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From David Heath CBE MP
Minister of State for Agriculture and Food

Thank you for your letter of 21 May about the future of the New Forest Consultative Panel.

As we made clear in the Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement, we will expect the new body to develop clear arrangements for working with communities at the local level, building on best practice. We set out that this will involve working effectively with existing partners in the area and tailoring arrangements, within an agreed national engagement framework, to the needs and capacities of particular locations and communities.

The current arrangements between the Forestry Commission and the New Forest Consultative Panel represent an example of best practice that meet the principles set out in the statement. It provides a good foundation that the new body should welcome building on.

My officials will, of course, work with the New Forest Consultative Panel to ensure that the interests of local communities are reflected in our plans for the new body as they develop.



DAVID HEATH CBE MP



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