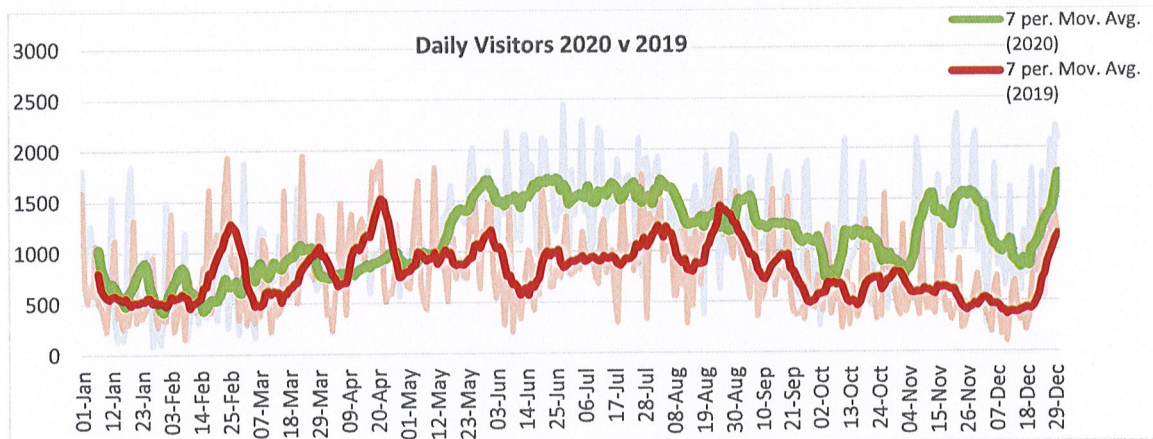


The Christmas period and particularly the New Year holiday is always a very busy time at the Heath. In fact New Year's Day is the busiest day of the year until mid-summer.

During the course of 2019 around 295,000 visited The Heath. As of 30th December 2020 that number was about 418,000, just over a 33% increase in visitors for the entire year. Much of that increase has been due to the Covid-19 pandemic and as the graph below indicates since the restrictions were eased in early May 2020 the level has been consistently above the previous year.



Note: Daily numbers are recorded for those visitors mainly in the western half of the site, around the pond, however it observed that additional 20% of visitors to the site do not pass through the counters in these locations.

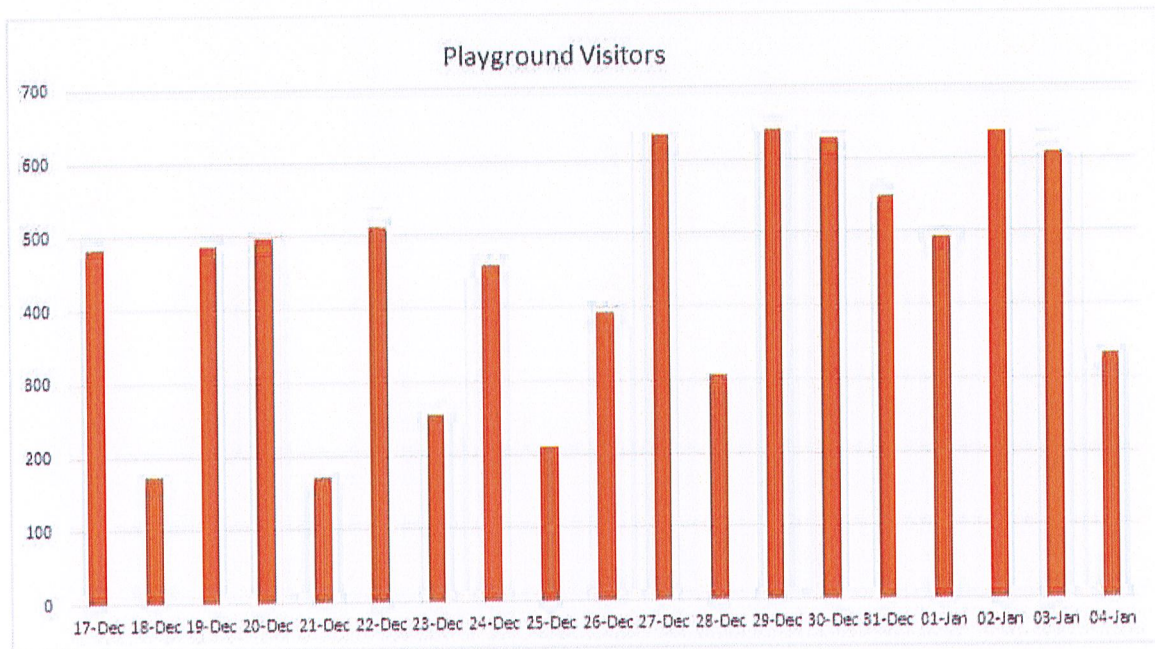
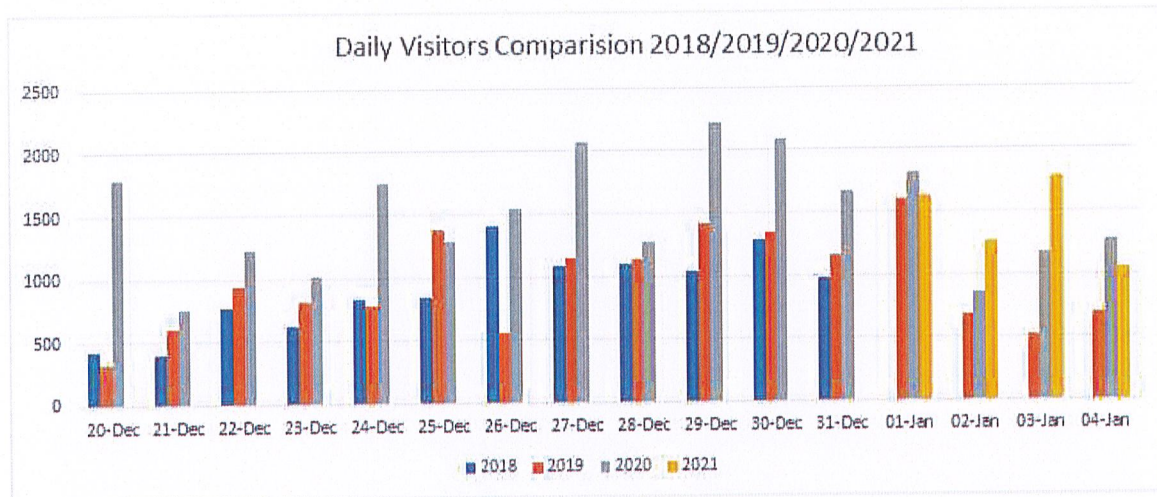
Towards the end of 30th December the Council received several complaints from members of the public regarding how busy the Heath had been over the past few days, people not following one way systems on the board walk and in certain areas social distancing had become impossible. At the same time reports on Social Media reported of large disruption in the Sussex Road car park with some cars blocked in for many hours. Google reviews also recorded concerns from visitors about how busy the site had become.

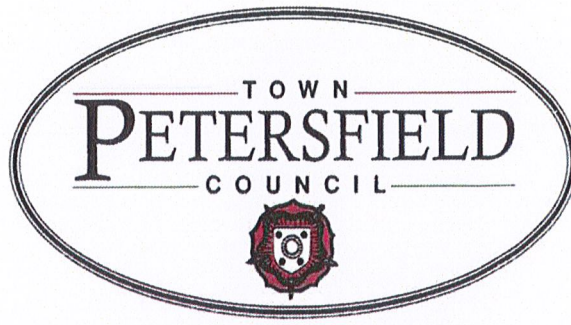
Council representatives attended the Sussex Road car park on the evening of 30th December and dispersed an illegal gathering of approximately 15 people and 3 vehicles who were having a party and littering in the car park. It was also observed In addition the car park entrance was already partially blocked by a fallen tree which already made accessing the car park difficult.

Reviewing the previous years' visitor data it raised a real concern that if some action was not taken to reduce visitor numbers then a very serious situation could occur on New Year's Day which was forecast to be even busier than the preceding days. Forecast visitor numbers would have been well in excess of the busiest summer days, but with visitor time concentrated into a much smaller window of daylight hours.

Having reviewed the visitor data and the complaints received, the Mayor, Chairman of the Grounds Committee and the Town Clerk, agreed that car park should be closed.

Although it was inevitable that there would be parking on adjacent roads this had been occurring anyway on the previous days as the car park had been full to capacity from early on in the daytime. The car park has capacity for around 80 to 90 vehicles. By closing the car park it could reduce the number of daily visitors to the Heath somewhere between 300 to 500.





Grounds Committee

Naming of Meadow recently purchased by Town Council

Background

Members will be aware that PTC purchased Land behind the Causeway Farm Development site (see map below) with the long term vision of creating a managed Country Green Space, and whilst it was given a working title of 'Sussex Meadow' it was agreed that members of the public should be given the opportunity to vote for their preferred name.



Steve Field
Projects and Office Manager
11th January 2021

Members of the public were invited to vote on three possible suggestions and PTC welcomed any further comments which would be considered by the Grounds Committee prior to the final decision.

The three suggestions were as follows:

1: The John Goodyer Meadow/Goodyer Meadow

John Goodyer is widely recognised as one of the great botanists of the 17th century. Born in Alton in 1592, he died in 1664 and is buried in Buriton. He spent much of his married life living at the Spain in Petersfield. Prior to his death he set up a charity to help educate poor children from Buriton and Petersfield. The charity was originally funded by rents which included the renting of two fields at the upper end of The Causeway. The current John Goodyer Trustees wish to submit that his continued 356 year legacy is honoured and marked appropriately. The naming of a managed area of the natural environment and ideally placed is clearly and exceptionally well suited to allow for the continued cost free enjoyment for all and also provide a further opportunity for environmental education for generations to come.

2: Criddell Meadows

The stream running through the meadows rises on private land near Ramsdean. It has been known as the Criddell since time immemorial. It is shown on Norden's 1595 map of Hampshire and is the name retained today by the Ordnance Survey and the South Downs National Park. Descriptions of the Greensand Terrace landscapes of East Hampshire mention the Criddell as contributing to the character and biodiversity of the area. The meadows in question belong to this landscape and the Criddell covers a substantial portion of them when it is in flood. During the preparation of the local Biodiversity Action Plan in 2011 the area was surveyed as the Criddell Meadows Transect. It is a geographical name rooted in the history of Petersfield. This is the existing name, so why change it?

3: Sussex Meadows

Sussex Meadows was a working title to differentiate it from the Causeway Farm building development itself. It is land off Sussex Road and the stream within it flows towards the Sussex boundary.

The results of this public consultation is as follows:

Meadow Name	November PTC News (requesting vote by email to TC or via Website)	Social Media (from 3 November)	Total Votes
Sussex	1 (3%)	177 (67%)	178 (59%)
Criddell	31 (86%)	46 (17%)	77 (26%)
Goodyer	4 (11%)	41 (16%)	45 (15%)
TOTAL	36	264	300

Please find additional comments by members of the public who wrote direct to the Town Clerk

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1	<p>I vote for Criddell Meadows. It's the name of the stream. Always has been for me! Gives it a specific location.</p> <p>Not Sussex Meadows- The meadows don't reach the Sussex border whereas the road does. Could be any meadows along the Sussex border.</p> <p>Not Goodyers Meadow. - I was so excited when I read the headline, I thought the council had bought Tesco's water meadow that Goodyers runs down to. Then I saw the map ! Too confusing.</p>
2	casting vote to name land purchased in 2018 to be Criddell Meadows
3	My preference is Criddell Meadows
4	I vote to retain the name Criddell Meadows.
5	<p>I am writing to lodge my suggestion for the Criddell Meadows.</p> <p>Why change for the sake of change, it is known as Criddell Meadows, save the money and use it on another more useful project. CRIDDELL MEADOWS it is.</p>
6	<p>Of the three names suggested and having read the background, I would like to vote for Criddell Meadow.</p> <p>I can understand the possibility of Goodyer but there seems to be no logic or justification for Sussex!!</p>
7	<p>The historical name of Criddell should be kept for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A number of small watercourses collectively create the Criddell. These flow through Weston, Ramsdean, Langrish and Stroud before passing through Fore Bridge in Petersfield. The Criddell has an established flood plain along low-lying territory that is now The Causeway, then flowing across Criddell Meadows to the Rother. The name Criddell originates in an Anglo-Saxon family with an ancient coat of arms in the Heritage series in Wessex, though its spelling is not always consistent. It is likely to be the name of a wealthy landowner of the time. Petersfield Town Council bought the Criddell Meadows flood plain in 2018, some 15.4 hectares in area. The intention is to create a new public open space, to be managed for informal recreation and wildlife conservation purposes. During the preparation of the Biodiversity Action Plan for Petersfield an audit in 2011 was carried out studying different aspects of nature by observing in Transect lines across this terrain, named Criddell Meadows on its data sheets. Environment Agency maps also use the name Criddell Meadows.

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	Since the name is well established I urge the Town Council not to consider alternative names for this site. It would be interesting to find out what The Petersfield Museum has to say on the subject of changing titles of land.
8	I vote for Criddell Meadow. Goodyer would be far more appropriate for the fields west of Tesco should you get them.
9	We, the undersigned, support retaining the current name Criddell Meadow for this piece of land. As this name has been in use for such a long time we can see no compelling reason to change it
10	Please would you register each of our votes for Criddell Meadows for the name of the land behind the Causeway Farm development site, because this is historically correct, and the land is widely known as such. Thank you. (x2)
11	Re: A suitable for the name proposed Country Green Space - I believe that Case No.2, Criddell Meadows, should be adopted.
12	Criddell Meadows - YES. Retain history. John Goodyer Meadow - NO. His meadows are to the west of The Causeway. Sussex Meadows - NO. The land is in Hampshire.

Observations

- Members of the public who wrote to the Town Clerk expressing reasons for their choice unanimously voted for 'Criddell' Meadow
- Only one vote was made for Sussex via the PTC email/website option, but was the most popular name via the Social Media vote

Steve Field
Projects and Office Manager
11th January 2021