

**Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group
Thursday 21 January 2021 via Microsoft Teams**

Attendance:

Rachael Bowen (notes), NFNPA
Richard Burke, Forestry England
Anthony Climpson, Go New Forest
Ruth Croker, Ringwood & Fordingbridge
Footpath Society & Access Forum
Linda Devlin, FE
John Durnell, HIWWT
Barry Dowsett, Verderers
Louise Evans, NFDC
Heather Gould, NFD OG
Renny Henderson, RSPB
Claire Lambert, NE
Charlotte Lines, CDA

Nigel Matthews, NFNPA
Jim Mitchell (NFNPA)
Francesca Sanchez (NE) (for Item 3)
Leanne Sargeant, Forestry England
Graham Smith, Test Valley Borough Council
Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association
Richard Taylor, NFNPA
Jenny Thomas, NE
Claire Upton-Brown, NFDC
Adam Vasey, NFNPA
Jonathan Woods, HCC
James Young

Apologies:

Mark Cowling, Cycle Working Group
Dylan Everett, National Trust

Allison Potts, NE
Nick Wardlaw, FE

1 Welcome / Introductions

1.1 RT welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2 Minutes of the last meeting (8 October 2020) and matters arising

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

2.2 Mapping for wildlife recovery and recreation continues alongside the Partnership Plan (which may last for just two years). The draft Partnership Plan will go to the Authority meeting in March then out for public consultation.

2.3 The RMS Steering Group had agreed that the work on positive and negative impacts of recreation should be presented as a webpage on the NFNPA website.

2.4 Meetings will alternate between RMSSG and the RMSAG, roughly 3 months apart.

3 England Coast Path: Francesca Sanchez, ECP Senior Adviser, Natural England and Adam Vasey, NFNPA Access Ranger

3.1 The England Coast Path comprises of 67 sections totalling 4,340 km, the longest coast path in the world. The Highcliffe to Calshot proposal was published in March 2018. Following on from a European Court Judgement ruling, the HRA is now being updated, and then the objections and representations, submitted in 2018, will be reviewed. The Planning Inspectorate will contact landowners and book site visits in due course. Proposals will be approved by Defra (2022 at the earliest).

3.2 The Calshot to Gosport section was submitted in July 2019 and should be approved this year.

3.3 As the Access Authority, NFNPA is responsible for establishing the routes once approved. Signposts will follow the style developed for the Lepe Loop and there will be interpretation boards explaining the sensitivity of habitats.

Action: Natural England to update the RMSAG on timeline for the Coast Path when known

4 Minutes of the last RMS Steering Group meeting (24 November 2020)

- 4.1 Consultants have been appointed to provide independent advice on Traffic Regulation Order options for consideration by the RMSSG in the first instance.
- 4.2 All the key actions in the RMS have ongoing programmes of work, shared between multiple partner organisations. Forestry England have an internal Steering Group to ensure delivery of the actions for which they are responsible.
- 4.3 The Group discussed communication between the RMSAG and RMSSG and topics that this Group could input to and influence. Today's agenda reflected requests from members, and there is an open invitation to request agenda items.

5 Review and update of recreation permissions on Crown Land: Linda Devlin, Business Support Supervisor – Permissions, Forestry England

- 5.1 LD explained the review of the HRA, which will need approval from Natural England. Events and group activities need formal permission from FE, which has a duty to demonstrate there will be no damage to ecological features.
- 5.2 The process should be completed by June 2021. User groups were approached, and options discussed. The process includes taking account of general recreation as well as the activities requiring permission. The result will be shared with this Group.

6 A Sustainable Cycle Network: Richard Burke, Programme Manager – Recreation Management Strategy, Forestry England

- 6.1 RB gave a presentation about the current situation and long-term ambitions for the cycle network on Crown Land. The summary included Footprint Ecology visitor survey data showing that cycling accounted for only 5.4% of visitors to the Forest.

7 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – Jim Mitchell, NFNPA Interpretation and Outreach Manager

- 7.1 JM explained the background to LCWIPs which aim to encouraging walking and cycling, over a 10-year period. A Steering Group of funding organisations has been established and stakeholders will be consulted at different levels.
- 7.2 Go New Forest welcomed the possibility of a joined-up cycle network that was long overdue. Its webpages on cycling and walking and its newsletters reaches large numbers of visitors and local subscribers and would be an excellent way to promote messages.
- 7.3 Defining what is meant by 'a sustainable network' would help to gain support from user groups and stakeholders.

8 AOB

- 8.1 It was requested that next meeting should include updates on spreading recreation away from protected habitats and control of verge parking.

9 Date of next meeting

- 9.1 To be arranged.