for people waiting at the bus stop nearest to the Mount Pleasant Park and Ride site now that the buses no longer use the stop in the car park.

### **Weymouth Civic Society**

Carole Chinn and I have been invited to give a talk to the Civic Society in the Autumn. John Lambert and I made a presentation nearly 20 years ago and it will be good to have an opportunity to discuss what has been achieved and what more can and should be done to improve accessibility

### **Public Conveniences**

Following the closure of the toilets in Bond Street the Group needs to know what proposals Weymouth and Portland Borough Council has and in particular their plans for providing more accessible W.Cs. I also wish to mention, as suggested by Crohn's & Colitis UK, that some accessible WCs are now being re-signed to read "Not every disability is visible. Accessible toilet" with the usual logos.

### **Bank Closure on Portland**

A plan has been announced to close the Lloyd's Bank Easton Branch. This is the last bank branch on the island. Arrangements would be made to allow banking business to be done at the island Post Offices, but as we had previously discussed, these offer poor access for disabled persons.

**5. Chairman`s Report.** No report in Chairman's absence.

**6. Treasurer`s Report.**

There had been only the room hire fee (c£16) spent since the last report. We had received a further years sponsorship of £200 from Weymouth Mobility. As at 7th April, the WPAG assets stand at just over £1500.

We had still not heard anything from the Carnival committee. Cllr Harris had heard that there had been only minimal profits from last year's Carnival, so he expected only small payments were likely to be made.

**7. Access Officers Report**

### **Chapelhay Skips**

The situation with the recycling and refuse bins at Chapelhay was that the signage required to show what the different bins were for was still awaited. When the signs

do arrive then the skips will be placed in the enclosures. Christine Pearce reports that the waste clearing organisation had complained that the skips had been contaminated by incorrect use and this was a current problem.

### **Handrail in Greenhill Gardens**

This matter had been referred to WPBC Parks Department.

### **8. Highway Officers Report.**

The budget for dropped kerb work for the coming year was £2000 for an area from Weymouth to Lyme Regis. All previously listed items were now complete.

### **9. Investigations Officers Report**

#### **Footpath between Field Barn Drive & Chafes Avenue**

Bob confirmed that the repairs to this footpath had been done speedily and to a good standard..

### **10. Any Other Business**

#### **D-day Museum, Castletown, Portland**

Museum is a good one to visit and helps understand the local areas wartime history. There is an upstairs section which is only accessible by stairs.

#### **Building Access**

Gill Penwell discussed a situation at Nightingale House where disabled residents dependent on Mobility Scooters were being expected to pay a fee of £45 to have a remote control for building access in place of the standard issue key fob. These were now needed as all the locks had been changed from mechanical to electronic.

Meeting closed at 14.45

**Next Meetings (all start at 14.00):**

| <b>Future meetings at 2pm at The Fire &amp; Safety Centre:</b> |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Monday 12 June 2017</b>                                     | <b>Monday 11 December 2017</b> |
| <b>Monday 14 August 2017</b>                                   | <b>Monday 12 February 2018</b> |
| <b>Monday 9 October 2017</b>                                   |                                |
|  |                                |

#### **Help Line Phone numbers:**

DCC highway emergencies: 01305 221020

WPBC Help Desk: 01305 838000