

New Forest Access Forum 12 June 2020

Chairman's Report.

1. Recreational Management Strategy Advisory Group. 19.07.22.

This meeting was given over completely to consider Public Space Protection Orders as a means to tackle persistent antisocial behaviour.

Legal tests and statutory guidance apply.

Problems need to be identified in a specific area.

Orders are unlikely to be legal in a "broad" area,

The right of communities to enjoy public open space exists.

Balance has to be achieved.

Legally it may be possible for orders to be made with regard to wildfires, use of barbecues, to feeding and petting of animals and to out of control dogs.

It seems unlikely that orders could be used for verge parking or wild camping,

Orders are valid for 3 years

They are principally a deterrent and to be used with persistent offenders.

The meeting aimed to inform members of possibilities.

Nothing has been implemented.

2. FWRP. (Fresh Water Restoration Forum)

No meeting has taken place. It has been proposed that David Rumble CEO of the Wessex Rivers Trust becomes Chairman. Also that a member of the Rivers Trust is invited to become a member of the Forum.

3. Farming in Protected Landscapes.

Meetings took place in June and August to consider the funding applications received.

Other Reports.

1. Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum. 28.06.22.

I attended this meeting via Teams. The following was discussed.

- Local Councils are being encouraged to maintain Public Rights of Way.

Volunteers can be used to do the work and could improve maintenance standards. Grants are available to buy tools.

Parishes have found it difficult to organise the work.

Proper support from Officers is required but there are time constraints.

- The Savernake Forest. This historic Forest near Marlborough is managed by Forestry England for a local Estate.

Problems particularly associated with use of the Grand Avenue were discussed at length.

Some HGVs are using it as a through route. There is a desire to stop this.

A Car Park may be moved. A 15-mph speed limit may be imposed but it would not be easy to enforce.

Public access and recreational use is not seen as an issue.

There is no requirement for users to stay on waymarked trails but more of these are desirable as are trails for the disabled and better facilities.

- Swindon Council.

A priority guidance system for dealing with problems is being developed.

A landowner who has blocked 5 paths with crops is being prosecuted. This is unusual in my experience.

Ruth Croker