

Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group

Tuesday 30 April via Microsoft Teams

Attendance:

Steve Avery, NFNPA
David Bennett, NFD OG
Tina Bige, Natural England
Richard Burke, Forestry England
Nicola Carass, Go New Forest
Ruth Croker, LAF
Tim Guymmer, NFDC
Leanne Sargeant, FE

Brice Stratford (Chair), NFNPA
Richard Taylor, CWG
Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association
Nick Tomalin, RSPB
Tony Vanderhoek, CDA
Nora Wallaya, Natural England
Jonathan Woods, HCC

Apologies:

Graham Smith, TVBC
Philip Thomas – New Forest Cycle
Working Group
Graham Horton, NE

1 Welcome / Introductions

- 1.1 Brice Stratford, chairing for his first meeting, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2 Minutes and matters arising from the RMS Steering Group meeting on 8 March 2024

- 2.1 SA explained the background to the Partnership Plan Leaders Panel which meets 3 or 4 times a year to help move things forward, activate the actions contained within the Partnership Plan and receive feedback from other Groups such as the RMSSG and the RMSAG. All relevant matters discussed at the RMSSG will be picked up in the agenda items.

3 Progressing the spatial plan for where recreation should be accommodated in the New Forest and surrounding areas

- 3.1 The spatial plan is a key action in the Plan and will involve mapping areas that are suitable as alternative recreational spaces in the New Forest and surrounding areas to mitigate recreation pressures. This will also include trying to relocate some of the associated infrastructure. Currently work involves bringing everything together to reflect the current situation, such as location of car parks, cycle networks and how they link with villages and campsites etc.

4. Update on the LCWIP

- 4.1 JW confirmed that the Draft New Forest LCWIP will be circulated in the summer for public consultation. He explained the background to the Plan and the approach from the Council to take account of the unique environment and

different user groups. Partners and funding partners will be given the Plan later this week for comment. RT emphasised the importance of commenting on the plan and highlighting dangerous crossing points on major roads such as the A326. RB reminded the Group that the LCWIP was not just about cycling, but pedestrians, dog walkers etc.

5 The off-road cycle network

- 5.1 A working group has been meeting for around 18 months, looking at proposed changes to the cycle network. The work is ongoing and when the time is right, details will be circulated.
- 5.2 BT raised concerns about the spatial strategy and the cycle network proposals and how this might expand within the forest and questioned what criteria is being used to guide this work. SA reminded the Group that the Spatial plan is mapping existing infrastructure, there are no plans currently being discussed to change this. There exists a lot of information already, multiple different layers of info, designated sites, tranquil areas, footprint ecology research etc., all this will help to inform any decisions and help inform the necessary criteria and will go through the same rigorous processes as planning and HRA.

6 Update on Campsites, Camping New Forest, Pop Up Campsites

- 6.1 Camping New Forest now run the campsites on Forestry England campsites and are currently working on their short and long-term plans. They are aiming to reduce their environmental impact, reduce capacity and improve training for site wardens.
- 6.2 A new Article 4 Direction was put in place last year in respect of the new permitted development rights for pop up campsites. Guidance is available for those applying and one application has been received for a site in Hale to date.

7 Ice cream / coffee concessions

- 7.1 RB was keen to provide the facts around the changes to the ice cream contracts. At the end of April, there were approximately 20 different concession sites. This number has been reduced about fifteen. Only five locations include hot drinks and pastries or cakes. The contracts this time are much more detailed and include looking at better quality goods, local produce, local impact, environment impacts, social impact, interactions with people etc. There was a lively discussion that followed, with members of the Group feeling that these messages could have better communicated and perhaps some early notification of the facts.

8 Ground nesting bird campaign

- 8.1 FE and NFNPA ranger and comms teams have been repeating a very similar campaign to last year, including relocating the model flying club at Beaulieu. NFDog reported difficulty in finding alternative locations for dog walking when areas are not accessible. There was a suggestion that the OS Maps App, or

the NPA Walking App in the future may be able to show which areas are usable all year round and which are seasonal. The overriding message was to stay on the tracks to avoid GNBs which are all over the Forest, not just on dog walking routes. There was also a discussion about directing people or user groups away from sensitive areas to places where there will be no adverse effects.

9 Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)

- 9.1 We are coming into the second of three years trialing PSPOs and refresher training is being held shortly. Last year there were about 700 engagements with the public, deterring inappropriate behaviour but no tickets were issued. All interactions were recorded so this information can help inform whether it is worth renewing the PSPO for a further 3 years.

10 AOB

- 10.1 NT pointed out that the latest Footprint report on strategic mitigation is now available and requested that it be circulated with the notes.

Action: Include Footprint Strategic Mitigation report as future agenda item

- 10.2 NT found the meeting helpful and happy to meet more frequently if agreed, perhaps 3 times a year.

11 Date of next meeting

- 11.1 Suggested meeting dates - July 2024 in person including site visit, September 2024 online.