

**Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group
The Library, Queen's House, 10 December 2018**

Attendance:

Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre (Chairman), New Forest National Park Authority
Alison Barnes, New Forest National Park Authority
Cllr James Binns, New Forest District Council
Adam Godwin, Forestry Commission
Lord Manners, Verderers
Nigel Matthews, New Forest National Park Authority
Bruce Rothnie, Forestry Commission
Graham Smith, Test Valley Borough Council
Jonathan Woods, Hampshire County Council
David Stone (notes), New Forest National Park Authority

Apologies: Alison Appleby, Natural England; Richard Burke, Forestry Commission; Colin Read, New Forest District Council

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 OCE welcomed Graham Smith from Test Valley Borough Council to his first meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (04 09 2018)

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

3. Matters arising - updates

3.1 The report by RJS Associates on recreation and leisure visits to the New Forest was supported for publication by the Group in January 2019. It should be accompanied by a news release that would reference how special the New Forest is and the additional research being done by Footprint Ecology on behalf of several local planning authorities.

Action: NM to draft a news release to accompany the publication of the RJS report and circulate this to members of the Steering Group for approval.

3.2 Changes to the Animal Welfare Regulations place new restrictions on how businesses that provide boarding and day care for dogs are allowed to walk the dogs in their care. At a recent workshop commercial dog walkers operating in the New Forest had commented favourably on a draft charter (developed by the Dogs Forum) setting out standards expected of those walking multiple dogs. The final text should be supported by participating organisations (including those on the RMS Steering Group).

4. Feedback from consultation

4.1 The draft Findings Report was supported by the Steering Group, and HCC staff are now content with the increased analysis. It will be released as part of the developing community engagement plan.

5. Progressing the Strategy and developing delivery plans

- 5.1 Most of the draft actions can be and are being progressed. However, greater clarity is needed regarding the legal framework for public engagement as the spatial distribution of recreation facilities is considered. One option would be to develop a Supplementary Planning Document (jointly adopted by multiple planning authorities) to guide decisions about relevant planning applications. This would be informed by the ongoing Footprint Ecology research and by public consultation.

Action: GS to consider the merits of developing a jointly adopted SPD to provide a spatial framework for recreation and to inform public engagement

- 5.2 There is still a need to raise awareness and understanding about the New Forest's special qualities, their benefits to people and their vulnerability – and hence the need to manage recreation. The plan for this will be developed alongside events taking place in 2019, including FC's Centenary, National Parks' 70th anniversary and the Year of Green Action.

- 5.3 The forward plan (including clarification of the legal framework) will help confirm when it would be best to finalise and publish actions that can be supported by all the organisations on the Steering Group.

Action: NM to work on an overall summary, strategic actions and a more detailed work plans with named organisations

- 5.4 A significant amount of work needs to be done, in particular by FC, so it is important that sufficient staff resources are in place.

Action: BR and AB to explore options to build staff resources

6. Date of next meeting

- 6.1 RB to canvass dates for the next meeting

7. Liaison with Advisory Group and date of next meeting

- 7.1 This is dependent on the forward engagement plan which is yet to be finalised.

8. AOB

- 8.1 Options for the FC, NPA and Verderers to share the same or adjacent stands in the Heart of the Forest at the next New Forest Show.