

**BRACKNELL FOREST ACCESS GROUP
11 OCTOBER 2017
7.30 - 8.50 PM**



Present:

Councillor Michael Brossard, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor John Harrison, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Mrs Sandra Ingham, Bracknell Forest Council

Also Present:

Fiona Goodhand, Older People and Long Term Conditions
Mrs Isabel Mattick, Red Diamonds
Mark Sanders, Healthwatch

In Attendance:

Phillip Burke, Bracknell Forest Council
Alison Sanders, Director of Resources

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Clifton Thompson
Councillor Jim Finnie
Councillor Mrs Jan Angell
Tom Conlin
Ray Edwards MBE
Mira Haynes
Muriel Rawsthorne
Abby Thomas

78. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes from the last meeting were approved as a correct record.

Arising from the last meeting, it was noted that the group would be interested in seeing the Lexicon's facilities in relation to access for people with additional needs. It was agreed that this would be organised with a minimum number of three Access Group members attending. **(Action: Veryan Lyons)**

The following comments were received from Tom Conlin prior to the meeting:

"Agenda Item 72; Three visually impaired members from our Bracknell Blind Club were involved in the orientation visits to the new Lexicon development and found the session very informative and very encouraging in terms of the thought that has gone into the needs of blind and partially sighted people. They were very enthusiastic in reporting back to the club meeting following their visit, so well done on this initiative"

"Agenda Item 75: I attended and presented to the large group of schoolchildren who were involved in the "Green meets Grey" project at Honda's offices in Bracknell on 14 July. They came up with some very innovative ideas about inclusivity for visually impaired people visiting the Lexicon and it will be interesting to see if/how any of these ideas are brought to fruition during the mentoring period."

Mrs Isabelle Mattick reported that the Dementia Action Alliance had very good feedback regarding the Lexicon and particularly commented on the good visibility at night.

79. **Town centre transport update**

Phillip Burke, Senior Transport Officer gave an update on transport in and around Bracknell and discussed with the Access Group any problems. It was noted that:

- The transport for the launch weekend of the Lexicon went smoothly with a few minor problems with ticket machines in the Avenue car park
- There was no longer any bike parking near the banks and this was going to be added in the coming weeks.
- The signage within the Lexicon was insufficient with regards to stopping cycling and skateboards which presented a risk to pedestrians. Bracknell Forest Council were limited in what signage could be put up as they already had signs for “no unauthorised vehicles” however The Lexicon would look at what signage they could put up.
- Phillip Burke would circulate locations of bike storage to the group. **(Action: Phillip Burke)**
- The LED displays showing parking spaces available were well liked
- There were problems with parking in Waitrose for their customers and at Skimped Hill even though they had employed security staff.
- The disabled bays at the Avenue car park were good.
- The colouring of the line markings on the ground floor of the Avenue carpark are difficult to see especially around the disabled bays as the paint and tarmac are both quite dark. This would be looked at in coming months.
- There was no bus station near the new Astbury Care Home and it was a struggle to access from the Bracknell Bus Station. Phillip Burke would investigate extending the 108 bus service and update the group. An update would also be put out on ward alerts to Members
- There were 390 bus stops in the borough with ownership split between parish and borough councils. Where possible the stops had hard standing, accessible by path and a nearby crossing for access.
- Any feedback regarding bus stops should be passed to Emma Young for collation and passing to the transport team. **(Action: All)**
- The bus stops were showing real time information and have key fobs which broadcast times for visually impaired people.
- Accessibility by taxi to the town centre was good with several taxi ranks located in areas where passengers would not need to go up or down steps to access the shops.

80. **Town centre feedback**

Veryan Lyons, Team manager for Regeneration and Economy, gave an update on the new town centre. So far the town centre had been open for a month and the shops were reporting positive trading especially the eateries.

The key points were:

- Eateries were having some problems with recruiting experienced staff
- Developers were still on site fixing pavements, putting up signage and completing service gate (located outside Blue's Smokehouse).
- 95% of floor space had now been let with new shops hoping to be open before Christmas.
- Management of the town centre including promotions and events was currently being looked at.

- When the Princess Square car park would be completed was questioned and Veryan would feedback to the group. **(Action: Veryan Lyons)**
- Good feedback had been received from people with dementia and their carers when visiting the new Fenwicks store. Marks and Spencer wasn't very good in this area due to the large number of mirrors and no clear pathways or areas to queue. Veryan agreed to pass this onto the retailer groups. **(Action: Veryan Lyons)**
- Oil stains left from trucks were being addressed by pressure washers
- Members of the public were still not aware of the lift access next to H&M and this should be advertised more
- The new Bracknell Market was well liked and had a good social media presence.
- It was noted that some of the empty shops were not smart however these were sublets and not under the control of Bracknell Regeneration Partnership.

81. **Any Other Business**

Mrs Isabel Mattick reported that dropped kerbs often had 'bobbles' for the visually impaired. However, this created difficulties for those with mobility problems and asked if an area of smooth pavement on dropped kerbs could be investigated. Phillip Burke undertook to investigate and feed back to the Department for Transport. **(Action: Phillip Burke)**

Phillip Burke highlighted the current consultation on Accessibility from the Department for Transport which may be of interest to the group especially page 19 with regards to tactile paving.

Fiona Goodhand reported that this would be the last meeting for her due to retirement. The group thanked her for her contributions.

Mark Sanders reported concerns regarding the pedestrian area of Market Street which would be a risk to the public from delivery lorries. Phillip Burke undertook to investigate the possibility of installing a barrier or warning sign. **(Action: Phillip Burke)**

Mark Sanders also highlighted that the flumes at Coral Reef were not open at off peak times. He asked whether sessions could be included during the week as this was when autistic people and people with learning difficulties would most likely visit and they would like to access the full facilities.

82. **Items for Future Meetings**

The following were proposed as items for future meetings:

- Phil Jarvis to report on Safe spaces in Bracknell Town Centre
- Bracknell and Wokingham College accepting students with Downs Syndrome and Autism
- Update on the accessibility of the Home library Service

Group Members were asked to forward any future items to Emma Young at: emma.young@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

83. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting was to be held on 21 February at 7.30pm