

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Third 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	Officer	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 / Gillie Molland	<p>We are discussing with Whiteparish Parish Council opportunities to convert some existing stiles to gates.</p> <p>Developed a suite of interpretation for Buckland Rings in partnership with the community, HCC and local charity SPUD youth. Engaged in workshops and in helping develop the plans for the site for installation in Q4.</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>Local information points have been visited and renewed for 2017, with Hythe added bringing the total back up to nine.</p> <p>We have been working with Lepe Country Park and the New Forest Centre on future development of their visitor information</p> <p>See the report given to the January Authority meeting for further details of the New Forest Centre situation.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Officer	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	<p>The OPOF database grew to over 300 volunteers and many were active in practical conservation. The Working Woodlands and Nature's Stepping Stones projects delivered 15 volunteer task days and two corporate volunteer days with Ordnance Survey and Bournemouth Water. A Volunteer Newsletter was sent out in November and regular updates were sent throughout the period. Volunteers planted trees at Foxbury, tested water quality on the Beaulieu River and undertook archaeological surveys. Volunteers have helped to collect over 600 photographs of commoners for the Ancestors Eyes project.</p> <p>First event volunteers have been inducted and have joined rangers and other staff at events.</p>		
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 / Gillie Molland	<p>Wild play project has been successful in first round of Landscape Enhancement Programme fund application. This will enable landscape improvements and interpretive trails at the Holbury Manor site. The first wild play areas have been established and community work is continuing.</p> <p>Twenty volunteer healthy walk leaders in the New Forest scheme attended the annual training walk at Ashlett Creek led by Craig Daters, NPA Ranger.</p>		
Launch the OPOF ranger Apprentice scheme in partnership with other Forest ranger teams and education providers. EW8	Gillie Molland	The first 2 Apprentice Rangers started in early October. They spent 3 weeks with the NPA learning about our work, the National Park and our partners before beginning their placement with the National Trust at the start of November. Training has already resulted in them receiving qualifications in Brushcutter & Strimmers, First Aid and Chainsaw felling and maintenance.		

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
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/ Gillie Molland / Mark Holroyd	<p>RAPC approved progression of PEDALL lottery bid to stage 2, draft will be finalised in the New Year. 11 sessions were delivered to 120 participants during the quarter.</p> <p>Youth Access Project ran two sessions with 16 young people over five sessions.</p> <p>Training for Cambiam School staff to increase their confidence in bringing young people to the Forest.</p> <p>Brockenhurst College and Priestlands School have started the John Muir Award with groups.</p> <p>We have expressed an interest to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a four year programme of youth work in partnership with UK Youth, SPUD Youth the Princes Trust and the National Trust.</p>		

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	Officer	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	Gillie Molland / Rangers	Ranger contacts totalled 3,318 in this period. Attendance at Brockenhurst College Drive Safe talking to students about reducing animal accidents and promoting safe driving across the Forest. Rangers reached a new audience leading a very successful New Forest Toddle as part of the walking festival. It was aimed at introducing very young children and their parents to the New Forest, equipping them with ideas of how to look after and enjoy the National Park. A surprising 300 people attended and plans are being made to run more in next year's events programme. Rangers supported the successful family Trees event and took the MU to the Christmas Fair at Exbury Gardens.		
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	OPOF 'Step into the New Forest's story' exhibition successful at the New Forest Centre with 6,700 visitors. Support of 'commoners' voice' project: interpretation and engagement led by commoners. We are working with the CDA and commoners through the OPOF scheme to develop a suite of interpretation over the next 2 years that helps tell the story of commoning. Two successful workshops have been held so far. We have been developing a programme of interpretation around the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest for 2017. This includes input into the Woodland Trust led 'Charter for Trees, Woods and People'.		

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<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>Record numbers attended the autumn Walking Festival – 1,900 people taking part in expert-led walks, up 77% on last year’s figures. Feedback included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 90% of walkers who left feedback said they enjoyed their walk(s) ‘a lot’ ▪ 94% learnt something new about the New Forest ▪ 98% said their walk encouraged them to look for further opportunities to discover the New Forest. <p>We helped promote the launch of the new cycle centre at Brockenhurst in September, which was part-funded by the DfT Cycling Ambition Fund.</p> <p>Over 300 people attended the Family Trees event to create a community wood at Ashurst during National Tree Week, including a school competition winner who designed the certificates everyone received.</p> <p>Combined social media audience is 38,392; email newsletter subscribers are up 51% on last year.</p> <p>Our website blog has seen contributions from staff about their favourite walks in the Forest, with over 900 people reading them.</p>	<p style="background-color: #92d050;"></p>	<p></p>

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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	The education team have taught 966 students from 13 schools and colleges during this quarter. One of these was an in-school session, the rest took place on site in the Forest.		
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	Meetings with secondary school geography teachers have been taking place to discuss field work requirements following the changes to the Geography GCSE syllabus. The difficulties of bringing together the group of young people who will form the Youth Forum has resulted in a change of approach; we will work with individual schools initially and bring the young people together at the conference in the summer. Work is continuing to transfer the curriculum website to the Authority site to enable easier access.		
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	A successful Wildplay Day at Bolderwood attracted a record 650 people. Five pre-schools were visited, delivering sessions to 119 children. Calshot Nature Club visited Lepe Country Park for a dusk walk followed by hot chocolate and marshmallow toasting around the fire.		

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	Officer	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>The Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group would ideally like to progress to the first stage of a public consultation in which we would raise awareness of opportunities and problems, what we want to achieve and why it is important to address this now. We would invite people to suggest how the recreational experience and protection of the Forest could be improved. The scope and timescale for this will be discussed early in 2017.</p> <p>Natural England officers expect to submit their proposed route for the New Forest section of the England Coast Path to the Secretary of State by the end of March 2017. They have also asked the NPA (as the Access Authority) to create infrastructure for the path when the route is confirmed. See the report that was taken to the January Authority meeting for further details.</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	Ongoing data collection and monitoring by the People and Wildlife Ranger for the Green Ways Mitigation Project. People counts and user surveys undertaken on SANGs and recreational walking routes prior, during and after mitigation works.		

Action/Outcome	Officer	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>In October the UK Cycling Events autumn event caused concern when the route had to be changed at short notice. For further details, see the update of the effectiveness of the Cycle Event Organisers' Charter given to the January Authority meeting.</p> <p>A flurry of animal accidents during the autumn meant that the 2016 the number killed (63) and injured (35) were worse than in 2015. However, the number of animals depastured has also risen and the percentage (0.53%) killed rose only very slightly. Over 30,000 emergency hotline cards were distributed to people ordering NFDC parking clocks: a very cost effective way of getting safe driving messages (and the phone numbers) to these local drivers, and there are plans for further improvements to road signage and new ways of engaging with people through their employers.</p> <p>Rangers assisted the Forestry Commission in encouraging people not to pick fungi and our work to encourage responsible dog walking is ongoing, especially through the NFDC-funded People and Wildlife Ranger.</p> <p>A high profile 2017 Spring Clean litter pick is being planned, starting with the first weekend in March, with several partner organisations taking part.</p> <p>Good join-up across all our educational campaigns is being facilitated by the OPOF 'behaviour change' work, especially in finding positive ways to engage people in potentially negative topics. We are also refreshing, with partner organisations, our high-level 'caring for the Forest' messages that we routinely use in our communications.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Action/Outcome	Officer	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 Forum met on 5 December in Hythe. They received a presentation from the National Trust about their activities at Foxbury and the Northern Commons. Feedback was given to the Trust following complaints about restrictions on equestrian access to Plaitford Common by adjacent property owners. The Forum finalised their response to the consultation on the NPA local plan and received updates on the Historic Routes project, New Forest habitat mitigation project and the England Coast Path. Following the meeting, a site visit was held to view the state of an existing public right of way between Hythe and Marchwood which runs along the boundary of the National Park.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>