

# **BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018**

## **Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Fourth 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 | In addition to the improvements reported previously, we had initial meetings with HCC to discuss adding value to existing rights of way creating a standard befitting of a National Park.  |            |  |
| 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>We delivered bespoke training for Lepe Country Park and Cyclexperience and ran two successful 'behind the scenes' discovery days for New Forest Tourism businesses entitled 'Who are the Commoners' and 'History by bike'.</p> <p>The 2017 Date with Nature at the New Forest Reptile Centre is up and running, with new and old volunteers returning to share their enthusiasm and passion for exploring and caring for the New Forest's wildlife with the public.</p> |            |  |

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|---|-------------------------------|--|------------|--|
| 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 | Busiest Volunteer Fair yet with over 700 people attending and over 40 organisations represented. Feedback from groups was very positive. The day was moved to a Sunday and this proved successful, so next year's date will be Sunday 28 January. More than 60 volunteers signed up on the day to the National Park stand alone, and some of these have helped us complete our practical conservation work. Volunteers received regular updates throughout this quarter, including two volunteer newsletters, with contributions from our partners in the OPOF scheme. |            |  |
| 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 | The Holbury wild play site has progressed well and is now ready to commence works after the bird breeding season. We have identified a second wild play site in Sway.<br><br>Healthy walks programme continued successfully, awaiting Q4 results.  |            |  |
| Launch the OPOF ranger Apprentice scheme in partnership with other Forest ranger teams and education providers. EW8   | Gillie Molland                | One apprentice has left the scheme and the remaining one is on long term sickness leave.<br><br>Planning for this year's recruitment is underway and adverts will go out at the end of May.  |            | One apprenticeship will not be awarded this year. Lessons have been learnt and will be applied to the recruitment of this year's 2 new apprentice positions. |

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| 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/<br>Gillie Molland /<br>Mark Holroyd | <p>Planned and delivered John Muir activities for Priestlands School, Brockenhurst College and Princes Trust groups.</p> <p>Rangers planned, co-delivered and evaluated programmes for 2 cohorts from Princes Trust to promote understanding of the special qualities of the National Park.</p> <p>Contract secured with NCS for delivery of 5 spring sessions and 30 summer sessions increasing engagement with young people about the National Park.</p> <p>We submitted a round 1 application to the HLF's Kick the Dust fund, in partnership with UK Youth (Avon Tyrrell) and other Forest organisations, focused on increasing the benefit of the National Park to young people in the area. We will hear if we have been successful in July.</p> <p>PEDALL – New Forest Inclusive Cycling has engaged with 1,472 participants delivering 68 sessions to families and individuals with a disability.</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.

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|--|--------------------------|---|------------|--|
| 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 | 1,329 ranger contacts within this period. Rangers attended 5 Great British Spring Clean events across the Forest during the annual Spring Clean weekend in March.<br><br>Attendance at 9 community events including OPOF hedge laying event, Lepe winter bird walk, HOS AGM and Cold War Celebration event.   |            |  |
| 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             | We have helped install new interpretation and public art at Buckland Rings on the outskirts of Lymington. This was developed by local charity SPUD youth with help from the NPA, Hampshire County Council and St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery. The interpretation includes two trails, seating, sculpture and information about the site's little know Iron-Age heritage. An Open day will take place in April.<br><br>We are developing the 2017 New Forest Show and Our Past, Our Future exhibitions around the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest, happening in November 2017. |            |  |

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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 Volunteer Fair (700 visitors, 46 organisations).</p> <p>Over 250 bags of litter were collected by volunteers in a Spring Clean weekend campaign with NFDC and the Forestry Commission.</p> <p>Advertising has allowed us to increase the print run to 200,000 of our popular Pocket Guide containing visitor information and caring for the Forest messages.</p> <p>A 'welcome home' information sheet for new residents has been produced with information about why the Forest is special and how people can help care for it, linked to a new website section.</p> <p>A leaflet has been produced for the Green Halo Partnership accompanied by new web pages.</p> <p>Combined social media audience is 41,375; email newsletter subscribers are up 88% on last year.</p> | <p></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           | Teaching sessions numbered 13 during this quarter, with 449 students and pupils taking part in curriculum based sessions. Most of the sessions focussed on Caring for the New Forest National Park and Human Influences on the landscape.<br><br>26 schools requested this year's Litter Assembly, "The Litter Heroes are coming!", which taught 5,932 primary school children about what belongs in the Forest and what should be taken home, and why.  |            |  |
| 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           | Initial meetings to set up the Youth Forum have taken place, with 4 secondary schools committed to investigating a current issue of their choice to present at this year's student conference.<br><br>Many schools have approached the education team individually for advice as they adjust to the constraints and opportunities of the new curriculum, which places greater emphasis on Maths and English. As there is no discernible common theme emerging this year, the team will concentrate on advising individual schools instead of bringing teachers together at a conference in 2017.<br><br>All website resources are ready for transfer to the new Authority website. |            |  |
| 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 | Nine preschool sessions delivered reaching 172 participants.<br><br>John Muir Award training delivered to New Forest Educators Forum members.<br><br>Four puppy classes attended by People and Wildlife Ranger to promote responsible dog walking messages.<br><br>Informal sessions delivered to groups including Lymington and Hythe Sea Scouts and Blackfield Young Explorers.<br><br>Wild Play Day at Hurst Spit planned for April 2017  |            |  |



### **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.

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|---|-------------------------------|--|------------|--|
| 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 (RMS) Steering Group asked the NPA to lead on producing an update to the RMS 2010-2030. This would include reviewing the current actions and achievements so far and creating a new set of prioritised actions with specified organisations to lead on their delivery. It was agreed that a first stage 'call for views' public consultation should be held in the summer of 2017. Since the NPA agreed to this request much preparatory work has been done to positive and helpful encourage participation.</p> <p>Natural England officers continued develop the proposed route for the New Forest section of the England Coast Path, together with a specification for necessary infrastructure. The NPA (as the Access Authority) agreed to establish the route (install the infrastructure) when this is confirmed.</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>The Wild New Forest volunteer-led survey of breeding curlews showed that there were about 40 pairs in the Forest in 2016, about one-third of the population some 10 years ago. There was some evidence that recreation is one of the causal factors in this decline.</p> <p>We have been exploring opportunities to use anonymised mobile phone data as a more accurate method of quantifying visitor numbers and understanding the behaviour of Forest users.</p>  |            |  |

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| <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>The publicity surrounding the animal accidents that happened around the turn of the year culminated in a week-long series of interviews on Radio Solent at the end of March. This demonstrated that there is a high level of coordination between organisations with responsibilities and interests in the subject, that the frequency of incidents is not escalating in the way that is sometimes portrayed and that there are no 'magic wands'. We worked with HCC, the Verderers and the CDA to agree revised warning signage on roads between Sway and Brockenhurst and these signs are now in situ. We are also helping the CDA's Shared Forest project to develop a scheme that encourages and enables local businesses to cascade safe driving messages to their employees and customers.</p> <p>A very successful day on responsible dog walking was organised by the People and Wildlife Ranger. This included training for Rangers from partner organisations and an evening with commercial dog walkers. The Dogs Forum met and agreed the content of new signs about ground nesting birds – with a clear call to all user groups to 'keep to the main tracks' and that dog walkers should use a lead if necessary.</p> <p>The 2017 Spring Clean litter pick went well with some 30 community groups being prompted to do litter picks close to where they live and other organisations attending events on Crown Land. New temporary signs (including logos of the NPA, FC and NFDC) are being used to show which roads have been 'litter picked in the last week'.</p> <p>There were no large cycle events during the period.</p> | <p></p>    | <p></p>                                |

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| <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 13 March in Fordingbridge. The Forum considered proposals to hold a consultation on updating the Recreation Management Strategy for the New Forest National Park. They received updates on local plan developments and an update on how Hampshire County Council is responding to planning applications with access implications. They received a detailed update on the England Coast Path and commented on a number of local access issues.</p> | <p></p>    | <p></p>                                |