

New Forest Horse Keeping Workshop. 29th April 2009

Workshop outputs

(Word for word what participants or
facilitators wrote on the evening)

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About the workshop and this report

▪ Purpose of the workshop

Draft policies in the consultation draft of the New Forest National Park Plan, have been controversial and caused a great deal of concern to the equine community and related business. The draft policy has also been a catalyst for equine organisations and other interested parties to bring to the fore a wide range of related concerns and issues.

This workshop involved representatives from a range of relevant organisations and interests to make progress in finding ways forward. (The attendee list is in the Annex)

This was the second of two workshops. The first workshop focused on opening up and exploring the context, benefits, and challenges of horses and horse keeping. It also included discussion of how the policy, and broader situation, could be improved. This second workshop included further discussion of the policy and also helped people work up the ideas for positive change that emerged from the first workshop.

▪ About this report.

During the workshop, the aim of the facilitators was to record in writing the essence of everything that was said or to collect the views of participants in other ways such as on post-its, maps, or diagrams.

Following the workshop all this has been typed up 'word for word', as it was written, and then sorted to aid understanding. This report follows the same order as the event.

▪ Why sort the outputs?

Conversations do not progress in a linear or logical fashion but go off at tangents, circle back and change direction suddenly. As a result, it can be very difficult to make sense of a discussion when it is reported in the sequence in which it happens and important themes and ideas can be obscured.

It is for this reason that the outputs of the workshops are sorted and grouped.

The sorting is done by seeing what themes emerge rather than to a predetermined set of titles. The ideas could have been grouped differently, or different titles chosen, so no weight should be attached to them.

▪ Using this report

Whilst this report serves as a record of what was discussed, and an *aide memoir* for those who took part in the workshop, it is recommended that it is not used as a means of communicating with non-participants without explaining the following:

- The aim of the workshop was to capture the range of views, perspectives, and understanding and all points were recorded whether or not they had wide agreement.
- Differences of view result from different values, experiences, perspectives, or from different sources of data and information. Where information or 'facts' were contested, we

encouraged people to identify the kind of information that is needed, or the questions that need to be answered, to clarify the situation.

- We do our best to capture every point but sometimes the speed of the discussion means these can be quite cryptic in places.
- During the workshop, all points are noted but not attributed unless a participant references relevant reports, research, case examples, or other data. In these cases, the participant will have been asked for their participant number, which will have been assigned to them randomly to provide a degree of anonymity. Such points are referenced as follows eg: <12>.
- Since everything at the workshop is handwritten, it is sometimes difficult for the typist who may have to guess a word or spelling. Where there is a query the flip charts are checked again or technical terms checked with relevant experts. However if uncertainty remains, the word or phrase will be highlighted in grey.

Acronyms used in this report	Meaning
ADAS	Agricultural Development and Advisory Service
BDS	British Driving Society
BHS	British Horse Society
CDA	Commoners Defence Association
DC	Development Control
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
FC	Forestry Commission
FUG	Forest Uprising Group
HAPTC	Hampshire Association of Parish & Town Councils
NFALC	New Forest Association of Local Councils
NFDC	New Forest District Council
NFEA	New Forest Equestrian Association
NFED	New Forest Equine Directory
NFNP / NFNPA / NPA	New Forest National Park Authority
NFPBCS	New Forest Pony Breeding & Cattle Society
NFPEC	New Forest Pony Enthusiasts Club
NFPPG	New Forest Pony Publicity Group
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
Surrey CC	Surrey County Council

Horse Keeping Workshop 2

Brockenhurst Village Hall

Agenda

Please note, we may make a few refinements to the agenda, between now and the event, but this gives you an idea of what the workshop will include

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| 5:45 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Registration, coffee and tea will be available | |
| 6:00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome | Leo Randall National Park Authority Member |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitators introduction | Diana Pound dialogue matters |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on progress with Working Groups and other engagement | Richard Lemon Director of Strategy and Planning |

Policy discussion

1. Ideas and suggestions for the policy
2. The application process
3. Criteria for when permission is required

Tea and Coffee

Positive action - Select one of the following discussion groups:

1. Information and data
2. Promoting good practice in horse keeping tailored to the New Forest
3. Promoting good practice (voluntary) codes/guidance for riding horses in the New Forest
4. Working more effectively together over the long term

Rapid feedback on group discussion

- **What happens next**
- **Closing comments**

no later than 9:30 **Finish**

- Workshop participants were provided with more detailed questions as a guide to their discussions. These can be found in the Annex. Please note that not all of the discussion groups followed these exactly.

1 Policy Discussion

For this part of the workshop, people were in four groups. Each group's work has been given a different colour font. When viewed in colour, this shows where each group made similar points in relation to the questions.

1.1 Ideas and suggestions for the policies

Discussions at the first workshop showed that people want policies that are more positive and respectful in tone, equitable, clear and easy to read, and neither too open to interpretation nor too rigid/prescriptive.

In your groups try out some ideas and suggestions for wording of the policy/ies

(**Please note**, this discussion aimed to come up with ideas to help the NPA planners in their work. As well as the discussions in these workshops, the NPA will also have to take many other factors into account, including planning law, all consultation comments, and other policy considerations.)

Planning permission

Make it clear this policy is about change of use

- Policy must say that planning permission is required for change of use e.g. installing permanent fencing
- Change of use does need planning permission
- We accept a case for planning control
- Make it change of farmland use per se, not just horse keeping
- Policy... 'if agricultural land is split into separate plots planning permission is needed'

Focus on the planning issue landscape/visual impact - not the way horses are looked after

- Preservation of the forest e.g. visual impacts
- Focus on the visual change, of change of use – not eg feeding
- The policy must prevent sub division of fields and visual effects - Very difficult to come up with a way of doing this - Why not use Defra's national definitions
- No one has come up with clarity on this

Policy DC12 and explanatory text

Change the description of who this is for

- 'Equestrian activity' rather than recreational horse riding / keeping
- 'Horse owners' not 'horse keepers'
- 'Horse keeping' not 'recreational horse keeping'

Positive Wording for DC12 and surrounding text

- All sentences start with no, converting to positives we get 'Horse keeping will be considered where: any adverse impact on the landscape or any nature conservation interests are managed'
- 'Recreational horse keeping will be permitted when it can....'
- but this still seems to convey negative attitude to horse keepers, still too much focus on horse keeping
- 'If you want to affect the visual appearance you need to'...
- DC12 ...'it will be permitted'...
- DC12 – "will only be" = too negative - "will be permitted..." = much more positive tone
- NPA wording and context negative and dictatorial
- DC12 tone: have to comply or get rid of horse
- Policy should have presumption that permission would be granted
- Preamble too negative – someone's view of problem.

- Underestimates the benefits of horse ownership and riding/driving: equestrian pursuits
- Context is as important as wording

Policy in context of promoting good practice

- Policy should include a code of practice for the keeping of horses and reference to the code for practice for the forest
- Policy should reflect current good practice e.g. in equine management
- Should include land management
- NPA issue guidelines like on Surrey website – on horse keeping, includes guidance and then planners use as guidance

Level of detail

- Most policies don't explain when planning permission is required – so does this one need to?
- The contentious aspect of the new policy was that it went into more detail about when planning permission is required

Need for interpretation/judgement

- Policy will require judgement
- References that are meant to clarify are actually misleading / open to interpretation
- In first workshop we discussed the need for clarity

Proving no adverse effect

- i, ii, iii – being asked to prove negatives – can't prove whether having negative effect or not... no one can.
- Landscape impact reference – very difficult and subjective
- DC12 conditions: "no adverse impact" → impossible to meet and no evidence

Recreation Pressure/erosion

- Tone really didn't help – put people's backs up e.g. erosion: only horses mentioned
- No increased riding pressure – why just focus on increased pressure from horses – what about other recreation pressure?
- Erosion reference in policy is contentious
- Mention of impacts on "open forest" is potentially misleading because meant to refer to all the forest whether open, developed, fringe, etc (NB this is in supporting text, not policy itself)

Runback grazing

- CP3.4 replace with idea like: 'planning should consider the potential negative impact of loss of agricultural land etc...'
- (What is loss of runback grazing land? Runback grazing is back up grazing for commoners e.g. for injury, management – its 'just in case land')
- Reference to back up grazing – is there any left? How much has been lost to quarrying? Misleading, again.
- "Run-back grazing" needs defining

DC 13 and 14

DC 13 and 14 (included here but came up in discussion 1.3)

- Ref DC13 & 14 – why separate stables and maneges and not field shelters
- Suggest that stables and field shelters go together and maneges treated separately

The NFDC Policy

NFDC Policy

- Many were comfortable with the NFDC policy
- Also many were unaware of the existing policy
- Is existing NFDC policy: has to be good reason with evidence for change
- Old policy - plus its implementation – were not problematic for equine community
- NPA should read NFDC policy and reconsider need for new policy
- If development control policy was sufficiently robust – wouldn't need separate policy for equine - ONLY separate policy
- New NFPA policy not needed

Comments about the context for a policy

The distinction between riding and commoning is not clear cut and they are interdependent

- Remove the distinction between riding and commoning
- No recognition of commonalities between 'riding' and commoning
- Difference between recreation and grazing horses not well defined or understood
- Absolute integration between what is being termed 'recreation' and commoning and breeding
- Even where distinction occurs between uses there are lines between them
- The success of the NF pony depends on equestrian activity both for the infrastructure and the financial input
- Need some distinction between commoning and horse keeping – but grave risk of dividing the community

Clear data

- Policies must be supported by up to date and accurate information and data
- Lack of evidence for assertions

Characteristics of the policies

- Needs to be practical
- Needs to reflect evolving forest not the 19th century vision of it. Fringe development is the problem i.e. what has changed most
- Existing policies are not too bad need to be refined

Causes of subdivision of fields

- Don't want policy that encourages or makes it too easy to sub divide land - There are examples of land divided up and sold at auction - Smaller land units are more affordable
- Livery yards are hit by health and safety and other restrictions which leads to horse keeping and subdivision

Need to understand the situation better

- Have to use fencing to protect any hedges whilst they grow

1.2 Planning permission – application process

Planning law requires assessment of impacts prior to the issuing of planning permissions.

How could the application process assess these impacts in a way that is proportional, effective and as straightforward as possible?

Be clear what information is required

- Has to be clear to applicant what information they have to provide

Simplified process

- Needs to be condensed - simplified
- Simple guidelines to avoid applicants wasting their time + money
- Needs to be simple... or won't bother!

Clarity about definitions

- The planning process is so negative - a biodiversity report – what does this mean and what are they looking for?
- Some items on list straightforward but others are complex. Gives huge scope for rejection – e.g. biodiversity
- "Grass land management scheme" – needs tight definition
- "Landscaping details - what is this?"
- "Waste storage details" – terminology – MUCK HEAP?
- Terminology should be what readers understand
- Is your field within your curtilage

Possible information required

- Assessment process must include information on stocking densities
- Some consideration of the permanence of the visual impact should be included
- Waste treatment and disposal considerations

- Longer term plan for the land in question i.e. are buildings planned?
- How is land to be used – i.e. horses living out and being exercised or partially stabled

Provide guidance

- Applicants needs to know how they can satisfy conditions - no guidance
- NPA – give guidance on type of field shelter – from local resources that could be acceptable
- If NPA recommended would need affordable options
- If applied and what you were proposing was inappropriate, should be given help to say what would be acceptable – e.g. environmentally friendly and in keeping with forest and locally resourced
- Impact Assessment give guidance on how impact could be reduced
- Could put it on the website

Who makes assessment of impact?

- Partial EIA conducted by land holders as opposed to ‘consultants’ as a pre-application process - Based on the above they can decide whether its feasible and should progress to application - Allows for recognition of differences between areas within the NFNP
- The policy includes a long list of impact assessments, some of which would require specialist advice
- Should applicant be assessing 3 caveats in DC12?
- Turn the process round

Cost

- Its all going to cost money. Buildings “in the future” → + still needs permission. Especially if land sold

Off road riding/driving

- Off-road riding not all in open forest – could be in a manege – but then DC13/14
- Carriage drivers have nowhere to go but forest tracks!

Quantifying a harmful impact

- How do you quantify a harmful impact?

Knock on consequences

- If too prescriptive inside the park, it will force the development to just outside the park boundary. Would it be possible to look at the risks of this?

Case by case

- Assessment has to be case by case because e.g. high visual impact in one place would be low in another
- Rather than having the long list in full in the policy, could tailor the list to the applicants’ specific circumstances
- At the moment, the wording suggests all impacts should be assessed for all applicants in absolute terms, but actually thus could be determined by the scale or nature of the application. The list could say “may” assess rather than “will” or “must”

Inclusion of list of impacts?

- What is the justification for the list of impacts to be assessed?
 - This is from government – nationally, the system has become more onerous
- Can it be taken out?
 - But if so, you don’t have everything in one place so risk applicants having incomplete information
- Impacts have to be assessed according to the policy, so impossible to say how impacts should be assessed without the policy
- Should also say that best practice may be considered

Level of prescription

- How prescriptive should the policy be?
- Rugging policy and stocking density – too prescriptive

Change the negative tone

- Implicit in the wording is a negative attitude to horse riding e.g. “no increase in horse riding on the open forest” – need to reword
- Need it to be more respectful and sympathetic

No retrospective permission required

- Mustn’t make this retrospective
- Problem for people who have bought property in good faith

Compliance

- The problem of follow up and compliance makes the whole thing a waste of time

- Need enforcement officers here to hear this discussion
- Compliance checks on approved developments - Must be someone with real local knowledge and respect of the equestrian community
- Assessments being undertaken by someone who understands the submissions

Equitable

- Impact assessment – not stronger judgements than for others eg farmers

Solve one problem cause another

- Jumps can be an eyesore - but would then need a shed to store and would need pp for this.

1.3 Criteria for when permission is required

The Government may produce guidance to assess whether permission is required, and there are also some definitions established in planning law.

What suggestions or ideas would you have for the kind of criteria/indicators that could be used to assess whether permission is required?

Positive approach

- Simplicity and clarify sense of being prepared to work with users, not dictate to them.

Defining change of use and difference between ‘grazing’ and ‘keeping’

- This is set out in law, but its not clear
- Grey area distinguishing change of use because overlap between commoning, grazing, horse keeping etc
- How do you define change of use?
- This question is too difficult!
- Distinction between “grazing” and “keeping” is the key – but what are the indicators?
- “Fact” and “degree” – subjective terms
- Government is considering national guidance on when planning permission is required for horse keeping in general (ref Steve Avery)
- Some perceive a difference between horse keeping and commoning
- Breeding counts as “keeping” – then you need to divide paddocks (electric fences) + shelter and supplementary feeding. This counts for breeding NF ponies on private property – BUT this isn’t recreational

Possible definitions that could be used already in law

- Farriers Registration Act 1978 gives criteria for e.g. hard standing, cover, and ring in the wall so will need planning permission to provide a farrier with this facility (Alex C has a copy) - Also compatible with rural crafts
- if the application involved permanent fencing

Focus on what the policy is trying to achieve

- Apart from visual impact what is the planning permission seeking to achieve?
- Focus on landscape issue

Criteria written with local knowlege

- Criteria written by people who know the local area (current ones have not been)

Number of criteria

- 1 criteria – every one understands it
- Criteria allow too much to count against permission

Intensification of use

- Horse keeping has been ‘accepted’ as high intensity and / or commercial e.g. dealers, where land is not used for grazing, but for turning out. This alters the definition of ‘horse keeping’
- Intensification of use (over grazing)
- Scale of operation should be considered when determining requirements for planning approval

Stocking density

- Stocking density is the most contentious indicator
- There is some support for old “1 acre per horse” criterion. Defra welfare consultation recommends 1 horse per 1.5 acres

- NFDC policy used 0.3ha per horse - the NPA policy is 3 times more demanding

Supplementary Feeding and rugging not good criteria

- Feeding and rugging should not be criteria
- If feeding is an indicator – what level of feeding would count?
- Comes back to earlier question – does this need to be in the policy?
- 1 hectare won't support a horse all year round – have to supplementary feed - FUG
definition of horse keeping is based on Defra definitions 'predominance of food from grazing'

Welfare issues

- Any criteria must be compatible with horse welfare
- People may try to avoid rugging /supplementary feeding to avoid change of use – welfare issue

Equipment

- Evidence of other horse-keeping related activities – e.g. show jumps in the field – possible indicator

Buildings

- New buildings / additions to buildings
- Change of use of existing buildings i.e. barns → stables
- Permanent buildings do need planning permission

Lighting

- Some lighting is essential i.e. security lighting and should not require planning approval

Enforcement

- Lack of enforcement action – it almost never happens

Retrospective Planning Permission?

- Residential properties with a history of horse keeping shouldn't require planning to move back to this use
- No retrospective application of policy
- Effectively retrospective – effect of rigorous enforcement after years of use – then have to apply for planning permission + might not get it
- Amnesty = start new policy at Day One

Effects on community trust

- People afraid neighbours may 'shop' them to NPA

Reducing demand for maneges

- At present sharing maneges doesn't occur because not allowed – but if policy was restricted to "commercial" maneges there could be sharing of private ones
(Comment written by facilitator (Lisa) : "NB this was a last minutes point as group 'd' rushed off to tea – not clear *why* you can't share at present"
Checked this with participants: Present policy says maneges must be for private / personal use for enjoyment of the household so prevents sharing, so everyone then needs their own")

Local development orders

- Local development order should be able to create a requirement for storage attached to a field shelter (for example)
- Making use of local development orders rather than prescribing under policy / additional approvals for small scale
- NPA to establish a range of local development orders which tackle particular issues such as lack of storage etc at field shelters
- Visual amenity impacts could be tackled by a local development order

Fit with other government policies

- NPA criteria must not cut across SSSI - conflict with Govt policies – at moment they do
- Farm diversification – keeping horses for recreational use could mean change of use + planning permission for part of farm: NPA not in line with Defra policy

2 Positive Action

2.1 Information and data

- Information Gaps - what information would help plug the gaps?

This table came out of workshop 1. Look at the information needs and the gaps in columns 'a' and 'b'. Now it is formatted like this can you identify other information that would help to plug the gaps?

a) what information and data is needed?	b) What information have you got that you could make available	c) new information added at second workshop
Economic benefit		
– How many horses are kept in the New Forest that contribute to people's livelihoods.	–	– <i>(see horse ownership below)</i>
– Data on numbers of people employed directly and indirectly through horsekeeping.	–	– The Fortune Centre employs 100-200 people alone – Some suppliers serve multiple types of stock so difficult to differentiate
– Data on the financial contribution horsekeeping (and commoning) makes to the local economy.	–	– National figures £4000 – 5000 per horse: source based on national no's of horses + national economic contribution. – If use these figures can drill down locally based on local figures – Also works out to a similar figure working 'bottom up' - from adding up eg tack, buildings, farriers, breeding costs, maintenance of buildings – Ref for this is the organisation that used to be called the Int League for Protection of horses – can't remember new name)
– Data/info on how to protect New Forest Pony and sustain strong local market.	–	–
Social and health benefits		
– Impact of horse keeping on youth work (clubs, groups etc).	–	–
– Quantify health benefits of horse riding.	–	–
Horse ownership		
– Accurate and up to date info on horse ownership to see trends over time. – - could update study from 18 years ago.	–	– Vets data - 2005 vets survey 3000 horses – but some register with more than 1 vet – Survey 2007 update to 1994 – showed fairly stable figures – Pony society have passports for all horses and ponies – 1500 new ones issued each year ref the Pony society (Jane Murray) – Verderers have numbers on forest – Auctioneers can give info about where the horses go
– Data on demographics of different types of horse owner.	–	–

a) what information and data is needed?	b) What information have you got that you could make available	c) new information added at second workshop
Distribution of horses		
– Distribution of horses throughout the New Forest.	–	–
Recreation patterns		
– Where do riders go to ride? Pattern of recreational use among riders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Survey done about 18 years ago on riding habits, reasons for visiting New Forest – who? – The 1994 Report on recreational use of horses in the New Forest Heritage Area. – The 2007 update of the above report by DEFRA Verderer Pat Thorne 	–
	– The 2005 Forestry Commission Progress New Forest Visitor Survey (tabulated results) – www.forestry.gov.uk/INFD-6TLKNY	–
Data on landownership		
– Landownership – private / estate / tenanted etc and how ownership patterns have changed.	–	–
Land use		
–	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Local concept of the forest is different to the NPA boundary – so depend what area you define – Land use maps held by Defra - the NPA have a copy but its hard to interrogate to get the answers in this table
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Evidence of loss of back up land. – - What is it? Where is it? If being lost why? 	–	– Availability of back up land in relation to where commoners live – commoners/Verderers may have, but data protection an issue
– Data on loss of farms.	–	–
– Info/evidence on loss of back up grazing land in the Avon Valley (and other areas) and relation to gravel pits.	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commoners are doing a survey on back up land (Jo Ivy) – NF Trust is also doing something but not getting cooperation – NPA has some data – but data protection means can't disclose
– Data on / reasons why land prices have increased within the New Forest.	–	–
– Info on demand for horse keeping land.	–	–
Data to support policy		
– Need info/data to quantify all statements in policy and supporting text.	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NPA have data on same sites where fields subdivided within NPA – A study is in progress on identifying where the intensive fields are in context of wider NP – NPA research – may be available by the end of 2009
– Need to explore reasons behind the issues the Plan is trying to address.	–	

a) what information and data is needed?	b) What information have you got that you could make available	c) new information added at second workshop
Erosion		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data and evidence of erosion caused by horse riding compared to that caused by other Forest users, including FC etc. - Evidence to support assertions of damage caused by horse keeping to enclosed land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data on erosion: old studies by FC in late 90's – but was also one in 1992 and question this - it made a flawed assumption that erosion all by horses. Later report may not make same mistakes - Also info about poaching / erosion in fields - Missing an up-to-date study that everyone agrees with how it was done - Erosions levels perceived to be less than 20 years ago – likely to be due to way horses are kept – fewer riding stables. Also more manege so in winter less riding in the forest - But no hard data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of different forms of recreational use on the wildlife of the Forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
Grazing		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data available on best grasses for grazing (Person 4). - The 1990 Report on Grazing by Richard Illingworth. - Nutrient Requirements for Horses, 6th Edition, p 146 – 149 - Fructan content in pasture grasses – J Graessler and U van Bastel, Landwirtschaftskammer, Hannover - Waltham Equine Research Digest – June 2006, Issue 2. Scientific output on laminitis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data on densities of various horse and pony types linked to the biodiversity of the fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biodiversity and Horse Grazing PhD - O'Beirne, Ranelagh, University of Cambridge 2001. <i>(Linked to point 4 in part (a) of this question)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on biodiversity and how to improve it on grazing land without incurring unnecessary restriction and financial burden. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English Nature <i>Horses, grasslands and nature conservation leaflet</i> (2002) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
Good practice		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examples of best practice from other National Parks and other areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surrey County Council is a particularly good example of positive advice and guidance to managing equestrianism. www.surreycc.gov.uk/horsepastureproject - National Horse Strategy – British Horse Federation, environmental chapter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on different materials for hard standing. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
Audit existing data		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better understanding of what already 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -

a) what information and data is needed?	b) What information have you got that you could make available	c) new information added at second workshop
exists and has been done over time. No need to recreate data already gathered.		
– <u>Audit</u> of existing data – bring NPA up to date, bring data centrally and sharing.	–	–

Other sources of information
– Wide variety of data available from New Forest Pony Breeders Society
– Needs to be recognition of the local expertise relating to horsekeeping, commoning and land management
– www.defra.gov.uk/rural/horses/pdfs/en-horse-industry-strategy.pdf
– Farriers code of conduct – outlines facilities horse owners should provide for their farriers.

▪ **What would need to happen to ensure that any research evidence was accepted as legitimate and usable, to all interests?**

Clarify what we want information for

- First questions is what do we want information for – don't just collect for its own sake
- Info need to help inform policy – to ensure landscape is not at cost of horse welfare

NPA + Equine Community Agree how the research is done

- Agree most important questions that need researching
- Agree methodology together
- Agree surveys together
- Design the study together

Know what data there is already

- Survey of existing data – directory of information – whose got it, where, is it accessible
- May need a wider database of where to go to find the information for a particular question

Effects of previous policy

- Assessment of effect of previous policy

▪ **Who can do what and when to move this forward?**

Action	First Step	Who	When
Raise need for information and data with Equine Forum	Take this to the Equine Forum to progress	Steve T	When forum is formed
Analysis of what data is where and where there are gaps		Sub group of the forum	
Following analysis, the NPA will seek funds to plug information gaps		Steve T	

▪ **Quick feedback of key points to the whole group**

Collate existing info

- need to collate (and verify validity of) existing information and data on horse keeping in the New Forest

Identify gaps

- identify gaps in existing information & data with a view to then commissioning new survey work (to be agreed by a newly constituted NF Equine Forum)

Collaborate on research

- We need to collaborate to agree on what evidence is needed and how it should be gathered Need to work together

Data

- Back up land + other data – where back up land is in relation to where commoners live + use the vast amount of data held by NFPB+C passports in conjunction with Verderers list, to try + keep back up land not far from where commoners live.

2.2 Promoting good practice in horse keeping tailored to the New Forest

▪ What topics would it need to include?

Boundary features

- Fencing/boundaries/hedges/ditches

Structures /shelter

- Structures – buildings
- Materials e.g. hardstanding, fencing
- Shelter

Grazing management

- Pasture management
- Stocking rates
- Mixed grazing e.g. with sheep
- Grazing systems

Feeding

- Feeding

Landscape

- Visual impact

Waste

- Waste management

Horse care

- Animal welfare
- Horse management/stock management e.g. when horses turned out or in
- Do you live on property with horses or travel to and fro:
 - Supervision and security

Biodiversity

- Biodiversity

Land use

- Land usage – what you're using it for

Access

- Access

▪ What already exists and how can it be adapted?

Defra

- Defra welfare consultation, generic straightforward, comprehensive. Welfare-orientated so different objective to overall need in NF
- Defra consultation on strategy for the horse industry

SEEDA

- SEEDA SE version of Surrey guidance not yet published but concerns that may not be locally relevant/applicable
- No known guidance on structures, or materials (NB may be in SEEDA guidance?)

Others

- Surrey CC web guidance very comprehensive but again, may not be directly applicable to NF
- Natural England guidance – national advice on horse keeping in relation to conservation
- BHS guidance (now subsumed into Defra guidance?)
- NFU Guidance

▪ Presentation and Dissemination

Online, face to face, paper formats

- Website
- Paper needed for those without web access - individual sheets on each topic

- One to one advice needed too
- Local experts advising others

Events

- Demo events, farm walks, road show
- Agricultural fairs, NF Show, equestrian events etc

Use existing outlets

- Via equestrian organisations + retail outlets even if just advertising existence of website
- Via vet. surgeons + farriers

▪ **Resources**

Work together

- Need everybody to help resource it, whether through money or time, to build a true partnership and ownership

NPA

- NP should resource it – the NPA are reasonably confident resources attainable

Potential funding sources

- Aspects could be resourced by the equine community, sponsorship from retailers, manufacturers etc
- Defra
Funding for land management advice – possible funders include Natural England, Wildlife Trust, NPA, EA, national grants, European grants
- Subsidy on equestrian planning applications

Avoid wasting money

- Stop wasting money on draft plans that end up being binned

▪ **Next Steps to make it Happen**

Forum

- Creation of the equestrian forum would bring together those who need to be involved in the guidance + enable links with other forums e.g. access
- NPA to organise the creation of the forum

Land management advice

- Extension of land management advice. This is in progress. Needs to utilise local equine expertise. Someone who understands local equine issues
- One post can only achieve so much, but could be supported by people who assist with some of the visits/advice

▪ **Who can do what and when to move this forward?**

Action	G. It's in our gift R. We need to find new resources	1. Immediate 2. Little thinking and planning 3. Will require a process	First Step	Who	When
Resourcing the landowner advice post	G		Underway, hoping to have resources by end of summer	Emma Rigglesworth	By end of summer
Priority expert input / writing guidance on animal welfare, horse management, & no of other aspects	G		Print off all existing guidance + exchange email addresses with Emma	Fiona MacDonald	
Contact manufacturers + local businesses re potential sponsorship	G	2	Liaise with FUG + identify targets	Tina, FUG	Start straight away – over coming months
Liaising with vets re dissemination	G			Fiona MacDonald	When guidance is complete

FUG website to advertise / request / promote input into guidance	G		Extend offer to all others to assist with dissemination	Tina, FUG	Immediately
Dissemination of leaflets etc			Coordinate / rally support amongst groups (e.g. NFPPG) to do this	Shirley Young	When guidance is complete
Venue for road shows, demos, etc (Ford Farm)			Need to be advised of what is planned re road show etc	James Young	

▪ **Quick feedback of key points to the whole group**

Partnership approach

- Equine Forum + Partnership approach to developing guidance
- Formation of an equestrian 'forum' under the umbrella of the NPA to act as an advice channel for NPA/equine matters
- Equestrian forum creation
- Partnership approach to taking work forward
- Involvement of local expertise
- Local organisations are involved

Funding

- Financial Support:
 - to carry document forward
 - for initiative from equine community/associated businesses, e.g. leaflets, advice etc all help with partnership working

Land management advice

- Land management advice – the existence already within the NPA of a section to develop land management expertise

Welfare

- Welfare – recognising the welfare needs of the horse are paramount

Disseminating information

- Dissemination – publicity + resources for dissemination of information
- Creation of an advisory/support web facility on all matters pertaining to equestrianism in the New Forest
- Need to disseminate good practice guidance widely

Drawing on existing guidance

- Existing Guidance – Surrey CC web guidance, Defra consultation, Stocking rates, Natural England advice
- how much information may already be available but how much may also need to be collated into easy to read and assimilate form.

2.3 Working more effectively together over the long term – Equine forum

- **How could this work?**

(eg purpose, numbers involved, secretariat, style of meetings (formal/informal), chair, frequency and timing of meetings, location etc)

Reasons its needed

- Get NPA involved in e.g. Industry(?) + vice versa
- Been very little communication between NPA + all equestrian interests

Core purpose:

- Facilitate exchange of views and information, recognition of issues

Who?

- Good cross-section of equestrian community, including working equestrian sector
- Bodies or individuals?
- May be some sectors without representative organisations
- Should be local members
- Have to want to do it

Numbers?

- 10 – 15 members. Not political. (how many NPA Officers + members?)

Possible organisations/interests?

- BHS
- Driving
- Riding schools/liveries
- Business, farmers, vets, saddlers, dentists, etc
- Vet voice?
- Commoners/Verderers/Agisters
- NF Pony Breed Soc
- Riding clubs/pony clubs
- Hunt
- NFEA/FUG?

Practical focus

- Must be at PRACTICAL level

Criteria for Chair:

- Independent
- Impartial
- No-nonsense

Secretariat?

- NPA equine liaison → secretariat?
 - Improve park management + show engagement
 - NPA has capacity

Frequency and timing?

- Quarterly meetings to start
- Evening meetings

Location of meetings?

- Central location – to those attending

Share development of agenda

- Members to contribute to agenda

Reports of meetings

- Public report → + one to NPA meeting + press

- **What resources would it need?**

- Resource → NPA equine liaison person
- Is there such a forum anywhere else?

- **What are the first steps needed to make it happen?**
 - Decision that it should happen – needs NPA to sign up as productive way forward
 - Invite orgs + people to preliminary meeting – use the 1st workshop list
 - Important for NPA to have equine liaison function
 - Ad hoc NPA open meetings go as issues
 - Web forum – needs moderating
 - Consultative panel not the right forum

- **Who can do what and when to move this forward?**

Action	G. It's in our gift R. We need to find new resources	1. Immediate 2. Little thinking and planning 3. Will require a process	First Step	Who	When
NPA definition for paper	G	1	NPA Board Meeting	Leo Randall	
Advise NPA on working side	G	1	Call to Alex Chalmers	Steve Trotter	
Find out what Exmoor does	G	1	Ask colleagues	Graham Ferris	
Find out what Dartmoor does	G	1		Alison Russell	

2.4 Good practice codes/guidance for riding or driving horses in the New forest

- **What would it need to include?**

Courtesy to other users

- Courtesy to other users + particularly other horse riders/drivers
- Courtesy to road users
- Paying attention to signs e.g. drifts/forestry etc

Safety

- Single file when on the road
- Road safety (signalling etc)
- Reference to relevant publications inc "Riding Road Craft" and Highway Code

Commoners' animals and activities

- Always give commoners' animals plenty of room
- Being aware of commoners activities

Ground conditions

- Wet land riding + avoidance of wet areas
- Avoiding soft slopes
- Avoid widening existing tracks
- Spread impact by using various tracks
- Walk on soft ground
- If a track is in poor condition avoid worsening the damage

Report problems with tacks

- Reporting of difficult / closed tracks
- Forestry Commission need to 'formalise' a reporting process for damaged tracks and use this to inform management

Respect wildlife

- Respect for wildlife

Address inappropriate use

- General inappropriate use of the forest needs to be addressed

Identity discs

- Identity discs on kit - details where horse is from /owners details

Raise awareness amongst other users

- Raise awareness amongst other users of the forest of horse riding / driving considerations
- Notifying where riders/drivers are going

▪ **How could it be presented?**

Paper based

- Leaflets
- Bullet points on a card in feed + tack shops

Websites

- Website (NPA website) (MANY)
- NFED site
- Forestry site
- BDS website
- BHS regional website

▪ **How could it be disseminated?**

Websites

- Parish Council networks (newsletters etc)
- Organisational websites

Outlets

- Vet clinics
- Vet surgeries
- Farriers
- Riding schools + liveryes

Rangers

- Rangers

Events

- Shows

Link with house sales

- Estate agents welcome packs

Publications

- NP magazine
- Equine publications

▪ **How could it be resourced and written?**

Potential funders

- ? NPA to resource (production)
- Parish Councils
- District Councils
- Associations annual fee

Access forums

- NF local access forum

Use but tailor existing guidance

- Reference to existing codes/guidelines
- Specific information relating to the NF only with reference to other codes

Part of a set

- Should be part of a set for users/activities

▪ **What are the Steps to Making it Happen?**

- Collating all existing codes
- Review to ensure local relevance or missing pieces
- Distribute pack
- Email to Steve K – he'll sort it out

▪ **Who can Do what when to move this forward?**

- Local access forum
- NPA for design skills
- Equestrian forum for review wording
- See action list

▪ **Additional Notes**

- Voluntary codes of practice need to be included in the recreational management strategy + NPA Management Plan
- These notes to be made available to rangers to raise awareness

▪ **Who can do what and when to move this forward?**

Action	G. It's in our gift R. We need to find new resources	1. Immediate 2. Little thinking and planning 3. Will require a process	First Step	Who	When
Contact HAPTC regarding resources for CoP	G	2	Telephone call	Sue Bennison	May 2009
Contact NFALC regarding resources for CoP	G	2	Telephone call	Sue Bennison	May 2009
Conversation with NPA (recreational)	G	1	Telephone call	Sue Bennison	May 2009
Distribute codes of practice when ready	G	3	Email, web, etc	Steve Kitcher	As required
No specifications			Can use English skills in dissemination / review etc	Chris Marshallsay	As required

▪ **Quick feedback of key points to the whole group**

Horse riding and driving code – up to date and relevant to the New Forest

- Collation – collate and prepare voluntary horse riding code - to collate all existing codes of practice into one updated leaflet.
- Would have been good to have had access to existing codes for reference prior to discussion
- Respect for other people and the forest - concentration on safety issues of all kinds
- Relevance – code of practice that is relevant too riders in the Forest
- Dissemination – disseminate code through websites + leaflets
- Information that is easily accessible

Raising awareness in other users

- other Forest users to be aware of equestrian activities + how to act safely around them

Contact details on saddles so owners of lose horses can be found

- Identification – mark saddles + bridles with tel no + home address when riding out on open forest

The value of working together

- NPA will coordinated all organisations under one umbrella to speak with One Voice and be in harmony when out on open forest

3 Individual Action

Organisation	Name	During the workshop I committed to the following actions			Following the workshop other actions I will take are		Any additional points
		What	When	Comments	What	When	
NFNPA	Steve Trotter	Work with equine forum to agree research + evidence needs	By end of 2009		Organise setting up Equine Forum		
NFNPA	Emma Rigglesworth	Resourcing the landowner advice post	By end of summer				
		Liaising with Fiona MacDonald re leaflets + advice	In response to Fiona	Agreement with NPA / Equine Forum			
BHS	Alison Russell	Find out how Dartmoor NPA relates to equestrian activities	ASAP				
Bramshaw Parish Council	Cllr Sue Bennison	Contact HAPTC re resources	May 2009		Telephone HAPTC	Soon	To see if this association will disseminate info + get resources from individual parishes
		Contact NFACC re resources	May 2009				
Farrier	Alex Chalmers	Provide my services in an advisory capacity, both working and equine	When required	To promote equine and rural crafts and trades			
Forest Uprising Group	Tina Cant	Source sponsorship for 'advice & support facility from commercial outlets	Over 3/4 months				
		Offer FUG website (intertwined with NFED website) for promotion, requests for help / info etc	Immediate / on demand				
NFCDA? Ford Farm Stables Ltd	James Young	Providing venue for workshops/demos	When required	Will need help in organising etc			
NFEA	Chris Aldhous	Attend data + information sub-committee	As required	Looking at information gaps. Analysing existing data	Brief the NFEA on groups I attend		Happy to contribute on any action on the equine forum
NFEA	Graham Ferris	Find out if Exmoor (NPA) has any experience of an equine forum/equine liaison officer	By mid may		Brief NFEA Committee at next meeting	22 nd May	
					Put write up from horse workshop in the next NFEA Newsletter	Q2	
NFED	Steve Kitcher	Distribute information to the NF Equine Community through NFED	As required				

Organisation	Name	During the workshop I committed to the following actions			Following the workshop other actions I will take are		Any additional points
		What	When	Comments	What	When	
NFPPG	Shirley Young	Distribute leaflets/ info available	When leaflets/info ready				
		Add name to information directory					
Valesmoor Farm Livery Stables	Chris Marshallsay	Being involved in preparation of any code (codes)	Any time				
		Distribution of any code (codes)	Any time				
		Take draft code to New Forest Access Forum	Any time – before or during meetings				
Veterinary Surgeon	Fiona MacDonald	Write leaflets on horse keeping welfare issues (in conjunction with Emma Rigglesworth).	Immediate		Search out relevant information	Immediate	
		Liaise with local veterinary practices to disseminate information					

Parking Place Comments

Parking Place

- Documents that went to consultation made no attack on horse riders, but the draft document does!
- ? re degree of consultation and at what stage during document delivery
- NPA should appoint an equestrian education officer for all the issues discussed. Person must have local knowledge
- Equestrian Officer – knows about planning and local conditions + has the knowledge and respect of local equestrian community
- Change of use from pure agricultural grazing by cattle, sheep, ponies, donkeys, to sub division of land into separate land ownership small plots

Annex 1 List of Attendees

	Name	Trust
1.	Alex Chalmers	Farrier
2.	Alison Russell	British Horse Society
3.	Anne Moulard	British Driving Society
4.	Chris Aldhous	New Forest Equestrian Association
5.	Chris Marshallsay	Livery yard owner
6.	Clive Maton	NPA Member
7.	David Illsley	NPA Planning Policy Officer
8.	Dionis MacNair	Verderers of the New Forest
9.	Emma Rigglesworth	NPA Head of Sustainable Development
10.	Fiona MacDonald	Vet
11.	Geoff Fairfoull	ADAS
12.	Graham Baker	New Forest Association
13.	Graham Ferris	New Forest Equestrian Association
14.	James Haynes	New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society
15.	James Young	New Forest Commoners Defence Association
16.	Jeff Clarke	NPA Interim Head of Policy & Plans
17.	Jennifer Dixon-Clegg	The Fortune Centre for Riding Therapy
18.	John Pemberton	NPA Member
19.	Kathy Heron	NPA Member
20.	Leo Randall	NPA Member
21.	Mark Weston	British Horse Society
22.	Pat Thorne	Verderers of the New Forest
23.	Richard Lemon	NPA Director of Strategy & Planning
24.	Shirley Young	New Forest Pony Publicity Group
25.	Steve Avery	NPA Head of Development Control
26.	Steve Kitcher	New Forest Equine Directory
27.	Steve Trotter	NPA Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development
28.	Sue Bennison	Bramshaw Parish Council
29.	Suzanne Kemp	New Forest Pony Enthusiasts Riding Club
30.	Tessa Johnstone	British Driving Society
31.	Tina Cant	Forest Uprising Group
32.	Vicky Bignall	Forest Uprising Group

Others

1.	Diana Pound	dialogue matters
2.	Lisa Chilton	dialogue matters
3.	Steve Roberts Mee	dialogue matters
4.	Kathryn Hardcastle	dialogue matters

Annex 2 Guidance for discussion groups

Policy Discussion

1. Ideas and suggestions for the policies

Discussions at the first workshop showed that people want policies that are more positive and respectful in tone, equitable, clear and easy to read, and neither too open to interpretation nor too rigid/prescriptive.

In your groups try out some ideas and suggestions for wording of the 3 policies: DC12, DC13, DC14.

(**Please note**, this is to come up with ideas to help the NPA planners in their work. As well as the discussions in these workshops, they will also have to take many other factors into account, including planning law, all consultation comments, and other policy considerations.)

2. The application process

Planning law requires assessment of impacts prior to the issuing of planning permissions.

How could the application process assess these impacts in a way that is proportional, effective and as straightforward as possible?

3. Criteria for when permission is required

The Government may produce guidance to assess whether permission is required, and there are also some definitions established in planning law.

What suggestions or ideas would you have for the kind of criteria/indicators that could be used to assess whether permission is required?

Positive Action

1. Information and data

Existing information.

- Look at the information needs and the gaps (ref 2.3 in workshop 1 report). Now it is formatted like this can you identify other information that would help to plug the gaps?
- How can this existing data and information be collated – who could do this, where could it be held?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Evidence base for better informed future discussions and decisions.

- Look at the suggested data and information needs below.
- How could this information be researched or gathered?
- What would need to happen to ensure that any research evidence was accepted as legitimate and usable, to all interests?
- How could a research be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Based on the first workshop, the following seemed to be the key information needs:

- **Benefits.** Data on the benefits of horses in the NF (health, disabled, grazing benefit to habitats, tourism, support business (farriers, vets, equipment, saddleries)) and trends.
- **Horse owners/keepers.** Data on the demographics of horse owners/keeper, including the numbers new to keeping horses, and the trends.
- **Horses** Data on distribution, types of horses, and main areas where horse recreation takes place within the forest
- **Other trends.** Data on other trends - loss of land to housing, loss of run back grazing, loss of livery, loss of riding schools
- **Grazing capacity and horse types.** Data on the grazing capacity of different areas for keeping horses in relation to the different types of horses kept.
- **Erosion.** Data on the effects of erosion from all recreation users and horses in that context

2. Promoting good practice in horse keeping

Guidance on good practice tailored to the New Forest

- What topics would this need to include?
- How could it be presented?
- How could it be disseminated?
- How can it be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Other ways of encouraging good practice - pick one at a time and discuss

- Explore the idea more
- How can it be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Other ways of encouraging good practice:

- Demo centres/ Centres of excellence
- Advice service
- Training
- Awards
- Grants
- Visits

3. Working more effectively together over the long term

Equine forum

- How could this work (purpose, numbers involved, secretariat, style of meetings (formal/informal), chair, frequency and timing of meetings, location etc)
- What resources would it need?
- How can it be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Other ways of improving working relationships

- Explore the idea more
- How can it be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

As well as an equine forum, other ways of improving working relationships included:

- Helping the NPA understand equine matters more
- Equine liaison person in the NPA - someone who has understanding of equine matters in the New Forest

4. Good practice codes/guidance for riding horses in the New forest

Guidance on good practice riding tailored to the New Forest

- What topics would this need to include?
- How could it be presented?
- How could it be disseminated?
- How can it be resourced?
- What are the steps needed to make it happen?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Other related topics - pick one at a time and discuss

- Explore the idea more
- What action is needed?
- How could any action be resourced?
- Who can do what and when to move this forward?

Other matters related to safe riding in the new forest:

- Road safety/road surfaces
- Demand for manege facilities