

## **NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM**

**Meeting:** *Monday 6 June 2016*

**Agenda item 5:** *Forest Design Plan consultation*

A draft response on behalf of the Forum is attached for Members to approve.



John Stride  
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Reference        NFAF/Forest Design Plan 2016

Dear Mr Stride,

### **New Forest Inclosures Forest Design Plan 2016**

This letter constitutes formal advice from the New Forest Access Forum in response to the consultation on the New Forest Inclosures Forest Design Plan 2016.

The New Forest Access Forum is the statutory Local Access Forum for the New Forest National Park plus the New Forest District Council area, as provided for under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Its membership is comprised of individuals with a wide range of interests and expertise, including land owners/managers, conservationists, representatives of user groups and those with disabilities. The role of the Forum is to provide balanced advice that reflects the combined view of individual members. The Forestry Commission is required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this Forum in carrying out its functions.

This Forum welcomes the opportunity to comment on the plans for the Forest Inclosures. The plans are comprehensive and we broadly agree with the proposals set out in them.

We do not have the expertise to comment on individual plans but would like to make the following general comments:

#### **Habitats and landscape**

Given the protected status of the New Forest and the significance of its landscape character, opportunities should be sought wherever possible to enhance habitats and landscape features.

#### **Access**

Access to the Forest is valued highly by local people and visitors and must be retained. Where forestry work adversely affects surfaces of access routes and tracks, these should be reinstated as soon as possible after the work has been completed.

Yours sincerely,  
*Ruth Croker*

**Ruth Croker**  
**Chair, New Forest Access Forum**

*The New Forest Access Forum is the Local Access Forum for the New Forest National Park and Southwest Hampshire, and is a requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.*