

## DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN - PERFORMANCE SECTION

### Delivering our aim and objectives

#### The Authority aims to:

- Champion the New Forest National Park, working in partnership through co-ordinated and innovative policies and actions (**Section A**)
- Conserve and enhance the unique environment of the New Forest National Park and in particular the special qualities of its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage (**Section C**)
- Encourage everyone to understand and enjoy the National Park's special qualities, while ensuring that its character is not harmed (**Section U**)
- Support the social and economic well-being of local communities in ways that sustain the New Forest National Park's special character (**Section SE**)

This section explains how the Authority intends to achieve this aim over the next year through a series of objectives linked to our aims. For each objective the tables describe:

- **Achievements in 2008-2009:** summarising the Authority's achievements in its third operational year
- **Priorities for 2009-2010:** outlines the key activities planned for the Authority's fourth year, with quarterly milestones for completing them. Those priorities highlighted in **bold** are new priorities for 2009-2010, the remainder are rolled forward from 2008-2009.

**A Champion the New Forest National Park, working in partnership through co-ordinated and innovative policies and actions**

**A1 Developing the Authority**

**Continuing development**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

The Authority operated new financial and governance procedures and achieved an unqualified report from the District Auditor for the 2007-2008 financial year.

The external funding strategy was adopted in August 2008 and, following the achievement of a satisfactory three-year funding settlement from Defra in December 2007, we have reviewed the match between expenditure patterns and long term financial projections.

Following the market test of our financial service arrangements, we concluded a three-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council for the provision of financial services.

In June 2008 we introduced a framework for performance management, involving staff across the organisation to deliver continuous performance improvement, within the Government's new performance framework.

The Business Continuity Plan was tested in July 2008 and the changes resulting from the lessons learned are being implemented.

A Peer Review of the operational effectiveness of the Authority was carried out in October 2008.

We implemented the Authority's first Corporate Sustainability Action Plan, reviewed it and developed and began implementing a second one.

**Priorities for 2009-2010**

**When**

Carry out a full review of future funding and prepare for discussions with Defra	Sep 2009
Develop and implement a Peer Review Action Plan linked to the work on securing Investors in People (IIP) accreditation	Dec 2009
Review the Performance Management Framework and update Business Continuity Planning and Risk Management procedures	Sep 2009
Finalise the remaining corporate policies and practices including the HR Policies and handbook and Data Protection policy and guidance and Records Retention policy and schedule	Dec 2009
Move towards accreditation to a recognised standard of corporate sustainability <b>and undertake an independent environmental audit to identify further measures the Authority can implement to reduce it's negative environmental impact</b>	<b>Dec 2009</b>

<b>Staff and Accommodation</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>Following consultation, some re-organisation was undertaken to clarify lines of responsibility and to find headroom within the existing budget to fund new posts in under-resourced areas, particularly on the two National Park purposes.</p> <p>HR supported senior management in implementing the re-organisation and ensuring the outcomes had a positive impact on staff. Staff skills were further developed through implementing the Staff Training and Development Plan and a series of learning activities including Discovery Days and presentations by specialist staff and external speakers.</p> <p>A further extension of the temporary planning permission was obtained for occupation of South Efford House until the end of 2011.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009-2010 and beyond</b>	<b>When</b>
Work with Defra to acquire permanent headquarters for the Authority, aiming to occupy new offices by the end of 2011	Dec 2011
Complete implementation of HR policies and handbook, and develop a Workforce Strategy, 360° feedback and competency framework for senior and middle managers	Mar 2010
<b>ICT, Communications and Knowledge Management</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>The revised Communications Strategy continued to operate with actions carried out across the full range of communications work including: media, corporate identity, publications, web, marketing, special events, information and internal communications.</p> <p>The Authority acquired and developed extensive new evidence bases in preparing the new National Park Plan, Recreation Management Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan, Cultural Heritage Strategy and other key documents.</p> <p>The first phase of a corporate time recording management system was designed, built and implemented by the Authority's IT Services team.</p> <p>A contact and address database was implemented with the goal of making this the primary source of addresses in the Authority outside the Planning system.</p> <p>The initial pilot of an electronic records and document management system (ERDMS) using the SharePoint software, was completed in October and was progressively rolled out to line applications in first quarter of 2009.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 - 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
Review the Communications Strategy in the light of the new approved National Park Plan	Sep 2009
Implement the second phase of the corporate time recording management system	Mar 2010
<b>Carry out a review of the ICT Strategy and begin to implement its findings</b>	<b>Mar 2010</b>
Develop a policy for maintaining, developing and sharing the Authority's information resources for its own and others' use	Dec 2009

**A2 Work with and through partners to achieve the Vision for the National Park and national park purposes**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

Partnership working continued to underpin much of the work to support delivery of the National Park purposes and socio-economic duty, including:

- using the Statement of Community Involvement to guide the Authority's involvement with the community in plan preparation and the consideration of planning applications, and review its continued effectiveness through the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (see below, section A4)
- supporting the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre through funding under a Service Level Agreement, attending Strategic Management and User Group meetings as required, to facilitate the partnership and its delivery of data services to the Authority. The partnership achieved 24 days of survey work in the Park as well as assisting with data requests for 26 sites.
- working with and supporting the New Forest Consultative Panel, the Ninth Centenary Trust at the New Forest Centre and the New Forest Access Forum
- participating in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight sub-regional Improvement Partnership including the Planning Partners Collaborative Project, and
- collaborating with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight local authorities (through HIOWLA) to benefit from training for future leaders and first line managers

Other examples appear under the relevant objectives

**A3 Provide a clear, up-to-date framework for the management of the National Park through a new strategic plan (the New Forest National Park Plan) by working with partners to review and replace the interim Management Plan and parts of the Development Plan**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

We published the draft New Forest National Park Plan for consultation in August 2008, together with a draft Recreation Management Strategy, began analysis of the responses and continued to discuss the outcome of the consultation with key stakeholders, including Ward Councillors, Parish Council representatives, and respondents in 2009.

**Priorities for 2009-2010**

**When**

Adopt and publish the New Forest National Park Plan as the first statutory Management Plan for the New Forest National Park and as the Submission Draft of the statutory Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

Dec 2009

Submit the New Forest National Park Plan to government for Examination as the statutory Core Strategy (including Development Control policies) Development Plan Document

Mar 2010

**A4 Develop spatial planning policies to support the delivery of the national park purposes and duty, working jointly with constituent and adjacent authorities**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

In addition to consulting on the draft National Park Plan (see above) we progressed various other components of the Local Development Framework (LDF) by:

- monitoring progress against the revised Local Development Scheme. A revised draft was submitted to government on time in December 2008, as part of the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report
- working actively with partners in the New Forest Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to help develop and deliver its Sustainable Community Strategy

(The decision to merge the National Park Management Plan and the Core Spatial Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) into a single integrated Plan for the Park – ‘The New Forest National Park Plan’ was taken in 2007.)

**Priorities for 2009-2010 and beyond**

**When**

Issue a revised Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD (prepared jointly with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils) for consultation addressing the points arising from the successful legal challenge by Associated British Ports, and revised minerals apportionments

Dec 2009

Complete and consult formally on a draft Building Design Guide SPD incorporating informal comments already received

Mar 2010

Once the Core Strategy has been completed, work on the detailed designations and policies

Jun 2010

**A5 Provide a development control service and consultation process that helps to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park, while supporting appropriate opportunities for economic and community development**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

We met the Government’s targets on planning applications, determining:

- 74% of minor applications within eight weeks (against a target of 65%)
- 84% of other applications within in eight weeks (against a target of 80%)
- 83% of small-scale major applications within thirteen weeks (against a target of 60%)
- 67% of large-scale major applications within thirteen weeks (against a target of 60%)

We developed a pro-active compliance and monitoring strategy:

- visiting 210 sites to check progress of ongoing developments
- identifying and recording the requirements of 129 Section 106 legal agreements: £92,000 in developer contributions has been collected since appointment of the Compliance Officer in February 2008
- identifying and recording 117 properties with an agricultural tie
- achieving compliance with over 120 conditions (so far with only one Breach of Condition Notice being required)
- removing two mobile homes and two unauthorised structures from sites where the temporary permission had expired; and
- designing and building a comprehensive database that shows all compliance-related issues in relation to a chosen property, for use as a tool in compliance monitoring.

We implemented:

- the mandatory requirement for new national planning application forms (1APP)
- new requirements for the validation of planning applications by local planning authorities, consulting planning agents on these requirements.

**Priorities for 2009-2010**

**When**

Initiate a Planning Service annual customer satisfaction survey

Sep 2009

Publish standing pre-application advice to assist applicants with householder and minor developments

Dec 2009

**A6 Ensure that statutory and other relevant bodies' Section 62 responsibilities are fully recognised and delivered in both the South East and relevant parts of the South West regions**

Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 states that in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect any land in a national park, any relevant authority shall have regard to national park purposes. National park authorities are authorised to monitor compliance with Section 62

**Priorities for 2009-2010**

**When**

Work with other National Park Authorities on strengthening Section 62 as one of the ways of celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the National Parks Act

Mar 2010

Agree consultation arrangements with neighbouring local planning authorities for planning applications outside the National Park that might impact on the Park

Sep 2009

**C Conserve and enhance the unique environment of the New Forest National Park and in particular the special qualities of its landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage**

**C1 Develop strategies and support schemes to help sustain agriculture and promote thriving commoning activity that is in keeping with the New Forest National Park**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

The first two houses built to the designs developed in partnership with the Forestry Commission, architects, South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the National Trust for dwellings that can be built at low cost for commoners while meeting high standards and sustainability requirements, were constructed by the Forestry Commission at Anderwood and were let in May 2008. In 2008-2009 we carried out further work to make the designs more accessible to other commoners wanting to build their own houses.

We continue to support applications to the Commoners Housing Scheme; in 2008-2009, one application was approved subject to agreement, with two more in the pipeline, one awaiting final agreement and one awaiting determination of planning.

We provided support to young commoners, through financial assistance to the Young Commoners Group and for developing projects of importance to the younger commoning community.

Together with the Verderers we commissioned research to provide information on the current pool of back-up grazing.

In partnership with the Local Action Group and New Forest District Council (NFDC), we supported the implementation of the new six-year LEADER programme. We facilitated the development of projects to secure the long term sustainability of the farming and forestry sectors by providing advice through the programme. Financial support was provided for:

- the production and promotion of New Forest wood products
- the development and marketing of New Forest farm products such as New Forest Marque and New Forest Produce, and
- sustainable land, farm and forestry management.

We worked with Natural England and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust on land management advice on agri-environment schemes to secure new higher level stewardship agreements.

<b>Priorities for 2009 - 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Transfer the New Forest Produce Manager post to the Authority and work to support the New Forest Marque project in partnership with New Forest Produce Limited</b>	<b>Jun 2009</b>
<b>Establish a new land management advisory unit with partners</b>	<b>Dec 2009</b>

**C2 Conserve, restore or recreate landscapes, and their component parts, which reflect the special qualities of the New Forest National Park**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

350 tree work applications were dealt with and 29 tree preservation orders were made, six existing orders were reviewed as part of our work in managing the tree work application service.

We completed scoping a project to identify the ancient/veteran tree resource currently documented in the Park and formulated methods for future strategic management of the resource and engagement with stakeholders.

As part of the work of developing the National Park Plan we reviewed whether further action was required to prevent undesirable landscape deterioration in the enclosed areas of the New Forest. We continued to contribute to the Local Development Framework (LDF) by reviewing existing spatial planning policies and supplementary guidance included in the LDF on landscape and conservation.

We are involved in the review of Southern Electric's next investment programme and continue to support this work and where possible secure funding for the removal of more overhead lines.

Data sets for tranquillity mapping developed by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) were investigated to see if they could be utilised as a tool in the National Park. A baseline survey of noise levels was carried out around the National Park and this will continue to be monitored in future years.

**Priorities for 2009 – 2010 and beyond**

**When**

Set up initiatives to help horse-keepers to manage their land effectively and sympathetically

Jun 2010

**Investigate the introduction of a new supplementary hedge planting grant scheme**

**Jun 2010**

Establish a strategy and action plan for ancient/veteran trees, undertake a pilot survey of ancient/veteran trees and implement actions arising from the project

Mar 2010

Complete the draft Landscape Strategy and adopt after consultation

Jun 2010

Complete the review of existing policies and guidance included in the Local Development Framework

Sep 2010

<b>C3 Conserve and enhance the nature conservation value of the New Forest National Park</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>We co-ordinated funding from Natural England, the Environment Agency and others for a project in which the Forestry Commission restored over 900 hectares of damaged land within the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</p> <p>We continued to improve and extend the current level of biological information available through partnership work with Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre, researchers, local groups and recorders.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
Together with New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council and others, complete and approve the draft Shoreline Management Plan for the Western Solent for public consultation	June 2009
Complete the draft Biodiversity Action Plan, undertake a public consultation, then adopt and launch the Plan	June 2010
<b>C4 Promote local cultural traditions and local products: this objective has been merged with C6</b>	
<b>C5 Work with relevant authorities to minimise the impacts of air, noise, water and light pollution on the special qualities of the National Park</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>We worked with partners to plan and implement projects to reduce the visual intrusion and perception of noise along the fenced roads, especially the A31. Baseline noise contour mapping of the National Park was completed.</p> <p>Work continued on reviewing, revising and informing existing spatial planning policies and supplementary guidance included in the Local Development Framework on environmental quality and conservation issues.</p>	
<b>C6 Strengthen protection, understanding and management of the historic, archaeological and cultural aspects of the National Park's landscape</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>Working with key stakeholders we developed a project plan and submitted a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for funding to support survey work of the maritime archaeology, to enable better knowledge and future protection of key archaeological sites on the New Forest coast. Overall, we secured funding of £340,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, the Aggregates Levy, the Crown Estates, Hampshire County Council, Exxon Mobil (and the Authority itself) for a 2-year project on marine archaeology.</p> <p>We undertook a historic rural settlement survey of Brockenhurst to complete the archaeological village survey base line data.</p> <p>Good progress was made with the archaeological field work survey projects to enhance the Sites and Monuments Record and to make the information available. The value of remote sensing surveys was assessed as the basis for future archaeological and landscape projects.</p>	

<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010 and beyond</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Complete the review of the Hampshire County Council archaeological 'Flag Map' data to inform development control decision making as part of the new 1App system for planning applications</b>	<b>Dec 2009</b>
Complete the development of Local Development Framework Policies that ensure the conservation of the Historic Environment	Dec 2009
Complete the draft Cultural Heritage Strategy, undertake a public consultation on it, then adopt and launch the Strategy	Jun 2010
Implement the project on marine and coastal archaeology and an integrated programme of education and interpretation	Mar 2012
<b>C7 Support high quality building and open space design in village and town centres, reflecting the distinctive character of the built environment</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>We managed the listed building consent service and carried out a condition survey on 10% of listed buildings and buildings on the 'at risk' register. We continue to provide planning and technical advice to developers and owners of listed buildings.</p> <p>Following a review in 2007-2008, we continued to operate the Historic Buildings Grants Scheme on a targeted and reactive basis and allocated £2953 funding from the Scheme.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010 and beyond</b>	<b>When</b>
Review the boundaries of, and prepare character appraisals for, the 3 remaining conservation areas	Jun 2009
<b>Prepare one draft conservation area management plan as a pilot exercise and adopt it after consultation</b>	<b>Jun 2010</b>

**C8 Co-ordinate a review of the likely impacts of climate change on the whole of the New Forest National Park and develop long term strategies to address these impacts**

**NB: Since this objective was developed, the Authority's work has expanded to include support for mitigation measures, notably with local communities, as well as adaptation**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

We provided support to communities seeking to undertake initiatives that mitigate or adapt for climate change, e.g. the Brockenhurst Carbon Reduction Project and the New Forest Transition Initiative.

The use of wood-fuel heating systems, wood-fuel production and renewable energy systems was promoted through the LEADER programme and Sustainable Development Fund.

We joined Hampshire County Council's climate change forum and worked with partners in the Hampshire Local Area Agreement to develop climate change indicators. The Authority also signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on climate change developed by local authorities.

In partnership with others we provided advice and support to New Forest businesses on a range of sustainability matters. We held two workshops where businesses could explore how to reduce their negative environmental impact.

**Priorities for 2009 – 2010**

**When**

Produce a plan for adaptation in the New Forest and promote the findings of the plan to relevant audiences for further discussion and implementation

Dec 2009

**Deliver a programme of resource efficiency audits for New Forest businesses on reducing their environmental impact**

**Dec 2009**

<b>U Encourage everyone to understand and enjoy the National Park’s special qualities, while ensuring that its character is not harmed</b>	
<b>U1 Produce a recreation management strategy for the National Park and surrounding areas</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
We consulted on the draft Recreation Management Strategy between August and November 2008 and started to review the strategy in the light of the responses to the consultation	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010 and beyond</b>	<b>When</b>
Following the adoption of the National Park Plan, prepare and adopt the final Recreation Management Strategy and Action Plan, and establish implementation mechanisms	Mar 2010
<b>U2 Review strategies and develop proposals to reduce the impact of traffic on the special environment of the National Park and promote alternatives to private car use, working jointly with relevant authorities</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>We started to develop mechanisms such as workshops, and other ways to build relationships to ensure that National Park purposes are taken into account when highway and traffic authorities are developing and implementing integrated transport schemes and highway maintenance schemes. We worked with the highway authorities to monitor the outcomes of weight restrictions on roads in the north of the New Forest and to identify other possible locations for similar measures.</p> <p>Working with partners, we implemented most elements of the action plan for reducing animal accidents for which the Authority is a lead partner, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ agreeing the design for new, simpler animal accident warning signs able to incorporate changing messages on the B3054 and other roads</li> <li>▪ distribution of emergency hotline cards to visitor and community outlets</li> <li>▪ distribution of ‘I go slow for ponies’ car stickers and the provision of dispensers for the stickers throughout the Park</li> <li>▪ enabling efficient and comprehensive collection and analysis of animal accident data</li> </ul> <p>The number of animal accidents in 2008 was the lowest on record and we believe these activities contributed to this reduction.</p> <p>We were involved in the development of a Transport Assessment used to inform the New Forest District Council Core Strategy Preferred Options.</p> <p>We provided revenue support for the operation and development of the New Forest Tour bus during the 2008 season and worked with partners to ensure effective marketing.</p>	

Priorities for 2009 – 2010	When
<p><b>Manage the marketing activities to promote the New Forest Tour with key partners</b></p> <p>Review the effectiveness and the opportunities for improvement of the New Forest Tour, to determine whether it can become commercially viable</p> <p>Develop options for the provision of recreational public transport (bus and rail) services in the National Park</p> <p>Commission research into the impact of trip generation in the National Park arising from development proposals in regional spatial strategies</p>	<p>Jun 2009</p> <p>Dec 2009</p> <p>Jun 2010</p> <p>Sep 2009</p>
<p><b>U3 Improve everyone's understanding and awareness of the New Forest National Park, in particular hard to reach groups</b></p>	
<p><b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b></p>	
<p>We continued to deliver the Interpretation Strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ developing the New Forest Centre and our partnerships with the Ninth Centenary Trust and the Visitor Information Centres to deliver National Park information and interpretation. The new branding, signage and interpretation were well received and visitor numbers much increased. A new website for the Centre was launched and we helped compile a successful bid for a lottery grant for a new Family Learning Zone in the form of a large interpretative tree</li> <li>▪ facilitating joint training for front-of-house staff from Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, the Forestry Commission, the New Forest Centre and local information points to encourage information-sharing, more coordinated dissemination of key messages and improve partnership working</li> <li>▪ improving the Pocket Guide to the National Park and providing input into partners' publications; an abridged version of the Guide is included in the annual bedroom browser circulated to hotels and B&amp;Bs</li> <li>▪ making progress towards making Forest Focus a fully joint publication with the Forestry Commission and the main free news publication focused on the National Park for visitors and local users</li> <li>▪ producing a booklet, a poster and postcards featuring the special qualities of the New Forest National Park</li> <li>▪ widening our events programme to 15 events in 2008 with very high levels of attendance and satisfaction</li> <li>▪ setting up pilot Local Information Points, where local shops and businesses provide information about the National Park, in Beaulieu, Brockenhurst and Burley</li> <li>▪ starting to operate a mobile interpretation and information unit, the National Park Explorer, in August 2008, which was staffed by a seasonally-employed Mobile Ranger, engaging with 3660 people in 4 months.</li> </ul> <p>The Authority's 'Night and Day'-themed stand at the New Forest Show in July 2008 was awarded both the prize for Best Stand and the Treasurer's award for the best publicly funded stand; it was visited by over 5,000 people over the three days of the show.</p> <p>We continued to provide a focus for tackling litter issues across the National Park. The Joint Litter Working Group, which brings together the Forestry Commission, New Forest District Council and the Authority organised the 2009 spring clean week and other awareness raising initiatives, including work in schools and agreement with the District Council to move towards pony-proof litter bins.</p>	

We brought together various organisations to develop an action plan to reduce the inappropriate feeding of commingling animals and anticipate that this will become an ongoing educational campaign.

We completed the installation of 45 awareness panels and provided information support at locations around the National Park and reached agreement with South West Trains and Titan Outdoor Advertising on new signs on the platforms of the four stations within the National Park that will feature the name of the Park under the station name.

Timber boundary markers were installed at all the planned road and footpath locations and we reached agreement in principle with the Highways Agency to mark the boundary on trunk roads.

We are working to develop links with under-represented groups from local communities: we arranged a visit by Chinese people from the Southampton area in June 2008, which generated very positive feedback, and we hope that our ongoing contacts with the Chinese Association of Southampton will result in further joint projects. The Pocket Guide has been translated into 23 languages spoken either by local people or overseas visitors.

We commissioned research to identify hard-to-reach and under-represented groups in nearby communities. This provided many useful contacts and ideas for our own community outreach work and will be help with the Campaign for National Park's Mosaic Project, which will start in 2009. Together with the National Park Authorities in Exmoor and Dartmoor we are part-funding a Mosaic project officer to carry out a three-year project to identify and train community champions in various urban conurbations including Southampton.

Together with the Forestry Commission and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) we repeated the birds of prey webcam 'Aren't Birds Brilliant in the New Forest' project, which was visited by over 19,000 people. With funding from the Sustainable Development Fund a weatherproof awning was installed and number of educational groups was increased.

<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
Working with the Forestry Commission and the RSPB, run the 'Date with Nature' project, broadening the range of species featured and improving the interpretation on ground nesting birds	Sep 2009
Install further awareness panels at visitor or local community locations	Dec 2009
Complete the rationalisation of signs on the B3054 and gain agreement on how roads across the National Park can be addressed in future	Mar 2010
<b>Review the pilot Local Information Points and establish new ones in other villages</b>	<b>Mar 2010</b>
<b>Further develop the website, introducing new interactive sections with the following features:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>downloadable walks and audio trails</b></li> <li>▪ <b>a feature highlighting the New Forest's connections to World War II</b></li> <li>▪ <b>a celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Parks Act</b></li> </ul>	<b>Mar 2010</b>

**U4 Prepare and implement a co-ordinated programme for education about the National Park, which emphasises environmental and sustainability issues**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

The Travel Grant Scheme to enable under-represented groups to engage with the National Park was extended to locally deprived areas as planned and all the grants were allocated by the end of July 2008.

<p>We continued to deliver the Education Strategy through the actions described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the Authority's education programme was expanded to increase the number of direct contacts with students, teachers, children's centres and youth groups</li> <li>▪ the number of education fact sheets has been increased to 17 and an additional interactive game 'Forest Trumps' was added to the Fun Zone</li> <li>▪ we worked with other national park educators and the Educators Forum to champion the Learning Outside the Classroom manifesto on a national and local scale and provided Early Years training for the Forum</li> <li>▪ following a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we developed plans for the education and outreach aspects of the New Forest Maritime Archaeology Project.</li> </ul>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Start conveying maritime archaeology to a wide range of audiences through a newly employed Education and Outreach Officer</b>	<b>Mar 2010</b>
<p><b>U5 Develop a co-ordinated National Park ranger service, working with relevant partner organisations to build on existing services</b></p>	
<p><b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b></p> <p>Following the creation of a joint Community Ranger post in partnership with the National Trust in 2007-2008, we funded two new ranger posts: a seasonal Coastal Ranger with Hampshire County Council and a Community Ranger with the Forestry Commission and Exxon Mobil.</p> <p>We completed the review of existing provision and further develop opportunities for a co-ordinated approach to Ranger Services throughout the National Park.</p> <p>We established the Ranger Forum as a twice-yearly meeting with attendance by most of the organisations operating ranger services in the National Park. Joint training for seasonal rangers was arranged for spring 2009.</p> <p>We designed dedicated webpages to promote and coordinate ranger service provision.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
Further develop the Ranger Forum and improve mechanisms for coordination of training, events and information exchange as well as joint working and branding	Mar 2010
<b>Further clarify the Authority's role in ranger service provision</b>	<b>Mar 2010</b>

**U6 Enhance opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding, including developing an integrated network of accessible, safe and attractive footpath and cycle routes, and promote their use to local people and visitors and implement the National Park Authority's responsibilities under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000**

**Achievements in 2008-2009**

We promoted the Small Grants Scheme to raise the Scheme's profile with land managers and Parish Councils; following a joint review of the Scheme with Hampshire County Council, we are making some minor changes as it is rolled forward.

We supported health improvement projects, such as GP exercise referrals and Walking for Health programmes, and are considering further opportunities for new projects.

We worked with the Local Access Forum and highway authorities to identify priority access improvements to address issues raised in Rights of Way Improvement Plans for potential funding support.

Subject to appropriate consents, we continue to support and develop proposals for sustainable new, improved and safe opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding (especially circular routes, routes linking settlements and providing access from settlements onto access land) to complement existing access:

- walking: we continued to replace stiles with gates on walking routes and assist with applying non-slip surfacing to bridle bridges; we have also looked at methods to promote walking routes without the need for on the ground signage
- cycling: we continued to work with relevant stakeholders to progress the delivery of the Strategic Cycle Network, including the National Cycle Network Route 2 between Hythe and Christchurch safety audit and signing, improvements to the Forestry Commission promoted gravel track network, and Hampshire / Wiltshire County Council bridleway networks. We also implemented signing for the proposed National Cycle Network between Hythe and Brockenhurst and we are working with partners to progress the scheme as recommended in the safety audit of the proposed National Cycle Network between Brockenhurst and the Hants/Dorset border between Brockenhurst and Christchurch.

We supported and serviced the New Forest Access Forum as the statutory local access forum for the New Forest and South West Hampshire, ensuring that the Forum membership meets statutory requirements and retains a balanced representation of local interests.

Following on from our assessment of the condition of Public Rights of Way in the National Park in 2007-2008, we produced a more accurate picture of their ease of use.

Following our research into the type of information that is required to enable people with limited mobility to visit the countryside, we collected detailed information for two pilot sites and trialled the publication of 'easy access' information.

**Priorities for 2009 – 2010**

**When**

**Publish the 'easy access' information on selected sites in an appropriate form**

Sep 2009

Improve the condition and ease of use of the Public Rights of Way in the National Park

Mar 2010

<b>SE Support the social and economic well-being of local communities in ways that sustain the New Forest National Park's special character</b>	
<b>SE1 Promote sustainable development within the National Park as the basis for the social and economic well-being of local communities. (This now includes action formerly recorded under SE3 – Support existing and encourage new business and community services which enhance the New Forest environment while providing economic and community benefits)</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>We continue to provide project development support both to potential applicants to the Sustainable Development Fund and those who have successfully secured funding. We continue to assess funding applications against the agreed appraisal criteria.</p> <p>Systems, expertise and links with other organisations were developed to enable us to carry out assessment of the sustainability, including the environmental impact, of the Authority's formal plans and programmes, particularly the New Forest National Park Plan and Local Development Framework.</p> <p>We continued to develop, test and consult on potential spatial planning policy options to optimise policies which seek to support local businesses and services, and promote sustainable design and practices; this work is being carried out within the context of developing the National Park Plan (see Section A for policy document details).</p> <p>We provided support to parishes in developing and implementing the projects identified in their Parish Plans and we supported green tourist initiatives for the New Forest, subject to the availability of resources.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Develop a joint statement with New Forest District Council on the respective roles and activities of the Authority and the District in economic development</b>	<b>Dec 2009</b>
<b>Delivery of the Sustainable Development Fund according to the scheme guidelines and budget (including provision of project development and support to applicants)</b>	<b>Mar 2010</b>
Also please refer to priorities listed under C1 and C8	
<b>SE2 Protect the existing affordable housing stock, and help increase the number of affordable houses for rent and shared ownership</b>	
<b>Achievements in 2008-2009</b>	
<p>The Chairman and officers attended meetings of the New Forest District Council Registered Social Landlord Development Group and the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing.</p> <p>We continued to work with local housing associations to explore new ways of funding and delivering rural affordable housing. We agreed a mechanism to enable local housing authorities and registered social landlords to apply for the release of funds from developer contributions collected by the Authority for the off site provision of new affordable homes.</p> <p>We continued to provide pre-application planning advice on exception sites for rural affordable housing schemes.</p>	
<b>Priorities for 2009 – 2010</b>	<b>When</b>
Continue to work with partners and providers to maximise the delivery of affordable housing in the National Park	Continuing