

# Consultative Panel Meeting Forestry England Update

7 September 2023



## Growing the future: 2021-26

- For wildlife
- For people
- For the climate

## Internal focus:

- Our team, our values, and telling our story
- Sustainability
- Financial performance



Over 50 members of staff and volunteers from Forestry England and HIWWT, along with our local partners, headed out on evenings between the end of May and mid-July to take part in this year's nightjar survey.

A total of 157 transect routes were walked in all areas of suitable habitat across the New Forest and all nightjars seen and heard were recorded.

It was a fantastic survey effort from everyone with all surveyors being fortunate enough to have encountered nightjars on at least one of their visits. Great views and interesting behaviour were observed as well as many other nocturnal species including tawny owls, woodcock and glow worms.

We'll be able to share the full results of the surveys soon.



We reopened Hatchet Pond car park on 11 July, completing one of the final stages of the works. Changes included the relocation of the car park, keeping the same number of parking spaces, further from the water's edge whilst retaining good views of this popular spot in the Forest.

This was carried out to prevent it draining into the Pond and returning the area immediately in front of the water to natural vegetation.

Hatchet Pond is the New Forest's largest body of fresh water and home to some of the UK's rarest wetland plants and freshwater animals- maintaining the health of this pond is a legal requirement.



The wet summer meant that some fungi emerged earlier than usual here in the New Forest.

We have nearly 2,700 species contributing to the biodiversity of the Forest - we look after one of the most important sites for fungi in England.

Once again, we're asking local partners, residents and visitors to support our campaign to look but don't pick and leave fungi for wildlife and others to enjoy.

We will continue to focus our resources on tackling commercial fungi harvesting, which has always been prohibited.

We've approved a limited number of licensed educational fungi walks in the New Forest, which help interpret and raise awareness of the huge value of fungi. We continued to work with foragers to develop sustainable solutions for people to enjoy the benefits of foraging outside of the protected New Forest area (not within the SSSI).



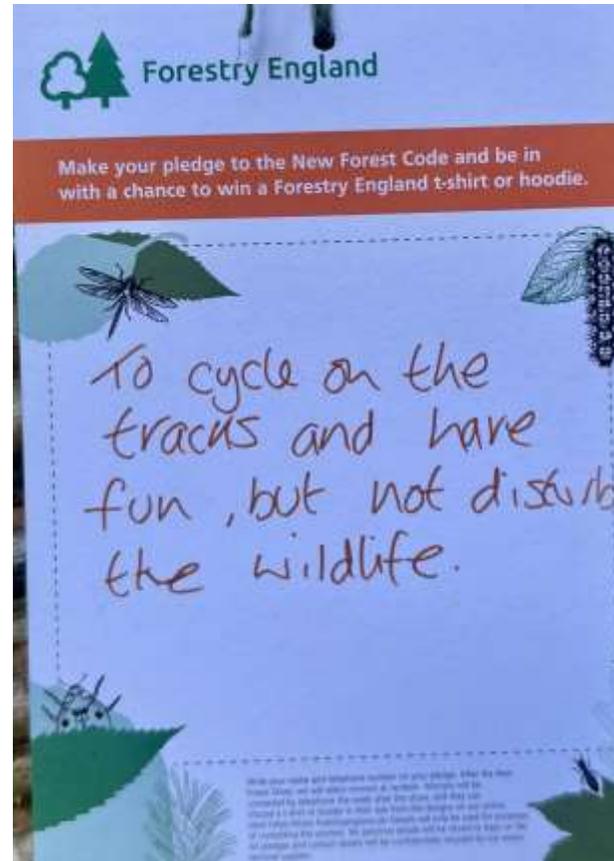
The Forest is a great place to see deer in their natural environment. From end of September, when the red deer rutting season gets underway, we shall be reminding people to make sure they watch deer from a safe distance and don't disturb them.

Unfortunately, each year many people are getting unacceptably close to the deer during the red and fallow deer rutting season (mid Sept - early Nov) and are disturbing them.

This has particularly affected red deer behaviour with the wild herd not able to move freely into the red deer conservation area, and they have been pushed towards nearby roads.



Our main theme at this year's New Forest Show was [the New Forest Code](#) encouraging visitors and local people to get involved in lots of fun activities that delivered key messages about the code, and how we can all care for the New Forest.



Also, four of our staff were delighted to receive the Heathcote Award for their many years of dedication to the New Forest.



Last week, our team and other Forest partners, cleared up truckloads of waste left behind by travellers near Stoney Cross.

The amount of staff time and extra costs incurred for specialist waste contractors has diverted our already limited resources.

We continue to work on a range of measures to deter unauthorised access and help to reduce waste being dumped on the Forest and in our car parks.



Thank you to everyone that has supported the launch of the new PSPOs this summer.

The strong partnership working locally has been vital to making this work and our dedicated staff continue to improve awareness of livestock and protect the fragile landscape from fires.



**Public Spaces Protection Order**

Be Forest Friendly!

It is an offence to:

-  Feed, provide or deposit food for consumption by any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey
-  Pet or touch any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey

**Fail to terminate any of these activities or surrender any items used in conjunction when required by an Authorised Officer.**

Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty of £100 or being taken to court and a fine of up to £1,000.



To find out more, scan the QR code or visit [newforest.gov.uk/PSPO](http://newforest.gov.uk/PSPO)

New Forest District Council | New Forest National Park | Forestry England | safer new forest Targeting Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014



Mowing bracken is a key part of our bracken control programme on the open forest and takes place each year between now, and the end of October.

We target different areas, on a rotational basis, where the bracken is rapidly expanding at the expense of other precious plants and wildlife. The cut material is removed, and this also improves the site for Forest stock to graze.

The bracken is cut using tractor mounted forage harvesters, so we focus clearing bracken over acid grassland, mainly on flatter, easy access sites that are free of obstructions. The cut material is blown into a hopper, enabling it to be removed from site and therefore leaving the ground free of the accumulated litter mat.



## Current work areas:

- The timber stacks in Sloden Inclosure will be collected in the next few weeks.
- Trees are being removed so that remaining trees have space to grow in Parkhill Inclosure, we ask people to follow diversions in place and take extra care until the work is finished in November.
- A small team of contractors have removing conifers at Turf Hill and are nearly finished, these skilled operators have been working with chainsaws and a tractor and winch in wet areas of the forest, which were previously too wet to work in.



## Current work areas :

- In Tantany Woods, we're currently removing some Scots pine and birch to open-up wet lawn areas and create glades within the woodland. Also, coppicing and pollarding some holly around veteran oak trees to support rare lichens.
- At Fort Bog and Holmsley, we're about to start some coppicing work to open-up and protect the surrounding bog, creating more habitat for rare plants - e.g slender cotton grass.

There is sometimes a perception that tree felling is bad, but it's a vital part of good woodland management. Trees provides the wood that we all use in our daily lives (helping lock carbon long term) and promotes a healthy forest / habitat



## And finally...Pannage, berries and pumpkins

The Forest is beginning to ripened, the first berries are already here with chestnuts and acorns soon to fall. This marks the start of the pannage season and we're urging people not to pet or feed the pigs when they go out from 11 September.

At Halloween, we'll once again be reminding people that pumpkins are not natural to woodlands and it can make some animals very poorly.

Pumpkins are also often decorated and have things such as candles in them. Animals eating the pumpkins could then eat a foreign object and this could kill them.

Please help us share these messages.

