

**Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group  
The Library, Queen's House, 25 September 2017**

Attendance:

Alison Appleby, Natural England  
Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre (Chairman), New Forest National Park Authority  
Richard Burke, Forestry Commission  
Adam Godwin, Forestry Commission  
Lord Manners, Verderers  
Nigel Matthews, New Forest National Park Authority  
Allison Potts, Natural England  
Colin Read, New Forest District Council  
Bruce Rothnie, Forestry Commission  
David Stone (notes), New Forest National Park Authority

**1. Welcome / introductions**

- 1.1 Following introductions, Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre thanked everyone for attending; he also thanked Nigel Matthews and his team for their efforts in taking forward the consultation and analysing the responses for this meeting.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

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

**3. Matters arising**

- 3.1 Allison Potts advised that she would be attending future meetings in the place of Jenny Thomas (Natural England).

**4. Future Forest Recreation Management Strategy (RMS) public consultation responses**

- 4.1 The Group noted a range of headline statistical information about the numbers of people and organisations which had responded to the consultation.

**5. Initial analysis of what people said through the consultation**

- 5.1 Nigel Matthews explained that, after taking advice from HCC officers who regularly handle consultations, NPA staff are doing a thematic analysis of the 7,000 free-text comments submitted by both individuals and organisations. For each of the priority topics identified in the 2010 strategy, the number of people commenting on each of several themes is being recorded. A summary of this information will be collated into a clear and meaningful public report on what people said. The Group agreed that the report should include an initial assessment of how the comments will be taken into account within the update to the RMS.
- 5.2 Nigel Matthews advised that he would bring a draft of the public report to the next meeting of the Steering Group for further discussion.

5.3 The Group confirmed that there was no need for any additional analysis of the responses from organisations, since these mostly replicated those made by individual people.

## **6. Early thoughts on options for the update to the RMS**

6.1 The Group discussed how the update to the RMS might be structured and agreed that initially, three themes could be developed around:

- raising awareness and understanding (including ways of encouraging responsible recreation and limiting negative impacts)
- a plan for where recreation should be enabled across the New Forest and nearby areas (and where it could be reduced), and
- how the above priorities could be resourced.

6.2 It was agreed that it will be important to emphasise the fact that the New Forest is a *working* Forest.

6.3 The Group noted that criteria for where recreation should and should not be enabled had been agreed by the six statutory organisations on the Group, in a Memorandum of Understanding in 2015. However, these could be incorporated into the draft update to the RMS so that the public could comment on them.

6.4 Following further discussion, the Group agreed that, once finalised, the RMS update would comprise a supplement to the 2010-2030 Strategy focusing on updated prioritised actions arising from the review.

## **7. England Coast Path**

7.1 The Group agreed that any representations on the England Coast Path should be submitted individually by the organisations of the Steering Group rather than jointly.

## **8. Liaison with Advisory Group and date of the next Steering Group meeting**

8.1 It was agreed that a meeting of the RMS Advisory Group be arranged for the middle of November to provide an opportunity for that Group to advise on the draft summary report about the public consultation. The next meeting of the Steering Group would be at the end of November.

## **9. Funding**

9.1 The Group noted the NPA costs of approximately £7,000 incurred to date, not including staff costs.

## **10. AOB**

10.1 The NPA and FC are considering which methodologies would best enable the Group to understand how Forest car parks are used at different times of day and year.