



## PLEASE READ THESE NOTES AS THEY WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### Applying to hold an event on Forest land.

We generally operate a permissive access policy for walkers, cyclists and horse riders to come and enjoy this wonderful environment as individuals or in small groups. These users have priority for access. As from December 2005, pedestrians will have a legal right of access under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. The forest does not close to general public access for private events.

All organised group events require formal permission. As the event organiser you are personally responsible for your activity, the participants and the potential impact it could have on other people around you. Because of general public access, the needs of forest operations and environmental legislation, events must be properly planned to guarantee that they pass off safely and enjoyably for everyone concerned.

**Your event may not be able to run without a signed license or permit in place; it will be in breach of Forestry Commission byelaws and your insurance will become invalid. Please work with us to get your event planned properly.**

### Environmental Factors.

The main bird nesting season is between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> September. Some of our land is designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SPA) under the European Habitats Directive.

For this reason event organisers need to note that:

- Motorised events may not be permitted between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> September, also the busiest time for visitors.
- Events which involve competitors leaving the standard forest tracks need to avoid heathland and areas of young trees under 15 years old, between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> September.



- Sensitive areas marked on permission maps need to be avoided by both participants and spectators. Marshalling needs to be adequate to ensure that control of spectators, children, dogs, etc. is achieved.
- Where necessary taping off or signing should be carried out to ensure sensitive areas are not disturbed/damaged.
- Parking areas need to be clearly marked in pre-agreed locations.

For some species eg Osprey, we may be legally obliged to close the forest around it under the terms of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. There is therefore a risk that some events may have to be changed, moved or cancelled at the last moment, underlining the need for good planning and a flexible approach to try and avoid this wherever possible. You will be personally liable under this legislation for any harm caused to the bird by your event.

### Before you make an enquiry:

Be clear about what your event is.

- What is the activity.
- How many people, cars, bikes or horses could be involved. Not just the competitors, but marshals, route planners, first aid vehicles, etc.
- Amount of parking space you might need.
- Time of year & the duration of the event.
- Will you need access to the forest before the actual event to set up, mark a route, etc.
- Where would you like to hold the event.

### What you will need to provide for us:

- A minimum of 6 weeks advance notice of your wish to run an event; but the longer the better to ensure good planning and to accommodate changes.
- Risk Assessment of how you will manage your event to reduce the risk of injury to your participants and other people.
- Evidence of roadworthiness, insurance & operator training (certificates of competence) for vehicles & machinery. Motorbikes and quad bikes are not encouraged in the forest other than for very specific events. You should plan the management of your event around standard vehicles.





## Motorised Vehicle Use for Set Up, Take Down and Safety Management at a Recreation Event

Forestry Commission (FC) byelaws prohibit the use of motorised vehicles on FC land without written consent and it is FC policy to minimise access to motorised vehicles. The forest is essentially an environment for access on foot, cycle or horse.

It is acknowledged that to set up, take down and manage safety at a recreation event a vehicle of some type may be required. This note sets out the policy of FC North West England on the use of motorised vehicles by event organisers:

1. Written permission is required for the use of any type of motorised vehicle at a recreation event (this includes pre-event and post event use as well as on the day itself). Permission should be requested via the district's recreation event application form detailing the number and type of vehicles (Section 11 of Application Form).
2. Event organisers should plan the management of their event around the use of standard vehicles (cars, vans, 4 WD) rather than motorbikes or quad bikes (See section 3 below). It is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that such vehicles are roadworthy (MOT), insured (see section 4) and the driver has an appropriate license.
3. The use of either motorbikes or quad bikes is not encouraged in the forest and permission for use will be strictly limited. Where permission is granted the conditions for use of motorbikes or quad bikes will be as follows:
  - Event organisers must ensure that quad bikes or motorbikes are adequately insured (section 4) and are roadworthy.
  - Event organisers must ensure that quad bikes or motorbikes are driven by trained and competent operators. Operators must as a minimum hold an appropriate driving licence and evidence of training for the quad bike.
  - Quad bike use must comply with the guidance given in AFAG (Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group) 701 - ATV quad bikes.
  - Drivers of motorbikes or quad bikes must wear a high visibility waistcoat or jacket and a suitable safety helmet.



- The use of quad bikes or motorbikes will be restricted to existing forest roads and tracks. Permission for off-road use will only be granted if the event organiser can demonstrate a clear need to use such vehicles off road and can provide clear evidence of off-road training.
- 4. Event organisers must ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate insurance in place in respect of the use of a vehicle on Forestry Commission property (this applies to standard vehicles, motorbikes and quad bikes). Please note that standard motor insurance or event insurance may not provide sufficient cover so please check with insurers. Evidence of public liability insurance will be required - minimum cover for vehicular access £2 million (The event itself may require a higher level of insurance).
- 5. The event risk assessment must cover the use of any vehicle to be used at an event.
- 6. The maximum speed limit for motorised vehicles on FC land is 15mph.
- 7. This note covers vehicle use by event organisers in the management of an event. Participant and spectator vehicles will be permitted onto FC property via approved access routes to designated parking areas agreed as part of the event permission process. Event organisers are responsible for ensuring that participant and spectator vehicles comply with the 15 mph speed limit and that they keep to agreed routes and areas.
- 8. Event organisers must not undertake any type of route maintenance (for example by hand tools, chainsaw, clearing saw, quad, tractor) without the written permission of the Forestry Commission. A risk assessment, insurance and evidence of training would be required for this type of activity.

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