

AM 558-20

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 9 JULY 2020

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Report by: Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

Summary:

This report covers the period since the Authority meeting on 18 December 2019. The report has been formatted to accord with the 'Protect, Enjoy, Prosper and Achieving Excellence' themes from the 2018-21 Business Plan, summarised below:

Protect	Enjoy	Prosper
<p>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Protecting and growing the natural capital across the National park Landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable. * Ensuring new development is sympathetic and in keeping with the National Park, promoting high quality design and environmental net gain. * Conserving the historic and built heritage; supporting local culture with continued focus on commoning. 	<p>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Helping more people to understand and value the things that make the New Forest National Park unique and special. * Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park. * 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. 	<p>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy where natural capital is an integral component of doing business. * Promoting connectivity across the National Park through sustainable transport and information and communication technologies. * Supporting the social wellbeing and sustainability of New Forest Communities.
Achieving Excellence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Maintaining and enhancing a capable, motivated team that delivers high quality service. * Championing the National Park and brokering partnership to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest and its communities * Identifying new resources and using them alongside our existing resources, effectively and efficiently. 		

Recommendation:
To note the report

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Equality & Diversity Implications:

There are no equality or diversity implications arising directly from this report.

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None of us could have predicted how life would change when we first started preparing this report for the cancelled March meeting as the pandemic began. The report covers the period from January to June and straddles two financial years; it covers a period of completing our work programme for 2019/20, moving into lockdown with remote working in mid-March and working with Forest organisations and other National Parks to meet the challenges of the lifting of travel restrictions with the hot, dry weather, numbers of people and associated pressures at a time when many facilities remain closed.

Although we are no longer together physically, our ICT team has done a brilliant job in supporting the move to remote working, helping the National Park, our communities and staff adapt as much as we can to the new reality; it is a great credit to our staff that we were able to quickly set up systems and ways of working.

Our planning service continued to operate without interruption - we were the first planning authority in Hampshire and among national parks to hold virtual planning committee meetings. Numbers of planning applications have remained similar to the previous year, despite lockdown, and our planning and enforcement officers have continued with site visits, observing Government guidelines. A number of significant planning proposals are in progress, including the replacement of Holmsley Bridge, the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel and the Fawley Waterside applications, with member briefing sessions on Fawley Waterside now taking place before reporting the application to the extraordinary meeting of the Planning Committee scheduled for 28 July.

During the early weeks of lockdown, we arranged for our rangers to safely support New Forest Marque businesses with deliveries and supported the NHS with delivery of glucometers. Since restrictions lifted in mid-May, our Rangers and other staff have been out daily with the emergency services and Forestry England keeping the national park and public safe. Our communications team and reception staff have seen a huge volume in online engagement and enquiries as they worked over weekends, evenings and bank holidays to respond to requests for visitor information, shared joint messaging about parking, wildfires and littering. We worked to develop and publish a New Forest Code and continue to work with local councils to promote useful information for residents and

businesses, as well as forwarding live reports of anti-social behaviour to teams on the ground. We led the joint call for a ban on the sale of disposable BBQs, which has seen 20 retailers and the villages of Lyndhurst, Ashurst and Brockenhurst go disposable BBQ free. Since lockdown started the content on our main social channels has reached 5.6 million people, with 536,000 engagements (likes, comments, shares) - up 623% compared to the previous period.

We have been working at a national and regional level with Government, other national parks and local councils to ensure the situation in New Forest National Park is fed regularly into plans for implementation of lockdown and developing plans for recovery as restrictions are lifted. We have been asked to lead some thinking on recovery with the Hampshire Local Resilience Forum focused on nature and national parks.

The lockdown has brought into sharp focus the importance of nature to our sense of wellbeing and resilience; the quiet spring has seen the Forest's rare species and habitats come to life for the breeding season. Maintaining any gain will be the challenge as we come out of lockdown and we hope that the awareness and appreciation of the important nature that has been well documented throughout this crisis will help boost our 'care for' campaigns such as for ground-nesting birds. Our work to make the Forest more resilient to the climate and nature emergencies, following our declaration of a climate and nature emergency in January, has taken on renewed significance and been stepped up further. We have been supporting the development proposals for nature recovery and connection of people with nature for our Partnership Plan through a Wildlife Roundtable of environmental NGOs and Natural England, which has met remotely and is being chaired by Dr Mike Clarke, former CEO of RSPB. Successes on the ground before lockdown included working with Network Rail to review progress in controlling invasive Himalayan balsam on its land - key wildlife corridors through the Forest. Confirmation that England's largest agri-environment scheme here in the New Forest is to continue for another year was very welcome news, allowing key habitat restoration work to continue and providing support for commoning as we transition into a new environmental land management system (ELMS). Extensions to Countryside Stewardship capital grants have also been secured for extensive improvements on two farms to help prevent nitrates and sedimentation polluting the Bartley Water and Beaulieu River. Two farm clusters are being established, working with large numbers of farmers on a landscape scale to encourage best practice in land management and working together so they are in the best position for the new ELMs when it is launched in 2024.

Volunteers gave nearly 1,000 hours of their time to improve eight sites for wildlife by the last quarter of the 2019/20 financial year. This has included improving a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) by felling turkey oaks, clearing invasive rhododendron and planting native trees. Volunteers have also assisted with the Nature's Stepping Stones project, clearing willow and gorse scrub at SINC's at Winsor and Pennington, and cleared brambles from fen meadow and rush pasture in Emery Down. All three sites are being grazed to ensure their value for biodiversity is maintained over the longer term. We are also working in partnership with the National Trust to transform a

newly gifted piece of land, adjacent to Plaitford Common, called Long Meadow Bottom. Meanwhile 28 volunteers signed up to the Countryside Access Volunteer partnership, working with Hampshire County Council to clear vegetation from the various footpaths and bridleways around the New Forest.

A record-breaking 760 visitors attended the annual Volunteer Fair in January, which is now in its 10th year, to browse almost 60 organisations searching for volunteers. The Fair was officially opened by Patsy Baverstock, from Southampton, who has been a volunteer since visiting the Fair four years ago. Since signing up to the New Forest Non-Native Plants project, she has spent more than 700 hours helping pull invasive Himalayan balsam from the Forest's riverbanks.

Nearly 100 people attended a 'Wilder for Water' conference, demonstrating the importance of the freshwater and coastal habitats for a wide range of species. The event aimed to increase understanding of the New Forest's rich freshwater environment, learn about the threats which face these habitats and inspire people to take action.

I was delighted be asked by Game & Wildlife Conservancy Trust, BTO and other partners to attend the Highgrove 'Curlew and Other Species Recovery Summit' in February and to lead a roundtable discussion on 'balancing landscape, species recovery and access', presenting the table's discussion back to HRH The Prince of Wales in person. The discussion highlighted just how important the New Forest populations of this rare and iconic species are to UK efforts to secure its future and how crucial the annual ground nesting birds campaign is.

Looking beyond the National Park boundary, around 80 leaders across the private, public and third sector came together at the annual Green Halo Partnership conference, 'Thinking Bigger' in February to discuss how we can respond to the nature and climate emergencies and find ways put natural capital and the Green Halo vision for 'World Class Environment, World Class Economy' at the heart of plans for our area. The C19 crisis has shown these conversations to be timely and in line with Government's drive for a 'Green Recovery'. We have continued to convene the steering group and engage partners in the important discussion about how natural capital can support health and wellbeing, green business and be delivered through sustainable design; we hope the Partnership can play a key role over the coming months in shaping a distinctive recovery for our communities and businesses in harmony with nature.

DELIVERY OF NATIONAL PARK PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

The report has been formatted to accord with the 'Protect, Enjoy, Prosper' objectives from the 2018-21 Business Plan, a summary of which is set out on the first page. In addition, a fourth section, 'Achieving Excellence', summarises those activities that support and contribute overall to all our work, and the final section lists Members' activities and events.

1 Protect

Protecting and growing the natural capital across the National Park landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable.

Green Halo Partnership

The Green Halo Conference, *Thinking Bigger*, held on 4 February challenged delegates to come together to drive real change in response to the climate and nature emergencies. Speakers encouraged radical, inspirational thinking and the courage to collaborate and communicate better, to extend good principles across boundaries, to ask What if? and Why not? Attended by 80 delegates from across the private, public and third sector, the conference recognised the importance of networks such as the Green Halo to be a platform bringing people together. We will continue to convene the group, to be the broker for What If? questions and to champion the importance of placing natural capital at the heart of decision making. The Steering Group has continued to meet during the lockdown period, a time when the importance of access to nature and local greenspace has been high on the agenda. Group members have contributed blogs on how we might take the opportunity to re-evaluate our relationship with nature as society seeks to recover from the pandemic and achieve a 'green recovery'.

Verderers HLS Scheme

In January we received the welcome news that the 10-year Higher Level Stewardship scheme that was due to end in March has been extended for a further 12 months enabling habitat conservation works and support for commoning to continue. This provides much needed continuity while we work with partners in the Forest Farming Group and others to ensure the National Park is best placed to benefit from the national Environmental Land Management Scheme due to be launched in 2024.

Nature Recovery - Net Zero with Nature

At the Authority meeting on 23 January it was agreed to work towards the target of the National Park becoming 'net zero with nature' by 2050. Maintaining and improving the health of the unique mosaic of habitats that make up the National Park will be essential if they are to absorb and store carbon and mitigate the impact of climate change. The winter saw considerable public discussion on the merits of tree felling to restore open habitats in the face of the climate crisis. We will be working to advocate the 'right tree, right place' message to ensure there is greater public understanding and appreciation of the role the range of New Forest habitats plays in adapting to climate change.

A Wildlife Roundtable, convened by the NPA and chaired by by Dr Mike Clarke, former CEO of RSPB, is helping to identify interventions to conserve and extend habitats within

and beyond the National Park boundary. Opportunities identified by the group, which has continued to meet through the lockdown period, will form part of a Nature Recovery Network for the National Park and feed into the developing Partnership Plan.

Our Past, Our Future Landscape Partnership Scheme

The OPOF landscape partnership scheme was due to end in November 2020 with the projects ending at different points over the year. However due to the impacts of the current COVID-19 situation the Board and the Heritage Fund have agreed to extend the Scheme to end of March 2021. Where staff are associated with projects a range of extensions to contracts are proposed. This gives all the partners the opportunity to meet targets and run the remaining activities over a sensible period given the restrictions of the current Covid19 situation. The additional costs will be funded by using spare contingency, additional matched funding that has been secured and reallocating spend from elsewhere in the scheme from work that cannot take place due to current restrictions.

A detailed assessment of the impacts of COVID-19 has been undertaken. The activities and targets of six projects are not affected as they have finished, or they can complete work that remains to be done as it is not affected by the lockdown restrictions. However, the remaining 18 projects are affected as the work that was planned and budgeted for cannot be completed in the timescale, as the work cannot happen under the current lockdown restrictions. The types of things that are not able to take place include: volunteer task days which impact on many of the projects, practical conservation and other work, events and training. There are also added issues associated with difficulties for staff to work at full capacity at home due to other home commitments (e.g. childcare, IT access) and that project activities are impacted where staff are furloughed. However, some snapshots from the Scheme that have happened over the last six months are outlined below.

- Work to Restore Lost Landscapes continues to meet the objective to reconnect the core with the surrounding landscape and to build connectivity. Practical conservation work continued during the winter including volunteer task days and contractor works. Since the end of the practical work season progress has been made in writing the management plans for the site owners to ensure the legacy of these projects. Work on some of the specific habitat restoration projects being run by NFLAS is reported elsewhere in this report. Work on some projects has slowed at the end of March due to the impact of the COVID19 lockdown restrictions.
- A key achievement of the non-native invasive plants project over the winter has been working with Network Rail to plan the control of Himalayan balsam on Network Rail land during 2020 and beyond. The field season for the removal of non-native invasive plants started in May, however this season will see some major changes to how this is carried out during the summer. The Wildlife Trust had made the decision that volunteer work parties were to be cancelled until at least the end of June, however project staff are now able to have help from volunteers one at a time on condition that social-distancing guidance is strictly adhered to.

This will mean that although Balsam pulls will be able to take place it will be at a much-reduced rate until restrictions are lifted further. The project also continues to plan legacy with landowners.

- The OPOF Community Archaeologist, left the Authority in December. Recruitment for the post is currently underway to enable the final areas of work on Heritage on my Doorstep and Rediscovering Our Archaeological Heritage projects to be completed.
- Opportunities to 'Discover Forest Skills' have continued including the final rural skills courses for farmers and commoners which took place in early 2020, In total the project has run 92 courses which have been attended by 443 individuals. The mentoring scheme is finished and there are plans in place to record interviews with some pairings once lockdown restrictions are eased. The final courses on traditional building skills for builders, agents and homeowners have been run, in total 336 people have attended 33 courses over the four years. Several short films on the building skills courses have been made which are available on the NPA website. The Building Skills Fair event that was planned for May 2020 has had to be postponed due to the COVID19 restrictions.
- The year 4 Apprentice Rangers finished their placement with Hampshire Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and were on placement with the National Trust when lockdown happened which has resulted in them working at home. They did an NPA Instagram takeover during 2020 Apprenticeship Week in March. During the lockdown they have been able to continue with college work and have both taken on additional work to assist with NPA projects including using the Apprentice Ranger van to assist with New Forest Marque deliveries to vulnerable people during the lockdown.
- Work has continued under the 'Discovering Forest Heritage' theme to produce materials or run events which have raised awareness and understanding of the heritage of the Forest. Work is continuing to make heritage information available through the New Forest Knowledge website, including work produced by local heritage groups. Work continues to plan the improvement and interpretation of the five historic routes. The Comms team has supported the CDA with its comms work in relation to the Shared Forest project - this is reported elsewhere in this report. In addition, we are helping the CDA set up several events which were due to take place in the Spring. The Instagram training for commoners was able to take place online however, the public engagement training and an event to showcase the work of the Ancestors Eyes project have been postponed until the lockdown restrictions are lifted. Work on many projects has slowed at the end of March due to the impact of the COVID19 lockdown restrictions, including the furloughing of staff at the National Trust and the New Forest Heritage Centre which has impacted on the Foxbury and Ecademy projects.

- 671 volunteers are signed up to OPOF (as of end of March 2020) and have recorded over 66,000 hours. Volunteering tasks were able to take place over the winter but all future volunteering tasks are now postponed due to the COVID19 restrictions, however we are keeping in regular communication with volunteers re alternative activities they can do from home where appropriate.
- Board meetings have been held in December, February and in May. The meeting in May took place via video conference.
- An end of Scheme event was planned for 29 April 2020 to celebrate the achievements of the Scheme and to thank all those that have been involved in making it a success. However, the event was cancelled and the Board will re-evaluate at a later date whether a smaller final event can be held, or whether there are alternative ways to mark the end of the Scheme. Resources for Change is in the process of carrying out the final evaluation of the scheme. They have been interviewing partners, project staff and key stakeholders who have been involved or benefited from the Scheme to gain their feedback. A final report will be produced at the end of the Scheme.

New Forest Land Advice Service (NFLAS)

Core NFLAS work

NFLAS has been working with many landowners, commoners and farmers over this period.

One example of our work this quarter includes liaising with Natural England and the Rural Payments Agency to proactively secure Countryside Stewardship capital grant extensions to two current agreements for farmers to undertake extensive improvements on their farms to help prevent diffuse pollution issues (nitrates and sedimentation) and maintain good water quality in the Bartley Water and Beaulieu River. This has brought in £85,000 worth of income to the farms and allowed them to deliver project work under our guidance.

Farm One



Before



After

Farm two



Before



After

We have supported the startup of two Farm Clusters, one in the south of the Forest and one in the North. We have had a farmer meeting for each cluster. This involves working with large numbers of farmers on a landscape scale to encourage best practice land management, collaborative working and help to position the landowners and farmers for the new Environmental Land Management Scheme when it is launched in 2024.

The lockdown occurred during the busiest time for the team in terms of it coinciding with the claims period for Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), Environmental Stewardship (ES)

and Countryside Stewardship (CS). Normally at this time of year commoners would be booking appointments to see the advisers to ensure their claims are correct, to check the status of their entitlements, for help with land changes and for support and help with Rural Payments Agency (RPA) issues. The advisers were working long hours over this period as usual during the claims period.

Due to COVID-19 the advisers were working at home this year and had to plan different ways to help commoners with their claims. They ran the booking system again and were able to talk people through their paper applications over the telephone. Also, many contacted the RPA and changed their claim to online giving permissions to enable the advisers to complete their online claims for them, while checking details with the claimant over the phone.

The most difficult issue was how to get the marking fee receipts, which are required evidence for claims, to the RPA by the deadline. Usually people will post a copy to the RPA, but as we are dealing with some of the most vulnerable people, going out to the post office was not to be encouraged.

We were fortunate this year to be invited by the RPA to join a weekly stakeholders teleconference where we could raise issues like the posting of receipts, and help the RPA come up with novel ways of helping vulnerable people. We joined online advisers from across the country who were all trying to tackle the issue of helping their vulnerable communities during this trying time. NFLAS advisers came up with novel ways of helping their clients; such as the postman collecting mail left out for them, gardeners taking photos of marking fee receipts and emailing them to the advisers; even marking fee receipts being posted to the advisers themselves to scan and email!

This resulted in RPA setting up a system where claims evidence could be either scanned or photographed and then emailed to RPA. Forms used to transfer entitlements or to make land changes were also made emailable online, as well as a dedicated hotline for referrals from the Stakeholder group for those in need of extra help from RPA.

In total by the end of May the advisers had assisted 76 BPS claims and 4 CS annual revenue claims. Most commoners asked how they could make donations this year.

In addition, a large CS Higher Tier application for an Avon Valley estate was submitted by the team after a lot of hard work sorting land use and ownership (as some were tenanted), along with lengthy discussions with the agent, landowner and agent submitting a Forestry grant application simultaneously.

Although the claims deadline was extended by a month until 15 June, requests from commoners slowed after 15 May, when the advisers then started concentrating on four new Countryside Stewardship applications for commoners, ahead of the end July deadline.

Working Woodlands Project

Work continued at our many woodland sites over the busy winter period, with volunteers and contractors hard at work.

At the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation shown in the photograph below we have felled a large number of huge Turkey Oaks over the past three years and started the process of clearing rhododendron from the area. Turkey Oak was introduced to the UK in the 18th Century and is host to a gall wasp that can impact on native Oak. The volunteers have planted native trees and protected them with temporary deer fencing which will also encourage natural native regeneration of the woodland.

The project has now entered its final few months and since the start of the bird breeding season work has focused on writing management plans for each of the project woodlands in order to ensure that landowners, contractors and NFLAS staff know what ongoing work is required after the project ends and the project officer is no longer in post.



Nature's Stepping Stones Project

During the winter months we worked with volunteers on several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation to clear willow and gorse scrub that was encroaching over acid heath grassland sites in both Winsor and Pennington and cleared brambles from fen meadow and rush pasture in Emery Down. All three sites are now being grazed seasonally to maintain the biodiversity value long term. The project has funded new stock-proof fencing at the Winsor site and a grazier (also a commoner) has been found for the site. Brackenhurst Copse and the meadow has also been matched with a grazier who is a commoner, securing seasonal grazing for these two sites. Extra, less sensitive back-up grazing has also been provided by this landowner to support this commoner. Contractors are lined up to restore about 200m of hedge boundary and banks through coppicing, bank restoration and fencing. In addition, an acid grassland adjacent to this is being fenced this month so it can be seasonally grazed with a commoner's stock, which will commence later this year. 80-100m of hedge has been laid at a nearby site in Rockford and 100m new native species-rich hedge will be planted and fenced. Ground preparation was completed for an 80m hedge to be planted at a community wildlife site at Tatchbury Mount Hospital in March. Hedge planting will be completed through NFLAS volunteers as well as staff and service users this month. Contractors have also cleared some small trees from the edge of the adjacent meadow at this site, to extend the meadow area.

The project has now entered its final few months and since the start of the bird breeding season work has focused on writing management plans for each of the project sites in order to ensure that landowners, contractors and NFLAS staff know what ongoing work is required after the project ends and the project officer is no longer in post.



Hedge in the process of being restored



NFLAS volunteers and NFLAS staff have a break from carrying out gorse management at a SINC near Lymington

Volunteering statistics for Working Woodlands and Nature's Stepping Stones

In the final quarter of 19/20 financial year (from 18 December to 2 March) we carried out nine conservation work parties to deliver wildlife habitat enhancements with the help of our NFLAS volunteers. This equated to 959 hours of volunteer time from 36 individual volunteers with an average of 15 volunteers each day. The eight sites were all Working Woodlands and Nature's Stepping Stones sites; which have as a result seen significant progress towards restoration and enhancement.

Mentoring Scheme

Pre-lockdown, we had an end of scheme social for all mentors and mentorees, also attended by the Official Verderer and chairs of the CDA and Young Commoners.

New Forest Catchment Partnership

February saw the delivery of one of the Partnership's key outreach events – our Water Forum. This year's theme was 'Wilder for Water' and we were pleased to host such inspirational speakers as Debbie Tann, Chief Executive of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Russell Wynne of Wild New Forest as well as a range of other experts and committed local conservationists. The event showcased the importance of the freshwater and coastal habitats for species as far ranging as sting rays, curlew and fairy and tadpole shrimp. The role of clean water, natural processes and landscape scale approaches in supporting such species was explored, as was the contribution of citizen science to understanding status and conservation needs of species.

Feedback from the audience of almost 100 indicated that the event was a great success. The event was described as informative, inspirational, and timely in reflecting current agendas. Attendees highlighted that this event was not only an opportunity to increase understanding of the freshwater environment, but to also gain an awareness of the threats which face these habitats and inspiration to take action. We were pleased to see support from Members and staff across the Authority for which we are thankful. Further details on the event available on the Partnership website

<https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/catchment-projects/new-forest-catchment-project/new-forest-events/> .

The period also saw the Partnership initiating work to understand the relationship between visitors to the Park and water quality, and opportunities to mitigate potential harm and engage audiences on taking action to help prevent pollution. The Partnership also met to review opportunities to represent the New Forest's special freshwater qualities in feedback to the current consultation on the River Basin Management Plan being undertaken by the Environment Agency. The agricultural sub-group also met to facilitate coordinated support with local landowners, the results of which are reported in relevant sections of this report. We continue to liaise with neighbouring Catchments who are undertaking work in the Park and its 'Green Halo', current work includes assessment of sediment impacts on the River Blackwater. The New Forest Partnership is also due to

complete capital works in the next quarter, having been successful in securing awarded grants from the Environment Agency.

National Grid - Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Project and Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI) programmes

National Grid has temporarily paused all current funding applications while COVID 19 restrictions have made progressing the bids challenging. The process will be re-started although we do not yet know when.

The LEI funding bid for Franchises Lodge, totalling £200,000 is still awaiting confirmation from OFGEM. In the meantime, a meeting has been held with RSPB and the NPA to update them and also to share the funding bid details with the new reserve manager. It is hoped that confirmation of the success of the bid will be received soon. The work funded by the LEI funding is mainly removal of rhododendron, but also path improvement and restoration of three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Bronze Age burial mounds).

Funding has been agreed (pre-COVID 19) for the LEI project at Landford Bog and the work will start on making the existing fencing stock proof so that grazing animals can be re-introduced to the site. This is an important part of the management plan for the site drawn up by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who own the site. Work has been delayed due to excessive rainfall in early 2020 which made the site too wet to work on, COVID 19, which has restricted contractors working on a site that is open to the public and now the bird breeding season. Fencing work is hoped to be started in late August/early September 2020 when the bird nesting season is over. Other parts of the project will go ahead following on from this date.

An Expression of Interest has been submitted for a third project, involving the improvement of footpaths and habitat in Cadland, Marchwood, Tatchbury and Woodgreen. All areas are close to the National Grid high voltage pylon line that runs through the National Park, qualifying those areas for potential funding from National Grid through the LEI programme to mitigate the visual impact of the pylons and lines. Queries from the fund managers have been received about this third application and NPA Officers are in the process of responding to those queries.

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

From the outset of lockdown, Government stressed the importance of ensuring the planning system continues to function, making simultaneous arrangements early on to facilitate 'virtual' committee meetings.

Throughout lockdown, our planning teams have continued to provide a full planning service to the public and we have now held three 'virtual' planning committee meetings. We are grateful too that local parish councils have been able to play their part by arranging their own meetings and responding to planning applications in a timely manner.

Development Management

The team continues to largely work remotely undertaking site visits observing social distancing guidelines. Two members of staff are undertaking essential functions in the office for limited periods each day (such as card payments and downloading applications from the Planning Portal).

We received 144 applications in the period 7 March to 1 June and in the same period determined 152 applications with an approval rate of 87%. This is comparable to the number of applications received in the corresponding period last year.

During this same period eight appeal decisions were received; five were dismissed and three were allowed.

We continue to deal with a number of significant planning proposals. The application for the replacement of Holmsley Bridge was approved on 17 April whilst pre-application discussions have commenced in respect of proposals for the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel. A package of revised plans and documents has been received for the Fawley Waterside applications and a further consultation on these is taking place (up to 24 June). Briefing sessions are now being held for Members on a topic by topic basis in advance of reporting the application to the extraordinary meeting of the Planning Committee scheduled for 28 July.

Trees

During the last quarter of 19/20 financial year, the Tree Team completed the following statutory functions along with advice to the general public, internally and other external bodies:

- 93 tree work applications received
- One unauthorised case of tree felling investigated with Planning Enforcement and Forestry England. Some 32 protected mature trees were felled in December at Doctors Copse, Southampton Road, Boldre.
- Two new Tree Preservation Orders made; three TPOs which are currently on the boundary with New Forest District Council reviewed and will be amended to avoid any confusion for the owners or applicants
- 42 Development Management consultations provided

A further 109 tree work applications have been registered since March, along with two new Tree Preservation Orders being made. Some 45 Development Management consultations have also been provided.

Lucy Saunders left the Authority at the end on May to take up a position with the Lake District National Park as Tree and Woodland Officer. We wish her all the best and welcome back James Palmer from the New Forest District Council.

Planning Enforcement

The number of new enforcement cases opened in the first five months of 2020 is comparable to that observed in 2019, – around 90. There remains a fairly consistent number of cases at various stages of investigation; monitoring, awaiting notice compliance, appeal decisions or consideration of planning applications (circa 135). We continue to work with residents and occupiers who may have undertaken unauthorised works and to help them to regularise, mitigate or remove unauthorised developments. Overall the number of new cases reported has remained fairly constant over the lockdown period. The enforcement team has been largely home-based and site visits continue to be made in accordance with social distancing guidelines. Two further enforcement notices have been served during this period.

Policy

Following the adoption of the new Local Plan for the National Park in the latter part of 2019, the Policy team's focus has turned to a number of important pieces of follow up work. Following members' decision to explore the feasibility of introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the National Park in 2019, we have worked with the specialist consultants Three Dragons to assess the viability of CIL. This study included a workshop with the development industry in January 2020 where their inputs we invited on land values and development costs in the National Park.

The reports were finalised in Spring 2020, but a decision on whether to implement CIL in the National Park is currently on hold until the implications of the C-19 pandemic on the development industry are clearer.

A significant amount of work is also taking place on ensuring that new development in the area does not impact on the integrity of the internationally protected habitats of the New Forest that make up over 50% of the designated National Park. Current work includes:

- (i) The National Park Authority and New Forest District Council are working with the specialist ecological consultants EPR to explore potential mitigation measures to address the current issue of nitrates and the Solent's protected habitats. This joint work complements the wider sub-regional work going on through the Partnership for South Hampshire.
- (ii) The Authority's draft revised Habitat Mitigation Scheme was subject to a six-week public consultation between January – February 2020. Amendments have been made to the revised draft Scheme in light of the consultation comments received earlier this year. The revised Mitigation Scheme follows on from the adoption of the new Local Plan and has been produced with input

from the Steering Group comprising Natural England, RSPB, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and New Forest District Council. The revised Mitigation Scheme is the subject of a separate report being considered at this meeting and has been supported by key partners.

- (iii) At the strategic level, the Authority has been working with other local planning authorities, Natural England, Forestry England and the consultants Footprint Ecology for the last two years on a major piece of research assessing the impacts of planned new housing development on the New Forest's Natura 2000 sites. An information event held in Brockenhurst on 28 February was attended by over 50 people representing a wide range of local stakeholders. The final research reports have been now been published and the project is moving into the second phase of working across local authority boundaries to prepare a strategic mitigation strategy.

Work on the review of the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan is also progressing, with the aim being to present the updated version of the Plan to the full Authority meeting by the end of 2020 following a public consultation. As part of the review, the first of a series of topic-based workshop have been held for Authority members and other partner organisations on Climate Change (25 February) and Transport (11 March), providing useful feedback for officers. The review of the Partnership Plan is the subject of a separate report and the final two member workshops – postponed from Spring 2020 – are due to be held later this month.

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

Archaeology

With the departure of Frank Green and James Brown, archaeological work has been headed up by Lawrence Shaw with support from Gareth Owen. This work has spanned OPOF, the HLS and the Forestry England Service Level Agreement (SLA) as well as archaeological planning advice and comments both internally and for the NFDC SLA.

As part of the FE SLA, 157 scheduled monument management plans have now been produced for all the nationally-protected archaeological sites found within the New Forest on Crown land. These plans will aid in the delivery of works to ensure that these monuments remain in good condition and protected.

To mark VE Day 75, the archaeology team, along with Steve Fisher, produced a podcast which looked to cover the role of the New Forest during the war and reflect on some of the oral histories that were recorded as part of the NF Remembers WWII project.

In May, Historic England confirmed that the hillfort at Home Farm, Denny Lodge, be removed from the Heritage at Risk register. This is a result of the management work that has gone on at the site over recent years with the NPA working in partnership with FE and many hours of dedicated volunteer work to improve the condition of the monument.

Community led projects

Work continues to re-establish historic routes in the New Forest. A press release asking the public for assistance in researching the history of the five established routes was published in December 2019.

Volunteers using the LoCATE equipment have undertaken a geophysical survey over a possible prehistoric barrow identified during the HLS LiDAR surveys. Although a barrow was not identified, the work highlights potential community led research that might come out of the HLF and HLS works undertaken previously.

In February we launched a citizen science project which looks to record historic tree graffiti found on Forestry England land. Within two days over 40 records were submitted and the project attracted coverage from the Times and BBC Radio 4 Gardeners' Question Time.

Building Design & Conservation

The Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group met in Hyde on 16 January. The meeting focused on the planned review of the National Park Design Guide SPD, the identification of non-designated heritage assets within the National Park, and the proposed review of a number of existing Conservation Area Character Appraisals (see below). The Steering Group are keen to support these work programs.

At the Planning Committee meeting in February, members endorsed the proposed work programmes for these three areas of work. Linked to this, design workshops were held with members and officers and later this year the Building Design & Conservation team will be engaging local communities in the National Park on these projects.

Work on preparing a comprehensive list of 'non-designated heritage assets' (sometimes known as 'locally listed buildings') is progressing well and the intention is to take a report to the Planning Committee meeting in July or August 2020. These assets make an important contribution to the built heritage of the National Park and the list currently being collated will also include information on the criteria used to identify the buildings and the weight they are afforded in national and local planning policy. The team have also scoped out a review of the Authority's adopted Design Guide SPD and this work will progress through the second part of this year. This will include ensuring appropriate cross-references to our adopted Local Plan (2019) and also to updated national planning policy (including the National Design Guide published in late 2019).

Our annual Building Design Awards Judging Panel met in February 2020 to review the nominated schemes in the categories of 'Best Residential Scheme', 'Best Non-Residential Scheme' and 'Best Green Building'. The following developments were selected as winners in each category.

Category	Winner
<i>Best Residential Scheme</i>	Little Marsh Lodge, Parkshore, Beaulieu Ben Pentreath Architects
<i>Best Non-Residential Scheme</i>	The Clock House Gallery, Beaulieu Estate Plum Architects
<i>Best Green Building</i>	Peppa Pig Building, Paultons Park HPW Architecture

2 Enjoy

2.1 Helping more people to understand and value the things that make the New Forest National Park unique and special.

Education

Since January and before lockdown, we engaged with 75 students through outdoor delivery across five education groups (from primary to university). Two of the sessions were to support schools with special provisions in their John Muir Award.

One of the highlights was delivering a day out in the Forest for a group of health and social care students who will be working with a variety of ages and abilities in the future; two rangers co-delivered the session designed to demonstrate techniques to rediscover nature through simple and engaging activities, noticing the mental health benefits of being in nature and using nature as symbolism. Below is the feedback given from the senior lecturer:

'We had a brilliant day. It was really well planned and delivered. A lot of thought had gone into the day and the facilitators were passionate about their subject. No improvements needed!' - Gavin Tucker, Senior Lecturer at Solent University

Our litter assemblies this year took on a theme of 'is history a load of old rubbish?' whereby the education team are archaeologists, looking back at the different layers and seeing what has been left behind. It raises the question, 'is this treasure or waste?', but also raises the point that history isn't a load of old rubbish, but our modern way of living is. It also links in with our climate change strategy by looking at reducing our global consumption of the earth's resources and encourages the participant to think about what small change can they make. We had booked in 48 schools with a total exceeding 10,000

pupils but due to the Covid-19 situation, we delivered these sessions to 29 schools / 6,035 pupils. Even with this reduced total, we engaged face-to-face with over 12,400 students during the 2019-20 year, exceeding our overall target of 10,000.

During lockdown, the Education team has been busy sorting and transferring essential documents to SharePoint, making it more efficient to use and we have been sharing educational resources online.

We have met with other National Park Educators and contributed to both our New Forest recovery ideas as well as National Parks collective which is focusing on the John Muir Award and a 'Big Walk Out' which would involve school children exploring green spaces local to their schools rather than travelling to more distant sites in a coach.

We have created and sent a survey to schools within and just on the border of the New Forest National Park to find out how we can support them in outdoor learning. We are awaiting responses, we will then analyse the data and plan our next steps.

Public and community events / rangers

Despite the unfavourable weather early in the year, rangers still went out and about engaging with a wide range of audiences.

The Seasonal Assistant Rangers attended 16 events engaging with 336 members of the public in the first three months of the year, promoting and celebrating the work of the New Forest HLS. This included partnership working with the National Trust, organising and leading of their own guided walk and giving evening talks to local groups such as Brockenhurst and Beaulieu Young Farmers Clubs. The events generated positive feedback about the NPA through social media posts by the groups involved.

The Seasonal Rangers contract for HLS celebration work ended in February and they are now focused on the spring ground nesting bird season.

Work to engage with our youngest future guardians of the New Forest continued with over 200 very young children and parents / supervisors spoken with at preschool ranger visits.

Following discussions with the central/south-west Ranger, positive steps have been taken with parish and town councils about reducing grass mowing at their sites for the benefit of wildlife. Rangers also continued to assist with the delivery of OPOF Working Woodland volunteer sessions.

The annual meeting between Forest partner organisations was held to discuss livestock feeding and petting. Incidents are logged by rangers and by Camping in the Forest at its camp sites. Two serious injury accidents resulted from people getting too close to ponies

on campsites. A joint action plan was produced to continue to tackle this problem on a Forest-wide basis.

Rangers attended a joint initiative with the Road Safety Unit and CDA which took place at Crockford Clump on the B3054 to raise the profile of speeding within the Forest, engage/educate drivers about their actions and enforce if necessary. Messages included speeding, livestock awareness on the road and allowing accompanied horses/riders extra time and space to use the roads safely. Eight vehicles were stopped doing speeds varying from 47-52 mph with drivers spoken to by rangers and partners and handed animal accident hotline cards.



The Coastal Ranger led a beach clean with Southampton Children's Hospital PEEER Project (Patient Empowerment, self Esteem, Employability and Resilience through enjoyable activities) supporting young people aged 11-25 with long term medical conditions. Using both natural and non-natural materials collected they made a display to go at the entrance of the Children's Department with the support from hArt New Forest.



The onset of Covid-19 and lockdown saw Rangers initially unable to work outdoors engaging with people to being at home and adapting to more office and computer-based tasks. This enabled good work in updating webpages, research for future work and a chance for more detailed planning which is sometimes lost due to the fast paced nature of engagement work as the ground nesting bird season and main visitor season arrives.

We have been pleased to be able to assist New Forest Marque businesses with home deliveries with rangers and vans, a service described as a 'lifeline' by one regular recipient. We also assisted with delivering glucometers to over 100 residents in the Waterside to allow personal health monitoring in the absence of being able to visit their GP surgery.

Following the first stage of easing lockdown at the beginning of May, we envisaged a large influx of people to the New Forest and deployed staff back onto the Forest. We undertook the significant task of preparing the risk assessment and guidance notes to enable staff to get back out on the ground safely to work with other Forest organisations manage the situation.

We have had two teams of two rangers, with support from RML team members, monitoring behaviour, promoting responsible recreation and engaging with the public. We have seen an unprecedented number of people visiting the Forest, especially at weekends. Working closely with FE Rangers and Keepers, the team has focused on stopping barbecues and fires, monitoring verge parking, litter picking and educating people to not feed or pet Forest livestock. It has been a challenging time, but we are immensely proud of the team who have shown great positivity and resilience. We will continue to provide a visible presence across the National Park as well as maintaining a focus on increasing awareness of key messages surrounding ground nesting birds during this sensitive and critical period. See 'Recreation management' below for further

information about our ongoing and developing response to managing recreation following the easing of lockdown restrictions.

Communications

January to March:

We promoted the Volunteer Fair which included producing a Volunteer Guide booklet, map and talks leaflet, BBC Radio Solent interviews and Facebook videos, a press release, social posts and a time-lapse video. It was the most successful yet, with 760 visitors and 60 organisations represented.

We launched our call to address the climate and nature emergencies following December's Authority meeting and are working with Natural England, Forestry England, National Trust and Wildlife Trust to coordinate our communications on the campaign, in particular messages around 'net zero with nature' and 'right tree in the right place'.

Work to celebrate the achievements of OPOF projects has included features about endangered eels which have returned to Beaulieu thanks to the Living Waters project; a call for memories and photos linked to five historic routes; an arts project to record memories of the Waterside; and a community conservation project in Lyndhurst churchyard to restore and record gravestones.

The one-year extension of the HLS scheme funding was promoted with a press release and social posts. We also highlighted HLS scheme achievements on World Wetlands Day with Forestry England which included the launch of a film about the wetland restoration projects, with a reach on Facebook of 18,000 and which had 10,000 views in the first two weeks. Social posts about our HLS rangers have also proved popular. We announced the winner of a 'micro forest' photography competition to highlight species benefiting from the HLS conservation work.

An innovative new interactive online tree map has been launched which shows all protected trees in the National Park. We also launched a citizen science project to record historic tree graffiti which was picked up by the Times and Daily Mail and regional media. It had 50 online submissions in the first few weeks. We helped promote a photography exhibition about ancient trees of the New Forest currently at Highcliffe Castle.

Communications work with the Commoners Defence Association has included producing a calendar of behaviour change campaigns for use on social media to encourage others to share messages about caring for the forest; a membership sticker for vehicles to help commoners when they are working with their stock; planning Instagram training and a strategy and content to increase social media reach.

We organised the Green Halo Conference with Ordnance Survey which was a sell-out with 80 people attending, keynote speaker Dan Raven-Ellison of London National Park City, a panel discussion with policy makers from the region and young ambassadors from

the environmental and design sectors. The event was supported by a leaflet reviewing the Partnership's progress in 2019, a series of email newsletters and social posts.

Our target to double the number of people signed up to receive our communications by the end of the Business Plan (March 2021) has already been surpassed with an increase of 76% by end December 2019. This has included a new focus on Instagram, increasing sign ups to our e-newsletters, and downloads of the walking app launched last year.

Other campaigns have included a consultation on the Habitats Mitigation Scheme with an online form, email newsletter, media release, press adverts and social posts; a £28,000 grant with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to restore Landford Bog; promoting the Secretary of State vacancy.

March to July:

The C19 period has been the busiest ever for our communications teams with huge numbers of social media posts and interactions, media requests and emails around anti-social behaviour and questions about what visitor facilities are available throughout the evenings, bank holidays and weekends.

Since lockdown started, content on our main social channels has reached 5.6 million people (up 361% compared to the previous period), with 536,000 engagements (likes, comments, shares) - up 623% compared to the previous period.

Over 11,000 messages have been received on our main social media channels (up 345%), with many more via email and in response to our email newsletters.

We have coordinated with Forest organisations and the emergency services to combine and amplify messaging. The main focus has been on fire warnings, verge parking, litter, feeding and petting ponies and ground nesting birds. We have posted 580 messages (up 87%) and ran online advertising campaigns promoting a shortened New Forest Code graphic, which also featured in the Lymington Times. We have also helped promote information for residents about lockdown, essential services, green waste and fly tipping from NFDC.

The Essential Guide and Pocket Guide visitor publications were printed earlier in the year but distribution has not been possible yet due to C19, although they are available online. The new Pocket Guide contained the shortened New Forest Code and digital versions have been widely promoted and well-received. Forestry England, the CDA, Verderers, New Forest District Council and Go New Forest have all added their logos in support of the Code.

We launched a #BBQFreeNewForest campaign with Forestry England and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue, calling on stores to take disposable BBQs off sale. In the first two weeks, 18 stores signed up and three villages were declared BBQ-free. The campaign received widespread newspaper, radio coverage and TV, and saw a reach so

far of 300,000 on social media with 40,000 supporting the campaign with likes, comments and shares of the campaign posts.

A press release and social media posts were issued about rangers helping with New Forest Marque deliveries and we also supported the Marque's campaign to promote businesses which were offering essential services during lockdown. We have also continued our #Outsidelnside campaign, bringing the New Forest to people at home with some great content from staff, which included a series of online activities to mark John Muir week and Earth Day.

We announced the winners of the Building Design Awards in April, with a wildflower-roofed building at Peppa Pig World winning the inaugural green building prize. The National Park Awards with the CLA have been launched, with an appeal for nominations. The awards are normally presented at the New Forest Show and we are working to find another way to celebrate the award winners.

Work has started to support the Commoners Defence Association with its social media content. This has also included setting up Instagram training for commoners, which was well-received even though it had to be changed to a virtual course as lockdown began.

The Green Halo Partnership has been focused on a green recovery and we have promoted a number of blogs from partners suggesting what 'building back better' could entail.

2.2 Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park

Interpretation projects

Community interpretation projects with Pennington and Lymington Town Council (four panels), East Boldre (oral history project) and Fawley Parish Council (two panels at Holbury Manor) were progressed.

The six new Nature Stepping Stones project interpretation panels for Avon Tyrrell have been designed and are in production. Delivery of the six wooden (oak) A1 lectern style panels is due and the Avon Tyrrell ground team are booked to install them.

Work continues to develop and enhance the existing Trim Trail around the Tatchbury Mount Hospital site as part of habitat regeneration work under way via the Nature Stepping Stones project and the NHS. Office and clinical staff along with patients have all been involved in putting together suggested content which could be included in the enhanced trail. The current focus for the trail is health (mental health), wellbeing and connecting with nature. The aim is that as work continues on the habitat regeneration the trail will pass through this area, encouraging staff and patients to connect with nature.

Since the lockdown we have been progressing the above projects remotely, where possible. In addition, we assisted with the VE day podcast, with Gareth Owen providing content and recording advice. We are now looking into other podcast topics.

We have researched evaluation methods for engagement work to inform future delivery. We have also facilitated an internal 'New Forest Voices' group - which is looking at how we increase diversity of people involved in the National Park. We also want to find out more about the demographics of audiences visiting the Forest (including new audiences that have started visiting in recent weeks).

Historic Routes project

With the five trail routes selected, a press release was published just before the Christmas holidays to raise public awareness of the suggested trails and attract public contributions. The story was picked up by several media outlets, local radio and has attracted several contributions. These include stories of smuggling, the home of T.E. Lawrence, stories of New Forest myths, legends and folklore from a local writer, use of a reconstruction illustration of the Iron Age Tatchbury hillfort along with members of public wishing to share their local knowledge and history.

Rights of Way surveying has concluded with 95% of routes assessed. This has created over 3,200 data points and over 3,500 photographs, providing a record of the state, form, character and condition of around 30% of the rights of way in the New Forest National Park.

A small team of volunteers are now digging deeper into the archives to pull out any further insights, compiling the historical information to make a coherent narrative and identifying highlights and 'stop spots' along trail routes to deliver relevant information.

We are investigating route enhancement including the use of locally sourced timber for signage, replacing stiles with gates and some surface works. The HCC access team has contacted landowners about repairing stiles identified as being in poor condition. We are now working with HCC on the final details and arrangements for installation of enhancements. A new timetable is being drawn up on installation following the impact of C19 and subsequent lockdown.

Health and Wellbeing

A group of nature connection practitioners has been formed to better co-ordinate how nature can be used to benefit health and wellbeing. We have secured a £7k grant from Public Health England to deliver pilot 'health and wellbeing' hubs around PEDALL inclusive cycling and nature connection. We are planning a major conference in partnership with the four southern National Parks and Public Health England South East and South West regions. This has been postponed until 2021.

Walking for Health, which the NPA supports, has had 316 walkers walking 2,007 hours between October and December, led by 43 different volunteer walk leaders. Walks have a real impact not only on mental and physical health but also on general wellbeing. Much health and wellbeing activity has stopped during the lockdown, but a programme of activity is being developed to help people return to activity and gain the benefits of connecting with nature and the National Park when the time is right. We have worked locally to build a partnership of charities, organisations and practitioners, as well as taking a lead on the national recovery for health and wellbeing and national parks, drawing up a programme to help those whose health and wellbeing has been disproportionately effected by the lockdown, vulnerable people and those with disabilities and key workers and their families.

PEDALL

Rides continued throughout the winter, albeit slightly less than during the busy summer 2019 period which has allowed us to focus on servicing the bikes.

We had a good response from the volunteer fair and are running more volunteer training including a two-day outdoor first aid course specific to PEDALL for volunteers.

PEDALL's original funding was due to finish in August 2020 and we were submitting a continuation bid to the Lottery when lockdown occurred. This continuation included targeting additional groups including people with dementia and mental health challenges and having a hub in the north of the Forest. We were successful in the first round and developed the bid for the final round. Two days before the final decision the Lottery funding was diverted to the emergency COVID-19 response and the PEDALL bid was put on hold until October.

We have also submitted funding bids to Sport England and Wave105 Cash for Kids; both of these funding bids are also now on hold. PEDALL stopped rides during lockdown and staff have helped with health and wellbeing planning, cycle route and ride planning and funding group work. The NPA has supported the project while on hold and this emergency funding has enabled the end of the project to be pushed back until the end of October. This will give time to develop the application to the National Lottery Community Fund to respond to COVID-19 impacts. In the last few weeks, we have written risk assessments and procedures regarding returning to riding and we are now looking to restart as soon as we can with single families following social distancing measures.

Volunteer fair

A wonderful variety of volunteer opportunities ensured another successful year for the New Forest National Park Volunteer Fair. Roles ranged from helping at Hythe Pier to Highcliffe Castle, working with badgers to butterflies, plus practical opportunities within a

host of natural habitats. A record-breaking 760 visitors attended the annual Fair, which is now in its 10th year, to browse almost 60 organisations searching for volunteers.

The National Trust, Forestry England and RSPB exhibited at the event on 26 January, alongside local groups including Rockbourne Roman Villa, Pondhead Conservation Trust and Friends of the New Forest. People could sign up to do gardening at Exbury, go bike riding with PEDALL Inclusive Cycling or help crew the Steamship Shieldhall.

The Fair was officially opened by Patsy Baverstock, from Southampton, who has been a volunteer since visiting the Fair four years ago. Since signing up to the New Forest Non-Native Plants project, she has spent more than 700 hours helping pull invasive Himalayan balsam from the Forest's riverbanks.



2.3 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

Recreation Management

Progress has been made on some of the more strategic recreation management work, including:

- Members had opportunity to see a presentation about the research by Footprint Ecology, and the final reports have been published on our website. The research provides data and evidence about many aspects of recreation within the New Forest: where people come from, where they go, what they like to do, which sites

and routes they also use elsewhere (or would consider using if they were improved) etc. It also gives a clear picture of where parking is in most demand (e.g. along the Waterside for people with dogs who live a very short distance away and at the more central car parks for people who have travelled from further afield). The reason for the work being commissioned and the main recommendation from the consultants was that multiple local planning authorities should adopt a coordinated strategic approach to habitat mitigation in relation to planned development. However, it will also help inform many other aspects of recreation management for years to come.

- Discussions about how illegal recreation-related activities are dealt with is resulting in better understanding and joint working between organisations such as Forestry England, the Verderers, Police and NFDC. Topics include fly-tipping, overnight parking, fungi picking, out of control dogs and verge/gateway parking.
- Feasibility work for a Local Development Order is continuing to establish criteria and thresholds for changes to where and how much car parking should be provided across the open Forest. The overall aim will be to protect wildlife.

The Government's Covid-19 lockdown restrictions and guidance, followed by their relaxation, has resulted in huge public and political interest in recreation, and highlighted both major opportunities and significant issues. While we were told to walk only from our homes, many people spent much more time in their gardens (if they had one) and used local green spaces and routes – and the wider open countryside of the New Forest became very quiet. When travel restrictions were lifted, many thousands of people took opportunity to visit the Forest's open spaces where they could enjoy time with their family and friends whilst still maintaining social distancing. Remarkably hot, sunny weather and the lack of open visitor attractions, shops, pubs and alternative recreation facilities combined to result in probably the highest influxes of people ever experienced.

The NPA quickly deployed rangers alongside Forestry England rangers and keepers and this joint working has continued, with excellent communication each day to ensure a responsive on-the-ground presence. On warm days, preventing wildfires by putting out barbecues became the primary task. A wide range of other issues was dealt with including feeding and petting of ponies, litter, swimming in ponds, climbing on timber stacks and drones. FE staff dealt with late night / overnight / early morning issues including wild camping, fires and anti-social behaviour. NPA communications staff used social media platforms to great effect.

Much of the media interest has focused on problems, but the vast majority of people have caused little or no impact. Many have been very happy spending time close to car parks and on waymarked trails; they have eaten picnics and not used BBQs and took litter home. From our discussions with the visitors we have found that quite a few have not been to the New Forest before, have been keen to learn about it and delighted to have experienced the health and wellbeing benefits that come with connecting with nature, which we have in abundance.

At this time, we are assuming that high footfall will continue through the summer at least when the weather is fine. When alternative facilities and activities open, people will have more choice of where to go and what to do, but the lack of foreign travel may mean a lot of people choose day trips to the Forest. This in turn means that Forest organisations need to find short, as well as long-term solutions to some of the issues that have come to the fore in recent weeks, especially the shortage of parking spaces in the more popular areas which results in significant verge parking on busy days.

Our response is evolving and growing as different elements of lockdown restrictions are eased. We are currently developing a new 'local action' section on our website, to help local people play a greater part. For example, some people already pick up litter and we think we can help them do this safely by providing litter pickers free of charge. Others are reporting issues that need attention from one or more of the Forest organisations, so we have provided more information about how best to do this. We're also now able to distribute our literature again, so we'll be making this available via businesses across the Forest.

Educational campaigns

The winter campaign to reduce animal accidents continued with the near life-sized silhouettes being moved each fortnight to a new location. This is part of much wider joint communications and awareness raising programme of activity that, over the years seems to be helping. In 2019 the number of animals killed (58) was about average for the last few years. However, an increase in the total number of animals depastured means that 2019 had the lowest ever percentage of animals depastured killed. This includes the lowest ever number of ponies killed (35) probably helped by the increase in use of reflective collars. The reduction of traffic during lockdown resulted in very few accidents, albeit at a time of year when the frequency of accidents is usually low.

Plans with multiple partner organisations, especially NFDC, for the Spring Clean litter picks were well advanced when lockdown arrived, but all had to be cancelled. In liaison with NFDC, some community groups will doubtless organise litter picks later in the year and this is to be welcomed. NPA rangers have combined litter picking around car parks with public engagement; the two work very well together, making conversation about the things that make the Forest special very easy.

We recruited three summer assistant rangers funded through contributions from the NPA's mitigation funds, Forestry England, Camping in the Forest and NFDog. All three were known to us: two spent the winter promoting the benefits of the programmes of work funded by HLS and the third was one of our apprentice rangers last year. They are already enabling us to talk face to face with people returning after lockdown.

Through the Dogs Forum and with Forestry England, a new sign warning about disturbance to ground nesting birds has been deployed – asking walkers to consider

using an alternative route. We are focusing effort on specific areas where curlews, lapwings and redshanks are known to be breeding and are trying to assess if the new signs are beneficial.

The Special by Design Steering Group met before lockdown to discuss the work to develop a more coordinated approach to signage and other communications, with the aim of reinforcing the New Forest's very special sense of place (especially as you cross a cattle grid and enter the 'core' of the Forest), show that multiple organisations are working together and engender pride and respect. For various reasons, Covid-19 has limited our ability to progress the project but we plan to pick it up again soon, informed by the experience of working together and getting messages out consistently through the challenging C19 period.

Access and Rights of Way

The Expression of Interest for the Landscape Enhancement Initiative has been accepted and we are working on a full bid. The work is to improve the landscape character and public access along five of our promoted walking routes. Works will include hedgerow and tree planting, stream habitat restoration, a footpath diversion, surface works, new gates and the installation of new National Park path signage.

The Countryside Access Volunteer partnership is going well with 28 volunteers signed up. We have bought electric brush cutters and hedge trimmers and are working in partnership with Hampshire County Council to clear vegetation from the various footpaths and bridleways around the New Forest. We have started to train our volunteers in the use of these electric tools and hope to continue this when lockdown restrictions are eased.

The Habitat Mitigation Scheme is funding signage improvements to two of the National Park's promoted routes. The first is the Hale & Woodgreen Route and we are in the process of choosing the second route. We are investigating the addition of sensors along these routes to monitor footfall and assess the benefits of signage and other access improvements.

The Walking App is still popular with now over 26,000 downloads. We are working to update the app, increasing its capabilities, and ensuring that it is accessible for those with additional needs.

3 Prosper

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

Sustainable Tourism / business

As highlighted earlier in the report, we have been working with local business to adapt to the considerable economic challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our

support for local deliveries was a practical way in which we could support New Forest Marque businesses. We have also attended weekly New Forest Business Partnership meetings, to show solidarity for local businesses and help signpost them to sources of support and have an active role in the Hampshire Local Resilience Forum that is helping revive the local economy. Nationally, we have contributed to a submission to government and Defra highlighting 4 key “offers” to the nation that can help contribute to green, resilient and inclusive recovery.

As per survey results from Visit Britain indicating an increase in UK population holidaying domestically, with rural and coastal areas proving the most popular, we continue to work alongside Go New Forest to ensure that appropriate visitor messaging is conveyed across media channels. We inputted into the GNF Recovery Plan to ensure full recognition of the landscape designation.

3.2 Promoting connectivity across the National Park through sustainable transport and information and communication technologies.

Sustainable Transport

We assisted and presented at the Partnership Plan workshop on transport on 11 March.

Covid-19 impacted heavily on public transport. Joint ticketing is in place amongst local bus operators, with services typically running at 80% of the regular timetable and 20% of normal patronage. It is hoped that restrictions will have eased sufficiently to operate the Bluestar 9 extension to Lepe Country Park this summer.

Earlier in the year, ongoing support for the New Forest Tour had been established via marketing packages promoting local businesses and with partner organisations endorsing the animal safety campaign. The operational status of the New Forest Tour this summer is still unknown. Discussions are underway with the operator with a view to introducing a socially distanced visitor experience. We will not be recruiting any Sustainable Transport Ambassadors this year. If this ‘visitor welcome’ role is required, it will be fulfilled by existing NFNPA staff.

The new bus route that was due to launch in April (servicing Christchurch, Burley and Ringwood) has been postponed until April 2021. Meetings have taken place with the train operator around how we can work together to safely welcome those arriving by train.

A small group of NPA staff is focusing on cycling projects. The aim is to encourage active travel and to improve the user experience - particularly at a time when the popularity of cycling has increased considerably - and to support the wider work to ensure responsible recreation and appreciation of the special qualities. A cycle working group meeting with partners was facilitated in early June.

As part of central government's Covid-19 Reallocation of Road Space funding, we have been liaising with HCC and WCC about if there are opportunities within the National Park to investigate further.

We attended South Western Railway's stakeholder meeting and also arranged a guest speaker slot for Alison Barnes at a managers' meeting of SWR attended by over 400 staff.

3.3 Supporting the social wellbeing and sustainability of New Forest communities.

Affordable Housing

Officers attended a number of meetings in the last quarter of 19/20 concerning proposals for rural exception sites, including a public meeting in Hale, a drop-in consultation event in East Boldre and an introductory meeting with New Forest Cohousing. The current outline application for Fawley Waterside proposes 60 new on-site affordable homes, in accordance with the policy target of 50% affordable housing.

The Burley Affordable Housing Scheme has progressed with agreement now reached on the access arrangements across the adjoining car park with all the relevant parties, as well as an easement for connecting to all the main services. It is hoped that the Authority will be able to complete the acquisition of the site very soon and an update will be provided orally at the meeting. Tenders will then be invited for the construction of the two affordable homes, to be followed by a final report to the full Authority to confirm the appointment of the preferred contractor and to approve the associated build costs.

Sustainable Communities Fund

Funds have been approved to install new interpretation panels at key entry points onto Pennington Common to help provide visitors with information about its environmental importance. The boards will illustrate the wildlife and flora/fauna that can be found there, together with information about its history and use as a Common. Each board will also offer guidance to visitors and regular users of the Common about how they can help preserve and care for the site when visiting.

Funds have also been approved to the New Forest Agricultural Show Society to create an accessible archive of materials covering 100 years since the first New Forest Show, and a travelling exhibition. The archive will help to tell the story of the Show as well as determine what has been learnt over the last 100 years and what this means for the future of the New Forest, for example by identifying any changes in agriculture, biodiversity and climate as well as local crafts and skills and food production.

A round-up of the schools and groups across the New Forest that bid for funds to support their Year of Green Action projects found that 43 applications enabled the development of

16 wildlife and nature areas, 11 vegetable gardens and composting areas, seven outdoor learning areas, and the purchase of a range of tools, recycling and litter equipment. We are keeping in touch with these projects to see how their plans progress.

Reducing Plastics

Further to the Litter Assemblies we continued to work with schools through follow up sessions, looking deeper at the impacts of our waste on domestic stock on the Forest, the marine environment and on our own health and wellbeing. Resources and displays raising awareness of pollution on our freshwater and marine habitats were used at the Southampton Science and Engineering Festival and at Ballards Eco Schools Open Day.

A presentation at an NPA All Staff Meeting highlighted the need for everyone to think about their consumption of the earth's resources and how we can start to reduce our individual impacts.

4 Achieving Excellence

4.1 Maintaining and enhancing a capable, motivated staff team that delivers high quality services.

Human Resources

As at 5 June 2020 the total staff headcount was 84 or 73.85 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

	Headcount	Variation from previous report	Full Time Equivalents	Variation from previous report
Core funded	64*	0	56.01	+ 0.15
Funded by external projects	20	+ 1	17.84	+ 1
Total	84	+ 1	73.85	+1.15

*Of the core funded roles, one staff member (1 FTE) is working in shared services, 26 are part-time and four are on a fixed-term contract.

In the last six months we recruited to the following roles:

Role	Contract type	How funded
Communications Administrator	Fixed-term, one year	Project funded
Planning Officer	Fixed-term, one year	Core funded
Planning Officer	Fixed-term, one year	Core funded
Seasonal Assistant Ranger	Seasonal	Project funded
Tree Officer	Permanent	Core funded

We said goodbye to:

Role	Contract type	How role will be filled in future
Tree Officer	Permanent, core funded	Replaced like for like
Community Archaeologist	Fixed-term, project funded	Recruitment for Assistant Community Archaeologist in progress
Senior Education Officer	Permanent, core funded	Assessing vacancy
Finance and Procurement Officer	Permanent, core funded	Assessing vacancy

Staff Wellbeing

As part of our commitment under Nurture in our People Plan, a number of mental health focused initiatives have taken place in the last few months:

- Ten staff attended two days of training to become our Mental Health First Aiders
- We have formed a Wellbeing group comprising of Winnie Sandhu, Jim Mitchell and the Mental Health First Aiders. The group meets monthly to take forward wellbeing initiatives and discuss ideas to promote national events/days. There is liaison with Health and Safety Officers to ensure a collaborative approach
- All line managers received a one-day course to become mental health advocates
- We supported Time to Talk day – a national day which encourages people to have a conversation about mental health
- We launched a dedicated Wellbeing area on our internal intranet for all staff. It provides access to information to help our staff maintain and enhance their mental health and wellbeing
- All managers have been provided with resources to support themselves and their staff during the pandemic and specifically supporting staff whilst they are working from home.

4.2 Championing the National Park and brokering partnership to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest communities.

Team New Forest / Updating the Partnership Plan

Following the Authority report 'Landscapes Review and updating the Partnership Plan', presented at the last Authority meeting, members and key staff from the statutory partners have taken part in, and been invited to, a series of workshops as part of the Partnership Plan review.

The first workshop considered the Forest's response to the climate and nature

emergency and was held in Lyndhurst on 25 February. The workshop was well attended and a range of climate change topics were discussed as well as potential new actions for the updated Partnership Plan, including the need to accurately update existing emissions in the Forest and in doing so, to identify the big stationary 'emitters' to facilitate more targeted measures.

The workshop also identified the need to engage more with parishes and communities and helping them prepare community action plans. It was agreed that we would provide an overview of frequently asked questions around the climate and nature emergency on our website.

The second workshop about transport issues took place on 11 March and colleagues from Hampshire County Council as the relevant transport authority (for most of the National Park) facilitated an interactive morning. Attendees debated and identified the most pressing transport issues. There was unanimous support in the workshop to push for a lower 30mph speed limit on Forest roads. Two further 'virtual' workshops about nature recovery and connecting people with nature will be held over the summer.

The new Partnership Plan will also need to respond to the impacts of the pandemic and to set out a clear recovery plan to support wildlife, local businesses and the Forest's communities. This is the subject of separate paper on the agenda.

A round of 'virtual' quadrant meetings is also in progress, where the focus has been on managing the unprecedented visitor numbers in the Forest as we ease out of lockdown and how new measures might be reflected in the updated Partnership Plan. Other agenda items for the quadrant meetings have included general planning updates, as well as proposals to update the Design Guide SPD and to publish a list of local heritage assets.

4.3 Identifying new resources and using them alongside our existing resources, effectively and efficiently.

ICT Services

ICT's main focus had to swiftly change with the need to provide a way for all staff to work from home. Whilst home working has been possible, it had only been used by a small number of staff at any one time. The biggest challenge was with all the planning applications, none of which were designed for remote working. It was an extremely challenging time but as we had already had foresight to see the benefits of Microsoft Office 365, and we had planned to install a new remote desktop system, we were able to implement the new remote system project in under 2 weeks, although this did require a lot of weekend and out of hours working.

Once staff were operating from home the team had to find a way to hold the Authority meetings virtually, Planning Committee being the first. This took a lot of setting up but we are pleased to report that it was successful and not only was this the first virtual meeting for the Authority, it was the first virtual planning committee within the national park family and one of the first in Hampshire. Since that meeting the first all staff virtual meeting has taken place, one of the benefits is the meeting can be recorded enabling all staff to have the opportunity of seeing it.

Changes to the way we work is helping increase the drive towards SharePoint. Further meetings have taken place with both RML and ERE and RML are now very actively moving their work across to SharePoint. Microsoft Teams has proved very popular, enabling teams to easily meet and keep in touch whilst working from home. Earlier in the year a number of new sites were set up (animal accidents, dog walking) and a SharePoint library for both teams. Wellbeing and Sustainability intranet sites have also been set up.

The touch table has been upgraded from Windows 8 to Windows 10 and the hardware also upgraded. This will allow easier maintenance and security updates moving forward. The team, along with some volunteers are testing the new Edge browser before deploying to all machines. The Calshot room now has a PC and screen available to use in a similar way to that in the Anderwood which has proved very popular.

A pilot project was commenced to look at the use of tablet devices in Committee meetings for both members and staff but due to the current situation we have had to temporarily place this project on hold. We have been working closely with the Conservation team to improve the data held relating to buildings with vernacular detailing. Data checks across both GIS and Acolaid have highlighted a number of anomalies from when the original information was added. This is being addressed but has had an impact on the length of time required to complete the project.

Information management and Data Protection

Q4 was a very busy period for information requests, we received 19 compared to 12 in the same period last year, and the start of 2020/21 has continued this trend. We have already received 16 requests this financial year (as of 2 June 2020) which is already five more than we received in the whole of Q1 last year. Alongside responding to requests within the statutory deadlines, work continues on reviewing and updating our records management policies and procedures, although the spike in information requests has at times impacted on this work. We are working very closely with both the ICT team and other teams to assist them in moving their records to the newly created SharePoint sites, this has been particularly useful in enabling home working during the current social distancing restrictions because Office 365 is web based and can be easily accessed when out of the office.

Ensuring that we meet our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) remains a high priority and we are constantly reviewing and updating our website, documents and privacy notices to improve transparency and compliance. The Covid-19 restrictions have meant changes to our working arrangements and we have had to review, update and create Privacy Notices and Data Protection Impact Assessments which encompass our new ways of working, such as working from home and holding remote meetings.

Year end statistics for 2019/20

Information requests

We received 53 requests for information from 01 April 2019 to 30 March 2020, which is similar to the 5-year average of 51, although -9% down on the previous year. All but one were responded to within the statutory 20 working days, with the average response time being 12.8 working days.

Of the 53 requests, two were subject access requests made under the General Data Protection Regulation i.e. requests for the personal data of the requester. Ten were handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and related to our finances and IT arrangements, and the remaining requests were handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 because they related to planning or other environmental matters. Of these, 26 were related to specific planning, enforcement or tree works cases, whilst the remainder were more general environmental queries, such as 4x4 use in the forest, hunting, the RMS and our Local Plan. A small number came from pressure groups and journalists.

In 42 requests (79%) the information was either released in full or only subject to minor personal data redactions, with only 6 requests withheld (11%) in their entirety (generally because they were related to sensitive planning enforcement cases). We did not hold the information requested on four occasions and the requesters were referred to the appropriate statutory body and in one instance the request lapsed because we did not receive a response to our request for clarification. Of the 53, only two requested an internal review of the response and in both cases the internal review upheld the original decision. As far as we are aware, none have been referred to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Requests under GDPR

Last year we received requests from four individuals to exercise their rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Whilst this is not a large number it does represent an increase on previous years we usually only receive one or two and there does appear to be growing public awareness of the GDPR which gives individuals greater control over how their data is used by organisations. All of the requests received related to planning and enforcement matters and were requests to either restrict the processing

or delete the data of the requester. Only one request was complied with and this decision was based on the particular situation of the requester.

Formal complaints

We handled 18 formal complaints last year which was just one more than the previous year. All were related to planning matters except one which was not within our jurisdiction. Our average response time was 18 working days, although three went over the 20 working days target. The majority were not upheld, however in two complaints we offered a written apology for some elements of how the matters were handled.

In seven cases on receiving the initial response the complainant requested a review by the Chief Executive under Stage 3 of our process and two were subsequently referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). One of these was closed by the LGSCO after initial enquiries, as there was no fault in the way the planning decision was taken and the other one has yet to be allocated to an investigator.

5 Members

Members noted with great sadness the death of parish member Harry Oram on 9 April 2020 creating a vacancy on the South West Quadrant of the Authority. Following an election process for this vacancy, Stephen Tarling has been appointed to the position, subject to ratification from the Secretary of State.

Alexis McEvoy has replaced Mel Kendal as Hampshire County Council member on the Authority with effect from 1 June 2020.

Our Chairman, Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, has now completed the two full terms permitted by Defra for Secretary of State members with the last term ending on 31 August 2020. After 8 years as a member of the Authority, the last six as Chairman, Oliver has provided excellent leadership and commitment to the Authority and the wider New Forest.

5.1 Some Members were involved in some or all of the following meetings and events

- 28 January – members day – Building Design Workshop
- 3 February – Resources, Audit & Performance Committee meeting
- 4 February – members day – Green Halo Partnership Conference
- 18 February – Planning Committee meeting
- 25 February – members workshop – Climate Change Emergency
- 28 February – members event - New Forest Visitor Surveys – Information Event
- 2 March - Resources, Audit & Performance Committee meeting

- 5 March – Consultative Panel meeting
- 17 March – Planning Committee meeting
- 21 April - Planning Committee meeting
- 19 May - Planning Committee meeting
- 1 June - Resources, Audit & Performance Committee meeting
- 16 June – Planning Committee meeting

5.2 Forthcoming activities include:

- 21 July – Planning Committee meeting
- 28 July – Extraordinary Planning Committee Meeting
- 18 August – Planning Committee meeting
- 7 September - Resources, Audit & Performance Committee meeting

5.3 Chief Executive's engagements

- 19 December – Meeting with Cisco
- 14 January – Improving Mental Health through Green Social Prescribing event
- 14 January – Meeting with Arup
- 16 January – Health Task and Finish Group
- 17 January – HIOW CX Meeting
- 17 January – Green Bridges Meeting
- 20 January – Meeting with Friends of Brockenhurst
- 22 January – HLS Board Meeting
- 23 January – Authority Meeting
- 24 January – SLT Awayday
- 26 January – Volunteering Fair
- 29 January – NPE Board Meeting
- 29 January – Dinner with Professor Sir John Lawton
- 30 January – Workforce South Action Group Meeting
- 30 January – Health Leads video conference
- 31 January – New Forest Partnership Plan Leadership Group Meeting
- 3 February – Meeting with Russell Wynn, Wild New Forest
- 4 February – Green Halo Partnership Conference
- 5 February – Mental Health training
- 6 February - Round Table Discussion: Natural England Resilient Landscapes and Seas Programme
- 7 February – Curlew Summit, Highgrove
- 8 February – PfSH Joint Committee
- 11 February – Business South Board Meeting
- 13 February – Meeting with HPW and Future South Board
- 13 February – Meeting with PfSH
- 13 February – Business South Directors of the futures dinner

- 14 February – Special by Design Steering Group
- 14 February – Climate Change discussion with NFDC Chief Executive
- 18 February – Green Halo Steering Group
- 21 February – Data and Evidence meeting with members
- 25 February – Partnership Plan workshop on Climate Change
- 25 February – NPE Delivery Plan discussion
- 26 February – SE FWAC Meeting
- 27 February – PfSH Chief Executives Meeting
- 28 February – New Forest Visitor Survey results information event
- 28 February – Meeting with Dr Anjana Khatwa
- 29 February – London National Park City event
- 2 March – Work Programme briefing session for members
- 2 March – Speaker at the New Forest Rotary Club Meeting
- 4 March – Meeting with the Deputy Surveyor
- 4 March – Fed into E-NPOG Meeting
- 4 March – Health and Safety planning Meeting
- 6 March – HIOWLGA Meeting
- 16 March – RAPC
- 16 March – Climate Change Summit event planning
- 18 March – Meeting with ARUP
- 18 March – Meeting with Southern Water

Virtual meetings:

- 26 March - UK National Parks Foundation AGM
- 30 March - NPO Conference call
- 1 April - Defra Conference call
- 7 April - Defra Glover Contact Group
- 8 April - HLS Board
- 8 April - Covid 19 and National Parks
- 9 April - Solent Leaders Forum
- 15 April - Wildlife Roundtable
- 15 April - UK National Parks Collaboration Forum
- 20 April - National Parks National Recovery Planning
- 20 April - NPO Conference call
- 21 April - Green Halo Steering Group
- 23 April - Wildlife Roundtable
- 27 April - NPO Conference call
- 27 April - World Parks Week webinar
- 28 April - National Parks Health & Wellbeing Strategy Steering Group
- 28 April - Call with Director of Regeneration, Portsmouth CC
- 29 April - Call with Deputy Surveyor
- 29 April - Natural Capital Baseline meeting
- 30 April - Natural England catch up

- May - NPO Conference call
- May - Wildlife Roundtable
- May - Introductory meeting with CX and Executive Director of Place, Southampton CC
- May - Covid 19 Green Alliance webinar
- May - LRF Recovery Group Environment and Infrastructure
- May - Green Halo Steering Group
- 7 May - National Parks National Recovery planning
- 13 May - National Parks Health & Wellbeing Strategy Steering Group
- 13 May - catch up with South Western Railway
- 14 May - National Park City Foundation Trustee meeting
- 15 May - HIOW CX meeting
- 20 May - Wildlife Roundtable
- 27 May - Landscapes Review Response Contact Group
- 28 May - Forest Farming Group
- 29 May - Southern Policy Centre - recovery in the Central South
- 1 June - RAPC
- 1 June - Safer New Forest Strategy & Delivery Group
- 2 June – St Georges Fellowship discussion
- 3 June - LRF Recovery Group Environment and Infrastructure
- 4 June - NPE Board meeting and AGM
- 5 June - Green Recovery discussion
- 5 June - Call with Director of Regeneration, Portsmouth CC
- 8 June - NPO Conference call
- 9 June - Meet with CX Business South
- 10 June - National Park City Foundation skype
- 10 June - South Western Railway webinar
- 11 June - SE FWAC
- 12 June - Southern Policy Centre webinar
- 12 June - PfSH CX meeting
- 15 June - NPO Conference call
- 19 June - New member induction
- 22 June - NPO Conference call
- 24 June - Green Halo Steering Group
- 25 June - Business South Board meeting
- 29 June - Chairman's briefing
- 1 July - UK National Parks Collaboration Forum
- 2 July - E-NPOG
- 3 July - Forest Farming Group
- 6 July - NPO Conference call
- 7 July - Hampshire Rural Forum Steering Group and AGM
- 8 July - HLS Board

5.4 Chairman's engagements

- 26 January – Volunteer Fair
- 29 January – NPE Board
- 4 February – Green Halo Partnership Conference
- 7 February – Forestry England Housing Review
- 13 February – Chair, RMS Steering Group
- 20 February - Chaired Forest Farming Group
- 7 April - Defra Public Appointments Panel sift meeting
- 22 April - Defra Public Appointments Panel meeting
- 13 May - Defra Public Appointments Panel interviews
- 22 May - live interview BBC Radio Solent
- 28 May - chaired Forest Farming Group
- 4 June National Parks England AGM
- 4 June National Parks England Board Meeting
- 8 June – interview Heart FM
- 12 June interview BBC Radio Solent
- 25 June, Interview with BBC South Today
- 26 June, Interview with Wave FM
- 2 July, Chair, RMS Steering Group
- 3 July June – chaired Forest Farming Group

6 Recommendation

To note the report.