

Deer on our Roads
A National Seminar
Tuesday 9th October 2007
Ashridge Business School
Nr Berkhamsted Herts

Questions and Answers - Morning Session.

Mr Kim Wheeler-Mallows, Defence Deer Management (area Ashdown Forest)

- Concerned about the deer welfare and the issue of dispatch following road traffic collision.
- How can we take this issue further to a point where we have a national approach. Current situation is fragmented with no national policy procedure for police/County Councils

David Hooton, Deer Initiative Eastern Region.

- Suffolk call out scheme managed by Forestry Commission
- BDS/Epping Forest issues of Health and Safety management
- Forestry Commission do not have rangers that give national coverage

Neil Biggs, Thames Valley Police

- Within TVP area in event of DVCs a Vet is called to dispatch the animal, this is thought to be funded by TVP

Justin Barber, Defence Deer Management (RAF)

- Acts as volunteer in event of DVCs; issues have arisen regarding appropriate insurance coverage
- Strain on volunteer register
- Suggests a co-ordinated national approach needed

Michael Collins, City of London Corporation

- Suggested that when called by Police/RSPCA you have a verbal contract with regard to insurance cover

Rod Wilson, Deer Stalker Ashridge Estate

- Is listed as a point of contact in cases of DVCs and regularly receives calls 24hrs a day from far and wide
- Often these are not relevant or within reasonable travelling distance

Jochen Langbein, Wildlife Consultant

- Dorset Police manage scheme of some 40 volunteers who aim to attend DVCs within 20mins

Malcolm Armstrong, Forestry Commission & Lincolnshire Deer Group

- Local scheme in Lincs for dealing with DVCs organised in conjunction with RSPCA. *A pager issued to responder for one month per year*
- Aims to attend DVCs in minimum of 20mins aiming for <10mins.

Tony Sangwine, Highways Agency

- Various types of schemes have been explored including one in Denmark. However, this would not work in UK due to fragmented responsibilities *for transport infrastructure*.
- The Dorset police approach has been discussed with DfT but likely to be low on its list of priorities, for further promotion nationally.

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David Kenyon, British Deer Society

- BDS Promote Dorset Model
- Educating deer seems unlikely, better to focus on national programme to educate public to risk
- Use of fencing may help if crossing points were managed using deer activated signs

Jochen Langbein, Wildlife Consultant

- Highlighted measures used in America including crossing warning lights/underpasses/fencing with gaps

Sir John Johnson, Chilterns Conservation Board

- Kings Forest Suffolk signage appears to increase public awareness

David Hooton, Deer Initiative Eastern Region

- Main awareness measure is Deer Awareness Signage
- Schemes still require to be funded

Marion Mustoe Board Member Chilterns Conservation Board

- Felt that reduction of speed limit through the Ashridge Estate from 60mph to 50mph was still too high and suggested that 40mph would have been more appropriate.

Neil Biggs Thames Valley Police

- Speed limits should be within DfT guidelines and need to be enforced
- Enforcement in Milton Keynes area would suggest that it does educate drivers if carried out on regular basis.
- Police resources are limited for this function

Graeme Cannon, Ashridge Estate

- Blanket 40mph speed limit was considered on roads through Ashridge
- Police were not supportive as compliance would have been low. There are only limited resources available in neighbourhood police team to carry out enforcement
- Evidence from monitoring suggests that the average speed has dropped in most locations
- Need to emphasise to public that Ashridge is a special place

Magedie Pretorius, Mouchel Parkman

- Buckinghamshire County Council will supply a temporary speed indicator device to encourage compliance along B4506

Paul Douglas, Chiltern Deer Management Group

- Suggested permanent preventative measures should be considered, as collisions will occur when police are not in area
- Either reduce vehicle numbers (unlikely) or reduce deer number (cull)

Joe Kingsmill, Highways Agency InterRoute Area 3

- Increase public awareness
- Reduce number of deer
- Increase sale of venison by celebrity chef promotion

Graeme Cannon, National Trust Ashridge Estate

- Increasing Public Awareness is constantly on agenda for estate
- High deer population on the estate, but also significant annual cull but with visitor pressure this is becoming harder
- Recent reduction of speed by lowering the speed limits may help
- Some vehicles could use more appropriate routes
- Estates like Ashridge provide countryside recreation for many living in nearby towns, and the increase of housing/population in the south east will lead to increased visitor numbers and traffic

Dave Huckfield, City of London

- Deer do appear to take notice of sounds
- Gets often called out 3 or 4 days in a row to attend DVCs
- The issue of traffic and changing from BST to GMT is an issue as this creates a situation where traffic flows are increased at times when deer are likely to be moving

Tevor Bonser, Buckinghamshire County Council

- The County is about to trial Safecote (a sugar derivative with anti-icing, de-icing and corrosion inhibition properties) as an additive to its rock salt during winter salting of roads
- Do others have any experience of this product as it is alleged it may attract wildlife on to treated roads.

Brian Barton, NT Ashridge Estate Committee

- The sounds emitted by the acoustic devices do not appear to be having any significant effect on deer
- Could other noises be used such as barking dog?

Jochen Langbein, Wildlife Consultant

- Alarm call of barking fallow may have some effect but in some cases could attract other fallow to investigate the call.
- Other calls could be investigated

Tom Shelly, Arup consultants

- Speed cameras are a measure that reduces speed of vehicles; could these be used to reduce speed at known DVCs hot spots?

Graeme Cannon, National Trust Ashridge Estate

- The government growth agenda does not take into account countryside management and increased pressure on limited resources of organisations such as NT. Suggests a strategic approach should be adopted to the issue otherwise issues such as DVCs will increase

Valerie Letheren, Cabinet Member for Transportation Buckinghamshire County Council

- Issue is one of conflict and environment where as man can learn but animals are creatures of instinct and it is about striking the balance between these two issues and protecting people and the environment

Questions Following site visit pm

- Eco Pillar Scheme costs are in region of £11,000
- Vehicle activated speed signs cost between £3,000 and £7,000
- Vehicle activated sign could be enhanced by addition of a permanent sign indicating that sign is activated when deer are present
- Are the lasers used in the deer activated sign affected by fog? (Not that we are aware of but the supplier would need to answer this,)
- Could funding from highways be used to address issue of deer management, as management at source of problem would be better than trying to find methods of managing deer on roads
- Management of deer numbers becomes increasingly difficult given number of visitors, season and opportunity.

Seminar Close