

# **BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018**

## **Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Second Quarter**

### **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	Team	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	Mark Holroyd / Jim Mitchell	<p>Working with Hampshire County Council, St Barbe Museum and local young people from SPUD Youth we have started a project to improve access and interpretation at Buckland Rings. The young people have been working with site managers, ecologist, archaeologists and artists to review the access to the site and propose new ways to better interpret this significant iron age hill fort for local people.</p> <p>We also worked with Lyndhurst Parish Council and the Forestry Commission to reroute the parish circular walk to reduce disturbance to a wader nesting site. New walk leaflets and map boards have been produced.</p> <p>We have completed some signage improvements in Ashurst, providing clear signage of the National Cycle Network route 236 from Totton to Lyndhurst.</p>		
Work with partners and communities to develop and deliver visitor information opportunities through visitor centres including New Forest Centre and Lepe Country Park redevelopment, eight+ local information points, wider networks and online.	Jim Mitchell	<p>Met with NFTA sector groups to develop shared learning opportunities around the National Park for spring 2017.</p> <p>National Park film at the New Forest Centre had subtitles added to increase accessibility.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Team	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 LPS) and an annual volunteer fair and guide, attended by 25+ volunteering organisations and attended by 200+ prospective volunteers. SQ2	Jim Mitchell / Richard Austin	The OPOF database grew to nearly 300 volunteers, including some signed up at the New Forest Show. A volunteer leaflet was created to take to events and distributed to partners. Volunteer Newsletters were sent out in July and September and regular updates were sent throughout the period. An induction event was held for Event volunteers. A record number of hours were recorded by volunteers pulling Himalayan balsam with the Wildlife Trust. Volunteers took part in archaeological surveys, botanical surveys and tested water quality on the Beaulieu River.		
Deliver and support 2+ projects (inc. Walking for health and an OPOF project on developing wild play) and work with partners to deliver a joint plan 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	Walking for Health walks totalled 1,120 hours walked, led by 31 walk leaders during Q2  OPOF Wild play site at Holbury Manor woods agreed and work starting in the winter, coordinated with 'Working Woodlands' work. Local schools and groups contacted and surveys on use and attitudes to the site carried out.		
Launch the OPOF ranger Apprentice scheme in partnership with other Forest ranger teams and education providers. EW8	Jim Mitchell	Apprentice Rangers interviewed and two recruited, due to start in October.		
Engage with groups usually thought to be under-represented including young people (John Muir Award and Youth Action Project) and those with disabilities (PEDALL). EP4, LC9	Jim Mitchell/ Mark Holroyd	15 PEDALL sessions ran with 402 participants, several of the bikes were available for people to try at the New Forest Show.		

## **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	Jim Mitchell / Rangers	Ranger contacts were over 9,000 for the quarter including the successful partnership with Camping in the Forest and Forestry Commission. The Seasonal Rangers delivered 65 activity sessions over a 10 week period and engaged with more than 3300 campers.		
Develop interpretive resources with partners and communities that promote the Forest's special qualities including self-guided trails, the New Forest Tour commentary, training, and permanent and touring exhibitions such as OPOF LPS. SQ4, LH10, LD3	Jim Mitchell	Successful New Forest Show and New Forest Centre exhibitions delivered for OPOF, on the theme of 'Step into the New Forest Story' and encouraging greater involvement and volunteering with Forest partners. Over 4,000 people visited the Show. The exhibition runs until 13 November.  Two Interpretation training sessions delivered for volunteers, staff and partner organisations as part of the OPOF 'New Forest Connects programme'.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>Deliver a communications service of the highest standard; support the Heritage Lottery Fund scheme; increase our combined social media audience from 28,000 to 40,000; double the number of email newsletter subscribers.</p>	<p>Hilary Makin</p>	<p>We launched the draft Local Plan public consultation, including a media briefing, press releases, social media posts, exhibition panels for drop-in sessions and an online response form.</p> <p>The New Forest Show was a great success winning the cup for Best Large Trade Stand, with the joint NPA/CLA awards; visits from Hampshire's Chief Constable, the M3 LEP Board and Sophie, Countess of Wessex; plus a reception for OPOF Heritage Lottery Fund partners and supporters.</p> <p>As part of the OPOF scheme we helped submit an application for a £96k Arts Council England grant for the Arts Festival and held a steering group meeting to plan for 2017. Graveyard monument surveys, the New Forest Knowledge e-cademy, wild play days and rural skills courses were also promoted and we hosted a visit by the new HLF Chief Executive.</p> <p>We supported the Forestry Commission with its campaign appealing to people not to pick fungi.</p> <p>Park Life residents' newspaper was produced and distributed with the Lymington Times resulting in cost savings and thanks to increased ad sales, went up from eight to 12 pages.</p> <p>Our combined social media audience is at 35,704; email sign-ups increased 30%.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Develop and lead curriculum-specific sessions for 8,000 students from pre-schools, schools and colleges, both in the 'field' and in school. SQ1, SQ7	Sue Palma	During the last two weeks of the school year and the first three weeks of the new school year, the education team taught curriculum sessions to 1236 pupils from 13 schools, with an additional 180 pupils who received the final Litter assembly in July, making a total of 1416 this quarter. School bookings so late and early in the term is a new and welcome trend.		
Work with primary and secondary schools to embed the New Forest into their curriculum, including organising annual conferences for students and teachers, the development of a Youth Forum and the continued population of the New Forest Curriculum website. SQ1, SQ7	Sue Palma	40 students from four secondary schools attended the Our Forest Our Future Conference. The conference was supported by the New Forest Association and the New Forest Livestock Association; the new venue at the pony sales yard was a great success.  Interest in the Youth Forum is increasing, though the issues around gathering together students from several schools have yet to be resolved.		
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 / Rangers	The summer break enabled the education team to assist Rangers and partner organisations at events, including Discovery Days at the New Forest Centre, Marine Wonders at Lepe Country Park, a Wild Play Day at Whitefield Moor (with Forestry Commission, National Trust and The Wildlife Trust), and Minstead Apple Day at Minstead Study Centre.		

### **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 local organisations and recreational user groups in agreeing an overall 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	<p>Options for partner organisations to consider at the next Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group meeting are being prepared. This work includes opportunities throughout the National Park and beyond and should result in wins for the environment and recreational experience.</p> <p>Natural England officers continue to develop a proposed route for the New Forest section of the England Coast Path, and we are hopeful that when implemented (probably in 2018) it will provide an enjoyable coastal experience without compromising environmental sensitivities. NPA officers have been asked to advise on path design and on waymarking but still await any formal request from Natural England for the NPA (as the Access Authority) to be involved beyond the current preparatory stages, alongside Hampshire County Council (as the Highway Authority).</p>		
Collate data to inform decisions about the management of recreation and the ways we engage with visitors to the New Forest e.g. use of recreational facilities and sustainable transport, value and volume of the visitor economy, visitor surveys and information.	Mark Holroyd / Nigel Matthews	<p>Our STEAM tourism volume and value estimates for 2015 have been received. In 2015 it is estimated there were 3.901 million leisure visitors to the National Park with an economic impact of £256.8 million. 361 customer satisfaction forms were received from New Forest Tour customers. This data is currently being analysed to provide us with portraits of the different customer types using the service.</p> <p>Our portable pedestrian and cycle counter was deployed throughout the summer on the new Marchwood cycle route adjacent to Bury Lane. It recorded an average of 158 cyclists per day and 57 pedestrians per day.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>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</p>	<p>Nigel Matthews</p>	<p>Cycle events within this quarter seemed to pass off with fewer issues and the marathon certainly ran more smoothly than last year. <i>(In October the UK Cycling Events autumn event caused much concern when the route had to be changed at short notice, so we are following this up with the Safety Advisory Group and will report back to Members in January.)</i></p> <p>Despite increased numbers of stock being depastured, animal casualties this year are about the same as last year, which ended with the lowest number of deaths on record. We have revised and printed 300,000 emergency hotline cards for distribution over the next three years.</p> <p>Ranger engagement with the public about disturbance of ground nesting birds and dog related issues continued throughout the summer months, and we visited the Thames Basin Heaths to see how Natural England is using the provision of alternative recreational sites to attract people (and dogs) to robust sites and away from areas designated for their wildlife importance.</p> <p>At the New Forest Show over 1,000 people took part in a thought-provoking voting activity; they each said which of four statements they thought would be most effective at deterring people from feeding of ponies. The same technique can be used for a range of topics where we want to influence the behaviour.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>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.</p>	<p>Mark Holroyd</p>	<p>The Access Forum met on Monday 5 September at Lymington Community Centre. The Forum received a presentation and issued advice on the wetland restoration scheme at Latchmore Brook and the initial plans for undergrounding of electricity pylons at Hale. It also received a presentation from British Cycling on their campaign to modernise rights of way legislation in England, and finalised comments on New Forest District Council's local plan review and commented on Lepe Country Park's planning application.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>