



Protecting
together,
shaping
tomorrow

Annual Review 2018 – 2019



Chairman's and Chief Executive's statement

It's a crucial moment in time for the future of the New Forest National Park.

Building a 'Team New Forest' across organisations and communities is vital if we are to all make best use of our resources and ensure we have a strong collective voice to champion the New Forest National Park. This annual review shows the many ways in which the New Forest National Park Authority is bringing people together to do just this; improving the environment, supporting land management that delivers public benefit and connecting people with the natural world – key aspects of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan published in January 2018.

Many of the pressing issues we are dealing with at a local scale reflect the reports that we've seen published over the past year showing worrying trends for wildlife and climate nationally and indeed internationally. In this context, we are working with partners to address crucial questions for the future:

- What are the priorities for wildlife?
- How do we best manage our landscape for nature and fund this following Brexit?
- How do we provide housing for our communities while protecting the Forest?

- How do we help people connect with nature to engender both stewardship and wellbeing?

These questions are at the fore in 2019 as we mark 70 years since the creation of a network of protected landscapes; the 'Glover Review' set up by Government to examine the role of protected landscapes in England in the 21st Century has been a key focus, building from Sir Arthur Hobhouse's report that paved the way for the first National Parks. We were delighted to host Julian Glover and his team in the autumn and be able to introduce them to the New Forest and to many of the key people from a range of organisations working for its future across our shared themes of 'Protect, Enjoy and Prosper'. With the Review set to report in autumn 2019, we hope for a fresh mandate for protection of wildlife and protected landscapes, with emphasis on the importance of engaging more people in caring for them and championing their benefits to modern society.

We are determined that the New Forest is a place where the 25 Year Environment Plan can be seen in action

in the years to come, where our environment is central to decision-making about our communities and economy – a 'natural capital' approach.

This year much of our focus has been on strengthening partnerships, building new collaborations and finding fresh approaches to make this happen, looking both within and beyond the National Park boundary. Our huge thanks goes to staff, our members and our partners for all that has been achieved together this year towards ensuring this special place thrives into the future.

Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, Chairman

Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

About the New Forest National Park Authority

Our vision

- The vision for the National Park in 20 years' time is of an area which has a unique and immediately recognisable sense of place, where:
- tranquillity and a feeling of naturalness pervade large parts of the Park
 - the mosaic of distinctive landscapes and habitats are all of the highest quality and a great variety of wildlife is able to flourish
 - there is a strong sense and understanding of the heritage and living culture of the Forest
 - all visitors can gain inspiration, health and wellbeing and enjoy the extensive areas of land with open access
 - the far-reaching consequences of climate change are taken into account in all policies and future plans
 - people live and work sustainably and contribute to the care of the Forest
 - local, regional and national organisations recognise the value of the National Park and there is a shared understanding of its role within the wider area
 - everyone contributes in appropriate ways to keeping the National Park a special place for present and future generations.

Our mission – National Park purposes

- As guardians of a national park the New Forest National Park Authority has statutory purposes and socio-economic responsibilities as specified in the Environment Act of 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.

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

We like to sum this up as:

Protect
Enjoy
Prosper



Right: The UK's 15 National Parks
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Our Authority board members 2018-19

National Park Authority members have overall responsibility for making decisions. They are responsible for setting policies and priorities, ensuring efficient and effective use of resources, and that money is well spent. It is their job to represent the interests of the National Park and to balance out any conflicting pressures.

Thanks go to all members who have served over the last year, in particular to Phil Marshall who sadly passed away in 2018. Phil was a diligent and well-respected member of the Authority and he is much missed.

Local authority appointees



David Harrison,
Chairman of
Resources, Audit
and Performance
Committee



Edward Heron,
Deputy Chairman
of the Authority



Gordon Bailey,
Deputy Chairman
of Planning
Committee



Richard Frampton



Penny Jackman
(to July 2018)



Richard Clewer



Ann Sevier
(from September
2018)



Mel Kendal



Keith Mans



Leo Randall,
Chairman of
Planning Committee



Barry Rickman



Neville Penman



Pat Wyeth

Secretary of State appointees



Oliver
Crosthwaite-Eyre,
Chairman of
the Authority



Phil Marshall,
Chairman of
Standards
Committee
(to September
2018)



Patrick Heneghan



Marian Spain,
Deputy Chairman
of Resources, Audit
and Performance
Committee (to
November 2018)



Gavin Parker



David Bence

Parish appointees



Richard Taylor



George Bisson,
Deputy Chairman
of Standards
Committee



Harry Oram



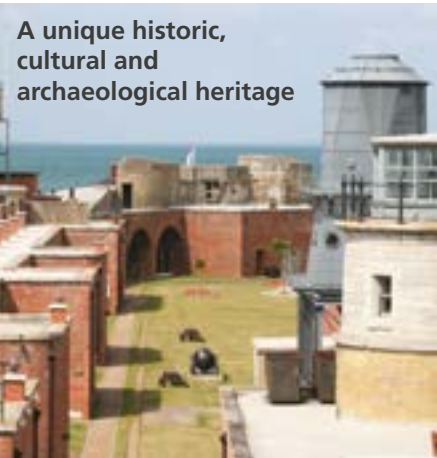
John Sanger

Our 22 members do not represent any particular political group. Driven by the National Park purposes and duty, they work with officers to establish and then deliver our work programme, with operational aspects delegated to officers.

- 12 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
- four are selected from the parish councils within the National Park.

What makes the New Forest National Park so special?

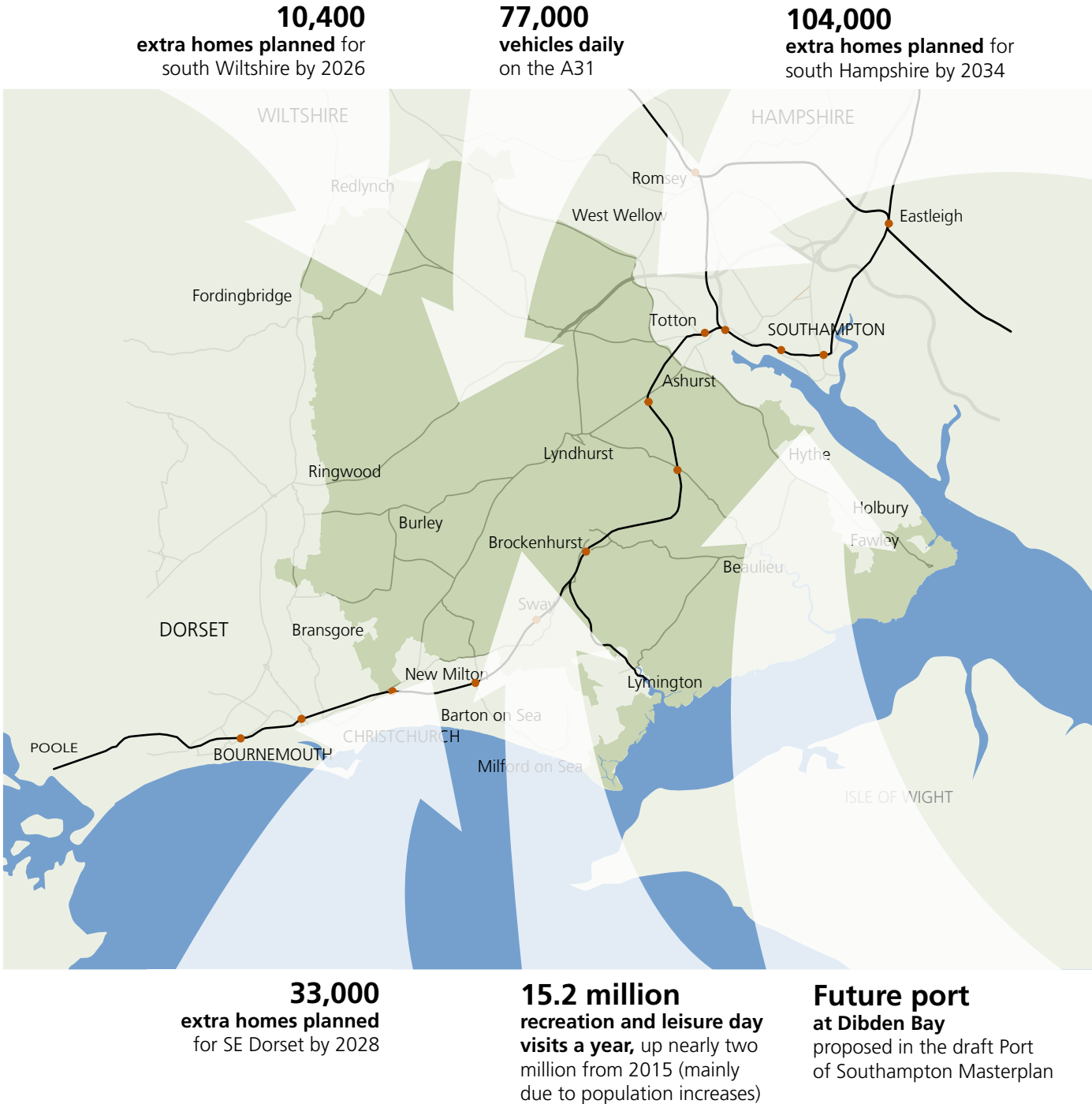
These are the ‘special qualities’ of the New Forest National Park – what makes it unique and recognisable and distinguishes it from all other places in the country.



Images © NFNPA unless stated

A changing context for the New Forest National Park

To meet these challenges, we have worked closely with our partner organisations and neighbouring authorities to maximise opportunities for ‘net environmental gain’ and to mitigate the impacts of new development on the National Park’s habitats and wildlife.



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PROTECT



Creating space for nature in the New Forest National Park

Spotted flycatcher
©Shutterstock

Dragonfly
© Mark Heighes



Wildlife globally and across the UK is in decline and sadly national parks are not excluded from this trend. Paul Walton, Head of Environment and Rural Economy at the New Forest National Park Authority, tells us about the issues in the New Forest and what is being done to tackle them.

Never has there been a more important time to come together to lead action for wildlife.

In launching a global assessment report on biodiversity Sir Bob Watson of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) called for policy makers and practitioners to provide clarity on what the future might look like for nature and set a clear agenda for our joint priorities for wildlife. This is as true in the New Forest as globally.

The State of Nature Report 2016 (produced by a partnership of over 50 conservation organisations) identified two key factors as being responsible for much of the decline in UK wildlife: agriculture and climate change.

Intensive agricultural practice squeezes out wildlife, while climate change will mean there are winners and losers, with key species struggling to adapt to the change in conditions and nowhere to go as habitats change. While not immune to the impacts of climate change, the Crown lands at the heart of the National Park have benefitted from the continuity of the commoning system and forest management. This relatively

stable system of land management has meant that the area remains one of the most important and extensive sites for nature conservation in Europe. The key challenges here are maintaining the long-term viability of commoning, finding ways to restore fragmented habitats that once covered a much greater area and managing the people pressure the location of the New Forest brings.

Beyond the Crown lands, in the other 50% of the 200 square miles of our National Park, mainstream farming practices have largely followed national trends with similar consequences for wildlife and loss of semi-natural habitats. Add in the need to manage the effects of recreation and pressures of development and population growth beyond the National Park boundary and the need to address these challenges with a range of measures becomes apparent.

So how are we tackling these challenges in the New Forest?

We're working hard to ensure our spaces for wildlife are bigger, better and more joined up. We can only do this through a combined effort of

organisations and landowners working together for wildlife.

Considerable investment has already gone in to enhancing key habitats through two multi-million pound schemes which the National Park Authority is part of.

On the Crown Lands and Open Forest, one aspect of the Verderers Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (worth £19 million over 10 years) has restored miles of internationally-important wetlands for wildlife.

Elsewhere in the National Park, the £4.4 million National Lottery Heritage Fund Our Past, Our Future landscape partnership scheme is improving woodlands, ponds, rivers and hedgerows, and removing invasive species, which crowd out native plants from our woodlands and waterways.

The New Forest National Park Authority also supports conservation efforts through a number of other schemes and partnerships.

You can read about what has been achieved to date throughout this annual review.

We will be joining with non-governmental organisations, developers, landowners and farmers to ensure the value of national parks for both wildlife and people is acknowledged and that we work together in constructive ways to manage the pressures that the New Forest is under to ensure the National Park delivers more for wildlife in the future.



Adders, male and female
© Tony Bates



Improving the Beaulieu River catchment

Beaulieu River
© Sam Loades

The New Forest is one of the most important sites for freshwater plants and animals in the UK.

The Living Waters project includes reducing small sources of pollution with help from the Beaulieu estate, tenant farmers and horse owners; training 35 volunteers who regularly monitor water quality, and a campaign to encourage local communities to reduce pollution.

Naomi Ewald of the Freshwater Habitats Trust said:

'So far the results show that 80% of the water bodies sampled in the Beaulieu catchment have clean water. This is outstanding compared with other river catchments we've surveyed.'

Further funding has been confirmed by the Environment Agency to improve the water quality of Hatchet Pond – one of the most important freshwater waterbodies for wildlife in the UK.

Unveiling a 'secret forest'

In 2018 we joined with the RSPB to purchase a 1,000 acre woodland called Franchises Lodge near Nomansland in the north of the National Park.

The size of over 1,300 football pitches, it provides a vital link for wildlife between two internationally-important areas – Langley Wood National Nature Reserve in the north and the New Forest Special Protection Area in the south, making a huge section of the New Forest better for nature and more joined up.

This year we signed a 'memorandum of understanding', outlining joint plans for the site. Walks and meetings were held with the community and a

fundraising campaign was launched.

We and the RSPB submitted a joint bid to National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative fund to clear invasive rhododendron, improve footpaths within the reserve, renovate three protected Bronze Age burial mounds and remove building rubble that had been fly-tipped there.

The RSPB also announced it wants to develop a residential educational facility, renovating a derelict cottage on the site to provide a base from

which small groups of young people will be able to have exceptional, immersive experiences in nature. The Cameron Bepolka Trust has donated £350,000 towards creating and running 'Cameron's Cottage'. The next step is to submit a planning application.

Peter Exley, RSPB Public Affairs Manager said: 'Our vision together is to create a place that will inspire the next generation of naturalists and conservationists.'

Our Past, Our Future

The Our Past, Our Future (OPOF) landscape partnership scheme ensures that the New Forest is better equipped to thrive through change and modern-day pressures.

- The 21 projects come under the themes of:
- Restoring lost landscapes
 - Developing Forest skills
 - Discovering Forest heritage and inspiring a new generation
 - Monitoring and evaluation.

The £4.4 million scheme is led by us, with 10 other partners and is backed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and ends in 2020.

Here are some of the habitats, wildlife and heritage achievements of 2018-2019...

Find out more about other Our Past, Our Future work at newforestnpa.gov.uk/landscapepartnership



Crossbill © iStock / Frank Leung

Wildlife sightings double

Bats, butterflies and birds are beginning to thrive at newly managed woodlands, meadows and hedgerows thanks to the Our Past, Our Future scheme.

Monitoring of restored wildlife sites by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust has seen nearly 7,000 new records of over 200 different species.

Highlights included a newly planted hedgerow being used for the first time since 2017 as a flight path by common pipistrelle bats.

Several sites have seen a doubling or tripling of butterfly and bird species, including the crossbill, spotted flycatcher and dark green fritillary.

The impact

7,000 new wildlife records at restored sites

The New Forest Land Advice Service



The New Forest Land Advice Service team

The Land Advice Service helps landowners manage their land for wildlife through advice, practical work and access to grants.

It's a partnership between the National Park Authority, Forestry England and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and is hosted by us.

The Service runs rural skills training for landowners, managers and commoners on skills as varied as coppicing, hedgelaying and venison butchery as part of the Our Past, Our Future scheme.

See [over](#) for some of the other OPOF projects the Service has worked on:



The impact

40 hectares of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) restored

Aberdeen Angus cattle grazing at Emery Down SINC to restore it for wildlife

Nature's Stepping Stones project

There are a large number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the New Forest, ranging from small ponds to woodland and open grassland.

They help to buffer and connect natural areas, provide ecological networks and increase the resilience of wildlife.

A number of SINCs are in a poor condition and the New Forest Land Advice Service is working with the

owners and managers of grassland, heathland, coastal and wetland SINCs to ensure they're managed in the best way.

Over 40 hectares of SINCs have been restored at 28 sites since 2016. This has included installing fencing, a bridge and a gate at Emery Down SINC so a commoner's Aberdeen Angus cattle can graze the meadows, making the site better for wildlife.



Comtois horses extracting felled timber

Working Woodlands project

Over 40% of private woodlands in the New Forest are unmanaged, meaning the sites aren't generally as good for nature, people or the economy as they might be.

With the help of volunteers and contractors, we've restored and enhanced over 130 hectares of woodland at 22 privately-owned woodland sites since 2016. Practical conservation work has taken place on privately-owned woodland, meadow and heathland sites. Some sites have required a more traditional approach – a woodland at Pilleys was impossible to access with machinery so comtois horses were used to extract the timber.

Project partners:



Our Past, Our Future
Working together for the New Forest



LOTTERY FUNDED

Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme

In numbers

The New Forest scheme is the largest agri-environment scheme in Great Britain.

Here are some of the achievements since it started in 2010.

14,000

school children went on visits to learn more about the New Forest

3,000

archaeological sites identified and recorded following a laser scanning survey of the whole national park, equivalent to 125,000 football pitches

50

ponds surveyed to gather data on rare species

30

surveys of rare species to see how they're faring and how we can help them

500

commoners signed up to the Verderers Grazing Scheme, receiving payments when they demonstrate responsible practices

218

foals born to improve the gene pool of the rare and threatened New Forest breed, which is essential in shaping the landscape

12

miles of verges restored and protected after vehicle damage, to save rare plants and grazing areas

20

miles of streams and mires restored to their natural courses, which won the UK River Prize

200

sites saw invasive rhododendron plants removed which crowd out native species, meaning the whole Open Forest has been treated

23

pounds rebuilt in hardwood, to improve safety and ensure they last longer. The pounds play an important role in the success of commoning and are symbols of the unique cultural heritage of the New Forest

17,000

reflective collars fitted to ponies, donkeys and cattle to help prevent road accidents

1,250

requests by commoners for land management advice, training and grant application support to the New Forest Land Advice Service

600

hectares of invasive bracken harvested or treated to restore the equivalent of 960 football pitches of grassland habitat



Before: A very straight channel at Wootton before being restored



After: Meanders reconnected and embankments lowered after restoration at Wootton

The impact

20 miles of streams restored

WINNER 2019 UK River Prize

The Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS)

Great Britain's largest agri-environment scheme, worth £19 million over 10 years from 2010-2020.

The scheme works to protect and enhance the internationally-important habitats which support a wide number of rare species.

The HLS agreement with Natural England is held by the Verderers of the New Forest. The scheme is managed by them in partnership with Forestry England and the New Forest National Park Authority.

Restoring the National Park's unique wetland habitat is a large element of the scheme.

So far over 20 miles of streams that had previously been deepened or realigned during the Victorian period have been returned to their natural water courses. Many of the streams and mires were failing current ecological standards but now their natural processes have been restored, making the habitats better for wildlife and commoning, to reduce flooding and make them more resilient to drought.

The scheme won the prestigious 2019 UK River Prize.

Nick Wardlaw, Higher Level Stewardship Manager at Forestry England said: 'The New Forest is an internationally important wetland and home to 75% of the remaining valley mires, or boggy areas, in north-western Europe. Over the last nine years this project has been painstakingly restoring wetlands across the New Forest, changing artificially straightened streams to return their natural meanders and bends, and protecting them from further erosion.'

Martin Janes, Managing Director of The River Restoration Centre said: 'It was impossible to ignore the huge amount of work that this partnership has undertaken over the past nine years leading to the improvement and protection of rare wetland habitat.'

'Visually, the finished work demonstrates incredible attention to detail, often restoring the stream component to its old course and floodplain with remarkably few visible scars to the landscape, as if it had been there for centuries.'

The partners are pushing for the HLS scheme to continue after March 2020.

'It was impossible to ignore the huge amount of work that this partnership has undertaken over the past nine years leading to the improvement and protection of rare wetland habitat.'
River Restoration Centre



Royal approval for woodland warriors

Pondhead Conservation Trust is a community woodland project restoring 200 acres of woodland at Lyndhurst to improve the site’s biodiversity and enable local people to enjoy it.

Run entirely by volunteers who provide over 4,000 hours of work each year, the Trust works with diverse groups within the community.

The woodland is managed on a fully sustainable basis and is funded by running craft courses and producing high quality BBQ charcoal, which is sold through a network of New Forest outlets.

The Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire presented ‘the MBE of voluntary service’ to Pondhead Conservation Trust on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen in September.

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a voluntary organisation in the UK and is subject to a rigorous selection process, with the final decision resting with the Cabinet Office in London. The award was established to mark the Queen’s Golden Jubilee in 2002; there have been only 38 recipients in Hampshire.

The National Park Authority has provided advice and over £23,000 worth of grants since the project started.

This year the New Forest Land Advice Service worked with the Trust to complete a survey of the site and

arranged for timber that was felled by volunteers to be extracted by a traditional horse logger as part of the Our Past, Our Future scheme.

Gemma Stride, Working Woodlands project officer, said: ‘The Pondhead project is a perfect example of sustainable woodland management by harnessing local enthusiasm and expertise to create diverse habitats into the future.’

Find out more at pondheadconservation.org.uk.

Above: Pondhead Conservation Trust receiving the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service from Lord Lieutenant Nigel Atkinson (centre), with Trustees Dave Dibden (left) and Derek Tippetts (right).

Below: Pondhead Conservation trustees Derek Tippetts (left) and Dave Dibden with the charcoal burner.



Supporting the ancient tradition of commoning

Commoning and the right to turn out animals to roam the landscape is vital for the survival of the New Forest as we know it today.

The ponies and cattle are known as the ‘architects of the Forest’ – it’s their grazing which creates the habitats and enables plants, fungi, insects, birds and animals to thrive here, some of which are found almost nowhere else in the UK. The animals’ owners are ordinary people with an extraordinary commitment to the New Forest – around 700 commoners who have ancient rights attached to their land or property.

The New Forest Land Advice Service oversees a commoner mentoring scheme with the Commoners Defence

Association, matching experienced commoners with six people who are new to the Forest’s traditional practices. Helping to round-up New Forest ponies, caring for stock and sheep showing are just a few of the skills learnt by new commoners in the innovative mentoring programme.

Each pairing lasts one year, with participants spending time on their mentor’s land to learn vital commoning skills that ensure the survival of this unique way of managing the Forest’s rare habitats and traditional way of life.

The impact

Six new commoners helped by mentors

Above: Commoner Charlie Knight is a mentor to new commoner Sami Blastock



Shared Forest

The Shared Forest OPOF project led by the Commoners Defence Association set up a Business Group which now has over 60 member organisations, encouraging their employees to drive safely and slow down for Forest animals.

A commoning education toolkit has been created and is available on our website. Around 10,000 people attended the Commoning Voices exhibition at the New Forest Heritage Centre, Lyndhurst (right), put together with help from our staff to communicate the importance of commoning.

Protecting the Forest through our planning service

Our planning service is a crucial tool in our work to protect and enhance the Forest for future generations and we aim to set the highest bar for development, working within the Government's National Planning Policy Framework.

Our planning policies are key in protecting the National Park's special qualities, supporting the local economy and conserving the distinctive New Forest character of our villages and landscape.



Reviewing our planning policies

A public examination was held into our emerging new Local Plan – which sets out a suite of new planning policies for the National Park. Among many aspects, it considers where and how much development should take place within the context of a protected landscape.

The limited development that is planned for the National Park is focused on meeting the needs of local people, ensuring that the National Park remains a living, working landscape. Key proposals in the draft plan include:

- **restricting the size of new homes** to ensure developments address identified local needs for smaller one to three bed properties.
- **a small increase in housing development** from the current average of around 25 homes a year to 40 per year. Most will be on sites which have existing planning consents, on brownfield sites or 'windfall' development which becomes available unexpectedly.
- **a lower site size threshold for new developments** (three dwellings or more) to make provision for affordable housing. It also proposes keeping the existing policy that all homes on 'rural exception' sites should be affordable.

- **allocating a few sites for new housing** for the first time since the Park was designated in 2005. On these new housing sites we will be seeking a significant proportion of affordable housing to meet local housing needs.
- **restricting any developments of care homes** to cater for local people, rather than external demand.

- **a new policy on major development** within the National Park, ensuring a high bar is set and requiring robust justification for any such proposals.

Government-appointed planning inspectors discussed 14 broad topic areas at the examination in November 2018.

The final Examination hearing session was held in March 2019. The Inspectors then set out the main modifications we're required to make to the Local Plan and the consultation on these modifications ran until the end of May 2019. We expect to receive the final Inspectors' report in summer 2019 and when the final plan is adopted, it will form the basis for all future planning decisions within the National Park.

Protecting the Western Escarpment Conservation Area

A steering group made up of the NPA and seven towns and parishes in the Conservation Area near Ringwood and Fordingbridge have been working to prevent damage to verges. The verges have a protected status and make an important contribution to the character of the area.

The steering group mapped over seven miles of verges damaged by vehicles and shared the results with the statutory bodies in the New Forest – including Hampshire County Council, the Verderers and Forestry England – and the group is working with them to address the problems.

Physical measures such as 'dragons teeth' posts have been put in at areas including Woodgreen and Broomy Plain and 6,000 copies of a leaflet about protecting verges were circulated to households and businesses in the Conservation Area to raise awareness of the issues.



Fawley power station

Proposals for Fawley power station site

Fawley Waterside Ltd has submitted outline planning applications to redevelop the former Fawley Power Station.

The proposals encompass land within the New Forest District and New Forest National Park, separate applications will be submitted to both authorities.

Proposals for the former power station site include:

- **1,500 homes (120 within the National Park boundary)**
- **103,000 square metres of new commercial, civic and employment space**
- **a canal, dock and a boat stack**
- **community infrastructure including a primary school, public open space and land that would be used to create wildlife habitats.**

The proposed development would be served by a new access off the B3053. Our draft Local Plan supports some development in the National Park as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to redeveloping the whole site. Our support is conditional on an exceptionally high standard of design being secured, the creation of new accessible green spaces and net gains for biodiversity.

Managing new development

The pressure for new development in the National Park remains high and this is reflected in the high number of planning applications received by our planning team – just under 1,000 this year.

We are required to meet Government timescales for determining planning applications and this year all major applications were determined by the 13-week deadline and 92 per cent of all minor applications by the eight-week deadline.

We encourage all prospective applicants to seek pre-application advice before a formal application is made, with the aim of getting the best possible

scheme for them and for the Forest. This work is supported by a range of supplementary planning documents that include a Design Guide and a series of Village Design Statements (prepared by local parish councils). As a result, 83 per cent of planning applications were approved this year.

Enforcement

We rely on the vigilance of the public in letting us know where and when development is carried out without planning permission.

We investigated around 250 cases in 2018/19. Government guidance stresses that enforcement action should only be taken as a last resort, so we aim to resolve breaches of planning control through negotiation with property owners. When that isn't possible or appropriate because of the harm being done, we do serve enforcement notices. We took such action in 16 cases this year.

We also monitor some new developments to make sure that they are being built in accordance with the approved plans.

Affordable housing

The New Forest housing market makes it difficult for many local people to find affordable homes which will allow them to stay in the area.

In 2016 we pioneered an innovative scheme and built two affordable homes at Bransgore which were then let out to local families. Working closely with Burley Parish Council, we have now secured planning consent to build two further affordable homes at Burley.

We're continuing to talk with landowners, agents, housing associations and other parish councils, such as Copythorne and East Boldre, with a view to bringing more sites forward for affordable housing.

Proposed affordable dwellings at Burley



Tree service highlights

Trees play a vital part in the New Forest's character and communities. Our tree team offers advice and support on arboricultural matters, gives advice on planning applications and determines tree work applications. In 2018/19 we also provided services to New Forest District Council and in total we:

- dealt with 1,140 tree work applications (604 of these within the National Park boundary)
- made 36 Tree Preservation Orders (10 of these within the National Park boundary)
- responded to 638 planning consultations (245 of these within the National Park boundary).

We also held a training course on pests, diseases and fungi of trees. Funded by the Our Past, Our Future scheme, the free event was well-received by local tree work contractors and others

working in the industry. We are now actively promoting measures for biosecurity across our organisation.

As in previous years, the team organised the annual Family Trees event, with families celebrating the life of a loved-one and planting a new community woodland at Totton.



Tree canopy at Pondhead Inclosure

Cherishing our built environment



Protecting buildings at risk

Following a partial survey of the National Park's buildings at risk list:

- 13 extra buildings have been added to the list, taking the total to 22 at risk out of 625 listed buildings in the National Park

- three listed structures have been removed from the list – two chest tombs within St Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Lyndhurst, and an ice house at Beaulieu, which have all been conserved.

Left: Beaulieu ice house during restoration
Right: Lord Montagu (right) with the restoration team



New visitor centre by Hampshire County Council at Lepe Country Park

Building Design Awards

The winners of the Building Design Awards 2019 were announced in March 2019. Awards were given to Lepe Country Park visitor centre and café; a converted chapel in Woodgreen; Brockenhurst College STEM building; and a conservation scheme in the Exbury area.

As part of the Our Past, Our Future scheme, courses in traditional building skills have been well attended with topics including a specialist course on masonry structure held at Buckler's Hard and a course for homeowners held in Minstead. The subsidised courses

are aimed at local agents, builders and homeowners and focus on the importance of traditional buildings to the area's character. The courses provide practical advice on the skills required in specialist repair techniques to help conserve the built heritage of the National Park.



Discovering more about our past

Our archaeology team not only cares for the National Park but provides services to Forestry England and New Forest District Council.

We've worked on a number of high profile projects this year, including several which have hit the headlines.

Neolithic discovery

Archaeologists and volunteers found an important prehistoric burial site near Beaulieu dating back thousands of years. A community dig in a field at East End set out to investigate what they thought was a Bronze Age barrow and they were thrilled to find four cremation burial urns dating from that period around 3,000 years ago.

But as the excavation progressed further, there was evidence of human activity below the level of the urns.

New Forest National Park Authority Community Archaeologist James Brown said: **'We also found two Neolithic flints from around**

5,000 years ago. Geophysics scans showed that there may have been two entrances to the site. So the evidence is strongly hinting at a much earlier Neolithic monument that was then re-used in the Bronze Age.

'The finds at this site are already adding to our knowledge in quite a substantial way of the story of people who have lived here in the past – the residents, their lives and how they exploited the Forest landscape.'

Image: National Park Community Archaeologist James Brown (centre) unearthing neolithic flints with volunteers Ian Richardson and Sue Pinyoun near Beaulieu.



Horse power hopes

Our team had to think differently when we needed to carry out a survey of a sensitive area of heathland at Beaulieu. They were probing a diamond-shaped feature found near East Boldre when airborne laser scans were carried out, which were thought to be the remains of a medieval royal hunting lodge. Usually a vehicle is used to pull a magnetometry cart, which pinpoints sites of past human activity by detecting tiny changes in the Earth's magnetic field. But as a vehicle could scar the fragile heathland, Jerry the pony was brought in to pull the cart and carry out a more detailed investigation.

Caring for monuments

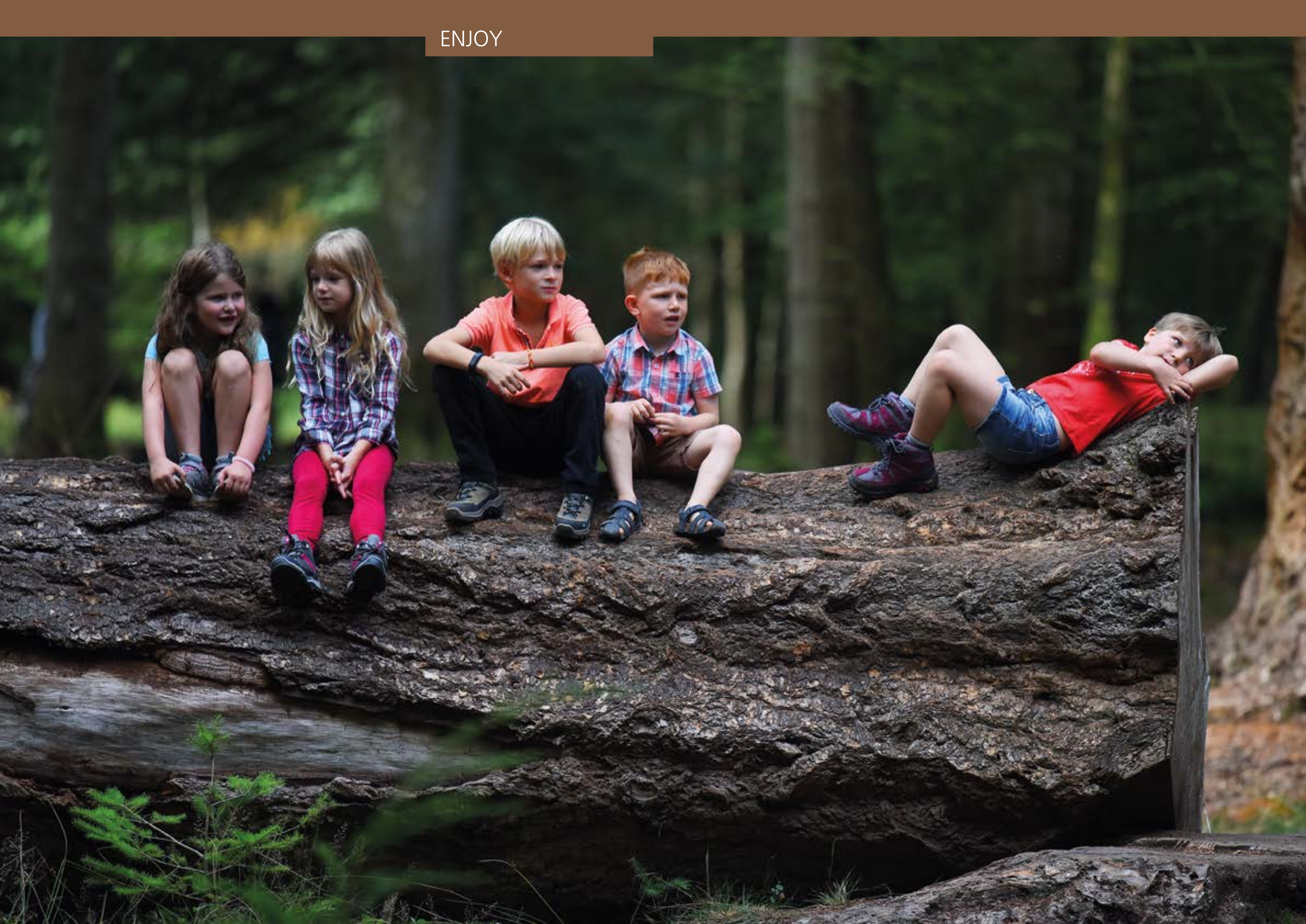
Management plans have been completed for 86 scheduled ancient monuments this year. These have seen work undertaken across 10 sites by Forestry England volunteers including Iron Age hillforts, Bronze Age barrows and Roman pottery kilns.

Meanwhile, historic monuments in the churchyards at Lyndhurst and Emery Down were assessed and repaired under the OPOF scheme, including the Jackson family memorial.



Images: Jackson Memorial before and after restoration

ENJOY



Understanding and caring for the Forest



Reducing animal accidents

A winter campaign to warn people about animals on the road was launched which included eye-catching signs and a touring 'display' of near-life-size animal silhouettes. Thousands of cards with emergency hotline numbers were redesigned, printed and distributed.

Launching a campaign to reduce animal accidents

The Great British Spring Clean

An estimated 1,200 people helped clean up the Forest as part of Keep Britain Tidy's national Great British Spring Clean in March in a local campaign by the National Park Authority, Forestry England, the Verderers, New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council and the National Trust. Meanwhile nearly 100 miles of the 40mph roadsides were litter-picked by contractors.



Launching the Great British Spring Clean at Waters Green, Brockenhurst



Curlew © Mike Read

Protecting rare ground nesting birds

Four seasonal rangers have been employed in 2019 to raise awareness of the New Forest's ground nesting birds and how people can help them by keeping themselves and their dogs to the main tracks during the critical breeding season of March to July. The roles have been made possible thanks to funding from NF DOG, Forestry England, developer contributions and Camping in the Forest.

Keep Your Distance

We joined with a number of organisations to highlight the dangers of approaching the commoners' animals and appealed to people not to feed or pet them. The partnership also included better ways to record incidents and new signs at campsites and at Hatchet Pond.



Keep your distance campaign

Responsible dog walking

Over 670 dog owners have taken part in 'Bark Ranger' activities at 18 events including puppy classes, dog focused events and specialist training sessions. Our People and Wildlife Ranger Dawn Rayment raises awareness of how dog owners can help care for the environment, wildlife, commoners' animals and other Forest users. She took the campaign to a national audience, attending Crufts Dog Show in Birmingham and the People and Dogs in the Outdoors Conference. A Professional Dog Walkers' Charter was developed which sets very high standards of operation for the many commercial dog walking businesses that operate across the Forest.



Responsible dog walking training at Foxbury

Managing recreation

Future Forest consultation

Over 1,000 individuals and organisations gave their views on how recreation should be managed in and around the New Forest National Park in a consultation held in summer 2018.

Forestry England, Natural England, Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and the Verderers asked the National Park Authority to conduct the Future Forest consultation on behalf of the statutory bodies.

The aim of the consultation was to help decide how we should:

- protect the spectacular, yet fragile, wildlife-rich landscape that people come to see
- manage recreation for local people and visitors
- use limited resources wisely.

Most of the proposed actions received a very high level of support (on average 78% of people agreed or strongly agreed with them).

The actions were based on previous feedback and ranged from developing an agreed New Forest-wide network of key visitor sites and core walking and cycling routes; to measures to protect against specific activities that have impact on the Forest; and increasing the range of initiatives designed to help people understand why the Forest is so special.

One of the aims of the survey was to hear the views of a wide range of local people and visitors, including people who don't normally get involved in public

consultations and nearly 60 per cent said they had never taken part in a New Forest consultation before.

Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor at Forestry England, said: 'The knowledge and views gathered from this consultation will help us to make the right choices for the future benefit of the New Forest.'



Recreation research

A year of research has been commissioned by six local planning authorities and Natural England thanks to a £250,000 grant from central Government. The project includes face-to-face interviews across the Forest, counts of parked cars and telephone interviews. The results due by the end of 2019 should help the authorities to agree a common approach to mitigating the impacts of new housing on the designated habitats.

Meanwhile a new study calculates that the New Forest now has over 15 million recreational visitor days each year – up 12% from the last study in 2004.

Over half (56%) of the New Forest National Park is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – areas which are protected because of their rare habitats and wildlife. This is a higher proportion than all the nine other English national parks. The figures mean there are more visitor days on protected conservation area land than any other English national park.

The visitor research by RJS Associates was commissioned by the National Park Authority and its partners. It predicts that by 2037 there will be over 17 million recreational visitor days a year to the National Park, the majority of which are from residents and those living close by.

Helping people get outdoors

Wild play

Hundreds of families turned out to wild play day events in the Forest and on the coast, giving families confidence to get outdoors and connect with nature through fun activities. A new permanent wild play site has opened at Sway following last year's successful launch of the Holbury Manor site. A third wild play site at Ashurst recreation ground is currently being designed and discussed with the local community. A toolkit to help other communities develop wild play sites has been launched on our website.



Wild play at the beach

Healthy walks

Through the healthy walks programme which we support, over 400 walkers enjoyed nearly 1,700 hours of healthy walking activity this year and eight new volunteer walking guides were trained.

The impact

1,700 hours of healthy walks in 2018/19

Walk this way

More than 1,500 people took part in over 80 expert led walks during the 2018 New Forest Walking Festival. We launched a new free mobile app of approved walking routes which recorded around 5,000 downloads in the first two months after launch.



Big Pedall ride out inclusive cycling



PEDALL

Our inclusive cycling initiative now has a new base at Burley, with a workshop, storage and seating area, thanks to building renovation work by volunteers. In total 15 volunteers have been recruited, giving 140 hours of their time this year. Funded by the National Lottery Big Community Fund, the project has exceeded all its targets for working with young people and so has expanded to older people and those living with dementia.

A total of 2,500 contacts/spaces filled were recorded in 2018/19 (an individual often attends more than one session). In an independent survey, all cyclists interviewed said they are doing more PE and physical exercise at college or school and are learning more in class since cycling with PEDALL. The scheme has achieved charity status and a Friends of PEDALL charity has been established to help raise funds.

Helping people understand the National Park's special qualities

The impact

52,000 people had contact with our rangers, educators and concierge



Celebrating loved-ones at the Family Trees event in Totton

An event for all at Family Trees

Almost 200 people planted trees at a new community woodland at Bartley Park, Totton, to celebrate the life of a loved-one. The event took place in National Tree Week and families learnt about the different species they were planting and why they are good for wildlife.



Crowds enjoy activities at the New Forest Show

Show time in the New Forest

The Future Forest consultation and recreation management was the theme behind our stand at this year's New Forest Show stand. Over 2,700 people visited us and staff from our partner organisations joined us on the stand to help explain why the work is so important.



BBC Four documentary A Year in the Wild Wood

A major new documentary exploring the landscapes, history and wildlife that make the New Forest one of the UK's most important ancient woodlands aired on BBC Four in January 2019.

It was presented by writer and environmentalist Peter Owen-Jones in collaboration with the National Park Authority, Forestry England and the Commons Defence Association.

'A Year in the Wild Wood' followed a year in the life of this special place, meeting many of the people who work to preserve and protect it and captured breathtaking images of rare wildlife such as goshawks, once almost driven to extinction but now making a comeback thanks to conservation work.

Promotions of the documentary on Facebook saw a reach of 300,000 people with 20,000 engagements.

Rough guide to the New Forest for arts organisations

14 people from seven different arts organisations took part in our discovery day. Participants found out who does what in the New Forest and also went on a guided walk at Beaulieu Road sales yard, led by Lyndsey Stride of the CDA and Richard Daponte of Forestry England.

One participant's feedback was: **'I learnt more in a day than I have in the last 25 years of being in the New Forest. The knowledge I gained will mean I will enjoy my time in the Forest even more now.'**



A prospective volunteer signs up to Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust at the Volunteer Fair

Encouraging volunteering

A nationwide Year of Green Action to celebrate the 70th anniversary of UK national parks was launched in the New Forest with a record-breaking turnout for the National Park's volunteer fair.

The fair saw 750 budding volunteers head to Lyndhurst Community Centre on 27 January to browse hundreds of opportunities from 50 local groups, making this the most successful fair to date.

Our volunteers are vital to much of the work we undertake in the Forest and we organised or supported over 1,700 volunteer days this year. Conservation volunteers spent the winter restoring hedgerows in Linwood, Hyde, North Gorley and Blissford by planting up gaps, weeding the hedges and putting up deer fencing. On our woodland sites in Bramshaw, Bransgore and Walhampton a huge reduction in rhododendron removed by volunteers has encouraged plants to thrive, with bluebells coming up in spring.

Meanwhile our archaeology volunteers have been out in all weathers, including a dig at East End near Beaulieu. Ian Richardson, from Poole, said the volunteers were fascinated to see what the site revealed. 'It is always good to find something when the day has been



Planting trees with Foxhills School Ashurst

spent moving mud and stone!' he said. 'You get in touch with the past and think the last person to pick that up was here thousands of years ago.'

Parents and schoolchildren at Foxhills School, Ashurst, joined our volunteer event, working together to create woodland trackways and cut back trees which were crowding out the meadow.

To celebrate the Year of Green Action, a 'Green Action Grant' fund was launched and 44 schools were successful in their bids for grants to carry out a small project to improve or enhance the environment. Other Year of Green Action initiatives include litter assemblies for local schools, screenings of the film 'A Plastic Ocean' to encourage people to reduce their plastic use and the launch of a 2019 'Wasted' Film Competition about all forms of waste.

The impact

over 750 potential volunteers turned up to the Volunteer Fair

Inspiring the next generation

We are heartened by the number of children and young people who are connecting with the National Park and showing their concern about the environment.

From the feedback we receive in formal education lessons and visits, to informal events, involvement in conservation tasks and engagement on social media channels such as Instagram, we are working hard to enable children and young people to find out more about the natural world and how they can influence it.

Educating children and young people

A staggering 13,000 children and young people received visits by our education team this year. The 'team' comprises 1.5 full time equivalent posts with some help from rangers. This included giving assemblies about the dangers of litter to 7,500 children in 34 schools.

We also work with other outdoor educators in and around the National Park. In 2018/19 3,160 children from 60 schools visited 19 New Forest education providers. An Educators Forum meeting in March was attended by 18 outdoor education organisations. They also provided an outdoor learning session for BA Hons Early Childhood students from Brockenhurst College.

The impact

150 young people aged 16 – 25 developed skills, knowledge and confidence

New Forest Youth Action Project

The project was established by us in 2016 with a range of partners providing outdoor education and volunteering opportunities in the New Forest. It provides opportunities for youth organisations working with 16 to 25 year olds to:

- access unique environments and landscapes within the National Park
- develop skills, knowledge and experience in conservation and land management
- carry out practical work to help maintain habitats and eco-systems for the benefit of people and wildlife
- learn, enjoy and achieve in a dynamic and informal setting.

Over 150 young people have benefited from 60 sessions given by the partners this academic year.



Photos from left to right: Apprentice rangers Hayden Bridgeman and Jake Barnes doing their chainsaw training; Apprentice rangers Martyn Meaker & Peter Dovey working at Lepe Country Park sensory garden.

Apprentice rangers

Martyn Meaker, one of our apprentice rangers for 2017/18, won Kingston Maurward College's award for best 'Intermediate Environmental Conservation Apprentice 2018' and the award of 'Best Apprentice of the Year'. He was presented with the award by our Chairman Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre at a full Authority meeting. Meanwhile the other 2017/18 apprentice Pete Dovey went on to find employment with Forestry England.

Our current apprentices Jake and Hayden have been working with the partner organisations involved in our apprenticeship scheme, including chainsaw and pesticide use training at a placement with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust at Blashford Lakes. They then moved on to the National Trust, getting involved in winter habitat management work, leading volunteer work parties and joining teams from National Trust estates in Purbeck and Mottisfont.

PROSPER



The future of farming post-Brexit



Left to right: Alison Barnes, NFNPA; Lord Manners, Head Verderer; Tracey Foster, Ed Barker and Daniel Jones of Defra; Tony Hockley, Commons Defence Association

We attend New Forest Future Farming Group meetings to work with other partners towards understanding and preparing for the new agricultural policy, schemes and legislation which Defra is currently working on.

This includes working with Robert Deane, of Rural Focus Ltd, to complete a report on the New Forest's natural capital, similar to a report he has completed for Exmoor National Park to map ecosystem services.

We hosted senior officials from Defra (Director of Natural Environment and Year of Green Action lead), introducing them to the New Forest and our work with key Forest organisations.



The Green Halo Partnership

A partnership looking to boost the natural environment by putting it at the heart of decisions about the environment, economy and communities marked its first anniversary in November.

One of the first of its kind in the UK, the Green Halo Partnership brings together organisations from across central southern England to protect and enhance our 'natural capital'. This is the term given to the benefits we derive from nature such as clean air and water, protection from flooding, food and healthy outdoor activities.

The partnership focusses its work across four themes:

- Enhancing the natural environment
- Supporting the local economy
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Encouraging sustainable living.

More than 70 representatives from dozens of Green Halo partner organisations attended a conference at Ordnance Survey, Southampton in November 2018 to mark a successful first year.

The partnership has received wide-ranging support over the last 12 months, with architects, wildlife charities, councils, utility businesses,

health bodies, universities and civil engineering firms among the organisations signed up so far.

This year's conference hosted several representatives from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), including Green Finance Team Programme Manager Daniel Barwick. Daniel discussed Defra's work to ensure natural capital is embedded in policy making across all government departments. He said: 'Everyone across society has to play a part in trying to improve the natural environment within a generation... National parks are an exemplar of driving the natural capital approach at a local level.'

Several of those who have been part of the Partnership over our first year spoke about their experience of working on the themes. Amanda Glenn from West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Sophie Burton from Energise Me shared how the Green Halo has brought organisations together to raise awareness of how the natural environment can improve people's physical and mental health.

They spoke about a number of small local initiatives including allotments for those living with dementia. The Partnership offered a way of bringing people together to develop ideas and promote activity.

Gary Wilburn of HPW Architects spoke about projects which included nature as part of development – from small initiatives to multi-million pound regeneration schemes. In each case recognising the place of natural capital helped create attractive and sustainable schemes which offered more than simple commercial benefit. Gary suggested the Green Halo offered a vehicle for sharing good practice and implementing these ideas closer to home.

We have continued to promote the Green Halo Partnership to government as one means by which the ambitions of the 25 Year Environment Plan can be delivered here in Hampshire.

In February we hosted a visit by Edward Barker, Director of Natural Environment at Defra. In March Chief Executive Alison Barnes met with Dieter Helm, Chair of the Natural Capital Committee which advises government on the sustainable use of natural capital.

Meetings have also been held with representatives of the Solent Local Economic Partnership as work begins on developing the Local Industrial Strategy.

A Green Halo website has been launched at greenhalo.org.uk.

Launching a Forestry Accord

A national Forestry Accord between Forestry England and National Parks England was launched at the New Forest Show 2018 by National Parks Minister Lord Gardiner.

We already work closely with Forestry England on a range of issues – recreation management, communications and events, the Higher Level Stewardship scheme

and providing them with archaeology services. We have identified local opportunities to further strengthen joint working in the year ahead.

Planting a tree at the New Forest Show ground to mark the launch of the Forestry Accord between Forestry England and National Parks England



New Forest National Park Awards recognise the best of the Forest

Passion for local produce, contributions to the commoning community and a talent for inspiring young people about sustainability were the recipe for success at this year's CLA and New Forest National Park Authority awards.

A new category of land managers was introduced this year. The awards recognise the best of the New Forest's rural businesses, organisations, land managers and champions and were presented at a special ceremony at the New Forest and Hampshire County Show. The prizes were handed over by National Parks Minister Lord Gardiner, Julian Lewis MP and National Park Authority Chief Executive Alison Barnes.

The winners of the 2018 awards were:

- Young Farmer/Commoner of the Year – Tom Hordle
- Best Supporter of Local Produce – Andrew Parry-Norton

- Sustainability Champion – Gemma Wilks, Ban the Straw New Forest
- Rural Diversification – New Forest Shepherds' Huts
- Land Management – Milford Conservation Volunteers and Milford on Sea Parish Council.

Award winners 2018 (l-r): CLA South East Regional Director Robin Edwards; young commoner Tom Hordle and his partner Adele Colton; New Forest National Park Authority Chief Executive Alison Barnes; commoners Andrew and Sarah Parry-Norton; National Parks Minister Lord Gardiner; New Forest Show President Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre; Gemma Wilks, Ban the Straw New Forest; Jenna Bessant, New Forest Shepherds' Huts; Tony Locke and David Horne, Milford Conservation Volunteers; and Julian Lewis MP.

© Craig Hobbs.



Landford village signs

A village in the north of the New Forest National Park has unveiled new signs at four key locations.

The signs in Landford, Wiltshire, are designed to complement the rural location and include the New Forest National Park logo. The aim is to remind road users that they are within a national park and should drive carefully to help protect this special place. The project was driven by the

local community with help from our Landscape Officer Sarah Kelly.

Left to right: Geoff Chase (Landford Community Partnership LCP), David Wilson (Chairman of LCP), Keith Cameron (LCP), Ken Parker (Co-Chair of LCP), Sarah Kelly (New Forest National Park Authority)



Encouraging people to travel sustainably

The New Forest Tour helped over 40,000 people to leave their cars behind and discover the National Park on our open top buses with audio commentary and discounts to attractions. The Tour, which operates from July to September, saw an 11% increase in revenue and 15% increase in patronage on the previous year. It saved an estimated 261,000 private car miles.

Our travel concierges, based at Brockenhurst Station and in Lyndhurst, helped over 9,300 people with visitor and sustainable travel information – up 5% on last year.

Promoting local produce

The New Forest Marque is awarded to produce which has been grown, reared, caught, brewed, produced or processed within the New Forest. The local produce scheme currently has 152 members including food and drink producers, crafts businesses and the hospitality and retail outlets which offer Marque produce.

We help the Marque with funding and business support to promote sustainable local business which supports the New Forest environment.

- Five Marque members were winners in the prestigious Great Hampshire Sausage and Pie Competition:
- A Pinch of Salt Curing Company
 - New Pastures Butchers
 - Roy Hunt Produce
 - T Bartlett & Son
 - The Farmers' Butcher.
- Marque members were finalists in every category in the 2018 New Forest Brilliance in Business Awards, with three taking home prizes:
- Court House Catering
 - New Forest Tartan
 - The Sett.

Winchester-based company director Dan Parsons has recently been appointed as the new chairman.



'I am incredibly privileged to be appointed as the new Chair of such a fantastic organisation. There's a wealth of skill across the Forest region, a rich variety of incredible members and a team of great people at the organisation to work with – I can't wait to get started!'

Dan Parsons, New Forest Marque chairman



Championing the National Park

Government’s Protected Landscapes ‘Glover’ Review

The 25 Year Environment Plan, published by government in 2018, included a commitment to conduct an independent review of England’s national parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The Review, led by a panel chaired by writer Julian Glover, is considering the role of these areas in the 21st Century and will make recommendations on:

- the statutory purposes for national parks and AONBs and how effectively they are being met
- the alignment of these purposes with the goals set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan
- the case for extension or creation of new designated areas
- how to improve individual and collective governance of national parks and AONBs, and how that governance interacts with other national assets
- the financing of national parks and AONBs
- how to enhance the environment and biodiversity in existing designations
- how to build on the existing 8-point plan for national parks and to connect more people with the natural environment from all sections of society and improve health and wellbeing
- how well national parks and AONBs support communities.

We hosted a visit by the Review chairman Julian Glover and panel member Sarah Mukherjee in October 2018. They met a large number of stakeholders and gained an



Julian Glover tries bikes at Cyclexperience Brockenhurst

understanding of the complexities of the New Forest. The panel held a ‘call for evidence’ public consultation in December. In our response we made the following key points:

1. National parks should be better places for nature, connected through wildlife corridors to each other and resilient to climate change
2. Future farming and land management schemes should be designed to help deliver national park aims
3. National parks and the NHS should form a strong new partnership to improve people’s health and wellbeing
4. Every child should have the opportunity to visit a national park during their time at school.

We also called on the Review to:

- restate the importance of the National Park Partnership Plan and ensure the delivery of the plan is enshrined in law, policy and practice to secure the commitment of all parties
- enable national parks to be exemplars of delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan, conferring on park authorities the appropriate powers and resources to meet this expectation.

We are hopeful that the Review will inspire a renewed sense of joint mission and purpose amongst the communities and partners of the New Forest National Park and recognise the experience and skills we can offer to enable society at large to benefit from access to nature.

The panel is due to report to government in autumn 2019.



Filming with BBC Countryfile and the ranger unit at Wilverley

BBC Countryfile 70th anniversary programme

We approached Countryfile to feature the debate about the future of national parks as part of the 70th anniversary programme. Chief Executive Alison Barnes was interviewed about the balance between people enjoying the National Park and protecting the environment and the programme was broadcast on 16 April.

Partnership Plan

The Partnership Plan for the National Park is the strategic document in which all organisations with a remit for caring for the Forest set out their joint actions for managing the area. The current Partnership Plan is up for review in 2020 so we hosted a partners’ event to visit some of the existing projects and discuss how the next Plan would be taken forward.

Providing expertise

We continue to provide an archaeology advice service to Forestry England. Management advice has been provided on over 25 Forestry England sites during the year and management plans have been produced for 100 Scheduled Monuments to meet Historic England requirements.

We successfully re-tendered to continue to provide ecology and archaeology services to New Forest District Council. During the year the Council decided to bring the trees and building design services that we had been providing back in-house.



Hurst Castle

Raising funds for the Forest

We are proud of our track record on leveraging funding for the Forest. For every £1 we spend, we produce on average £13 of value for the Forest, helping to protect and enhance the National Park.

We and a partnership of New Forest District Council and arts organisations under the banner Folio submitted a bid for £1.3m to Arts Council England to work with disadvantaged groups in the New Forest through art. We will hear if we’ve been successful in August 2019.

We also submitted a bid to Leader funding for access improvements to Hurst Castle and should hear in June if it has been approved.

Working with the RSPB, we submitted a bid for £200,000 to the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative for improvements to Franchises Lodge nature reserve.

We and other UK national parks set up National Parks Partnerships Ltd to work with corporate sponsors. We received our first funding from Forest Holidays which will enable more schools to undertake educational visit to the Forest. We provided marketing support for campaigns with Columbia outdoor gear, which provides our ranger uniforms.

Our staff

Our values

Our values help shape our culture and reflect our principles, standards and ways of working. They can be summarised as PACT:

Purpose – we are dedicated to our work

Achievement – we innovate, inspire and deliver success

Care – we strive to be sustainable in all we do

Teamwork – we work together with openness, integrity and respect.

Developing a People Plan

All staff have been considering organisational development during the year and have helped develop a People Plan which was officially launched at an all-staff meeting in February. Certain actions have been prioritised and are included in the 2019/20 work programme.

Encouraging sustainable living

A staff swap shop was held to exchange books, CDs and unwanted gifts. A large amount of toiletries was donated by staff to the charity Trinity which supports homeless and vulnerable people. The Ride to Work Week was promoted to staff.

Staff discovery days

All staff are invited to join our ‘discovery days’ – a half day out of the office in June to mix with other people from other parts of the organisation in an informal setting and find out what other teams do. Discovery days this year included a guided walk with the RSPB and Land Advice Service at Franchises Lodge nature reserve and a discover the media session with the communications team at Lepe.



National Park Authority ranger team 2018

Financial Information

Following a number of years of significant reductions, for the past three years our core grant from Defra has been 'protected', which includes a 1.7% inflation-offsetting increase (equating to £54,000).

We have continued to seek cost efficiencies where possible and sought ways to increase effectiveness in the work we do. We continue to generate substantial external partnership funding to further services and delivery. On average every £1 we contribute to joint projects generates a further £13 from partner organisations.

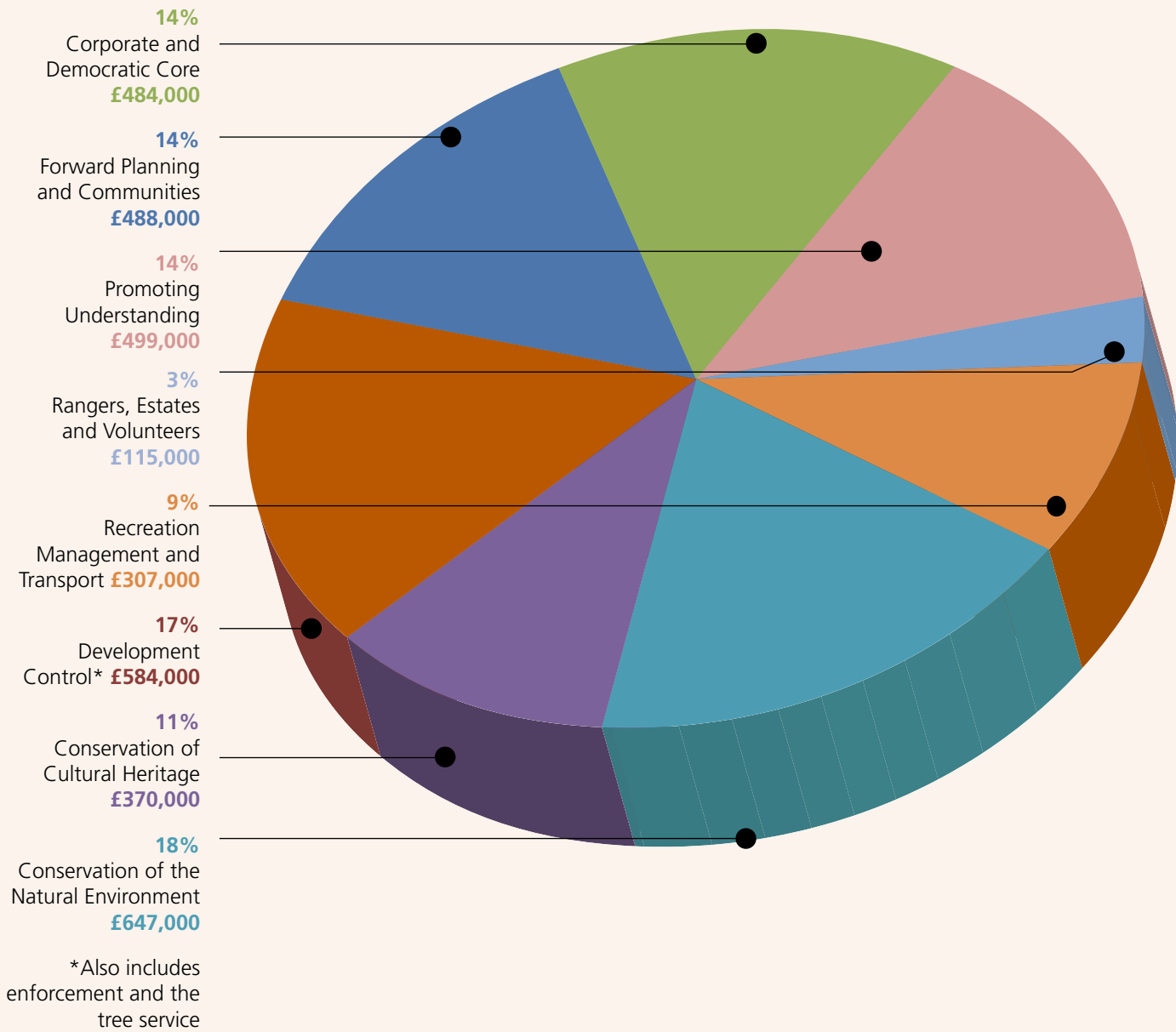
We received around:

- £3.196m** from Defra
- £396,000** in statutory fees for planning and related applications
- £355,000** for shared services with other local authorities (trees, ecology, rangers, archaeology, building conservation & design, comms, administration)
- £34,000** grants related to the planning service
- £14,000** on our investments
- £16,000** in other income generated (such as talks, guided walks, New Forest Tour advertising and charging for expert advice)

Significant external funding totalling £1.2m was secured for the Forest, including:

- £734,000** Our Past, Our Future: Landscape Partnership Scheme
- £91,000** PEDALL
- £45,000** Higher Level Stewardship Scheme
- £69,000** New Forest Land Advice Service
- Plus many more smaller projects...

2018-19 Net Expenditure



Contact us

We welcome your views and comments about this Annual Review or any other aspect of our performance or services. For regular updates, please sign up to our email newsletter at newforestnpa.gov.uk

Write to us at:

New Forest National Park Authority
Lymington Town Hall
Avenue Road
Lymington
Hampshire SO41 9ZG

Call

01590 646600

Email

enquiries@newforestnpa.gov.uk

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