

**Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group**  
**26 April 2021 via Teams**

Attendance:

Diane Andrews (NFDC)	Lord Manners (Verderers)
Steve Avery (NFNPA)	Nigel Matthews (NFNPA)
Rachael Bowen (NFNPA)	Allison Potts (Natural England)
Richard Burke (Forestry England)	Claire Upton-Brown (NFDC)
Patrick Heneghan, Chair (NFNPA)	Jonathan Woods (HCC).
Sam Jones (Forestry England)	

Apologies: None received.

**1. Welcome and introductions**

1.1 PH welcomed everyone to the meeting. A representative from Natural England, who will cover for Allison Potts in the future was unable to attend on this occasion.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting (24 November 2020)**

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

**3. Matters arising**

3.1 HCC has formally endorsement the strategic actions

3.2 The last RMS Advisory Group meeting had a good attendance, and the presentations on the coast path, cycling and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan were well received.

**4. Updates on strategic actions**

4.1 The 2021 Action Plan addresses the shorter-term issues arising from easing of lockdown restrictions on the Forest. Weekly operational meetings (NFNPA, FE, NFDC, NT and HCC) review the previous week, report on actions progressed and agree next steps. New staff, additional signage and wider communications are already in place and Forestry England Volunteers Rangers are expected to start again soon. The Police are also patrolling, and the Fire Service is on standby.

4.2 A review of progress against each of the 22 Strategic Actions is being prepared for the next RMSAG meeting.

Action: All to send any changes to the RMS Strategic Actions achievements table by 15 May

4.3 Following discussion with Dorset Council staff, Forestry England and NPA staff believe a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) could help deal with anti-social behaviours on the Open Forest such as dog fouling, wild camping, feeding of ponies and lighting fires. NFDC would need to issue the Order but enforcement could be delegated, for example to FE staff. There was further discussion about how it could be resourced, but all agreed it was worth investigating.

Action: CUB to discuss PSPO with NFDC colleagues and liaise with RB

Action: RB to share contact at Dorset Council with CUB

- 4.4 Progress on assessing whether a Local Development Order (LDO) could help with redistribution of car parking capacity has been hampered by the pandemic. Site visits will start again in May. Natural England needs to understand the impacts of potential car park changes to help judge which might fall outside of an LDO and associated Habitats Regulations Assessment, and therefore still need a planning application.
- 4.5 The consultants working on Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) options have identified four types of TRO that are worth progressing in more detail. Special consideration would need to be given in and around the edges of villages to avoid displacement parking and perhaps solve related problems within the villages.

Legal issues, appearance and costs need to be considered as information becomes available. HCC would need to be consulted and agree to the scheme, which would be reflected in its updated Transport Plan.

- 4.6 RB gave a presentation on the management of cycling, which had already been given to the RMS Advisory Group and the Access Forum. Broadly, this was welcomed by the Group. However, discussion highlighted a range of challenges including the different types of cyclists and cycling (not all of which can be accommodated in the New Forest), the need for an evidence-based approach, the need to improve the 'network' of permitted routes, enforcement activities to deter those who deliberately cycle elsewhere and importantly the need for adequate staff resources and funding to make progress.

Action: RB to draft an action plan about management of cycling including required resources

- 4.7 The RMSAG had requested an agenda item on spreading recreation away from protected sites (to sites outside of the New Forest SSSI). Options for mapping areas for habitat improvement and recreation were discussed at an earlier meeting and there is likely to be a commitment to produce a spatial plan in the Partnership Plan. Changes in national planning policies and funding streams are likely to give added impetus to the provision of new recreation opportunities and some Local Planning Authorities are already improving local recreation facilities alongside new development. NM offered to liaise with partner organisations to respond to the RMSAG's request, recognising its significant local knowledge and desire to help.

## **5. Date of next meeting**

- 5.1 The next meeting to be held in July.

## **6. Liaison with RMS Advisory Group**

- 6.1 Previously discussed.

## **7. AOB**

- 7.1 WM said that fencing Dibden Inclosure to help people to enjoy recreation away from commoners' stock has been discussed and that he would report back in July.
- 7.2 Forestry England is updating its policies and procedures around granting permissions for activities on Crown Land, based on a new Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Action: Linda Devlin to be invited to the next RMSSG to update the Group about the HRA work and how this will affect permissions for activities on Crown Land.