



Official Verderer
 Dominic May

22nd April 2015

MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21st April 2015

Voting Members		
Dominic May	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive – New Forest National Park Authority
Bruce Rothney	BR	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry Commission
Non-Voting Members		
Jenny Thomas	JT	Lead Adviser New Forest - Natural England (NE)
Graham Ferris	GF	Chairman – CDA
Sonia Lorenzo-Martin	SLM	HLS Contract Manager (standing in for Jane Smith)
Andy McDonald	AM	Natural England
In Attendance		
Leanne Sargeant	LS	VGS Administrator taking minutes

Item	Discussion	Action
1. Apologies	None	
2. Declarations of Interest	OV is a commoner & a member of the VGS; & is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee. GF is a commoner & a member of the VGS. AB declared an interest in all Wetland Restoration projects because of the NPA's responsibilities as local planning authority.	
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the last meeting	JT to clarify if the Basic Payment Scheme is still using 50 trees/ha as a rule for eligible land for the New Forest Common. BR to invite the sports clubs that have not attended the previous training regarding the use of chemicals on the Forest, to a new training session. BR to check if Holmsley Bunker has been blocked up yet. AB is setting up a meeting with Alex Lovegrove's supervisor, Adrian Newton, to discuss Alex finishing his project, and invited GF to attend.	JT BR BR AB

<p>4. 2015 Programme Register & Summary</p>	<p>The summary page has a column called 'Planned income' which seems to have an error on the calculation. LS to check.</p> <p>The FC withdrew the 2015 to 2020 programme registers last year as they wanted to update the plans to reflect the requirement to now apply for planning consent for the wetland restorations. Therefore the current programme register for future years now needs updating.</p> <p>The implications to the HLS of not spending all the income from Natural England could be high. Natural England may reduce the final years' payments to reflect the under spend, unless there is a firm plan to complete the programme.</p> <p>AB attended a recent meeting along with the New Forest Association where there was discussion about the NFA taking more interest in scrutinising the results of the wetland restoration and they are likely to take an increased interest in monitoring.</p> <p>The 2015 programme register should be updated to include the full cost of Harvestslade.</p> <p>At the current rate of spending we will not reduce our underspend by the end of the scheme. BR is going to look at what resources the HLS team needs in order to be able to increase the number of wetland restoration sites being delivered each year so that we can make better use of the scheme funds. It was suggested that it may be better to get all the planning applications underway in the shorter term and submit them, so that once planning approval is received, the next steps will be quicker to deliver the projects on the ground over the remaining years of the scheme.</p> <p>Item 63 on the programme register is Regeneration clearance. This total should be split over the 4 years of the contract. Regeneration clearance is needed on sites that have been clear-felled. It seems that some sites are more problematic than others.</p> <p>Bracken management was not achieved in 2014, and this was due to a breakdown in both forage harvesters. It is unacceptable to not get the machines repaired as a matter of urgency or hire in replacements. It has meant that very little bracken management was done in the available season. In future, repairs must be done immediately or extra machines must be hired in.</p>	<p>LS</p> <p>SLM</p> <p>GH</p> <p>BR</p> <p>GH</p> <p>BR</p>
<p>5. 2014 Health check</p>	<p>Natural England are pleased with the progress made to date with the many wide-ranging HLS projects.</p> <p>JT would like the comments column on the health check to have more details about what has been achieved in the last year, so that it builds up a picture of what is being done with the HLS funds. If the objective has been completed, write that information in. For example the objective to conduct a nightjar survey can say 'This was completed in 2014 and due again in 2019.'</p> <p>JT, LS and SLM to draw up a revised health check form for next year.</p>	<p>JT, LS & SLM</p>
<p>6. FC Update</p>	<p>Item 1 needs to reflect what was discussed and agreed at the Verderers' Court, reducing car free ditching to areas where it is required, and instead tackling verge damage from illegal parking and</p>	<p>BR</p>

	<p>over-running. The FC report was very informative. The OV has asked if he can please have a copy of this annual review of works done by the FC slightly earlier next year so that he can use it for the Annual Report to the AGM. He also requested that it includes the plans for the year ahead.</p> <p>In the Section T&C of the report it refers to Lazy Bushes, which should read Harvestslade. This is a layby that needs to be closed as part of the wetland restoration project for Harvestslade. The materials will be delivered here and access to the site for machinery is from this layby.</p> <p>We need to make use of the cycle counter statistics to stop cycle damage to the SSSI. The Forestry Commission needs to have a management action for addressing the issues of off-road cycling.</p> <p>It would be useful if the data from the cycle counters could include which 6 counters are for legal cycle tracks and which 6 are for the illegal off-road routes. This would enable the board to decide where to place the "No Forest Cycling from this Car Park" signs.</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>GH</p> <p>BR</p> <p>GH</p>
7. New Forest Non-Native Plants Project Annual Report from HIWWT	<p>Catherine Chatters is working closely with the Forestry Commission to get permission for the work she is doing on Crown Lands. The Board are pleased with her progress on tackling these species. JT commended Catherine on her diligence in spotting new invasive species around the Forest and tackling them straight away.</p>	
8. SAMs	<p>There was a discussion about East Boldre Aerodrome and its historic value. JT said that we need to follow Lawrence Shaw's recommendations, as he is the person with the knowledge of what is of historic value. The HLS states that no management must be undertaken that can adversely affect an historic monument but that we don't have to actively manage them.</p> <p>The works planned at Faircross and Bignal Woods will need the consent of the Verderers and Forestry Commission.</p> <p>The work to the SAMs has been approved by the Board, but the Board need to agree the method of how to preserve them. The trials for preserving the bronze age barrows at Whitefield Moor didn't work very well. JT felt that perhaps the barrows would benefit from grazing pressure to re-introduce seeds after repairs have been made to infill any erosion spots with gravel.</p> <p>It was suggested that the next Board meeting should visit East Boldre Aerodrome to look at the concrete plinths and also visit Hilltop Barrow, accompanied by LSh.</p>	<p>LSh</p> <p>LSh</p> <p>LSh, LS</p>
9. LiDAR	<p>The Board is very pleased with the good work being done by Lawrence Shaw on the LIDAR analysis.</p>	
10. Bird Surveys	<p>The reports from the bird surveys completed last year are now finalised and on the website.</p> <p>There is a suggestion that Nightjar is used for a breeding success study as a PhD project, but the Board felt Woodlark would be better, as it is suffering more of decline. If a PhD project is initiated in the future, we must have a contract with the University to ensure that the survey we commissioned is completed, and payment should be on</p>	<p>IB</p>

	results i.e. delivery of the final report.	
11. RPA Appeal	LS to follow up.	LS
12. Annual accounts	The Annual Accounts were agreed by the Board and signed by the OV.	
13. HLS Annual Claim form	<p>An annual claim form does now have to be completed and submitted by 15th May in order to ensure we get paid the HLS scheme funds. LS highlighted that there are some land parcels that still need to be removed from the maps, meaning we will need to make a back-dated payment to return the funds to the RPA since the start of the scheme for these areas. These parcels were identified by Denise Eccles in 2011 and reported to Natural England at the Board meeting in January 2012. Unfortunately for some reason they have not been removed. They will be highlighted on the HLS Claim Form this year for removal.</p> <p>The area of ground being used for the Holly Pollarding Trials must have the HR1 supplement removed as it will be fenced off.</p>	<p>LS</p> <p>LS</p>
12. AOB	<p>It was brought to the attention of the Board that the website needs updating. LS has agreed to get each relevant party to update their part of the website.</p> <p>The website is aimed at members of the public and the Board agreed that it should be user friendly. For example, the label of MA5 should not be used: it should follow the same pattern as earlier sites and be called White Moor. BR to follow this up with the HLS team.</p>	BR
13. Confirm Dates for Future Meetings	<p>List of future meeting dates: 1st July 2015 7th October 2015</p>	

Delegated Actions to		
Lawrence Shaw	LSh	Heritage Mapping and Data Officer, NFNPA
Grace Herve	GH	HLS Administrative Officer, FC
Ian Barker	IB	Ecologist, NFNPA
Hilary Makin	HM	Communications Manager, NFNPA
Nick Wardlaw	NW	HLS Hydro-geomorphologist, FC
Catherine Chatters	CC	New Forest Non-native Plants Project Coordinator
Marianne Bergin	MB	Senior Ecologist, FC

Dominic May
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