

New Forest National Park Authority
Infrastructure Funding Statement
Covering the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

Published December 2021

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, any authority (including local planning authorities and parish councils) that receives a contribution from development through either the Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 planning obligations is required to prepare and publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement.
- 1.2 This report therefore provides a summary of the financial contributions the New Forest National Park Authority has secured through Section 106 legal agreements (including unilateral undertakings) from development for off-site infrastructure works, the delivery of affordable housing and mitigation measures for the internationally protected habitats of the New Forest and Solent coast. **The report covers the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.**
- 1.3 The information included in the report is updated annually and published on the National Park Authority's website. This ensures up-to-date information on the amount of developer contributions received from new development and the projects where these contributions have been spent is readily available to local communities and other interested parties.

Section 106 planning obligations and developer contributions

- 1.4 Under Section 106 of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, local planning authorities (including National Park Authorities) can enter into legal obligations with developers to mitigate the impacts of new development. These agreed legal obligations can include both physical on-site measures and financial contributions towards off-site infrastructure provision and mitigation measures.
- 1.5 Planning obligations assist in mitigating the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. National planning regulations state that planning obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if they are:
- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the development; and
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

- 1.6 These tests are set out as statutory tests in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended by the 2011 and 2019 Regulations) and as policy tests in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹.

New Forest National Park Local Plan (2019)

- 1.7 The [New Forest National Park Local Plan](#) was formally adopted in August 2019, several months before the 2020 – 2021 reporting period for this Infrastructure Funding Statement. The Local Plan forms a key part of the statutory 'development plan' for the National Park and the policies set out in Table 1 are particularly relevant to this Infrastructure Funding Statement.

¹ Paragraph 57, National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Table 1: Relevant Local Plan policies

Local Plan Policy	Summary
SP5: Nature conservation sites of international importance	Confirms that a contribution to the Authority’s Habitat Mitigation Scheme for the New Forest sites and/or the Solent Recreation Mitigation Partnership’s Scheme (‘Bird Aware Solent’) will enable measures to be put in place to mitigate the recreational impacts of new development.
DP10: Open Space	New development is required to provide new public open space provision. Where this cannot be delivered on site (typically due to the small-scale of development within the National Park) a financial contribution to support off-site provision or enhancements will be sought.
SP27: Affordable Housing Provision	At the discretion of the Authority, financial contributions in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision will be accepted on smaller development sites.
SP38: Infrastructure provision and developer contributions	<p><i>“Development proposals shall make provision for the infrastructure and measures necessary to ensure that the development is acceptable in planning terms. Where appropriate, financial contributions for the provision of off-site infrastructure and measures will be sought.”</i></p> <p>Within the context of development within the New Forest National Park, developer contributions may be required towards highway and transportation works; affordable housing; education provision; recreation provision; and nature conservation mitigation measures.</p>

- 1.8 Further details on the developer contributions sought within the New Forest National Park are set out in the Authority’s adopted [Development Standards SPD](#) (2012), which sets out the level of financial contributions sought from new development towards affordable housing, public open space and transport.
- 1.9 In the context of planning within the New Forest National Park, developer contributions are also required to mitigate the impacts of new residential and visitor accommodation development on the internationally protected habitats of the Solent coast and the New Forest heathlands. Further details of these mitigation schemes can be found in the Authority’s updated [Habitat Mitigation Scheme](#) (2020) and the [Bird Aware Solent Strategy](#).
- 1.10 It is also important to note that alongside local planning policies, the process for seeking developer contributions from new development is guided by national planning policy and guidance. The Government’s National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) resource includes a specific section on [‘Planning Obligations’](#) which sets out the national framework for seeking developer contributions.

2. Section 106 contributions available at 31 March 2020

2.1 Prior to the adoption of the New Forest National Park Local Plan in August 2019, the previous Core Strategy (2010) also sought developer contributions from new development towards a range of local infrastructure and habitat mitigation measures. Table 2 (below) sets out the level of developer contributions held by the National Park Authority as at 31 March 2020.

Table 2: Contributions available at 31 March 2020 received in preceding years

Infrastructure / measure	Contributions available at 31 March 2020
Affordable Housing	£556,240
New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation	£108,240
Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation	Pooled contributions held by the Bird Aware Solent habitat mitigation scheme*
Transport	Pooled contributions held by Hampshire County Council for local transport schemes #
Public open space, sport & recreation	£30,760
TOTAL	£695,240

*Solent SPA habitat mitigation contributions are transferred to the Bird Aware Solent mitigation project on a quarterly basis and so are not in the direct control of the National Park Authority.

#Transport contributions are transferred to the local highway authority and so are not in the direct control of the National Park Authority.

2.2 Developer contributions secured through Section 106 agreements in the National Park are legally ring-fenced for specific uses/forms of infrastructure. This means they must be used for the purposes set out in the relevant legal agreement. Unlike funding received through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – which the National Park Authority does not operate – the priority for the use of received Section 106 contributions is not at the discretion of the Authority.

2.3 It is important to note that other than for the affordable housing and the New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation contributions, the National Park Authority itself is not directly responsible for the expenditure of the following contributions:

- Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation contributions have been sought since 2015/16 from new residential development within 5.6 kilometres of the Solent's internationally protected sites. Contributions within the 5.6-kilometre catchment area from across the 14 planning authorities in the area are pooled to be spent on the delivery of the 'Bird Aware Solent' habitat mitigation scheme and further details can be found [here](#).
- Although the Authority is the sole statutory planning authority for the National Park area, it is not responsible for highways (or education and social care). The two 'highway authorities' for the National Park area are Hampshire County Council (for the 95% of the land area of the National Park that lies within Hampshire) and Wiltshire Council (for the remaining 5% of the National Park located within the county of Wiltshire). Transport contributions are therefore transferred to the relevant highway authorities to be spent on schemes within the National Park area.

- The National Park Authority does not own or manage any public open space, sport or recreational facilities in the National Park. This responsibility typically rests with the local town and parish councils in the National Park and therefore contributions received towards open space provision are made available for the relevant town or parish council to draw down on and spend on open space projects in the locality of the new development.
- 2.4 For developer contributions towards affordable housing, it is necessary to build up a fund of pooled contributions to enable the delivery of off-site affordable housing. Affordable housing contributions have previously been spent on the delivery of two affordable dwellings for local people at Bransgore.
- 2.5 Table 2 confirms that the total of developer contributions held by the National Park Authority as at 31 March 2020 stood at just under £700,000. Of the total contributions held at the start of the Infrastructure Funding Statement reporting period, it is also important to note that the habitat mitigation contributions for the Solent coast and New Forest habitats were earmarked for specific projects. Both the New Forest and Solent mitigation schemes have published strategies setting out future spending priorities. The Solent contributions are pooled from development across the sub-region to fund the implementation of the Bird Aware Solent Mitigation Strategy, which is subject to separate annual reporting. The implementation of mitigation measures funded by the financial contributions towards the New Forest Habitat Mitigation Scheme (2020) is overseen by a Steering Group that meets annually to agree priorities for the following year.

3. Section 106 contributions received in 2020 – 2021

Table 3 – Contributions received in 2020 – 2021

Infrastructure / measure	Contributions received in 2020 – 2021
Affordable Housing	£27,829
New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation	£39,882
Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation	£16,055
Transport	£30,748
Public open space, sport & recreation	£49,072
TOTAL	£163,586

- 3.1 As shown in Table 3, during 2020 – 2021, the National Park Authority received just over £163,000 in financial contributions from new development, secured through either Section 106 agreements or unilateral undertakings.
- 3.2 The scale of new development between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 in the New Forest National Park (and the wider catchment of the Solent in South Hampshire) has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the requirement for all net new residential development to demonstrate ‘nitrate neutrality’. This is required to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations and has resulted in a significant slow-down in new development in the South Hampshire sub-region. Nonetheless, the level of developer contributions received by the Authority in this period was higher than the circa £100,000 received during the preceding 2019 – 2020 year.
- 3.3 Developer contributions towards habitat mitigation measures to address recreational pressures for both the Solent coast and the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are required to ensure legal compliance. They are therefore sought from all net new dwellings and visitor accommodation permitted in the National Park, unlike other forms of contributions where various site size thresholds apply. During 2020 – 2021, habitat mitigation contributions towards the New Forest and Solent designated sites were mainly received from a number of small-scale residential schemes.
- 3.4 In the 2020 – 2021 reporting year, the biggest financial contributions received overall were from the redevelopment of the former Hatch Motors site in Sway (planning application reference 18/00946) and the former Redmayne Engineering site in Brockenhurst (planning application reference 20/00236). The mixed residential and retail development in Sway was due to contribute a total of £123,839 towards affordable housing, open space, transport and habitat mitigation; of which the remaining £82,559 was received in the 2020 – 2021 reporting period. The permission granted for the former Redmayne Engineering site in Brockenhurst contributed towards measures to mitigate the impacts of increased recreational pressures on the internationally protected New Forest SPA and SAC (£37,019) and open space (£26,873) and is due to contribute towards affordable housing and transport infrastructure.

4. Section 106 contributions spent in 2020 – 2021

Table 4 – Contributions spent in 2020 – 2021

Infrastructure / measure	Contributions spent in 2020 - 2021
Affordable Housing	£252
New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation	£34,553
Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation	£16,055 transferred to the Bird Aware Solent habitat mitigation scheme
Transport	£30,748 transferred to Hampshire County Council for local transport measures
Public open space, sport & recreation	£20,375
TOTAL	£101,983

- 4.1 Table 4 illustrates that during 2020 – 2021 a total of £101,983 of contributions were spent on infrastructure or habitat mitigation measures within the National Park. This includes spend of contributions received in previous years and is an increase from the £90,409 spent in the 2019 – 2020 financial year.

Affordable Housing

- 4.2 £252 in received developer contributions towards affordable housing was spent as part of the feasibility work for the two proposed affordable dwellings at Burley. The scheme – which now has full planning permission – is based on the model established by the National Park Authority for the two affordable dwellings completed in Bransgore, whereby financial contributions towards affordable housing are pooled and spent on dwellings managed by the National Park Authority for local people in identified affordable housing need.

New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation

- 4.3 The spending of received financial contributions towards mitigating the impacts of increased recreational pressures associated with new development is done in accordance with the Authority’s adopted habitat mitigation scheme (2020). The scheme is overseen by a steering group comprising representatives from the National Park Authority, Natural England, the RSPB, the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and New Forest District Council. During 2020 – 2021 a total of £34,553 was spent on mitigation measures, including the following. The Authority’s Habitat Mitigation Scheme Annual Implementation Report for 2021 sets out details of all the expenditure and the developer contributions received.
- Seasonal Rangers: Habitat mitigation contributions have been used for the seasonal ranger resource working in the New Forest designated nature conservation sites. Three seasonal rangers were employed with one retained through the winter - £26,800.

- Communications: An important mitigation measure is the regular delivery of interpretation information, publications, website and social media development - £5,000.
- Alternative recreational routes: Improvements to, and monitoring of, alternative recreational routes outside the designated sites are important measures. This year sensors and a data collection system for monitoring footfall for an alternative recreation route were secured - £2,473.

Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation

- 4.4 The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy [annual reports](#) provide more detail on the spending of the contributions received. The 2021 Annual Report sets out the value of the developer contributions received by the partnership in 2020 – 2021, and details of all expenditure.
- 4.5 During 2020 – 2021, planning permission was granted for a total of 1,904 net new dwellings within the 5.6 kilometre ‘catchment area’ of the Solent’s protected habitats. This includes 11 net new dwellings within the New Forest National Park within the Solent’s identified visitor catchment area, as well as the 38-room hotel extension granted at the Balmer Lawn Hotel in Brockenhurst. In total, the Bird Aware Solent Mitigation Scheme received £1,494,020 in developer contributions from across the sub-region, including £16,055 from developments within the National Park (i.e. just over 1%). Set out below is an overview of the mitigation projects supported in the 2020 - 21 reporting year through the use of pooled developer contributions. Further details can be found in Appendix 1 of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy Annual Report 2021.
- Team of full time and seasonal rangers: The key mitigation measure is a team of rangers who patrol the Solent coast, including the National Park’s coastline. The rangers aim to reduce bird disturbance by helping people to better understand the importance of the over-wintering birds and their vulnerability to disturbance - £287,038.
 - Monitoring: Due to Covid restrictions, the Partnership worked in conjunction with the consultants Footprint Ecology to develop a scaled back version of the planned monitoring programme (disturbance surveys, car park counts and vantage point surveys) whereby the rangers delivered the fieldwork element and the consultancy produced the final reports. Ten passive counters remain installed at set points along the coast so that comparisons could be made between pre- and during Covid times - £42,943.
 - Information, Marketing and Communications: Effective communications are key to raising awareness and achieving behavioural change amongst people who visit the coast. Social media has been an increasingly important outreach tool, especially during periods of lockdown. This has been coupled with work to develop the website and provide more content for coastal users. These efforts saw the creation of a ‘Lockdown Learning’ section which provides many resources to support learning about birds and wider nature at the coast and has proven popular - £44,825.

A modest number of paid promotions were implemented on social media and the results of these have been closely monitored in an attempt to understand more about what role these might play in the outreach work moving forward. The website - www.birdaware.org - had 9,359 users during 2020 - 2021 with 87.2% of these being new visitors. This is approximately a third more visits to the website than the previous year.

Transport

- 4.6 Following changes in national planning policy, the National Park Authority is only able to negotiate financial contributions towards transport infrastructure from larger developments. Given the typical profile of development in the protected landscape of the New Forest National Park, transport contributions are not usually triggered. In 2020 – 2021 the Authority received £30,748 in transport contributions, which was transferred to Hampshire County Council.

Public open space, sport and recreation provision

- 4.7 The National Park Authority liaises with town and parish councils regarding the spending of received contributions towards public open space, sport and recreation facilities. During 2020 – 2021 a total of £20,375 was released to the parish councils in Bransgore and Brockenhurst for the following projects.
- A financial contribution of £7,010 towards the new wildplay site at Clare Lodge, Bransgore on the southwest boundary of the National Park. This financial contribution for new play equipment was from the development of two affordable dwellings in the village and highlights the link between new development and enhanced open space provision in the locality.
 - A financial contribution of £11,690 was made towards the provision of new cycle facilities in Brockenhurst village centre. This was from developments within the village and the funding contributed towards improving facilities in the village for recreational cycling.
 - Another financial contribution of £1,675 was made towards the Highwood Road play area in Brockenhurst, and also resulted from developments within the village.

5. Section 106 contributions available for future years

Table 5: Contributions available as at 31 March 2021

Infrastructure / measure	Contributions available at 31 March 2021
Affordable Housing	£583,817
New Forest SPA Habitat Mitigation	£113,569
Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation	Pooled contributions held by the Bird Aware Solent habitat mitigation scheme
Transport	Pooled contributions held by Hampshire County Council for local transport schemes
Public open space, sport & recreation	£59,457
TOTAL	£756,843

5.1 During the 2020 – 2021 year of this Infrastructure Funding Statement, the National Park Authority received just over £163,000 in developer contributions (Table 3); and released just under £102,000 towards local infrastructure projects and habitat mitigation measures (Table 4). The total level of contributions held by the National Park Authority therefore rose slightly compared to the position at 31 March 2020 (see Table 2), from £685,404 to £696,490. It should be noted that some of the contributions received in 2020 – 2021 were spent within the same reporting year. Table 5 sets out what was held by the Authority at the end of March 2021.

5.2 As well as reporting on the developer contributions received and spent between April 2020 – March 2021, the Infrastructure Funding Statement is required to set out the priorities for spending in the future. These are set out below for the main areas of infrastructure provision sought in the National Park.

Affordable housing

5.3 The delivery of affordable housing for local people in identified housing need is a key element of the adopted Local Plan and accords with the Authority's statutory duty to foster the socio-economic wellbeing of local communities living within the National Park. Successive development plans dating back prior to the designation of the New Forest National Park in 2005 have required new development to support the delivery of affordable housing, through either on-site provision or financial contributions to enable off-site delivery.

5.4 Received developer contributions towards affordable housing have previously been used to fund the delivery of new affordable housing in the National Park. This has included the release of funds to New Forest Villages Housing Association to support new provision at Foxhills in Ashurst; and the use of contributions to fund the construction of two new affordable homes at Bransgore (application reference 14/00664).

5.5 Following the successful delivery of the affordable dwellings at Bransgore in September 2018, the Authority granted planning permission for two affordable dwellings on land adjacent to Park Lodge, Burley (application reference

delayed. Estimated funding £25,000. It is important that monitoring footfall data is collected to establish a baseline prior to the route enhancements.

- Ambassador scheme: The 'Ambassador' scheme aims to recruit volunteers to get involved in looking after the Forest. Estimated funding - £5,000.
- Monitoring: Installation of automated people counters on identified routes and collection of baseline data before improvements are made to those routes.

Solent SPA Habitat Mitigation

5.9 The fourteen local planning authorities within the Solent's 5.6km catchment area (including the New Forest National Park Authority) are continuing to pool developer contributions to support the delivery of strategic mitigation measures for the Solent coast. A budget has been set for 2021 - 22 totalling £782,000 to fund the implementation of mitigation measures and associated costs including the part-time Partnership Manager and the headlines are set out below:

- Team of full time and seasonal rangers: The ranger team remain a core part of the mitigation package and the Bird Aware Solent rangers complement the work undertaken by other rangers along the Solent coast - £287,000.
- Monitoring: Undertaking the next phase of data collection to monitor the effectiveness of the mitigation measures - £30,000.
- Information, marketing and communications: To include: (i) actively promoting the use of the Bird Aware brand to 3rd parties; and (ii) implementing the third year of the agreed marketing strategy, growing the reputation and sphere of influence of Bird Aware Solent - £55,000.
- Dog initiatives: The implementation of initiatives to encourage responsible dog walking on the coast to avoiding bird disturbance - £10,000.
- Site specific projects: A total of £2 million is set aside over a number of years to fund capital projects designed to further the aims of the strategy - £400,000.

Public open space, sport and recreational facilities

5.10 In accordance with Policy DP10 of the adopted National Park Local Plan (2019), new residential development is required to either provide on-site open space provision, or financially contribute towards off-site provision and/or enhancement in the locality of the development.

5.11 The developer contributions received by the Authority are made available for local town and parish councils. Over the years, the Authority has released over £275,000 towards local open space infrastructure, including the wildplay projects at Stanford Rise, Sway; Clare Lodge, Bransgore and Whartons Lane,

Ashurst; and new play equipment at the Coles Mead recreation ground, Lyndhurst; and the Highwood Road play area in Brockenhurst.

- 5.12 The Authority will continue to make the received open space contributions available for the relevant town and parish councils to support the delivery of costed open space enhancement. The contributions are linked to the locality of the development.

6. Section 106 Monitoring Fees received 2020 – 2021

- 6.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2019 enable local planning authorities to charge a monitoring fee to cover the cost of the monitoring and reporting on delivery of the Section 106 obligation. Monitoring fees can be used to monitor and report on any type of planning obligation, for the lifetime of that obligation.
- 6.2 The regulations allow monitoring fees to be established using a number of options. However, in all cases, monitoring fees must be proportionate and reasonable and reflect the actual cost of monitoring. Local planning authorities are required to report on monitoring fees in their Infrastructure Funding Statements.
- 6.3 National Park Authority members approved the introduction of Section 106 monitoring fees (as enabled by the relevant Regulations) in December 2019. The monitoring fees took effect from 1 January 2020 and therefore covered the entire 2020 – 2021 reporting period. The monitoring fee rates introduced in January 2020 are set out below.

	Band 1: 1-5 dwellings or up to 1ha of land	Band 2: 6-10 dwellings or up to 3ha of land	Band 3: 11-49 dwellings or up to 10ha of land	Band 4: 50+ dwellings or more than 10ha of land
Percentage increase	0%	20%	40%	80%
Monitoring fee per covenant	£284	£284 x 1.2 = £340.80	£284 x 1.4 = £397.60	£284 x 1.8 = £511.20

- 6.4 In the Infrastructure Funding Statement reporting period of April 2020 – March 2021 the National Park Authority received £3,295 in Section 106 monitoring fees.