

Conservation projects

Avon Tyrell eco-health

Total project costs £11,250

SDF grant £8,000 (71% of total)

The Eco-Health programme started in 2009 to provide opportunities for people with mental health issues to get back into work/training, build confidence, relationships and self-esteem. The project participants undertake gardening, environmental arts and listed building and habitat conservation work at Avon Tyrell, Bransgore. Funding was awarded to continue the position of a support worker.

Burrard Neale 250 – Walhampton Monument

Total project costs £69,863

SCF grant £25,000 (36% of total)

Lymington & Pennington Town Council plans to restore the area around the Walhampton monument which has become heavily overgrown to the point where both the monument and the heritage oaks have been difficult to see and appreciate. Work will involve tree management, planting new hedging, and introducing signage and interpretation around the monument and at the entrance to help make the site more attractive to visitors of the National Park. The work will also help provide educational opportunities for people to understand more about the site's location within the wider National Park.

Bashley Woods

SDF grant £496(100% of total project cost)

Bashley woods has not been managed for an estimated 60 years. Woodlander Bushcraft was awarded a grant to purchase loppers, bow saws, gloves and other small tools to set up a volunteer group. The tools will also be used by school/youth groups and adults on woodland management courses, helping reinstate much needed management and improve the biodiversity of the woodland.

Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust comparison of management of New Forest heathland

Total project costs £60,848

SDF grant £17,137 (28% of total)

This mosaic of habitats across the New Forest has developed over generations as a consequence of the traditional cycle of burning and grazing. However burning is not the only method of management; sometimes vegetation is cut. The ecological consequences of cutting are unknown. The project in partnership with the Natural History Museum will use local volunteers to gather data to help make informed management decisions.

Longacre Farm marl pit reinstatement

Total project costs £10,606

SDF grant £7,954 (75% of total)

Longacre Farm is a 12-acre farm that has a DIY livery stables and caravan site. The owners have been involved with the 1st New Forest North (Lyndhurst) Scout Group for many years. There are marl pits on the site which have become invaded by trees and scrub. The scouts will help clear the pits allowing the marl pit vegetation to thrive again whilst working towards their environmental challenge award.

New Forest bat box project

SDF grant £4,826 (67% of total project costs £7,161)

Hampshire Bat Group received funding six years ago for a project to capture and radio track rare bats to roost sites and undertake bat detector surveys. The group has now received a grant to buy 96 bat boxes which have been fitted to trees at four sites in the New Forest where rare Barbastelle and Bechstein's bats have been found. The sites will continue to be monitored and the Bat Group aims to search for grey long-eared bats (another rare species).

Pond conservation New Forest Pondscape project

Total project costs £13,802

SDF grant £10,350 (75% of total)

There are an estimated 800 – 1,000 ponds in the New Forest supporting rare species of plants and animals. The aim of the Pondscape project is to develop a comprehensive strategy which will protect the critical pond species and community types of the New Forest. It brings together expert knowledge and species information to produce a pond creation and management plan whilst providing training for land owners, land managers and planning authorities.

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.

Credit: Jamie Corey

Friends of Lepe Country Park

Total project costs £6,308

SDF grant £1,123 (18% of total)

This project built on the interest shown by visitors to Lepe Country Park to participate in the site's management and improvement.

The Sustainable Development Fund grant was used to establish a 'Friends of Lepe Country Park' voluntary group. Established in 2007 the group continues to grow and meet regularly to carry out practical habitat conservation works and site maintenance and runs a successful programme of informative walks and talks.

Visit: www3.hants.gov.uk/lepe

Credit: Sara Briggs

New Forest Barbastelle and Bechstein's bat research

Total project cost £40,964

SDF grant £19,263 (47% of total)

Barbastelle and Bechstein's bats are two of the UK's rarest bat species and both can be found in the New Forest National Park. This project undertook research to identify areas of the New Forest where each species exists, areas where they forage and the roost locations of colonies. The research was conducted by around forty local volunteers who also took part in awareness raising and training events.

Sustainable Development Fund support enabled the purchase of a range of technical survey equipment which continues to be used by the Hampshire Bat Group to undertake further research. It is anticipated that the research data gathered will be used to inform land management within the New Forest to the benefit of these species.

Visit: www.bats.hampshire.org.uk

Credit: Colleen Mainstone

Beaulieu Road sales yard utilities installation

Total project costs £134,375

SDF grant £29,400 (22% of total)

Sales of New Forest ponies have taken place on the site of the existing Beaulieu Road Sales Yard for over 60 years and the yard is used by nearly all the commoners in the New Forest to sell their ponies by auction.

Although much improved in recent years, the sales yard still offers only very basic facilities for buyers, sellers and also for the stock.

The sales yard plays an essential role in the future sustainability of commoning in the New Forest and in order to comply with current and future animal welfare legislation and trading standards it is necessary to install mains water and electricity to the site.

New Forest invasive non-native plants project

Total project costs £216,023

SDF grant £20,000 (9% of total)

The New Forest National Park is one of the most important areas for wildlife in western Europe and as such, has many designations recognising its local, national and international importance for biodiversity.

A large proportion of the National Park is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and includes a mix of heathland and mire, ponds, grassland and woodland habitats not found anywhere else in lowland Britain. It is estimated that over 2,700 non native plant species have established themselves in Britain and the vast majority of them pose little or no threat to our native wildlife.

However, there are a number of species that are having a very serious negative effect on our native wildlife and present particular challenges in the New Forest National Park, for example, *Crassula helmsii*, parrots feather, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed.

This project aims to address the problem across the entire National Park area including the Open Forest, enclosed landscape and river valleys. It will deliver large scale practical management work, improved data recording and collection and extensive volunteer and community involvement. The project is being led by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and is partnership between the Trust and the Environment Agency, New Forest National Park Authority, Forestry Commission, Defra and Natural England.

Visit: [Hampshire Wildlife Trust](#)

Hatchet Green enhancement project

Total project costs £3,309

SDF grant £1,772 (54% of total)

This project, which is now complete, replaced unattractive signage and urban-style bollards at Hatchett Green Site of Special Scientific Interest with ones more in-keeping with the New Forest Landscape.

Credit: Steve Whitmarsh

South coast Osprey project

Total project costs £12,754

SDF grant £5,000 (39% of total)

Ospreys last bred in southern England over 400 years ago. The Hampshire coast has been identified as a prime location for Osprey recolonisation as they pass through this area twice a year on migration and there is excellent feeding site and food supply. First time breeders do not build their own nest, they occupy nests built previously by other Ospreys. This project, which is part of the wider South Coast Project, is to identify suitable sites around the New Forest coast to erect artificial Osprey nest platforms.

Recording Boldre parish

Total project cost £25,494

SDF grant £9,400 (37% of total)

The Recording Boldre project, which took place during 2006 - 2008, involved the community in an exploration of the recent history of the parish with the aim of increasing understanding among residents and improving social cohesion.

Three exhibitions were held showing photographs, documents, maps and anecdotes of local history. Interest increased with each exhibition and further material was contributed to the project. The exhibitions attracted in excess of 1,500 people and the project involved around 30 volunteers and community groups.

As a result of the project the Boldre Parish Historical Society has been formed.

Credit: Peter Roberts

Archaeological excavation equipment

Total project costs £8,601

SDF grant £1,657 (19% of total)

The Fund has helped a local archaeological society purchase essential tools and survey equipment in order to conduct archaeological excavations, designed to provide dating evidence to better understand the Forest's history. The excavation was conducted during August 2006 and findings reported on in November.2006

Visit: www.nfhistoryandarchaeology.hampshire.org.uk