

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

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

Protect

We will endeavour to ensure the qualities that make the National Park a unique and special place are conserved, enhanced and resilient.

Protect Priority 1: Enhancing the New Forest's landscapes and habitats

We will work with land managers, land owners and commoners to enhance the New Forest's landscapes and wildlife habitats, by:

- giving clear advice and guidance, using the Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Action Plan and tranquillity mapping
- developing and delivering projects which restore, enhance and maintain important wildlife sites
- offering support, advice and training
- working with partners to enhance the New Forest at a 'landscape scale'.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Enhance important wildlife sites with active management delivered through 3 OPOF projects: Working Woodlands, Better Boundaries and Nature's Stepping Stones. The NPA leads on this work with projects delivered through the NFLAS. Targets are to have 10 SINCs, 1200m of hedgerow and 40ha of woodland under active management. LH1, LH3, LM5	Julie Melin-Stubbs	This quarter has focused on survey, monitoring, finding new sites, liaising with landowners and planning for the next winter season. This is because it is bird breeding season and so we are very limited in the amount of practical work that can be carried out.		
Provide a programme of land management support, advice and training for 100 landowners, farmers and commoners. LM1, LM2	Julie Melin-Stubbs	A very busy quarter for Rhys Morgan (Land Advice Service Advisor) who has worked with over 70 individual commoners to support them with their Basic Payment Scheme applications. We have delivered seven courses for farmers, commoners and landowners this quarter; 2 x Safe Use of Pesticides, 2 x chainsaw, tree safety and surveying, cattle breeding and management, first aid for forestry. A total of 70 people attended the courses.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>With partners, facilitate the delivery of landscape scale enhancement, habitat restoration and river catchment enhancement through key schemes: the Verderers HLS Scheme, New Forest Catchment Partnership and New Forest and Solent SPA (Special Protection Area) Forums.</p> <p>Outcomes include: providing advice to the Forestry Commission on the delivery of the programme of wetland restoration and habitat management to enhance the SAC.</p> <p>Review opportunities to mitigate the impacts of new development on the SPA's</p> <p>Support measures to engage the public in activity aimed at reducing diffuse pollution and enhancing "flagship" ponds. LH4, LH6, LH7, LH8</p>	<p>Ian Barker</p>	<p><u>Verderers HLS Scheme</u> – The period saw implementation of a programme of restoration and enhancement work by the Forestry Commission including monitoring. Site visits to assess small – scale projects for future restoration planned for Q2. Changes to agri-environment funding in the future which could represent both threats and opportunities for landscape scale restoration across the whole of the National Park are being considered as part of other work coordinated by the Authority.</p> <p><u>New Forest Catchment Partnership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our co-hosting role of the Catchment Partnership with the Freshwater Habitats Trust has been confirmed to continue in 2017/18. A grant of £15,000 from the Environment Agency has been secured to support this work during this financial year. In addition the Authority has worked with the Environment Agency during the period in respect of potential flooding issues in Brockenhurst. A community-led bid to Defra for associated work was not successful. ▪ The delivery of activity as part of the 'Living Waters' project of OPOF is proceeding successfully. Further external funding of £3,000 has been secured from the Environment Agency. The project has exceeded its target for match and external funding. A Partnership newsletter was distributed and a programme of activities planned for New Forest Water Month in July. ▪ A New Forest Water Conference is planned for 28 September, invites have been circulated and the event publicised locally. 	<p style="background-color: #92d050;"></p>	

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		<p><u>New Forest and Solent Special Protection Areas (SPA)</u></p> <p>We supported meetings with NFDC, the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership as well as the Authority's own Mitigation scheme. Several are in review due to the need to mitigate the increased development pressure and ensure in-perpetuity delivery of mitigation. Public consultation is programmed as part of Local Plans and associated processes. We continue to assist NFDC by providing the Ranger service under contract for their GreenWay project.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>Implement actions from the Landscape Action Plan. The priorities are to reduce impacts from noise, visual disturbance and lighting on the tranquillity of the National Park. Targets include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with National Grid to progress proposals for undergrounding power lines at Hale Purlieu. Develop a “pipeline” of projects for Landscape Enhancement Initiative funding, aiming to submit 2 projects a year to the scheme. Maintain dialogue with the MoD and CAA to identify ways of reducing the impact of low flying across the National Park. <p>LH6, ST1, ST2, ST3, ST4</p>	Sarah Kelly	<p>A joint site visit took place at the western end of the power line at Hale Purlieu with National Grid, National Trust and Natural England to explore potential route options for undergrounding, avoiding the bog and mire where possible. Expertise and detailed local knowledge was offered by all the participants.</p> <p>A site meeting took place at Landford Bog with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to ascertain if the LEI fund could be helpful to improve access and management of the site with a view to making an application for LEI funding later in the year.</p> <p>It was agreed with Natural England that a meeting with MOD would be secured to discuss low flying helicopter training in the New Forest, in particular impact on protected bird populations and disturbance.</p>		
Engage specialist staff (NPA and key partners) on the impact of climate change, identifying risks and future actions to inform a climate change adaptation plan for the National Park. CC4	Andy Brennan	No action planned for this quarter, to be completed in Q3 & Q4 once the inclusive cycling project has been handed over to the new manager.		
<p>Work with partners to secure the post-EU exit policies for land management that enable farmers and land managers to enhance the natural capital of the National Park.</p> <p>Work with local stakeholders to agree key outcomes and champion the needs of the National Park collectively to Defra, Ministers and National Parks England.</p>	Paul Walton	The focus this quarter has been the preparation of a paper putting the case for a bespoke and locally led scheme of payments for public benefits for the New Forest to be put in place post 2020. A group comprising of the CDA, NFU, Verderers, NFLAS, CLA and the NPA collectively set out the benefits delivered by the New Forest commoners and farmers and the strength of the local partnership working. The paper was presented to Lord Gardiner at the New Forest Show		

Protect Priority 2: Ensuring new development is sympathetic and in keeping with its surroundings

We will seek the highest quality of development in the New Forest to minimise impacts on its special qualities and deliver enhancements by:

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

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>Work with partners to develop a strategic approach to the management of natural capital and provision of ecosystem services within the National Park and surrounding "Green Halo".</p> <p>Establish and support the work of a cross-sectoral Green Halo Partnership which will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coordinate the delivery of a programme of projects and activity, supported by Partnership members, aimed at enhancing the Green Halo ▪ seek additional resources to support the Green Halo work <p>LM3, LH11</p>	Paul Walton	<p>The Green Halo Steering Group met twice during the quarter, continuing to demonstrate cross-sectoral working with representation from local authorities beyond the National Park boundary, two Local Economic Partnerships and private sector involvement. Work is progressing towards a launch of the Green Halo Partnership later in the year.</p> <p>Natural England has committed staff resource (0.5fte) to the Green Halo work and Group members have contributed staff time to developing projects and preparation of a Partnership prospectus.</p>		
<p>Progress the review of our adopted Core Strategy (2010), taking into account the representations received following publication of the first consultation draft last year. Include a further round of public consultation on a revised (Submission) draft Local Plan in Autumn 2017 and thereafter onward submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination.</p>	David Illsley	<p>Following updated advice from Natural England, the Authority ran a 6-week public consultation on alternative housing sites, which commenced in mid-June 2017. The results will feed into the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan. The Policy team continues to co-ordinate the Local Plan Review work, including liaison with neighbouring authorities and the commissioning of evidence base studies. The Authority remains on track to submit its revised Local Plan for independent examination by the end of March 2018.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Review level of habitat contributions (currently £1,250 per new residential unit) required to mitigate the impacts of new development.	Steve Avery	Officers have been working on a revised NPA Habitat Mitigation Scheme (as part of the Local Plan Review). Current estimates are indicating a revised habitat contribution of circa £3,200 per new dwelling. This work is being progressed in association with the New Forest Habitat Mitigation Steering Group which includes representatives from Natural England and the RSPB.		
Co-ordinate the use and distribution of developer contributions to support habitat mitigation measures within the National Park. LH10	Tony Spence	The Policy team continues to co-ordinate the use of developer contributions toward habitat mitigation measures in the Park. To date nearly £90,000 in contributions has been received and the use of these contributions is overseen by the above mentioned Steering Group.		
Progress the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy for the National Park, taking into account the Government's anticipated response to the CIL Review in the Housing White Paper.	Steve Avery	Specialist consultants have been commissioned to undertake a viability assessment as part of the Authority's Local Plan Review. This work will assess whether the introduction of CIL – which remains discretionary – is viable in the National Park.		The Government's response to the CIL Review Panel report is still awaited and this creates continuing uncertainty regarding the future of CIL.
Co-ordinate the local design awards scheme to recognise and promote exemplary development in the National Park.	David Illsley	The second New Forest National Park Building Design Awards were distributed in January 2017. The Scheme has been relaunched this year and nominations invited by the end of October.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Support the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Action Plan by working with Parish Councils in delivering the actions identified in the Plan. LD8	Pauline Megson	The Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group met on site in Woodgreen in June 2017 to trial work on local distinctiveness. At their September 2017 meeting the Steering Group will be considered the measures required to update their Action Plan 2012 – 2017.		

Protect Priority 3: Conserving the historic environment and local way of life

We will support the conservation of features that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the New Forest, by:

- enabling local people to retain and promote traditional building skills and crafts
- developing initiatives that encourage recording and celebration of features of interest to local communities
- providing advice and resources for specific community-led projects that promote local distinctiveness and cultural heritage
- improving knowledge and skills amongst the public to further protect the archaeology of the National Park.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Through the OPOF and HLS schemes deliver a range to projects to encourage volunteer involvement in the local heritage, history and archaeology of the New Forest. Aim to involve 240 volunteers and hold two meetings of the Community Heritage Forum. LD1, LD2	Frank Green / James Brown / Lawrence Shaw	Though this quarter sees the least archaeological volunteer activity due to survey restrictions on the New Forest a range of activities were undertaken by activities including 3 days of field survey, 6 days of geophysical survey at Buckland rings, 3 training days and 2 guided walk. The third Community Heritage Forum was held in June. A total of 75 volunteers were involved across these activities.		
Deliver a programme of training in traditional building skills as part of OPOF, with 175 people participating in 8 courses (5 professional and 3 householder). EW8, LD5	Pauline Megson	Courses for professionals and homeowners continue as part of this HLF project. Two courses for were held at Buckler's Hard during the period, on timber framing and lime, renders and plasters. These were well-attended with a total of 45 professionals taking part.		
Actively manage scheduled and unscheduled ancient monuments on the Crown Lands and Open Forest. Improve the condition of at least 10 sites on the Crown Lands. LD6	Frank Green / Lawrence Shaw	Work continues with meeting arranged in August with Natural England, Historic England and the Forestry Commission to look at some of the more important sites at risk and develop an appropriate methodology to manage these different risks that all parties are happy with.		