

Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group 21 September 2020 via Teams

Attendance:

Diane Andrews (New Forest District Council)

Steve Avery (NFNPA)

Richard Burke (Forestry England)

Patrick Heneghan (NFNPA)

Sam Jones (Forestry England)

Lord Manners (Verderers)

Nigel Matthews (NFNPA)

Julie Melin-Stubbs (NFNPA)

Allison Potts (Natural England)

Graham Smith (Test Valley Borough Council)

Claire Upton-Brown (NFDC)

Jonathan Woods (HCC)

Apologies: None.

1&2 Welcome and introductions / election of Chair

- 1.1 WM recommended that an NPA representative continue to Chair the meeting. Patrick Heneghan volunteered for the position for the coming year, subject to ratification at the NFNPA meeting on 15 October, which was accepted by the Group.

3. Minutes of the last meeting (2 July 2020)

- 3.1 The minutes from the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record with the exception of adding Steve Avery as an attendee.

4. Matters arising

- 4.1 The RMS Advisory Group met recently, having not met for about a year. Their main requests were for better two-way dialogue with the Steering Group and a better understanding of how spatial planning for recreation will be progressed alongside any changes to parking (which they considered very important).
- 4.2 NPA staff have been looking at different styles of mapping, largely driven by nature recovery, but including ways of identifying areas that could accommodate more recreation, with a view to feeding into the emerging Partnership Plan. Julie Melin-Stubbs updated the Group on some potential options which the Group discussed. It was agreed to continue this work, taking account of recreation areas currently available, potential new areas and existing projects (e.g. those within NFDC's approach to mitigating the impacts of development). The Group agreed it was important to get the views of the RMSAG at their next meeting.

Action: JMS to attend the RMSAG to give a similar presentation on spatial planning

- 4.3 HCC officers have renewed discussion to find a process to enable the 22 strategic actions to be approved.
- 4.4 A webpage on positive and negative impacts of recreation is being drafted. It should also convey, or link to, key messages to effect behavioural change.

Action: All to forward any comments on the draft webpage to NM
Action: NM to add reference to loss of tranquillity and share the draft webpage with the RMSAG for their input

- 4.5 NM updated the Group on recent recreation-related work including:
- The New Forest Ambassadors scheme, which had proved popular
 - NPA rangers have been out on bikes talking with cyclists, asking a series of questions. A seasonal ranger has been retained to continue this work for two months.
 - Local planning authorities are discussing their habitat mitigation strategies including how far away from the SPA developer contributions should apply if a more coordinated approach is developed
 - A Special by Design meeting will take place on 23 September (to identify how the Forest's special sense of place can be more effectively conveyed through signage and other means)
 - Partner organisations are reviewing how they jointly responded to the increased use of the New Forest for recreation this summer and how we will manage similar issues in the future
 - It is currently hoped that, after public consultation, the new Partnership Plan will be taken to the NPA meeting in March 2021 for NPA approval. Partner organisations would then endorse it over the summer.
 - Richard Taylor and Patrick Heneghan are currently attending the RMSAG and RMSSG respectively, with formal ratification expected on 15 October

5 Updates on strategic actions

- 5.1 Discussions about the feasibility of a Local Development Order to facilitate changes to car parks are progressing between Natural England, Forestry England and the NPA. The need for much stronger powers to prevent damaging verge parking was discussed. Current Hampshire Highway Authority policy prioritises locations with a history of human injuries rather than environmental impacts. Forestry England attempts to establish a temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) this summer had failed.

Action: NM to work with others to acquire independent advice on options to control verge parking in the New Forest

6. Date of next meeting

- 6.1 To be arranged for mid/late November 2020

7. Liaison with RMS Advisory Group

- 7.1 As discussed above

8. AOB

- 8.1 None was raised