

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the 218th Meeting, held in the Louisa Suite, Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst, on THURSDAY, 2 July 2009

Those present: Tim Greenwood (Chairman)
David Stone (Panel Support Officer)
Rosalind Alderman (Panel Clerk/Secretary)
Jo Murphy (Panel Clerk/Secretary)
Members as shown on the Official List, with the exception of those listed below for whom apologies were received.

ITEM 1

1.1 APOLOGIES

Arthur French, Boldre Parish Council
Peter Turner, Breamore Parish Council
Tony Barnett, Caravan Club
Lord Montagu, English Heritage
Mary Barnes, Hampshire Federation of Women's Institutes
Alan Shotter, Marchwood Parish Council
Sophie Beeton, Milford on Sea Parish Council
Ian Taylor, newforce
Olive Collins, New Forest Access for All
Nigel Clarke, Ringwood Town Council
Sheila Campbell, Whiteparish Parish Council
Edward Heron, New Forest District Council

1.2 SUBSTITUTIONS

David Bryant, Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council
John Korbey, Brockenhurst Parish Council
Martin Powell, Godshill Parish Council
Heather Gould, New Forest Dog Owners' Group
Richard Reeves, History and Archaeology Group
Jackie Kelly, Natural England
Sandra Pearce, Redlynch Parish Council

1.3 NEW REPRESENTATIVE

The Chairman welcomed Simon Moody as the new representative of the Environment Agency following the retirement of Peter Kelly.

1.4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman explained that following the resignation of Lindsay Cornish, Barrie Foley had been appointed Interim Chief Executive of the New Forest National Park Authority. He welcomed Barrie to the meeting and invited him to address the Panel.

Barrie stated that he lived locally, and was passionate about the Forest. He indicated that he would listen to local concerns on the National Park Plan. Following questions from panel members he explained a little about his professional background and said he would attend the Equine Forum on 14 July.

ITEM 2

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (7 May 2009)

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

ITEM 3

MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 The Chairman advised the Panel that the planned presentation on the forthcoming study of non-native species (minute item 4.2) would take place when the relevant officer was established in her post.
- 3.2 Eddie Holtham (Fawley Parish Council) advised the Panel that work had been carried out at Kings Copse Inclosure (minute item 7.2) but that there was another pothole on the opposite side of the road.

ITEM 4

FORESTRY COMMISSION

4.1 Study of the public forest estate

Mike Seddon (Deputy Surveyor, Forestry Commission) drew members' attention to the forthcoming consultation due to begin on Monday 6 July 2009. He explained that the study would look at all aspects of land managed by the Forestry Commission and would investigate areas such as: how the land was used, what it should be delivering now and in the future, how it should be funded and the size and location of the estate going forward.

- 4.2 Mike advised Panel Members they could find more information on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-estatesstudy or by contacting Pauline Marchington on 01223 346019 or by email on Pauline.marchington@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Action: Mike Seddon to write to Panel Members confirming the details of the above consultation.

ITEM 5

ANCIENT TREES OF THE NEW FOREST – GROWING OLD GRACEFULLY

- 5.1 Bryan Wilson (Senior Tree Officer, New Forest National Park Authority) gave an entertaining and informative presentation on the ancient trees of the New Forest. He emphasised the importance of this area for ancient woodland and explained that there are greater numbers of old trees here than anywhere else in the UK and Europe. He talked about the Woodland Trusts Ancient Tree Hunt project and advised that Harry Oram (Brockenhurst Parish Council) was coordinating volunteers.
- 5.2 Any member who would like copies of the presentation or more information can contact Bryan Wilson on 01590 646668 or by email on bryan.wilson@newforestnap.gov.uk

ITEM 6

CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER

- 6.1 Amy Rawlins, Climate Change Officer for the New Forest National Park Authority introduced herself to the Panel. She explained that her post had been created on the acceptance that climate change is a threat to the New Forest. She pointed out that her role had two main focuses - firstly adaptation, making sure the Authority is ready for future change and secondly mitigation, looking at ways to minimise the impact. She advised that she is currently in the process of establishing what the Authority's carbon footprint is and will then introduce strategies to reduce it.

ITEM 7

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETINGS

- 7.1 The report from the meeting held on 28 May 2009 was circulated with the minutes and the report from the meeting held on 25 June 2009 was tabled at the meeting.
- 7.2 Steve Trotter (Director of Conservation, Recreation and Sustainable Development, New Forest National Park Authority) advised that the Authority members had approved the Shoreline Management Plan in principle for consultation at the June Authority meeting. Steve Clarke (New Milton Town Council) advised that there were still access issues to the Sowley foreshore.

ITEM 8

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Eddie Holtham (Fawley Parish Council) thanked Steve Trotter for the recently circulated information on ragwort and asked to whom ragwort problems should be reported. Steve Trotter advised that Natural England were the agency responsible for following up possible breaches by landowners. All agencies agreed that this year ragwort was less prolific and Mike Seddon confirmed that the Forestry Commission were ready to start clearance when the time was right. Steve Trotter said that although the NPA was not a landowner he was happy to coordinate some volunteer days similar to previous litter pick events. Roly Errington (EHI Parish Council) made the point that there was a need for the Authority to produce some locally based information which could be added to the previously circulated document.

Action: New Forest National Park Authority to organise a ragwort removal volunteer day and produce some locally based information to be added to the previously circulated document.

- 8.2 Martin Powell (Godshill Parish Council) raised concerns at the proposal to close one of the exits to the car park at Godshill Cricket Club. He said that the car park was regularly used by visitors towing caravans and that having only one exit would make turning round difficult. Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) explained that he was not aware of the detail at this site but that in general the policy was to reduce the number of interfaces between gravel and tarmac as this is the weak point where the surface breaks down. He offered to take the issue back to the relevant department to establish more detail.

Action: Mike Seddon to respond directly to Martin Powell regarding the proposed closure of one of the exits at Godshill Cricket Ground.

8.3 Martin also reported that there had been a cycling accident on the cattle grid by the ford at Blissford and confirmed that the Parish Council had been trying to get it repaired for some time. Kevin Fuller (Hampshire County Council) said he was sorry to hear about the accident and would go back to the department to find out the detail. He advised that they were responsible for 120 cattle grids in the New forest and that they had to prioritise maintenance.

8.4 Cathy Gulliver (Sway Parish Council) raised an issue relating to cattle grid near the cemetery in Sway and expressed concerns about the overgrown vegetation on South Sway Lane which was making the road hazardous.

Action: Kevin Fuller to respond directly to Martin Powell regarding the maintenance of the cattle grid at Blissford and Cathy Gulliver regarding the cattle grid and road safety issues in Sway.

8.5 Professor Evans (Institute of Chartered Foresters) enquired as to whether there was to be a Consultative Panel Tour this year and expressed an interest in an ancient tree theme.

Action: Mike Seddon to organise a Consultative Panel Tour and write to members with the date and details.

NB The date has since been confirmed as 16 September 15.45 to 19.00 hrs

8.6 Several Panel Members offered their opinions on the new venue. The main concern was that the "school room" style layout meant that it was difficult for the speakers to be seen by all. Members were reminded to wait for the microphone to arrive before speaking and to confirm their name and organisation prior to speaking. The Chairman asked Member Services to investigate alternative layouts.

Action: The Secretariat to look at alternative layouts of the seating for the next meeting and to send out parking permits with the agenda papers.

8.7 Tony Gentle (Test Valley Borough Council) raised a concern regarding the overgrazing at Wellow / Canada Common. Jeffrey Kitcher (Verderer) advised that under the Stewardship Scheme commoners had a responsibility not to over-graze areas. He agreed to look into it.

Action: Jeffrey Kitcher to respond directly to Tony Gentle following investigation.

ITEM 9

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

9.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting would be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2009** in the **Louisa Suite at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst**

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm.