

**AM 643/23**

**NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**AUTHORITY MEETING – 23 MARCH 2023**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

**Report by:** Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

**Summary:**

This report covers the period since the Authority meeting on 26 January 2023. The report has been formatted to accord with the 'Protect, Enjoy, Prosper and Achieving Excellence' themes from the Business Plan, summarised below:

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

**Recommendation:**  
**To note the report**

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**Equality & Diversity**

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics and places us under a duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of our functions. We aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity throughout all aspects of our work. More details regarding our projects and initiatives, such as PEDALL, are set out in the relevant reports and Equality Impact Assessments.

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#### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

**Report by:** Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

In the two months since our last meeting in January our focus has been activating our shared Re:New Forest Partnership Plan and securing commitment and resources to deliver its ambitious programme.

Our own resources were given a welcome boost at the beginning of March, with the award of a one-off £440,000 of additional funding from Defra.

The funding letter from our Minister Trudy Harrison had some very positive words about the work we do, describing us as 'the custodians of these special places' and that the funding would help 'protect vital assets and...ensure our National Parks remain open and accessible to the nation...[so] that you can continue to support thriving communities and economies, improve our public health and wellbeing, drive forward nature recovery, and build our resilience to climate change' – all in line with our new Partnership Plan themes of climate, nature, people, place and partnership.

Whilst a welcome and timely announcement as we set our forward budget, our core Defra grant has almost halved in real terms since 2010 and we will need to continue our efforts together with our partners to pool resources and raise funds to fully meet the ambitions of Re:New Forest.

The Government also announced that the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme, currently delivered across 10 National Parks and 34 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) since 2021, will be extended until March 2025. We have already been awarded £456,000 to issue in grants between July 2021 to March 2024 which has seen miles of hedgerow planted, ponds created, orchards planted and measures to reduce flooding.

We were also pleased that the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme which supports conservation grazing and vital conservation projects in the New Forest, has been extended for a further five years. However, it is a time of transition and uncertainty for the Forest as we move towards the full domestic agricultural policy in 2024. A solution urgently needs to be found to the issue of Basic Payment tapers off threatening the viability of commoning. We are supporting the Forest Farming Group to

commission work to determine which scheme might be best to meet the Forest's need and to recommend when and how to move into a new scheme.

The Chairman and I were pleased to be able to meet our Minister in mid-March for an hour during her visit to the New Forest with Campaign for National Parks. We had the opportunity to introduce her to our Re:New Forest mission and the challenges and opportunities in meeting government's ambitions for National Parks with constrained resources and the concerns for a future land management scheme to for the Forest.

The Green and Blue Horizons from City to Forest scheme is ending this month. This represents a £800,000 investment into the Forest thanks to a £540,000 grant and match funding from partners. As projects are finally being completed, evaluation work and a wrap-up film are under way. One of the highlights of the scheme is the £78,000 project to support interns and staff delivering climate education at the new Fort Climate Centre at the Countryside Education Trust (CET) in Beaulieu. It was an honour to be a part of the official opening by HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh (then Countess of Wessex) on 9 March. Other highlights include 20ha of habitat restored and 2km of hedgerow created.

Our apprentice ranger scheme is proving successful, with our current colleagues working with CET and other partners on their year-long rotation around the Forest. However, it is recognised that the environment sector is lacking in diversity and needs new people to come into green careers. To help address this we have a number of initiatives in place at all levels to stimulate interest in the environment and careers.

We have set up an early green careers network to provide peer support with a successful NPA group operating for several months now and our education team has attended careers fairs at local schools and colleges and with the Local Enterprise Partnership. We have now expanded this to other organisations and the first meeting saw 20 people from 12 organisations developing green career resources to share. We secured the opportunity to recruit another paid intern through funds that have been awarded by Groundwork as part of the New to Nature programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This post will be one of 70 jobs for 70 young people across the UK to start their green careers and improve recruitment and diversity across the environment sector.

Events are back in full flow for 2023 and we saw the New Forest Marque spring roadshow draw a large crowd with strong sales at Everton Nurseries. We joined the Farming Community Network 'Yarn in a Barn' event hosted by NFDC for the farming community to help address loneliness in farming and enable conversations on current farming issues.

Our campaign work with partners under the New Forest Code is currently focused on the all-important annual push to protect rare ground nesting birds partnership and promote behaviour change during this sensitive period. We are asking businesses to help spread

messages about keeping to the tracks and to look out for signs in nesting areas with support from the New Forest Business Partnership. We have also worked closely with NFDC and Forest organisations to allow implementation of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) and plan the Care for the Forest Campaign for the coming visitor season.

We partnered with the New Forest Agricultural Show Society and the Hampshire Forest Partnership to deliver a Queen's Green Canopy family trees planting day at New Park on 4 February. Together we welcomed more than 140 people of all ages to plant around 70 native English oak trees to mark a family event. It was a wonderful day for the families and a boost for the natural beauty of New Park creating important new habitats for the wide diversity of wildlife there.

A real highlight in late January was the record-breaking Volunteer Fair which welcomed 920 potential volunteers, the largest in the event's 13-year history to discover volunteering opportunities from 45 different organisations. Opened by Sir Julian Lewis MP and trainee guide dog Aretha and her handlers at Brockenhurst Village Hall, around 100 people aged below 30 years old came representing a marked increase in young people. We also saw an increase in people with disabilities and those from different communities attending. The NPA alone recruited 55 new volunteers as a result of the fair.

As we go into spring, we are running our Awakening Festival throughout March inviting people to learn and engage with nature and climate action through over 80 events both in person and online, provided by a wide range of organisations and businesses as well as the NPA. One of the early events on eco-gardening run by A Greener Brockenhurst saw 225 people attend and walks, talks and exchange of inspirational ideas continue with 1,000 people having now signed our online pledge to take sustainable living steps and many have signed up to receive further information on their climate change journey.

Through these events and collaborations, we go into the spring with a real sense of the 'Team New Forest' which underpins our shared Re:New Forest mission. Continued investment in this partnership by us all and making the case for the significant resources to make a difference will be crucial for the year ahead and beyond.

## **DELIVERY OF NATIONAL PARK PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS**

The report has been formatted to accord with the 'Protect, Enjoy, Prosper' objectives from the 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.**

##### *Farming in protected landscapes*

A further two projects have been approved in February and work continues to encourage claimants to get their projects completed before the end of March. The programme has been extended for a further year to March 2025, with the likelihood of additional funding due to be confirmed by Defra by the end of this financial year. The support of the largely voluntary members of the Local Assessment Panel who determine the applications to be supported is greatly appreciated.

##### *Green and Blue Horizons project*

The Green and Blue Horizons Programme, funded by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund is in its final stages and will be complete by the end of March. Over the last 18 months we have restored around 20ha of open habitats and 2km of hedgerows to help improve connectivity of sites. We have also been working with landowners to implement nature restoration and nature-based solutions and identify research priorities and opportunities for training/upskilling. An external evaluation of the programme is currently underway with the results expected in April. In the meantime, we are continuing to explore opportunities for projects to enhance habitats in the National Park working with partners and stakeholders across the national park and a project portfolio is being developed. This will form the basis of future funding bids to help deliver our ambition for nature set out in the National Park Partnership Plan.

We also saw the launch of the Fort Climate Centre at the Countryside Education Trust. The building is gifted by the Fort Foundation and a £72,000 grant as part of the Horizons scheme has funded three climate and environment staff posts (two existing and one new) so they could deliver their climate education programme plus some additional funding for a new internship programme. The CET has also delivered some volunteering tasks as part of the Horizons scheme. Our apprentice rangers are now also spending time at the CET as part of their rotation with New Forest partners.

### *National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative Funding (LEI)*

The LEI funded projects at the RSPB-owned Franchises Lodge, Hamptworth, continue to progress with Rhododendron removal and the upgrade of footpaths. The first year of LEI-funded projects improving footpaths at Marchwood, Tatchbury and Cadland are being prepared with the co-operation of the landowners.

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

##### *Development Management*

95 planning applications were registered between 1 January to 7 March 2023 although we received many more applications during this period as the team is still working through a backlog of applications awaiting registration, due to a combination of managing vacancies in the team and operating the new software system. Thankfully, we have seen improvements in recent weeks in the performance of the new software system and have filled vacancies in the team.

In the same period 95 applications were determined with an approval rate of 97% and eight appeal decisions were received, of which four were allowed.

We expect to complete the s106 legal agreement for the Fawley Waterside application this month whilst agreements for the planning applications on the other allocated sites (land adjacent to 40 Whartons Lane, Ashurst and land at Church Lane, Sway) are also nearing completion. Building works are now underway to redevelop the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel site whilst the application for the Ashurst Hospital site remains under consideration.

The Government has recently launched two new public consultations that are relevant to the team's work:

- [Increasing planning fees and performance: technical consultation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/increasing-planning-fees-and-performance-technical-consultation) - consultation on proposals to increase planning fees and to improve capacity, capability and performance within local planning authorities. The Government are seeking views on the proposal to increase planning fees by 35% for major applications and 25% for all other applications; double fees for retrospective applications; and whether additional fee income should be ring-fenced for planning departments.
- Permitted development rights: supporting temporary recreational campsites, renewable energy and film-making consultation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – proposals include the removal of existing limitations relating to article 2(3) land –

i.e. national parks – for the installation of solar on non-domestic buildings. It also proposes the introduction of a new PD right to allow the temporary placement of up to 30 tents at any one time on land for up to 60 days a year, and for moveable structures on the land related to the campsite use, such as portable toilets. The right is not proposed to allow for the siting of caravans, motorhomes and campervans. It is not proposed to apply to land within the curtilage of a listed building; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); scheduled monuments; safety hazard areas and military explosives storage areas (article 2(3) land is not excluded).

These will both be considered by the Planning Committee in agreeing the Authority's response to the consultations.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome Clare Hathaway to the team as an administration assistant and also Catherine Cluett and Marjorie Jones as temporary administrative support. Richard Castro-Parker left the Authority on 28 February. We are currently out to advert for a new Planning Officer.

### *Planning Enforcement*

So far this year the Enforcement Team has received 44 new enforcement complaints and been able to close 34, nine of which involved steps being taken to remedy any breach identified without the need for formal action. One enforcement notice was issued in relation to unauthorised dormer windows at a property with further enforcement notices in the pipeline. The new planning system has made the issuing and service of notice more streamlined and efficient.

The most common complaints continue to relate to the stationing of residential caravans closely followed by alleged unauthorised works to domestic outbuildings and the current caseload is around 150.

With regard to the proposed development of a residential mobile home park at Vernon Dene, near Bransgore, the Planning Inspectorate has confirmed that the owners' enforcement appeal must be accompanied by an Environmental Statement and they have been given until 1 August 2023 to prepare one (the Enforcement Notice requires the removal of the unauthorised site works including caravan bases and internal roadways). We have also received a response from the owners following our earlier notice of intent to revoke the Certificate of Lawful Use for use as a caravan site and this is being considered carefully at the moment (before presenting a final report to Members later this year).

The enforcement team has been working together to make best use of the new software system by working towards making our enforcement notice register, information that is required by law to be available for public viewing, available online. This project should be completed over the coming weeks.



## *Policy*

The Policy team led on the National Parks England consultation response to the Government's proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and further amendments to national planning policy. The response highlighted some concerns over the introduction of new National Development Management Policies (which would supersede adopted local planning policies once published), while also highlighting sections of the National Parks Circular (2010) which could be raised in profile as part of the reforms to national policy. We also signed a separate joint response from 11 planning authorities with local plans adopted in 2019 highlighting issues over the NPPF's proposed transitional arrangements to the new plan-making system. These concerns were repeated by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) in their consultation response.

The Ringwood and Wellow Neighbourhood Plans have both recently been out for public consultation. Both plans include land within the National Park and once the consultation responses have been considered by Ringwood Town Council and Wellow Parish Council respectively the draft plans will be formally submitted to the National Park Authority (as well as New Forest District Council and Test Valley Borough Council accordingly).

Mitigating the impacts of planned new development on the New Forest's designated sites continues to be a key focus of the team's work. We are working with Natural England, Forestry England, eight neighbouring planning authorities and the specialist ecological consultants Footprint Ecology on the appropriate mitigation measures within the New Forest's designated sites. These will complement measures being delivered in neighbouring planning authority areas, such as new greenspace provision. We are also liaising closely with colleagues at New Forest District Council to support the delivery of a nutrient neutrality and biodiversity enhancement site in the New Forest area.

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

#### *Archaeology*

During this reporting period the Archaeology Team has consulted on 10 New Forest District Council and five Authority planning applications and given comments and recommendations on several other ongoing cases. The District Council SLA concludes at the end of March, we are waiting to hear from NFDC its plans with regards future years.

Forestry England's Service Level Agreement (SLA-FE) work and the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) work has continued.

#### **Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)**

Site visits for stream restoration and heathland recovery were made at Penny Moor and Ravens Nest.

### **HLS Projects: Field Surveys**

Work on the built heritage (mainly concrete) survey progresses. Final methodology is being agreed and tested with the intention to start surveying, with volunteers, in the spring at suitable locations not affected by ground-nesting birds. Volunteer interest has been very high, we are all looking forward to field work starting. Following this, other work to complete the gap filling surveys of the original HLS land surveys will commence. Again, some of this field work may be required in areas affected by ground-nesting birds, so will be held off until later in the year.

### **HLS Projects: Data consolidation**

Work on the HLS heritage data consolidation project has progressed. The current data has been assessed and survey records from before COVID have been cleaned and added to the existing database. We have reviewed current UK HER standards and gained informal advice from the Hampshire County Archaeologist. The method of data storage used in previous years has been reviewed. MS Access, which was used previously, is no longer supported by Microsoft and is not a long-term method of retaining heritage data. Alternative options have been assessed so that we can meet the aim of holding a heritage dataset that meets Historic Environment Record data standards and is fit for purpose.

We are now in the final process of agreeing attributes for the new GIS database. Once completed we can start importing all current HLS data. From the assessment done to date this consolidation is going to be a time-consuming task, but the final product will be a New Forest Heritage 'map' that is fit for purpose for at least the next 10 years.

### **Forestry England's Service Level Agreement**

We continue to provide archaeological advice, data packs and site mark ups across FE's entire Southern District.

From April 2022 up to and including February 2023, we have provided heritage mitigation advice for 24 sites across the southern district. This has included conducting at least 19 site visits and issuing 19 data packs. We have also provided more detailed advice and guidance on specific features and sites within FE's holdings.

A flurry of new requests has been received in the past month, and it is likely that March will be busy with site visits and mitigation advice for a further six sites. It is anticipated that we will exceed the allocated 40 days of work, FE is being kept informed.

The current SLA-FE concludes on 31 March. FE has invited us to tender for the new SLA, which would be a five-year agreement. FE has requested, and we have approved, a two-month extension to the current SLA to enable the full tendering process to be conducted.

In addition, we have been supporting FE regarding their involvement in the Dorset Peat Partnership Project. As part of FE's contribution we've been asked to produce the Historic

Environment Assessment for a site north of Verwood, this is expected to be submitted by the end of March.

### **Working with Community Groups**

We are continuing with the LoCATE (Local Community Archaeological Training and Equipment) scheme, working with archaeological societies and community groups from across Hampshire and Dorset. A magnetometry training session was held at Bournemouth University in early March, which was attended by 15 representatives from six local heritage societies. The feedback from the attendees was very positive and we will continue to run several training sessions each year. We are liaising with the University to update our websites with information for community groups on how to become part of the equipment loan scheme.

Avon Valley Archaeological Society continues to make regular use of the magnetometry equipment and have so far surveyed 51 archaeological sites using the project equipment. We have had several requests by other groups for equipment loans during 2023. The NFNPA was donated more magnetometry equipment to add to the loan scheme in 2022, and Bournemouth University and Avon Valley Archaeological Society are looking to include additional pieces of kit in 2023.

### **Local Groups Projects & Research**

We continue to support a small local group with their research into the history of Lady Hardinge Hospital for Wounded Indian Soldiers in Brockenhurst and a proposed geophysical survey project of the site, subject to permissions. We have trained two members of their society in magnetometry techniques and are currently waiting for the group to provide us with more information, so that we can support them in gaining relevant permissions.

The Romani Community Archaeology Project has received full funding, and we will continue to provide archaeological advice to Forestry England regarding the project's fieldwork methodologies. We will be seeking the required permissions to start surveying in Autumn 2023.

We have established contact with the Church of England regarding their 'National Burial Grounds Survey', which aims to survey all churchyards nationwide and make the information available online in an interactive, searchable map format within the next few years. They are keen for us to be able to host our churchyard survey data gathered by NFNPA volunteers during the Our Past, Our Future scheme on this platform. A meeting was held in January and the project lead will liaise with the us on when the map portal with local churchyards becomes publicly available. They are planning to open the portal up to requests by members of the public for the inclusion of additional data, which we are looking forward to assisting local heritage groups in engaging with.

## **New Forest Oral History Group**

Following the huge success of the oral history element of the New Forest Remembers WWII project we continued to work with local groups and volunteers. During COVID lockdowns and today we support the one remaining volunteer currently transcribing oral history recordings from the Beaulieu and Buckler's Hard Archives. Following COVID we have now re-launched the group recruiting new volunteers to the team. Training for new members of our New Forest Oral History Group, transcribers and editors, will be held in March.

With groups now increasing their activity following Covid there has been a renewed interest in the use of GIS software. New GIS training sessions, using the free QGIS software, are being planned for Spring 2023.

## **New Forest Knowledge website**

The website continues to be extremely popular. The view stats from January to date are over 21,000 views with [Ashley Walk Bombing Range](#) and the new [Digitised Drivers' Map](#) articles being the most popular. The New Forest Heritage Centre is now at the end of the OPOF legacy funding and we will continue to work with the team as it explores how to fund the site. Our ICT team has managed to keep our Geoserver, which feeds data to the sites map, during our systems update. However, this temporary fix will not last and a new solution is urgently needed. We are working with our ICT team to explore options.

## *Building Design and Conservation*

The Building Design and Conservation officers continue to deal with a wide range of applications and proposals relating to both designated and non-designated heritage assets. This includes assets on the national list (including Grade 1 listed buildings), as well as locally significant assets. As part of this, the team has been liaising with Boldre Parish Council on the assets identified by the parish council for potential inclusion on the New Forest National Park 'local list'.

The member panel met last month to review nominations for our annual Building Design Awards. The awards recognise the positive new developments taking place within the National Park and this year awards are being presented in the categories of 'Best non-residential scheme', 'Best conservation project' and 'Best green building'. The awards complement the updated National Park Design Guide SPD and the local village design statements we have adopted in promoting high quality new development.

## 2 **Enjoy**

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

#### *Education and Youth*

In January, the first meeting of the New Forest Early Green Careers Network was held at Lepe country park. The network is for individuals in the first few years of their green career, working or volunteering for a New Forest based organisation. The network will be a forum for peer support, networking and professional development. The first meeting was a great success, it was attended by 20 participants representing 12 different organisations and had a great energy throughout. The group spent its time focusing on identifying their priorities and potential future areas of work. One of its first projects is to create an online green career resources for both the group and other individuals looking to take their first steps into a green career (see link below).

<https://padlet.com/newforestlearn0/early-green-career-network-bios-resources-24gjs21z3n9czrtq> The next meeting is being held on 21 March and will be hosted by the RSPB at Franchises Lodge.

The education and youth team has collaborated with Forestry England staff to ensure local green careers are represented at local school and college careers fairs including New Forest Academy, Priestlands School and Totton College, where we spoke to over 150 young people. We also reached new and underrepresented groups of young people and enabled first time visits to the New Forest via Southampton University and the charity Alabare and provided training on outdoor wellbeing for a new cohort of social work students from Solent University.

We met with 181 children from local primary schools for curriculum related visits to the New Forest on topics including habitat study, recreation management and sustainability, bringing our annual total of school curriculum visits to 1,194 days of pupil learning, the majority of which are supported by Higher Level Stewardship funding. A class teacher from Stroud school said: 'Amy liaised with me thoroughly before the visit and knew what the aims of the visit were. She tailored the activities very well and was really great with the pupils. The pupils loved the mindfulness activities.'

Our climate and nature assembly campaign this year is themed around responsible recreation and titled 'New Forest Welly Wander'. The bright characters exploring the forest and sharing the New Forest Code have been well received by pupils, inspiring questions such as 'How have the ways of the Forest changed throughout history?'. The link to watch is here <https://youtu.be/O9ATj8IW69w>

Finally, the New Forest Educators' Forum travel grant scheme received applications from 42 schools this year, resulting in grants totalling over £6,000 being allocated and enabling, 2671 days of pupil learning at venues across the Forest including Beaulieu Motor Museum and Bucklers' Hard, Minstead Study Centre, Tile Barn, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, St Barbe museum, Lepe Beach, Patricks Patch, Longdown Dairy Farm, Countryside Education Trust, Ferney crofts, Paultons Park and NFNPA-led visits on Crown Lands supported by Forestry England.

### *Public and community events / rangers*

The ranger team has continued to support events including the Volunteer Fair; HRH the Queen's Green Canopy planting day at New Park; New Forest Marque Road show; Priestlands Careers Fair; and Yarn in a Barn (a farmers wellbeing event). Winter conservation volunteer days have been wrapped up across a variety of sites including Copythorne (RSPB), Harrow Wood and Cranemore Common and continued hedge planting work with NFLAS on private farms as well as litter picking with Freshwater Habitats Trust. Rangers are also providing ongoing support to local food banks and warm hubs by providing New Forest themed activities for families who might not engage in other NPA events. Rangers continued to work with the local police teams on various operations and campaigns:

- Operation Mountie which aims to help reduce speed and animal deaths on the road across the New Forest where on 28 February at Crockford Clump saw a dozen vehicles stopped (including three taxis) and tickets issued for speeds of up to 62mph on 40mph roads. Two drivers were also stopped for having no insurance. Our rangers are on site to give advice and education to drivers.
- Cycle patrols: rangers completed police cycle training to allow them to partner on cycle patrols throughout the Spring and Summer enabling them to engage with visitors about sticking to the cycle network, general cycle safety and other New Forest messages.
- Responsible Dog Owners campaign: Working alongside Forestry England, NFDC and the Police to engage with dog owners in Moonhills Car Park to encourage responsible dog walking and use of the Forest.

Other work includes:

- The first meeting of the ranger forum took place at Franchise's Lodge – rangers from organisations including RSPB, Wildlife Trust, Forestry England, Hampshire County Council and the National Trust came together to talk about best practise and meet face to face for the first time post Covid.
- Lead Ranger Gillie Molland led a walk for Southampton University students from the wildlife society on an introduction to the New Forest.
- North area Ranger Hayden Bridgeman secured £600 from Natural England to help under-represented communities become more connected to nature in the New Forest. The funding covered a minibus, lunch, warm hats and gloves. Alongside

this project work has been undertaken with the charity Alabre to welcome young refugee and asylum seekers into the Forest to connect them to nature and wildlife.

- Ranger visits continued in preschools – including a session with families of children with additional needs in the New Milton area, with one school commenting that NFNPA was the first external visit they'd had in three years!
- Rangers also assisted with filming a successful social media video to contribute to International Women's Day highlighting the roles carried out by women across the organisation.
- Apprentice rangers are about to finish their placement at the Countryside Education Trust and move on to RSPB.

The seasonal ranger post has been advertised with a good number of applicants and shortlisting is currently taking place. Alongside this we have our continued work of patrols, distributing literature to local businesses and preparing for ground nesting bird season.

### *Communications*

Community engagement around the climate and nature emergencies is making great strides. Over 1,000 people have signed our online pledge to take sustainable living steps and many have signed up to receive further information on their climate change journey. [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge).

The Awakening Festival highlighting different aspects of the climate and nature emergencies is running throughout March with over 80 events both in person and online, provided by a wide range of organisations and businesses as well as the NPA. A Greener Brockenhurst eco gardening event saw 225 people attend as part of the Festival.

The Green Groups network had its first in-person meeting with around 30 people attending from across the New Forest district area at the informal get-together in the New Forest Heritage Centre. The groups have submitted successful applications to the Sustainable Communities Fund for everything from help with events and education projects to thermal imaging cameras. We had a stand at a well-attended climate event for parish and town councils organised by New Forest District Council and Olivia McGregor gave a presentation about our climate change work.

Key events this period included the record-breaking Volunteer Fair with 920 prospective volunteers attending – the largest number in the event's 13-year history. They had the chance to discover volunteering opportunities from 45 different organisations and the fair at Brockenhurst Village Hall was opened by Sir Julian Lewis MP, Alison Barnes CEO, and guide dog puppy in training Aretha with handlers Sharon and Simon from Guide Dogs UK. Our marketing specifically targeted under-represented groups and there was a marked increase in young people, people with disabilities and those from different

communities attending. The online volunteer finder was updated in advance with new groups adding opportunities:

[www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/communities/volunteer/partnering-with-us/search-for-opportunities/](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/communities/volunteer/partnering-with-us/search-for-opportunities/)

We promoted the family trees event which led to more than 140 people of all ages coming to the event at New Park, Brockenhurst, on 4 February, run with the New Forest Agricultural Show Society and the Hampshire Forest Partnership. Around 70 native English oak trees were successfully planted, enhancing the natural beauty of New Park while creating important new habitats for the wide array of wildlife there, including birds, invertebrates, mosses, lichens and fungi.

We provided media support for the opening of the Countryside Education Trust's Fort Climate Centre by HRH The Countess of Wessex. The Horizons scheme provided £72,000 primarily towards staff and interns.

The New Forest Marque spring roadshow we promoted was held at Everton Nurseries. It drew a large crowd and Marque members were pleased with sales.

We also promoted and attended the Farming Community Network 'Yarn in a Barn' event hosted by NFDC event for the farming community to help address loneliness in farming. The event also encouraged discussions and conversations on topical farming issues or challenges.

Communications support we provide for the Commoners Defence Association as part of the Horizons scheme focused on the salt licks put out to draw animals away from salted roads and the 'architects of the Forest' - how commoners' animals grazing helps habitats.

New Forest Code partnership work to protect the Forest and promote behaviour change has this period included launching the annual campaign to protect rare ground nesting birds. This year we are asking businesses to help spread messages about keeping to the tracks and to look out for signs in nesting areas and the campaign is backed by the New Forest Business Partnership. A blog post about the work of People and Wildlife Ranger Jim Day and the Dog Walking Code was promoted. We have produced stickers for accredited businesses joining our Professional Dog Walkers scheme to use on their vehicles and are also updating our dog walking code leaflet and a heathland highlights leaflet about ground-nesting birds. As part of the animal accident campaign, we have supported the Operation Mountie joint initiative and patrols with social media posts. We are now preparing for the New Forest Spring Clean and thanking the many litter picking groups and individuals who help care for the Forest all year round.

We are about to launch a visitor welcome film produced with Go New Forest and Forestry England, and thanks to a £2k grant from Love the Forest which includes New Forest



Code and responsible recreation messaging. We have also produced new map panels for two Local Information Points – in Burley and Sway and have inputted into 40 new walking leaflets being produced.

We have increased our use of videos, stories and reels on Facebook and Instagram to reach younger audiences. Video views are at 44,000 since the last Authority report. One of the successful results was around the promotion of New to Nature funding and a paid intern position targeting young people which saw nearly 50 applications for the role. We also produced a creative video for the Education Team's climate and nature assembly called 'New Forest Welly Wander' which has proved popular in schools. We also used clips to promote the early green careers group.

Working with other National Parks, we responded to the £4.4m total one-off payment from Defra to England's 10 national parks and joined in marking International Women's Day by highlighting on social media the range of job roles among female colleagues. We are now planning Discover National Parks fortnight.

The spring summer issue of Park Life residents' newspaper is about to go to press, packed with features including a round-up of the successes and achievements of the Horizons scheme. We are also working on a film to show the outcomes and different aspects of the scheme to thank those who took part and lottery players who helped fund the projects, as well as to help us attract future funding.

Support for the Love the Forest scheme by the New Forest Trust has included a press release encouraging more people and organisations to apply for grants and a photocall with volunteers planting a Jubilee hedge at Rockford Farm. We ran a social media appeal on Valentine's Day asking people to become regular givers.

Increasing understanding of our special habitats and species has been the focus on social media with World Wetlands Day, World Wildlife Day, Freshwater Habitats Trust Spawn Watch, the RSPB Garden Birdwatch and CPRE's dark skies Star Count. Preparing for the New Forest Show is underway with the theme of 'Our Nature Story'.

We have promoted several jobs we have during the period and also advertised for new members of the Access Forum.

Overall, since the last Authority meeting on 26 January our main social media accounts have seen 925,000 impressions and nearly 40,000 engagements (likes, comments, shares).

### *Fundraising*

We have been awarded £19,000 to provide a paid work placement for young people to develop their skills in nature and landscape. The funds have been awarded by

Groundwork as part of the New to Nature programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The programme aims to create 70 jobs for 70 young people across the UK to start their green careers and improve recruitment and diversity across the environment sector.

## **2. Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park**

### *Interpretation and inclusive projects*

We have submitted the application to the Arts council for the National Park Artist in Residence programme and continued to support Beccy McCray in preparation for her exhibition and events in May, including an Open Afternoon on 13 May at spudWORKS where all will be welcome. Artist Mel Rose will join us as the next artist in residence in May and her exhibition will be in October.

There have been several visits to the National Park facilitated by us in the last couple of months including visits by Southampton University Inclusion group and South West Visitor Group. We met with Open Sight Hampshire to plan the programme of visits for those with visual impairments and these will commence in April.

### *Volunteering and Ambassadors*

Our winter programme of wildlife and conservation tasks has gone exceedingly well. We are working at five sensitive sites with five different landowners to actively improve species diversity and habitat resilience. In April we will start our very popular path clearance programme. Through the summer Gareth and Hilde are restarting the oral history group and gathering a team of archaeology surveyors to find new pieces of WW2 construction heritage.

We have recruited 55 new volunteers since the volunteer fair. We are now pausing recruitment as we feel we have currently reached capacity. Over the past month we delivered more evening and online induction sessions to be more inclusive and catch a more diverse audience.

The 2023 New Forest National Park Volunteer fair was the most successful to date with 920 people attending, with an estimated 100 or so of them being younger people (estimated as younger than 30). We were very pleased with the interest and we know that the 45 groups who attended were delighted with the new volunteers they have signed up as a result of the event. The event was held at Brockenhurst Village Hall which enabled us to have a full range of talks which were also well attended. We may need to look for an even larger venue next year to accommodate the demand. We attended both as the National Park Authority and as PEDALL and had good numbers of people signing up. In the run up to the Fair we featured on three different radio stations, including an in-depth half hour interview about the Forest and volunteering on Unity 101.

## *Health and Wellbeing*

James Alden finished his Health Education Fellowship with us, having completed his report into the natural capital value of the New Forest and surrounds for health and wellbeing. We are looking to publish this shortly. Following some reorganisation on their part, we are currently in discussion with Health Education England and OHID about the second year of the Fellowship and the future of this partnership.

The New Forest Healthy Walks programme, which we support alongside NFDC and Community First, recorded 1,432 walking hours in quarter three, across nine walks in the Forest.

## *PEDALL*

Pedall rides have recommenced from our bases at Burley and Ashurst. Groups from Tiptoe Primary School, Summerwood specialist residential care, Minstead Trust and Coxlease School have braved the early spring weather, with our other regular riders booking up fast.

Following the very well-attended NFNPA Volunteer Fair at the end of January, we have hosted three 'Volunteer Experience Days' attended by 30 new potential volunteers. Feedback has been encouraging and heart-warming, and we have some wonderful new volunteers signed up to join the Pedall family, to assist us with rides and bike maintenance. We have two further fully booked 'Volunteer Experience Days' scheduled in coming weeks.

We have undergone a period of training for our existing volunteers, with six attendees completing their 'Outdoor First Aid training' and 20 volunteers completing our 'Ride Assistant' training, which includes bike safety checks, dynamic risk assessments and guidance on roles and responsibilities for our volunteering community.

We are excited to be close to the launch of our Social Confidence rides, the first of which is on Friday 24 March. Our twice weekly Social Confidence rides invite those who wish to access a fun, easy-going guided ride using our mountain bike fleet. Our mountain bikes and e-bikes are available to hire for these rides. We are hoping that a new community of users will ride with us, using our Ashurst base and the accessible transport network. Our Social Confidence rides are being advertised as part of the NFNPA Awakenings Festival.

As we expand our community reach through our Ashurst base, we are also offering a Community Hub bike safety check and maintenance service, opening every Wednesday between 10.30am – 2.30pm. We are also delighted to be working with Brockenhurst College on our first bike maintenance skills program for young people with additional needs.

Pedall will be present at the Southampton Cycling Sporterium on 1 April in the Spin City zone, promoting our inclusive cycling, displaying our specialist bikes and taking pre-booked riders on a traffic free loop.

The Pedall website has been refreshed to include the new Ashurst Community Hub.  
[www.pedall.org.uk](http://www.pedall.org.uk)

### **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*

The Recreation Management Strategy Advisory and Steering Groups met on 9 and 27 February respectively. Key points for discussion included the work to progress and confirm the two Public Spaces Protection Orders, the delays to the New Forest LCWIP and the need to progress a spatial plan for managing recreation.

A more detailed update on Recreation Management work is included as a separate item on this agenda.

#### *Access and Rights of Way*

We are on course to spend the Defra Access For All infrastructure fund. We have purchased eight specialist bikes for Pedall, added 20 oak signs to the Hale and Woodgreen walking route and are designing 40 inclusive walking route leaflets (including 12 accessible routes) to encourage more diverse groups out into nature. Other outputs include replacing two difficult stiles with gates and surface improvements to a very muddy footpath in Walhampton.

## **3 Prosper**

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

#### *Green Halo Partnership*

The Greenprint Steering Group met in mid-February to progress the shared agenda Greenprint framework working with the Partnership for South Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth Universities and the Southern Policy Centre to deliver a shared approach to green recovery and green skills and jobs. [Greenprint - Green Recovery Public Policy | Southampton - YouTube](#) A conference to engage more partners and sectors across the area in the framework is planned for June.

The Greenprint was included in the successful Solent Freeport bid and we continue to advise and encourage the Freeport partners to ensure the Freeport supports our area being an exemplar of the green economy working in harmony with communities and our landscape. As well as the fundamental protection of the National Park, we are championing green skills and jobs and three projects for significant investment through the opportunity of the Freeport:

- A new (extensive and nature rich) Country Park
- Reconnection of the New Forest to the sea (ecologically functional corridor, green bridge and if possible and positive for habitat management grazing throughout corridor)
- Connected active travel/sustainable transport network (implementation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan)

Brian Johnson, Chair of the Solent Freeport joined the New Forest Consultative Panel in early March to give a presentation and take questions from representatives of Parishes and Forest organisations.

### *New Forest Marque*

The New Forest Marque spring roadshow held at Everton Nurseries was very popular and Marque members were pleased with sales at the event.

In January New Forest Pannage Ham was given 'PGI' status by Defra. PGI – or protected geographical indication – is given to food, drink and agricultural products with a geographical connection. New Forest Pannage Ham is made specifically from pigs that have been released into the New Forest during the preceding Pannage Season for a minimum of 50 days. The geographical area is the New Forest National Park and the ham may be made by producers in the counties of Hampshire, Dorset and Wiltshire. It is hoped that the work done in this case by David Richards of Capreolous Fine Foods in Dorset will help support the commoners rearing the pigs and encourage other producers to explore the possibility of obtaining the PGI status.

### *Visitor experience*

We're creating an infographic for our website based on the 732 visits survey responses.

Maps and hanging signs have been installed at both Burley and Sway Local Information Points, which will give the sites more prominence as we approach the busier Easter season.

The New Forest visitor information communication group (comprising organisations and businesses involved in information provision) met in February to discuss trends and share knowledge around the summer season.

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

#### *New Forest Tour*

The New Forest Tour will operate 1 July – 17 September (inclusive) for 11 weeks, on the same three routes. Subject to securing the required funding from rail operators and community rail partnerships, we look forward to rolling out the cargo bike and reinstating the sustainable travel ambassador role at Brockenhurst station. Confirmation of successful bids will be announced on 1 April.

#### *Sustainable transport*

Government announced an extension until 30 June to the scheme in which single bus fares are capped at £2, which will enable more people car-free access to enjoy, explore and commute to and within the New Forest and coastal area.

The New Forest Community Rail Partnership met and discussed items such as how we can promote the upcoming integrated travel ticket from West Wight to Brockenhurst as well as events such as Community Rail Week whilst promoting the NPA's purposes. The 'Friends of' various stations took part in the NPA's volunteer fair in January and felt that their presence at least raised some awareness. The Pedall team is engaged with Friends of Ashurst Station group to work together to create a community hub at the new, nearby Pedall base.

#### *Walking and cycling*

In February we met with Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) partners and reviewed some good progress on the audit of a draft primary and secondary utility network. In addition to this utility network, we are working with HCC, NFDC and FE to see how the New Forest's leisure network can be developed and compliment future utility routes. There will be some stakeholder sessions/workshops in May before further refinement. Official consultation is planned for the autumn then all completed in Q4 of 23/24. HCC is awaiting further DfT / Active Travel England advice on rural LCWIPs which we would like to see before the consultation.

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

#### *Affordable Housing*

As noted above, development is underway at the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel and the consented scheme will deliver eight affordable dwellings for local people in housing need. In addition, the Local Plan housing allocations adjacent to the former Fawley Power Station, Whartons Lane in Ashurst and Church Lane in Sway are all subject to Planning Committee resolutions to grant. Work on the necessary legal agreements for each site is nearing completion and the schemes will deliver over a hundred further affordable homes.

We are still waiting to complete the agreements to permit access across the adjoining Council car park in connection with the Burley Affordable Housing Scheme.

#### *Sustainable Communities Fund*

Funds of around £30,000 have been awarded to six projects. This includes:

- £3,634 for Energise Me to deliver a series of clay workshops aimed at helping new audiences benefit from the National Park by understanding more about the natural clay in the New Forest and how this can be used for making ceramics. The workshop included a guided walk and opportunities for participants to make their own hand-pinched ceramic.
- £3,650 for local artist Karina Abramova to develop a series of virtual climate sculptures as a way for audiences to connect with climate issues in the New Forest. Participants will access the sculptures via their phones as part of a walking trail. Karina will be delivering guided walks to participants during the New Forest Awakening Festival in March.
- £9,698 for RSPB to transform around 1ha of land around Cameron's Cottage residential centre for young people into an accessible wildlife garden featuring a woodland path suitable for wheelchairs, natural produce area with raised bed herb garden, wildlife and pollinator planting, woodland meadow, tree planting and orchard space. This will provide an outdoor space for visitors to the centre to connect with nature and support positive behaviours in the landscape.
- £10,000 for East Boldre Community Stores to install a solar system as part of their plans to safeguard a village shop and post office in East Boldre by establishing a new facility in the former Baptist Chapel. Funds are needed to acquire the chapel and carry out repairs and alterations as well as fit out and equip the shop. A solar system with battery storage will provide half of the electricity needs (our contribution will support 50% of this cost), rainwater harvesting will be used for toilet flushing, and extensive native planting of hedging and herbs will improve the

site's biodiversity. The new shop will have a larger retail area enabling a much broader range of goods/services. There will be a strong focus on local food including New Forest Marque as well as a refillable product range and recycling options. Two full-time staff will be employed, and several volunteers will help run the shop.

- £1,760 for Greener Brockenhurst to implement their 'making space for nature' initiative as part of the nationwide Greening Campaign. The aim is to increase biodiversity in public and private spaces within the village and bring people together to act for nature. Funds will support several initiatives including showcasing wildlife gardening at St Saviour's Church and village hall, promoting nature friendly gardening at an eco-event in March (as part of New Forest Awakening Festival), and a campaign to leave verges and wildlife corridors unmown. The group would also like to run some workshops and nature walks for the community and the wider New Forest.
- £1,692 for Forest Arts to promote wellbeing within the local, mature adult population by connecting participants to their natural surroundings of the National Park through art, breath, and movement. There will be a series of free outdoor workshops including sound baths, outdoor art workshops, and movement classes, with the main benefits being relaxation, lowering stress and anxiety, improving mood and sleep, heightening focus and energy, and leaving participants with a feeling of rejuvenation. Alongside the workshops, there will be a series of free Wellness Walks focusing on meditation, breathing, and walking mindfully in nature.

## 4 Achieving Excellence

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

#### *Human Resources*

As at 10 March 2023 the total staff headcount was 75 or 66.05 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

	<b>Headcount</b>	Variation from previous report	<b>Full Time Equivalents</b>	Variation from previous report
Core funded	59*	+ 1	51.80*	+ 0.40
Funded by external projects	16	0	14.24	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>+ 1</b>	<b>66.05</b>	<b>+ 0.41</b>



\*Of the core funded roles, one staff member (1 FTE) is working in shared services and 21 are part-time.

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

Role	Contract type	How funded
Administration Assistant (Planning) x 3	Permanent x 1 Temporary cover x 2	Core funded

We said goodbye to:

Role	Contract type	How role will be filled in future
Administration Assistant (Planning)	Temporary, core funded	N/A – temporary cover only
Planning Officer	Permanent, core funded	Like for like replacement

We are currently recruiting:

Role	Contract type	How funded
National Park Intern	One-year fixed term	Mostly funded by the New to Nature programme via Groundwork UK (with up to £5,000 matched by NPA)
Seasonal Assistant Ranger	Seasonal, 6 months	Joint funded (NPA, Camping New Forest, NFD OG)
Planning Officer	Permanent	Core funded

## 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*

The new Leaders' Panel has been established to support the delivery of the new Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027. The Panel is due to be having its second meeting at the end of March 2023 and provides a forum for senior representatives of the main statutory bodies in the New Forest to come together and discuss shared priorities. The March Panel meeting will focus on the Waterside area of the New Forest, including the recently confirmed Solent Freeport area.

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

#### *ICT Services*

##### **Security / Infrastructure**

Following an initial Cyber Security Incident Plan (CSIRP) meeting, a small group of staff were identified to form the CSIRP response team. This team, along with deputies, met in early March with Evolve North to start the process of building the plan and prepare for a tabletop exercise.

In early February the final work to move to cloud storage took place, leaving just a few servers including the phone system servers still in operation on the SAN. Old data consisting of 777,694 folders and 2,205,241 files were transferred to our new cloud storage. Security continues to be a top priority, with the changes to the infrastructure outlined above, new ways to roll out security updates and applications are now available along with more in-depth security tools. Work to update all laptops and PCs to the new Microsoft modern desktop deployment has begun allowing us to deploy new and existing software along with equipment to users far quicker than before and fully supports our new hybrid working. We will be looking to revisit cyber security training with staff in the coming months.

##### **Replacement planning system**

This remains a full-time job for 1FTE of the team. We are working with the planning teams to amend and enhance what was originally set up, complete the TPO module, develop the monitoring module and enforcement / pre-applications Citizen Portals. Weekly meetings have been taking place with the software provider to iron out issues identified post go live, progress has been made. Following a full re-upload of the address base there are noticeable improvements with the gazeteer, and changes made by the software provider to the server configuration that hosts our Citizen Portal has improved the speed and response.

##### **Other work / projects**

The new cloud-based printing system was set up for all printers in January and appears to be working well. Now the Azure work has taken place we will look to set up the large plotter to also work off a similar cloud printing system.

The HR Hub has been upgraded with a new single sign on allowing employees to logon with their main logon credentials.

Replacement of the current phone system is now a priority, the software is end of life, and is not compatible with the BT ISDN changes due to be rolled out by 2025 or with a move

to the cloud. We urgently need to move forward now with this project to enable the SAN to be fully retired.

## *Legal and Information management*

### *Information requests*

To date this year financial year (as at 8 March 2023) we have received 63 formal requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations, which is exactly the same number as last year. All but one were responded to within the statutory time frame. As in previous years most requests (63%) relate to our planning function, with requests about specific planning applications, pre-apps and enforcement investigations, as well as policy and statistics enquiries. Those which are not related to our planning function are predominantly concerned with matters relating to finance, our IT arrangements, and HR matters such as homeworking and diversity. We have undertaken three internal reviews so far this year; in two cases the original decision was upheld and in the third some further disclosures were made. We are not aware of any appeals to the Information Commissioner to date.

### *Complaints*

Complaints remain down on last year (10 vs 12). All but one, were related to planning matters, either specific planning applications, enforcement investigations or the planning pages of our website being temporarily unavailable whilst we migrated our planning records to the new case management system. One was about the use of the complainant's personal data. We missed the 20-working day response time on two occasions. Currently we are not aware of any being referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, although they can take some time for us to be notified about a complaint to them.

### *Privacy and data protection*

We continue to work hard to ensure that we meet our obligations under the GDPR and are constantly reviewing and updating our website, documents and privacy notices to improve transparency and compliance, whilst responding to data protection queries as they arise.

## **5 Members**

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

- 2 February – Members Day – Volunteering, Pedall & Health & Wellbeing
- 6 February – Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
- 21 February – Planning Committee

- 2 March – Consultative Panel
- 6 March – Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
- 21 March – Planning Committee

## **5.2 Forthcoming activities include:**

- 5 April – Members Day TBC
- 18 April – Planning Committee
- 16 May – Planning Committee
- 1 June – Consultative Panel
- 5 June – Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
- 12 June – New Forest Access Forum
- 20 June – Planning Committee
- 29 June – Members Day TBC

## **5.3 Chief Executive's external engagements**

- 27 January – Wildlife Roundtable
- 31 January to 1 February – National Park City Foundation International Conference
- 2 February – NPE meeting
- 3 February – HIOWCX meeting
- 3 February – St George's Windsor Fellowship Leader to Leader Exchange (online)
- 3 February – NPUK Communications Review Group (Chairing)
- 3 February – Meeting with Conservation Director, North York Moors NPA
- 7 February – Meeting with Executive Director, Foundation for Common Land
- 9 February – National Park City Board Meeting
- 27 February – Meeting with NPP Chair
- 28 February – Meeting with Conservation Director, North York Moors NPA
- 28 February – Nature Recovery Network meeting
- 2 March – Defra Environment Committee (representing all National Parks)
- 2 March – Business South meeting
- 3 March – Meeting with Conservation Director, North York Moors NPA
- 3 March – St George's Windsor Fellowship Leader to Leader Exchange (online)
- 6 March – UKNP Chairs handover meeting
- 7 March – National Parks APPG
- 9 March – Fort Climate Centre opening event
- 10 March – Meeting with HIOWWT New Forest Area Manager
- 14 March – Director of Conservation Sub Group meeting
- 15 March – NPE Wildlife / Nature Recovery Plan meeting
- 15 March – Meeting with CX, NFDC
- 15 March – Freeport meeting with Defra and DLUHC
- 16 March – Defra Ministerial visit
- 17 March – UK Communications Review meeting (Chairing)

- 20 March – Meeting with Friends of New Forest
- 20 March – ENPOG meeting
- 21 March – UK Communications Review meeting (Chairing)
- 21 March – Landscapes for Everyone meeting (NPE)
- 21 March – RSA Student Design Awards Judging briefing meeting
- 22 March – Meeting with lead CX for National Parks England

#### **5.4 Chairman's engagements**

- 2 February – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 9 February – Future New Forest Partnership Board meeting
- 9 March – NPE Chair's briefing
- 13 March – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 16 March – Defra Ministerial visit
- 17 March – Interviewing for Official Verderer post

## **6 Recommendation**

**To note the report.**