

**Town Access Plan
Steering Group meeting held on 21st April 2009**

Present: Dominic McGrath - HCC
Hannah Baker - HCC
Bernard Rand - HCC
Jo Stannard - RTC
Cllr Mrs Wiseman - RTC
Cllr Treleaven - NFDC

Apologies: Cllr Clarke – RTC & HCC

The Town Access Plan (TAP) is a shared strategy between Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and Ringwood Town Council that details how access to services and facilities within the town can be improved.

The TAP will identify the barriers that people face in reaching services and activities such as jobs, healthcare, shops and education and set out an action plan on how these barriers can be reduced and the ease of movement in the town improved. While the TAP aims to improve access for all it will focus on those groups that may have limited accessibility such as the young and the elderly and those without access to the car who rely on walking, cycling, public and community transport.

The Steering Group discussed the Draft TAP, which had been prepared by HCC and was based on a model used for Andover. The general format was agreed and some minor alterations and additions were made.

It was agreed to extend the area of interest to the east to meet the National Park boundary, to ensure that all main residential areas are covered.

It was agreed that the Highways Agency proposals to close the West Street exit to the A31 need to be the subject of a separate study, although it will be referred to in the TAP.

The poor condition of the surfacing in Christchurch Road was noted – it is very dangerous for cyclists, particularly between the brewery and the dairy – there is a need for interim repair work prior to the delivery of the cycle route connecting the town centre to the south. DM will report to Tim Lawton.

Proposals for pavement widening in Southampton Road (near Carvers) have been put on hold. This scheme has been reserved for inclusion in a future programme.

Transport Contributions – there is concern that NFDC is not pursuing these contributions following some recent Appeal decisions, when the Inspector has said there is no justification for the contribution. The principal role of the TAP is to help to secure and direct this funding to identified schemes. It would therefore be beneficial if the document could have a formal status, for example as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will give it weight. Cllr Treleaven supports the proposal to have the TAP adopted as a SPD. NH will speak to Graham Ashworth to see how this could fit in with the Local Development Framework programme. HCC will adopt the TAP as a daughter document to the Local Transport Plan.

(For information, when the District Core Strategy has been approved, NFDC will be working on 3 documents in tandem – Sites and Development Management, Local Distinctiveness and Town Centres SPD.)

A Stakeholder Workshop has been arranged for 6.30pm on Thursday 2nd July, prior to public consultation, to ensure that the priorities and proposed measures will reflect local concerns and local knowledge of accessibility issues. The Workshop will take the format of a mapping exercise. Needs that have been previously identified through the LDF, Walking & Cycling Working Group and Town Plan will be mapped and participants will be asked what the barriers are to access and where they would like to see improvements made. Issues to be considered at the workshop will include:

- Locations of poor physical infrastructure such as lack of pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities, dropped kerbs, narrow footways and poorly maintained surfaces;
- Lack of transport facilities such as community or public transport services or cycle routes;
- Locations where there are safety issues;
- Ways that information can be provided and awareness raised so that people are aware of what transport options are available to them.

HB and JS will organise the workshop.

Another meeting of the Steering Group will be arranged to discuss the outcome of the Stakeholder Workshop.