

Hawkshill Consultation

The public consultation ran from 1 January 2016 until 31 March 2016.

Local residents

The attached letter was sent to approximately 60 residences in the near vicinity of the Freedown. In total 33 responses from residents were received. Of these 28 (85%) fully support the proposal. One resident requested the “do nothing” option and three did not give an opinion but requested further information which has been supplied. One resident was opposed to the plan but made some comments which can be addressed.

Some of the supporters gave additional comments and three main themes emerged:

1. Concern over increased number of visitors and cars parking
2. Loss of privacy in gardens in Badgers Rise
3. Concern over use of site as a picnic area: increased rubbish and consequently foxes

These comments will be addressed within the tender document. The idea of a picnic area can be withdrawn since no evidence of need has been established.

Wider public

In addition the East Kent Mercury ran two large pieces (February 11 and 25) which prompted further interest. Approximately 60 dog walkers were engaged in conversation on the Freedown one Sunday morning. Four large posters were fixed around the Freedown and carpark informing visitors of the proposals and how to comment. All information was published on our web-site and booklets were on display in the office window.

Agencies

Favourable responses have been received from KCC Public Rights of Way, English Heritage (Walmer Castle) Transition Deal, Deal with It, Kent Downs Ramblers, The Deal Society, Dover and Thanet Rights of Way Society. Kent Wildlife Trust are supportive and have offered further advice and assistance as necessary.

Natural England responded to say they are unable to comment. Both Deal Town Council and Ringwould with Kingsdown Parish Council received the details which were discussed and noted at full Council meetings.

WALMER PARISH COUNCIL

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Plans to regenerate woodland at Hawkshill Freedown

Walmer Parish Council is committed to ensuring that local residents and key stakeholders are kept informed on a wide range of issues. We are writing to you to inform you of our plans for Hawkshill Freedown.

Consultation overview

In 1999 Walmer Parish Council purchased Hawkshill Freedown for the use and enjoyment of all local people. In 2000 an independent wildlife management consultant was commissioned to produce a management plan for the site and this has been periodically updated to assist the council and its volunteers who maintain the land. The report has repeatedly stressed the importance of coppicing and pollarding the trees in the woodland immediately north of the car park. The Parish Council is now in a position to implement these plans.

Why are we consulting?

To give all interested parties the opportunity to read the plans in full and make comments if necessary. I enclose a short piece on the project. Detailed plans and reports are available on our web-site www.walmercouncil.co.uk or in the Parish office at 8 The Strand, Walmer. Please call first to make an appointment.

Who are we consulting with?

- Local Residents
- Dog Walkers/Regular Site Visitors
- Local Walking Groups
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- Disability Groups
- Deal With It
- Deal Society
- Friends of the Earth
- Rights of Way Society
- Dover District Council
- Kent County Council - Public Rights of Way
- Walmer Environment Group
- Deal & Walmer Community Association
- English Heritage

How do I respond?

I enclose a response form which should be completed and returned to us. A stamped addressed envelope is also enclosed for your convenience or you can email your response to clerk@walmercouncil.co.uk.

The closing date for responses is **31 March 2016**

What happens after the consultation?

After the closing date we will publish a summary of the responses on the Council's website together with any comments which will be considered by the Council prior to implementing any plans. It is expected that work will commence on site in autumn 2016
I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Holroyd
Parish Clerk

