

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

2017-18 Work Programme – Q2 (1 July to 30 September 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	The first phase of work to upgrade bridleway 743 on the edge of the National Park within Hordle parish has been completed. 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 advised that the publication date has been delayed again to allow further quality assurance work on the report. We have continued to provide advice and support to Natural England throughout this period, in particular, assisting with the development of cost estimates. We attended an Open Access Seminar with colleagues from Natural England, Defra and other NPAs to understand more about the management implications of other areas of open access land, including on open stretches of the England Coast Path.		
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	The travel ambassador service at the New Forest Centre was a success with 5,911 meaningful engagements. It enabled a dedicated information service from Lyndhurst during the peak summer months which also enabled the Centre to operate effectively in other functions such as shop and museum. There is also a new café facility at the Centre (in the old VIC space) which is proving popular. The Date with Nature project 2018 finished at the end of August with 617 days of volunteering helping visitors discover New Forest wildlife.		

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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	This summer volunteers completed 154 biodiversity monitoring surveys at 37 different sites, and surveyed for bats, butterflies and bees. The Wildlife Trust also recorded the most number of volunteer hours in the history of the project this year, with hundreds of dedicated volunteers helping to remove Himalayan balsam at sites across the Forest. Archaeology volunteers have been carrying out field surveys and visiting the National Archives in London. Volunteers have been trained at the Winchester Historic Records Office to continue work on the Historic Routes and Past Pathways project. Volunteer Newsletters were sent out in June and September and continue to have a high level of engagement and interaction from volunteers. We continued to recruit volunteers and have planned our practical conservation work programme until the end of 2017.		
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>We attended the West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group AGM with a stall about the National Park.</p> <p>We delivered training to 25 New Forest NHS 'care navigators' about where and how people in their service can safely access and benefit from the National Park.</p> <p>We have completed the Wild Play toolkit and successfully delivered the summer Wild Play event with over 500 people attending.</p>		

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Deliver the OPOF ranger Apprentice scheme in partnership with other Forest ranger teams and education providers. EW8	Gillie Molland	Two apprentice rangers were recruited from 64 applicants and will start on 10 October. They will spend 3 weeks meeting partners and acquainting themselves with the Forest before starting their first placement with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust at the beginning of November.		
Continue the development of the PEDALL project, securing external funding and recruiting volunteers and deliver cycling sessions for participants EP4	Donna Neseiyif	We have successfully recruited a part-time Project Manager, Donna Neseiyif, and full time Ride Leader, Gareth Jones. We are working with project partners and are delivering 6 week progressive courses to local schools. We are also providing regular introductory and led rides for individuals and groups.		
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	Rangers delivered 28 sessions to 589 15-17 year old National Citizenship Service participants over the six-week holidays, helping them to enjoy and understand some of the special qualities of the National Park. From feedback evaluation, 88% agreed that they enjoyed the sessions with 82% feeling they now understand more about the National Park. We received £7,000 for our services. Sessions continue to be delivered to Brockenhurst College students, who have been encouraged to undertake the John Muir Award, and young people from the Princes Trust.		

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	<p>After a very successful ground nesting bird awareness engagement period speaking with over 3,000 people, our two seasonal rangers moved to engaging with Camping in the Forest visitors. They delivered 57 sessions over a period of 10 weeks at eight campsites, engaging with 1,764 people. The dusk walks proved particularly popular with numbers attending often between 50 and 70. The programme supported the New Forest Trust by collecting donations for the activities and including them in promotional material.</p> <p>Partnership events with Forestry Commission, Wildlife Trust and Natural England continued this summer including Date With Nature at the Reptile Centre, Wild Wednesdays, Fun in the Forest and Marine Wonders at Lepe Country Park.</p> <p>The mobile information unit went to 23 events including Sway Carnival, Burley Show, Avon Tyrrell Big Bike Bash and the New Forest Marathon.</p>		
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	<p>After capturing over 8,000 still images at the New Forest Show the animation team have now finished the animated film about the Charter of the Forest in the New Forest. This will be on show during our temporary exhibition at the New Forest Centre 14/10/2017 to 14/01/2018 and released via our YouTube channel.</p> <p>Work continues on the temporary exhibition at the New Forest Centre where we are also working with three artists to show elements of their work from this year's Arts Festival. This includes the Travelling Tree of Life, Dendrology - Writers in the observatory, and Den Building - Willow, woodcraft and wikiups.</p>		

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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	This is to be done in the next quarter, and will be the subject of a paper to RAPC in November and to the Authority in January 2018		
<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 Walking Festival (14 - 29 October) is being promoted and will see 70 walks with experts. We launched the Open Art competition and exhibition with the New Forest Centre, followed by an exhibition on the Tree Charter which brought together elements created by people taking part in the Arts Festival. Working with National Parks UK, we launched an Accord with Public Health England to establish a 'natural health service' of projects to improve people's health and wellbeing and a partnership with outdoor apparel company Columbia.</p> <p>Working with the Animal Accidents Reduction Group of organisations and the Shared Forest group of commoners, we are launching a campaign to reduce the number of animals killed and injured in the winter nights after the clocks go back. This will involve the police mobile speed van, temporary road signs, a media launch and social media campaign #add3minutes.</p> <p>Plans are in place for a Green Halo partnership conference on 22 November at Ordnance Survey HQ, inviting businesses and organisations to consider how to protect and enhance the natural capital of the national park and surrounding area.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
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	Sue Palma	<p>529 pupils from 14 school groups booked sessions with the Education Team during this quarter, ranging from university groups studying Countryside Management and Rural Tourism, to Key Stage 2 pupils investigating National Parks and Coastal Processes.</p> <p>The team has worked with New Forest Marque to develop a school assembly about the importance of local produce (good for you, and good for the Forest), with the option of cookery lessons involving local food. The assembly is based on the story of Red Riding Hood and has been popular with schools, with 1,037 children from 6 schools having learnt the catch phrase "Know where it's grown, not far from home" in the 4 weeks since the new school term began.</p>		
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>Ten students aged 15 or 16 from local secondary schools carried out their first work experience during July. This is the greatest number of students which the Authority has accepted; we have earned a reputation as an organisation which ensures the young people have a successful experience, so demand for places is growing each year.</p> <p>A university student who completed a 3-month placement with the Authority last year returned as a volunteer for the month Ten students aged 15 or 16 from local secondary schools carried out their first work experience during July. This is the greatest number of students which the Authority has accepted; we have earned a reputation as an organisation which ensures the young people have a successful experience, so demand for of July.</p> <p>The New Forest Curriculum website is ready for uploading to the new system.</p>		

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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	We delivered a successful Wild Play Day in August attracting over 400 people to enjoy and learn about the National Park. Feedback in the form of a questionnaire reveals a huge appetite and enthusiasm from local and visiting families for this type of event.		

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	The ‘call for views’ consultation to inform an update of the New Forest National Park Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030 (RMS) attracted over 1,500 responses and over 7,000 comments. We had been asked to lead on this by the RMS Steering Group (Forestry Commission, Natural England, Verderers, Hampshire County Council, NPA and New Forest District Council). Work to analyse the comments is ongoing and a public report on what people said is being prepared.		Whilst the consultation went well, the task of agreeing new actions for the RMS will require strong leadership and joint commitment within the Steering Group, and carefully considered responses to the issues raised by the public.
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	<p>The number of animal road traffic incidents is roughly the same as this time last year. Accident rates invariably go up when the clocks change and more people travel home in the dark so with HCC, the Verderers and the CDA, we are using some new eye-catching temporary signs at the start of high risk routes. We have also checked and commented on HCC proposals for refreshed signage around the Burley area.</p> <p>The NPA is a founding member of the Shared Forest Business Group, a new scheme led by the CDA as part of the OPOF project, launched at the New Forest Show. This means we have signed up to a charter which lists 10 things we agree to do to reduce animal accidents, e.g. raising awareness of the risks through staff induction procedures, on our vehicles and website.</p> <p>There were four cycle events with 200+ participants during the quarter. Two of these were organised by UK Cycling Events and they trialled the use of rear numbers at both. They also attended a Sway Parish Council meeting, changed a feed-stop venue in response to local concerns in the NW of the Forest and released cyclists at a lower rate than in the past.</p> <p>We helped the Forestry Commission to update fungi-picking posters and leaflets for the autumn season.</p>		Comments received through the recreation consultation show a high degree of concern about these issues, but there are no ‘magic wands’. We will always look for new and more effective ways to achieve success and work with other organisations to ensure a proportionate and meaningful response.

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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 4 September and discussed progress with the Recreation Management Strategy and the National Park Partnership Plan. They finalised a response to the House of Lords select committee on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 – the act of Parliament which created Natural England. The Forum is looking to proactively explore three areas of work in detail over the next year, including education, health and wellbeing and signage/ease of navigation.		