

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 January 2014	
Subject: Burnham Beeches Consultation Group Minutes of 11 th December 2013		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons		For Information
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report provides your committee with the minutes of the December 11th 2013 meeting of the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group (BBCG).</p> <p>The main topic covered at the meeting was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of Dog Control Orders (DCO's) at Burnham Beeches <p>The BBCG have considered the outcome of the recent Dog Control Order survey carried out at Burnham Beeches and made recommendations for each Schedule.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive this report. 		
<p><u>Minutes of Burnham Beeches Consultation Group – 11th december 2013</u></p>		

Minutes of Burnham Beeches Consultation Group – 11th december 2013

1. **Welcome:**– By the Chairman Alderman Gordon Haines.
2. **New attendees:**
Sarah-Lynn Spruzen - The Avenue Resident's Association
Naomi Turner and Christina Gilchrist both of the Beeches Café.
3. **New members:** The following new members elected to the Consultation Group and will share attendance and voting rights:
Brian Bilgorri – Joggers and Wheelers
Vivien Ely – Joggers and Wheelers

3. **Apologies**

<p>Virginia Rounding Peter Cathcart Bill Lidgate Peter Adams Martin Albertini Simon Gray Mary Kohlhase Peter Henry Kavan Harley</p>	<p>City of London Farnham Royal Parish Council South Bucks District Council The Burnham Society Local Invertebrate Representative South Bucks District Council The Avenue Residents Association The Avenue Residents Association The Beeches Cafe</p>
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4. **Minutes of the last meeting** – reviewed and agreed with no issues outstanding.

Dog Control Orders

5. The Superintendent updated members as to the introduction of Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches.

6. Durwyn Lilley of Footprint Ecology presented the summary results of the recent DCO survey. He confirmed that the following headline findings are based on preliminary findings and that a final report will follow in January 2014:
 - 359 visitors interviews
 - 70 refusals – 49 people already interviewed.
 - 62% Interviewees had dogs with them (max 8 with one person)
 - 44% of the survey sample were dog walkers when group size was accounted for.
 - 81% visited by car
 - 14% on foot
 - 63% dog walkers are female
 - 2% of visitors came to the site to see the ancient trees or wildlife
 - There is a clear difference of opinion on the introduction of DCO's between dog and non dog walkers
 - Close proximity of the site to a home was particularly important to dog walkers
 - Some of the survey sample struggled to visualise the site in terms of percentage area when considering the coverage for each DCO.

The survey sample responses to each of the 5 DCO's were as follows:

Schedule 1. Failure to remove dog faeces. The large majority of interviewees supported the introduction of Schedule 1 across the whole site.

Schedule 2. Failure to keep a dog on a lead in an area so designated.

The introduction of Schedule 2 was supported by the majority of interviewees across 50% of the site or less.

Schedule 3. Failure to put and keep a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer. The introduction of Schedule 3 was supported by a large majority of interviewees across 50% or more of the site.

Schedule 4. Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded. This was supported by a minority (37%) of interviewees.

Schedule 5. Taking more than a specified number of dogs on to the land. This Schedule was supported by the large majority of interviewees with 3 being the favoured maximum number followed very closely by 4.

7. Durwyn Liley concluded that the duty to accommodate a balance between recreation and nature conservation remains a very challenging one.

8. The Chairman, Superintendent and Mr Liley took questions from the floor.

Q. Joggers and Wheelers: - Disappointment was expressed that not many joggers and wheelers were interviewed as they are an active group who are often on the site.

A. Mr Liley explained that if a group was on site then only one person for a particular group would have been interviewed which the norm with data collection. Joggers and cyclists are also a difficult to interview as they are often focussed on their activity and present a swiftly moving target.

Q. Joy Winyard: - People are put off by high volumes of dog walkers. She knows of many locals who now don't come to the site even as dog owners as so many poorly behaved dogs are present.

A. As with many sites trying to get the correct balance of visitors is very difficult, and it is very hard to keep everyone happy. DCO's can address some of the issues and it is hoped that behaviour will improve as time passes.

Q. Query of data? Was the data also collected at Black Park and were the timings similar.

A. The survey indicated that a mixture of sites is often used by all users including dog walkers. There are differences though as Black Park is not a conservation site and is a very different site to BB.

9. The Superintendent reported 220,000 dog visits per year to the Beeches.

10. The Superintendent then explained that the role of the BBCG is to help conclude the difficult issue of where each DCO should apply at Burnham Beeches.
11. Members then participated in an information display based on the findings of the recent site survey. Members were then asked to 'rate' the various options for each DCO. The ratings for each DCO were then calculated by the Superintendent and the results were announce as follows:

	Supported by Members Yes/No	Area Coverage (as a % of site)	Favoured Option
Schedule 1	Yes	100%	N/A
Schedule 2	Yes (+ max lead length = 5 metres)	41%	Map A
Schedule 3	Yes (+ max lead length = 5 metres)	59%	Map A
Schedule 4	Yes	0.001%	As exists around cafe
Schedule 5	Yes	100%	3 dogs max

12. The group accepted these results as a fair reflection of the proceedings and the Superintendent thanked members for bringing clarity to the situation. He then explained that there would now be a meeting with the Kennel Club to discuss the survey results and BBCG recommendations. This would be followed by a report to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee to seek approval on the way forward.
13. The Superintendent further explained that, should the EFCC give their approval, the matter would then move to the statutory consultation phase early in 2014.

Other Matters

14. The Superintendent updated members on the following additional issues:
 - Progress on the Local Development Plan currently being carried out in partnership with South Bucks District Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

- Progress on the expansion of conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches.

15. The above issues and Dog Control orders will form the main agenda for the April 2014 meeting of the BBCG.

AOB

16. No matters were raised.

Date of next meeting

17. To be confirmed as a Wednesday evening in April 2014. Superintendent to liaise with the Chairman

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