

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Lyndon Room, Lyndhurst Community Centre on THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2019

- 1.1 **Those present:** Harry Oram (Chairman)
David Stone (Panel Secretariat)
Debbie Copping (Panel Secretariat)

Members as shown on the Official List, with the exception of those listed below for whom apologies were received.

2 Apologies for absence

Alison Barnes (New Forest National Park Authority)
Hannah Marsh (British Horse Society)
Barry Olorneshaw (Hampshire Chamber of Commerce)
John Clarke (Woodgreen Parish Council)
Gerald Lewis (Sopley Parish Council)
Mike Proctor (Marchwood Parish Council)
Melissa Sheppard (Bransgore Parish Council)
Mark Carter (Institute of Chartered Foresters)
John Goodwin (Copythorne Parish Council)

Substitutes

George Clitter for Pamela Keen (Norleywood Society)

3 Approval of Minutes from the meeting held on 5 September 2019

- 3.1 Further to minute 4.3, members requested that a copy of the Conditions set by Forest Services on the areas to be felled to restore open habitats under the Forest Design Plans be circulated to members before the next Panel meeting on 5 March 2020 *(a copy of the Conditions are circulated with these minutes or members' information)*.

4 New Forest National Park Authority Update – Steve Avery

- 4.1 Mr Avery advised that the Glover report was published at the end of September and was considered by the NPA in October. Some of the areas highlighted in the report were the importance of national landscapes in supporting communities living in National Parks, the proposal for a new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes and closer collaboration between AONBs and National Parks.
- 4.2 He said that the State of the Park report had been considered at the Authority meeting in October. The report was now available on the NPA website and

could be downloaded from <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/about-us/state-park-report/>. The report includes key facts and figures about the National Park including animal numbers, land management and climate change.

- 4.3 The NPA's Local Plan had now been approved and would be available for distribution shortly.
- 4.4 The NPA was currently waiting receipt of the revised Fawley waterside development plan and it was hoped that this will be received before Christmas. Consultations on the revised plan would take place in the New Year and the earliest the application was likely to be considered by the Planning Committee was March 2020.
- 4.5 Proposals for work on Holmsley bridge on the A35 were still being discussed - the Environment Agency had raised concerns which could delay this work further.
- 4.6 Mr Avery reported that the NPA had raised concerns with the Government and DEFRA over the issue of a loophole in current planning legislation which had allowed 80 new mobile homes to be erected in Bransgore. The NPA was pressing for a change in legislation in terms of the definition of a caravan. Other National Parks were also facing the same problem.
- 4.7 The NPA was continuing to work against encroachment into the National Park and 2 cases had recently been brought to the Planning Committee. The NPA was committed to taking a firm stance on this issue.
- 4.8 Mr Avery highlighted the current problem of nitrate pollution which was affecting marine life in the Solent and surrounding habitats. Natural England was reconsidering its advice to planning authorities and there was currently an embargo on new housing in Southern Hampshire unless these developments were nitrate neutral.
- 4.9 The NPA's annual Volunteer Fair was taking place on 26 January 2020 in Lyndhurst Community Centre. Any organisations interested in having a stand were requested to contact Jim Mitchell jim.mitchell@newforestnpa.gov.uk.
- 4.10 Eastleigh Borough Council have received a proposal for an extension to the runway at Southampton Airport. The NPA was looking at how this may impact on the New Forest and would be responding to the proposal.

5 Forestry England Update – Bruce Rothnie

- 5.1 Referring to discussion at the last meeting on Forest Design Plans, Mr Rothnie advised that these were management plans for the Enclosures of the New Forest and provide approval for a 10-year programme of work.

Included within the plans were some areas where conifer plantations are being felled to restore rare heathland habitats and these deforestation

elements of the plan needed to go through an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This process has recently concluded, and the work has been approved subject to a number of conditions which apply only to the felling areas considered in the EIA - these conditions would be circulated to Panel members. The full Forest Design Plan was now going through a full Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) which will check that the plans do not have any adverse effects on the integrity of the designated features and site. It was hoped that the HRA would be submitted for approval before Christmas.

- 5.2 Mr Rothnie said that there had been a slight decrease in the number of fly-tipping incidents on the Forest in the last 3 months compared to the same period in 2018 with the number of incidents dropping 8% from 106 to 98.

Forestry England had taken a number of steps to prevent fly-tipping, including additional gates and barriers; improving visibility of entrances; removing fly-tipped waste quickly and installing CCTV in the most frequently affected locations. In addition, FE was working closely with partners in the New Forest and were part of in the joint New Forest Litter Working Group with the New Forest National Park Authority and New Forest District Council. The focus of this group was to raise awareness of the issues around littering and fly-tipping and to coordinate direct action where necessary. He encouraged Panel members to continue to report incidents to FE.

- 5.3 Mr Rothnie said that Ash Dieback continued to spread across England and explained how ash trees were affected by the disease. There is very little that can be done to prevent the spread of the disease so the majority of work was focused on finding trees that may be showing some signs of resistance through their genetic makeup. Forestry England has recently agreed to plant at one of its sites in southern England 1,000 grafted ash trees, collected from across England, which have shown some early signs of resistance. These will now be monitored to see if the resistance remains longer term. Ash trees were not abundant in the New Forest. Elsewhere in the south FE has decided to fell all ash trees on its land in zones close to public roads, car parks and public footpaths where the potential risk to the public is higher. He advised members who had ash trees in close proximity to their property to keep vigilant for signs of dieback and seek professional advice if they had any concerns.

- 5.4 As part of its centenary celebrations, Forestry England had planted commemorative trees at Great Lindford and in the Blackwater Arboretum with the help of local school children. FE had also planted 2,000 oak trees during the autumn in North Bentley Inclosure as part of its own planting programme.

6 Any Other Business

- 6.1 A member mentioned that she has seen animals licking salt off the roads and said that this had been a problem some years ago and was now reoccurring possibly due to a change in the make up of grit by Hampshire County Council.

6.2 Concern was expressed that the consultations log circulated with the agenda papers did not reflect current consultations and NPA officers were requested to ensure that the log was kept up to date.

7 Date of the next meeting

7.1 The Panel noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 5 March 2020 at 7.30pm at Lyndhurst Community Centre