

NFNPA 532/17

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 12 OCTOBER 2017

UPDATE ON REVIEW OF RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2010-2030

Report by: Nigel Matthews, Head of Recreation Management and Learning

1 Call for views public consultation

- 1.1 In March 2017 the Authority accepted the proposal to lead a public 'call for views' consultation to inform an update of the New Forest National Park Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030 in partnership with the other organisations on the Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group (Forestry Commission, Verderers of the New Forest, Natural England, New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council).
- 1.2 All the background information, consultation questions and publicity was prepared with the support of the RMS Steering Group organisations.
- 1.3 The online Future Forest consultation ran from 19 June to 13 August (a total of eight weeks spanning both 'work' and holiday seasons) and attracted over 1,550 responses, including 53 organisations. A series of drop-in sessions were also held in New Forest towns and villages and part of the NPA's stand at the New Forest Show was dedicated to the consultation.
- 1.4 The overall aim of the Future Forest process is to:
 - provide the best recreational experience for local people and visitors
 - protect the very thing people come to see – the spectacular, yet fragile landscape which is a haven for many rare wildlife species
 - ensure limited resources are spent wisely.

2 Early analysis of consultation responses and next steps

- 2.1 Each consultation respondent was asked to say which of the 15 topics identified in 2010 should be prioritised in the future – and explain why. There was also opportunity to say what new things should be done. In total over 7,000 comments were made, many of these touching on multiple subjects. At the time of writing, officers have analysed 4,000 of these comments.
- 2.2 Of the 15 topics identified in 2010, respondents most frequently suggested that the following should be made high priority in the future: raising awareness and understanding, on and off-road cycling, sustainable transport, providing sustainable services and facilities, walking and improving access. Further analysis of the reasons why people suggested these and other priorities is

ongoing so that we can develop a sound rationale for the update to the Recreation Management Strategy.

- 2.3 Working through the RMS Steering Group, we plan to produce a public summary of what people said later this year, and of course to use the feedback to inform proposed new actions for managing recreation. These proposals will be the subject of a further public consultation next year.

RECOMMENDATION

To note the report

Equality Impact Assessment:

There are no equality or diversity implications arising directly from this report.

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