

## Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

### NOTICE OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY DECISION FOLLOWING REVIEW OF DIRECTION RESTRICTING CROW ACCESS

Prepared by Natural England

**Access authority:** Hampshire  
**Relevant authority:** Natural England  
**Local access forum:** New Forest Access Forum  
**Direction reference:** 2007020060

Land Parcel Name	Direction Reference	Details of restriction on original direction
Bickerley Common (Avon Valley SPA)	<b>2007020060</b>	No Access between 1 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 <sup>st</sup> July annually For Nature Conservation

Natural England has now decided how to proceed following its review of the above-mentioned long-term direction to restrict open access rights on this land. A consultation was held between 22/01/2025 & 28/02/2025 with statutory consultees and the general public. We did not receive any comments

#### **Outcome of the review:**

Natural England's decision is to (1) leave the original direction unchanged in the way it was originally proposed and extend the end date for a further six years

The site is within the Avon Valley SSSI and River Avon (Hampshire) SPA and is an important wet grazing meadow site with specific sensitivities for ground nesting birds and over wintering bird assemblage. Due to the relatively small size of the site Natural England feel that the best way to continue to manage the nature conservation concerns is to exclude access for the period described above.

Bickerley Common has breeding Lapwing each year and Redshank may start to breed here too. These are notified features of the SSSI. Any human (or dog) presence at the site during the breeding season (1st March through to 1st August), even on a perimeter path, would almost definitely preclude these birds from breeding and would thus go against our objectives for the Avon Valley SSSI.

The exact same issues apply during the winter-feeding season (1st October through to 1st April). The nature conservation interests are being met by the restriction in a way that no lesser restriction would achieve, and as would not be possible by any access management solution.

There is sometimes grazing cattle on site too, so we are reiterating the requirement for walkers with dogs to adhere to the general restrictions given in Schedule 2 of the Act, that require dogs to be kept to a short lead when livestock is present.

Natural England's policy for long term directions is that they should not be given for a period of more than 6 years. Therefore, the original direction will be extended to an end date of **19/09/2031**.

**Summary of changes made to the existing directions:**

<b>Land Parcel Name:</b>	<b>Details of restriction on original direction:</b>	<b>New details of restriction</b>
Bickerley Common (Avon Valley SPA)	No Access between 1 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 <sup>st</sup> July annually Until 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2026	No Access between 1 <sup>st</sup> October to 31 <sup>st</sup> July annually until <b>19<sup>th</sup> September 2031</b>

Details of the restriction will appear on the relevant map of access land on the Open Access website - [www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk).

*For long term directions*

Where a direction restricts access indefinitely, for more than five years, for part of every year, or for part of at least six consecutive years, we have a statutory duty to review it within five years of the date of its issue.

Date review completed: 05/03/2025