

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Linden Hall, Lyndhurst Community Centre,
Lyndhurst, SO43 7NY
on THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2024 at 7.30 pm

1 Those present:

Brian Tarnoff (Chair)
Steve Avery (NFNPA)
Craig Harrison (FE)
Derek Tipp (NFDC)
David Stone (Panel Secretariat)

2 Apologies for absence

- Jenni Tubbs - NF Forest Friends of the Earth Gill Hickman to substitute
- Melissa Sheppard – Bransgore PC
- David Horne – Hordle PC
- Pamela Keen - Norley Wood Society
- Hannah Marsh – British Horse Society
- Peter Brown - Camping and Caravan Club
- Janet Bache – New Forest Dog Owners' Group
- Nigel Buckett - Marchwood Parish Council

Also in attendance:

Abby Sullivan, Countryside Access Development Officer, Hampshire County Council
(minutes item 3.1)

Nic Carass, Business and Membership Manager, Go New Forest (minutes item 3.3)

Chairman Notice - *the Chairman reported on the sad death of Roly Errington who had passed away in October 2024. Mr Errington had been a member of the Panel for some years representing Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley Parish Council, his memorial service would take place on 15 February 2025.*

3. Presentations

3.1 Abby Sullivan, Countryside Access Development Officer, Hampshire County Council made a presentation to the Panel on Countryside Access Plan

3.2 A copy of her presentation may be found on the Panel's website *
(* not yet posted on [site](#))

3.3 Nic Carass, Business and Membership Manager of Go New Forest made a presentation to the Panel on Go New Forest and Visit The New Forest

3.4 [A copy of her presentation can be found on the Panel's website](#)

4 Approval of Minutes from the meeting held on 5 September 2024

4.1 The minutes were approved.

5 Matters Arising

5.1 There were no matters arising from the last minutes

6 Matters for Reporting

6.1 Forestry England Update – Craig Harrison

Mr Harrison reported on the following:

Heathland restoration - the programme of works included removal of mature conifer, clearance of felled conifer and removal of natural regeneration, on areas of wet and dry heathland open to grazing livestock. He referred to the areas of the New Forest where work had been undertaken in accordance with the programme.

Freshwater surveys - the HLS scheme supported the citizen science Riverfly Partnership Project which involved training of volunteers to identify and survey specific groups of freshwater invertebrates. In the current year citizen science volunteers have surveyed two sites (Pondhead and Millersford) from April to October.

Cycling – representatives of the Verderers, local community environmental groups, and the cycling community had been working to improve the management of cycling towards a long-term, sustainable way to manage more responsible and enjoyable cycling in the New Forest.

New Forest ponies - the Ranger team have continued year-round with reminding people of the dangers of feeding and petting ponies and donkeys in the New Forest

Animal accidents – In November and December the ranger team had been reminding motorists to take care when driving in changeable conditions. The vast majority caught speeding in the New Forest under operation Mountie were local drivers on their daily commute.

Tackling fly-tipping – FE was continuing to work with local partners NFDC, the police, VOSPA and the NPA, carrying out random spot check on vehicles carrying waste, this effort had recently been extended to include private estates such as Beaulieu and Longdown which were also suffering with similar issues.

Car parks – the cost of maintaining car parks in the New Forest had increased significantly due to the rising cost of materials and changes in weather patterns causing greater damage. This had impacted on FE's ability to

maintain such a large network (130 car parks) which may result in additional car park closures this winter as FE's works through the list of required repairs.

Forestry work update – FE staff had been carrying out tree safety check surveys inspecting the condition of hundreds of miles of Forest roads and car parks - looking for signs of decay, rot and damage and checking the trees' stability.

Mr Harrison then reported generally on FE work including the recent completion of resurfacing work on the walking trail at Blackwater near Brockenhurst, funded through a DEFRA accessibility grant secured for this site which was now accessible for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility vehicles. Maintenance of the other trails and paths through the New Forest was ongoing with increased reliance on other funding options accessible to FE.

[A copy of the presentation is available on the website.](#)

6.2 NFNPA Update – Steve Avery

Mr Avery reported as follows:

Government's response to the consultation on the draft National Planning Framework – the Government would be publishing its response before Christmas with housing numbers.

New statutory duty, Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 – a new statutory duty would strengthen protections for national parks. Not yet received guidance on this and how it would be taken forward.

Devolution White Paper – the NPA was also expecting information on a Devolution White Paper from the Government setting out details on devolution plans.

Partial Local Review – the NPA was conducting a partial local plan review and a report on this would be considered at the Authority meeting on 23 January 2024.

New Forest National Park Planning Design Awards 2025 – nominations for schemes in the New Forest would close on 31 December 2024.

Biodiversity Net Gain – Mr Avery advised that the Secretariat would include a link in the minutes on how this was applied in the New Forest National Park.

Please see link below:-

[**Biodiversity Net Gain - New Forest National Park Authority**](#)

He advised that the NPA and NFDC had finalised a significant local agreement on BNG and nitrate mitigation with a landowner in Keyhaven.

2024 New Forest Show – Mr Avery reported briefly on the last New Forest Show which had featured a ‘Behind the Scenes’ campaign. A link to the campaign is set out below

[Behind the Scenes - New Forest National Park Authority](#)

6.3 NFDC Update – Derek Tipp

Derek Tipp updated members in connection with the following:

Car parking Strategy – NFDC had been consulting on a new car parking strategy which consultation ended on 1 December 2024. This was a new district-wide parking strategy which will consider the Council’s off-street car parks taking into account issues such as demand for parking, whether car parks were in the right place and the right size, modernisation, carbon neutrality, charging points and road safety. The final parking strategy was set to be completed by May 2025.

Call for sites, local plan review – Councillor Tipp advised that the District Council was commencing a review of its Local Plan and had opened a Call for Sites survey as part of its evidence gathering process to commence work on the review. The closing date for this was 13 December 2024.

Community Infrastructure Levy - the current bidding window for local infrastructure bids under the CIL process was open until 13 December 2024 after which time the Council would be considering the bids received to fund projects within the District area.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Nitrate Mitigation Scheme in the New Forest – Councillor Tipp advised that a Natural Capital Scheme had been established on a 600-acre Aubrey’s Farm at Keyhaven which would deliver 3,950 Nitrate Mitigation credits.

6.4 Verderers Update –

Did not take place as the Verderers had yet to appoint a replacement representative after their November elections.

7 Consultations

Panel members were advised that the government were currently consulting on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. This consultation closes on 19 December 2024.

8 Any other business

- 8.1 The Chairman advised that the election of Panel Chairman would take place at the next meeting on 6 March 2025 and nominations for Chairman would need to be received by 26 February 2025.

9 Date of next Panel Meeting.

- 9.1 Thursday 6 March 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm