

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
MINUTES FOR MEETING No. 115
Held on Monday 11th November 2013,
at The Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth

1. Introduction of those present

Mike Kelly (President), John Lambert (Chairman), David Harris (Secretary), Carolyn Harris, Ray Bartlett, Terri Bartlett, Sheila Dyer, June Ryan, Graham Ryan, Carole Lord, Gill Penwell, Dawn Atkin (DCC), Ian Newport (DCC) Susan Ward-Rice (WPBC), Christine Pearce, Cllr Colin Huckle

2. Apologies

Steve Rook (Treasurer), Ian White, Carole Chinn,

3. Minutes of Previous meeting

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

A-Boards - An update and status report will be given by Ian Newport

Dropped Kerbs - Pier Bandstand markings have been done

Chapelhay steps - A stabilisation project is now in hand, and is scheduled to take 20 weeks, the access may have to be rebuilt after that - meaning a continued long detour for those on wheels.,

No Bins in Disabled Toilet - Changing Places Toilet now has waste bins.

4. President`s Report

A-boards ...later...

Post Offices

I have had a response to the new Weymouth Town Centre Post Office complaint. There is little new information but a lengthy set of reasons why further improvements could not be made. Indeed the letter contains the following:

"I am aware that certain members of your access group feel that the staff are responsible for the entrance situation. Could I respectfully ask that any frustrations are not focused towards the staff who are doing their best to maintain a high level of customer service and satisfaction, but forwarded to me and I will address issues as and when they occur. The staff within the branch have a right to work in a safe and secure environment without feeling threatened, intimidated or insulted."

There is also:

"Long term we aim to install a new shop front with a more level access and wider electric door. This at the moment is not a reasonable request as there are no funds available to support this action. However, as the business grows and becomes profitable, funds will be transferred monthly to enable the business to finance this project."

So we are still waiting for a new storefront some time in the future..

As part of this discussion, Dawn Atkin said she had inspected the general area and that the job of raising the pavements outside the premises should not be a major one.

Pharmacies

Improvements at Boots branch at Easton have been made - there are some remaining concerns about the steepness of the new ramp, Portland Road, Wyke branch access has been improved.

Sea Life Tower Mike had received a reply from Merlin Entertainments about the

difficulties reported by Ian White previously. The response was really a non-committal one. As the ride does provide "reasonable access" it was felt there was not much more that could be gained by pursuing the matter further.

Bus services

MK was now a member of a local First Bus Customer Panel. Carole Chinn's name had also been put forward for this. Mike now had information cards for passengers with particular needs which could be displayed to drivers to help them give assistance. He passed several out to those interested.

Poor air quality in parts of Weymouth Town Centre and in Trinity Street and High West Street, Dorchester. This is a particular issue for people with respiratory problems. As the problem arises from vehicle emissions it is a significant problem to children and people using wheelchairs. Buses are only part of the problem but First Group will be introducing more low emission vehicles including vehicles where the engine turns off if the bus is stationary for a short period

Further accessible buildings:

Vaughan's restaurant (Custom House Quay) was accessible and had a good disabled toilet; The George Inn (also on the quayside) was also a good accessible premises with disabled W.C. and which had a good lift to get to the upper floor.

5. Chairman`s Report

Introductions: I should like to introduce two officers of Dorset County Council: they are Dawn Atkin, who deals with dropped kerbs and Ian Newport, dealing with 'A' Boards.

Sainsburys: I used the lift to the Mezzanine floor. Whilst it would have been preferable for there to have been a little more space between the lift entrance and the glass screen, it was certainly negotiable for any wheelchair / mobility scooter to turn in and out of the lift. There is no way anyone could crash through the toughened glass screen onto the ground floor as there is what looked like a stainless steel barrier approximately 8 inches from the floor in front of it. Also there is a vertical upright holding the glass in place in the centre of the screen immediately in front of the lift. There is an excellent mirror in the lift to assist with the manoeuvre.

Sheila Dyer commented on the high quality of disabled toilets in Sainsbury`s Upstairs and downstairs, plenty of room, small bins making them easier to use from a wheelchair!

6. Access Officers report -The floor was given over to Ian Newport who produced copies of DCCs 'Guide to "A" Board Enforcement Policy'. This is an A5 size four page brochure which clearly sets out how the County requires "A" Boards to be managed. They (DCC) recently had a great deal of success in Lyme Regis using the "softly softly" approach of visiting traders premises and explaining the policy supported by giving a copy of the leaflet. They would like to try this in the Weymouth Town area and would like some people with disabilities to help them illustrate problems to the businesses. Sheila Dyer, Graham and June Ryan agreed to assist.

DCC officers also agreed to look at the steps from the carriageway to the raised footpath on the east side of Fortuneswell to assess whether handrails to the steps would be helpful.

If problems with highways are identified, they can be recorded on DCC's web site using the following page:
["http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/roads-and-driving/report-a-road-problem"](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/roads-and-driving/report-a-road-problem). This page can currently be found in two clicks from the DCC home page. Alternatively they can be phoned in to 01305 221000 where details will be put in to the same system.

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. **Action - Dawn Atkin to assess/discuss with WDDC.**

Sheila Dyer has found a problem with the connection between Nightingale Drive and Icen Lane in Upwey. There are complications with levels, kerbs and the cycle barrier which between them make it difficult for electric scooters and all wheelchairs to use. Could leveling/ramping be used to improve access? **Action - Dawn Atkin to assess**

8. Treasurer`s Report

There had been only minimal changes since last meeting - the balances now are: we have £2311.23 in the bank and £3.51 in cash at present.

9. AOB

Publicity Leaflets passed to DH

DH mentioned **CAMRA's new pubs database** containing details for over 32,000 pubs. Local members provided the data for our area and were trying to put accurate factual information about access within the premises, Web site is "Whatpub.com".

Action DH to arrange linking from WPAG web site to relevant pubs.

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] **Action - Dawn Atkin to assess.**

Weymouth CIL (Centre for Independent Living) - A web site is set up with basic information, but there is no further progress with the proposed building.

Absence of local TIC: The lack of an "official" TIC was a problem - there was no longer a service to put people with disabilities in touch with accessible accomodation. Dorchester TIC could be used for booking tickets etc. but did not have the other knowledge.

Weymouth Area Seniors Forum is holding a meeting at 14.00 on 26th November at the Angling Club. There will be a speaker explaining changes which are happening within the Ambulance Service. Contact Gill Penwell on 778208 for more information.

Next Meetings (all start at 14.00):

Monday 10th February 2014 (includes AGM - Agendas on next page).

Monday 12th May 2014	Monday 10th November 2014
Monday 11th August 2014	Monday 9th February 2015

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
AGENDA FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

To be held at 2pm on Monday 10th February 2014

At Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth

- 1. Introduction of those present**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Approval of Minutes of previous AGM**
- 4. President`s Report**
- 5. Chairman`s Report**
- 6. Treasurer`s Report**
- 7. Election of Officers for the Coming Year**

**WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND ACCESS GROUP
AGENDA FOR MEETING No. 116
MONDAY 10th February 2014, (immediately after AGM
Acorns Centre, Grosvenor Road, Weymouth**

- 1. Introduction of those present - [as AGM]**
- 2. Apologies - [as AGM]**
- 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**