



New Forest National Park

Protecting together, shaping tomorrow

Chief Executive's Report

March 2023



PROTECT

Farming in protected landscapes (FiPL)

- Programme extended for a further year to March 2025
- Additional funding likely to be confirmed
- Working to ensure this financial year's £100k of projects is completed by end March



PROTECT



HLS extension and future schemes

- HLS scheme extended for five years
- Solution needed to sustain commoning into the new Domestic Agricultural Policy post 2024 as Basic Payment Scheme tapers away
- Forest Farming Group commissioning work on options



PROTECT

Green and Blue Horizons from City to Forest scheme comes to an end

- £800k investment into Forest
- 18-month scheme
- Partners: NPA, FHT, CET, CDA, HIOWWT

Results:

- 19 jobs created or retained
- 104ha of land improved for nature and climate resilience, 2km of hedgerows created across 32 sites
- 115 volunteer events with 235 regular volunteers (4,575 hours)
- 136 engagement events reaching over 8,000 people
- CET Fort Climate Centre launched



PROTECT

Franchises Lodge nature reserve

- Invasive rhododendron removal and footpaths upgraded on the RSPB nature reserve at Hamptworth
- Funded as part of the £200,000 we allocated from National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative
- Open days and events as part of the New Forest Awakening Festival



PROTECT

Planning

- 95 planning applications registered Jan-March
- 95 applications determined, approval rate 97%
- Eight appeal decisions received, four allowed
- Working through backlog of applications awaiting registration
- Situation improving with Agile software.



PROTECT

Government planning consultations

1. Increasing planning fees and performance

Proposals to:

- Increase fees by 35% for major applications
- Increase fees by 25% for all other applications
- Double fees for retrospective applications
- Ring-fence additional fee income for planning departments

2. Permitted development rights:

Supporting temporary recreational campsites, renewable energy and film-making

3. National Planning Policy Framework proposed revisions



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

[Home](#) [Find activities](#) [Building Safety](#)

Fees and Performance Consultation



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

PROTECT

Neighbourhood plans

- Ringwood and Wellow Neighbourhood Plans recently out for consultation
- Both plans include land in the National Park
- Once responses have been considered by Ringwood Town and Wellow Parish councils, draft plans will be submitted to the Authority



Wellow Neighbourhood Plan

PROTECT

Community archaeology

- LoCATE training scheme involving six local heritage groups
- 51 sites surveyed by Avon Valley Archaeological Society using magnetometry equipment loaned by us
- Continuing to support: group researching the Lady Hardinge Hospital for Wounded Indian Soldiers, Brockenhurst; Romani Community Archaeology Project; CofE National Burial Grounds Survey; New Forest Oral History Group; New Forest Knowledge website



PROTECT

Building design awards

Categories:

- Best non-residential scheme: Forest Corner Farm near Ringwood
- Best conservation project: Wood End House in Lymington
- Best green building: Little Hill in Hyde



ENJOY

Education

- 'Welly Wander' assembly video put together with the comms team on New Forest code
- 181 children enjoyed curriculum-related visits
- 1,194 days of pupil learning this year



ENJOY

New Forest code

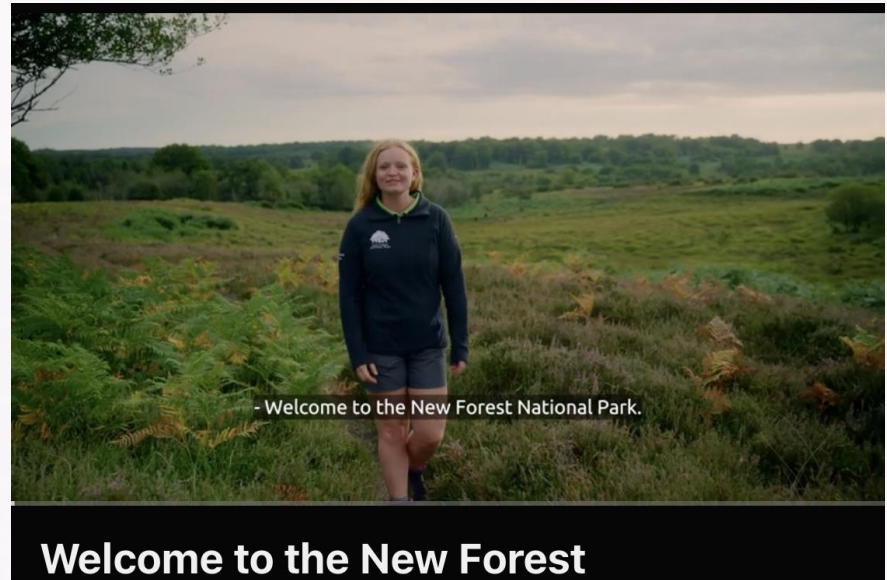
- Ground nesting birds campaign
- Cycle patrol training with police
- Responsible dog owners campaign



ENJOY

Visitor season 2023 preparation

- Ranger Forum first meeting
- Publications
- Local Information Points
- Two PSPOs proposed focussed on feeding and petting commoner's animals in the National Park; lighting fires and using BBQs principally on the Crown Lands
- LIP map panels installed for Sway and Burley
- 40 new walking leaflets
- Visitor welcome film produced





ENJOY

Events: Awakening Festival

- 80 events throughout March
- Highlighting the climate and nature emergencies
- Online and in-person events
- Highlights: Repair cafes to RSPB Cameron's Cottage visits, pine marten webinars to wetland walk



ENJOY

Events: Volunteer Fair

- Largest yet in 13th year
- Over 920 visitors
- New more diverse audiences – 100 under 30s
- 55 new NPA volunteer sign-ups
- 45 organisations
- Opened by Sir Julian Lewis MP and Guide Dogs UK



ENJOY



Events: Family Trees

- Held at New Park, Brockenhurst
- 140 people of all ages attended
- 70 English oak trees planted
- Run with New Forest Agricultural Show Society and Hampshire Forest Partnership



PROSPER

Green careers

- 150 young people heard about green careers at school and college careers fairs
- Early green careers group attended by 20 young people from 12 organisations
- New to nature funding: £19k for an intern, awarded by Groundwork from the National Lottery Heritage Fund; further funding expected
- 700 at Southampton University Science Fair



PROSPER

New Forest Marque spring fair

- Marque spring fair at Everton Nurseries drew a large crowd
- 13 Marque members selling food, drink, arts and crafts
- Traders enjoyed good sales and visitors praised the atmosphere



PROSPER



Yarn in a Barn

Supported event from Farming Community Network and hosted by NFDC to help address loneliness in farming and discuss topical issues and challenges.

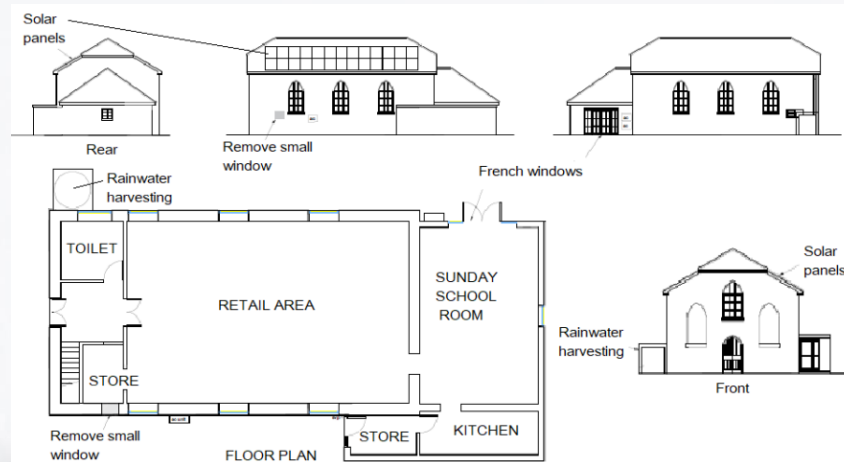


PROSPER



Sustainable Communities Fund highlights

- £10,000 for a solar system at East Boldre Community Stores
- Nearly £10,000 towards a sensory garden at RSPB Franchises Lodge
- £3,650 for climate walking digital arts trail
- £3,634 for clay workshops and walks with disadvantaged groups to connect to the Forest



EXCELLENCE

Minister visits conservation projects

- Trudy Harrison, Minister for Natural Environment and Land Use, visited conservation projects at Roydon Woods and Fletcher's Thorns
- Met Campaign for National Parks, FE, Verderers, Friends of the New Forest, PedAll and Wildlife Trust during Awakening Festival



EXCELLENCE

Minister visits conservation projects

'On Thursday I had the privilege of visiting the New Forest National Park to meet with the Park Authority and local community groups and see some of the vital work they're doing towards our nature recovery and access to green space targets.

Highlights were seeing Pedall's work on inclusive making cycling, enabling those with disabilities to access and enjoy nature, and seeing the success of the Fletcher's Thorns river restoration project.

I'd like to thank all involved for organising the visit and commend them for their excellent work.'

EXCELLENCE

Defra grant

- Core Defra grant almost halved in real terms since 2010
- One-off award of £440,000
- Farming in Protected Landscapes extended to 2025



EXCELLENCE

Defra grant cont.

1 March letter from Minister describing National Parks as:
'the custodians of these special places'.

Funding to 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.'

Reflects five Partnership Plan themes of climate, nature, people, place and partnership.



EXCELLENCE

International Women's Day – 8 March

Most watched reel on Instagram – 6,804 views

