

The long-term role of the Forestry Commission England Public Forest Estate: consultation.

East of England stakeholder consultation event.

The aim of the event was to stimulate discussion on the issues raised by the consultation, allow people to hear the views of others and to encourage people to submit a written response to the consultation and to encourage others to submit responses.

Details

Date of meeting: 16 July 2009

Location: Santon Downham Community Centre, Santon Downham

Number attending: 45

Chair: Gerry Barnes, Chair, East of England Regional Advisory Committee

Forestry Commission England National Committee attendee(s): None

Study Working Group attendee(s): None

Key points raised during whole meeting discussion

Most discussion in plenary related to valuing the Public Forest Estate.

- Concern that conventional economic models are being applied to the PFE and that we need to shift to scenarios that factor in climate change.
- Mechanisms for investment criteria are too short term and we need to move to a longer term cost:benefit analysis
- We need to find a mechanism to include the ecosystem service benefits of the Public Forest Estate in the balance sheet
- The health benefits of the Public Forest Estate as Green Infrastructure are vital given the current mental and obesity epidemic. Forestry Commission needs to work in partnership and pool funds through the Local Area Agreement process.
- £15m p.a. net cost considered to be very good value (compared to the £1bn p.a. paid to farmers for stewardship). Calls to "leave the Forestry Commission alone" as it represents excellent value for money.
- The consultation is too introspective – the value of the Public Forest Estate beyond its boundaries is underestimated

Public Forest Estate consultation

Comment from Chair

None

Note taker: Steve Scott

Date notes finalised: 20 July 2009

To find out more go to www.forestry.gov.uk/england-estatestudy or contact:

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