



# Refreshments

The Ashdown Forest Act 1974, S.18 (c), permits the sale of ice cream and refreshments from not more than six vehicles on Ashdown Forest.

For the past 35 years, the contract has been awarded to ice cream vendors, but in June 2020 and as a direct result of the pandemic, the previous ice cream vendor was sadly forced to close their business.

This sudden departure highlighted the need to review our practices and adapt and diversify to our changing times. It was also an opportunity to review our sustainability and consider alternative ventures with clean air/solar power and other zero-emissions vehicles.

In September 2020, the Conservators invited applications from individual ice cream concessions and mobile refreshment concessions (i.e. tea and coffee vans), for a trial period of one year and, to try and control the impact of additional visitor pressure, the locations for the refreshment vendors were specified.

After a comprehensive tender process (published on the Forest's media channels) new vendors were awarded licences subject to strict regulation to ensure Bye-law compliance. As part of the process, applicants had to define their waste and litter management strategy.

The Conservators are delighted to confirm that our new mobile refreshment vendors have now taken up their pitches on the Forest. Traditional ice cream at Kings Standing and Millbrook East and hot and cold refreshments and locally produced ice cream at Gills Lap, Box and Broadstone car parks.

We are thrilled to have support from local businesses and are pleased to be able to provide them with such an opportunity during these difficult economic times, but we do understand that litter is obviously of great concern to the Forest and to its visitors. Indeed, it is a daily battle for the team which is why there are explicit terms within the licences of our refreshment vendors to mitigate waste management.

The Conservators have no jurisdiction over COVID-19-regulations and, as of 12 January 2021, take-away venues can operate under current Government guidelines.

Please consider that most of the take-away litter on the Forest comes from Costa, McDonalds, and other well-known multi-national chains. These establishments have been able to provide a takeaway service throughout lockdown, yet none offer any compensation to the Forest for litter clearance. By supporting local ventures (who are providing much needed income to the Forest), the organisation can hopefully start to control the litter.

New initiatives are under continual review and we welcome constructive feedback.