

**Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group  
Brockenhurst Village Hall, 15 November 2017**

Attendance:

Mark Adams, British Cycling  
Rachael Bowen (notes), New Forest National Park Authority  
Richard Burke, Forestry Commission  
Ruth Croker, Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society & Access Forum  
Barry Dowsett, Verderers  
Louise Evans, NFDC  
Dylan Everett, National Trust  
Heather Gould, New Forest Dog Owners Group  
Sam Jones, HCC  
Stephen Lorton, Go New Forest  
Nigel Matthews, New Forest National Park Authority  
Dave Rumble, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust  
Ann Sevier, Commoners Defence Association  
Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association  
Jake White, National Trust

Apologies:

Jenny Thomas, Natural England  
Neville Penman, New Forest National Park Authority

**1 Welcome / Introductions / Apologies**

- 1.1 NM welcomed everybody to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

**2 Election of Chairman**

- 2.1 It was proposed and agreed that NM would Chair the meeting.

**3 Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

**4 Draft public report**

- 4.1 There had been over 1,500 responses to the consultation from individuals and organisations. Respondents mostly lived within or a few miles from the New Forest. The option for respondents to provide free-text comments had worked well, providing a wealth of information to inform an update to the Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030.
- 4.2 The Group felt that the draft Findings Report summarised a large number of comments in a clear and understandable way. NM confirmed that responses from organisations were very similar to those of individuals. The Group did not think it would be helpful to try to summarise key findings near the beginning of the document or to do more detailed analyses than had already been done.

4.3 The Group discussed a range of things that were prompted by the analysis of the responses:

- It should be made clear that the consultation was open to anyone to take part. No attempt was made to limit participation to a balanced and representative sample survey approach of the local (or wider) population.
- There is an ongoing need to raise awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the area and of the sensitive environment.
- The update should focus on a small number of achievable goals, and not promise things that might require significant new resources or stray into trying to solve problems that are not caused by recreation.
- The meaning of 'verge parking' should be explained.
- Byelaws and their enforcement could be reviewed alongside other ways to achieve the desired outcome.
- The criteria for judging the suitability of recreation facilities that were included in the MoU that was previously drawn up by the Steering Group (with input from the Advisory Group) could be included in the update.
- Three main areas were evident among the responses: raising awareness, where recreation happens and finding resources to manage recreation.
- Although BT felt that not enough information had been provided about the England Coastal Path (ECP) and that responses were therefore not based on all the facts, others felt that the feedback was still useful and valid.
- Healthy lifestyles currently attracts a lot of funding.

Action: NM to amend the draft Findings Report where appropriate and advise the RMS Steering Group of the Advisory Group's comments.

## **5 England Coast Path**

- 5.1 BT, on behalf of the NFA, fears that the ECP will have negative impacts on coastal wildlife. The route may be too close to the coast and issues may arise because of the spreading room (e.g. OS maps will not show all of the habitat exclusions). He invited members of the Group to attend the Consultative Panel on 4 December when a presentation on the ECP will be made.
- 5.2 People will be given opportunity to comment on the suggested route when it is published for consultation by Natural England. The habitats and sensitive features appraisal should assess impacts to wildlife in the same way as a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The route will eventually be signed off by the Secretary of State.

## **6 AOB**

- 6.1 BT felt that a precedent could be set with night time events on the Forest because of the recent approval of such an event by the Forestry Commission. RB confirmed that the event organisers had now gone through the appropriate channels and that the permission included a lot of constraints, but that a lot of the media coverage was negative and misleading.

## **7 Date of next meeting**

- 7.1 To be decided.