

Surrey Parks and Countryside Forum
Tuesday 7th March 2023
10.00am, Via Teams

Present	Alexander Bagnell MVC AB Andi Roy SCC AR Andrew Thwaites COL AT Cara Thomas SCC CT Emma Campbell ECC EC James Herd SWT JH Stewart Cocker EECC SC Lisa Creaye-Griffin SNP Chairman LCG Zoe Williams SNP (minutes) ZW
Apologies	Sophie Sykes – update sent will be included in the round table. Christa Emmet – “ “
Previous minutes	Approved
Matters Arising	<p>An update on the LNRS and Stakeholder Engagement BNG – We have now had the response from the government and know it will be introduced in November for most planning applications, April next year for small applications and then later in 2024 for National Infrastructure projects. LNRS we are still awaiting guidance, LNRS guidance is drafted and waiting for the release, we are hoping by April. SCC are going to be the responsible local authority, SyNP and SCC are preparing the stakeholder engagement plan, the biodiversity records centre are working with us to collect data. Trying to find out everything that is already out there to see if we need to do any future survey work. Expect to hear from SCC or SNP on who we would contact via stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>SC – our draft plan has just come out, currently there is no mention of LNRS in the plan plenty of mention of Green Belts, they have not put biodiversity as the sixth criteria they are working on the original 5. Will there be scope to look into green corridors across Epsom and Ewell Boroughs?</p> <p>LCG – they are still pushing for LNRS to be a material consideration within planning. SC- LPAs are still putting green belt forward for development.</p>
	<p>Commercial dog walking and licencing Lisa – No authorities have licence in place according to the responses to our question. CT – I thought Tandridge had something in place. No one signed up as present EC. LCG - Was it hard to get signed up?</p>

<p>EC - No legal basis to enforce it.</p> <p>SC – Meeting at Nonesuch, decision taken to trial at Nonsuch the licencing of professional dogwalkers. Tandridge had a licensing fee of £100 perhaps we can see the draft of this.</p> <p>EEBC have used public space protection orders (PSPO), this has to be renewed every year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professional dog walkers are prepared to pay as they have no overhead costs. Having a presence like a ranger is important and welcomed. • Sight capacity is something to think about, the impart to sights need to considered. • No professional dog walking in SSSI site such as Epsom Common. <p>LCG - understand from Surrey Hearth they have set areas they have offered up.</p> <p>AT – Ashtead common license is available but hasn't gone ahead yet. Hamstead Heath have got mobile data from dog walkers. Allowing the setting of capacity on the Heath.</p> <p>AB - Our sites are quite small, having a device to measure environmental impact would be an idea. Walking a dog, myself I release the amount of distance covered is large and there is a potential impact of this to the land.</p> <p>CT- We have pulled together a code of conduct and a booking agreement, they have had contact with MOD, National Trust and others, we have limit resources to police. Trying to determine the extent of the right of access of our land, should this include one accompanying dog or more. This is being raised. Feedback we have had depends on the land class.</p> <p>Will be at a meeting this afternoon for dog training day. One aimed at wardens, one aimed at land managers, how to influence positive behaviour at Thames Basin Health. Cara offered to share these notes of the meeting.</p> <p>EC- What legal basis, we have been advised there is none, we need sustainable date to implement a PSPO.</p> <p>SC- This is a commercial business and therefore should be treated as one. We would normally ask for public liability insurance, they can be charged for and licensed just the same as sports activities on our land. Hopeful that by having this it creates better behaviour all round. Nonsuch will be the trial.</p> <p>Lisa would damage to SSSI have legal protection?</p> <p>JH – Evidencing this is difficult and getting NE to back you up is hard. There will be disturbance to wildlife and over time pollution to the ground. SWT were looking at this to moderate amount of engagement as they could then use this as an accreditation. They could be allowed to walk a set number of dogs and the commercial dog walkers saw this as a positive professional mark, they would be working within a minimum standard.</p> <p>LCG - How would you like to take this forward?</p>	<p>Cara offered to share these notes of the meeting.</p>
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	<p>AT – is there a legal basis, depends on the legalisation of each piece of land. There is a requirement to respond according to this.</p> <p>LCG– I would like to agree a set approach, might be worth waiting to see what works in the trials.</p> <p>JH- Dorset dogs have a successful scheme they operate this over their heathland.</p> <p>This will be kept on the agenda and the results of the inquiry into the incident in Tandridge will affect how we move forward. The numbers of dogs will need to be managed in some way.</p> <p>Tandridge dog incident- Ian Hudson parks officer, the incident happened on Tandridge land. Waiting on the police meeting with the council.</p>	
	<p>Updates on Ash Dieback</p> <p>AB – We are looking at three sites in particular, we will need to be more proactive in felling trees. How are other people managing trees they can no longer climb how are people getting this is done?</p> <p>CT– Three sites, all going ok small issues on Sheepleas, with a dormouse box. Next year we are looking at a few more sites we have recruited a Countryside Project Officer to support this. We are looking at developing a learning statement and reason for the approach and licencing for this, e.g. Why are we using the machines and will we be extracting timber.</p> <p>We are developing a communications plan which will be signed off and is working well,</p> <p>AR – We have had an issue with contractors not willing to work on trees with any ash dieback. They are not recommended to climb on Ash dieback trees.</p>	
<p>Round table</p>	<p>AT – Bigger picture across all land holdings we are looking at landscape scale initiatives. The AONB extension won't affect Ashtead Common but may affect sites over in the Coulsdon/Caterham direction.</p> <p>We are looking at joining up partnerships with our neighbours. On a local sight base level. We didn't do our work on the Ancient oak pollards due to drought. Hoping to try this again this year weather permitting.</p> <p>All the other programmes have gone ahead, work for scrub etc.. More resistance work on fires, looking at residential boundaries and fire breaks.</p> <p>AB – We are concertinaing on overriding documents, there is some confusion on what we have and how we manage sites looking at bringing this into one document, on the ground we are looking at possibilities of grazing for some of our sights not previously done in Mole Valley.</p> <p>JH - Wildfire resilience we are in the final stages of getting our wildfire reliance plan for Chobham finished, this has been supported by an</p>	

	<p>independent specialist. Chobham is a very complicated site due to overhead powerlines and a major aviation fuel line running under it and public access.</p> <p>Wildfire resilience plan will knit together with our sites management plan. We wanted the two plans to work together, looking at higher risk area wildfire and managing this as best we can. Weighing up managing the priorities. In warming climate, it is necessary as 20% of all the land we manage in Surrey experienced wildfire last year. (We manage over 5000 hectares.) Happy to talk through this document once it is released.</p> <p>We have been flagged on two of our sites as being in a radial TB zone, in the north of county. This means someone close to us has TB reactors in their cattle. SWT herd is clear at the moment. We are looking at testing for TB to keep our herd safe. Any keepers of cattle are being cautious at the moment. TB in on increase in and round Surrey at present.</p> <p>CT – The council are working on an integrated land management policy, looking to provide instruction on how we approach the management of our land. This is in the initial stages. I attended a workshop with other departments, looking at the guiding principles. I have suggested they bring this to Forum. I have spoken to Katie about this. I will be leading on this in the council due to someone leaving.</p> <p>AR – Nothing to much from Spelthorne, increasing our wildflower planting, we are review or nature and parks strategy for the next ten years. We are looking at nature reserve status from some of our SSSI sites. More optimistic and ambitious in our new strategy.</p> <p>EC– A biodiversity policy has been put forward by Members and we are currently managing expectations regarding this. We are currently out to consultation regarding naked flames, along with illegal moorings and fishing activities along our riverside sites. Our Countryside Strategy is currently being revised and will be due for release once approved.</p> <p>SC – Other updates already mentioned. Epsom Common is going to be put forward as a natural nature reserve status to NE. This could include other sites.</p> <p>SS- Main update from me was around Stewardship, new capital grants this year are on a rolling window and can be added to an existing agreement (HLS or CS). A lot of the capital items have been added to the standalone grant.</p> <p>SSSIs – We will be creating our new monitoring plan for next financial year. If there are any sites that have not been surveyed in the last 10 years or any site, you think may now be in favourable condition please let me know.</p>	<p>CT to follow up</p>
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	<p>Ashtead NNR Expansion – We recently had a partners meeting which was extremely positive and encouraging. We are now looking to engage with other partners to increase the scope even further. This could be looking at a new NNR partnership stretching from the Thames to the North Downs. Once we have more of an update, I would be happy to present to the group.</p> <p>Any questions, please get in touch.</p> <p>CE-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since January we have been working in partnership with four landowners and farmers to plant 2.5km of native hedgerow and 700 trees. This has included delivering a target of 20 volunteering sessions including 5 community open days and engaging with a wide variety of groups such as Merrist Wood College, Godalming Ramblers, Refugees and Surrey Choices Growth Team. We hope to achieve this target by the end of March. • We have been continuing our tree popping work both at Banstead Heath where we have had 3 successful sessions with refugee groups as well as several corporate sessions at the Hampton Estate near Puttenham. • We have now released our Surrey Girlguiding Hedgerow Badge in partnership with Surrey Girlguiding which includes activities surrounding the importance of hedgerows as well as the offer of a practical planting session or hedge visit next planting season. • We have now informally launched Surrey Hills Conservation Volunteers which is a volunteering scheme all about managing access and habitats for people and nature in the Surrey Hills with a USP of working with private farmers and landowners. <p>SA – We are looking to procure a new sports booking system for our pitches so that customers can self-serve book ideally. We are considering if we only offer this for tennis or whether there is a system out there in use that can deal with all our sports variations. I would be grateful if members could advise how they currently manage sports pitch bookings for customers. What, if any, booking system they use, and if they would recommend anything.</p> <p>If this could be asked around other members, that would be great.</p>	<p>SS to share update once received.</p>
<p>Dates for next meetings</p>	<p>Tuesday 6th June 2023 in person – 2.00pm Location: Surrey Hills Estate Office Warren Farm Barns Headley Lane Mickleham Dorking RH5 6DG</p>	

	Tuesday 29th August 2023 Thursday 30th November 2023	
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