

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Permitted activities on the Crown Lands of the New Forest.

14th March 2022

Linda Devlin - Recreation Manager - Permissions



The New Forest:

- local, national and international protections
- globally important for its landscape, nature conservation, heritage and recreation.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI),
Special Area of Conservation (SAC),
Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA)
Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance).

- **UK Habitats Regulation / Habitat Regulations Assessment**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 – **Habitats Regulations**

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Ramsar sites (or European sites)

Habitats Directive - to protect biodiversity through conservation



- Natural England / DEFRA
- Forestry England - competent authority
- Forestry England - legal duties

The term 'Recreation' is used for all aspects of permitted activities (including education) under the HRA protocol

- The Sandford Principle



- Challenge in avoiding or mitigating impact
- Need a robust protocol
- Principle challenge - The “In combination effect”
- Existing non permitted use and displacement



- Effective, reliable, timely
- Monitoring compliance with protocol
- Feedback and make changes if required



Categories simplified

<p>Barbecues on allocated sites (Banned for 2021)</p> <p>Beekeeping</p> <p>Community Events</p> <p>Cycling events upon cycle tracks</p> <p>Duke of Edinburgh Award</p> <p>Working dog-related events and training. Including Trail hunting without horses such as New Forest Beagles</p> <p>Drag hunting</p> <p>Educational visits</p>	<p>Equestrian Events</p> <p>Exercise classes</p> <p>Falconry</p> <p>Filming and Photography (excluding drones)</p> <p>Filming - Drone use</p> <p>Foliage Collection</p> <p>Fungi Educational Walks Horse-drawn driving (for personal use)</p> <p>Horse-drawn Driving (for commercial use)</p> <p>Licensees</p>	<p>Model aircraft</p> <p>Model boats</p> <p>Orienteering events and training</p> <p>Running Events</p> <p>Scientific studies</p> <p>Sled Dog Events</p> <p>Training exercises</p> <p>Walking Events and Geocaching/Letterboxing</p> <p>Weddings and Blessings</p>
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Mitigation Measures

Time of year	Limits on numbers
Time of day	Specific monitoring
Use of 'robust tracks'	Activity specific mitigation
Event management	Ad hoc arrangements



Ecology and Wildlife

Avoiding disturbance of very sensitive locations and protected habitats

Forestry Operations

avoiding areas and key times of the year when major forestry operations are taking place to ensure public safety.

Other planned events

with around 2000 permitted activities or events taking place each year, we work hard to avoid activities clashing or competing for limited parking space and facilities.

Civil engineering

Avoid clashing with maintenance works on forest infrastructure

Public pressure

Consideration must be given to managing events and activities in combination with existing visitor engagement to avoid over-use and damage to the landscape.

New Forest

Free roaming livestock - at certain times of the year and in specific locations priority is given to activities supporting this.

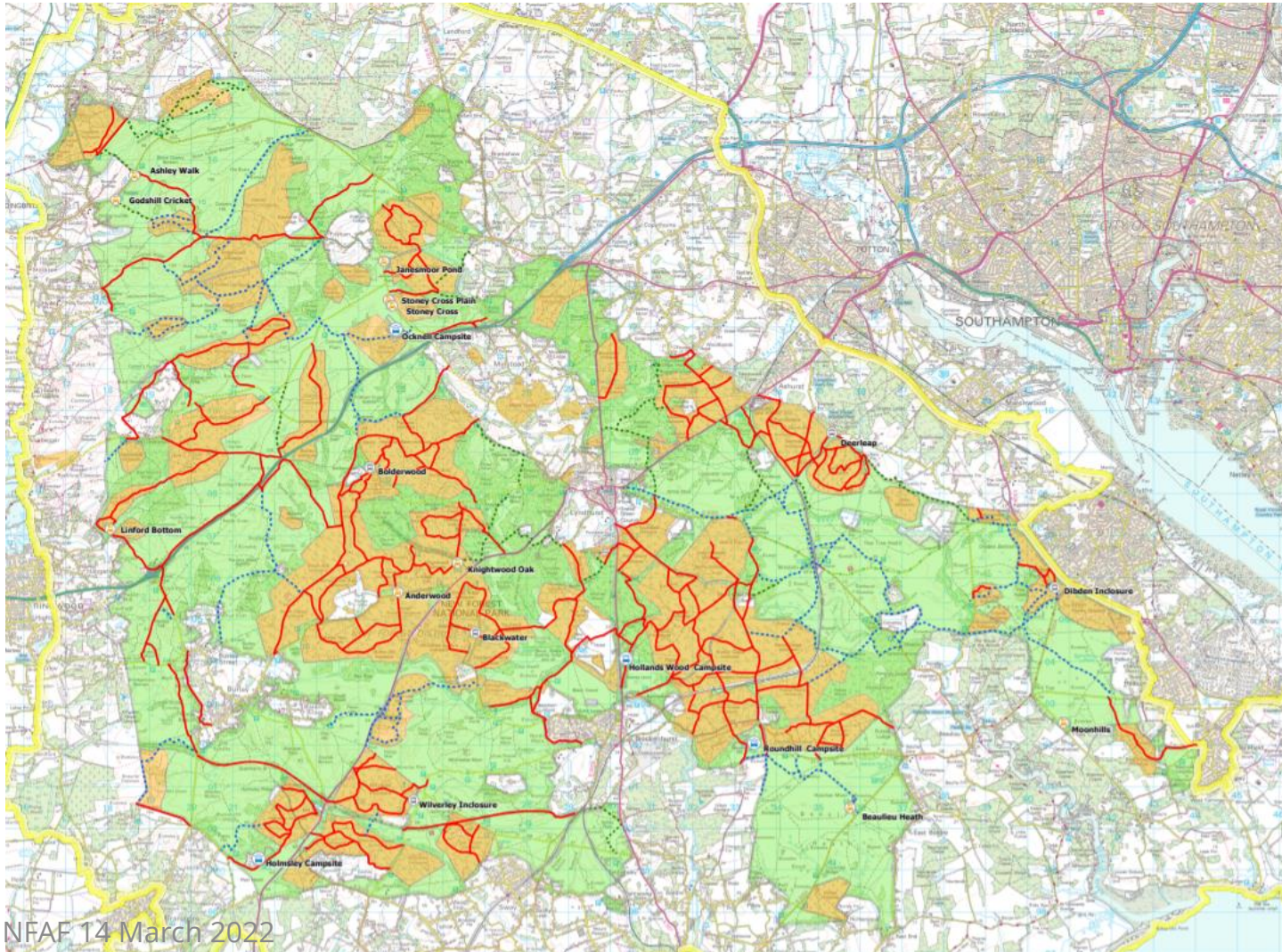


	Under 50 people	50-150 people	150-1000 people
Location(s) including routes clearly defined and agreed with Forestry England as part of permission		✓	✓
Temporary signage directing parking, routes and other key information		✓	✓
Temporary signage letting public know of event taking place, in position at least 1 week before event		✓	✓
Stewards managing car-parking and moving on any cars parking on verges, blocking gateways etc. with parking only in car parks as agreed with Forestry England (see Appendix 2).		✓	✓
Litter clear-up on same day as event, including check of all routes and other areas used	✓	✓	✓
Provision of litter bins (temporary) removed on same day as event		✓	✓
Stewards/marshalls managing participants along set routes, to ensure participants are in the pre-agreed areas/course		✓	✓
Temporary toilets provided (if none already at location and event more than 3 hours), removed within 1 day of end of event		✓	✓
Shuttle bus or other means to limit car use			✓
Public address system allowed (no amplified music and limited announcements)		✓	✓
Information to participants in advance on sensitivities and reason for particular requirements, agreed with Forestry England in advance		✓	✓
Restrictions on infrastructure, e.g. gazebos, rows of seating etc.	No infrastructure, such as gazebos allowed.	Small gazebo permitted on hardstanding/gravelled car-park areas only	Small gazebo permitted on hardstanding/gravelled car-park areas only
No petrol generators or naked flames	✓	✓	✓
No catering (cooking of food on-site)	✓	✓	✓

Mitigation - size of event



- Map of robust tracks can be found: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/new-forest-planning-event-or-activity>



Recreation, enjoyment, sustainability and wildlife.

Compliance to UK Habitats Regulation

Fulfil our legal duties as a ‘competent authority’ under the Habitats Regulations

Conservation and protection of SAC and SPA habitats and species

Reports/data

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017>

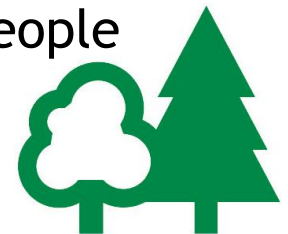
Permissions HRA management

We issue permits when

- Activity prohibited under byelaws
- Competitive events
- Exclusive use
- Impact on the environment, our work, people
- Commercial activity - income generation

- Documentation - 5 key documents:
 - Completed and signed Application form,
 - Maps
 - Public Liability Insurance, Route maps,
 - Risk Assessment (including relevant COVID safety measures),
 - Safeguarding policy and Volunteer policy where applicable.

- Do not need permission: low risk/low scale - under 25 people
<https://www.forestryengland.uk/new-forest-car-parks>



HRA permissions communication programme undertaken so far:

NF Advisory Group

NF Steering Group

NFDC - Economic Development Dept (filming permissions) and SAG

NF NPA - (all relevant departments/teams)

RSPB, IOW & Hants Wildlife Trust, NT

NF Heritage Centre

Education centres: Avon Tyrrell, Calshot, Ferny Crofts, Foxlease, Minstead Study Centre

Ramblers (national level and NF local group)

Scouting Association (County and District Commissioner level)

All event organisers requesting permission

All regular user groups (i.e. running clubs, Healthy Walks group, Nordic Walking groups, cycling groups, etc)

Each new permission requestee

Stakeholder diaries and staff workshop/trainings

Permissions pages on website:

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/new-forest-planning-event-or-activity>

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/the-new-forest-special-place>

General Permissions email contact:

Southern.Permissions@forestryengland.uk

