

Education projects

Calshot nature club

total project costs £26,230

SDF grant £17,630 (67 % of total)

Calshot Nature Club started in March 2010 catering for children aged two to 12 years old and their parents. Calshot is considered a rural area of high deprivation. The club aims to provide fun, interactive outdoor/indoor nature-based activities teaching children and adults about their local environment and the importance of sustaining it. The club also have an allotment plot to engage children and adults with the importance of growing food locally.

Oaks CE Learning Federation forest school

total project cost £13,318

SDF grant £4,339 (33% of total)

For the last two years children from three local schools have worked together on a joint Forest Schools project to learn about the history, geography and science of the New Forest and develop interpersonal skills. The project helps to instil a sense of awe and wonder and fosters respect for the heritage, wildlife, flora and fauna of their local natural environment so they can become stewards of the Forest. Funding was awarded to continue this project.

Tiptoe forest school

total project cost £3,547

SDF grant £2,400 (68% of total)

Tiptoe is a small rural primary school with a resourced provision unit for children with moderate to severe learning disabilities. The Forest School takes place in the non-threatening woodland setting with the aim of making learning fun, enjoyable, stimulating and engaging for those who disengage at school. Children learn about the local environment, sustainability and the importance of the woodland environment.

Ashurst and Colbury bags for the future

total project costs £4,665

SDF grant £3,030 (65% of total)

'Bags for the future' aimed to significantly reduce the use of plastic bags in the parish of Ashurst and Colbury and to provide a catalyst for similar changes to take place elsewhere in the National Park.

The project provided every household in the parish with an organic cotton re-usable bag, which was designed by local school children as part of their sustainability work.

The project also worked with local retailers, encouraging them to use alternatives to plastic bags.

New Forest carbon footprint project

The New Forest carbon footprint project, which took place during 2007 - 2008, raised awareness of the predicted impact of climate change on the New Forest. The project focused on reducing the community carbon footprint of Brockenhurst by holding a wide range of talks and producing easy to understand information that encouraged community members to take practical action in reducing their individual footprints.

The project has inspired many other New Forest communities to take action to reduce their carbon emissions and played a significant role in the establishment of New Forest Transition.

Visit: [New Forest Transition](#)

Minstead Study Centre community courses

total project costs £8,220

SDF Grant £6,165 (75% of total)

Work between Minstead Study Centre and New Forest Transition has identified a number of areas where local people require new skills training to live a low carbon lifestyle.

The Transition Towns movement is a powerful social movement that recognises the need for a move to a sustainable way of living. One of the side effects of recent decades is that many people no longer have the skills that older generations learned from their parents, skills such as how to grow and cook your own food have not been passed on because mass commercial provision has simply taken its place.

The Transition Towns thinking is that when energy prices increase substantially, such commercial provision may well be threatened and people need to prepare themselves for moving towards a more self-sufficient lifestyle. This is termed 're-skilling' – to build resilience in people and communities to better cope with a need for living with less fossil fuel energy. The SDF has provided some 'springboard' funding to enable Minstead Study Centre to launch a programme of community re-skilling courses.

Visit:

[Wild Wood Web](#)

[New Forest Transition Group](#)

Forest schools training

total project costs £1,304

SDF grant £652 (50% of total)

The fund has supported two local individuals in training and qualifying as Forest School Providers who are now running sessions at a range of locations in the New Forest. Forest schools is a unique form of outdoor environmental education focusing on woodland or forest settings.

Credit: Susannah Hayes

Breaking down the barriers

total project costs £54,169

SDF grant £20,00 (37% of total)

Breaking Down the Barriers was a volunteering project designed to encourage young people and vulnerable adults to access, protect and learning more about the New Forest National Park. Over 180 young people and around 60 adults took part in a range of practical conservation tasks on a nature reserve within or adjacent to the National Park.

Visit: <http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/>

Credit: Jamie Corey

Countryside education project

total project costs £7,755

SDF grant £4,934 (64% of total)

Now complete this project developed opportunities for school children from around the National Park to learn about farming, commoning and where their food comes from. During the project 800 school children took part in educational farm visits and/or school workshops exploring local food and farming. The project also included training for both farmers and teachers on running successful and beneficial farm visits.

Credit: Hampshire Country Learning

Honey pot forest schools programme

total project cost £5,897

SDF grant £4,430 (75% of total)

Around 165 children from area surrounding the New Forest took part in ' Forest Schools sessions trying their hand at pond dipping, bug hunting, natural art, den building and campfire cooking.

The sessions enabled the children to explore and learn about the National Park in a fun way, while at the same time raising their awareness of and respect for the natural environment.

Although the funded project has now been completed the sessions proved so successful that Honey pot has incorporated them into its main activities programme.

Waterside to forest community connection project

total project costs £91,267

fund grant £36,674 (40 % of total)

This was a two year project between the Forestry Commission, the New Forest National Park Authority and ExxonMobil to encourage the Waterside community to access and use the New Forest in a positive way.

The Community Ranger ran an extensive programme of varied activities with different sectors of the community, focusing particularly on young people to tackle issues of anti-social behaviour on the forest.

Credit: Vicky Myers

New Forest sustainable schools

Minstead Study Centre has received two grants from the SDF to run a Sustainable Schools programme for schools in and around the New Forest National Park.

Total project costs £15,400

SDF grant £11,550 (75% of total)

This was a pilot project to trial a new method of helping schools to become more sustainable. The project was run by Minstead Study Centre and drew on the sustainability practices in place there to support schools in making positive changes.

The project targeted Hounsdown Secondary School and its six feeder schools who participated in a variety of advice and inspiration visits, focused workshops and actions days catering waste, energy, water, food and travel. Each of the participating schools has set up a 'Change Team' - a group of staff and students who will drive the sustainability agenda within the school to make real changes.

Total project costs £22,030

SDF grant £15,999 (73% of total)

Following the successful pilot the project was expanded to work with fourteen New forest schools, each receiving tailor-made support to establish a 'change team' of students and staff to plan and implement a programme of sustainability improvements.

Credit: Chris Townsend

Priestlands sustainable school

total project costs £19,773

SDF grant £7,365 (37% of total)

Priestlands School in Lymington has a walled garden project which has been successful in engaging students in exploring sustainable living and how they can reduce their environmental footprint.

Funding was provided for a period during 2007 and 2008 to expand the reach of the project - to involve more students and link the garden into the curriculum so that it becomes a mainstream learning resource.

total project costs £39,635

SDF grant £29,726 (75% of total)

Building on the success of the walled garden, Prieslands School was keen to move towards becoming a truly sustainable school. Due to the SDF support, the school now has a Sustainable School Co-ordinator, which has enabled a variety of initiatives, actions and ideas to be taken forward including the installation of solar panels and the introduction of an Eco-prefects Scheme

Brownies go green

total project costs £4,715

SDF grant £3,185 (68% of total)

This project will work with every Brownie Pack in the New Forest National Park to educate them about energy efficiency and renewable energy through a series of interactive workshops. This will contribute towards the Brownies earning their environment badge, as part of which they must record, monitor and reduce their energy and water use in the home.

Lymington Montessori school farm

total project costs £27,324

SDF grant £13,832 (51% of total)

Over the last three years Lymington Montessori School at South Baddesley has created a small organic farm that is tended by the children, with chickens, lambs and a variety of fruit and vegetables for use in the school kitchen. The children are actively involved in growing, preparing and eating their own food on a daily basis. The school has received SDF funding to take the project to the next level, enabling the school to be more self-sufficient and increase the sustainability of the farm. The school will:

- set up a system of compost bins and wormeries allowing 100% of the schools biodegradeable waste to be recycled
- install a rainwater harvesting system to meet 75% of the schools irrigation needs
- create a permanent livestock area
- significantly increase fruit and vegetable production by creating extra raised beds and a fruit cage
- construct an outdoor wood-fired clay oven
- install a greenhouse to extend the growing season
- create a pond
- install a composting toilet and a shed.

Get out of town!

total project costs £30,837

SDF grant £15,477 (50% of total)

The aim of the Get Out of Town! project is to introduce the young people that Fairbridge Solent works with to the benefits and opportunities the New Forest National Park has to offer. Fairbridge works with young people aged 13 – 25 who are often facing multiple issues ranging from school exclusion and homelessness to anti-social behaviour, crime and substance misuse. They often lack family support and are existing on the margins of society. The majority of the young people Fairbridge Solent engages with live on the periphery of the New Forest National Park, yet few have ever spent any time there.

By working in partnership with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust this project offers young people a variety of opportunities to take part in practical conservation work throughout the New Forest as part of their Fairbridge activity programme. The young people will help to protect and conserve important habitats, learn about these habitats and their importance and learn traditional skills.

The project ran from September 2008 to September 2010.

Hampshire Country Learning – New Forest local food project

total project costs £6,832.82

SDF grant £4,706.60 (69% of total)

Working with six New Forest schools this project teaches children about the food that is produced in the New Forest area. Children from each of the schools visit a local working farm to experience how the countryside is managed to produce food, learn about the work that is involved and meet the people who produce the food. Following the farm visit each school will receive a composting bin, gardening equipment and a gardening session to help them improve their sustainability. Each school will also receive a cookery workshop which will use locally grown ingredients and food from the school's growing activity. Class work produced by the school children will be displayed at the New Forest Show.

Hollies cards and calendars

total project costs £6,916

fund grant £1,045 (15% of total)

This project, which took place during 2006-07, provided opportunities for a group of local people with mental health issues to visit and learn about the New Forest. Fourteen people explored the National Park on their doorstep through a photography project, learning about natural cycles, habitats and plants.

New Forest aspirations

total project cost £3,180

SDF grant £1,590 (50% of total)

Now complete, this project provided opportunities for disadvantaged people who were participating in a wood occupations training course to visit the New Forest to learn about woodland management and timber production.

Participants from a variety of socially-excluded backgrounds in Southampton explored the origins of timber, the role of woodlands in our ecological systems and the positive leisure potential of the New Forest through visits to woodland sites and wood-based local businesses.

Rags to witches

Rags to Witches is an engaging touring theatre production that incorporates important messages about sustainability and care for the environment and is based on stories from the New Forest.

Rags to Witches was performed over 20 times in local schools and community centres during the Autumn and Winter of 2007 and was seen by over 2000 people.

The production itself was created with sustainability in mind. All the energy used during the project was from renewable sources, the van was powered by recycled chip fat and many of the props and scenery were made from recycled materials.

Rags to Witches is no longer touring but has been incorporated into the repertoire of the Wildwood Theatre Company.

Sculpture park feasibility study

total project costs £3,980

fund grant £2,985 (75% of total)

Now complete, this project undertook a feasibility study investigating the creation of a sculpture park within the National Park, designed to interpret and reflect the special qualities of the New Forest. Sculptures would be chosen which interacted with the natural elements and incorporate local, natural materials and traditional skills. The findings and proposed action plan are being used to develop the idea further.

Credit: Gerry Clarke

Aren't Birds Brilliant! In the New Forest

total project costs £63,323

SDF grant £19,909 (30% of total)

total project costs £6,970

SDF grant £4,550 (65% of total)

This project established an exciting visual and interpretive experience of New Forest birds of prey.

A viewing station, at the New Forest Reptile Centre, was set up to show live images from the nests of Hobby and Goshawks in the forest and to highlight the plight of ground-nesting birds. The viewing station is staffed by knowledgeable people who are able to explain events taking place on camera.

A second grant was awarded in 2008 to increase participation in the project by creating a covered interpretive entrance and developing an education programme for school groups about New Forest birds and reptiles.

This successful project has now entered its fourth season and is open to visitors from April to the end of August 2010 and is now called 'A date with nature'.

Visit: [A date with nature](#)

Roots youth theatre festival project

total project costs £33,696

SDF grant £11,029 (33% of total)

Run by Forest Forge Theatre Company, a local touring theatre, Roots Youth Theatre Festival is a celebration of local young people, their cultural past and environmental future in the New Forest. The Festival took place in the beautiful Blackwater Arboretum from 27 July to 1 August 2009 when young people from different backgrounds came together to devise and perform four different productions. One of the productions was Midsummer Night's Dream, the other three explored local history and local and global environmental questions.