

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Second Quarter

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)
<p>Deliver habitat restoration and river catchment enhancement through landscape scale partnerships across the National Park. These include: Our Past Our Future (OPOF), where the NPA is the lead body, the Verderers HLS Scheme, New Forest Catchment Partnership (co-host) and New Forest and Solent SPA (Special Protection Area) Forums. LH4, LH7</p>	<p>Ian Barker, Lawrence Shaw, Rachael Gallagher</p>	<p>OPOF LPS is one year into its 5 year programme and most of the 21 projects are now nine months into their delivery and on schedule for delivering the required targets. Those included in the Restoring Lost Landscapes theme have so far delivered the following: i) Discussions started with woodland owners and works planned for contractors and volunteers at several sites over the winter period as part of the NFLAS led Working Woodlands project ii) 347m of hedgerow created/restored and baseline monitoring undertaken for year one sites over the summer as part of the NFLAS led Better Boundaries project iii) 119 volunteer parties have removed Himalayan Balsam at 62 sites over the summer as part of the HIWWT led Removal of Non Native Invasive Plants project iv) Capital works to undertake rain water harvesting has been undertaken and volunteers have been doing water quality monitoring as part of the Living Waters project v) 7.23 hectares of land has been enhanced at one privately owned site and baseline monitoring undertaken for all year one sites over the summer as part of the NFLAS led Stepping Stones project.</p> <p><u>Catchment Partnership</u>- Living Waters (part of OPOF) project ran successful volunteer training day and now has a team of over 35 volunteers undertaking bi-monthly water quality testing. Projects launch events successful. Funding from EA has been secured for fish passage work and feasibility for habitat enhancement but aspects require consent from landowners and negotiation on acceptable solutions are underway. Partnership is currently liaising with EA to secure additional funding for capital projects such as rainwater harvesting with landowners. Hosting role continues with Partnership meetings held in September and information produced to advise owners of septic tanks.</p> <p><u>SPA Forums</u> – officers have supported partnerships including development of final strategic mitigation scheme for Solent SPA to facilitate development and reduce costs to developers whilst conserving special migratory bird species. This is due to be finalised in winter 2016. Officers also continue to review the delivery of the New Forest mitigation scheme</p>		

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Enhance important wildlife sites with active management delivered through 3 OPOF projects: Working Woodlands, Better Boundaries and Natures' Stepping Stones. The targets are 10 SINC's (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation), 1200m of hedgerow and 40 ha of woodland under active management. LH1, LH3, LM5	Julie Melin-Stubbs	All three projects are in a spring/summer phase of survey, monitoring and planning of capital works. The Restoring Lost Landscapes Project Officer and Working Woodlands Project Co-ordinator have both been planning for the winter works and finding new sites. Some preparatory capital works have been carried out to prepare for hedgerow project work.		
Identify and secure £60k in grants as match funding to deliver OPOF.	Fiona Wynne	Bids have been submitted to Arts Council England and Barker Mill Foundation. Bids to Big Lottery Fund, Tesco Bags of Help and Waitrose are currently being considered.		

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Identify the areas of greatest need for back-up grazing for commoning and identify the mechanisms for securing grazing land. LM4	Julie Melin-Stubbs / Paul Walton	The mapping work under the Green Halo project will highlight potential areas for back up grazing opportunities. NFLAS continue to act as broker between land owners and graziers when required.		
Provide a programme of land management support, advice and training for 100 landowners, farmers and commoners. LM1, LM2	Julie Melin-Stubbs	Work has continued this quarter to act as technical advisor and intermediary for the CDA, Verderers and many commoners re the ongoing Basic Payment Scheme issues including the re-mapping by the RPA. A steady flow of advice requests from farmers, landowners and commoners keeps the advisors very busy. The New Forest Rural Skills Project delivered six courses during this quarter and many others in planning phase for later in the year and early next year. Highlights this quarter included a four day Tractor Driving course, a deer stalking course and a three day Chainsaw course. The Commoners Mentor Scheme is well underway with the six mentors spending time with their 11 mentorees. Mentorees have been to livestock markets, helped at drifts and assisted livestock stewards at the New Forest Show. One mentoree has now bought her first pony from Beaulieu Road, the start of her own herd.		

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Work with the New Forest Ecademy (OPOF) and partners to identify the priorities for future surveys on species and habitats. LH14	Ian Barker	Liaison and support continues with Local Biological Records Centres. New Forest Smooth Snake survey has been undertaken successfully this season and was subject of press coverage due to Sir Desmond Swayne MP's support as a Species Champion. Future quarters will see liaison with officers leading on Evidence destination statement which may be a platform to deliver this action in the future.		
Seek to reduce impacts from noise, visual disturbance and lighting on the tranquillity of the National Park. The priority is the National Grid Visual Impact Provision project at Hale Purlieu ST1, ST2, ST4	Sarah Kelly	In July an exhibition was held over two days by National Grid at Hale Village Hall which NPA officers attended throughout to hear the views of attendees and answer any queries specific to the NPA. Noise from low and repetitive flying from light aircraft in North West of NP investigated and meeting with MOD set up for the end of November to discuss low flying of MOD aircraft.		
Finalise a climate change adaptation plan report and set up New Forest Climate Change group. CC4	Andy Brennan	No progress this quarter, action planned for Q3		
Coordinate action through the Verderers HLS, OPOF and Western Escarpment Project to reduce verge damage and encroachment. Outcomes will contribute to delivery of the New Forest Site Improvement Plan. LH6, LD7, LD8	Sarah Kelly	Contact made with resident on Buddle Hill in Hyde Parish regarding verge protection.		

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)
Lead partners in developing a strategic approach to the provision of green infrastructure and the management of natural capital within the National Park and a surrounding 25km "Green Halo". LM3, LH11	Paul Walton/David Illsley	Following the Green Halo event in July the NPA have continued to lead on this work, developing the ideas behind the Green Halo and drawing together a working group of key partners to articulate a shared vision and identify projects to realise the vision.		
Undertake a full review of our adopted Core Strategy (2010), taking into account the experiences since the Core Strategy was adopted and changes in national planning policy (introduced through the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance). To include public consultation on the draft Local Plan in Autumn 2016 and the preparation of the Submission draft Local Plan by Spring 2017.	David Illsley	The consultation draft New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 was endorsed for the purposes of consultation at the full National Park Authority meeting on 22 September 2016. This follows extensive liaison with relevant bodies over Summer 2016. The draft was then published for an eight week period of public consultation from early October to 28 November 2016. Ultimately the Authority's aim is to submit a final draft Local Plan to the Government by the national deadline of March 2018.		

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Run a series of themed planning workshops for Parish and Town councils, including building design and conservation, planning policy, trees, development control and enforcement.	Steve Avery	A series of four planning related workshops have been set up for 2016. The first two - building design and conservation and planning policy - were held in Q1. The third workshop took place in Q2 – trees - and was attended by over 40 local town and parish councillors. The final workshop on development management will take place on 13 December.		
Introduce charging for pre-application advice for certain types of development whilst maintaining an open and accessible planning service.	Steve Avery	Charges for formal written pre-application advice were agreed at the full Authority meeting on 22 September 2016. The relevant fees and guidance have been published on the website; the new procedures were also discussed at the annual Planning Agents' on 28 September. Fees have been charged since 1 October.		
Co-ordinate the use and distribution of developer contributions to support habitat mitigation measures within the National Park.	Steve Avery	The Authority has successfully negotiated circa £50,000 from new developments in the Park to support habitat mitigation measures in the New Forest (including the Solent coastline). Contributions have been spent on a range of measures including protected species interpretive material to be used by the Authority education and ranger teams.		

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Re-visit the merits of introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy for the National Park following enactment of the Housing and Planning Bill and further government planning reforms.	Steve Avery	In June 2016 the Planning Development Control Committee agreed in principle to implement CIL in the National Park following recent restrictions on seeking S106 affordable housing contributions. This work will run in parallel to the timetable for the Local Plan review.		
Co-ordinate the local design awards scheme to recognise and promote exemplary development in the National Park.	David Illsley	The 2016 Building Design Awards were launched in Summer 2016, with nominations invited by early October 2016. The Awards have been publicised at the Parish Quadrant meetings and the annual Planning Agents meeting.		
Support the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Action Plan by working with Parish Councils in delivering the actions identified in the Plan. LD8	Lisa Crouch	The Steering Group met in September to discuss the verge protection project within the Western Escarpment and had a useful presentation from the Forestry Commission on their work on encroachment. Discussion was also had on the Group's next action to be taken forward from the Action Plan.		

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)
Develop period and thematic research strategies to address gaps in the knowledge of specific time periods of the Forest's archaeological record. LD2	Frank Green	Late Iron Age and Roman research strategy to be circulated through the New Forest Heritage Forum in November and further comments and views to be incorporated. Transcribing the recordings of the day seminar on the Palaeolithic and Early Holocene strategy to be available for Heritage Forum meeting in 2017. Period strategies for the Neolithic to middle Iron Age periods and the Post Roman period to late medieval to be developed in Q4.		
Establish a New Forest Heritage Forum as part of OPOF LD4	Frank Green/James Brown	Forum established further meeting planned for November		
Curate the New Forest Remembers Exhibition and Heritage Portal, a WWI & WWII online archive. The WWI exhibition will be shown at five different venues, 12 new articles added to the Portal, 50,000 page views and 5 talks given. LD3	Gareth Owen	New Forest Remembers WWI Exhibition was on display at a Downton History Group event, one of the three local history groups it is booked to attend and an event held at the Emery Down church. The Portal continues to grow with three new article being added and 18,475 page views during this period.		

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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	10 monuments visited and recommendations made awaiting Historic England renewal of the five year rolling management agreement with the Forestry Commission.		Delays by Historic England