



Re:New Forest

The New Forest National Park Partnership Plan **2022–2027**

Summary version

Produced jointly by:



Wiltshire Council

Test Valley
Borough Council



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Hampshire
County Council



The extraordinary New Forest National Park

The New Forest is an exceptional landscape, shaped over thousands of years by the people who have lived and worked here.

It is one of the most important areas for nature in Europe and its open landscape, coast and unique natural beauty have inspired and sustained generations of local people and visitors alike.

Help us achieve our ambitious vision to **Re:New Forest** so the New Forest National Park becomes:

A national beacon for a sustainable future, where nature and people flourish.



 New Forest National Park boundary

Produced jointly by:





Why is the New Forest so special?

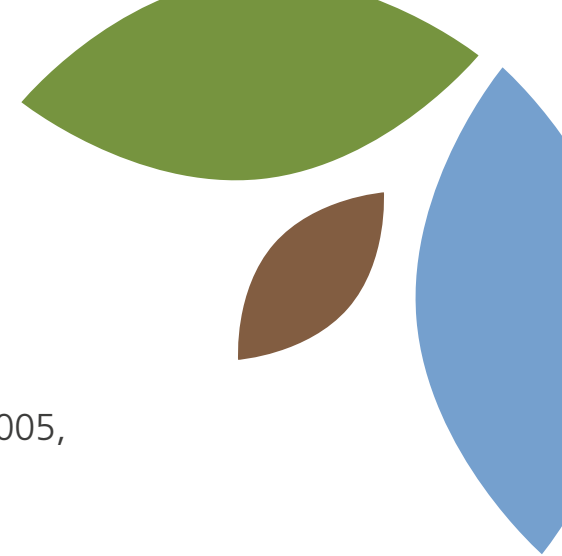
The New Forest is a haven for some of our rarest and most spectacular wildlife thanks to the wonderful mosaic of heaths, mires and bogs, ancient woodland, coniferous plantations, grasslands, farmland and coastline.

This combination of natural environments is hard to find anywhere else in western Europe.

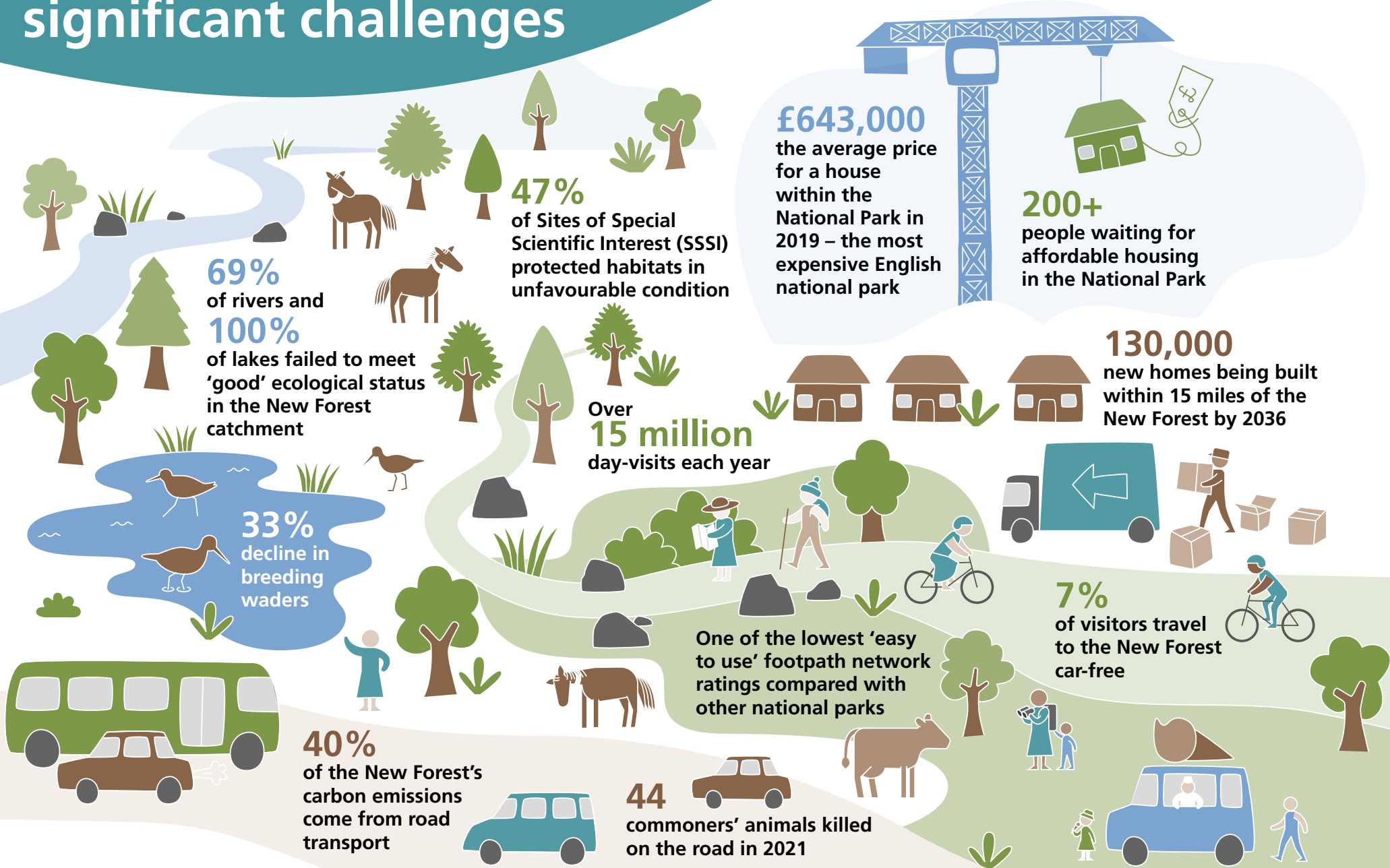
Over half the National Park is designated for its international importance for nature.

When the National Park was established in 2005, a widespread public consultation defined the New Forest's special qualities as:

- 1 The New Forest's outstanding natural beauty:** the sights, sounds and smells of ancient woodland with large veteran trees, heathland, bog, autumn colour and an unspoilt coastline, with views of the Solent and Isle of Wight.
- 2 An extraordinary diversity of plants and animals** and habitats of national and international importance.
- 3 A unique historic, cultural and archaeological heritage,** from Royal hunting ground, to ship-building, salt making and 500 years of military coastal defence.
- 4 An historic commoning system,** that maintains so much of what people know and love as 'the New Forest' forming the heart of a working landscape based on farming and forestry.
- 5 The iconic New Forest pony** together with donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free.
- 6 Tranquillity** in the midst of the busy, built up south of England.
- 7 Wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery** in one of the last extensive gentle landscapes in the south including unmatched open access on foot and horseback.
- 8 A healthy environment:** fresh air, clean water, local produce and a sense of 'wildness'.
- 9 Strong and distinctive local communities** with a real pride in and sense of identity with their local area.



The New Forest faces significant challenges



Our shared vision

A national beacon for a sustainable future, where nature and people flourish.

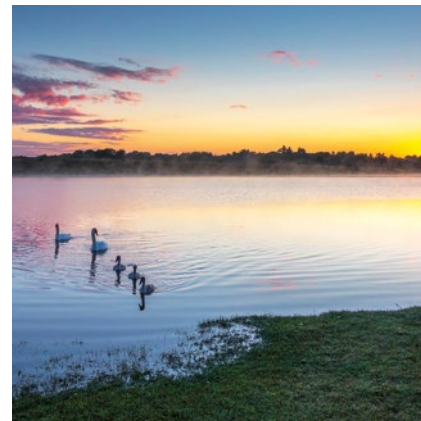
Working together, our joint plan will create a greener future – ensuring the recovery of climate, nature and ourselves.

In 2050, the National Park will be a unique and immediately recognisable place where:



People **live and work** sustainably, having successfully adapted to the impacts of the climate emergency and supporting nature's recovery and resilience.

Image: Affordable housing scheme, Bransgore.



Tranquillity and a feeling of naturalness pervade large parts of the New Forest.

Image: Hatchet Pond swans. © Nick Lucas



The mosaic of distinctive landscapes and habitats have been conserved and greatly enhanced, supporting **wildlife** to recover and flourish.

Image: Lapwing. © Marc Baldwin



All communities and visitors are better informed and gain **inspiration, health and wellbeing** and enjoy the extensive areas accessible across the National Park whilst **respecting** the fragile nature, unique environment and rich culture of the New Forest.

Image: Pigs let out during the autumn 'pannage' season.



There is a strong sense, understanding of and support for the **heritage** and living culture of the New Forest, especially the local tradition of commoning.

Image: Commoner and farrier, Ben Mansbridge.



Local, regional and national organisations recognise and work to **enhance the value** of the National Park; there is an appreciation of its importance and role within the wider area.

Image: New Forest Partnership Plan representatives view projects at Lepe Country Park.



Facilities such as car parks, campsites, walking and cycling routes and community green spaces are in the right places to both protect rare wildlife and to provide a better, more informed experience for people.

Image: Ranger walk with visitors from Southampton and Winchester.



Everyone contributes to **caring for** the National Park as a special place for present and future generations.

Image: Visitors at the University of Southampton Science and Engineering Day learning about the National Park.

How we'll work together

National Parks have two statutory purposes set out in the Environment Act which give the main reasons why they were designated and the focus for their management:

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

National Park Authorities also have a duty in taking forward the two National Park purposes to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within the National Park.

All National Parks must have a Partnership Plan to guide and co-ordinate the work of all those with an interest and influence in the National Park – statutory organisations, land managers, businesses, local communities and user groups.

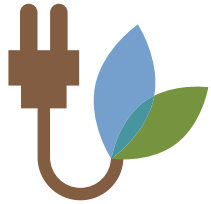
It's a plan for the National Park as a place and not specifically for the National Park Authority or any other organisation.



Ambitious agendas for action

The partners and communities are working together on transformational change in five areas.





Re:New Climate Net Zero with Nature

Challenges

We're already seeing warmer wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, rising sea levels, an increasing frequency of extreme weather events and longer periods of higher fire risk.

By 2027: Significant cuts in carbon emissions are secured through restoring natural habitats and enabling carbon capture.

Case study

Over **£174,000** has been given to farmers, landowners and commoners in 2021–22 for projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses. The three-year Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme from Defra is administered by the New Forest NPA.

Action:

- Develop a 'net zero with nature' programme with partners and communities to ensure the National Park is **carbon neutral by 2050**.
- Promote and develop best practice in **nature-based solutions** to meet climate and nature goals.
- Help **communities** to take action on the climate emergency.



Image: Volunteers at Pondhead Conservation Trust which received a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant.
© Pondhead Conservation Trust.



Re:New Nature Nature Recovery

Challenges

The New Forest has some of the most precious habitats in western Europe and they and many wildlife species are in decline.

By 2027: Habitats are more resilient, restored, expanded, connected and maintained to enable wildlife to thrive, both within and beyond the National Park.

Case study

Since 2010, **20 miles** of rivers and streams have been transformed and around **5,000 hectares** (more than 7,000 football pitches) of protected wetland habitats have been improved thanks to the **£22 million** Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship scheme. The scheme is a partnership with Forestry England, the New Forest National Park Authority and the Verderers.

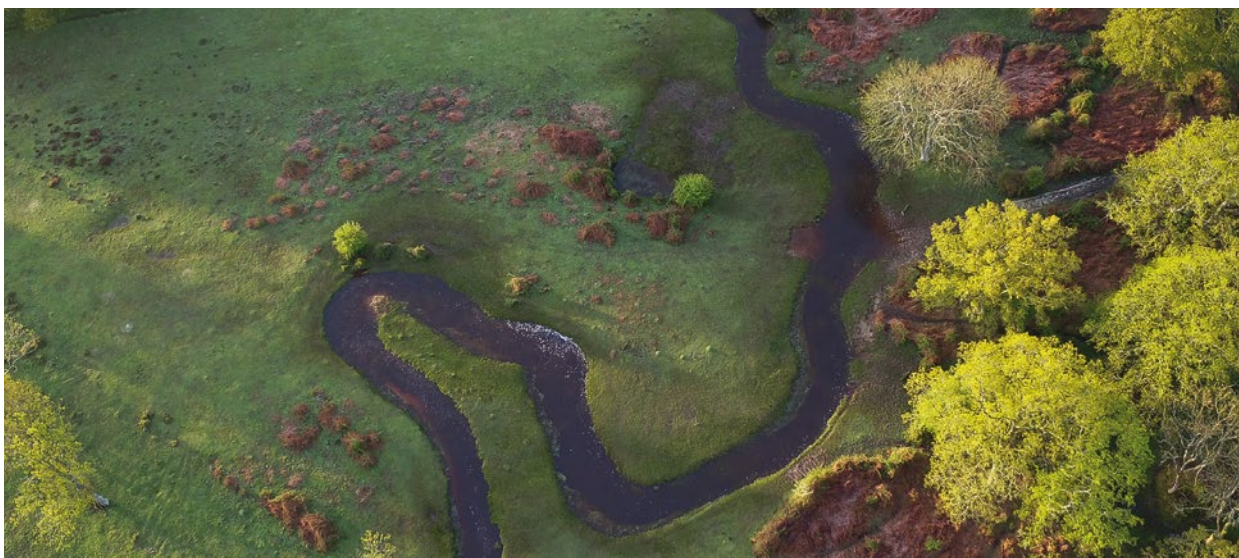


Image: Aerial view of the restored Fletchers Water. © Big Wave

Action:

- Produce a **local nature recovery plan** to:
 1. maintain, restore and expand habitats so that they are resilient and support thriving wildlife
 2. mitigate recreational pressures
 3. ensure recreation takes place in the most resilient areas.
- Harness the benefits we receive from nature in the New Forest ('natural capital') to generate increased **investment and projects** to enhance nature and the services it provides.
- Help landowners, farmers and commoners move to the new **Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)** of subsidies which rewards working with nature.



Re:New People

An inclusive National Park

Challenges

Green space is vital for our health and wellbeing. Yet in a recent survey only 58% of people within the 10% most deprived areas around the New Forest had recently visited the National Park.

By 2027: People within reach of the New Forest of all backgrounds, abilities and socio-economic groups value the National Park as an important part of their lives and seek to care for it.

Case study

Inclusive cycling charity **PEDALL** takes people with disabilities out for cycle rides to experience the Forest using a fleet of specially-adapted bikes. With two hubs at Burley and Ashurst, riders and carers took part in nearly 2,800 slots in 2021/22, **with the help of over 30 volunteers.**



Image: Pedall inclusive cycling charity.

Action:

- Develop opportunities to deliver a **'Natural Health Service'** within and beyond the National Park, through a programme of measures provided by communities, businesses and the health and environment sectors.
- Foster a **greater appreciation** of the New Forest, its landscape and cultural heritage.
- Help new and diverse audiences **connect with nature**, discover why the National Park is special and how to care for it, with a particular focus on young people.



Re:New Place Thriving Forest

Challenges

Around 35,000 people live here with 2,500 businesses and some of the highest house prices in Britain. It's a living, working Forest and we need to make sure we keep it that way.

By 2027: A living, working Forest is sustained through its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty and support for commoning. There is a vibrant local produce sector, access to affordable homes and sustainable tourism, and high-value businesses and employees are attracted.



Case study

The **New Forest Marque** local produce scheme has over **160 members** ranging from award-winning producers linked to the landscape, to outlets including farm shops, restaurants and hotels.

Images: Hockey's Farm Shop, South Gorley.

Action:

- Protect **cultural heritage** assets and support commoning and local produce to sustain the unique natural beauty of the landscape and culture of the New Forest for future generations.
- Invest in **green skills and jobs**, creating a recognised reputation as a centre of excellence for a growing green economy.
- Provide **more affordable housing**.



Re:New Partnership Team New Forest

Challenges

We can't do this on our own – it's only through the combined efforts of communities, businesses and partners that we can secure the future of the New Forest.

By 2027: Communities, businesses and organisations work together as a team to bring the Partnership Plan vision to life, sharing knowledge, ideas and resources to deliver the best for the Forest.

Case study

The Green Halo Partnership brings together businesses, charities, universities and public sector organisations to focus on valuing nature and its benefits and ensuring it flourishes as an integral part of how we live and work.

greenhalo.org.uk



Image: Green Halo Partnership conference at Ordnance Survey.

Action:

- Establish new ways of **engaging with our communities**, hearing their ideas and encouraging grassroots action.
- Ensure the New Forest is **leading the environmental agenda** by delivering exemplary projects and partnerships and showing how these can support and shape policy and sustainable decisions beyond our boundaries, both regionally and nationally.
- Develop a **data, evidence and insights** capability to underpin our collective decisions and actions and use up to date technology to help us manage and communicate across the National Park more effectively.

Join us

Manage land for nature and climate:

Contact the New Forest Land Advice Service to see how land could be managed better for nature, with funding and advice.



Take the climate and nature challenge pledge:

Join hundreds of other people and sign up to take vital small steps towards living more sustainably.

newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge



Invest in the New Forest's future:

Talk to the partners about how you or your business could help fund transformational change to ensure the Forest is fit to face the future.



Volunteer or become a New Forest Ambassador

Commit some time to protecting New Forest habitats and heritage while learning new skills and meeting new people. Not much time to spare? Consider becoming an Ambassador and help care for the Forest in your own time with our help.



Read the full Partnership Plan at: newforestnpa.gov.uk Join the conversation: [@newforestnpa](https://twitter.com/newforestnpa) [f](https://www.facebook.com/newforestnpa) [t](https://www.instagram.com/newforestnpa) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/newforestnpa)



Image: Heathland near
Linwood. © Nick Lucas.
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