

AM 678/24

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY – 21 March 2024

Interim report for Youth Board Task and Finish Group

Report by: Claire Pearce Youth Development Officer
Hayley Quarrington, National Park Intern
Helen Robinson, Lead Education and Youth Officer

1. Background

- 1.1. Members will recall the report to the full NPA meeting in January 2024 regarding the Youth focused work and the YouCAN (Youth for Climate and Nature) project. Since that meeting the task and finish group has had its first meeting and the purpose of this report is to update members on progress towards facilitating the establishment of a Youth Board.
- 1.2. A Youth Board will provide a voice for young people across the New Forest. The development of a Youth Board is a key area of work within the Youth for Climate and Nature (YouCAN) project, funded by the National Lottery Communities Fund. It will be able to provide a coordinated youth voice to leadership teams, members and trustees of both the NFNPA and partner organisations. Priorities and actions of the Youth Board will be led by the young people, including independent projects and social action.
- 1.3. The task and finish group is asked to consider how the work of the Youth Board and Authority members could be mutually beneficial, how consultations and communications could most effectively take place and which aspects of a youth board would be most relevant to Authority Members.
- 1.4. The task and finish group is co-chaired by intern Hayley Quarrington and Communications Assistant Josh Taylor, and in addition comprises members Ann Sevier, Bryce Stratford, Joe Reilly and Mary Davies, together with a number of officers, namely Claire Pearce (Youth Development Officer), Helen Robinson (Lead Education and Youth Officer), Jim Mitchell (Access and Learning Manager), and Rosalind Alderman (Solicitor and Monitoring Officer).

2. Summary of discussions

- 2.1. The task and finish group agreed that the Youth Board should be made up of a diverse group of young people representing a range of both expertise, age, passion and lived experience from within the New Forest as well as the urban fringe areas.

- 2.2. The group intends to consider and offer suggestions towards the overall function of the Youth Board, including aims and measurable outcomes. Interactions between Authority members, partner organisations and the Youth Board should take place within a loop-based approach, with regular communication, feedback and consultation taking place between all parties.
- 2.3. Officers will facilitate the task and finish group by researching models and outlines from pre-existing youth boards from comparable organisations, in order to inform the structure and remit of the New Forest Youth Board. This work has now commenced.
- 2.4. Members of the task and finish group have volunteered their strengths, skills and experience to support Youth Board members in their work. It was identified that this assistance would need to be provided in a flexible format to promote accessibility to Youth Board members, and the wider NPA can help facilitate this support.
- 2.5. The task and finish group will now go on to consider how NPA members and the Youth Board will communicate and consult with each other and how areas of work can have mutual benefit. It is intended that proposals made by the task and finish group will be influenced by young people themselves once the Youth Board is formed.
- 2.6. Engagement of young people to the board will need to happen in advance of the final report in the July Authority meeting. The next steps in developing a youth board are to publicise and generate interest for Youth Board membership over the summer period, with a view to staff providing training and induction sessions in September. Members are asked to engage with this work where they can, for example by offering support and making suggestions, and all members are encouraged to identify how they can support Youth Board members to enable a menu of training opportunities to be produced.

Recommendation:

To note the report and confirm support to establish a youth board for the National Park.

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