

## East Devon Pebblebed Heaths visitor access consultation

At the same time as new homes are built in the area, it's important and legally required to protect the rare and vulnerable wildlife found on the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths.

Proposals to ensure this happens and improve visitor access to the Heaths were consulted on for 6 weeks ending on 4 November 2019.

A report of the responses has been compiled and it will be presented to the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee (SEDHREC) for a decision on Tues 28<sup>th</sup> January.

Below is a summary of comments we received during the consultation with our response.

You said	We respond
1. About height restrictions	
<p>1.1 The height restriction will mean horseboxes can't use this car park and may disadvantage some disabled users. This is unfair and will restrict the amount they can use the bridleways/heaths.</p> <p>1.2 The height restrictions will mean I can't go cycling there, my bicycle is on my roof / in my large van.</p>	<p>The proposals to install height restriction barriers at entrances to car parks aims to reduce fly tipping and prevent overnighting and lorry parking.</p> <p>We are recommending a compromise which would see car parks close to key roads - Joney's Cross, Warren, Estuary, Four Firs – install height barriers. Car parks at Model airfield and Wheathill would have height barriers, which would be locked open (so no height restriction).</p> <p>This addresses concerns of site managers, at the same time providing a wide choice of car parks. Smaller parking areas at Castle, Stowford, Squabmoor, and Frying pans roadside will not change.</p> <p>Car park usage will be monitored and the height restriction would come into effect if problems arise.</p>
2. About redesign of car parking space	
<p>2.1 There needs to be room for horseboxes and trailers to turn and park.</p> <p>2.2 We need dedicated horse box parking.</p>	<p>The car park layout and spacing proposals are designed to make more efficient use of the area. Although there will be no increase in spaces, existing spaces will be able to be used more efficiently, giving greater capacity.</p> <p>Horse boxes can be parked at Wheathill.</p>
3. About suggestions to close Woodbury Castle car park	

<p>If you close Woodbury Castle to most cars people, including families and dogs, will have to cross a busy road, which will be too dangerous.</p>	<p>The routes that are accessed from Woodbury Castle can also be accessed from other car parks (Four Firs, Model Air, Warren). Improvements would be made to these alternative locations before any changes occurred at the Castle. We anticipate that many people would naturally relocate (particularly to Four Firs) without the need to cross the B3180.</p> <p>We do recognise that visitors have a strong connection to Woodbury Castle, so as a compromise, the recent reductions at Castle car park would be formalised and the situation monitored.</p> <p>As this would not reduce spaces at the Castle, it's likely that spaces would need to be saved at Estuary View so there are no overall increases. Implications from this change would need to be reviewed.</p> <p>As land owners, EDPHCT are entitled to review arrangements in the future should issues arise.</p>
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4. On suggestions to close some car parks

<p>Car parks must be kept open as they are well used. Closing them will restrict access to the heaths.</p>	<p>The proposal to close Uphams car park to public vehicles is intended to separate out Royal Marine and site vehicles from the public. Uphams provides good access to the heaths for site staff and the Royal Marines, who frequently use this area. Improvements to Model Air car park (which is only 400m away from Uphams) are designed to cater for any increases in use by the public. EDPHCT have confirmed that Uphams car park will be made available for public parking on some occasions and as long as it would not have an adverse impact on the heaths.</p> <p>Frying Pans car park is an isolated car park which is densely screened and provides little security. There is regular anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and abandoned cars here. Roadside parking near the entrance to Frying Pans can be formalised and improvements to nearby Wheathill car park means that we can address concerns about security whilst not reducing spaces or access to the heaths.</p>
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5. On overall changes to access to the Heaths

Don't turn the heaths into an amusement park.

The visitor access advisory report explains that all signs would be sensitive to the area and used as sparingly as possible to keep the character of the Heaths. Signs will be kept to the main access points, and trail markers would be low-key and similar to discs that mark the East Devon Way – see below:

