

AM 649/23

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 13 JULY 2023

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Report by: Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

Summary:

This report covers the period since the Authority meeting on 23 March 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>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting and growing the natural capital across the National Park Landscape, connecting with surrounding areas to ensure habitats and wildlife are sustainable. Ensuring new development is sympathetic and in keeping with the National Park, promoting high quality design and environmental net gain. Conserving the historic and built heritage; supporting local culture with continued focus on commoning. 	<p>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping more people to understand and value the things that make the New Forest National Park unique and special. Enabling high quality and beneficial experiences of the National Park. 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. 	<p>Our priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy where natural capital is an integral component of doing business. Promoting connectivity across the National Park through sustainable transport and communication technologies. Supporting the social wellbeing and sustainability of New Forest Communities.
Achieving Excellence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining and enhancing a capable, motivated team that delivers high quality service. Championing the National Park and brokering partnership to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest and its communities Identifying new resources and using them alongside our existing resources, effectively and efficiently. 		

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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Spring and early summer in the New Forest National Park not only sees our precious landscape at its best, but full of new life and renewal of connections of our communities and wider populations to the National Park as the summer season begins. This report reflects on this period and also marks the beginning of the new financial year, describing a wide suite of projects and programmes delivering towards the Re:New Forest Partnership [Plan](#) that together demonstrate our role in convening partnership or 'Team New Forest'.

This quarter saw the Green and Blue Horizons from City To Forest scheme has come to an end after 18 months. Led by the Authority, it brought together five organisations representing a £800,000 investment in the Forest. The £540,000 grant came from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund, with match funding from partners.

The scheme has been delivering tangible results and represents a real Team New Forest effort. Highlights include the creation or retention of 19 jobs – 75% of which have continued after the end of the scheme; land equivalent to 147 football pitches being improved for nature and climate resilience across 27 sites; 4,575 hours given by volunteers and 200 events reaching around 9,500 people. It also provided support for staff and interpretation in the new Fort Climate Centre at the Countryside Education Trust in Beaulieu, recently opened by the Duchess of Edinburgh.

We have continued to successfully bid for other funding to enable projects with a range of partners, including £45,000 from Arts Council England to extend our artist in residence programme with the SPUD charity in Sway for a further three years. Our Pedall inclusive cycling charity has also attracted grant funding of £67,000 to support work at its Ashurst community hub. This has come from: South Western Rail Community Fund (£44,000), The Peter Harrison Foundation (£20,000) and Energise Me/Cycling UK (£3,000).

We were pleased that our work on Farming in Protected [Landscapes](#) was showcased at the recent National Parks All Party Parliamentary Group. The scheme, which we deliver on behalf of Government, has completed year two with the 22 projects completed this year bringing the total to £547,000 of investment into the Forest over the lifetime of the scheme. Nationally over 5,000 farmers and landowners have benefited from the scheme.

Our Planning Team has seen a high volume of applications this quarter and we were pleased to end the previous year exceeding all performance targets for determining applications. This is a major achievement for the team given the significant disruption experienced in moving to a new planning system.

The enforcement team has been working with temporary campsites to ensure they comply with the Habitats Regulations and that applications are submitted where necessary. Meanwhile our policy team has responded to a Government consultation on proposals to introduce new national permitted development rights for temporary recreational campsites. It is also liaising with seven neighbouring planning authorities, Natural England and Forestry England to develop a comprehensive strategy for mitigating the recreational impacts from planned new development in and around the National Park.

With the very particular circumstances relating to planning in National Parks, the team plays a very active role as part of the family of National Parks, responding to consultations and shaping policy. It was therefore a great boost for the team to be able to welcome the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and colleagues to highlight issues in National Parks and the important role planning plays in protecting these landscapes.

We go into July as we pass a major milestone for our ongoing partnership working to manage recreation pressures, with the launch of two Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to ban feeding and petting ponies and donkeys; and to ban BBQS and fires in the open countryside. Staff from our ranger and planning teams have joined staff from other organisations for training in the engage – explain – educate – enforce approach and if necessary issue £100 fixed penalty notices. Signs have been put up around the Forest and the New Forest Code has been updated to reflect the PSPOs. Partners ranging from the tourism industry to community outlets, businesses and parish and town councils have been kept updated.

The work on the PSPOs has sat alongside our spring campaigns to protect Ground Nesting Birds from disturbance and to remind people of the presence of foals and stallions as part of the animal accidents campaign, with the messages #KeepYour Distance and #PassWideAndSlow widely disseminated.

Our programmes to encourage young people onto the path of green careers and equip them with skills and experience are inspiring for all involved.

We were delighted to get our New to Nature internships funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund underway this quarter, funded as part of a national programme providing 70 placements led by Groundwork UK. Our focus on enabling and nurturing green careers also saw us meet over 50 students at the Brockenhurst College employer fair and

support Bournemouth and Poole college in delivering their green skills programme. In addition, a new Junior Rangers programme has just been launched and we continue to convene an early green careers group from across Forest organisations. We also delivered the Greenprint Conference with partners at Southampton University at the end of June, focusing on growing green skills and jobs for our region with 120 delegates from across public, private and third sectors.

With the commitments to Nature Recovery now set out in the Government's Environment Improvement Plan published in January, there is an increased recognition of the role National Parks can and should play in the UK response to the shared international commitment to the target of protecting 30% of the planet for nature by 2030. It was a pleasure for me to be able to reflect on this with Totton residents at their Totton Goes Wild Earth Day Summit chaired by Lord Montagu in April and to hear how communities are acting across our communities through the Green Groups network and through projects supported by our Sustainable Community Funds in schools, scout, guides and church groups. This groundswell of support for action for nature was never more evident than at the Friends of the New Forest in April, where I was pleased to present to members how we are working with partners to deliver the shared Re:New Forest Plan.

In order to capture this groundswell of activity and support for nature in and beyond the Forest, we recently launched #OurNatureStory – a campaign to highlight people's favourite memories, places and things to do outside and inspire others to connect with and care for nature. The social media campaign has seen nearly 300 entries so far with videos from the CEOs of RSPB and Freshwater Habitats Trust, local media presenters and young people.

Preparation for the New Forest Show are in full swing and visitors to our stand will be able to discover the Forest's nature story with models of giant species and family friendly activities, plus a TV screen showing #OurNatureStory submissions. At the Show we will also be celebrating the winners of the National Park Awards which marks its 10 anniversary. We look forward to recognising extraordinary contributions in categories including young farmer or commoner; farming and nature champion; young environmental champion; rural diversification; and best supporter of local produce.

Finally, I am pleased to report that the Partnership Plan Leaders Panel has been very active, meeting together face to face for the first time in late March and hosting their annual tour for partners on 3 July around Keyhaven and Hurst. This has enabled valuable sharing of practice, ideas and opportunities to deliver effective and impactful projects for the New Forest National and to build the relationships so crucial to being a great Team New Forest together.

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

The second year of the New Forest Farming in Protected Landscapes programme ended on the 31 March. 22 projects were supported in the year, delivering across the four themes of climate, nature, people and place. This included 10 projects to help increase carbon storage, 2,161m of hedgerow planted, four ponds created and 71 volunteers engaged through the programme. Funding was confirmed for Years 3 and 4 of the programme, providing a further £547,000 for delivery of projects over the two years.

Nationally the programme has been very well received by farmers and landowners with more than 5,000 farmers and land managers benefitting from the programme. A report on the second year of the programme was launched at the All-Party Parliamentary Group for National Parks on 20 June.

Green and Blue Horizons project

The Green and Blue Horizons from City to Forest scheme ended in March. The project was an £800,000 investment into the Forest thanks to a £540,000 grant from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund and match funding from partners. Evaluation work and a wrap-up film are now complete. 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. Other highlights include 20ha of habitat restored and 2km of hedgerow created. More details and a film about the projects are on our website.

Evaluation found that the funding provided investment that was needed to support the partners as they became accustomed to working in a post-COVID-19 environment, allowing them to continue delivering existing work, and enabling them to unlock and trial innovative and new areas of work. An impressive amount of conservation and engagement was achieved. Conservation interventions and nature-based solutions are already producing benefits: woodland and wetland species have already been recorded

returning to areas where work has taken place. Relationships between the partners established through the OPOF programme have grown and flourished, new collaborations have developed, and knowledge, skills, and experience are being shared providing considerable value and benefit to landowners, and the species and habitats of the New Forest.

National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative Funding (LEI)

The four current LEI funded landscape improvement projects are proceeding well with landscape, access and environmental improvements creating marked benefits for people and wildlife. The first of the four, Warrens Copse (near Fawley), working with Fawley Parish Council, is in the maintenance stage after the improvements were completed last year. The Landford Bog project, with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is progressing well. The third project at Franchises Lodge, with RSPB, is also progressing well and the fourth and most recent LEI project, involving improvements to access at Tatchbury, Marchwood and Cadland, has recently started now that the funding has arrived from National Grid. The projects are being monitored by the National Park's Landscape Officer, Access Officer and Grants Officer with liaison with the partner organisations an essential part of that process. Through these projects the 75% funding from National Grid is having distinct positive outcomes across the National Park.

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

Development Management

Planning activity remains high with 156 applications received in the period 21 March to 21 June 2023. In the same period 194 applications were determined with an approval rate of 92%. We are slowly beginning to see some improvements in the performance of our new planning system and have held weekly meetings with Agile Applications to iron out the last few remaining issues. In spite of the difficult transition to the new planning system we were pleased that our performance on determining applications within time held up, with year-end (22/23) return figures as follows:

- Major Applications - 100%
- Minor Applications - 72%
- All Other Applications - 82%

During this same period (21 March to 21 June 2023), three appeal decisions were received, of these, two were allowed and one was dismissed.

We were very pleased to welcome the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Sue Bridge, to the National Park on the morning of 16 June as part of a two-day visit to the South East (SE) Region. Accompanied by colleagues from the RTPI SE

Region, the visit involved a trip to Fawley Waterside and a roundtable discussion with the planning team with a focus on the important role planning has to play in protecting and enhancing our National Parks.

Following the recent appointment of Lindsey Chamberlain as our new Planning Officer in May we now have a full planning team.

Planning Enforcement

In the period since the last report there have been 61 new enforcement cases opened and 74 cases closed with around half of them requiring skilful negotiation to persuade owners to cease the breach. We have issued three enforcement notices: one relating to an unauthorised mobile home in Dibden; one relating to further unauthorised development in a woodland plot in Mount Pleasant Lane; and another in relation to an unauthorised building on agricultural land.

The team has also been pro-actively engaging with temporary campsites to encourage and ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and submit applications where necessary. We have also attended Public Space Protection Order training to assist and support our colleagues in the Ranger Team.

Policy

Following approval at the March Authority meeting, the revised draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was subject to a seven-week public consultation between April and June. Following consideration of the responses received, the proposed adoption of the revised SCI is the subject of a separate report being considered at this meeting.

We continue to work with our partner minerals and waste planning authorities (Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority) on the review of the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan. This includes reviewing the representations received on the draft Plan earlier this year and a workshop in July to move matters forward towards the preparation of the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan (which will be the subject of a future Authority report).

We are also engaged in joint work with seven neighbouring planning authorities, Natural England and Forestry England on preparing a more strategic approach to mitigating the recreational impacts arising from planned new development in and around the National Park. Further work on strategic access management and monitoring measures (SAMM) within the New Forest's internationally designated sites has been commissioned from the specialist consultants Footprint Ecology and they are due to report over the summer. The aim is to move towards a comprehensive approach to mitigating the impacts of planned development, with local planning authorities working across administrative boundaries to deliver an agreed package of mitigation measures.

The team has co-ordinated responses to several national Government consultations since the last Authority meeting. These include: (i) the proposed introduction of new national permitted development rights for temporary recreational campsites (April 2023); (ii) the proposed introduction of a new use class for short term holiday lets and associated permitted development rights (May 2023); and (iii) the proposed 'Environmental Outcomes Reports', which would replace the current system of Environmental Impacts Assessments (June 2023). Our responses continue to highlight the detrimental impact of extended national permitted development rights on the delivery of the National Park purposes.

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 19 New Forest District Council (NFDC) and 20 Authority planning applications and given comments and recommendations on several other ongoing cases and new enquiries. We've also made four site monitoring visits, to NFDC sites, to review the archaeological work being conducted.

Service Level Agreements

NFDC renewed their SLA with us for the coming year and we will continue to provide archaeological advice for their planning service.

We were also successful in winning the new 3-year SLA with Forestry England. This SLA continues our work providing archaeological advice ahead of forestry work and for other initiatives. This SLA also includes an element of community and public engagement.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)

The Team continues to support the HLS scheme. During this period there has only been one new enquiry regarding ridge, furrow & stump removal plans in Dunces Arch.

HLS Projects: Data consolidation

Work on the HLS heritage data consolidation project has progressed. We have now converted the HLS Heritage MS Access database into the more stable ESRI Shape file format. Testing of the methodology for data consolidation is now done and it is estimated that this work will take around 80 days to bring all HLS data together and consolidate all attribute information to UK heritage standards. This work is now underway.

HLS Projects: Field Surveys

Due to other calls and the ground nesting bird season, the field surveys have been on hold. At the end of the ground nesting bird season, we will prioritise the work to complete

the gap-filling surveys of the original HLS land surveys. Following the completion of this and the data consolidation project we will prioritise the WWII built heritage (concrete) surveys.

Working with Community Groups

Festival of Archaeology 2023, 15-30 July

We will be supporting the Burley Historical Society during their Burley Heritage Weekend held during the Festival of Archaeology in July, showcasing the NPA's past, present and potential future historic environment projects with a particular focus on the Burley area.

In addition, we will be supporting Forestry England with their Festival of Archaeology events in Creech Wood near Denmead. We are providing support for two open days, including four guided walks, focusing on the D-Day preparations camp.

We will also be running two work experience student sessions in July together with the Education Team, engaging young people with our heritage work through staff-led activities.

LoCATE training scheme

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. Further training sessions for Hampshire and Dorset societies in the use of magnetometry equipment, resistivity equipment and the Total Station survey equipment are planned in the second half of 2023.

Avon Valley Archaeological Society continue to make regular use of the magnetometry equipment, as well as Burley Historical Society and the New Forest History and Archaeology Group. Bournemouth University and Avon Valley Archaeological Society are looking to include additional pieces of kit to the loan scheme in 2023.

We are seeking permissions to do a targeted geophysics programme with New Forest NPA volunteers focussing on industrial archaeology, looking at Romano-British pottery kilns and their context in the New Forest landscape.

Supporting Local Groups and Societies

We are supporting the Burley Historical Society with its research into Early Medieval heritage assets in and around Burley, providing advice regarding a proposed geophysical survey east of Burley through the LoCATE scheme, now planned for early 2024 to avoid heavy bracken cover in the proposed survey area.

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 through the LoCATE training scheme 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. The group will be seeking the required permissions to start surveying in Autumn 2023.

New Forest Oral History Group

Following the re-launch of the group six new members have now been trained in transcription. Along with our existing and long-standing member the team is now transcribing oral history recordings from the Beaulieu and Buckler's Hard Archives.

New Forest Knowledge website

The website continues to be extremely popular. The view stats from March to date are over 31,000 views with the WWII heritage content still being the most viewed articles. Our ICT team has continued to keep our ageing Geoserver, which feeds data to the sites map, going. However, this temporary fix will not last and a new solution is still urgently needed. Enquiries have been made with some possible service providers but as yet a solution has not been forthcoming. We are working with our ICT team to explore options. The New Forest Heritage Centre has now recruited its new Head of Collections and once settled in we look forward to meeting her and continuing our joint work caring for and developing the site.

Building Design and Conservation

The team continues to have a full and varied caseload, covering designated heritage assets (e.g. nationally listed buildings), non-designated heritage assets (e.g. locally listed assets) and other proposals relating to design and impacts of local distinctiveness. We are part of the Hampshire Conservation Officers' Liaison Group that enables specialist officers to meet to discuss areas of mutual interest, and the group met in May.

The local listing project continues to move forward and since the last Authority meeting in March we have engaged with local parish councils including Hyde and Boldre on their nominations for inclusion on the local list. These will be the subject of reports to our Planning Committee in due course. We are also liaising with Copythorne and Netley Marsh parish councils regarding the Forest North East Conservation Area review. This has included a meeting and site visit with Netley Marsh parish councillors in May to consider areas for potential inclusion with the Conservation Area.

We are also due to be hosting a visit from Historic England officers this autumn which will give Authority staff and officers and opportunity to discuss how we engage with Historic England and its role in supporting the building heritage of the National Park (linked to the delivery of the first statutory National Park purpose).

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

The education and youth team has facilitated school visits to the New Forest Crown Lands and coast for 270 pupils, covering topics ranging from the special quality of the new forest, history, river studies and coastal management. Working with smaller class groups proved really effective in increasing the learning benefit pupils get from the day and creating a dynamic where all pupils can engage.

'Being able to show the pupil "real geography" and take them out of the classroom. The geography was great but also the ability to teach them in a real and different atmosphere.' Teacher, Testwood school.

Our work experience programme is underway, this year we are hosting 10 students from six different schools and colleges including some year 12 students for the first time. Many year 12 students missed out on work experience in year 10 and colleges are keen to meet a new government drive to ensure their students benefit from meaningful workplace encounters.

'From my first look around the office space with Amy I was already put at ease as the work environment was so calm, easy going and playful while maintaining an air of deep importance and pride in the work going on.' Year 12 work experience student.

We have also spent time broadening our relationships with careers advisors in schools and especially Brockenhurst College, where we met over 50 students at their employer fair and we were able to spread the word about our New to Nature internship and apprentice roles for the future.

Our youth development officer has been piloting a new programme with students from Bournemouth and Poole College with support from staff across our early careers branch giving insight into the range of green jobs that exist in the sector. The first group of 12 students has started on a new green skills programme and has one more session to go. So far, they have had a talk in college about green careers within a protected landscape and visited Bolderwood to learn about the New Forest, its wildlife, history and how it is managed. More programmes are planned for September.

We will be launching a new Junior Rangers programme over the summer holidays and all the preparatory and administration work is underway. The scheme will be for young people aged 11 to 16 years we will be working alongside other partner agencies, including Lepe Country Park to provide a range of opportunities.

The Early Green Careers Network met in May for a traditional woodland management training session, run by Paul Brockman from Woodlander Coppice, attended by 11 members of the network. We have contacted a similar network run by Forestry England, covering the South East England region and will be sharing relevant information and training opportunities. The group has appointed its own chair and is moving towards being self-managed. We have facilitated two 'new to nature' interns here at the NPA, one of whom started in April and another on 17 July.

Public and community events / rangers

Rangers have continued to work closely with Forestry England Keepers and Rangers and Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust to mitigate disturbance to ground nesting birds and educate the public on the vulnerabilities and sensitivities of their habitats. The 'mitigation ranger team' has been supporting the Area Ranger work but primarily focusing on patrolling and engaging with the public at key ground nesting bird sites, liaising with FE keepers and NPA rangers. Since April between them, Jim, Naomi and Lizzie have talked with over 1,200 people at 24 sites across the New Forest in awareness raising conversations about ground nesting birds. The team is soon to be boosted with the addition of Dawn Smith in the new Assistant Ranger post. Jim wrote a short article on ground nesting birds which NFDog published on its website earlier this month.

Hayden continued to link with the refugee communities in Southampton through a South-West Visitors Group (SWVG) summer celebration event. 22 refugee and asylum seekers came to the National Park to learn about the New Forest from NPA and FE rangers and boost their mental health.

We were thrilled to hear Hayden has been successful in applying and winning a Europarc Natural Heritage scholarship worth up to £3,000. The aim of the scholarship is to give opportunity to young professionals that have chosen to develop a career in protected areas to improve their skills and learn from others. Hayden's project theme is 'Parks for People' and the title is 'Nature for all: A study into how protected areas in Europe are engaging with some of the most vulnerable communities - asylum seekers and refugees'. She will be completing study visits in 2024 to Greece and Scotland which will include visits to peri-urban parks, refugee camps and nature sites looking at and working with professionals that are engaging with these communities. She will be writing a report that includes a toolkit to hopefully help other protected areas and parks both nationally and locally engage with this under-served community.

For this work Hayden has also been nominated for a National Parks UK Park Protector Award in the New Perspectives category. She will attend the finals ceremony in the House of Commons in August.

150 people attended a Wild Play Day at Bartley Park run by NPA rangers and the Friends of Bartley Park during half term. It was a great opportunity to engage with local communities and provide a stepping stone of knowledge and experiences for engaging with nature and outdoor spaces local to the National Park.

Rangers ran the annual Family and Friends day for ExxonMobil staff at Anderwood. Two guided walks were delivered to 40 people and forest activity sessions with the mobile information unit.

Joint operations with the Police, FE, NFDC, NFDOG and CDA were held to promote responsible dog walking across the New Forest. The Police, NPA and FE continued to deliver Operation Mountie sessions aimed at driver awareness and reducing speed and animal deaths on the forest roads.

Five rangers attended the PSPO training delivered by NFDC to become 'Authorised Persons' enabling them to issue fixed penalty notices when the two Orders come in to force on 1 July. Rangers are working with FE to create appropriate monitoring of engagements and with partners outside the Crown Lands to have the appropriate signage erected.

Gillie attended Kingston Maurward College to assist with a mock interview day for their final year Wildlife and Conservation students. It was useful to share knowledge and experiences with the students as well as networking with a range of other local employers present on the day including Purbeck National Trust, Forestry England, Dorset Wildlife Trust and RSK Sustainable Solutions.

Communications

On World Environment Day we launched #OurNatureStory – an online campaign capturing people's favourite places, memories and things to do in nature with the aim of inspiring others to connect with and help care for the natural world. Social posts with videos from the CEOs of the RSPB and Freshwater Habitats Trust are among those featured. The New Forest's nature story is the theme of our stand at the New Forest Show and the #OurNatureStory posts will be displayed on a TV screen. There will be a New Forest nature experience with giant models of rare species. People will also be encouraged to join the 1,000 people who have already signed up to the nature and climate pledge (www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge), plus a colouring activity for families.

We are also supporting the Verderers with content for their stand about the achievements of the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

The New Forest Awards with the CLA were launched, marking the 10th anniversary of recognising people excelling in six categories varying from young environmental champion to rural diversification, and had over 100 nominations. The awards will be presented in the main ring at the New Forest Show.

We supported a crowdfunding campaign with CPRE to create the Hampshire Hedge - a wildlife corridor hedge linking the New Forest National Park with the South Downs National Park, which raised £9,000.

Working with the Solent Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and the Partnership for South Hampshire, we helped to promote the Greenprint Conference at the University of Southampton on 30 June, with around 100 people expected to attend. The Greenprint is a framework for local authorities and other organisations to build environmental thinking into their strategies and action plans to build a green recovery together. The Green Halo Partnership laid the foundations for the Greenprint and the framework has already been embedded in the Solent 2050 strategy and Solent Freeport bid.

We promoted the Environment Agency's public exhibitions in Lymington and Milford on the next phase of developing a Hurst Spit to Lymington coastal strategy.

Other initiatives to highlight issues affecting the New Forest included social posts about Invasive Species Week and ash die-back disease.

Joint work has continued to tackle recreation management issues with a consultation and launch for two Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). The PSPOs means it is now an offence to feed and pet ponies and donkeys and there is a ban on fires and BBQs in the open countryside. Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty of £100 or being taken to court and a fine of up to £1,000. Our key messages are that rangers and others will aim to first engage, explain, educate and then enforce where necessary. Signs about the new powers have been designed and put up around the National Park; the New Forest Code has been updated with PSPO messaging as well as the RSPB logo, with flyers, posters and signs of the whole code being made available in different formats for businesses and community outlets. Translations of the code into five different languages are being prepared. We highlighted the amber fire alert across the Forest and a large heathland fire at nearby Verwood on social media to further demonstrate why the fire ban PSPO is necessary.

We supported the animal accidents campaign highlighting the new signs showing numbers of accidents and high-risk routes which had been put up around the Forest by the New Forest Young Commoners. Other messaging included warnings about foals on the road and to #PassWideAndSlow and to #KeepYourDistance with stallions being released.

Other New Forest Code campaigns have included the ground nesting birds campaign, with a highlight being World Curlew Day in April with an event hosted by Wild New Forest at the Countryside Education Trust treehouses featuring singer David Gray. We also supported the launch of a Countryside Code campaign by Natural England featuring Shaun the Sheep.

A film to welcome people to the New Forest and encourage them to have sustainable visits which respect the National Park was created with Forestry England and Go New Forest, supported by a grant from Love the Forest. It has had nearly 4,000 views on the NPA YouTube channel alone and has also been promoted by Go New Forest and tourism outlets. We have also joined together with FE and Go New Forest to launch this year's 'enjoying the New Forest' visits survey to build on last year's baseline data and help us gather data and understand trends in recreation in the National Park.

The New Forest Tour is back on 1 July with a 15% early bird discount and the residents pass running again this year for people living in the NFDC area. We are again leading on the Tour marketing this year in conjunction with bus company MoreBus.

The Green Groups Network organised by the Communications Team has held several meetings with collaboration on energy saving initiatives, sharing resources such as thermal imaging cameras and collaborating on events. Highlights have included Ringwood Eco Fair; an EV vehicle talk in Sway; Totton Goes Wild week of activities including a speech by Alison Barnes at an Earth Day summit hosted by Lord Montagu; and several activities in Great Big Green Week in mid-June.

Discover National Parks Fortnight in April gave us an opportunity to highlight a range of initiatives including the launch of Cameron's Cottage education centre at RSPB Franchises Lodge and a video highlighting the successes of the HLS scheme. Other initiatives for people to engage with the National Park included No Mow May and Earth Day.

A new 'citizens science' survey was launched to record where invasive non-native rhododendron is re-appearing on the open Forest after a programme of removal, with an online reporting form. We encouraged more volunteers during National Volunteers Week and All Parks Volunteers Day on 10 June. To mark the Coronation, we highlighted the Crown's links to the New Forest; promoted Marque members for the Big Lunch; and volunteering opportunities for the Big Help Out, including the citizen science initiative iNaturalist app which all National Parks in the UK are promoting to help record wildlife species.

There have been several arts and heritage initiatives to promote this period. These have included a call for the next artists in residence and the exhibition of the most recent artist in residence Beccy McCray entitled 'Common Ground'.

Archaeologist Gareth Owen appeared on ITV in a segment about the 80th anniversary of the Dambusters raid and links to the testing of the bombs on the Forest.

A consultation on revising our Statement of Community Involvement was held, setting out how we involve communities in shaping our planning work.

We promoted two New to Nature internships, admin assistants and Planning Officer roles which attracted a good number of applicants.

Overall, social posts from April to mid-June have seen nearly 950,000 impressions and almost 57,000 engagements.

Fundraising

We have been awarded £45,000 from Arts Council England towards the New Forest National Park Artist in Residence in partnership with SPUD. Funds will support and facilitate six new artists/groups over the next three years to develop their creative practice and deliver artist-led public engagement inspiring new audiences to think about landscapes, how people interact with them, and the challenges they face now and in the future. We'll support artists to work with partners and communities so that a wider range of people can participate and benefit. For each residency the funding covers artist fees, travel, materials, use of the spudWORKS gallery for 30 days, and use of the dedicated live-in residency studio space for 30 days. The programme is based on a successful 18-month development phase initiated in May 2022 and funded by the Authority.

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

Interpretation and inclusive projects

Following the successful joint application with arts charity SPUD for a three-year programme of the National Park Artist in Residence, we have put out the call for artists for 2023/24 and we have had a great response. Interviews took place on 4 July. The programme will help develop engagement with new audiences and help view the Forest and its challenges in different ways.

In May the second artist in Residence Beccy McCray held her exhibition 'Common Ground' which included a successful launch event attended by local producers such as Pondhead Conservation and Hollyhock Flock and 'ritual walk' attended by over 40 people to nearby Bronze Age Barrows. Artist Mel Rose was in residency in May and has worked

to produce a huge amount of content to help her develop her exhibition which will take place in October.

We also applied for interpretation and footpath improvements to the Bird Aware sites fund for footpaths around Lymington. This was a joint application with NFDC and we will hear if we were successful in the Autumn. We were successful last year for some interpretation and fencing measures at two coastal sites. Preparatory work on these projects has also started and will be delivered in winter 2023/24.

We have been working on the New Forest Show exhibition stand content which will reflect the theme of Re:New Nature. Large models have been created and interpretation developed which can be used over several years at the Show.

The 2023 programme of inclusive visits is underway with Open Sight Hampshire visiting PEDALL and also taking part in art activity at spudWORKS in Sway.

We supported Southampton University in running two workshops on 'Effective Partnership' for communities in and around Southampton. This was part of a programme funded via their Public Engagement with Research Unit and enabled us to broaden contacts in Southampton communities, as well as develop a resource that can be reused.

Volunteering and Ambassadors

The volunteering programme is going well with 1,035 hours of volunteering so far this year. Path clearance teams are busy clearing overgrown paths and installing signposts. Wildlife conservation work continues in Hamptworth as we work with local landowners to remove the invasive Himalayan Balsam from rivers and streams.

We have worked with the FE HLS team to run a citizen science type survey on the location of rhododendron on the Crown Lands. This allows ambassadors, volunteers and members of the public to log sightings of the invasive species, which is in flower during the last spring and summer. The survey is live until end of July and you can report your sightings [here](#).

Health and Wellbeing

We have been successful in gaining funding for a small part of the [ENLIVEN](#) project (run by Exeter University, funded by UK Research Institute). ENLIVEN is working with organisations to make the wellbeing benefits of outdoor activity more accessible to older people with cognitive impairment, for example memory problems due to dementia or a stroke. The focus is to enable people to keep active, independent and socially-connected through increased outdoor activity. Our element is underway with preparatory visits taking place in May and June and then the first visits for those with dementia in July. Visitors attended PEDALL sessions and also rode on the New Forest Tour, and the study will use their experience and feedback to learn for future visits. The third part of the project is the

volunteering element which we are looking to deliver in August / September at Lepe Country Park.

The New Forest Healthy Walks programme, which we support alongside NFDC and Community First, recorded 1,774 walking hours in quarter four, across nine walks in the Forest. Over the summer the programme of longer Forest walks is taking place, with 11 happening from Lyndhurst led by the health walks volunteers.

PEDALL

PEDALL New Forest Inclusive Cycling enables access to the New Forest for our community of riders, using a range of specialist cycles.

From March to May a total of 803 riders, carers and volunteers joined PEDALL riding in the New Forest, connecting with nature and improving both their physical and mental well-being. We supported 18 organisations including schools, colleges, residential homes and charities. A particular highlight has included the return of groups from residential care homes for the elderly following the COVID pandemic. New groups from The Shelling School, Linwood School and Forest Park School have started their six-week riding courses with us.

Our community outreach has continued to build momentum with events running at Slades Farm in Bournemouth in association with Dimensions, an organisation supporting adults with complex additional needs. We were also delighted to join Active Nation at Southampton Sports Centre. These outreach events will continue throughout the summer.

At the new PEDALL Ashurst Community Hub we launched our social, confidence rides using our fleet of two-wheeled bikes and have supported 20 people at our 'bike safety and maintenance drop-in clinic', which is open between 10.30am – 2.30pm every Wednesday. Another highlight has included the launch of our pilot training program (bike safety and maintenance skills) for students with additional-needs from Brockenhurst College. We continue to build our links with the college offering confidence building rides, skills-training and work skills opportunities.

We are delighted to announce our successful grant applications with South Western Rail Community Fund (£44K), The Peter Harrison Foundation (£20K) and Energise Me/Cycling UK (£3K). These grants will support our on-going work at the Ashurst Community Hub.

Friends of Pedall are joined by two new trustees, Geoff Newman, who brings a wealth of financial experience and Richard Taylor, a former New Forest NPA Member, who has a true passion for cycling. We look forward to these new trustees helping to drive Pedall's fundraising and awareness building goals.

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

During this period a lot of work has been undertaken to prepare the ground for the introduction of the two PSPOs on 1 July. This has necessitated a considerable amount of joint working with partners; publicising the PSPOs, training staff and putting up the PSPO signs. In terms of an enforcement strategy, the focus of all those involved remains very much on adopting the '4 Es' approach: Engage – Explain – Educate – Enforce.

Access and Rights of Way

We are progressing with the National Grid project and organising improvement work to a public bridleway on the Cadland estate. With the same funds we are looking to install oak signposts on the Pound Bottom walking route at Franchises Lodge.

The England Coast Path has been rebranded as the King Charles III England Coast Path to honour the new King. The planning inspector is currently assessing the large numbers of objections and representations and will hopefully make a determination on the Highcliffe to Cadland stretch of the route in the Autumn.

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 Conference was held at the University of Southampton on 30 June. This inaugural Greenprint event explored the challenges and practical solutions to making the most of the opportunities for green skills and jobs in the wider Solent region. Building on the work we have done through the Green Halo Partnership, Greenprint is a joint initiative led by ourselves, University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, and Southern Policy Centre, working with the Partnership for South Hampshire.

New Forest Marque

The New Forest Marque AGM was held on 24 April, hosted by the Minstead Trust. The 22/23 year was one of mixed fortunes with a 13% drop in members over the year from 161 to 140. However, finances remain stable and the organisation retains two years of running costs in reserve. Six new members have been recruited since April and the new Marque produce directory is due to be published. Some of the product sectors are doing

particularly well, for example there are now nine bee keeping members associated with the Marque, two of whom were kind enough to lead one of our Discovery Days. A new full-time staff member has been recruited; Members Manager Helen Spiller will focus on looking after members and bringing on new members, as well as running networking events.

Visitor experience

Data and a high-level summary of the 2022 'Enjoy the New Forest' survey is available on our website: www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/visiting/visitor-information/where-to-get-information/enjoying-new-forest-survey/ In partnership with Forestry England and Go New Forest some small changes have been made to the questions and a prize draw incentive has been added. We intend to relaunch the survey on 1 July with a closing date of 30 September and aim to publish the survey findings within 12 weeks.

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

New Forest Tour

The New Forest Tour bus starts on 1 July, with thanks to local businesses and organisations for their ongoing support. For the second year running, the Tour operator is offering a resident's discounted ticket via an app for New Forest District residents upon proof of address. We are hopeful that NFDC information offices will be equipped to help potential residents/customers with the validation process. We are in conversation with the operator about how this offer can be extended geographically to include people living within the National Park boundary in Wiltshire. Unfortunately, funding was not secured in time to reinstate the sustainable travel ambassador role at Brockenhurst Station.

Derbyshire County Council have received Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding from the Department for Transport to introduce new and improved bus services within (and to) the Peak District National Park. We are assisting colleagues at the Peak District NPA by answering questions and providing background around the New Forest Tour's origins, funding and sponsorship arrangements and the involvement of local visitor attractions.

We presented at the Consultative Panel to update on the upcoming New Forest Tour and recently released 'visitor welcome' film which will be shared on social media and, where possible, at attractions, accommodation providers and information centres.

Sustainable transport

Government announced an extension until 31 October 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.

We are supporting the New Forest Community Rail Partnership to promote the West Wight Wanderer (the Needles to Brockenhurst) integrated travel and visitor-experience ticket.

Walking and cycling

New Forest Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has progressed slowly with a steering group meeting in July to help plan stakeholder events (date TBC). In tandem, we are organising the next New Forest Cycle Working Group meeting. We have also engaged with Hampshire County Council about the A326 (North) proposals and challenges and opportunities they provide for cycling and walking into the New Forest. The emerging LCWIP and Waterside proposals are linked in these documents and there is potential for new 'quiet lanes' such as the Staplewood Lane proposal in the A326 plans.

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

Affordable Housing

The legal agreements that will accompany the planning permissions for the Local Plan housing site allocations at Fawley, Church Lane in Sway and Whartons Lane in Ashurst are nearing completion. Between them these three sites are due to deliver over 110 affordable dwellings for local people in housing need in the National Park. Work has begun to redevelop the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel site, which will deliver a further eight affordable dwellings for people in housing need in the parish.

Sustainable Communities Fund

Microgrants of £150 have been awarded to six schools, two scout and guide groups, three village halls, a church, and a volunteer group. Funds will enable new planting and wildflower areas, installation of new bird feeders, insect homes, swift boxes, and rainwater recycling.

Sway Village Hall has been awarded £8,500 to help move to solar panel generated electricity, low energy lighting, and replacing the old and inefficient stage lighting. A 40% drop in electricity costs is expected following the work which will also reduce carbon

emissions and expand the potential for the building to be used for a variety of uses including a more usable stage facility.

4 **Achieving Excellence**

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

Human Resources

As at 7 July 2023 the total staff headcount was 75 or 67.16 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

	Headcount	Variation from previous report	Full Time Equivalents	Variation from previous report
Core funded	58*	- 1	51.39*	- 0.41
Funded by external projects	17	+ 1	15.77	+1.53
Total	75	0	67.16	+ 1.11

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

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

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 x 2	Seasonal, six months	Joint funded (NPA, Camping New Forest, NFD OG)
Planning Officer	Permanent	Core funded
Assistant Ranger	Three-year fixed term	New Forest NPA mitigation funds

We said goodbye to:

Role	Contract type	How role will be filled in future
Communications Assistant	Fixed term, project funded	N/A – end of contract
Administration Assistant (Planning)	Temporary, short-term, core funded	N/A – temporary cover only

Net Zero with Nature Project Manager	Permanent, core funded	Assessing vacancy
Nature Recovery Officer	Fixed term, project funded	N/A – end of contract
Communications Assistant	Permanent, project funded	Assessing vacancy

We are currently recruiting:

Role	Contract type	How funded
National Park Intern (second placement)	One-year fixed term	Mostly funded by the New to Nature programme via Groundwork UK (with up to £5,000 matched by NPA)

We are thrilled to be taking part in the New to Nature scheme hosted by Groundwork UK and partners and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Our first National Park Intern, Joshua Dawes, started work supporting multiple teams across the organisation in April and our second will begin in July. The dual aims of the project - enabling young people from varied backgrounds to start their career in their natural heritage sector and to grow and improve best practice for equality, diversity and inclusion in our sector - are already taking shape.

4.2 Championing the National Park and brokering partnership to achieve collaboration for the benefit of the New Forest communities.

Team New Forest / Partnership Plan

The New Forest Leaders' Panel had its inaugural meeting on 28 March. The meeting included a visit to the Waterside area, focusing on the relationship between the Waterside communities and the adjacent National Park, the challenges created by the severance of the A326 and the economic opportunities around green growth. The first meeting was positively received and the Panel will be meeting again in September. The officer-level Leadership Group met in June and this included an update from Hampshire County Council on its proposals for the A326 corridor, the public consultation for which runs from 5 June to 16 July – see www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportschemes/a326-north-waterside-improvements.

The annual Partnership Plan Tour is taking place on 3 July at Keyhaven and Hurst Castle. With a focus on the coastline of the National Park, partner organisations that will

be contributing to the day include the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (outlining its partnership work to deliver nature recovery); the Environment Agency (with a focus on its Lymington to Keyhaven project); Bird Aware Solent (outlining its work to mitigate the impacts of recreational pressures on the Solent coast) and Historic England (highlighting the challenges of managing a heritage asset at risk from climate change). We are grateful to Belport and Hurst Castle for hosting this year's tour.

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

ICT Services

Security / Infrastructure

Work to update all the devices with the Microsoft modern desktop deployment is approximately half-way through. Each piece of equipment must be updated and then users' equipment swapped out. Once done it will enable deployment of new and existing software to users far quicker than we have previously been able to do and supports the hybrid way of working.

The ICT technical officer has also been doing a lot of work on the new video and archive storage in the cloud and working on the new backup system requirements.

Next month the ICT Technical Officer will be providing refresher security training to the other team members.

Replacement planning system

This continues to be a very time-consuming piece of work. Weekly meetings with the software provider have been held to try and iron out the outstanding issues identified post go-live. The TPO and monitoring modules have now been completed. We are about to embark on the conversion of all the older planning files from tif format to PDF. Once the post go-live outstanding issues have been addressed, work to complete the enforcement and pre-applications Citizen Portals can start.

Other work / projects

We are now working on the replacement of the phone system, and hope to go out to a framework in the next few months. As previously reported the phone software is at end of life and the system is not compatible with the BT IDSN changes being rolled out by 2025. Following all the recent changes to the infrastructure a full review of the IT disaster recovery document has taken place. We are also in the process of rewriting the ICT Policy.

Legal and Information management

Year-end statistics 2022-23

Information requests

We received 67 requests for information between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, which was one more request than the previous year, and the second highest number ever received in any one year. The three-year average is 69 requests, an increase of 31% on the previous three-year period (52.7 requests).

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Q1	18	19	22	11	14	14
Q2	14	12	19	8	20	10
Q3	24	20	14	15	12	15
Q4	11	15	19	19	12	8
Total	67	66	74	53	58	47
	Three-year average = 69.0			Three-year average = 52.7		

All but two requests were responded to within the statutory timeframe (20 working days or one calendar month for subject access requests). One was particularly complex and required significant amounts of redaction and went two days over the deadline, whilst the other one was missed due to an administration error; however, we provided a response within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. The average response time was 14.4 working days.

Of the 67 requests, only one was a subject access request made under GDPR i.e. for the personal data of the requester, and a further 15 (22%) were handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. These related to our IT arrangements and HR and finance matters including, for example, spend on wages, resources dedicated to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), our staff Code of Conduct policy, home working, and communications spend. The remaining 51 requests were handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) because they were related to our planning function or other environmental matters. Of these, 33 were about specific planning or enforcement cases or sites, where the requesters were seeking information which would not generally be publicly available on our website, such as pre-application enquiries or the source and details of planning enforcement investigations. The remaining EIR requests were more general environmental queries and were seeking information on various topics, such as trees, use of peat in compost, waste management and planning policy matters.

As in previous years, most requests were received from individuals and this year two requesters made five requests each, whilst a further eight made more than one request in the period. We continue to receive a small number from businesses, pressure groups

(such as the Taxpayers' Alliance) and journalists, and we also received a request from the Police in relation to an investigation.

In accordance with the presumption in favour of disclosure under the EIR and the general public interest in transparency, we endeavour to release as much information as possible. In 28 of the requests (42%) the information was either released in full or only subject to personal data redactions, and a further 13 requests (19%) were partially released. Fifteen requests (22%) were withheld in their entirety (the main reason for withholding the information was because they were related to sensitive planning enforcement cases or other potential or ongoing legal matters). In nine cases (13%) we did not hold the information requested and where appropriate, the requesters were referred to the relevant public authority that might be able to assist them e.g. a request about burials. We also had two requests which were not pursued because the requesters managed to obtain the information from another source.

Of the 67 requests received, four asked for an internal review of our initial response. These all related to planning matters and in two cases the internal review concluded that some further disclosures could be made, including an extract from an enforcement complaint and some historical plans. In the other two cases the internal review upheld the original decision.

At this time, we are not aware of any matters being subsequently referred to the Information Commissioner.

Requests under the GDPR to exercise data subject rights

Under the GDPR data subjects have certain privacy rights, and in addition to requesting access to information held about them, they can also object to the processing of their data or ask for it to be restricted, and they can ask for their information to be corrected or deleted.

Last year we received requests from four individuals wishing to exercise these rights. Three of them were related to planning applications. The requests were all responded to within the required one calendar month timeframe. We complied with one request and refused another. The other two requests required additional information which was not provided and therefore the requests lapsed.

Formal Complaints

We received 12 formal complaints last year, which is the same number as the previous year. As can be seen from the table below, the number of formal complaints received does vary year on year; however, this is the second successive year with a notably low figure, meaning the three-year average is 25% down on the previous three-year period.

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Q1	0	2	3	7	4	9
Q2	1	3	11	5	3	4
Q3	5	3	4	2	3	9
Q4	6	4	3	4	7	3
Total	12	12	21	18	17	25
	Three-year average			Three-year average		
	15			20		

Most complaints related to our planning work (eight re planning applications; two re enforcement and one re trees), and the other one was a personal data matter. Our average response time was 18.75 working days. In two cases we exceeded the 20-working day target. Only one complaint was upheld (the non-planning matter) and we offered an explanation and written apology.

The Chief Executive responded to seven complaints under Stage Three of our process, either because the complainant was not satisfied with the initial response (three complaints), or the complaint was moved straight to Stage 3 because senior members of the planning team had already been involved in the matter and therefore it was not appropriate for them to consider the complaint.

Only one complaint has been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), who determined that the matters complained of did not cause the complainant sufficient significant personal injustice to warrant an investigation. It was closed after their initial enquiries as 'no further action' by the LGSCO. On receiving a complaint, the LGSCO undertake initial enquiries prior to contacting the public authority, and it is therefore possible that there may be other referrals in the system which we have not yet been made aware. If this is the case, they will be recorded in the LGSCO's Annual Letters which are due to be issued to public authorities on 19 July.

5 Members

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

- 18 April – Planning Committee
- 24 April – Finance Task and Finish Group
- 31 May – Members Day – Business Plan
- 1 June – Consultative Panel
- 5 June – Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
- 12 June – New Forest Access Forum
- 20 June – Planning Committee

5.2 Forthcoming activities include:

- 18 July – Planning Committee
- 25-27 July – New Forest Show
- 15 August – Planning Committee
- 4 September – Resources, Audit & Performance Committee
- 13 September – Members Day TBC
- 19 September – Planning Committee
- 17 October – Planning Committee

5.3 Chief Executive's external engagements

- 27 March – NPE Extra-Ordinary meeting
- 28 March – Partnership Plan Leaders Panel
- 29 March – Freeports meeting
- 29 March – Meeting with NPUK Chair
- 29 March – Meeting with Deputy Surveyor
- 30 March – NRN meeting
- 31 March – Southern Water Focus Group
- 31 March – Greenprint Steering Group
- 3 April – RSA Student Design Awards judging
- 13 April – UK Communications Review meeting
- 14 April – Green Leadership meeting
- 15 April – Speaker at FoNF AGM
- 17-19 April – National Parks CX Awaydays
- 20 April – Green Leadership meeting
- 20 April – Nature Recovery meeting
- 20 April – National Park City Foundation Board meeting
- 21 April – Meeting with Verderers
- 21 April – Visit to New Forest NPA by CX and Chair SDNPA
- 22 April – Speaker at Totton Earth Day Conference
- 24 April – Greenprint Steering Group
- 26 April – HLS Board
- 26 April – National Park Directors of Conservation meeting
- 27 April – Meeting with Chair, National Parks Partnerships
- 27 April – Green Leadership meeting
- 28 April – HIWWT Wilder Landscapes Event
- 10 May – Meeting with NFDC Chief Executive
- 10 May – UK Communications Review meeting
- 11 May – Greenprint Conference Planning meeting
- 11 May – Green Leadership meeting
- 15 May – RSA interviews
- 15 May – ENPOG meeting

- 16 May – UK Communications Review meeting
- 16 May – Greenprint Steering Group
- 16 May – Meeting with National Park City Executive Director
- 16 May – Landscapes for Everyone meeting
- 18 May – Interview with La Republica
- 18 May – UK Communications Review meeting
- 18 May – Health & Wellbeing Officers meeting
- 18 May – Green Leadership meeting
- 19 May – Hosting visit of Southampton and London National Park City colleagues
- 20 May – Cameron's Cottage Opening Ceremony Day
- 23 May – Friends of Brockenhurst meeting
- 23 May – Meeting Lead Director of Conservation & Climate Change (all NPAs)
- 24 May – Green Leadership meeting
- 24 May – Meeting with Chair, NPUK
- 25 May – Ministerial Roundtable hosted by University of Southampton
- 25 May – Business South Directors Dinner
- 26 May – Business South Board meeting
- 26 May – Nature Recovery meeting
- 26 May – Meeting with NPAs Chief Executives
- 31 May – Directors of Conservation subgroup meeting
- 1 June – NPUK Chairs Forum
- 2 June – Green Leadership meeting
- 5 June – Greenprint Steering Group
- 6 June – Future Countryside conference
- 8 June – NPE Board meeting and AGM
- 9 June – St George's, Windsor Fellowship Leadership Conversation
- 12 June – Nature Recovery meeting
- 12 June – Meeting with Leader, HCC re Partnership Plan
- 13 June – Green Leadership meeting
- 20 June – Meeting with the Deputy Surveyor
- 21 June – Meeting with Chief Executive, NFDC
- 22 June – Wildlife Roundtable
- 22 June – Interviews re UK Comms provision
- 22 June – Meeting with Chair, National Parks Partnerships
- 23 June – NPP / National Parks collaboration day
- 24 June – Green Leadership interview
- 27 June – RSA Student Design Awards event
- 30 June – Greenprint Conference
- 3 July – Partnership Plan Summer Tour
- 5 July – National Park City Foundation Board meeting
- 6 July – 2023 Reynolds Lecture, Emmanuel College Cambridge
- 7 July – Green Leadership interviews
- 10 July – NRN catalogue meeting

- 11 July – Meeting with The Wildlife Trusts
- 11 July – PfSH Joint Committee
- 12 July – HLS Board
- 12 July – Visit to Heartbeat House
- 12 July – Business South Directors Dinner

5.4 Chairman's engagements

- 23 March – Pre-meeting for OV interviews
- 24 March – Official Verderer interviews
- 27 March – NPE Extra-Ordinary meeting
- 28 March – Partnership Plan Leaders Panel
- 18 April – Planning Committee
- 21 April – Meeting with Verderers
- 21 April – Visit to New Forest NPA by CX and Chair SDNPA
- 26 April – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 1 June – NPUK Chairs Forum
- 8 June – NPE Board meeting and AGM
- 20 June – Planning Committee
- 21 June – Defra meeting
- 28 June – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 3 July – Partnership Plan Summer Tour

6 Recommendation

To note the report.