

NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

Business Plan

2018 - 2021



Welcome

The New Forest is one of Britain's most spectacular landscapes, home to rare wildlife, a unique and fascinating history and rich cultural heritage.

It is a living, working landscape that has been shaped by people for generations. It is this interaction between nature and people which ensures its survival today and that will be vital for its future.

The New Forest and its communities are at a critical point in time, with many challenges and opportunities ahead.

Over the past few years the National Park Authority team of members and staff have focussed on brokering partnerships – working together to 'put the Forest first'.

This is our Business Plan for the next three years, outlining where we intend to focus our work and measure our progress. Through this programme we renew our commitment to protecting the Forest, developing strong partnerships and securing resources for the future.



Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre

New Forest National Park
Authority Chairman



Introducing our Business Plan

This Business Plan sets out the pathway we'll be following over the next three years and shows what we will do as an organisation to deliver the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan, the main strategic plan adopted by key partners in 2015. It also sets out how we will take forward more recent policy, especially the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan published in January 2018.

This is likely to be a period of change, challenge and opportunity. Conservation and land use policies will need to develop for a post-Brexit environment, plans for significant development around the National Park will start to come forward, the discussions about recreation management in the National Park will focus on actions and current funding streams that have supported much of the conservation work in the National Park will come to an end.

We intend to respond by working closely with our partners and communities to position the New Forest as a place where the ambitions of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan can be seen in practice, with its clear direction to improve the environment, support land management that delivers public benefits and connect people with nature. We want to work to ensure our National Park is a place where

our natural assets underpin decision making and the direction set for our environment, communities and economy – a natural capital approach.

We want to secure the National Park for the future, using fresh approaches and innovation. Looking beyond our boundaries is vital, as pressures from around the New Forest become increasingly relevant to the state of the National Park.

Central to meeting the challenges and opportunities in this plan are our staff, members and partners. It is only through their commitment, through collaboration and innovation that we can ensure the next three years help the New Forest thrive into the future.



Alison Barnes

Chief Executive Officer

Natural capital

Natural capital is commonly described by four elements. The unique system of the New Forest provides all of these.

Support

The services that underpin everything else – water cycling, soil formation, photosynthesis – supported by the extraordinary diversity of plants and animals that makes the New Forest so special.

Regulation

The New Forest's woodlands, heath, bogs and mires help filter and clean rainwater, store water to reduce flooding, take pollutants from the air and absorb CO₂. Coastal vegetation helps reduce erosion and prevent coastal flooding.

Culture

Commoning is at the heart of a landscape that provides experiences to the benefit of people's health and wellbeing.

Provision

Food, fuel, timber and freshwater; some of the key products provided by the New Forest.



Format of our Business Plan 2018 - 2021

National Park Purposes and Duty

This Business Plan is set out around four themes, **Protect, Enjoy, Prosper** and **Achieving Excellence**. The first three are designed to reflect our two purposes and duty as set out in the Environment Act 1995:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.

In taking forward these two purposes, we also have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.

Underpinning all of this is our commitment to providing a high quality of service through our **Achieving Excellence** theme.

An integrated approach

Taking our lead from our purposes and duty, this Business Plan and our Partnership Plan sets out a work programme around Protect, Enjoy and Prosper. However, our goal is to work in an integrated way, linking across themes to achieve progress across the board. At the same time we seek to develop our own organisation and people to deliver efficiently, effectively, creatively and through partnership. There will be six areas of focus over the next three years where we will bring Protect, Enjoy and Prosper together; these are outlined on the following pages.





Archaeological volunteers, Denny Bog



Green Halo meeting at Ordnance Survey headquarters



Pondhead inclosure, Lyndhurst



Wild play day, Hurst Spit

Data and evidence

Decisions need to be underpinned by sound evidence and informed by reliable data. As we shape our thinking about actions underpinned by natural capital, supporting nature, people and the economy in the National Park we will need to invest with partners in our evidence base. In this way we will be able to monitor progress against key challenges and opportunities and engage people in the case for looking after the National Park. The State of the Park Report will be a key focus of this work.



Wildflower meadow

The future of land management

The New Forest is a world capital for wildlife with a unique blend of habitats which support many rare species, the result of people managing the area over hundreds of years. As the UK transitions to a new farm support system post-Brexit we are already working with the Verderers, Commoners Defence Association, National Farmers Union, Country Landowners Association and other partners in a Future Farming Group. This aims to ensure continued support for the land practices that help deliver environmental enhancement and sustain the practice and culture of commoning. The challenge will be to continue to demonstrate that public investment in the New Forest delivers a high level of benefit and to build on good practice in the Crown Lands and beyond.

Working beyond our boundaries

Looking beyond our boundaries is vital, as pressures from around the New Forest become increasingly relevant to the state of the National Park.

We know that plans will come forward for significant development around the National Park, particularly along the Waterside and at the redundant Fawley Power Station. There is strong demand for houses and employment opportunities in this area of the south coast, which remains a highly desirable place to live and work – not least because of its high quality natural environment. Our challenge is to ensure the natural capital of the New Forest National Park and its surrounds is enhanced, ensuring a focus on ‘environmental net gain’ as set out in the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan launched by the Prime Minister in January 2018, and creating an environment that helps improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. Within the National Park, much of this will be addressed through our updated suite of planning policies in the new Local Plan whilst our continuing engagement with surrounding authorities through the ‘duty to cooperate’ will address wider strategic cross boundary planning issues, such as the provision of affordable housing. Alongside this work through the planning system, the developing Green Halo Partnership will continue to bring the private, public and third sectors together to ensure the environment, economy and communities thrive.

People and the National Park

Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan recognises the important link between the quality of the environment and the nation’s health and wellbeing, and the importance of young people, education and interpretation which makes nature relevant to people’s lives. National parks have a role to play with partners in helping to provide opportunities for people to access the special landscape of the National Park. Yet maintaining the spectacular, wildlife-rich but fragile, working landscape and thriving communities is one of our big collective challenges. Delivering the Recreation Management Strategy action plan with our partners, managing the anticipated England Coast Path and supporting the creation of Franchises Lodge in the north of the Forest will be a prominent part of our work and help us move towards a more sustainable¹ approach.

Developing partnerships

While this is a Business Plan for the National Park Authority, much of what needs to be done will be achieved through partnership. Programmes such as the Our Past Our Future Heritage Lottery Fund scheme and Open Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme have transformed the way we work together and we intend to build on their legacies to continue ever-greater partnership working. The Partnership Plan for the National Park will be reviewed by 2020 and will build on the work started in 2015, working together to be greater than the sum of the parts. This is a fresh opportunity for us to combine resources and focus on how we can best deliver for the National Park.

Future generations

We know the New Forest National Park makes a huge contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of the area, helping to make this part of the south coast one of England’s most desirable places in which to live and work. There is an opportunity to ensure that people’s experiences of the National Park today inspire them to continue to care for it in the future. In an increasingly digital world there will be challenges in ensuring that communities living and working in the New Forest are not left behind by the speed of technological innovation happening elsewhere. There will also be opportunities to harness this technology to help people engage with and deepen their understanding of the National Park and its special qualities. Over the period of this Business Plan, we intend to explore fresh approaches and innovations to recruit the next generation of champions, to ensure that the unique culture of the Forest remains cherished and relevant.

Business Plan at a glance

Programmes of Work Summary 2018-2021 Our priorities:

Protect

- 1 Protecting and growing the natural capital across the National Park landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable
- 2 Ensuring new development is sympathetic and in keeping with the National Park, promoting high quality design and environmental net gain
- 3 Conserving the historic and built heritage; supporting local culture with continued focus on commoning

Prosper

- 1 Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy where natural capital is an integral component of doing business
- 2 Promoting connectivity across the National Park through sustainable transport and information and communication technologies
- 3 Supporting the social wellbeing and sustainability of New Forest communities



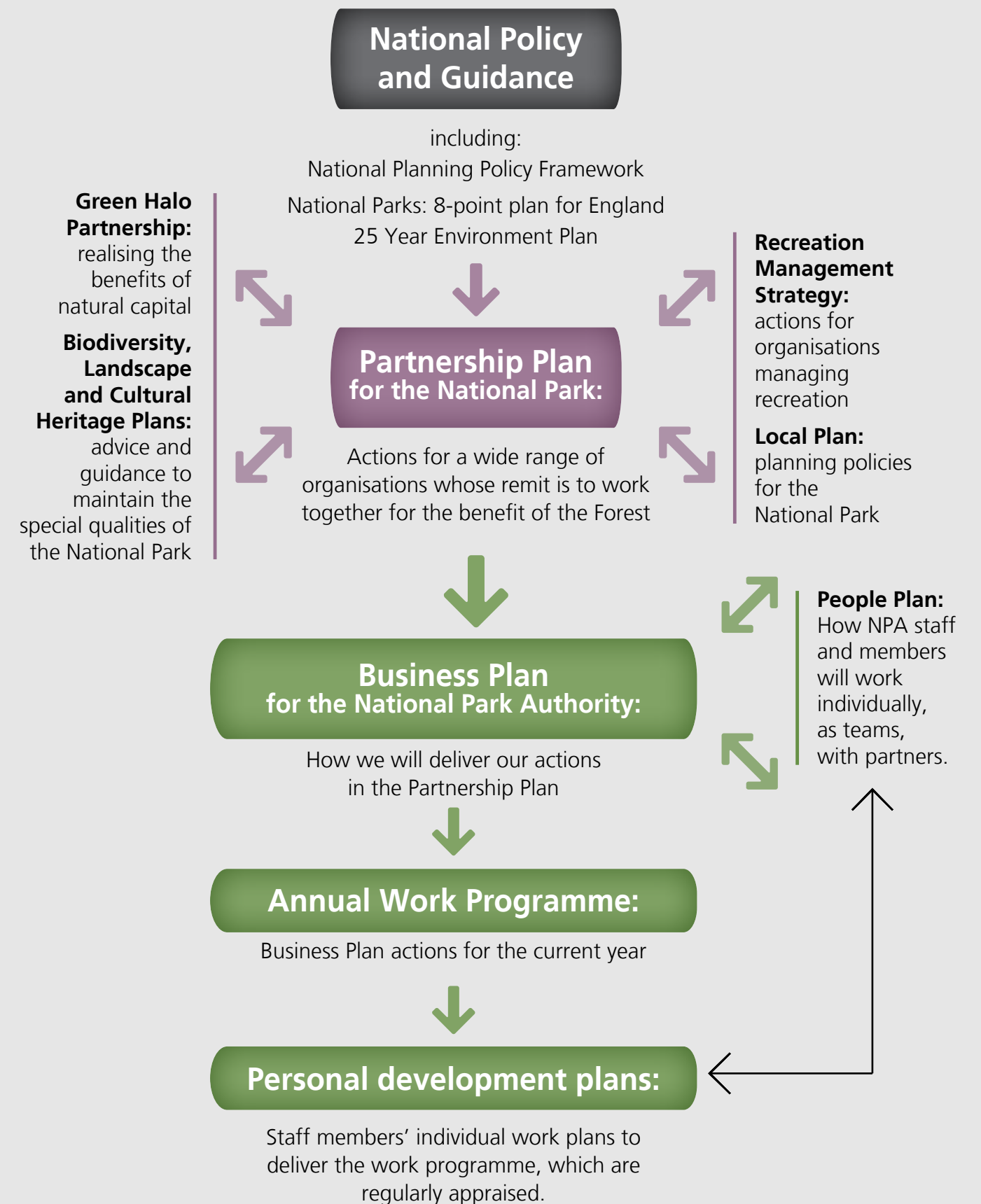
Achieving Excellence

- 1 Maintaining and enhancing a capable, motivated staff team that delivers high quality services
- 2 Championing the National Park and brokering partnerships to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest and its communities
- 3 Identifying new resources and using them alongside our existing resources, effectively and efficiently

Enjoy

- 1 Helping more people to understand and value the things that make the New Forest National Park unique and special
- 2 Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park
- 3 Facilitating a partnership approach to managing recreation to achieve a net gain for both the working and natural landscape as well as for the recreational experience

Plans, Policies and Partnerships guiding our work



Our People and Values

Our team of staff and members are our greatest and most important asset. In taking this plan forward we will work in line with our values and develop these to underpin a positive culture where we are aware of our capacity, capability and development needs. We are united by a sense of pride in working for the New Forest and strive to enjoy our work.

Our values help to shape our culture and reflect our organisation’s principles, standards and ways of working.

These can be summarised as PACT:

P

A

C

T

urpose:
We are dedicated to our work

chievement:
We innovate, inspire and deliver success

are:
We strive to be sustainable in all we do

eamwork:
We work together with openness, integrity and respect.

Role of our members

Our twenty-two Authority members have overall responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, deciding policy direction and overseeing how we achieve our objectives and use resources effectively.

They act in the interests of the National Park as a whole, representing both the local and national perspective. Twelve are appointed by the county, district and borough councils with land within the National Park, six are appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and four are selected from the parish councils within the National Park.

All our members meet four times a year at Lymington Town Hall to make decisions on matters relating to the full functions of the National Park Authority and there are also a number of committees which meet to deal with specific matters:

Planning Committee (13 members)

Determining planning applications:

- Referred by members
- Where the Parish Council has expressed a view contrary to the planning officer
- Which are contrary to our approved policies but which are recommended for approval.

Standards Committee (5 members)

- Promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by our members
- Helps members observe the Authority’s code of conduct and any local protocols.

Resources, Audit And Performance Committee (9 members)

- Financial matters and annual Authority budget
- Performance monitoring
- Human and other resources
- Audit functions.

For more information on our current members and committee details please see our website.

Our staff

As at March 2018, we have 78.16 full time equivalent staff. The teams work together to provide a unique blend of skills that deliver a specialised ‘National Park service’. Roles range from planners and archaeologists to rangers, tree experts to building design professionals, corporate services to land management advisers.

Achieving Excellence and the People Plan

Through the Achieving Excellence theme of our work we measure progress on objectives designed to deliver the highest quality of service.

However, this Business Plan cannot capture everything we do and our core services work across all of the four themes. Each year we will agree **an annual work programme and budget** to deliver this Plan, which will include resource allocations to core services. The Resources, Audit and Performance Committee

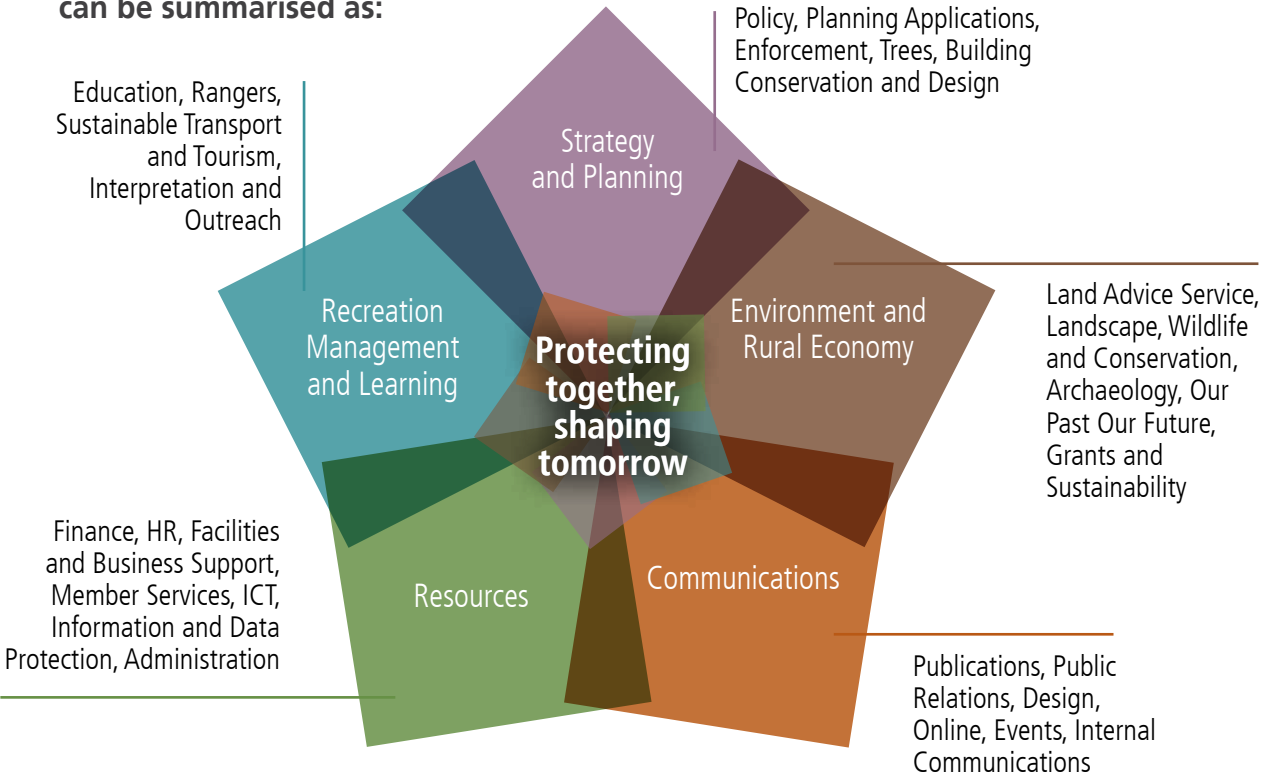
will monitor progress quarterly and work with officers to report this to full Authority.

Recognising people as our biggest asset, we are also developing a **People Plan** to help focus our development as an organisation. This will look at **how** we work (as opposed to this Business Plan which focusses mainly on **what** we do) and will set out actions to further improve our working practices and develop a high-performing team.



Ranger team

The structure of the organisation can be summarised as:



Our Priorities and Objectives for 2018-2021

The diagram on page 8 summarises our priorities at a glance. Presented on the following pages are the full three-year priorities and objectives for Protect, Enjoy, Prosper and Achieving Excellence. Each objective has measurable indicators of success.

The programmes of work should be taken together as a whole, so that they deliver in an integrated way across teams and with partners.

For example, a project might be focussed on improving the natural environment (Protect) but we will always look to ensure we consider and deliver links with the Enjoy and Prosper themes and *vice versa*.



Native bluebells, Roydon Woods, Brockenhurst

1. Priorities for Protect

PROTECT: 1. Protecting and growing the natural capital across the National Park landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable		
Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
1.1.1	Provide clear advice, guidance and training to deliver the Landscape Action Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan and Cultural Heritage Plan	→ Provided advice and training to over 750 landowners, farmers, commoners and land managers within and around the National Park → Ensured regular partner engagement on and monitoring of the delivery of the Landscape Action Plan, Biodiversity Action Plan and Cultural Heritage Plan
1.1.2	Lead a co-ordinated approach to strengthen natural capital ² and ecological networks within and beyond the National Park boundary, supporting Government's ambition for a 'Nature Recovery Network'	→ Supported development and delivery of a programme of practical projects to support the aims of the Green Halo Partnership
1.1.3	Deliver landscape enhancement in the National Park and maintain and enhance the ecosystem services ³ on which the Park depends	→ Played our part in making the case for investment in land management of the Forest for public benefit in line with the 25 Year Environment Plan post Brexit
1.1.4	Identify the key evidence and data requirements needed to inform the conservation of the National Park's special qualities	→ Published an updated State of the Park Report and understand our conservation priorities arising from the 25 Year Environment Plan, especially contributing to objectives for the Open Forest, enclosed lands, woodlands, river catchments and coast

Common snipe, Keyhaven



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

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
1.2.1	Provide a long-term planning vision for the National Park informed by the special qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Adopted a new Local Plan to guide new development in the National Park → Reviewed and updated the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document → Undertaken a review of the Mineral and Waste Plan
1.2.2	Deliver a high quality, proactive planning service that is focussed on securing the best possible outcomes for the National Park and its communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Have reviewed and updated the Development Control Charter → Introduced a more comprehensive set of local KPIs to better monitor performance and planning outcomes → Carried out bi-annual planning applicants' satisfaction survey
1.2.3	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 ⁴ in line with the 25 Year Environment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Agreed a common approach with neighbouring authorities for the provision and management of SANGs outside the National Park → Adopted a joint New Forest Habitat Mitigation Strategy for the strategic mitigation of recreational pressures arising from within and outside the National Park



New build affordable housing, Bransgore

PROTECT: 3. Conserving the historic and built heritage; supporting local culture with continued focus on commoning

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
1.3.1	Direct the management of scheduled and unscheduled monuments to bring them into good condition	→ Improved the condition of at least 30 monuments on the Crown Lands and Open Forest
1.3.2	Work with property owners to improve the condition of historic buildings and heritage features by encouraging repair and renovation, reuse and appropriate management	→ Worked with 100 property owners to improve the condition of listed buildings and heritage features
1.3.3	Foster greater knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of the National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Published a list of non-designated heritage assets in the National Park → Undertaken reviews of three Conservation Area Appraisals
1.3.4	Provide advice and support to secure resources for community-led projects that promote local distinctiveness and commoning way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Facilitated the successful delivery of 21 projects under the Our Past Our Future scheme by 2020 → Established a legacy programme and funding for continued partnership working



Cleaning of historic ice house, Beaulieu

2. Priorities for Enjoy

ENJOY: 1. Helping more people to understand and value the things that make the New Forest National Park unique and special		
Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
2.1.1	Deliver learning and engagement activities (e.g. through rangers, education officers, events, exhibitions and interpretation) for different audiences including a focus on children and young people, making the National Park relevant and accessible and giving them a voice in its future	→ Achieved face-to-face NPA staff contact with an annual total of over 50,000 people (including 12,000 young people), aimed at increasing understanding and engagement
2.1.2	Lead the development and delivery of bespoke curriculum-linked education for schools and colleges at selected National Park sites and in the classroom	→ Ensured, through NPA-led school sessions, and school group visits to partner organisations supported by NPA travel grants, that at least 70% of local schools (128 out of 183) feature the New Forest National Park in their curriculum
2.1.3	Maximise the use of social media and online resources to help a growing number of people to understand, value and care for the New Forest	→ Grown the number of people signing up for our communications by 50% and developed ways to enable us to nurture these contacts and engage our audiences more effectively
2.1.4	Enable organisations with face-to-face public and visitor-facing roles, including educators, businesses and accommodation providers, to be ambassadors for the National Park and its special qualities	→ Through bespoke training and support, engaged with staff and volunteers from at least 12 organisations to help them communicate what makes the National Park special and how people can care for it



Ranger preparing for litter assembly

ENJOY: 2. Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park		
Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
2.2.1	Encourage providers of sites for outdoor recreation to highlight in their visitor information and interpretation the New Forest National Park's special qualities and its status as a nationally-important, living landscape	→ Helped highlight the New Forest's special qualities and National Park status through the sites of at least nine significant organisations and businesses
2.2.2	Work with Natural England, local communities, land owners, land managers and highway authorities, to establish the England Coast Path and improve agreed recreational sites and routes in ways that will reduce impacts on sensitive areas	→ Achieved 'on the ground' access improvements to 15 sites or walking routes (e.g. to surfacing, accessibility and way-marking), including establishing the England Coast Path between Keyhaven and Fawley once the route is confirmed
2.2.3	Work with health providers, communities and businesses to enable people to benefit from improved mental and physical health through engagement with the special qualities of the National Park	→ Engaged with 1,000 people per annum to support improved mental and physical health, including through walking (10,000 hours spent walking for health) and through the inclusive cycling project PEDALL
2.2.4	Work with partners to develop a shared approach to promoting volunteering, building on the success of the Our Past Our Future scheme and the annual volunteer fair, to enable more people to volunteer in ways which benefit the New Forest's special qualities and support their own wellbeing	→ Provided opportunities for 4,000 volunteering days on NPA projects for the Forest



Inclusive cycling, Beaulieu Heath

ENJOY: 3. Facilitating a partnership approach to managing recreation to achieve a net gain for both the working and natural landscape as well as for the recreational experience

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
2.3.1	Gain wide agreement and shared commitment to deliver a new suite of prioritised actions that will improve the management of recreation across and beyond the National Park	→ Published a jointly owned update to the Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030 that includes commitments from named organisations to deliver key actions
2.3.2	Work with partners and facilitate the delivery of co-ordinated communications to influence behaviour and reduce the recreational impact on the 'working Forest' and its special qualities	→ Achieved, with partner organisations, reductions in: litter, petting and feeding of ponies, disturbance of wildlife and animal accidents
2.3.3	Facilitate a review of the sites and routes used for recreation throughout the New Forest and to gain agreement for changes that need to be made, including working with highway authorities and land owners to create a more joined up and safer network of walking and cycling routes between villages and places of interest	→ Worked with partners to deliver new or improved walking and cycle routes and/or crossing points
2.3.4	Undertake and support research, and to collate data that clarifies positive and negative impacts of recreation and the success of recreation management initiatives	→ Established datasets and related monitoring programmes to inform recreation management



Slow down at night campaign

3. Priorities for Prosper

PROSPER: 1. Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy where natural capital is an integral component of doing business

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
3.1.1	Provide leadership regarding the significance of natural capital to the economic performance of the National Park and the wider area	→ Established a shared approach to natural capital accounting that can inform economic decisions for the National Park and its surrounds, working with and through the Green Halo Partnership → Worked with partners to develop a programme of natural capital investment opportunities that can be supported by economic funding programmes
3.1.2	Use the strength of the National Park designation to increase the viability of products associated with the local area	→ Supported New Forest Produce Limited to grow the membership and increase income of the New Forest Marque → Developed a local Protected Food Name Status scheme ⁵ for National Park producers
3.1.3	Work with partners to develop a sustainable, authentic visitor experience that protects the special qualities of the National Park and respects its communities	→ Worked with partners to establish agreed actions to further the sustainability of tourism → Supported the New Forest Trust in the development of a successful Visitor Gift Scheme



Our Past, Our Future project members

PROSPER: 2. Promoting connectivity across the National Park through sustainable transport information and communication technologies

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
3.2.1	Encourage travel to and around the National Park by sustainable forms of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Engaged with at least 100 businesses about sustainable travel and delivered face-to-face information to an annual total of 8,000 people through the concierge service → Maintained a sustainable operation of the New Forest Tour, with overall customer satisfaction of at least 4.5 out of 5 → Secured the addition of 12 electric vehicle charging points in the National Park
3.2.2	Utilise data and technology to improve sustainability, support economic development, and enhance quality of life for people living in, working in and visiting the National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Worked in partnership to develop a plan for a 'smart' National Park⁶, fit for the next generation → Secured additional investment in sensitively located digital and mobile infrastructure

PROSPER: 3. Supporting the social wellbeing and sustainability of New Forest communities

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
3.3.1	Promote affordable housing to address local needs and support the management of the National Park landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Consented at least 20 new affordable homes
3.3.2	Support the sharing of innovative ideas and good environmental practice through local action groups, businesses and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Engaged with 50 community groups and offered support through the Sustainable Communities Fund → Supported initiatives to reduce the use of plastic and encourage reuse and recycling → Participated in the 2019 Year of Green Action by creating projects around the #iwill campaign, working with the National Citizen Service Trust
3.3.3	Continue to support the take up of low carbon / renewable energy technologies in support of the Clean Growth Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Encouraged the return to management of 15 woodland sites to help supply timber and wood fuel markets → Provided advice on the installation of renewable energy installations to 15 community groups

4. Priorities for Achieving Excellence

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE: 1. Maintaining and enhancing a capable, motivated staff team that delivers high quality services

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
4.1.1	Recruit and retain high-calibre people and provide opportunities for learning and development within a flexible, healthy and safe work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Implemented a People Plan to support continuous improvement, effective and efficient working practices internally, with members, our partners and across the wider National Park family → Expanded our apprenticeships initiative to build this resource across our organisation and with our partners
4.1.2	Deliver high standards of service that reflects our status as a National Park Authority at all levels, both internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Maintained a high level of staff satisfaction (monitored through the staff survey) → Reviewed our service delivery across the organisation in the light of feedback from stakeholders and customers
4.1.3	Ensure that we comply with our data protection obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Reviewed and updated our records management systems to ensure that the Authority complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE: 2. Championing the National Park and brokering partnerships to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest and its communities

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
4.2.1	Support and develop partnerships and fora that further our purposes and duty (including for the Partnership Plan, Green Halo Partnership, New Forest Consultative Panel, New Forest Access Forum and parish quadrant meetings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Agreed a revised Partnership Plan with our partners → Created and maintained a database of current and future projects, ensuring join-up with other organisations establishing a portfolio of planned outline projects ready for implementation as funds become available
4.2.2	Increase public engagement with and awareness of our work through our communication channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Delivered a communications strategy, clearly defining audiences and messaging to support our Business Plan objectives
4.2.3	Work with partner organisations, individuals and communities to build a Team New Forest ⁷ focussed on being greater than the sum of our parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Established new ways of supporting staff development and sharing good practice and resources with our partners

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE: 3. Identifying new resources and using them alongside our existing resources, effectively and efficiently

Objectives		By 2021 we will have:
4.3.1	Seek additional opportunities for external / commercial funding for our work	→ Created a framework within which staff can develop income generating ideas and opportunities → Supported National Parks Partnerships Ltd. ⁸ in achieving sponsorship of national parks
4.3.2	Provide reliable, cost effective IT services and robust systems that enable us to be adaptable, responsive and flexible in our work	→ Introduced a cloud-based IT system under Office 365 allowing easier ways to access, collate, analyse and share data → Upgraded the planning database, improving the functionality of the system, allowing integration with mobile devices and compliance with legislative requirements
4.3.3	Ensure we maintain robust financial reporting, records management and cyber security processes	→ Maintained unqualified audit opinions and clean value for money conclusions from our auditors each year → Increased data security against cyber threats
4.3.4	Continue to deliver efficiency savings by reviewing internal processes, procedures and procurement, ensuring that these support and promote our environmental protection and sustainability lead role in the New Forest	→ Reviewed and updated our SLAs in delivering and receiving specialist services to/from other local authorities → Significantly reduced paper usage from 2018 baseline and increased electronic distribution of documents such as agendas and reports

Resources

Investing in the National Park

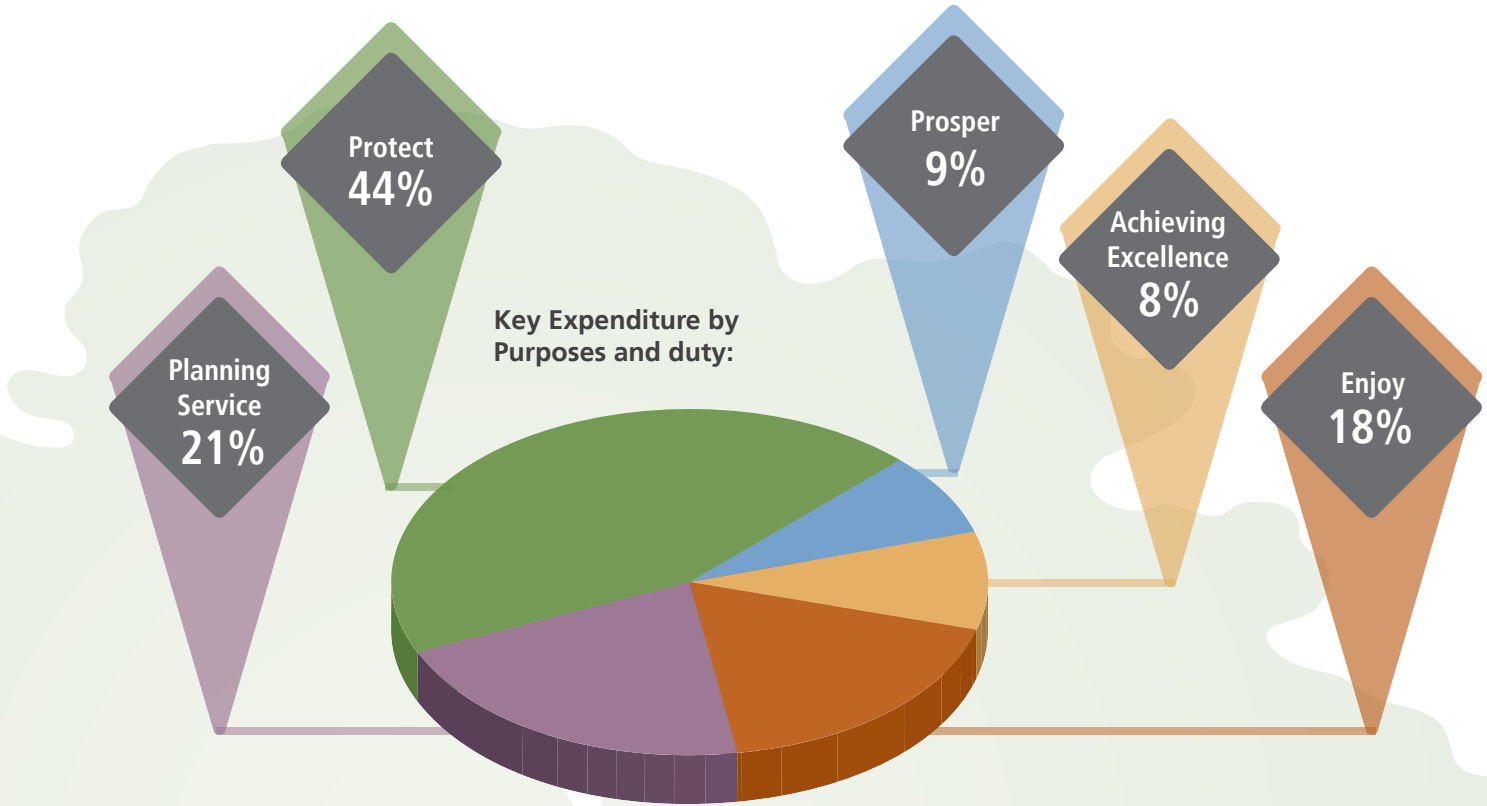
Two multi-million pound schemes, of which we are partners; the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme and the Heritage Lottery Fund Our Past Our Future scheme, are making a real difference on the ground but will come to an end in this plan period. We will be working with partners to prepare new projects and secure new resources from a range of sources, including seeking support from the Local Enterprise Partnerships and Government rural development funds.

Annual Finances

Each year of the Business Plan we will present a full, balanced budget to the Authority in March and monitor those finances carefully through the years using the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee. The Authority will look to maintain its core income and expenditure budgets around £4m and top this up with externally-funded, often partnership, projects which in recent years have added a further £1m (equating to £13 for every £1 invested by the Authority into these projects). The indicative income and expenditure amounts each year are:

Key Income:	£	Key Expenditure:	£
Defra Grant*	3,200,000	Employee Costs	2,750,000
Planning Fees & Grants	350,000	Programme Fund	280,000
Shared Services	275,000	Planning (non-staff)	60,000
Income Generation / Misc	100,000	Members	60,000
Partnership Projects	1,000,000	HR / ICT	275,000
		Offices	200,000
		Corporate Services	300,000
		Partnership Projects	1,000,000

* The Authority's Defra grant is currently protected up to the end of 2019/20 and therefore the funding for the final year of the Business Plan will fall into the next Comprehensive Spending Review, making it less certain.



National Parks’ Performance Indicators

All of the English national park authorities collect the same set of indicators each year to allow identification of both trends and impacts. However, it should be noted that the ability to affect change on some of those indicators can be outside the direct control of the Authority. These national indicators are therefore supplemented each year by a set of local indicators, more specific to the work and circumstances of each national park authority.

National Indicators		2021 Target/ Indicator*
Conservation of the natural environment		
Area of SSSI land in the National Park: 32,190 ha		
% of SSSI land in ‘favourable’ condition		60%
% of SSSI land in ‘recovering’ condition		39%
Total length of regularly monitored water courses: 280km		
% length of regularly monitored water courses with ‘high’ or ‘good’ ecological status		50%
% length of regularly monitored water courses with ‘moderate’ ecological status		49%
Conservation of the cultural heritage		
Number of conservation areas		20*
Number of listed buildings		625*
Number of listed buildings at risk		8
Number of scheduled ancient monuments		216
Number of scheduled ancient monuments at risk		3

National Indicators		2021 Target/ Indicator*
Recreation management		
Estimated total number of visitors to the National Park (STEAM survey data)		4.29m*
Total number of volunteer days organised or supported by the NPA		1,000
Total value of volunteer days organised or supported by the NPA		£50,000
Number of those days attended by under-represented groups		80
% of those days attended by under-represented groups		8%
Total length of footpaths and other Rights of Way: 326km		
% of total length of footpaths and other Rights of Way that were easy to use by members of the public		80%
Promoting understanding		
One paragraph at year-end on what has been achieved within promoting understanding and with the under-represented groups so that the breadth of work across different national parks is demonstrated.		
Development control (circa 1,000 applications received annually)		
% of planning applications by type dealt with in a timely manner:		
Major applications determined within 13 weeks		60%
Minor applications determined within eight weeks		70%
Other applications determined within eight weeks		80%
% of planning application approved		80%
		2021 target set by Government



Commoners' stock on Forest roads

Endnotes

1. Sustainability can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly).
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The EU protected food name scheme highlights regional and traditional foods whose authenticity and origin can be guaranteed. Under this system, a named food or drink registered at a European level, will be given legal protection against imitation throughout the EU. Defra has indicated that the UK will continue to use this system after the UK leaves the EU.
6. Adopting the principle of a 'Smart City' which uses different types of electronic data collection sensors to supply information which is used to manage assets and resources efficiently.
7. Gives expression to the aim of separate New Forest organisations working together as one.
8. A limited liability partnership set up by the UK's 15 national parks in order to create successful partnerships between the UK Parks and businesses.



Above: Future Forest consultation, New Forest Show 2017.
Front: Young participant at Family trees planting event, Brockenhurst.



Contact us

New Forest National Park Authority

Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road,
Lymington SO41 9ZG

Telephone: 01590 646600

enquiries@newforestnpa.gov.uk

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk



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