



New Forest National Park Authority BUSINESS PLAN 2011-2015



Welcome

Welcome to the New Forest National Park Authority's Business Plan for 2011-2015. It sets out a simple framework for the work of the Authority over the next four years, complemented by a more detailed operational plan showing specific activities, which will be updated each year. It aims to provide a helpful guide to our work and a reference for partners, the public and the organisation itself.

The plan introduces the Authority's three central programmes of work going forward - Protect, Enjoy and Prosper. These encompass our overall aims for the National Park and clearly reflect our statutory purposes and duty.

Within each programme a series of priorities will direct our resources and provide the main focus for our work over the next four years, the period of the Government's budget settlement. These priorities have been derived from the National Park Management Plan, published in 2010. As examples, they range from strengthening local distinctiveness within the Park, to providing educational opportunities for young people and seeking new ways to support a sustainable local economy. A major challenge over this period will be to continue to deliver positive benefits for the Forest within reduced means.

A number of measures have been included to help us gauge how well we are achieving our priorities overall, while the annual operational plan gives more information about particular projects. The framework of the Business Plan and operational plan will allow new initiatives to be added as opportunities arise over the period. In addition we will continue to deliver and improve upon the core services that form a large

part of our work, always aiming to provide the highest level of service.

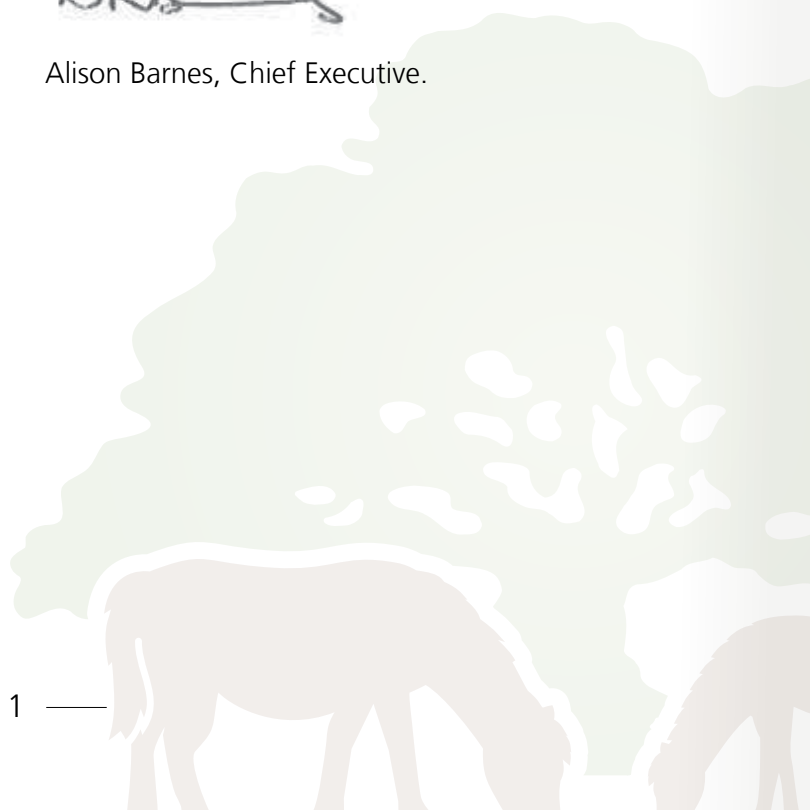
The business plan and its priorities place a particular emphasis on two key themes: working closely with the local communities within the Park, and delivering with partners 'on the ground'. We are looking forward to a new chapter in our work, where we build strong relationships with the many interests and communities of the Forest, enabling us to work together effectively for the benefit of this special place.



Julian Johnson, Chairman



Alison Barnes, Chief Executive.



About the National Park Authority

The National Park Authority was established in April 2005 and took on its full statutory powers and responsibilities in April 2006. It seeks to act as a champion for the qualities that make the New Forest a special place, focusing on achieving the two National Park purposes:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

National Park Authorities also have a duty, in taking forward the purposes, to:

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

The National Park Management Plan was published in 2010 setting out 10 long-term objectives for the Park, based on extensive consultation with our partners, local communities and interest groups. We are committed to working closely with the many other organisations and interests in the National Park to deliver the Vision and objectives of the Management Plan.

Our members have overall responsibility for making decisions, setting the direction for the organisation and ensuring objectives are achieved through the effective use of resources. The members act in the interests of the National Park as a whole, representing both the local and national perspective. The membership and committee structure of the Authority are shown in Appendices 1 and 2.



Explorer van at the Greener Living Show 2011.



Vision

All our work is designed to help achieve the long-term Vision for the National Park, agreed in the National Park Management Plan. The essential themes of the Vision are:

The New Forest National Park will be:

- a living landscape that remains unique and immediately recognisable
- a natural and historic environment of the highest quality
- a place that is inspirational, enjoyed and valued by all
- a home to communities that are vibrant, dynamic and truly sustainable
- a world class National Park where people work together to meet the challenges of the 21st century

Programmes of work

We will work towards achieving the Vision for the Park through three main programmes of work that reflect the National Park purposes and duty. These programmes and their outcomes, set out below, will provide the focus for all our future work and will ensure that there are clear and common goals across the organisation.

■ **Protect**

We will work to ensure that

the qualities that make the National Park a unique and special place are strengthened and made more resilient, bringing benefits for both people and wildlife

■ **Enjoy**

We will work to champion

the National Park as a place of inspiration, where everyone is able to enjoy, understand and value its special qualities

■ **Prosper**

We will work to support

a way of life in the National Park that continues to centre around strong and distinctive communities with a clear cultural identity and a vibrant local economy



Community information point, Emery Down.

Aiming for excellence

In all our work we will seek to provide the highest quality of service for local people and visitors and work closely with organisations and communities in championing the National Park. In drafting this Business Plan we aim to include joint initiatives and to reflect and support the priority work of partner organisations. We will continue to develop strong and effective partnership working throughout the lifetime of this plan.

Within the organisation itself we will encourage ways of working that bring us together as a high performing team. The aim will be to achieve a smooth running organisation where everyone contributes in different ways to our priorities and continually aims to improve our efficiency and capacity to deliver. As part of this we will actively promote our core values of enthusiasm, achievement, integrity, openness, teamwork and care.

The Authority will give particular emphasis to the following ways of working that will underlie and support the delivery of all three work programmes:

- Working with and through local communities
- Strong collaboration with partner organisations
- Inclusion of a diverse range of people, especially the younger generation
- Openness, transparency and good governance in all our work
- Effective communication
- Improving knowledge and evidence about the Park
- Strong customer focus and value for money
- Securing external funding for Forest projects

Activities enabling these to be achieved will be included in more detail in the annual operational plan.

Tracking Progress

We will monitor and measure performance against this plan using a structured performance management framework.

Every quarter progress reports against each programme will identify achievements and actions still required to meet the priorities set out in this business plan. In this way performance and achievement will be actively managed by both officers and members of the Authority.



Interpretation Officer with participants of Bioblitz event, Lepe.

The Business Plan at a glance

Protect	Enjoy	Prosper
Our priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhancing the Forest's landscapes and habitats 	Our priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enabling high quality experiences of the National Park 	Our priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting a distinctive local economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieving excellence in development and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving understanding of the special qualities of the National Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving affordable housing provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conserving strong local distinctiveness and the character of the historic environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreeing positive recreation management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting sustainable transport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraging environmentally sustainable land management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leading on education about the New Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraging sustainable living
Aiming for Excellence		
In all we do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ seeking to provide the highest quality of service ▪ working closely with others in championing the National Park ▪ achieving an efficient and high performing organisation 		



Priorities for Protect

1 Enhancing the Forest's landscapes and habitats

We will help to improve the large-scale landscapes and habitats that are characteristic of the New Forest, by:

- prioritising the areas where action is most needed to ensure the integrity and quality of the landscape and biodiversity of the Park
- protecting landscape quality through the planning system
- supporting Natural England and local landowners / occupiers in restoring and continuing to maintain the quality of locally, nationally and internationally important wildlife sites
- working with the Forestry Commission, the Verderers, commoners and other partners in planning and delivering long-term management of the Open Forest

As measures of success, we will:

- Help to deliver at least two large-scale landscape or biodiversity enhancement projects that provide connection and resilience for the Forest
- Complete a Landscape and Biodiversity Action Plan for the National Park, supported by a broad partnership to enable the delivery of specific actions
- Agree a framework for identifying gaps in our knowledge about the historic and cultural landscape

2 Achieving excellence in development and planning

We will seek the highest quality of new development within and around the National Park and minimise any impacts on its special qualities, by:

- providing clear planning policies and a high quality planning service
- working closely with neighbouring authorities in the development of planning policies and proposals that may affect the National Park
- increasing knowledge and factual evidence about changes to the special qualities of the National Park
- supporting the delivery of green infrastructure plans, both within and outside the National Park to reduce pressure on the most sensitive areas

As measures of success, we will:

- Produce supplementary planning documents and guidance notes as an aid to residents and developers, covering design guidance, recreational horse keeping, boundary treatments and open space standards
- Ensure all Core Strategies and other relevant planning policy documents adopted for neighbouring areas reflect the special qualities of the National Park
- Establish condition indicators and a system of data collection to monitor the special qualities of the Park



Drift, Burley Rocks

3 Conserving strong local distinctiveness and the character of the historic environment

We will support communities, businesses and residents in conserving the many features that contribute to the local distinctiveness of their area, by:

- enabling local people to safeguard and promote the character of their area, including support for local traditional building and craft skills
- developing Forest-wide initiatives of interest to local communities, including those that record or celebrate features of value
- providing advice and resources for specific community-led projects that maintain or add to local distinctiveness
- continuing to improve our knowledge of the history and archaeology of the National Park, increasing public awareness of its importance

As measures of success, we will:

- Support at least eight local communities in producing a Village Design Statement for their area
- Help in the design and successful implementation of at least five projects to conserve local distinctiveness involving communities in the Park
- Support 20 local businesses in developing skills in conservation building

4 Encouraging environmentally sustainable land management

We will work with land managers and private estates to encourage environmentally friendly farming, commoning and woodland management, by:

- developing the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme and other initiatives that will enhance the landscape of the National Park and support the commoning community
- offering support, advice and training to local landowners, commoners and private land managers in the National Park and adjoining areas through the New Forest Land Advice Service

As measures of success, we will:

- Help at least 150 land managers to seek or renew funding for environmental enhancements on their land
- Deliver good quality land management advice to at least 400 land managers on their holdings
- Work with our partners to support at least 25 young commoners in their commoning activities



Priorities for Enjoy

1 Enabling high quality experiences of the National Park

We will add to people's experience and enjoyment of the National Park through better access, information and interpretation, by:

- identifying a network of core routes within and around the National Park, working with land managers, highway authorities and user groups
- continuing to facilitate the work of the New Forest Access Forum in advising on all aspects of access, providing advice and resources for specific local projects that improve public access
- developing projects that enable people with particular needs to experience the New Forest at first-hand
- working with partners and local businesses to improve visitor facilities within and around the National Park
- encouraging people to volunteer their time and skills in ways which benefit the New Forest

As measures of success, we will:

- Assess a potential network of core routes, involving all local interests
- Enable the delivery of at least five access improvement projects annually
- Establish at least four major volunteer initiatives and an annual event to promote volunteering in the Forest

2 Improving understanding of the special qualities of the National Park

We will help to further people's understanding of the special qualities of the Park, by:

- expanding the Authority's public events programme and face-to-face communication through the ranger service
- continuing to develop public awareness campaigns with partner organisations on issues such as litter, feeding of ponies, disturbance of ground nesting birds and animal accidents
- supporting the New Forest Centre and other key visitor locations in reaching a wider audience and providing innovative interpretation and information

As measures of success, we will:

- Arrange or support a series of awareness-raising events each year, in partnership with other organisations, reaching at least 8,000 local people and visitors
- Work with partners to achieve a year-on-year reduction in the number of fatalities to commoners stock as a result of traffic accidents
- Increase the number of visits made to the New Forest Centre's museum by 50% (30,000 people each year)



Cyclists, Bank

3 Agreeing positive recreation management

We will work closely with land managers, local residents and user groups to agree positive recreation management, by:

- bringing together all interested stakeholders to agree the direction for recreation management
- undertaking and supporting further research to clarify the trends and impacts of recreation locally
- helping local communities to design and implement practical recreation projects

As measures of success, we will:

- Commission joint visitor survey work with the Forestry Commission, New Forest District Council and other partners to inform recreation management
- Facilitate at least four meetings of the Recreation Management Strategy Working Group to agree and take forward priority work for positive recreation management
- Support at least four new community-based recreation initiatives

4 Leading on education about the New Forest

We will provide and support educational activities that, in particular, involve and engage young people, by:

- developing educational programmes that link the special qualities of the New Forest with school, college and university curricula
- leading outdoor educational visits for schools, colleges and groups at key locations within the National Park
- co-ordinating educational activities in the National Park through the New Forest Educators Forum
- expanding the range of informal learning activities, for all ages, including developing mechanisms for skills and knowledge transfer for the benefit of the Forest

As measures of success, we will:

- Ensure 50% of local schools feature the National Park in their curriculum
- Reach at least 4,000 school pupils annually through direct contact with National Park Authority staff
- Co-ordinate at least one major National Park-wide education/skills exchange project every year involving the New Forest Educators Forum and other partners



Priorities for Prosper

1 Supporting a distinctive local economy

We will encourage a strong and distinctive local economy that benefits the communities of the National Park, by:

- actively participating in a partnership approach to sustaining the economy of the area through championing the rural economy of the New Forest
- providing support for local producers, particularly members of the New Forest Marque, focusing on enabling long-term business success through high quality products, promotion, marketing and access to local outlets
- strengthening the New Forest's role at the forefront of sustainable tourism
- supporting the police and other partners in tackling rural crime that affects local businesses, communities and individuals

As measures of success, we will:

- Fully engage with other partners in the Local Enterprise Partnerships relevant to the National Park
- Support New Forest Produce Ltd in increasing membership of the New Forest Marque and developing a long term development plan for the scheme
- Develop a programme that offers sustainable short breaks for visitors, focused on the special qualities of the National Park

2 Improving affordable housing provision

We will help improve affordable housing provision for local people, by:

- working closely with rural housing enablers, local communities, housing authorities, landowners and registered housing providers to identify sites and prioritise the delivery of affordable housing schemes in the National Park
- continuing to implement the Commoners Housing Scheme for the benefit of commoning in the National Park
- providing additional resources where necessary to aid high quality design of new housing
- maximising the proportion of affordable housing gained through the planning process

As measures of success, we will:

- Provide specialist advice and support to ensure all new affordable housing schemes are of the highest quality in terms of design and sustainability
- Work with the Rural Housing Enablers to produce at least three detailed housing needs surveys for parishes within the National Park
- Ensure that, wherever possible, affordable housing comprises 50% of new housing development in the main villages



New Forest Tour bus

3 Promoting sustainable transport

We will promote sustainable transport for the benefit of residents and visitors, by:

- working with other authorities in the National Park to develop a joint vision for sustainable transport
- supporting the operation and further development of the New Forest Tour
- developing a range of opportunities for safe and responsible cycling
- working with partners to assess the feasibility of new forms of transport such as electric and eco vehicles

As measures of success, we will:

- Increase the number of journeys made on the New Forest Tour by 100% (currently 18,000 annually)
- Establish at least 20 public charging points for electric vehicles
- Work with Hampshire County Council and other stakeholders to review and update the New Forest Transport Strategy and identify joint projects for delivery

4 Encouraging sustainable living

We will support new local initiatives that create more self-sufficient and resilient communities, by:

- providing advice and resources for specific projects that incorporate energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation or re-use / recycling
- promoting sustainable living and good environmental practice to residents and businesses
- supporting the sharing of innovative ideas and local action through New Forest Transition and Sustainable Development Fund partners
- showing leadership in reducing the carbon footprint of the National Park

As measures of success, we will:

- Provide support for 40 new community projects that improve local sustainability
- Establish a renewable energy project to provide advice and training to at least eight local organisations in the initial year
- Reduce the carbon footprint of the National Park Authority by at least 10%

Appendix 1

National Park Authority members

There are 22 members of the New Forest National Park Authority. They are responsible for setting policies and priorities and ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources. It is their job to make decisions in the interests of the National Park as a whole, and to represent the Park in the public arena.

Twelve members are appointed by our constituent local authorities. A further six are appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to represent the national interest of the Park, while four are elected by the parish and town councils, and agreed by the Secretary of State, to represent local community interests.

County and district council members:

Tony Gentle, David Harrison, Edward Heron, Maureen Holding, Penny Jackman, Julian Johnson, Keith Mans, Leo Randall, Alan Rice, Barry Rickman, Alan Weeks, Pat Wyeth.

Secretary of State national appointees:

Peter Frost, Roger Heape, Ted Johnson, Vicky Myers, John Pemberton, one vacancy.

Parish members:

Clive Maton, Bob Morris, John Sanger, Richard Frampton.

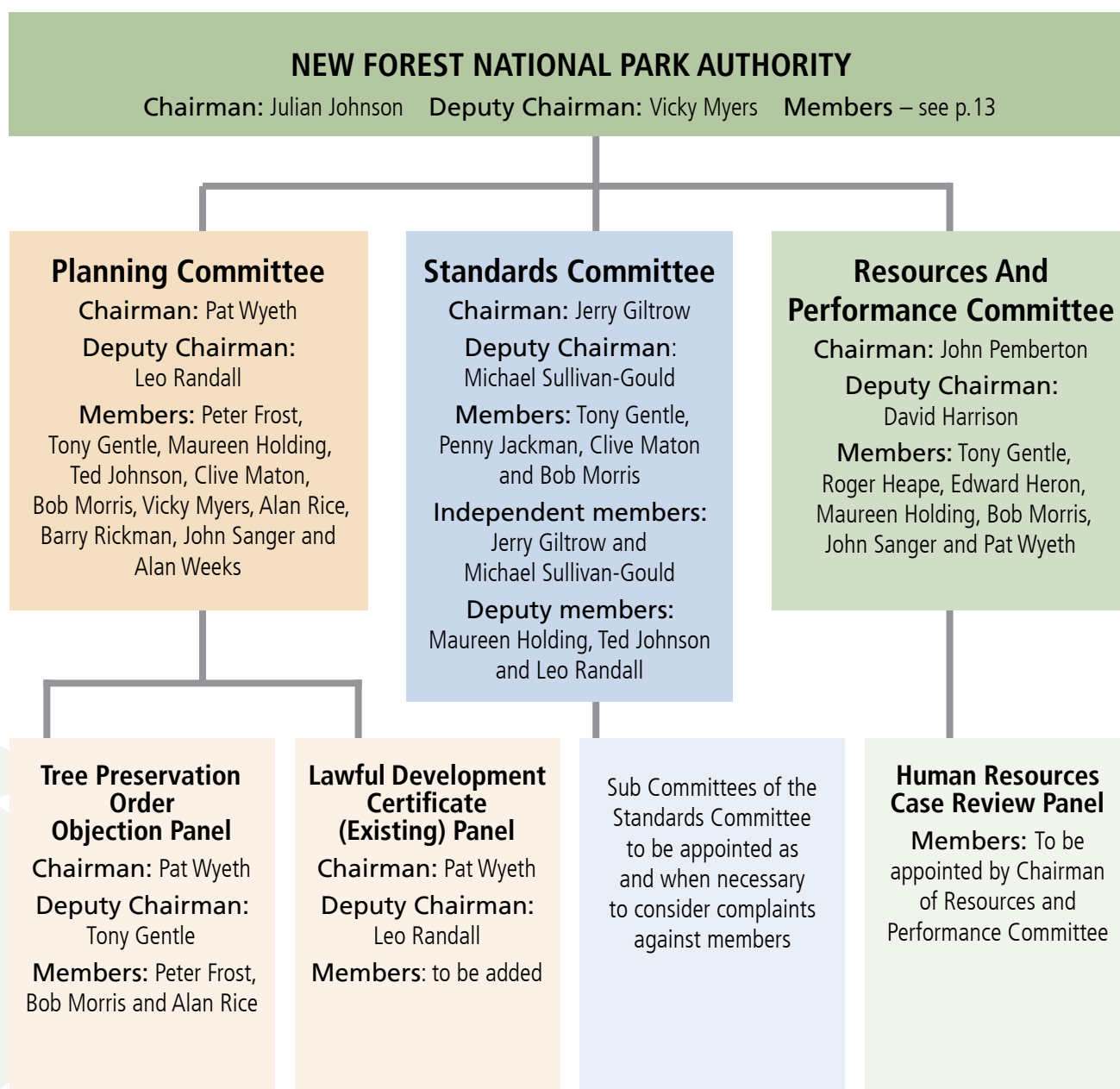
Biographies and photographs of members can be found on the Authority's website at

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/index/aboutus/members.htm



Appendix 2

Committee Structure



Appendix 3

Relationship between the business plan priorities and the National Park Management Plan

Business plan priority	Helps to deliver Management Plan objective / action
Protect	
Enhancing the Forest's landscapes and habitats	Objective 2, Objective 1, Objective 4, Objective 5 Actions: LH2, LH3, LH6, LD3, TR3, CC1, CC6
Achieving excellence in development and planning	Objective 1, Objective 2 Actions: LD4, LH1, LH5, LH6, CC2
Conserving strong local distinctiveness and the character of the historic environment	Objective 1, Objective 2, Objective 8, Objective 9 Actions: LD2, LD5, LH2, LH6, LC4
Encouraging environmentally sustainable land management	Objective 3, Objective 2 Actions: LM1, LM2, LH4, LH6
Enjoy	
Enabling high quality experiences of the National Park	Objective 7, Objective 6, Objective 10 Actions: US3, EN2, TT5
Improving understanding of the special qualities of the National Park	Objective 6, Objective 10 Actions: US1, US2, US5, EN6, TT1
Agreeing positive recreation management	Objective 7, Objective 8, Objective 2 Actions: EN1, EN5, LC4, LH1, LH2
Leading on education about the New Forest	Objective 6, Objective 7 Actions: US6, EN3
Prosper	
Supporting a distinctive local economy	Objective 9, Objective 3 Actions: EW3, EW8, LM5, LM6
Improving affordable housing provision	Objective 8 Actions: LM3, LC3
Promoting sustainable transport	Objective 10 Actions: TT4, TT5
Encouraging sustainable living	Objective 4, Objective 8, Objective 9 Actions: CC5, LC4, EW4, EW6