

NOTES OF THE HASTINGS COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT FORUM

Milking Parlour, Hastings Country Park

24th November 2016 at 2pm

Present:



		ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>Cllr [REDACTED] welcomed everyone and thanked [REDACTED] for all the fantastic work she has done. The group also expressed their gratitude to [REDACTED] as she leaves for pastures new.</p> <p>[REDACTED] commented and said that she has enjoyed working with us. She found the job very interesting and so diverse.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>[REDACTED].</p>	
3.	<p>Notes of Previous Meeting held 29th June 2016</p> <p>Agreed as read.</p> <p>Matter arising: <i>National Speed Limit at Coastguard Lane:</i> [REDACTED] advised that HBC cannot alter the signage here – we are still in discussion with ESCC. HBC cannot suggest a speed limit but we have erected new signs asking drivers drive carefully as there are children and animals.</p> <p>[REDACTED] will contact ESCC with regard to the 20mph speed restriction.</p> <p><i>Purchase of Ponies:</i> It was decided that at this stage it was not an option for now as it would put us in abeyance. We will continue with the hiring of Exmoor Ponies from the Sussex Trust.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>

	<p><i>Cultural Strategy:</i> It is presumed that Regeneration is dealing with this. [REDACTED] will take this up with them.</p> <p><i>Car Park at VC:</i> Concern that the surface is being turned up all the time. Is there any way that the park; perhaps locking up at night and re-opening in the morning.</p> <p>[REDACTED] advised that there would be cost implications as installing a good barrier would be expensive. It would also change the contractual arrangements for toilet cleaning.</p> <p>Residents could get a season ticket £25 per annum – car park open from 8am to 6pm</p> <p><i>Issues at Coastguard Lane:</i> This area falls in the remit of RDC and it would be their decision. HBC did erect 'do not park here' signs but these are ignored. HBC cannot put yellow lines as we would have to get a traffic order for this.</p> <p>Residents to be encouraged to take up concern with RDC. HBC will put a yellow hatch line around there.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Management Update [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] went through his report updating the group on progress in implementing Higher Level Stewardship Grant; highlighting key points of note in the management of the park and to note that [REDACTED] will be leaving to take up a full time position with Natural England in January 2017.</p> <p>[REDACTED] went through her report outlining a brief summary of what was achieved in the first 3 years of the Stewardship Agreement and its importance of maintaining trajectory and HLS objectives are met to avoid any risks to the funding for the remainder of the agreement. Focus is needed on the heathland to avoid returning to a monoculture of gorse. Conservation grazing needs to be established across most of the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Contractor for all arable works in 2016 proving to be successful. • Red Tractor Farm Assurance gained • Flower rich margins well established • Some good wild bird seed plots • Legume and Herb rich swards providing good food source for insects and birds • Grassland • Heathland • Woodlands • Species 	

General Discussion: -

Natural England has put us in touch with people for [REDACTED] replacement. A rare set of skills is required for this role.

Firehills Grazing Project: - This is a new venture for HBC and is a big strategic project. It is intended to lay 'invisible fencing' on potential grazing blocks on the Firehills. It works by setting up an underground battery powered induction loop. The cattle would wear special collars which would make a sound when they get close to the loop; getting too close will give the cows an alarm. The cattle learn to avoid the line where the loop is training them to remain inside the area to be grazed.

Grounds Maintenance: This is a new venture for HBC and Idverde. HBC are trying to keep track of the site. Our method of inspection is by PQMS which is looked at weekly and scored. We will be able to see if the contract is working well or not.

We have had no complaints from the public with regard to the maintenance of the park.

Reports to Cabinet: - A paper was presented to Cabinet on the 7th November for EU funding approval.

This could be a good publicity story. [REDACTED] has contacts with BBC Country File. [REDACTED] to speak to him with regard to the contacts.

[REDACTED] commented that it would be good to get children visit the Country Park. Excellence Futures Trust could be contacted. [REDACTED] said he would contact [REDACTED]

Forum were asked to consider the following recommendations:

- Management Forum is asked to thank [REDACTED] for her hard work and to wish her every success in her new role.
- Management Forum request that we seek a replacement stewardship advisor as a matter of urgency and liaise with the Chair on progress in seeking and appointing a new advisor
- Management Forum to ask the Environment and Natural Resources Manager to progress the Firehills grazing project for anticipated implementation during 2017.

Note

The Forum agreed the recommendations

4.	<p>Friends Update</p> <p>AB informed that everyone should have received a copy of the Volunteer magazine. Friends are always looking for new contributions to the magazine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is now 200 members • Hedge planting planned for January 2017 • Events coming out soon • Will provide a list of committee dates for next year <p>██████████ on behalf of the Forum, thanked the 'Friends' for all their good work.</p>	
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
6.	<p>Date of next meeting 23rd February 2017 at 2.30pm at the Milking Parlour</p>	