

**Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group
The Library, Queen's House, 13 March 2019**

Attendance:

Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre (Chairman), New Forest National Park Authority
Alison Appleby, Natural England
Steve Avery, New Forest National Park Authority
Rachael Bowen (notes), New Forest National Park Authority
Nicola Brown, Natural England
Richard Burke, Forestry Commission
Adam Godwin, Forestry Commission
Lord Manners, Verderers
Nigel Matthews, New Forest National Park Authority
Bruce Rothnie, Forestry Commission
Adam Vasey, New Forest National Park Authority

Apologies: Jenny Thomas, Natural England; Colin Read, New Forest District Council; Jonathan Woods, Hampshire County Council; Cllr James Binns, New Forest District Council; Graham Smith, Test Valley Borough Council

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 OCE thanked Steve Avery and Nicola Brown for attending.

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 RJS report had been published alongside a press release. Forestry Commission will be recruiting two members of staff in the coming months. One will help with technical recreation advice and the other will help with engagement and communication around the RMS. The Steering Group was pleased that these two roles had been created to assist with such a significant and critical area of work.

4. Progress against draft actions

4.1 The Steering Group considered examples of progress against the current draft strategic actions and how this work is best presented. There had been positive discussions with a range of partners about topics such as managing organised events and activities, enforcement with regard to illegal recreation-related activities and ways of reducing verge parking.

4.2 There was support for a table with columns for 'achievements so far' and 'next steps'. This would be updated about twice a year.

4.3 It should be possible to agree actions and make these public when those related to Objective 4 (about *where* recreation takes place) have been finalised (see next 'progressing the strategy' below).

5. Progressing the Strategy

- 5.1 The main area of proposed work which currently lacks an agreed action is how a spatial plan for managing recreation will be devised and implemented. As had been discussed at the last meeting, a legal framework for public engagement to inform this plan is needed.
- 5.2 The Group discussed the benefits of the National Park having a Local Development Order (LDO) focussed on the provision of recreation facilities.
- 5.3 The LDO could only be made by the local planning authority, in this case the NPA and would take around 12-18 months to complete. Once in place, the Secretary of State is informed.
- 5.4 Developments to specific sites would still be subject to consideration by and obtaining any necessary consents from organisations like the Verderers and Natural England, e.g. to ensure compliance with habitats regulations.
- 5.5 Those present agreed that the NPA should further scope out the benefits of developing an LDO and report back at the next Steering Group meeting. If a decision to proceed is supported by the Group, then NPA members would be asked to consider making an LDO at their July Authority meeting. Both the Verderers and the Forestry Commission will consider a financial contribution to help cover costs.

Action: SA to progress the concept of an LDO and report back at the next meeting

6. Date of next meeting

- 6.1 The next meeting will take place late April / May

7. Liaison with Advisory Group

- 7.1 It was agreed that liaison with the Advisory Group was not needed at this time.

8. AOB

- 8.1 A joint project was discussed: to review National Park signage and messaging throughout the New Forest so that people will know it is a special place that deserves special respect. There was support for engaging an independent consultant to make recommendations.

Action: NM to circulate draft details about the signage project