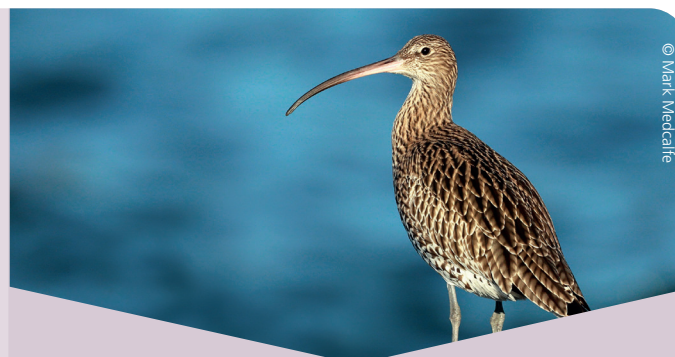


'Big themes' and future challenges for the new Partnership Plan



1

Ensuring the New Forest is resilient in the face of the climate and nature emergencies.



2

Making sure spaces for wildlife are bigger, better and more joined up.



3

Managing recreational pressures by improving people's awareness and understanding.



4

Supporting cultural heritage, local communities and more sustainable transport.



5

Establishing a stronger partnership to accelerate economic recovery as a result of Covid-19.

Our purposes and duty

As specified in the Environment Act of 1995 national park authorities have a responsibility to:

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

Working in partnership with other organisations it is also our duty to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.

We sum this up as:

Protect – Enjoy – Prosper

For any enquiries and the full Partnership Plan: **Call** 01590 646679 | **Email** policy@newforestnpa.gov.uk
newforestnpa.gov.uk/partnershipplan

NPA 01062

Progress report 2020

Partnership Plan for the New Forest National Park



Hatchnet Pond sunrise © Nick Lucas

All national parks have a partnership plan for their area, to help guide the work of partners with responsibilities and an interest in the national park.

2020 is the final year of the current five-year New Forest National Park Partnership Plan. Most of the 90 actions in the Plan have been fully or at least partly completed, which is a great achievement given the wide variety of different actions and partners involved.

The Partnership Plan is owned and delivered by a wide range of organisations and as partners,

we are collectively responsible for carrying out and monitoring the progress of the actions.

This is the last update under the current Plan and highlights some key successes as well as case studies that show how people are involved in making a difference for the Forest.

This report also looks ahead to some of the opportunities

and challenges for the next Partnership Plan 2020-2025.

To help shape this new Partnership Plan, please sign up to our email newsletter on our website to be kept informed: newforestnpa.gov.uk

New Forest National Park Partnership Plan Partners

Produced jointly by:





Case study: Rare lowland heathland restoration reaps rewards

A new stronghold for the rare nightjar bird and other wildlife has been established in the north of the New Forest thanks to the total transformation of a commercial tree plantation. A diverse landscape of rare lowland heathland, woodland and wetland has been created at Foxbury, a 350-acre site acquired by the National Trust. Foxbury is the largest project in the New Forest National Park Authority's £4.4m landscape partnership scheme Our Past, Our Future, which is backed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Restoration work has included removing invasive species such as pine and rhododendron – allowing native trees, wildflowers and shrubs to re-establish – as well as planting 18,000 trees with the help of volunteers. The result has been a huge increase in wildlife from birds to butterflies.

A third of Foxbury is now woodland. A herd of belted Galloway cattle and six New Forest ponies graze the land to keep the grasses and invasive plant saplings at bay. The site is now open to the public for a range of special events such as wild play days and ranger-led walks.

Jacob White, the National Trust's area ranger, said: 'Foxbury is a huge success story for the National Park, not just through the regeneration of rare habitats and colonisation of wildlife, but also through its ability to involve members of the community from all walks of life through education, learning and volunteering. The scheme has also seen a car park installed and a basecamp created featuring three timber cabins, benches, a den building area, bug hotels and a mud kitchen.'

Highlights Protect

LH6 Page 20

28 locations saw verges restored for wildlife and grazing thanks to education and practical measures such as ditches and posts to stop parking.

LH8 Page 21

35 organisms including fish, amphibians, birds and mammals identified by eDNA surveys at Hatchet Pond.

LH10 Page 21

5,300 face-to-face interviews conducted at 60 car parks as part of a Government-funded study into visitor pressures on the New Forest's habitats.

LH12 Page 21

60 volunteers from Hampshire Ornithological Society carried out a New Forest-wide survey of the rare Woodlark and found 169 nests.

LH14 Page 21

8 local wildlife sites re-surveyed and samples taken to inform their condition over time.

LM1 Page 22

3,000 lost or forgotten archaeological sites recorded with LiDAR over across 23,000 hectares of the open Crown Lands by expert staff and with the help of volunteers.



Verges protected by dragons teeth

LM3 Page 22

3,300 tonnes of nitrogen removed annually by natural habitats in the Solent – the equivalent of removing 13 Olympic swimming pools worth of nitrogen.

LM5 Page 23

1,000ha of woodland brought into Woodland Management Plans and Countryside Stewardship Schemes so they're managed better for wildlife.

LM8 Page 23

48 New Forest farmers and commoners given information and updates about grants and policy post-Brexit at an event run by the New Forest Land Advice Service.

LD7 Page 25

1 Estates Officer given a permanent role with Forestry England to work with parishes and residents to protect New Forest habitats.

CC2 Page 26

25 miles of intertidal habitat along the New Forest coastline surveyed to provide information on its condition.

CC3 Page 26

20 miles of rivers and streams restored, including mires and streams at more than 60 locations.

ST3 Page 27

£60,000 given by National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative fund for landscape improvements at Warren Copse, Holbury and Landford Bog.

Highlights Enjoy

SQ1 Page 28

300,000 people viewed social media campaigns educating and signposting them to information about ground nesting birds.

SQ3 Page 28

4,800 volunteer days supported by the New Forest Volunteer Ranger Service through staff resources, funding and training.

SQ6 Page 29

100 people attended the 2019 New Forest Water Forum Event to raise awareness about and promote work to restore ponds, rivers and streams.

EP1 Page 31

4 local community groups improved open spaces for people and wildlife at Milford, New Milton, Hordle, Wellow and Landford.

EP2 Page 31

£10,000 spent on upgrading the popular circular walk known as the Lepe Loop.

EP5 Page 31

7 large, annual, cycle events complied with most aspects of the Cycle Event Organisers' Charter.

EP7 Page 31

£300,000 of funding secured for Blashford Lakes nature reserve to improve habitats and access.

Highlights Prosper

LC5 Page 32

15 affordable flats and houses built in Bransgore, Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst, including affordable rented and shared ownership.

EW2 Page 34

£1.2 million of EU grants awarded to 40 local businesses by the New Forest LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 to create 32 new jobs.

EW5 Page 34

162 businesses are now members of the New Forest Marque quality assurance scheme for local produce – up 20% since 2017.

EW7 Page 34

23,300 homes and businesses upgraded to superfast broadband; 16,300 to ultrafast speeds and 1,400 with fibre-to-the-premises ultrafast broadband.

EW8 Page 35

36 building conservation courses run, with 350 professionals and homeowners trained in traditional building skills.

TT9 Page 37

6,300 visitors and residents given help and information by the travel concierge team in 2019.

TT11 Page 37

115,000 downloads of the New Forest walking app providing approved walks for people on the Rights of Way network and on waymarked trails.

Case study:

Supporting New Forest businesses and the community during COVID-19

The New Forest Marque has been supporting local producers during COVID-19 by helping deliver goods to the community and providing business support and advice. All 162 members of the New Forest Marque scheme were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown, although more than half adapted their services and were still trading in some way.

Many local retailers, caterers, butchers, bakers, farmers, and growers were working at full capacity to serve their local towns and villages across the New Forest and were potentially a lifeline for the elderly and vulnerable in their communities. Marque members were helping people to stay home and save lives by offering online ordering and deliveries, while others were busy making up boxes of goods grown or produced in the New Forest, such as vegetables, fruit, meats and cheeses.

Elsewhere in the Forest, mills were working all hours producing much-needed flour which the National Park rangers delivered to farm shops. Gin suppliers were switching their production to hand sanitiser and worked with Marque skincare producers to add new properties and fragrances. While hotels and guest houses had to shut their doors to the public, some were offering accommodation to NHS staff. Claire Lee, New Forest Marque Manager, added: 'I'm amazed at the interesting ways people are adapting their businesses, supporting the community and helping people stay at home.'

