

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Third 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	Officer	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><u>OPOF</u> OPOF LPS is one year into its 5 year programme and most of the 21 projects are now 12 months into their delivery and on schedule for delivering the required targets. Key work undertaken by projects within the Restoring Lost Landscapes theme include the following: i) Work is now underway at several woodland sites, with contractors undertaking tree works and volunteer task days taking place over the winter period as part of the NFLAS led Working Woodlands project ii) The NFLAS led Better Boundaries has started work on several sites over the winter to improve and restore hedgerow features iii) The NFLAS led Stepping Stones project has started work at several sites over the Winter period this has included felling trees to restore heathland, scrub removal by volunteers. Grazing has been introduced to several sites for the first time.</p> <p><i>Verderers HLS Scheme</i> The HLS Board met on the 6 October. The wetland restoration application at Latchmore was refused at the November meeting of the NPA Planning Committee. Good weather through the autumn enabled volunteers to complete more than the planned schedule of fieldwork with an additional 599 hectares surveyed.</p> <p><i>New Forest Catchment Partnership (co-host)</i> Successful and valued collaborative working continues with partners through the Partnership. The Partnership has undertaken landowner liaison to plan and agree measures such as intercept ponds to help improve water quality in the Hatchet catchment. OPOF project delivery ('Living Waters') is ahead of schedule and has achieved match funding requirements. 40 community volunteers are undertaking monthly water quality monitoring covering 61 data sample sites. Walking Festival used to communicate importance of New Forest for freshwater wildlife and opportunities for public to help in management of wastewater, event was fully booked. Partnership engaged with EA led Defra natural flood management group during the quarter. Support and liaison with Catchment Sensitive Farming has continued with a range of partners.</p> <p><i>New Forest and Solent SPA (Special Protection Area) Forums</i> Liaison with the Solent SPA Recreation Partnership continues through Plan Policy and Environment Team representation and the partnership is developing an appropriate final scheme to replace the current interim strategy. The New Forest SPA scheme continues to be effectively managed and during the period staff met with Natural England to review options for future evolution of approaches.</p>	<p></p>	<p></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	The three projects are into their first full winter season of capital works. Working Woodlands has seen 10 volunteer work parties take place in several of the project woodlands to remove rhododendron and create glades and widen rides. Contractors have also been working at sites to do larger operations. Four Nature's Stepping Stones sites have had 8 work parties worth a total of 54 days of 28 volunteers' time. This has mainly been scrub removal on species rich grasslands. A large program of work has begun in Hyde and Ogdens on the Better Boundaries Project where hedgerows are being restored through planting, coppicing, replanting and laying. This is being carried out by a number of local contractors through our contractor framework.		
Identify and secure £60k in grants as match funding to deliver OPOF.	Fiona Wynne	A new bid for £15,000 is in progress to Arts Council England as the larger bid for £94,950 was unsuccessful. Feedback received suggested the application did not fully meet the criteria for public engagement but showed the potential to do so. A bid has also been submitted to Tesco Bags of Help and is subject to a public vote to decide the value between £1,000 and £5,000.		

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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	This will come through the Green Halo work and the NFLAS will continue to act as facilitators to link commoners with any land available.	Amber	
Provide a programme of land management support, advice and training for 100 landowners, farmers and commoners. LM1, LM2	Julie Melin-Stubbs	The target of 100 landowners and commoners has been met through our work giving advice and training on grants, schemes and land management around the New Forest. Several new cases came in during this quarter including working with a new landowner on a farm near Hyde and with a farmer on the Avon Valley who owns a SSSI. The New Forest Rural Skills project has run 6 courses during this period including Sheep Breeding and Husbandry, Chainsaw courses, Hedgerow Management, Woodland Management and a 6 week evening course in Welding.	Green	

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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	Authority's work on the Evidence destination statement will assist coordination of this action. The Authority is due to meet with Biological Records Centres in Q4 to agree the level of survey programmes which are deliverable within current funding. Ecademy partnership in early stages and once their audience development has developed the necessary partnerships these will provide a Forum to seek support for input.		
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	National Grid has continued to progress their investigations into the feasibility of the potential undergrounding of the high voltage line at Hale Purlieu and have held site meetings with the National Park Officers in attendance to discuss the methodology for bore hole testing. Officers have attended a meeting with MOD to discuss low flying helicopter training over the National Park with useful discussions having taken place regarding disturbance to wildlife, stock and people.		
Finalise a climate change adaptation plan report and set up New Forest Climate Change group. CC4	Andy Brennan	No progress in this quarter due to resources being directed to complete PEDALL Lottery bid.		Climate change plan unfinished, actions forwarded to 2017-2018.
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	Continued work with Hampshire Highways and a resident in Buddle Hill, Godshill, regarding verge damage.		

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	Officer	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	A steering group has been established with representatives from both the public and private sector. The group's primary role is to develop and articulate the project "vision", a clear statement of what the Green Halo is and the broad outcomes it seeks to achieve. The group has held two meetings and is developing a programme of projects and activities that will develop and promote the Green Halo		
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 draft New Forest National Park Local Plan was published for an 8-week public consultation between October and November 2016. The consultation was widely publicised and four public drop-in sessions were held during the consultation period. In total responses were received from nearly 400 bodies, groups and individuals. The responses received are in the process of being considered and will be used to inform the revised draft Local Plan which will be prepared in 2017. A workshop to update members on the draft Local Plan is currently being arranged.		

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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 were set up for 2016. The first two - building design and conservation and planning policy- were held in Q1. The third workshop on trees took place in Q2 and the final workshop on development management took place on 13 December. A workshop on enforcement has tentatively been set up for 22 March 2017.		
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 now successfully negotiated just over £60,000 in financial contributions 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 the employment of seasonal rangers and the provision of additional interpretive material to be used by the 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 legal restrictions on seeking S106 affordable housing contributions. This work will run in parallel to the timetable for the Local Plan review and will be informed by specialist viability work due to be commissioned in early 2017.		
Co-ordinate the local design awards scheme to recognise and promote exemplary development in the National Park.	David Illsley	The Building Design Award panel met in late December 2016 to consider the schemes nominated. The awards will be presented at the March 2017 Authority 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 November to discuss the verge protection project within the Western Escarpment. The group also had a useful presentation from Sarah Kelly on the NFNPA Local Distinctiveness Project. Discussion was also had on the Group's next action to be taken forward from the Action Plan with regards to redundant signage.		

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	Officer	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	Work on the Roman research strategy completed and circulated through the New Forest Heritage Forum in November. Work progressing on transcribing the recordings of the day seminar on the Palaeolithic and Early Holocene strategy and drafting the strategy. The research strategy seminars for the Neolithic through to later Iron Age to take place in march along with the post-Roman to Medieval periods.		
Establish a New Forest Heritage Forum as part of OPOF LD4	Frank Green/James Brown	A really useful second meeting held at Beaulieu Parish Church in November and was attended by 20 representatives from local groups as well as personnel from NFNPA, New Forest Centre, Archaeovision and Historic England. Historic England provided a talk on the value of Community Generated Research and links with local Historic Environment records which was food for thought and led to a lot of very useful discussion.		
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 the Ashurst and Colbury event and the Redlynch Local History Society event at the beginning of October. The Portal continues to grow with four new articles being added and eight updated. We have also had 23,037 page views during this period.		

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<p>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</p>	<p>Frank Green</p>	<p>Ongoing work has involved the project officer working with staff and volunteers to continue to clean the vast quantity of data gathered during the field season. This work will help towards the deposition of archaeological data with the County.</p> <p>The largest area to be included is Beaulieu Heath which contained over 300 features. Work has continued in supporting the FC advising on mitigation where historic landscape and archaeological features exist.</p> <p>A number of mitigation data packs have been produced for the FC prior to works taking place.</p> <p>The Service Level agreement with the FC is being reviewed with a view to being renewed and continued, along with the development of Scheduled Monument Management plans in conjunction with Historic England.</p>	<p style="background-color: #92d050;"> </p>	<p> </p>