



Re:New Nature Challenge

Join us to Re:New Nature in
the New Forest and wider area



Working together

Nature is in crisis and only by urgently combining our expertise and resources can we achieve the vital large-scale revival of the natural world – not just in the New Forest itself but in the wider region and beyond too.

A group of organisations working for nature in the New Forest has come together informally to discuss nature recovery, linked to the ambitions of the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan Re:New Forest.

We believe the future of the New Forest National Park will only be secured by working as a team using local knowledge set within the national and global context of the nature and climate crisis.

We are committed to working with others to find solutions, to access funding, to work at scale and to influence policy, so a shared ambition for nature recovery can be made a reality.

An evidence-based strategy needs to be developed and, as a first step, the group has set out key high-level themes and interventions to drive large-scale improvements for nature in the New Forest National Park and beyond.

We share the goals of the Partnership Plan and support the Plan's call to action to bring people together, build collaboration across sectors and develop new and inclusive ways of engaging with communities for the benefit of nature and wellbeing.

Cover image: New Forest heathland and woodland habitats © Adobe / yujie

Below: Planting 70 English oaks at the Family Trees event at New Park, Brockenhurst



The New Forest is globally important for nature

The New Forest National Park can be seen as an ark for nature in southern England and has a massive role in being able to enrich a large part of the region.

The lowlands of north-west Europe are a unique landscape rich in biodiversity that has survived since the last Ice Age, largely due to an enduring partnership between humans and animals. Key natural processes have been sustained since the beginning of recorded history thanks to the traditional commoning system and, in particular grazing, by free-roaming animals.

Yet the future of the New Forest is under threat.

Land use pressures, recreation, pollution, climate and environmental extremes mean its future and the benefits it brings to us all, as currently mapped out, are increasingly unsustainable. Livestock grazing, with commoning at its heart, is key to delivering a healthy ecosystem and widespread nature recovery. But its future is uncertain. If the New Forest is to survive long-term in one of the most populated and economically active regions in north-west Europe, we will need to transform and meet the challenge of the nature and climate emergencies.

Join us

With rare wildlife and habitats shaped by centuries of human activity, the New Forest can drive and inspire nature recovery not just in the National Park but across the whole region.

It has the critical natural assets.

It has networks of people passionate about the place and rooted in traditional knowledge.

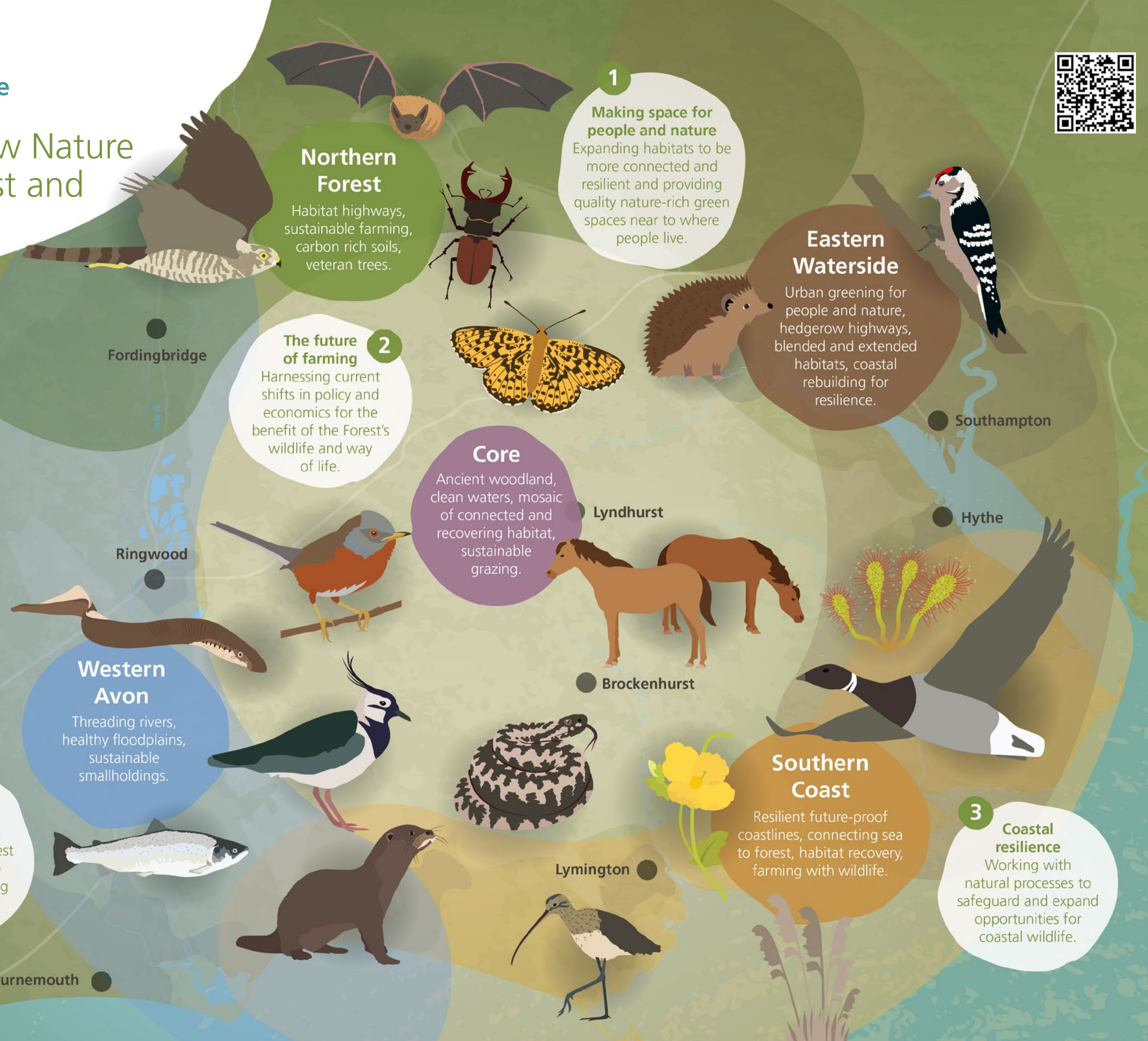
We want to work with you and together must find the resources to make it happen.



Join us to Re:New Nature in the New Forest and wider area



The New Forest can be viewed as the core of heavily protected habitats with four surrounding areas, each with its own landscape character. We have identified **four nature recovery themes** that will be critical to the future of the Forest.



Northern Forest

Habitat highways, sustainable farming, carbon rich soils, veteran trees.

1
Making space for people and nature
 Expanding habitats to be more connected and resilient and providing quality nature-rich green spaces near to where people live.

Eastern Waterside

Urban greening for people and nature, hedgerow highways, blended and extended habitats, coastal rebuilding for resilience.

The future of farming **2**

Harnessing current shifts in policy and economics for the benefit of the Forest's wildlife and way of life.

Core

Ancient woodland, clean waters, mosaic of connected and recovering habitat, sustainable grazing.

Western Avon

Threading rivers, healthy floodplains, sustainable smallholdings.

Southern Coast

Resilient future-proof coastlines, connecting sea to forest, habitat recovery, farming with wildlife.

4
River valleys
 Using valleys to connect the core habitats of the Forest with those of the coast and adjoining countryside.

3
Coastal resilience
 Working with natural processes to safeguard and expand opportunities for coastal wildlife.

Bournemouth

Case studies

Many people and organisations have a role to play in nature recovery in and around the New Forest. Here are some recent exemplar projects which contribute to the Partnership Plan goals.



1 Making space for people and nature

Project: Foxbury
Led by: National Trust

Why it's special: The National Trust's Foxbury site is a 142-hectare former conifer plantation – a key piece of the jigsaw puzzle linking private land to the Open Forest.

Issues: After years as a commercial conifer plantation, it's being restored to its natural state of lowland heathland and woodland, reconnecting it with the rest of the New Forest.

Solutions: It has been transformed with a third of the site now native woodland and a huge increase in wildlife. Woodland management has included removing invasive species such as pine and rhododendron – allowing native trees, wildflowers and shrubs to re-establish – as well as planting 18,000 trees.

When the site was a plantation, bird surveys consistently identified around 12 species of bird. Now, 106 species of bird have been identified including breeding Dartford warbler and woodlark. The site is also now home to one of the densest nightjar populations in the New Forest, with 27 churring males identified in recent surveys. Further studies have identified 26 species of butterfly, including heathland butterfly the silver-studded blue, 12 species of bat and over 17 species of dragonfly and damselfly.

newforestnpa.gov.uk/foxbury

Above: Horse rider at Foxbury © National Trust Images, John Millar

2 Future of farming

Project: Farming in Protected Landscapes
Led by: New Forest National Park Authority

Why it's special: Urgent action is needed to ensure our habitats are more resilient, better managed, bigger and more joined up. Wildlife needs to be able to move freely through the landscape if it is to adapt to change. Farmers, commoners and land managers will be critical in helping join up a nature recovery network at the landscape scale.

Issues: The unique mosaic of habitats in the National Park are all under threat from a variety of factors including climate change, recreation pressure, new diseases and invasive species. With the right support farmers, commoners and land managers can deliver for nature.

Solutions: A grants programme, aimed specifically at National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty provides support to farmers and other land managers to make improvements to the natural environment and build resilience to climate change. Projects range from planting hedgerows and orchards; installing rainwater harvesting systems to conserve water and reduce run off into watercourses; providing boxes for birds and bats; and investment in machinery to protect the soil.

newforestnpa.gov.uk/farming-in-protected-landscapes

Below: Cows are fenced out of a stream and woodland at a farm near Fordingbridge thanks to a FIPL grant



3 Coastal resilience

Project: Lower Test Nature Reserve
Led by: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Why it's special: A particularly important refuge for wildfowl as the regular saltwater flooding protects the grassland from freezing in cold winters. With saltwater and freshwater and the natural progression from land to sea, birds and flowers thrive here. It is rich in wildflowers with over 450 species recorded, including green-winged orchid, water avens, meadowsweet and adder's-tongue fern. Autumn brings flocks of sand martin and swallow that gather over the reedbeds before their long flight back to Africa. Rare birds such as osprey and marsh harrier also stop by to visit this wetland.

Issues: Sea level rises show habitats realigning and saltmarsh is moving upstream at around one metre a month. Lower Test is a rare example of a natural marsh at the head of Southampton Water and every high tide brings a merging of saltwater and freshwater across the floodplain.

Solutions: The Lower Test shows what can happen if provision is made to accommodate natural processes. Saltmarshes readily move upstream if the land is available and if ecological niches are continuously created so species can colonise them.

hiwwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/lower-test-nature-reserve

Above: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's Lower Test Nature Reserve © Clive Chatters

4 River valleys

Project: Reducing run-off to improve the water quality of the Beaulieu River catchment

Led by: Beaulieu Estate, Freshwater Habitats Trust, tenant farmers

Why it's special: The freshwaters of Beaulieu River catchment – river, streams and ponds – are outstanding for freshwater wildlife and historical heritage.

Issues: They are being affected by diffuse nutrient and sediment pollution.

Solutions: The Lottery-funded Living Waters project improved aquatic biodiversity in the Beaulieu River catchment by addressing diffuse nutrient and sediment pollution, as well as managing high-quality habitats like the Beaulieu Abbey ponds. Practical work included:

- A water harvesting system and sediment trap installed at Leygreen Farm.
- A water harvesting system, including a pump to reuse the water where it's needed on site, installed at Chichester Trees and Shrubs nursery.
- A muck spreader, manure shed and water harvesting system at Countryside Education Trust.

A highlight of the project was helping the European eel migrate along the Hartford Stream thanks to three individually-designed eel passes being installed on existing dams. Within three months of the works being completed, young eels were recorded using the passes to swim upstream.

Below: Projects are preventing manure from entering water courses



Please join us in this vital and exciting endeavour

We want to work together with landowners, land managers, communities and investors to develop projects and ideas and secure resources together to Re:New Nature in one of the best and most iconic places for nature in Europe.

Express your interest today:

Visit:

newforestnpa.gov.uk/renewnature

Email:

communications@newforestnpa.gov.uk

Call:

01590 646600



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Ponies help create the conditions for the Forest's spectacular biodiversity

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