

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

Draft 2017-18 Work Programme – Q1 (1 April to 30 June 2017)

Enjoy

We will champion the National Park as a place of inspiration, where everyone can enjoy, understand, value and care for its special qualities.

Enjoy Priority 1: Enabling high quality experiences of the National Park

We will enhance people's experience and enjoyment of the National Park, by:

- working with local communities, land managers and highway authorities to improve sites and routes for people
- developing projects that enable people with particular needs to experience and benefit from the New Forest
- working with partners and local businesses to improve visitor facilities and information within and around the National Park
- encouraging people to volunteer in ways which benefit the New Forest.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Work with partners to enhance at least four local sites by improving access, routes or information provision, e.g. through the small grants scheme and community-led projects. EP1, EP2	Gillie Molland / Mark Holroyd	Through our joint small grants scheme with Hampshire County Council we have supported a local volunteer in the Hordle area with a project to upgrade bridleway 743 on the edge of the National Park. We have been supporting the applicant by acting as the accountable body for the funds.		
As the Access Authority for the National Park, provide input to Natural England's plans for the development of the England Coast Path through the National Park. When the route has been agreed, deliver the establishment phase of the new trail and associated open access land.	Mark Holroyd	We have been continuing to engage with Natural England's coastal access team as they finalise their route for the England Coast Path. In particular, in this quarter we have been assisting them in estimating the infrastructure costs of establishing the new trail. The formal consultation will now take place no earlier than 27 September 2017.		
Work with partners and communities to understand, develop and deliver visitor information opportunities about the National Park through visitor centres including New Forest Centre and Lepe Country Park redevelopment, eight+ local information points, wider networks and online.	Jim Mitchell	Working with the NF Centre to enable the travel ambassadors to operate in the Centre for a trial 2017 summer season following closure of VIC. Assisting Lepe Country Park with interpretation planning.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Support volunteering in the New Forest through specific projects such as Our Past, Our Future Landscape Partnership Scheme (OPOF) and an annual volunteer fair and guide, attended by 30+ volunteering organisations and attended by 300+ prospective volunteers. SQ2	Richard Austin / Jim Mitchell	<p>The OPOF database grew to over 400 volunteers and many more work through our partners. The Wildlife Trust began their surveying and monitoring work on 24 sites in this period, with training sessions delivered for new volunteers. They also took volunteers out to remove Himalayan Balsam from Lymington River and Cadnam River. A Volunteer Newsletter was sent out in May and regular updates were sent throughout the period. Volunteers undertook geophysical surveys at Buckland Rings, were trained and assigned parishes in the Historic Routes and Past Pathways project and have now digitised over 5000 items in the Christopher Tower Reference Library in the New Forest Centre.</p> <p>A partnership with the (Southampton HQ based) Maritime and Coastguard Agency has resulted in groups of their staff carrying out volunteering tasks in the National Park and also developing ideas for future joint working / communication</p>		
Deliver and support 2+ projects (inc. Walking for health and an OPOF project on developing wild play) and work with partners to deliver activities to benefit the health and wellbeing of local communities and visitors through contact with the natural environment and heritage of the New Forest. LC8	Jim Mitchell	<p>Wild play site at Sway continued ahead of schedule. Holbury site behind schedule but overall the project is on track. Successful wild play day in April attracting over 250 people.</p> <p>Walking for health Q1 results included 1371 walking hours. The project has 39 volunteer walk leaders.</p> <p>We have continued to support the West Hampshire CCG Get Hampshire Walking scheme through promotion, steering group membership and events.</p> <p>We supported art therapy sessions delivered by local group Hampshire Art for Recreation and Therapy as part of the 2017 Arts Festival.</p>		

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Deliver the OPOF ranger Apprentice scheme in partnership with other Forest ranger teams and education providers. EW8	Gillie Molland	<p>One apprentice has left the scheme to take up permanent employment and the remaining one has resigned after a period of long term sickness leave.</p> <p>Two excellent candidates have been selected for the new apprentice positions and will join the Authority in October.</p>		<p>Lessons have been learnt where they can and have helped in the recruitment of this year's 2 new apprentice positions.</p> <p>Resources saved this year will go forward to aid future years.</p>
Continue the development of the PEDALL project, securing external funding and recruiting volunteers and deliver cycling sessions for participants EP4	Andy Brennan	<p>The bid to Big Lottery was successful with the Authority being awarded a £297k towards the project. Job descriptions have been drafted to recruit a part time manager and full time ride leader. Four sessions have been delivered to 215 participants.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Engage with groups usually thought to be under-represented including young people (John Muir Award and Youth Action Project) and those with disabilities. EP4, LC9	Jim Mitchell /Gillie Molland	<p>Planned and delivered John Muir activities for Brockenhurst College and led a Youth Options session of the John Muir Award at Anderwood.</p> <p>Rangers planned, co-delivered and evaluated programmes for the New Forest Youth Access Project (Salisbury Princes Trust) to promote understanding of the special qualities of the National Park.</p> <p>Rangers also attended a YAP workshop held by Southampton Princes Trust.</p> <p>Delivery of 5 spring National Citizenship Service sessions was cancelled by NCS at short notice. However, at the end of Q1 rangers developed, co-led and evaluated the first of 6 weeks of NCS sessions to promote understanding of the special qualities of the National Park, with the assistance of volunteers.</p> <p>Kick the Dust application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was unsuccessful but feedback was positive and has led to conversations with UK Youth about support for a National Park England-wide programme focussed on young people's mental health.</p>		

Enjoy Priority 2: Improving understanding of the National Park

We will further people's understanding of, respect for and desire to care for the special qualities of the National Park, by:

- leading the development and delivery of curriculum-linked educational programmes for schools, colleges and other groups
- delivering engaging events, activities, interpretation and informal learning activities for different audiences
- maximising the use of social media and online resources to reach new audiences
- enabling educators, businesses and people with public-facing roles to be ambassadors for the New Forest.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Promote the special qualities, our work and key messages through 20 public events led or co-led by the Authority, 50 community events run by other organisations, opportunistic use of mobile unit and an on-the-ground presence throughout the National Park. SQ1, LH10	Gillie Molland	7,235 ranger contacts within this period. This included 1,148 people who met rangers during engagement sessions about ground nesting birds. The mobile unit was deployed at 26 events and was also used multiple times for promoting key messages on issues such as ground nesting birds, responsible dog walking and pony feeding.		
Develop interpretive resources with partners and communities that promote the National Park's special qualities including self-guided trails, the New Forest Tour commentary, training, and permanent and touring exhibitions including activity to mark the 800 th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest. SQ4, LH10, LD3	Jim Mitchell / Gareth Owen	At the New Forest Show we celebrated 800 years since the Charter of the Forest. During the show the public produced the characters and scenery to be used in a short animated film about the Charter of the Forest in the New Forest. We captured over 8000 images and the animation team are now working to produce the first rushes for review. Also at the New Forest Show was the first use of the Tree Time Challenge unit, an engaging display unit exploring the work of the NPA Tree Team, dendrochronology and the history of the New Forest. Both these (and other items) will form a temporary exhibition at the New Forest Centre 14/10/2017 to 14/01/2018.		
Review the operation of the concierge service within the New Forest Centre and update the agreement with the Ninth Centenary Trust in the context of recent changes to information provision in the Forest.	Nigel Matthews	New Forest Centre 2016-17 Annual Report in preparation ahead of subsequent review of travel ambassador deployment and Agreement.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>New website live and amendments made by end Q3; brand messaging reviewed and rolled out; Heritage Lottery Fund scheme, Coast Path consultation, National Grid Hale Purlieu trials, Local Plan and recreation consultations and Visitor Gift Scheme supported and engagement targets (to be determined by project leaders) attained; Green Halo campaign launched; walking festival organised and Charter of the Forest celebrated.</p> <p>Arts Festival organised and audience of 4,000 achieved.</p>	Hilary Makin	<p>The Arts Festival saw over 5,000 people attend a wide range of events across the Forest, learning more about the National Park's special qualities during two weeks in June.</p> <p>The Future Forest recreation consultation was launched, including a film, web pages, leaflets and flyers, drop-in sessions, social media posts, press releases and a media briefing. More than 1,500 responses were received (by 13 August): over 80% of respondents had not taken part in Forest consultations before and more than half found out about the consultation through social media.</p> <p>The Local Plan informal consultation was launched, with drop-in sessions, web pages, and social media posts.</p> <p>As part of the website work, our brand messaging has been reviewed and is being refined. An audit of the current website (over 800 pages) has been undertaken and the new site is being built. (The software of the current site is now 'end of life' after five years and is no longer supported).</p>		
<p>Develop and teach curriculum-specific sessions about the national park for 8,000 students from pre-schools, schools and colleges, both in the 'field' and in school. SQ1, SQ7</p>	Sue Palma	<p>The education team has given formal teaching to 28 schools during this quarter. 1,087 pupils have received teaching sessions including GCSE Geography rivers fieldwork, habitats and adaptations, and impacts and management. The most requested teaching session this term was an introduction to national parks.</p> <p>Litter Assemblies were presented to 3,825 children in 15 primary schools this quarter.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Work with primary and secondary schools to embed the New Forest National Park into their curriculum, including organising conferences for students and teachers, the development of a Youth Forum and the continued population of the New Forest Curriculum web pages. SQ1, SQ7	Sue Palma	<p>The team visited four local secondary schools to introduce the Youth Forum to students aged between 12 and 16. Each group chose an aspect of the national park to research. They attended a conference at Bolderwood and the New Forest Centre, focussed on commoning, at which they presented their findings and also contributed to the Recreation Management Strategy review.</p> <p>The curriculum website is ready for transfer to the new NPA website.</p>		
Develop and deliver informal learning activities for non-curriculum groups, societies etc., including Wild Play Day events, in partnership with members of New Forest Educators Forum. SQ1, SQ7	Sue Palma, Gillie Molland	<p>Five preschool sessions delivered, reaching 130 participants.</p> <p>Informal sessions delivered to groups including Tiptoe Brownies, Marchwood Guides, Highcliffe Library junior members and Marchwood Scouts.</p> <p>Puppy classes and fun dog events attended by People and Wildlife Ranger to promote responsible dog walking messages.</p> <p>Wild Play Day at Hurst Spit attracted over 250 participants.</p>		

Enjoy Priority 3: Managing recreation to benefit the National Park

We will work in partnership with others to encourage and manage appropriate recreation, by:

- agreeing and implementing recreation management strategies that benefit people and the New Forest
- raising awareness of issues such as litter, feeding of ponies, disturbance of wildlife, fungi picking and animal accidents
- enabling the New Forest Access Forum to provide useful advice on improving public access
- undertaking and supporting research to clarify positive and negative impacts of recreation locally.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Engage the public, local organisations and recreational user groups in agreeing an overall evidence-based plan for where within and around the National Park we should encourage people to go to enjoy outdoor recreation – and how this should be achieved. LH10, ST1	Nigel Matthews	Eight-week Future Forest ‘call for views’ consultation launched in June on behalf of the six Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group organisations and after input from the Access Forum and RMS Advisory Group. This is a significant milestone in the development of a revised RMS Strategy that will deliver benefits to the Forest and those who enjoy it.		
Play a leading role in the co-ordination of targeted educational campaigns about key issues leading to more responsible behaviour and reduced conflict between user groups, e.g. cycling, animal accidents, litter, fungi, disturbance of ground nesting birds and feeding of ponies. LH10, SQ1, EP5	Nigel Matthews	Cycle events monitored included the April UK Cycle Events ‘Wiggle’ sportive and we attended the Safety Advisory Group meeting about this. Ground nesting bird work progressed mainly through extensive face to face engagement by rangers. Animal Accident Reduction Group meeting held in April; NPA input to various initiatives including analysis of 2016 accident data (now published online); 2017 accidents are roughly similar to last year. Dogs Forum meeting discussed use of consistent messages across different organisations, ways in which the Police could help follow up where the Law is being broken and proposed further work with commercial dog walkers. Joint Litter Working Group met to review the Spring Clean and discuss future initiatives including a fresh focus on roadside litter.		
Through four full meetings and topic-specific subgroups enable the New Forest Access Forum to provide helpful advice to relevant organisations on improving public access, including the England Coast Path being developed by Natural England.	Mark Holroyd	The Forum met on 12 June in Lymington and received a presentation from Jonathan Woods, the Countryside Access Team leader at Hampshire County Council about progress in delivering the Countryside Access Plan. They also heard about BirdAware, the new name for the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership which was well received. The Forum has a busy few months ahead responding to the consultation on the Recreation Management Strategy and the England Coast Path.		