

# BUSINESS PLAN 2018-2021

## 2018-19 Work Programme – Q3 (1 October to 31 December 2018)

### 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:** Protecting and growing the natural capital across the New Forest National Park landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable

- Provide clear advice, guidance and training to deliver the Landscape Action Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan and Cultural Heritage Plan
- Lead a co-ordinated approach to strengthen natural capital<sup>1</sup> and ecological networks within and beyond the National Park boundary, supporting Government's ambition for a 'Nature Recovery Network'
- Deliver landscape enhancement in the National Park and maintain and enhance the ecosystem services<sup>2</sup> on which the Park depends
- Identify the key evidence and data requirements needed to inform the conservation of the National Park's special qualities

---

<sup>1</sup> Natural capital is the world's stocks of natural assets or resources (including geology, soils, air, water and all living organisms) which have a value.

<sup>2</sup> Ecosystem services can be described as the benefits people obtain from the environment, ranging from physical benefits such as clean air, water and food to aesthetic and cultural benefits that improve our quality of life.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Review the key actions in the Landscape and Biodiversity Action Plans, reporting on progress against actions in Q4 to inform future project work. (LH14)	Sarah Kelly/ Julie Melin-Stubbs	<p><u>Landscape Action Plan</u> The LAP continues to give advice and guidance both within the NPA and to planning applicants, partner organisations and utility companies. This helps to raise the standards of development in the NP and also to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity Action Plan</u> Initial analysis against objectives was carried out in Q1 and shared with Environment and Rural Economy Managers. This demonstrated generally positive progress against key objectives such as the New Forest Land Advice projects, Higher Level Stewardship of the Open Forest and Our Past, Our Future bid. Continuation of these will be subject to future decisions and development of new work streams according to resources.</p>		
Enhance important wildlife sites with active management delivered through 3 OPOF projects: Working Woodlands, Better Boundaries and Nature's Stepping Stones. Targets are to have 10 SINCs, 1200m of hedgerow and 40ha of woodland under active management. (LH1, LH3, LH6, LM5)	Rachael Gallagher	To date the Working Woodlands project has worked with 20 sites and is working to enhance and restore 87 hectares of woodland (project target is 120 hectares by end of OPOF). Natures Stepping Stones has worked with 19 sites and restored 38.58 hectares of SINCs (project target is 30 sites and restoration of 54 hectares by end of OPOF). The practical work season started in October 2018, this has involved contractors working on a number of areas of private land to restore habitats and volunteer work parties to carry out conservation tasks. One example of a site is that both projects have worked with Foxhills school where there are woodland and grassland areas. 54 members of staff attended an Inset day in October where they undertook some practical conservation of the woodland and learnt about woodland conservation and learning activities so that the teachers can use the woodland to educate the children about nature. As a result, the NPA education team have also been involved with the school and have set up a nature project with the children which will be a long term workstream through the years. A local farmer and woodsman have agreed to take on the management of the woodland on a one year trial. Planning is ongoing for work on other sites within these two projects over the winter season. As reported previously the Better Boundaries project has been completed.		Currently behind target for Working Woodlands and Natures Stepping Stones projects, due to: landowners selling; staff changes; the time taken working with numerous small landholdings versus larger landholdings. Projects will extend into a 4 <sup>th</sup> year in order to meet the targets by the end of OPOF.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Provide a programme of land management support, advice and training for 100 landowners, farmers and commoners. (LM1, LM2)	Julie Melin-Stubbs	<p>This quarter NFLAS and the Rural Skills Project, funded through OPOF, have trained 147 people during this quarter, including 60 commoners. Courses included:</p> <p>Agricultural regulations and funding updates (48)  Emergency first aid (11)  Cattle nutrition (16)  Equine solutions: worming, manure and soil management (32)  Welding (10)  Tractor driving (3)  Cattle herd health and fertility (17)  Rodent control (10)</p> <p>Another area of work this quarter is our ongoing time spent working in partnership with EA and the Freshwater Habitats Trust on farms where water quality is being affected by agricultural/equine impacts. Two farms are currently the focus of this work to clean up the Crockford Stream in the Sowley catchment.</p> <p>Following introductions as a result of the Green Halo Project we are carrying out a project with ExxonMobil at Fawley Refinery to scope potential for some of their untenanted land to become back up grazing for commoners and guide them on infrastructure and management requirements. We hope this may lead to them accepting our offer to work with them on other areas of their land, particularly woodland, where in many locations best practice management would be beneficial for wildlife.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
		<p>We have negotiated, worked up and delivered five grants on commoners' holdings on behalf of the National Trust on the Northern commons using their HLS funding. These grants included funding for livestock pounds and handling facilities, fencing of back up grazing, materials for completion of a livestock and feed barn and repair of a livestock shed.</p> <p>We found out this quarter that an application we put in last year to the NE Hedgerow and Boundary Grant for the restoration of an overstood hedgerow in Godshill has been approved. We will continue to work with the landowner to introduce her to contractors and ensure the work is carried out to a high standard.</p>		
With Green Halo forum leads identify and map a suite of projects that will strengthen natural capital, reporting outcomes to the Green Halo Partnership conference in November 2018 (LH11, LM3)	Paul Walton	A Conference was held at Ordnance Survey to mark the first anniversary of the Green Halo Partnership. 70 organisations are now members of the Partnership and a website has been launched to promote the Green Halo work and provide opportunities for members to promote their projects and case studies. Projects are coming forward under the four themes of Sustainable Living, Health and Wellbeing, Local Economy and Natural Environment. Work is progressing with Defra and the Local Enterprise Partnerships to explore opportunities for funding to support the projects and the Green Halo Partnership.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>With partners, continue support for the delivery of landscape scale enhancement, habitat restoration and river catchment enhancement through key schemes: the Verderers HLS Scheme, New Forest Catchment Partnership and New Forest and Solent SPA (Special Protection Area) Forums.</p> <p>Outcomes include: providing advice to the Forestry Commission on the delivery of the programme of wetland restoration and habitat management to enhance the SAC.</p> <p>Review opportunities to mitigate the impacts of new development on the SPAs</p> <p>Support measures to engage the public in activity aimed at reducing diffuse pollution and enhancing “flagship” ponds.</p> <p>(LH4, LH6, LH7, LH8)</p>	<p>Rachael Gallagher/ Julie Melin-Stubbs / Ian Barker/ Sarah Kelly</p>	<p><u>Verderers HLS Scheme</u></p> <p>A Wetland Strategy is in development and this quarter saw the Forestry Commission and Natural England hold a workshop with stakeholders to share proposals for the strategy. Small scale habitat restoration is continuing successfully, with gains for the natural environment, however larger areas of habitat continue to be unfavourable due to the lack of larger interventions. Specialist professional historic environment advice continues to be successfully provided as part of the projects.</p> <p><u>New Forest Catchment Partnership</u></p> <p>The New Forest Water Forum was held in November and attended by approximately 50 individuals and organisations, with positive feedback being received from participants. Links are being made with adjacent catchments and funding bids will be developed in partnership. Improvements in water quality in conjunction with local landowners and businesses continue to be delivered.</p> <p><u>New Forest and Solent SPA Mitigation Schemes</u></p> <p>Schemes continue to be delivered appropriately to support development whilst protecting special wildlife interests. Schemes were not subject to any adverse comments from the Inspector during the Local Plan Examination in Public.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
		<p><u>Franchises Lodge</u></p> <p>Work with RSPB is ongoing to develop a funding bid to National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative fund for rhododendron removal in woodland and improvement of 3 tumuli (by removal of rhododendron and conifers). The deadline for the expression of interest application is in February 2019 and it is hoped that an invitation to submit a full application will follow.</p>		
Work with the Forest Farming Group (FFG) to establish a set of agreed objectives and potential mechanisms for achieving them, for land management and rural development in and around the New Forest following Brexit. (LM8)	Julie Melin-Stubbs	<p>The consultancy work on developing the business case for investment of public money in return for the public goods provided by the New Forest is continuing, with the full support of the FFG.</p> <p>Representation is being made to Defra to try and secure the extension of the existing Verderers HLS scheme which is due to expire in March 2020.</p>		
<p>Safeguard the tranquillity of the National Park through reducing visual intrusion and disturbance from low flying aircraft. (ST1, ST2)</p> <p>Continue involvement with the National Grid Visual Improvement Project (VIP) – responding to proposals undergrounding at Hale Purlieu and representing National Parks on the national VIP steering group. (ST3, ST4, ST5)</p> <p>Maintain liaison with the MoD and civil aviation bodies to reduce incidence of low flying.</p>	Sarah Kelly	<p>The no-fly zone around a sensitive nesting area is still in place.</p> <p>National Grid have continued their investigatory work on their preferred route for the potential undergrounding of the high voltage line that crosses Hale Purlieu. A planning application is expected to be received by the NPA in July 2019 accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>An NPA Officer attended a National Grid's Visual Impact Provision Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting in Birmingham in December, representing National Parks England.</p>		

**Protect Priority 2:** Ensuring new development is sympathetic and in keeping with the National Park, promoting high quality design and environmental net gain

- Provide a long-term planning vision for the National Park informed by the special qualities
- Deliver a high quality, proactive planning service that is focussed on securing the best possible outcomes for the National Park and its communities
- Work with neighbouring authorities in the development and implementation of their planning policies and proposals that may affect the National Park, taking forward the principle of environmental net gain<sup>3</sup> in line with the 25 Year Environment Plan

---

<sup>3</sup> The environmental net gain principle expands on the net gain approach used for biodiversity to include wider natural capital benefits, such as flood protection, recreation and improved water and air quality.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Secure the adoption of a new Local Plan to guide new development in the National Park	David Illsley	The Local Plan Examination hearing sessions took place between 6 – 15 November 2018 and concluded on time. The Authority has also responded to the subsequent requests for information from the two Inspectors in accordance with the agreed timetables.		
Review and update the Development Control Charter.	Natalie Walter	Consultations with Parish Councils reviewed and updated and will be discussed at the next round of Quadrant meetings. Development Control Charter being updated to reflect current national guidance.		
Review standing pre-application advice on the Authority's website to assist the pre-application process and to secure the best possible planning outcomes	Steve Avery	Refinements to existing advice ongoing. A more fundamental update will follow adoption of the new Local Plan.		
Co-ordinate the use and distribution of developer contributions to support habitat mitigation measures within the National Park. (LH10)	Tony Spence	The Authority continues to successfully negotiate developer contributions to mitigate the impacts of new development on the integrity of the New Forest and Solent Natura 2000 sites. Research work is continuing as part of developing a strategic, cross-boundary approach to habitat mitigation measures for the New Forest. The Authority's annual Habitat Mitigation Steering Group will be meeting in Q4 to agree priority projects for the next financial year.		
Co-ordinate the local design awards scheme to recognise and promote exemplary development in the National Park.	David Illsley	The closing date for nominations for the next annual Building Design Awards closed at the end of December 2018. The judging panel (made up of members of the Planning Committee) will be convened by the end of February 2019 and the current intention is to announce the winners at the full Authority meeting in March 2019.		



Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
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 Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group has not met in this quarter.  A meeting is scheduled for early 2019 to continue the actions discussed in the previous meeting in September 2018.		
Devise and implement an enhanced monitoring programme for new development to secure greater compliance with planning consents	Steve Avery	Work has stalled on taking a more pro-active approach to monitoring compliance. However, following the successful recruitment to vacant posts in the team, this work can now be progressed during the final quarter.		

**Protect Priority 3:** Conserving the historic and built heritage; supporting local culture with continued focus on commoning

- Direct the management of scheduled and unscheduled monuments to bring them into good condition
- Work with property owners to improve the condition of historic buildings and heritage features by encouraging repair and renovation, re-use and appropriate management
- Foster greater knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of the National Park
- Provide advice and support to secure resources for community-led projects that promote local distinctiveness and commoning way of life

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>Through the OPOF and HLS schemes deliver a range to projects to encourage volunteer involvement in the local heritage, history and archaeology of the New Forest. Aim to involve 240 volunteers and hold two meetings of the Community Heritage Forum. (LD1, LD2, LC1)</p>	<p>Frank Green / James Brown / Lawrence Shaw/ Building Conservation Team</p>	<p>Burley local History Society and Parish are signed up to support a test pitting community dig project in the area at Easter. This will bring elements of historic maps, archives and records together with the community dig.</p> <p>A new location map was added to the New Forest Knowledge (NFK) website for people to position their created content alongside Longitude and Latitude boxes. The Hampshire Historic Environment Record data has also been added as a map layer; a first for Hampshire and such websites in this area. 9 groups involved with 143 articles submitted and 125 registered users in the past quarter.</p> <p>The New Forest Knowledge website was used in an evidence session for the Hampshire Commission of Inquiry – Hampshire 2050, Vision for the Future.</p> <p>The Community Heritage Fair was held at Lyndhurst Community Centre with 21 groups participating and over 150 people attending, providing very positive feedback.</p> <p>Three days of volunteer led geophysics demonstrating the joint LoCATE project with Bournemouth University.</p> <p>The NPA contributed to the Coastal exhibition at St Barbe Museum with displays of historic maps, archaeology and coastal change in one of the three gallery spaces. The interactive touch table was provided, and a map timeline created with lots of positive feedback.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
		<p>A week long excavation was carried out in a field at East End where previous aerial and geophysical surveys had shown what was thought to be a Bronze Age barrow. The excavation took place with the help of 26 volunteers and support from Bournemouth University Archaeology. Four bronze Age urns were recovered along with prehistoric flint work potentially of Neolithic date. Post-excavation specialist work is being undertaken at Bournemouth University; reports awaited.</p> <p>Several site visits undertaken with Working Woodlands officer to private woodlands and other sites signed off through OPOF. Franchises sign off from Historic England (HE) to remove Rhododendron from Scheduled Monuments.</p> <p>Gravestone recording work has taken place at Emery Down, Thorney Hill and Netley Marsh churchyards. Renovation work has begun on the Ward-Jackson memorial at Emery Down.</p> <p>RAF Ibsley control tower has been laser scanned and recorded. Lepe Second World War features laser scanning complete. HE have given consent for walkway works at Hurst Castle and also vegetation removal on the Scheduled Barrows at Hamptworth. Survey work on the NT commons is now complete.</p> <p>Rockford common now surveyed and data will be cleaned. Assessment of all Scheduled monuments at Ibsley undertaken and proposals submitted to NT for geophysical survey work. NT are commissioning repairs of Victorian Brick Culverts at Foxbury and have cleared vegetation from Rockford and Hale Pillow Mounds.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Deliver a programme of training in traditional building skills as part of OPOF, with 175 people participating in eight courses (five professional and three householder). (EW8, LD5)	Lisa Crouch	<p>For the third year, the Building Conservation Team have been leading on the Building Skills Project as part of the wider OPOF project.</p> <p>The project involves promoting the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment of the National Park, through raising awareness, developing specialist building skills, encouraging sensitive management and promoting availability and access to these skills.</p> <p>Several courses have also been held for professionals and homeowners in this quarter. In October a joinery course was held at Bucklers Hard for agents. Two homeowners' courses were held in November.</p> <p>Positive feedback continues to be received for both courses.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
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 / Lawrence Shaw	<p>Excavations have now been completed as part of the £15,000 Historic England funded project at Home Farm Iron Age hillfort. Restoration work will now take place to consolidate the monument and protect it from erosion by livestock.</p> <p>A yearly review of the archaeology SLA with Forestry England took place in December 2018 with all parties happy with the agreement and discussions started around the extension of the agreement which currently ends in March 2020.</p>		
Undertake a review of the Historic Buildings at Risk (LD5)	Lisa Crouch	<p>A partial survey of the National Park's Buildings at Risk has taken place this year. The remainder of the survey will take place shortly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 extra buildings have been added to the list due to the recent survey.</li> <li>• three buildings have been removed from the list including two chest tombs within the Lyndhurst Churchyard and the Beaulieu Ice House.</li> </ul> <p>This gives a revised figure of 22 Buildings at Risk.</p> <p>It is hoped the Ha-Ha at Moyles Court can be removed shortly with repair work expected to commence soon.</p>		