

Visitor Management Plan 2015 - 2020

‘innovative and hospitable’

Outline of policy, objectives, and enabling conditions

Drawn up on 19 March 2015



stichting het nationale park
de hoge veluwe

1. Introduction

The Visitor Management Plan 2015-2020 outlines the principles of visitor management within the Hoge Veluwe National Park. Visitor management will be shaped within the Park's policy framework. The policy's underlying principle is achieving a balance between ecology and economy. The influence of a large number of visitors on nature and landscape is something in particular that requires spatial zoning.

There are four aspects to the organization of visitor management:

- hospitality and education;
- zoning and experience;
- accessibility;
- recreational facilities.

The objective of visitor management – satisfied visitors who intend to visit again – is only achievable within specific enabling conditions.

2. Objectives and target group

Stichting Het Nationale Park De Hoge Veluwe (*Foundation for the Hoge Veluwe National Park*) was founded in 1935 on the cultural heritage of the married couple Kröller-Müller.

Its objective is to maintain and strengthen the independence of the three pillars of nature & landscape, art & architecture, and history, and to enable as many visitors as possible to enjoy these experiences.

The objectives for visitor management are making visitors feel welcome, and providing a high-quality experience of the Hoge Veluwe, in harmony with the protection of the qualities possessed by the Park. Since it was first created, the Park has offered visitors the opportunity to enjoy a combination of nature, art and architecture, and quiet and space.

Because the Park is a private foundation that receives virtually no grants towards its operations, it charges an entrance fee. Paying visitors are essential for its operations. The Park will strive over the coming years to achieve a consistent growth in the number of paying visitors to 600,000 per year.

Attention will be continuously focused on increasing the attractiveness of, and experiences provided by, the Park in order to retain its competitive position. It is its three pillars that distinguish the Park from other attractions and national parks.

The Park focuses on visitors who wish to enjoy these three pillars, who wish to relax, de-stress, and gain something from the experience. The Park's target group are aged 45+ with children, grandchildren, family and friends from the Netherlands as well as nearby regions of Germany such as Noordrijn-Westfalen.

3. Hospitality and education

The Park wants its visitors to feel welcome. Over the following years the policy will concentrate on the continuous education and training of staff and volunteers on aspects of providing hospitality and safety. The Park aims to provide an excellent level of quality and hospitality.

Education has an important role and De Hoge Veluwe wants to be a Park that attracts as many primary schools as possible. The intake and support of schooling (especially further education) requires additional attention so that other visitors are not disturbed, and facilities and materials are used with care. The Museonder will play a central role in providing the visitor with information presented in a stimulating, interactive, sensory, and creative way.

The provision of information in the Park and interaction with visitors will be further optimized through the use, for example, of new digital and other techniques. The Park aims for a good balance between digital information and personal contact. Volunteers will be deployed to provide information to visitors at the Park entrances. Visitor information will be supplied in three languages – Dutch, English, and German.

To remain distinctive, to improve its hospitality, and to generate more revenue from visitors, the Park is continually developing new Hoge Veluwe products and activities. The Park will work over the coming years to provide a range of products that is in keeping with its image, with the aim of increasing sales revenues from these products and activities. The level of quality being aimed for also applies to the availability of food and refreshments in the Park. The Park manages its own hospitality services and will refine its concept in a separate policy plan.

An important element of hospitality is that visitors should feel safe. The Park guarantees that in the years ahead it will manage and maintain recreational facilities, nature and landscape, and supervision.

The Park will continuously monitor visitor satisfaction with regard to hospitality, quality, and safety.

4. Zoning and experience

The Park aims to draw in visitors by means of its unique, distinctive three pillars. To achieve this, it is important to connect the wishes and motives of visitors for visiting to the unique selling points of the Park, namely:

- combination of nature and culture;
- three museums: Jachthuis Sint Hubertus, Museonder, and the Kröller-Müller Museum;
- diversity of old Veluwe landscapes;

- (free) White Bicycles;
- accessibility, even for people with a disability;
- opportunity to see wildlife.

Iconic features of the Park are landscapes, Corsican sheep), black grouse, Jachthuis, and white bicycles.

The layout of the Park is aimed firstly at providing visitors to the Hoge Veluwe with a high-quality experience, and secondly at protecting vulnerable species and terrains.

The Hoge Veluwe National Park is distinct from other national parks in Europe because it adopts an American model. The most important recreational facilities (Kröller-Müller Museum, the Museonder, and the country house awaiting construction) are located not at the edges but at the heart of the Park. There are three zones (see appendix 1):

- busy: a focal point for recreation, the busy zone is the focal point for most visitors. It is located in the central area;
- relatively busy: there are relatively busy zones along the north and south sides of the Park, in the vicinity of the entrances in the direction of the centre and in the vicinity of the Jachthuis Sint Hubertus;
- quiet: the quiet zone, where visitors can best experience nature and relaxation, is located in the middle of the Park.

The focal point for recreation is invigorated by a new layout of the central area. This area needs to function even better as a meeting point and starting point for activities in the Park. This new layout will improve the quality of recreational facilities in the central area. Information boards will continue to be placed only in the recreational focal point (central area, Jachthuis Sint Hubertus) and along cycle and walking paths. The infrastructure will be modified in order to promote the visibility of wild animals based on their natural behaviour, and to limit disruption. Within the Park it is not permitted to wander off the roads and paths - whether using a GPS or otherwise – without the supervision of a Park warden.

To differentiate the zones even more from each other and to cause as little disruption to the experience of the Hoge Veluwe, non-natural elements will be removed wherever possible from the quiet, most natural zone - the original Wildbaan. In this zone of the Park there will be no more use of route markers and information boards.

5. Accessibility

It is important for visitors to be able to get to the Park with ease. Directions to the Park are indicated by ANWB route signs from highways, provincial roads, and from the centres of the Dutch towns of Arnhem, Ede, and Apeldoorn. Another important area for focusing administrative/political influence is accessibility to the Park by public transport. The bus route through the Park must continue to ensure that the Park remains accessible by public transport from Ede, Arnhem, and Apeldoorn. The visitor to the Park has various transport

options both to get to the Park and to travel inside the Park. Although it is possible to drive cars within the Park, visitors are encouraged to use environmentally-friendly forms of transport. The Park provides the use of 1,800 White Bicycles free of charge. The number of such bicycles is calculated on the basis of the capacity of cycle tracks, their maintenance, and usage. In addition, there are bicycles for rent which will meet the needs of all target groups, including special bicycles for those with impaired ability. An increase in the range of these bicycles will depend in part on demand as well as on bicycle development.

The target for growth of visitor numbers per year demands a greater distribution of visitors throughout the year – to include the low season – and for all the entrances to the Park to be utilized.

The entrances are the ‘front doors’ to the Park. This is where the ‘Hoge Veluwe experience’ begins. The supply of information at, and numbers passing through, the entrances (especially large groups and visitors with e-tickets) will be paid additional attention over the months ahead. The Park aims to use checks at the entrances to obtain management-related information regarding the number and origin of visitors.

The Park aims for optimum accessibility and to provide all visitors with the ‘Hoge Veluwe experience’. The Park provides special facilities for those with impaired ability. The experience of a perfect idyll depends on the system of roads and paths. Paths and cycle tracks lead to a central area in which the facilities are located and where visitors can find information. From this point, visitors can further get to know the Park. By physically separating streams of visitor traffic (cars, bicycles, walkers, riders) as much as possible, the experience that each visitor takes from the Park will be optimized. Where there are public facilities, or where the Park connects with the outside world (central area, Jachthuis Sint Hubertus, Park entrances) these streams of traffic will converge. This vision of the Park will be given shape over the years ahead through the implementation of the Total Plan 2010-2020.

6. Recreational facilities

The Park and the Kröller-Müller Museum attract many visitors each year. It is in the interests of the Park that visitors are able to look back on their trip with pleasure. This will contribute significantly to knowledge of the Park and to return visits. For this reason, the Park aims to achieve a consistently high quality of recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of its visitors. To maintain this level of quality, the Park will invest extra during the coming years in the quality of its recreational facilities:

- the building of a new visitor centre, complete with restaurant, reception rooms, information desk, Park shop, and toilet facilities;
- renovation of Museonder and renewal of exhibition.

With a new layout for the central area, the Park aims to develop a new, characteristic heart with modern, multi-functional, and sustainable facilities. The new visitor centre will become the meeting place and departure point for activities within the Park. The Park aims to use the visitor centre for commercial purposes also. It will offer facilities for various activities,

such as business meetings, family outings, and meetings with an educational purpose. The Park will manage its own food and refreshment services. The Museonder will be given a new, interactive exhibition of international standard, sure to challenge and encourage the visitor to think and respond. It will translate scientific knowledge into practical management of the Park and make the visitor aware of the importance of the ground we live on.

The Park attaches great importance to architectural merit. New buildings will be based on top architectonic quality, aesthetics, and cohesion between buildings. The Park will utilize sustainable building materials. As much use will be made as possible of the opportunities to conserve energy and water.

The Park aims to attract greater numbers to its guided tours of the Jachthuis. The restoration of the Jachthuis will contribute to this aim. Following improvements to the campsite, the Park aims to increase the number of overnights stays in the campsite.

7. Enabling conditions

The Park has attracted paying visitors ever since its creation in 1935. Visits are geared to the capacity of the Park.

To realise the above ambitions the Park's internal organization needs to be geared to these ambitions. There must be a continuous cohesion with Marketing & Communications (to attract visitors) and Business Management (work on the property and maintenance of facilities) in order to maintain and increase visitor numbers within the capacity of the Park.

A constructive collaboration with the Kröller-Müller Museum goes without saying. Here there are opportunities in the areas of Marketing & Communications, service, and hospitality.

Agreements are needed at operational level with, for example, tourist-industry partners and educational institutions (research and monitoring, security, organisational events). The new exhibition in the Museonder will take shape in close consultation with knowledge centres and universities.

Achieving ambitious improvements in the quality of recreational facilities is aided by effective communications with surrounding interested parties. It is also necessary to pay attention to laws and regulations governing the natural environment. Implementation depends in part on obtaining permits and the financial resources.

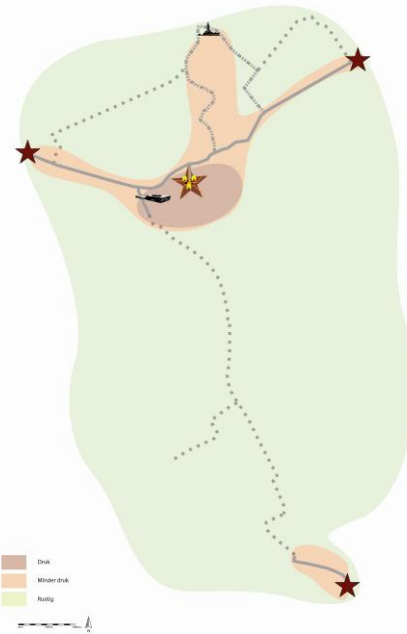
The Park will undertake continuous monitoring over the coming years to obtain useful information about our visitors, their needs and experiences, and to be able to evaluate the results of the implementation of our policy. The Park will itself undertake the continual monitoring of visitor satisfaction with the available activities. Every three years a wide-ranging external investigation into visitors will be commissioned. During this policy period visitor monitoring will generate new management information. This information will contribute to the development and implementation of the goals set by the visitor management policy.

Appendix 1 Zoning

current



future



*** Druk = Busy; Matig druk = Relatively busy; Rustig = Quiet**

Appendix 2 Critical performance indicators

1. Consistent growth in the number of visitors to 600,000 per year in 2020;
2. Doubling the number of primary-school visits to the Park in 2020 compared to 2014;
3. Provision of visitor information in three languages as standard;
4. Bus route through the Park that connects the Park by public transport with Ede, Arnhem and Apeldoorn, to continue in the period 2015-2020;
5. Growth in visitor numbers on guided tours of the Jachthuis from 60% of capacity in 2014 to 75% in 2020;
6. The number of overnight stays at the campsite to increase by 30% in 2020 compared to 2014;
7. Increase in the sale of products and activities per visitor by 10%;
8. In 2020 the quality of recreational facilities to be improved by carrying out the following projects:
 - a. New visitor centre with restaurant, reception rooms, visitor information desk, Park shop, and toilet facilities;
 - b. Renovation of Museonder and new exhibition;
9. Continuous monitoring of visitor satisfaction concerning activities;
10. Every three years a wide-ranging external investigation into visitors will be commissioned.