

## RAPC 505-23

### NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

### RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 6 MARCH 2023

#### FUNDING UPDATE

**Report by:** Hilary Makin, Communications Manager

#### **Summary:**

Sourcing external funding to support the work of the Authority in delivering its core purposes and socio-economic duty is a priority for the Authority, with £2.7m secured since 2019. This paper provides an update to Members on our strategic funding priorities and seeks support for two interim partnership bids to different lottery schemes to fund aspects of the Partnership Plan programme.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**It is recommended that:**

- i) the content of the report be noted.**
- ii) the submission of an application to the National Lottery Community Fund as outlined in the report be supported, and that authority be delegated to officers to take all action as necessary in this regard.**
- iii) the submission of an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund as outlined in the report be supported, and that authority be delegated to officers to take all action as necessary in this regard.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **1. Funding update**

- 1.1 The Authority has always had a focus on securing external funding to support our work in delivering our core purposes and socio-economic duty. Since 2019, we have secured £2.7m for NPA projects which averages an £18 investment in the Forest for every £1 we invest in these projects (up from £14 previously). In that time, we have seen:

**£65k** Defra Green Recovery Challenge Fund for Generation Green youth initiatives (£2.5m scheme with other English NPAs, Guides, Outward Bound and YHA). Funds youth work, apprentice rangers.

**£200k** (£350k project) National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative for Franchises Lodge habitat improvements

**£300k** (£600k project) National Lottery Community Fund for PEDALL (also **£50k** from Sport England and **£25k** British Cycling)

**£23k** Staff support for heritage assets Local Listing project (with Winchester City Council and IoW Council)  
**£20k** (£200k project) Health Education England paediatric fellowship partnership, five-year programme  
**£20k** Greenprint framework project (PfSH)  
**£600k** Farming in Protected Landscapes, three-year programme  
**£300k** (£100k/year) Higher Level Stewardship scheme, £2m/year programme  
**£9k** funding from the Big Give (volunteering), **£2k** towards New Forest Code printing, **£2k** towards a visitor film, **£2k** animal accident print materials from the New Forest Trust  
**£220k** (£850k scheme) Green & Blue Horizons from City to Forest, 18-month programme  
**£120k** National Grid access improvements  
**£100k** Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund project  
**£40k** Kickstart programme  
**£20k** from the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) for Greenprint framework project  
**£20k** New to Nature internship  
**£750k** Scottish and Southern Electric powerline undergrounding  
**£2.5k** from NPP sponsor Clif Bar towards apprentice rangers.

- 1.2 In July 2022, we commissioned a consultant to talk to partner organisations about their current and future project ideas. A report was provided to the internal officer 'funding group' in November 2022 setting out each partner's key priorities and how these relate to the themes in the Partnership Plan.
- 1.3 At the same time, organisations involved in the Wildlife Round Table have been working on developing priorities for nature recovery in the New Forest. This has led to the development of a portfolio of around 150 potential ideas for projects.
- 1.4 It is envisaged that these portfolios will form the basis of future funding bids including a potential landscape scale proposal along the lines of Our Past, Our Future. The next phase of this work will begin in April 2023.
- 1.5 In the meantime, we are proposing submitting two interim partnership bids to different lottery schemes to fund aspects of the Partnership Plan programme, before working up a larger-scale joint bid.

## **2. Application to the National Lottery Community Fund's Climate Action Fund**

- 2.1 As members will recall, the New Forest National Park Authority recently submitted an expression of interest to the National Lottery Community Fund's Climate Action Fund with and on behalf of several organisations. This stage has now been approved by the funder and we have been asked to submit a full application by 31 March 2023. As the bid seeks funding of over £50,000 member support for a submission is required.
- 2.2 The Climate Action Fund is aimed at helping communities across the UK to address climate change. Funding is available for projects that focus on the link between nature and climate and using this to encourage more community-led climate action. Local place-based partnership projects are encouraged that can show how creating a

deeper connection with nature will lead to changing people's behaviours and greater care for the environment.

- 2.3 The Authority is co-ordinating and leading a bid on behalf of several trusted partners. We have the experience and track record in delivering this type of partnership project, winning resources, and supporting schemes such as the highly successful Our Past, Our Future Landscape Partnership Scheme and Green and Blue Horizons from City to Forest Green Recovery Challenge Fund scheme. The new bid involves several partners and is likely to seek lottery funding of around £995,000 for a project value totalling around £1.2m (the difference being the match-funding from the partners).
- 2.4 Within the bid the partners will work together to increase the scale and reach of outdoor learning, galvanise communities to feel more connected to and caring for the place where they live, improve green and blue nature networks, and develop knowledge by learning from each other and experts. A summary of the project is given in **Annex 1**.
- 2.5 The bid will seek funding for around 15 posts across several partners and support project costs including outsourced sessions and residential stays with local providers and new climate resources including interpretation and materials for events. For the Authority we are looking to support our youth and education team as well as communications support and a project coordinator for the partnership.
- 2.6 If funding is approved, the programme will take place over three years from around September 2023 to August 2026. At that stage, the partners would be required to sign a contractual partnership agreement.
- 2.7 The deadline for submission of the full bid is 31 March 2023, giving officers time to finalise content with partners. The fund is highly competitive and around 12 to 15 projects will be supported.

### **3 Application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund**

- 3.1 The Authority would also like to submit an expression of interest in March to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help support volunteering and increase engagement with nature in the New Forest. As the bid is likely to seek funding of over £50,000 member support for a submission is required.
- 3.2 The bid will focus on developing regional wide 'new routes to nature' for people. Building on pilot activity carried out over the last year, this will include developing our inclusive volunteering and ambassador programmes with a range of regional partners from across Southampton, Bournemouth, and Christchurch and providing specific opportunities to help those who might not be able to easily access our existing volunteering programmes, such as people with long term health conditions, dementia, or a disability / additional need. Activities will include physical improvements to key access routes in and around the National Park, nature recovery activities and looking after heritage features. We will also provide help to find and access routes for groups who will benefit the most, through digital and face to face assistance – this may include developing a skill and learning hub dedicated to volunteers.

- 3.3 The bid will provide funding for a volunteering officer and communications support. The bid is also likely to include a development officer role to help build the link with businesses and landowners to develop opportunities. It is envisaged that the bid will seek lottery funding of around £250,000.

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### **Contact:**

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### **Papers:**

Annex 1: Summary of Youth for Climate and Nature

## Annex 1

### Summary: Youth for Climate and Nature (working title)

#### Aims

- Working together with young people to support green and blue nature networks across urban, rural, and coastal areas.
- Discovering, understanding, and acting in ways that will make the most difference to climate and nature emergencies.
- Increasing climate action participation and supporting behavioural change.

#### Partners

- 10 local voluntary New Forest Green Groups convened and facilitated by NPA
- Youth charities including Alabare (charity in Salisbury supporting vulnerable, homeless, and marginalised people.)
- Theatre for Life
- Parks Foundation (working across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole)
- Southampton National Park City
- Countryside Education Trust
- Freshwater Habitats Trust

#### Key themes

INSPIRE: exploring and connecting climate, nature, people, place, via interactive outdoor learning

- Designed with groups of up to 10 young people over 8-12 weeks based on their interests. Includes residential option.
- Activities and venues exploring nature and climate emergencies across urban, rural, coastal areas, enabling groups from different areas to learn from each other.
- Activities might be conservation volunteering, walks, talks, cycling, geocaching, nature escape room, mindfulness, bushcraft, at range of local providers: Wildlife Trust, RSPB, YHA, PedAll, National Trust, Parks Foundation, Southampton National Park City, Countryside Education Trust.
- Outdoor learning sessions include reflective element that young people can take back into their everyday lives, e.g. lifestyle changes for climate action.
- Skill sharing for experts in youth provision supported to participate in outdoors with their groups.

ACTIVATE: collaborating, participating on practical actions, skills, volunteering, internships

- Volunteering – practical conservation, information, training, social, wellbeing, greening to help nature and climate resilience.
- Young Ranger – next step to deepening knowledge and opportunities to be part of the solution through volunteering for key habitats and species.
- New Forest Green Groups – increasing energy efficiency, greener homes, making space for nature, climate cafes, compost demos, community apple pressing days, food growing initiatives, recycling hubs.

- Southampton National Park City – developing community fridge and food growing.
- Parks Foundation in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole – redesign parks and green spaces for nature with trees, hedging, climate friendly planting, as part of Green Heart Parks Initiative. Development of community cafes as hubs for understanding, enjoying, spending time in nature.
- Freshwater Habitats Trust wilder for water initiative – events, training, promotion of the New Forest Water Code.

COMMUNICATE: youth voice, storytelling, intergenerational opportunities, behavioural change

- Youth voice – supporting young people to present to partners, audiences, connect to decision makers via workshops, training. Young people’s contributions integrated into project design and delivery.
- Online youth green and blue portal, with practical opportunities, digital resources to enable ongoing and continued support for everyone to participate around own schedules.
- Proactively assist young people to share their discoveries and create content for social and traditional media for the project.
- Theatre for Life / Life Lab – groups developing own stories of climate change via short plays, working with emerging young actors, performing as community tour. Live performances integrated into landscape (New Forest treehouses, city parks and promenades).
- Workshops run by climate change scientists teaching fundamental science behind climate change and empowering people to act.

GROW: developing a joined-up network of people and communities taking climate action

- Internships and training at new Fort Climate Centre in Beaulieu including climate champions, working with local businesses, developing, delivering events, conferences, talks, seminars.
- Mentoring and partnering youth groups with each other or young people to help share knowledge and ways to reduce climate impacts.
- Developing early green careers network across local employers from outdoor sector, local businesses, and charities. Events to be run for participants in roles including apprenticeships, seasonal staff, internships, placements etc. Aim to become self-sustaining led by young people.

REFLECT: thinking about climate and nature in new ways and insights based on evidence

- Guiding people to make the best use of local climate data resources and making decisions on how and where to act for nature and climate.
- Exploring locally prominent issues such as sea level rise, changes in species and habitats, threats to nature, likely floods, drought frequencies, what it will mean for people, place, nature, what will these changes look like, and what can we do to prevent them.
- Create a shared sense of purpose in tackling the climate and nature emergencies in our local landscapes and everyday lives by sharing stories and good practice.
- Bringing together lived and learnt experience of young people and those working in the landscape.