UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX  
ACCESS FORUM  
25 NOVEMBER 2010  
(1:00pm – 2:00pm)  
ACTION NOTES

Chair: Rowena Macaulay  
Present: Ian Hack, Angela Jones, Syd Kent, Mary Pelowski, Kevin Wilding  
Apologies: Colin Riodan, Alex Seabrook, Mark Vinter, Thomas Yap, Karen Bush, John Crust

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2010

Approved

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2010

a) Alterations to the Lakeside Theatre  
Reported: Rowena reported that she understood the changes to the new lift in the Lakeside Theatre had now been made; the doors had been automated and it was not necessary to hold down the button to operate the lift.

b) Accessible Parking at Loughton  
Reported: Andrew Nightingale had reported in the Disability Equality Scheme that these arrangements were being reviewed. Rowena had been involved in discussions on the location of parking and understood the work (to create 2 new spaces at the upper level, alongside the Corbett Theatre) was going ahead. Plans to improve the path from the car park to the theatre were also being considered, including smoothing the surface of the ramp (removing the pitted sections), adding a handrail and, if possible, reducing the gradient.

Action: Rowena to check plans for parking were still on schedule

c) Staff disclosure  
Action: Syd to circulate current wording to the group in the hope this could be made clearer for staff disclosing a disability

d) Interactive mapping  
Reported: This project was still in development. When it was complete, the maps would be available in the totems on the central campus to help with way finding including step free routes.

e) Door opening/closing weights  
Reported: The University has invested in two pressure gauges to test the force it requires to open doors. These have been used in a number of areas to aid accessibility. In addition, the Estates Management Section were reviewing other suppliers of door closures.

Action: All to report doors to be reviewed to Mark Vinter

ACCESS ISSUES

a) Zest  
Reported: Rowena reported that counters in the new catering outlet were inaccessible by wheelchair. Proposals on how to address this issue were being considered by
Estates. Concern has been expressed by the Forum (and by Chris Woodman, Estates) at plans to place additional furniture in the venue is likely to make the space difficult or impossible to negotiate for wheelchair users.

Action
Syd to contact Peter Church to try to arrange a meeting to discuss the role of the Forum and the importance of accessibility within developments

b) Teaching Centre
Reported Rowena reported that an intercom would be fitted so people with a mobility impairment could access the lifts in the building out of hours. The furniture including location of bins in the large lecture theatres had been challenged as it was not possible for a wheelchair user to negotiate past the number of chairs. The door weights were currently being considered.

Action
Ian to discuss access to the access budget for Rowena with Mark.

DOOR HEIGHTS
Reported Complaints had been received from a student who was 6ft 6” who had banged his head on a number of door frames. One door in particular had been identified as a problem. This is not currently covered with design guidance. Various solutions were discussed including the use of highly visible tape and padding on doors where the frame was not visibly distinctive.

Action
Rowena to advise the department of the group’s conclusions

REPORT ON SUMMER WORKS
Reported A report on the progress of works had been submitted to the Equality and Diversity Committee. This included the following updates;

i) The 25 departmental access guides are now completed.

ii) The Access Guide has been reviewed with information now sitting in relevant sections of the web eg accessible travel information. Accommodation Essex and the Sports Centre were asked to host access information on their own site.

iii) Updated information provided to Disabled Go. Representatives to visit campus to update the information on the Accommodation Office, Lakeside Theatre etc.

iv) Four new benches have been installed; two on the path from Square 5 to Wivenhoe House and two from Square one to South Courts. These have been established at points where people are likely to want to stop and each is visible from the last. The benches have arm rests and there are concrete spaces alongside that are large enough for a wheelchair.

v) Discussions have taken place on the development of the Hex.

UNDERPODIA MAP
Reported A draft map has now been created. This will be printed as well as put on the web.

Action
Rowena to liaise with Printing Services regarding the cost and WALT to publish the map; later to review a cover and information for the back of the map including a link to the step free campus map, in preparation for a possible hard-copy print.
**PARKING FOR NON-BLUE BADGE HOLDING DISABLED DRIVERS**

**Action**
Angela to discuss recent student complaints with Charlotte Humphries with a view to reviewing the policy for next year.

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

**Reported**
The VC had requested that the meetings could be scheduled for the year to make his attendance more likely. Rowena asked for the minute taking to rotate between members as had originally been agreed.

**Action**
Rowena to add the bus campaign to the next agenda

Angela Jones
Assistant Director of Student Support (Disability)
26 November 2010