

Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group The Library, Queen's House, 29 November 2019

Attendance:

Alison Appleby (Natural England)
Diane Andrews (New Forest District Council)
Richard Burke (Forestry England)
Sam Jones (Forestry England)
Lord Manners (Verderers)
Nigel Matthews (New Forest National Park Authority)
Alison Potts (Natural England)
Colin Read (New Forest District Council)
Graham Smith (Test Valley Borough Council)
Jonathan Woods (Hampshire County Council)

Apologies: Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, New Forest National Park Authority

1. Election of Chairman

1.1 Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre was elected as Chairman of the Group for the ensuing year. The Group asked Nigel Matthews to oversee the current meeting.

2. Welcome and introductions

2.1 Apologies were noted. Sam Jones has replaced Bruce Rothnie on the Steering Group as Forestry England's representative.

3. Minutes of the last meeting (20 05 2019)

3.1 The minutes from the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising

4.1 The minutes of the Advisory Group on 2 July 2019 were noted

4.2 Almost all Steering Group organisations have endorsed the 22 actions for managing recreation (HCC is in the final stages doing so). In response to a request from Jonathan Woods, the group agreed that in action 4.2, 'traffic regulation' should be replaced by 'traffic management'; this increases the range of mitigation options to be explored to reduce harmful verge parking.

4.3 Richard Burke had been appointed to lead FE's recreation strategy work; a further appointment to focus on community engagement is in progress.

5. Updates on strategic actions

5.1 Good progress is being made on most strategic actions.

5.2 A significant amount of useful research data has been collected by Footprint Ecology. Final reports will be published early in 2020 and are likely to

recommend a strategic approach to habitat mitigation by local planning authorities rather than the current piecemeal approach.

- 5.3 Feasibility work on the use of a Local Development Order to aid a review of parking across the Crown lands and adjacent commons is progressing. Habitats Regulations Assessment and measures to control verge parking were discussed. It was stressed that this work is a vital part of the recreation management strategy and that the various organisations involved must work together to find solutions to the legal, practical and financial challenges. The Verderers would like an update on options being considered at their meeting on 15 January.
- 5.4 Hampshire County Council staff are exploring options for traffic management to reduce verge parking and will feed back to the Steering Group
- 5.5 Productive meetings have been held to discuss both illegal recreation-related activities and the management of events and organised activities in the New Forest. Both topics will be brought back to the Steering Group in due course. The NFDC-led research into littering from vehicles is progressing well.
- 5.6 The Steering Group noted that the Partnership Plan for the National Park is currently being reviewed, and that this statutory document will be completed in late 2020. It was agreed that some key recreation management actions should be included, including one or more aimed at increasing public awareness of the special qualities of the National Park (reflecting the results of the two Future Forest public consultations). Draft actions will be discussed at the next Steering Group meeting.
- 5.7 The Steering Group considered initial proposals on signage and other forms of communication and options for a 'visual language' arising from the Special by Design project. The proposals are at an early stage and will need more work before they could be shared with the organisations that had attended the workshops. Comments were noted, to be fed back to the Special by Design Steering Group.

6. Date of next Steering Group meeting

- 6.1 It was agreed that the next meeting should be in the first half of February 2020.

7. Liaison with Advisory Group

- 7.1 It was agreed that an Advisory Group meeting should be convened after the next meeting of the Steering Group, i.e. March 2020.

8. AOB

- 8.1 None