



Notes of the Cooks Bay Access Working Group Meeting held at Gurnard Village Hall in Worsley Road, Gurnard on Thursday 28 May 2015 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Nolan (Chair), Community Representatives: P. Hutton, S. Mawson, P Schofield and J Ward

1. Councillor Nolan was elected Chairman of the new Cooks Bay Steps Project Working Party
2. There were apologies for absence received from Mr J Green.
3. There were no declarations of interest received.
4. The Terms of Reference drafted by the clerk had been circulated to members. It was:
RECOMMENDED: That the amended Terms of Reference are accepted by the Parish Council with the revision that only one member of the Parish Council is required to form the Working Group.
5. The current position was discussed. Mr Green has been working on this project for around 18 months including contact with the Isle of Wight Council Rights of Way team. He has been collecting evidence from residents of over 20 years showing access to the beach in Cooks Bay from the footpath. The original land owner built and maintained wooden steps for many years which were eventually washed into the sea, so steps were constructed using rocks and boulders from the beach. When the footpath was closed following the storm of 14th February 2014, the access was also stopped. So far 13 people have completed forms with photographs to provide the evidence, but no-one is sure if the forms used are adequate for the Isle of Wight Council. This needs to be checked the Rights of Way team. One member advised that there is photographic evidence (which he will print for the next meeting) which clearly shows the steps back in 1927 with lots of people on the beach. There are also ariel photographs available which provide further evidence. Although the chalet and associated land was purchased by new owners in 1996, people have still gained access to the beach until the storm of February 2014. Notices have now been erected saying that it is private land, but no-one was sure when they first were seen.
Ideally members would like to see a wooden walkway along the cliff edge with wooden steps down to the beach and suggested that this could be a project using "community payback" labour with the only cost being for materials.
Discussion centered on ensuring a safe access for people to access the beach.
Because the steps have been eroded, it was decided to change the project name from Steps to access to avoid confusion.
6. Plans for the future were discussed.
Firstly a meeting needs to be arranged with the IW Council's Rights of Way team to discuss the project and evidence collected so far. At that meeting the continued closure of footpath CS16 from the start to point A on the map needs to be discussed, as members feel that point A should be the other side of the style.

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Secondly, further evidence needs to be generated to support the modification order.

7. As the I W Council are the party with legal authority to grant this modification, it was agreed that:
ACTION: A date will be arranged by the Parish Clerk for a meeting with the Rights of Way team at the Isle of Wight Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL:

- 1 That the name of the group is changed to Cook's Bay access Working Group**
- 2 That a meeting is arranged by the Parish Clerk with the IW Council Rights of Way team at the IW Council offices and this is followed by a site visit.**
- 3 That the Parish Council supports the project to collect further evidence regarding historic access.**

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN