

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

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

Prosper

We will foster the National Park's social and economic wellbeing.

Prosper Priority 1: Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy

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

- championing the local rural economy with Local Enterprise Partnerships and national and European funders
- enabling long-term success of local producers through high quality products, promotion, events and access to local outlets
- playing an active role in the New Forest Business Partnership and New Forest Tourism Association
- encouraging land based businesses to develop opportunities for positive management of the landscape.

Action/Outcome	Team	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Through the New Forest Destination Partnership, encourage tourism businesses to improve their overall sustainability, communicate 'caring for' messages to visitors and encourage car-free visits. EW9	Mark Holroyd	We continue to develop our relationship with GoNewForest, exploring opportunities to streamline publications to avoid potential duplication. We have worked with GoNewForest to encourage the Tourism Industry to engage fully in the Future Forest consultation process. We published our car-free calendar map pads for hotel rooms which have been very well received by businesses and guests, and supported entirely by advertising-revenue. The maps show the best ways to use seasonal bus services to reach key attractions.		
Work with the New Forest Trust and New Forest Tourism Association to increase participation in and income to the 'Love the Forest' Visitor Giving Scheme.	Andy Brennan / Paul Walton	Businesses currently in the scheme continue to be supported but planned recruitment of new businesses was curtailed as staff resources were diverted to establish the inclusive cycling project 'happy, healthy, active', following the award of £297k towards the project by the Big Lottery in May.		Work to recruit new businesses to the scheme will take place from October onwards which will also coincide with a quieter period for businesses.
Work with the Brand New Forest Broadband Development Group to facilitate the roll out of Superfast broadband services across the New Forest. Support schemes for "hard-to-reach" communities that are not included in the roll out programme. EW7	Paul Walton	400 properties in East Boldre, Burley, South Gorley and Brockenhurst due to be connected to superfast broadband as part of the programme roll out in this quarter.		

Action/Outcome	Team	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Develop the role of the National Park as a driver of the local economy, supporting the New Forest Marque and developing Protected Food Name status for products associated with the New Forest. EW5	Paul Walton	The New Forest Marque launched a new website in May. Membership is currently 147 with 10 new members recruited in the quarter. The Marque manager joined with New Forest Land Advice Service to deliver training courses to 12 businesses as part of the OPOF programme. The National Park was one of 56 exhibitors at the 3 rd New Forest Expo.		
Work with partners to explore opportunities to develop joint, strategic bids to benefit the National Park and deliver the Partnership Plan. Work with the Local Enterprise Partnerships, LEADER Local Action Group and New Forest Business Partnership, deliver investment in the forestry and food sectors of the local economy. EW2, EW3	Paul Walton	Work is underway to examine the opportunities presented by the RDPE Growth Programme which has funds available for Business development, Food processing and Tourism Infrastructure. Expressions of Interest need to be submitted by Jan 2018.		
Working in close liaison with Burley Parish Council, progress proposals for two new affordable homes and a new heritage centre on land to the rear of Park Lodge, Burley. To include completing on the acquisition of the land and the submission of a detailed planning application.	Steve Avery	It has taken longer than expected to complete agreement of the draft lease of the land but all of the vendor's outstanding queries have now been settled.		To agree a single point of contact with those representing the landowner.
Work with New Forest District Council, parish councils and other partner organisations to identify suitable sites for affordable housing and promote new schemes designed for local people which are of high quality and sustainability, and are in keeping with the character of the area. LC5, LC6	Steve Avery	Officers continue to work closely with the New Forest District Council's Housing Development & Strategy Officer and local parish councils in identifying suitable sites to bring forward. The Council has produced a draft Housing Strategy and our input has been sought as a key partner. Holger Schiller is now our representative on HARA.		

Prosper Priority 2: Promoting sustainable transport

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

- working with highway authorities to improve the network of sustainable transport options available
- supporting tourism businesses to encourage existing visitors to travel to and around the National Park by sustainable transport
- working with transport operators to sustain existing bus services, and grow use of the New Forest Tour and Beach Bus
- working with partner authorities to improve aesthetics and safety of the highway network.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Promote and enable the three New Forest Tour routes and the Beach Bus to maintain overall passenger journey numbers (2016 total: 46,000). TT8	Mark Holroyd	Final preparations were made for the New Forest Tour and the Beach Bus. The New Forest Tour season has been reduced by two weeks (starting on 8 July) to cover operational demands elsewhere in the bus network; we anticipate a slight decrease in overall passenger numbers this year as a result.		
Operate the New Forest Travel Concierge service at Brockenhurst Rail Station and the New Forest Centre, Lyndhurst throughout the summer to welcome visitors, tell them about the special qualities of the National Park and help them to explore car-free. SQ1, TT8	Mark Holroyd	Three seasonal staff have now been recruited to deliver these services in Q2. The services commence operation on 8 July.		
Work with key partners (HCC, transport operators and tourism businesses) to build on previously successful projects to increase the range and scope of sustainable transport opportunities in the National Park, and to work with Highway Authorities to improve the safety and aesthetics of the highway network. TT9, TT11, TT2, TT10	Mark Holroyd	We have been engaging with Hampshire County Council around a number of small schemes, including to improve safety in Bramshaw and the reduction of animal accidents in the Brockenhurst area. We hosted a visit by Transport Officers from across England's National Parks where we discussed ways to improve our national engagement with Highways England and Network Rail.		

Prosper Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable communities

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

- supporting specific projects that incorporate business opportunities, renewable energy and efficient use of resources.
- promoting sustainable living and good environmental practice to residents and businesses
- supporting the sharing of innovative ideas through grassroots local action groups and Sustainable Communities Fund partners.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Support current beneficiaries of the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) and deliver the new SCF programme for 2017-18. LC10	Fiona Wynne	Funds of £30,000 have been transferred to Our Past, Our Future: New Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme 2016-20 as part of the four year commitment to the Nature Stepping Stone's project. So far the funds have helped to enhance 23.68 hectares of grassland and heathland at six Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.		
Support the uptake of the EM3 Woodfuel Productivity programme, working with FC and local partners to increase woodland management and develop woodfuel markets. LM5,LM6,	Paul Walton	Work is ongoing with the Forestry Commission to generate interest in woodfuel hubs, woodfuel use and secondary processing and encourage applications to the EM3 Woodfuel grant programme. Contacts with woodland owners and potential heat users are establishing likely level of investment and level of support needed. The initial response from these sectors suggest a general unwillingness to invest in woodfuel installations at this time.		Work will continue to develop a network of woodland owners and woodfuel suppliers but there is a high risk that the EM3 grant funding will not be taken up in the New Forest area.