

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

**Minutes of the Meeting held at the Linden Hall, Lyndhurst Community Centre,
Lyndhurst, SO43 7NY
on THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER 2022 at 7.30 pm**

Those present:

Andrew Gilruth (Chair)
Steve Avery (NFNPA)
Michael Pittock (FE)
Graham Ferris (Verderers)
David Stone (Panel Secretariat)
Vicki Gibbon (Panel Secretariat)
Margaret Bunyard – CPRE
Ailsa Ferrand – NF Equestrian Association
Sue Bennison – Bramshaw PC
Robert Clarke – Burley PC
Janet Bache – NF Dog Owners Group
Alexa Carcas – Fawley PC
Diana Kitcher – Hampshire WI
Eve Elloate – Denny Lodge PC
Rob Bird – Landford PC
Richard Reeves – NF History & Archaeology Group
Jenni Tubbs – NF FOE
David Horne – Hordle PC
Peter Brown – Camping & Caravanning Club
Martin Fletcher – Royal Forestry Society
Richard Taylor – Minstead PC
Brian Tarnoff – NFA (Friends of NF)
Gordon Bailey – Test Valley
Charles Payne – Wellow Parish Council
Frank Weller – Ramblers Association

1 Apologies for absence

Craig Harrison - FE
Rob Dewing – NF Business Partnership
Cllr K Brake – Sopley PC
Rob Waite – Environment Agency
John Korbey – Brockenhurst PC
Melissa Shepherd – Bransgore PC
Alison Bolton – Boldre PC
Bernie Tully – Hyde PC
Pamela Keen – Norley Wood Society
Copythorne Parish Council
Hannah March – BHS

2 Approval of Minutes from the meeting held on 1 September 2022

- 2.1 A member requested that in future more discussion and detail was added to the minutes along with a list of member attendance, this was agreed by the secretariat. The minutes of the Panel meeting on 1 September 2022 were then approved.

3 Matters Arising

- 3.1 There were no matters arising on this occasion.

4 Matters for Reporting

4.1 Forestry England Update – Michael Pittock

Michael Pittock (substituting for Craig Harrison from Forestry England) introduced himself and provided an update to Members.

Referring to the presence of Pine Martens, he said that studies by FE and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trust showed that Pine Martens had established a population in the New Forest. Further studies were taking place to assess the size of the population and their breeding success; similar studies were also taking place in other parts of the UK.

The HLS teams had worked on improving habitats at various locations - Dur Hill, Markway, Longdown, Ipley, Turfhill, Allum Green, Little Wootton. This work included woodland restoration, ridge and furrow, a rhododendron cut and burn programme, bracken control, holly coppicing/pollarding and verge restoration (measures to counter verge parking included establishing dragons teeth). In response to a query, Mr Pittock advised that the preferred hoggin for groundworks was difficult to source and discussions were taking place with local contractors to improve the material. The next phase of heathland restoration was now underway at Matley Ridge and Denny Inclosure both important works within the Verderers' HSL agreement. There had been a good display of fungi in the New Forest this year with unpicked fungi providing an opportunity for study and a contribution to the fragile eco-system of the Forest. FE was continuing to monitor commercial picking in the Forest.

Mr Pittock reported that the New Forest Keepers had observed and monitored this year's breeding season. Unfortunately, numbers of curlew and redshank remained critically low but nightjar numbers had done well.

He said that the pannage season had been extended by the Deputy Surveyor and would now come to an end on 9 December.

Major repair works had begun to replace a pair of derelict bridges over the old railway track at Longslade. The work would be undertaken by specialist contractors and take around 2 months to complete. The car parks at Longslade Bottom and Longslade View would be closed during the works.

During the last year, the FE Permissions team had received over 4,500 application enquiries for permits which had resulted in 1,820 permitted events, including 3 social prescribing permissions - Healthy Walks, Parkrun and Pedall cycle rides.

Over recent months, a national tender process has been underway to find a new operator for Forestry England campsites across England, including those in the New Forest. The new operator will be The New Forest Agricultural Show Society, through their trading company - Camping in the New Forest Ltd and FE was now in the final stage of agreements and legal process. From 1 December 2022 Forestry England will be operating the campsites for an interim period ahead of the new operators taking over. Some Panel members expressed concern with regard to the efficient management of the campsites in the future.

Joint operations to tackle fly-tipping continued with Hampshire Constabulary and NFDC on a range of measures to deter and reduce waste being dumped on the Forest and in car parks.

Forestry England's contractors would be thinning out some trees at Millersford to give the remaining ones more space to grow. From 6 December for a few weeks there will be further forestry activities at Turfhill, removing conifer trees to restore this area back to heathland.

A copy of the presentation is available on the website

4.2 NFNPA Update – Steve Avery

Steve Avery began his presentation by reminding Panel members of the Partnership Plan which had recently been published, he explained that the five main themes of the Plan were Climate, Nature, People, Place and Partnership. Beginning with Climate and the need to reach net zero Mr Avery advised that the Authority had recently commissioned a report to determine where emissions arose in the National Park, the reductions that would be necessary to safeguard against runaway climate change and recommendations for how net zero for the National Park could be achieved. A copy of this report can be found here - [Net zero with nature programme - New Forest National Park Authority \(newforestnpa.gov.uk\)](https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk)

Within the Nature section Mr Avery highlighted the Authority's work in piloting the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund, which was a government initiative to drive private investment into nature recovery projects. He then went on to explain the importance of Habitat Mitigation Schemes operated by both the Authority and neighbouring local planning authorities, which seek contributions from developers to mitigate recreational and other impacts arising from new developments on the designated sites. A priority action of the Partnership Plan is to develop a more strategic approach to habitat mitigation as it applies to the New Forest. Under the People section of the Plan the Local List project was highlighted, which recognises the positive

role that landmark buildings, structures, sites and monuments play in the local distinctiveness of the areas.

Mr Avery advised the Panel that NFDC would be launching a consultation on 5 December in regard to two draft PSPOs concerning fires and the petting and feeding of animals. For more information and to respond to the consultation please see here - [Public Spaces Protection Orders consultation - New Forest District Council](#).

A Panel member raised the issue of sky lanterns and fireworks in the forest and believed that these should be included within the PSPO. Mr Avery advised to respond to the consultation making these issues known.

Mr Avery drew members attention to Solent Freeport; freeports being special areas within the UK where different economic regulations would apply. He explained that the Authority had recently written to the government asking for clarification on boundaries and what this would mean in regard to planning in the New Forest.

The new Citizen Portal was now up and running, guidance notes would shortly be available on the website. An enforcement notice had been served on land at Vernon Dene, Bransgore and finally Mr Avery highlighted the upcoming Green Halo Conference due to take place on 6 December.

A copy of the presentation is available on the website.

5 Statutory Consultations – Steve Avery

There were no further consultations.

6 Any other items the Chairman feels urgent

There were no further items.

7 Dates of next Panel Meetings.

7.1 Thursday 2 March 2023, Thursday 1 June 2023, Thursday 7 September 2023, Thursday 7 December 2023.