



Public Space Protection Order(s) extension public consultation

July - August 2025

Online public consultation hosted by NFDC through the Go Vocal platform for public feedback to PSPO 1 & PSPO 2. 842 responses were collected in total during 14 July 2025 – 10 August 2025

The consultation period was open for a 4-week period from 14 July 2025 to 10 August 2025 for the public to provide their feedback on the two current PSPOs for NFDC and partners to consider the possibility of extending for a further 3 years.

The online platform 'Go Vocal' was used for the consultation with content created by NFDC officers.

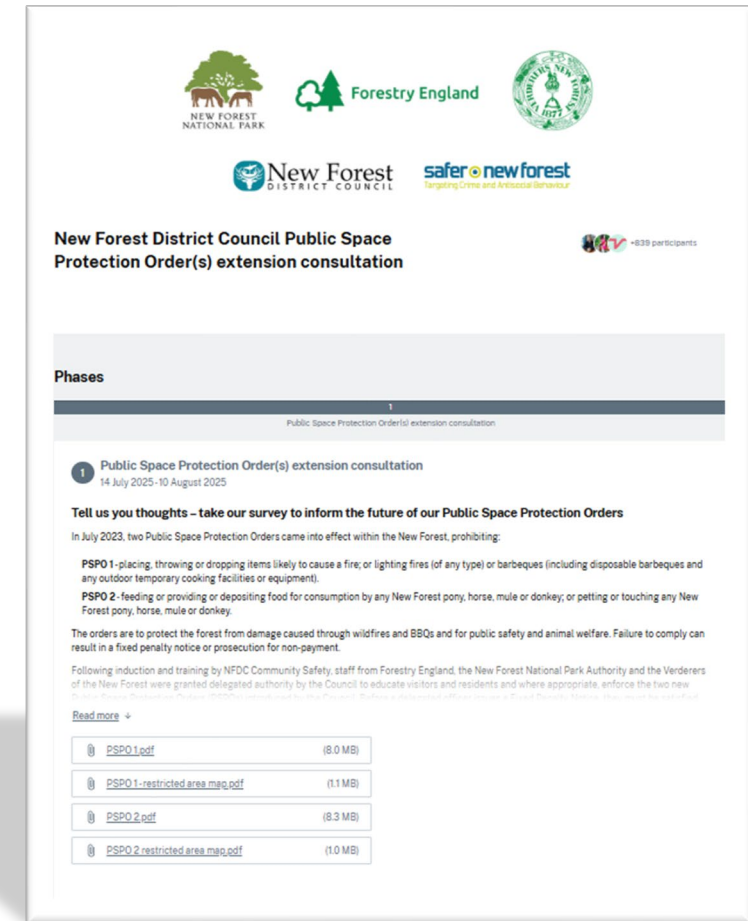
The survey could be accessed through the PSPO dedicate page on the New Forest District Council website, on social media and was sent through NFDC residents' emails. It was also hosted on the webpages of Forestry England & National Park Authority to maximise responses.

Any member of the public unable to complete the survey online were sent either an electronic or paper copy and their responses were inputted and analysed as part of all submissions.

Respondents were able to access five documents prior to completing the survey:

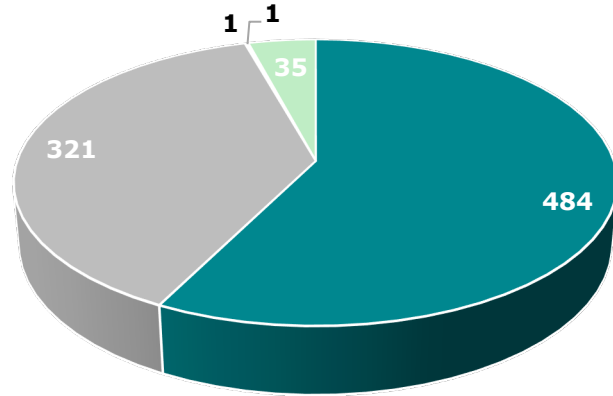
- PSPO 1 order
- PSPO 1 map of the restricted area
- PSPO 2 order
- PSPO 2 map of restricted area
- Link to the PSPO page with all relevant documentation for further information.

842 responses in total were recorded



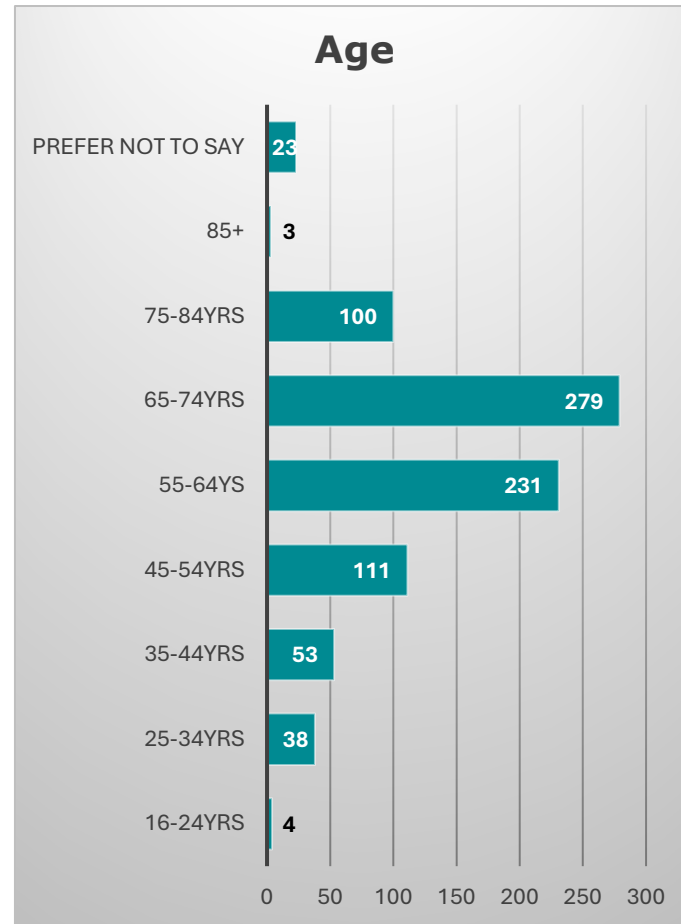
Good spread of age groups responding to the survey, albeit an older sample profile than census data suggests. More females responded to the survey than males, with 75% of those completing the survey living in the New Forest.

Gender



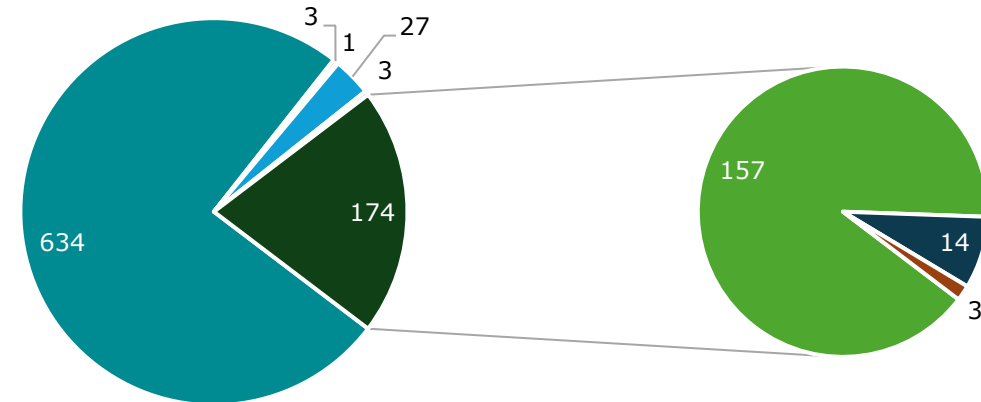
■ Female ■ Male ■ Non-binary ■ Other ■ Prefer not to say

Age



**Average age:
61.23**

Respondent type

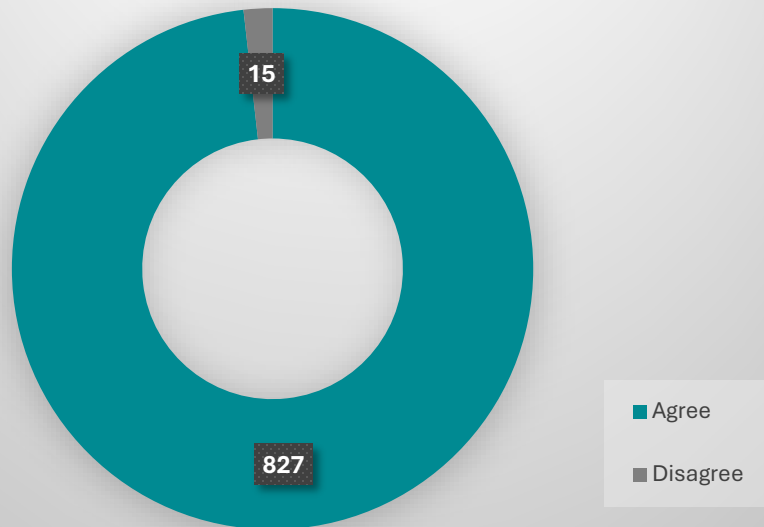


■ A resident ■ Local business ■ Other ■ Person who works within the district ■ Community group ■ New Forest Commoner ■ Person who visits the district



Do you support the proposal to extend the PSPO 1 (fire) for a further three years until 2029?

Do you support the proposal to extend PSPO 1?



Most respondents strongly support the extension of Public Space Protection Order 1 prohibiting the placing, throwing or dropping items likely to cause a fire; or lighting fires (of any type) or barbecues (including disposable barbecues and any outdoor temporary cooking facilities or equipment), citing the need to protect the New Forest from damage, particularly from fire risks.

Many mention the increasing threat of wildfires due to drought and climate change, emphasising that measures such as banning barbecues and open fires are "common sense" and "critical" for safety.

Several respondents note personal observations of irresponsible behaviour, such as people lighting fires or using barbecues during droughts and stress the importance of enforcement to ensure compliant behaviours.

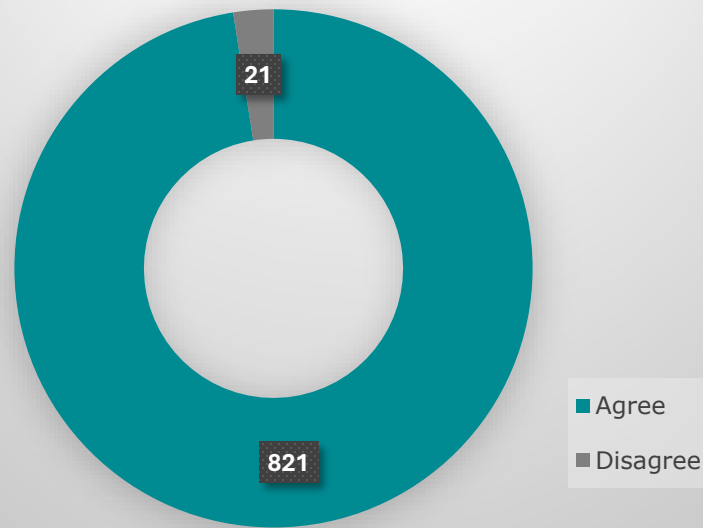
There is also concern for safeguarding wildlife, the landscape, and residents. Some mention the need to educate visitors unfamiliar with local rules and risks.

Overall, the extension is viewed as necessary, sensible, and vital for the ongoing protection of the New Forest.



Do you support the proposal to extend the PSPO 2 (New Forest animals) for a further three years until 2029?

Do you support the proposal to extend PSPO 2?



Most respondents strongly support the extension of the Public Space Protection Order 2, prohibiting the feeding or providing or depositing food for consumption by any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey; or petting or touching any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey. Emphasising the need to protect the New Forest's animals and landscape, particularly livestock such as ponies, donkeys, and potentially cattle and pigs.

Many cited ongoing issues with visitors feeding or petting animals inappropriately, which leads to health risks for the animals and dangerous situations for people.

Several respondents noted that tourists often ignore advice or are unaware of the PSPO, suggesting that better signage and more visible enforcement are needed.

There is a call for stricter enforcement and tougher penalties, especially for high-profile breaches.

Some responses described the extension as "common sense" and necessary for the ongoing protection of the forest and its future.

Overall, the main trends are strong support for continued protection measures, concerns about public behaviour towards animals, and a desire for improved communication and enforcement.



Do you think there is sufficient awareness and signage advising of the orders?

The overwhelming trend across responses is a strong call for more, clearer, and better-placed signage regarding the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), particularly about feeding and petting New Forest animals. Many respondents feel current signage is inadequate, poorly communicated, or not visible enough to all visitors, especially those not using car parks, for example cyclists.

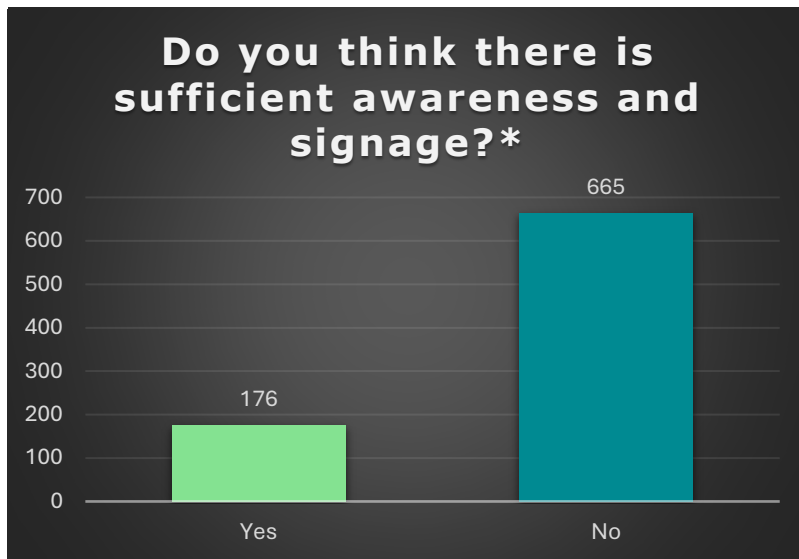
Suggestions include adding signs to benches, bins, lamp posts, and at key visitor locations such as Boltons Bench, Brockenhurst, Denny Lodge car parks, main access gates, and along incoming roads.

Several respondents also recommend using more visual signs rather than written notices for greater impact and suggest additional communication methods such as leaflets at campsites, hotels, train stations, and self-catering accommodation as well as wider coverage on social media.

A few respondents mention the need for more education materials and ranger patrols, and an easy way to report breaches.

One dissenting view is that there are already too many signs, but that communication could be improved at campsites and hotels, with a belief that locals are not the main issue. Another respondent notes they have not seen any signage at all.

In summary, respondents overwhelmingly want more and clearer signage in a wider range of locations, supported by visual materials and broader communication efforts. There is also support for increased education and enforcement.



*One respondent did not complete this question