

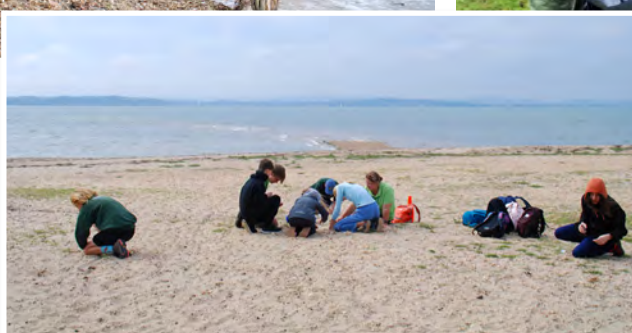
# Park Life

News from the New Forest National Park Authority



Autumn/Winter 2023/24

FREE!



The £1.2m grant from The National Lottery Community Fund will enable young people to work in their urban, coastal and rural communities to tackle the climate and nature emergencies

## £1.2m funding for young to drive vital changes

The New Forest National Park Authority has received a £1.2 million Climate Action Fund grant from The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest community funder in the UK, to empower young people aged 11 to 25 to drive change in their communities to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. Thanks to National Lottery players, activities will take place across urban, coastal, rural and freshwater spaces, and include volunteering opportunities, junior ranger programmes, nature improvements and internships. The Youth for Climate and Nature scheme (YouCAN) will strengthen young people's connection to nature and deepen their understanding of what drives environmental behaviour change. It will enable them to develop nature-focused campaigns in their local communities spanning an area of 300 square miles across the New Forest, Southampton, Bournemouth, Christchurch

and Poole.

This £1.2m National Lottery grant, with match-funding from partner organisations, represents a £1.4m investment into the area.

Lead partner New Forest National Park Authority will work alongside the Countryside Education Trust in Beaulieu; Freshwater Habitats Trust; The Parks Foundation in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; Southampton National Park City project; Theatre for Life, and care and support charity Alabaré to deliver the scheme over three years, starting in October 2023.

Prof. Gavin Parker, Chair of the New Forest National Park Authority, said: 'We know our communities and young people are eager

to tackle the climate and nature emergencies and there is already a great deal of activity in this area. The YouCAN scheme represents an unprecedented opportunity to secure a step-change towards sustainable living in the National Park and beyond. This investment will give us tools, resources, knowledge and networks to move forward at pace.

'YouCAN aligns with our National Park Partnership Plan themes of climate, nature, people and place, and the funding will allow us to develop a 10-year plan for climate action with partners. Young people will benefit from a raft of existing experience through events, mentoring and skill sharing opportunities, as well as an

early green careers network.'

Helen Robinson, the New Forest National Park Authority's Lead Education and Youth Officer, said: 'The funding will enable us to increase the scale and reach of our existing green opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to connect to nature and take action to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. Importantly, it will empower young people, giving them new skills to take forward to help understand and protect these amazing spaces across the south.'

Melissa Eaglesfield, Deputy Director, UK Portfolio from The National Lottery Community Fund, said: 'I am delighted that the New Forest National Park Authority is using our funding to put young people at the forefront of meaningful climate action. We are proud to help young people thrive and help communities be environmentally sustainable.'

■ See [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/YouCAN](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/YouCAN)



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Walking  
and Cycling  
Festival



4

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together for  
nature



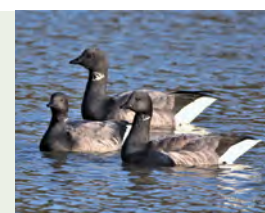
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Above, Wood End House and below, Unit 1 Forest Corner Farm, winners in previous years

Pictures: Sheerin Bettle Architecture/LST Projects Ltd

## Brilliant building design

Nominations are now open for the New Forest National Park Building Design Awards 2024, which will be awarded in the spring. Nominations are invited for schemes completed over the last three years that enhance or protect the built environment of the National Park.

The awards recognise high quality design and the best new developments in the National Park, with residential schemes, non-residential schemes, conservation projects and green buildings all eligible to be recognised.

Nominate at [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/buildingawards](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/buildingawards)



## Keep to the Forest code

People of all nationalities can find it easier to help care for the New Forest National Park thanks to the simple New Forest code which is now available in 10 languages, as well as English.

The languages the code has been translated into are Arabic, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Pashto, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Ukrainian and Urdu.

The code was designed so that you can help protect the Forest animals and wildlife by doing the following:

- Keep your distance from the animals – don't feed or touch them
- Take home litter and dog waste
- No fires, stoves or barbecues
- Keep dogs under control. Don't let dogs approach or chase any animals
- Park only in car parks
- No wild camping
- Stick to the permitted cycle tracks
- Drive with care – animals on the road!
- Help wildlife by keeping to the main tracks



### Follow the New Forest code

The New Forest is a unique place with rare wildlife and free-roaming livestock. Thank you for helping us care for this special place by following the simple New Forest code:



\*Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty of £100 or being taken to court and a fine of up to £1,000.



The New Forest code is available in 10 languages as well as English, ensuring all can find it easier to care for the New Forest National Park



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**Did you know that feeding a natural and healthy diet to your pet could not only help prolong your pet's life but also offer them a better quality of life?**

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# Protecting our National Park

The open landscape of the New Forest where ponies, cattle, donkeys, sheep and pigs roam free is one of the distinctive features of the New Forest National Park.

The animals are owned by people called commoners, and it's the animals' free grazing activity across the Forest that helps shape the area we know and love today.

We're working with other Forest organisations to help protect the local stock and the landscapes they graze.

### New rules around petting ponies and fires/BBQs

Two new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) have been introduced by New Forest District Council supported by Forestry England, the New Forest National Park Authority and the Verderers of the New Forest.

The PSPOs were introduced following repeated fire damage to the Forest caused by campfires and BBQs, and the growing risk of wildfires due to increasingly hotter and drier conditions.

One PSPO bans the lighting of fires of any type including BBQs and any outdoor cooking facilities or equipment. It also makes it an offence to place, throw or drop items likely to cause a fire such as lit cigarettes.

Concern over the safety of the public and Forest animals, following injuries to people and animal deaths resulting from being fed human food, created the need to better manage public interactions with these animals, and the related PSPO bans feeding



Animal safety car stickers are available from petrol stations and community outlets throughout the New Forest; more than 29,000 reflective collars have been fitted to ponies, donkeys and cattle



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and petting ponies or donkeys on the Forest.

Forest staff are engaging with the public to explain more about the rules. Signs and information are in place across the area. The new orders where necessary can be enforced by issuing fixed penalty notices of £100, which can rise to £1,000 following a successful prosecution.

### Know who to call to protect New Forest animals

The famous New Forest ponies have little or no road sense and are likely to step out in front of vehicles at any time on the unfenced roads of the National Park.

Sadly, last year saw 41 animals killed and a further 19 injured and although this was the lowest number of accidents on

record, every death is a great loss to its owner and the Forest.

Now Forest organisations are encouraging people to carry a card with essential phone numbers to call in the event of an accident and asking people to help raise awareness by displaying a new animal safety car window sticker made from eco-friendly materials.

Hilary Makin, New Forest National Park Authority Communications Manager, said the NPA has invested £8,000 in the three-year campaign with the Love the Forest charity contributing a further £2,000.

She said: 'We are urging people to be especially careful when driving through the New Forest as the nights start to get darker this autumn.'

'Even minor accidents can be deadly for the animals, as well as causing injuries to people and vehicle damage.'

'We'd like as many people as possible to carry one of the credit-card sized hotline cards so everyone knows who to call if you see or are involved in an animal accident.'

'Alternatively, you can take a photo of the numbers to keep on your phone, or add them to your contacts.'

William Ziegler, Chair of

the Love the Forest charity campaign, said: 'The ponies and cattle do a vital job of helping to maintain the Forest's rare mix of habitats through their grazing. Although the number of accidents is thankfully decreasing we are urging people not to be complacent when they drive across the Forest and to ensure that if

they see or are involved in an accident, they make sure they let the authorities know.' Animal accidents cards and car window stickers are available at many petrol stations and community outlets throughout the New Forest as well as from the New Forest National Park Authority office at Lymington Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington SO41 9ZG.

**Reflective collars**  
More than 29,000 reflective collars have been fitted to ponies, donkeys and cattle, making them easier to see at night, as well as reflective ear tags for cattle. This is thanks to the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship scheme, with funding now confirmed for another five years.

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Sick, injured or distressed pony, cow, donkey, pig or sheep (not deer)

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Sick, injured or distressed pony, cow, donkey, pig, sheep or deer

**IT'S THE LAW:**  
Report all accidents involving a pony, cow, donkey, dog, pig or sheep to the Police as soon as possible, and within 24hrs.

**REMEMBER:**

- Forest animals have no road sense and have right of way!
- Drive slowly, especially at night, and give animals a wide berth.
- Don't feed the animals.

Cards with emergency numbers to call in the event of an animal accident are available at community outlets - or keep a photo of them on your phone



# Walking and Cycling Festival for all

The ever-popular New Forest Walking and Cycling Festival is returning this autumn – and everyone's invited.

Last year, more than 700 people took part in over 90 events as part of a very successful 10-year anniversary. The Festival, which includes events on evenings and weekends, runs for two weeks from 14-29 October, with plenty of expert-guided walks for all interests and abilities, such as wildlife, heritage, arts, and culture.

The Festival aims to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park, with many walks available on accessible tracks. This means that strong and confident wheelchair users and helpers, and off-road mobility scooters may find these routes within their capabilities.

It is also a brilliant opportunity to explore the Forest responsibly on two wheels.



An NPA guided walk in the New Forest

All rides follow designated cycle trails across the National Park and are led by qualified guides. Our guided cycle ride providers are extremely friendly and have designed

all their cycle tours during the Festival to be extra beginner friendly. That means short distances, electric bikes and plenty of stops. If you need help getting into the saddle,

inclusive cycling charity PEDALL will be encouraging people on board its extensive range of specialist cycles, developed for people with additional needs. The charity



New Forest Volunteer Fair 2023

Save the date! The area's largest volunteering event, the New Forest Volunteer Fair, is back on Sunday 28 January 2024 at Brokenhurst Village Hall. More than 40 local groups will be offering hundreds of roles to suit all ages and abilities. Entry is FREE.

■ Visit [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/volunteerfair](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/volunteerfair)



is also offering confidence rides on two-wheeled bikes, including e-bikes.

When out in the Forest, please remember to follow the New Forest code.

■ We'll keep you updated on the different events throughout the festival – visit [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/walkingfestival](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/walkingfestival) to browse and book.

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# How we can work together to Re:New Nature in the National Park

With Forest partners, we're calling for people to join together to drive nature recovery in the New Forest and wider area.

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.

The Re:New Nature Challenge looks at the opportunities and resources needed to put nature front and centre in the New Forest National Park, which is a globally-important site for nature and should be thought of as an ark for wildlife.

In the New Forest, 56% of the National Park is a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protected in Area or Ramsar Site and a further 5% is classified as non-statutory sites important for nature conservation – the highest proportion of protected land in any local authority area in the country.

The Re:New Nature part of the New Forest's Partnership Plan focuses on nature recovery in the face of the climate emergency and recreational and environmental pressures and highlights the urgent need for action to ensure the National Park's habitats are more resilient, better managed for wildlife, bigger and more joined up.

Habitats need to be restored to enable wildlife to move through the landscape if it is to adapt to changing conditions, including going beyond the National Park boundary to the wider countryside.

## Who's involved?

The New Forest National Park Authority has been working with key nature conservation organisations: RSPB, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Natural England and Friends of



Primary school children visit Bolderwood; the Re:New Challenge document; a family tree planting at New Park, Brockenhurst



**Alison Barnes, CEO of the New Forest National Park Authority**

'There's a huge amount of great work already being done to Re:New Nature in the New Forest, including improving wetlands and freshwater habitats, restoring heathlands and delivering grants and advice to farmers and landowners. 'The idea of the Re:New Nature Challenge is to ask people to redouble their efforts to work together to achieve this in a more collaborative and co-ordinated way, aligning resources, harnessing each other's work and, crucially, to attract funding into both the public and private sector to secure the New Forest for future generations.'

the New Forest, as part of an informal 'Wildlife Roundtable' with an independent chair, Mike Clarke, former Chief Executive (now Vice President) of the RSPB and Life Member of Friends of the New Forest. Forest organisations are now calling for wider partnership working, inviting landowners, land managers, communities and investors to develop projects and ideas, and secure resources together.

## What's next?

The group has identified actions needed to encourage a programme of nature recovery in the New Forest and beyond. The Re:New Nature Challenge document - which can be viewed at [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/renewnature](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/renewnature) - sets out a spatial approach, viewing the New Forest as five connected areas, each with its own landscape character. A Re:New Nature Partnership



**Mike Clarke, independent chair of the Wildlife Roundtable**

'The New Forest is one of the most rich and important places for nature in the UK, and we take it for granted. The 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. It has around 20,000 animal and plant species – around a third of all those in the UK – in just 300 square kilometres. 'The natural landscape has survived since the last Ice Age, thanks to the commoning system and the enduring partnership between humans and animals. It can still survive but we have to work together to make an impact collectively.'



**Andrew Parry Norton, chair of the Commons Defence Association**

'We all share a love of the New Forest. We want the Forest to thrive, we want nature to thrive, and we want commoning to thrive. Once we've got that right, then everything around us will fall into place.'



is being established, taking forward and broadening the shared commitments in the Re:New Forest Partnership.

■ Find out more at [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/renewnature](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/renewnature)

**An Adonis blue butterfly**  
Picture: Mark Heighes

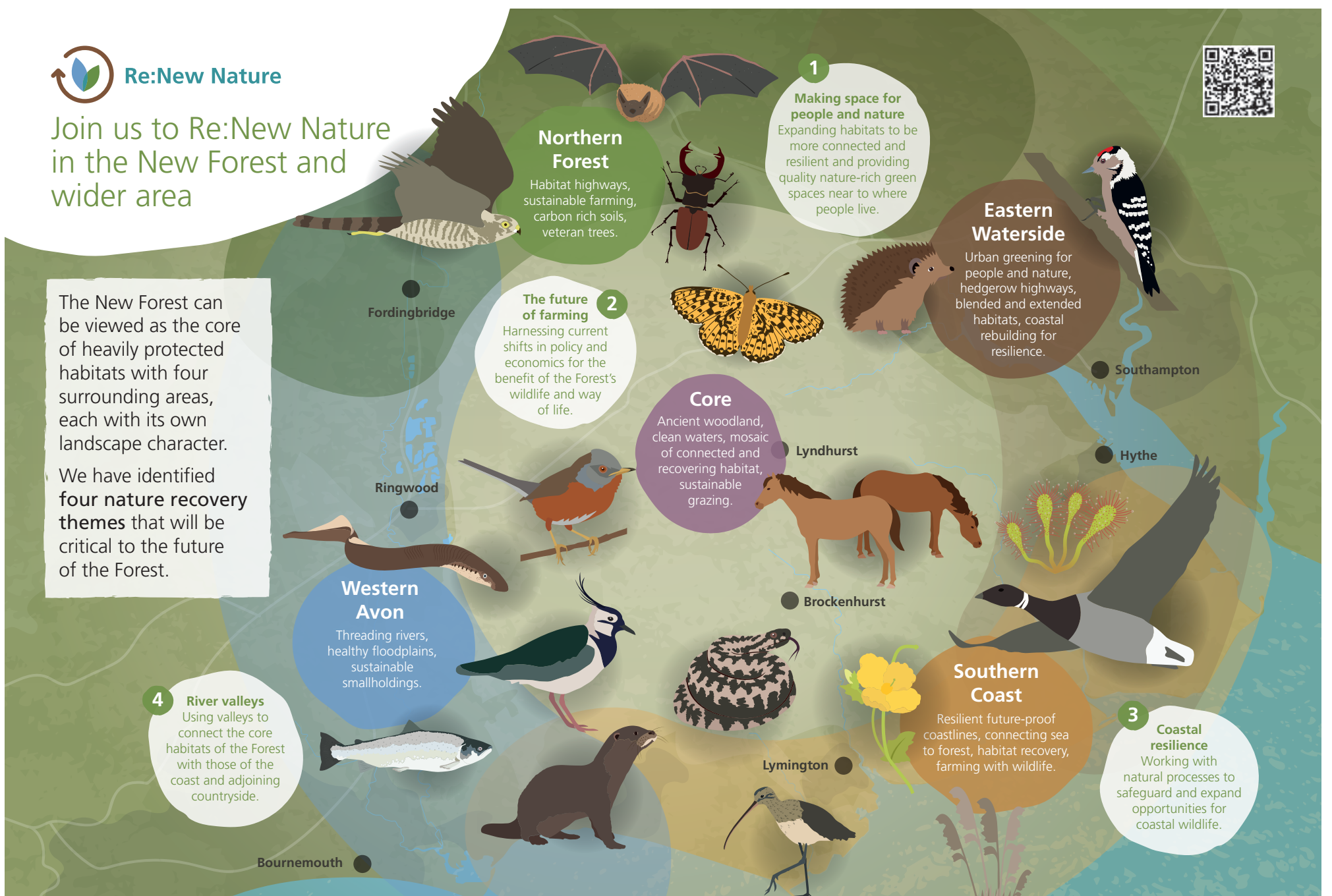




## Join us to Re:New Nature in the New Forest and wider area

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.



## The grant scheme improving habitats for nature

The second year of our Farming in Protected Landscapes grant programme has supported 22 projects, seen six projects completed and 820 hectares of habitats (equivalent to 1,148 football pitches) improved for nature.

The Defra grant programme, now in its third year, supports farmers, commoners and land managers and is delivered locally by the NPA. The scheme, which runs until March 2025, funds projects that reflect at least one of four themes: nature, climate, people and place. One of the projects is at Brooklands Farm in South Gorley where thousands of hedging plants have been introduced, as well as new orchards. Capturing rain from a barn with new water harvesting equipment will allow these to be watered in future drought years and reduce run-off in winter. Farmer Crispin Samson also



**Simeon Morgan Farming in Keyhaven has introduced 'strip-till' planting; Crispin Sampson of Brooklands Farm in South Gorley, which is involved in the programme**

wanted to increase and improve the amount of land available for nature.

Through Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) he has been able to create a strip of vegetation, called a 'riparian buffer' to stop the river bank eroding, reduce sediment pollution and contamination of the watercourse.

The funding has also enabled wildlife boxes to be installed for pine martens and other native species including owls, kestrels and bats.

Nearby in Godshill, Claudia Weis and Eden Cormack have run St. Giles Farm since 2017. The 30-acre mixed farm, in its own sloping valley, has areas of species-rich pasture. Claudia and Eden are committed to increasing biodiversity on the site as well as practising



biodynamic agriculture, a form of organic farming which treats the land as a self-contained organism and maintains a natural capacity. Together they have been enhancing the landscape by planting hedgerows and trees and building pasture fences, all thanks to a FiPL grant.

Their rare breed Shetland cattle are very suited to grazing low-input grassland without the need for animal feed. The soil fertility on the land depends on the compost St. Giles Farm produces, including from animal manures. Compost covers have been funded that keep compost heaps dry in wet winters and prevent nitrates leaching into the ground. Fencing and gates that were also funded allow rotation

of the livestock onto fresh pasture to avoid a build-up of internal parasites and therefore the need to use chemical wormers. The cow manure attracts huge numbers of insects, and the farm has reported a significant increase in bird life as a result.

In the south of the New Forest, £40,000 of funding has helped Simeon Morgan Farming (SMF) in Keyhaven implement 'strip-till' planting. SMF has been tilling land in the New Forest for well over 20 years and currently grows around 800 acres of maize. The 'strip-till' conservation farming technique requires special machinery that prepares just the seeding line ready for planting crops in rows. Research shows this approach helps improve soil condition and enables better crop yields while delivering up to a 40% reduction in diesel used, reduced application of fertilisers and agrochemicals and improved soil carbon.

The NPA's Head of Environment and Rural Economy Paul Walton said: 'The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is open to all farmers, commoners and land managers and helps deliver a range of significant benefits.'

Find out how to apply on the New Forest National Park Authority website or email [fipl@newforestnpa.gov.uk](mailto:fipl@newforestnpa.gov.uk).



**The funding has allowed wildlife boxes for pine martens and other native species**  
Picture: Martin Noble



# Supporting arts in the New Forest

## Meet the next New Forest National Park Artists in Residence

Sway-based charity SPUD and the New Forest National Park Authority are welcoming the next exciting artist residencies, helping people to discover and learn about the Forest through art.

The first new artist, Alex Julyan, will undertake her residency at SpudWORKS throughout October. Alex grew up in London and studied painting at the Chelsea School of Art. She takes a fluid approach to her method using whichever medium suits the project at the time.

She said: 'I'm particularly interested in the interaction of humans with nature - whether that's through visiting the Forest or working in it.'

In a first for a New Forest National Park Artist in Residence, Alex will also be mentoring another artist

during her residency, Ben Adamson.

Ben is a multimedia and sound artist based in Leeds. He focuses on the composition of soundscapes using the musical capabilities of unconventional and non-musical objects.

The New Forest National Park Artist in Residence Programme is an opportunity for artists of any discipline to work with and comment on a chosen area, idea, or community within or engaging with the National Park. It's supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

Previous artist in residence Melanie Rose will be exhibiting at SPUD between 4 and 30 October with her showcase, 'Shadowing'.

Melanie's exhibition follows on from previous works 'Common Ground' by Beccy McCray and 'We Belong Here' by Marie Smith.

A future artist to the programme will be Jasper



**New artist in residence Alex Julyan working in her studio; Paul Gonella of Strong Island Media provides professional advice to the Photo Walkshops**

Rouven, who will take up his residency in May 2024 and exhibit the following October.

## Culture in Common

Culture in Common is an arts and cultural programme for the New Forest, created with the people that live in the district and made possible thanks to public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England. In the summer it held an arts and environment workshop which

brought local artists together with local 'Green Groups' to explore creative ideas that would respond to the National Park nature and landscape. Exercises led by creativity consultant Piers Ibbotson saw numerous initiatives discussed – from creating wildlife-friendly gardens according to permaculture design, to a digital project exploring the Forest past, present and future, an apple festival or a New Forest song.



Culture in Common will be able to provide funding for one or more of these projects, linking closely with National Park Authority festivals and initiatives.

## Photo Walkshops

Culture in Common is bringing inspiring 'Photo Walkshops' to this year's New Forest Walking and Cycling Festival. Participants will learn different photography skills and techniques out and

about in the New Forest, with support from experienced professional photographer Paul Gonella of Strong Island Media.

Paul has been involved in numerous artistic projects, working with young and vulnerable older individuals across Hampshire.

With a decade of experience, he delivers captivating photography workshops to thousands of people, spanning all ages and skill levels. The National Park Authority's Adam Vasey will help lead the walks, providing knowledge about the Forest landscape, heritage and wildlife that you'll be photographing.

Walks will take place from Beaulieu (Monday 16 October) and Calshot (Monday 23 October), with both finishing in a cozy café.

■ Visit [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/walkingfestival](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/walkingfestival) or [cultureincommon.co.uk](http://cultureincommon.co.uk) for more details.



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## Great-tasting cheese, pork and honey enjoy sweet success

New Forest Marque members have won 10 accolades at the world's most coveted food and drink awards.

Lyburn Cheese in Landford, Hockey's Farm Shop in Fordingbridge and The Noble Bee from Hythe all picked up the prestigious three-star Great Taste Awards from the Guild of Fine Food.

Out of over 14,000 global entries put through rigorous blind-tasting tests, only 248 products (less than 2%) were bestowed with the coveted three-star award, including Lyburn's Stoney Cross cheese, Hockey's Rare Breed British Lop spare rib of pork and The Noble Bee's New Forest wildflower honey.

The judges were impressed with the creamy and buttery texture of the Stoney Cross cheese, as well as its sweet



Simon Noble and apprentice Chloe from The Noble Bee; Lyburn Stoney Cross; Graham Sim and Thomas Newman (butchers) and Jonathan Burrell (owner) of Hockey's Farm



flavours and distinctly earthy finish.

They praised Hockey's for its 'deliciously moist, flavourful piece of pork', saying it was 'the best pork these judges have ever tasted'.

The Guild also described Noble Bee's New Forest wildflower honey as 'exquisite' and with a 'unique and delightful flavour'.

Other Marque producers scooping awards were New Forest Shortbread in Burley which claimed two stars for its rosemary shortbread and one star for its Earl Grey New Forest shortbread.

A one-star award was also picked up by Naked Jam in Hordle for its raspberry jam, with Hockey's claiming a one-star award for both its British

Lop rare breed Olde English pannage pork sausages and Rare breed British Lop loin of pork.

Lyburn claimed a further two one-star awards for its Lightly Oak Smoked and Old Winchester cheeses.

New Forest Marque Chair Dan Parsons said: 'Many congratulations to all the winners.'

'This is unequivocal evidence of the quality of local produce sourced from within the New Forest.'

Established in 1994, the Great Taste awards are recognised as one of the world's largest, longest standing and most respected food accreditation schemes for artisan and speciality food producers.

## Fantastic produce direct to your door

If you love trying local produce, sign up now to receive a Taste of the New Forest produce box delivered direct to your home each season. These unique boxes feature hand-picked seasonal products from New Forest Marque members and are delivered four times a year. Each box contains a selection of around eight to 10 products which have been grown, reared, caught, brewed, produced or processed within the New Forest. A one-off costs £45 or an annual subscription, including a box each quarter, costs £140. In addition to the local produce boxes, the Marque also sells gift boxes of local honey. Currently, deliveries can only be made within the New Forest.

■ Sign up at [newforestmarque.co.uk/shop](http://newforestmarque.co.uk/shop).

## The sign of true, local produce

The New Forest Marque is awarded to produce which has been grown, reared, caught, brewed, produced or processed within the New Forest. It's also for arts and craft inspired by the New Forest and made within its boundaries. The New Forest Marque welcomes its newest members, taking the total to 164:

**All Gone to Pot:** Local potter creating ceramic tableware glazed in natural colours.

**Bimble Box:** Bespoke furniture maker sourcing timber from local mills.

**Brick Kiln Pottery:** Makes a range of pottery items, many created from clay dug on the artist's land.

**Brock Ice:** Serving delicious ice cream with a selection of locally-made toppings and sauces.

**Buds and Blooms:** Horticultural services, sourcing plants for clients from local nurseries, several of which are Marque members.

### Deborah Macleod Art & Gifts:

Beautiful and unique giftware inspired by a love of the New Forest.

**Kate Smith Prints:** Limited edition lino print artworks, celebrating the biodiversity and textures of the Forest.

**Love Coastal:** Paintings & greeting cards inspired by the New Forest, plus handcrafted coastal pictures created from local beachcombing treasures.

**Lymore Huts:** Architects and makers of the most exclusive luxury shepherd's huts using traditional materials.

**Lymore New Forest:** A private luxury house escape, as well as a stunning

hut offering couples a self-catering retreat nestled in coastal woodland.

**Maggie Macro:** Inspired by local flora and fauna, Maggie turns her photographs into handmade cards, pastel paintings, wall art and jewellery.

**Marchwood Candles Ltd:** Individually hand-poured, using 100% locally-sourced beeswax, or 100% coconut wax for vegan candles.

**Michelle Dowle Glass:** Michelle creates glass-based art inspired by natural surroundings.

**New Forest Sawmill:** Providing timber predominantly sourced from

within the Forest, as well as timber products and mobile milling service.

**Scott Bailey:** New Associate Member. Hugely successful Lymington law firm offering the full range of legal support and advice.

**Southern Co-op:** New Associate Member. 150-year-old independent society which operates a large number of convenience stores across the New Forest and the South.

**Steve Poole Photographer:** New Forest-based photographer, offering bespoke services for local businesses, private portraits, and photography workshops.

**Sue Page:** Creating semi-precious gemstone jewellery.

**Sway Butchers:** Award-winning family business established in 1976. Specialising in local pannage pork, venison, beef, lamb and poultry.

### Where to buy local and support the New Forest

Discover the variety of local produce the New Forest has to offer with the New Forest Marque's latest guide. The Local Produce Guide 2023/24 includes a map showing you places you can enjoy New Forest food, drink and crafts. Businesses featured range from food and drink producers to arts and crafts creators, as well as retail and hospitality places. Look out for a copy in stores, community outlets and garden centres or you can download one at [newforestmarque.co.uk](http://newforestmarque.co.uk)



## Diary dates

■ The New Forest Marque Roadshow, the popular produce market, will be returning to Everton Nurseries on Saturday 28 October 10am-4pm, with 15 Marque members selling food, drink, arts and craft. Entry is free.

■ Browse, try and buy New Forest produce at Eats 'n' Treats on Sunday 19 November, 11am-4pm. The Christmas-themed event at Brockenhurst College will include a food and craft market, demonstrations, a food court and bar, plus live music. Organised in association with The New Forest Marque and Go New Forest, entry is £2 for adults, children free.





## Fabulous fungi

An autumnal New Forest offers a landscape of weird and wonderful fungi. With almost 2,700 species contributing to the biodiversity and ecosystem of the National Park, it is one of the most important sites for safeguarding Britain's fungi kingdom. While it's a great time to explore the Forest to observe fungi, always remember to look but don't touch and leave them for wildlife and others to enjoy.

# The New Forest is a lifeline for



Hurst Spit 'is a wonderful place to see a great variety of winter wading birds, ducks and geese'



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The Cave is a unique business in Milford on Sea that serves as an off-license specialising in premier quality wines, spirits and beers as well as a wine and tapas bar. Since 2013, The Cave has served thousands of locals and visitors alike and has proved to be a popular destination venue for the discerning traveller.

Within The Cave is Sam's Bar, a great place to relax, either with a drink, to eat Tapas or to meet with friends/family. The welcome is always warm, and the choice of food and drinks is second to none.

The Cave, 2 Church Hill, Milford on Sea, SO41 0QH | [www.thecavemos.co.uk](http://www.thecavemos.co.uk) | Tel: 01590 642195



# a multitude of our winter wildlife



An oystercatcher



Dark bellied brent geese

## By Bird Aware Solent

Throughout the autumn and winter, the New Forest coastline hosts an extraordinary array of migratory wading birds, ducks and geese. Some will have travelled all the way from Siberia – that's a flight of around 3,000 miles.

You may be wondering why the birds fly such a long way to get here, and what does the New Forest's coastline have to offer them? The answer is simple: food! The New Forest is home to lots of marvellous mudflats, and when the mud is exposed at low tides coastal birds can access the wealth of food that hides beneath the surface (small marine animals like insects, worms, and shellfish). However, when the tide comes in the buffet is closed, and it's vital that birds can rest undisturbed during this time. Bird Aware Solent ranger Julie Sims will be out on the coast from October through to

March, telling local people all about our migratory birds and what we can do to protect them. Here, she shares three of her favourite places to visit, and explains how everyone can enjoy them while keeping wildlife safe.

### Hurst Spit

'Hurst Spit, near Lymington, is a wonderful place to see a great variety of winter wading birds, ducks, and geese. The bird hide overlooking Sturt Pond offers an excellent view, and you may see curlews, large flocks of godwits, shelducks and dunlins. The hide is run by Milford Conservation Volunteers, and they keep it well stocked with helpful resources.

'At this time of year, the birds are exhausted and hungry after their lengthy migrations, so it's important that they get enough time to feed and rest undisturbed. Lower tides are their only opportunity to feed, and if the birds are forced to

fly away, or stop behaving naturally due to feeling threatened, this can have a big impact. We can all help them survive the winter by keeping an eye out for birds and giving them plenty of space.'

If you engage in watersports at Hurst Spit, check out our guides for wildlife aware wind and paddle sports. You can find them on our website: [birdaware.org/solent](http://birdaware.org/solent)

### Lymington Keyhaven Nature Reserve

'The expansive Lymington Keyhaven nature reserve is, in my opinion, the best place to see coastal birds in the New Forest and beyond. You have a good chance of spotting anything from avocets to spoonbills, and every species of wader, duck, or goose that you might expect in this part of the world.

'This nature reserve has lots of raised walkways which offer fantastic views and



Bird Aware Solent Ranger Julie Sims

great wildlife watching opportunities.

'To ensure that the birds can continue to use this special reserve as a safe place to rest and feed, visitors and their dogs can stick to the path, leave spits and groynes for the birds, and always look for birds before heading down onto the shingle beach.

'Waders such as turnstone and grey plovers often feed and rest on the shingle and can

be almost invisible when they stand still.

'The islands in Normandy Lagoon are protected with an electric fence and a ditch, creating a safe, secure space for birds to rest during the winter months. The path that runs around the outside of the fence is my favourite place to take my binoculars or telescope and see how many species I can spot.'

### Lepe Country Park

'Curlews, dark-bellied brent geese, and oystercatchers are often visible from the Lookout café.

'So, grab a drink and spend a lazy hour watching an oystercatcher trying to break open a mussel, a curlew eating a crab, or just watch boats of all shapes and sizes navigate past.

'I once saw a great black-backed gull eat a whole starfish the size of my hand!

'At high tide, dunlins, grey plovers, knots, redshanks and

turnstones use the shingle beach and the blackwater marsh area as safe places to rest, while the waterline is the birds' favourite place to feed. Walking at the top of the beach is an easy way to help them refuel undisturbed, but if you are keen to spend some time at the water's edge, a 'there and back' trip is a good option as most of your walk will still take place at the top of the beach.

'Coast and Country Canines have mapped out a walking trail around Lepe Country Park that's perfect for dog walkers – it takes in stunning views and includes a great place to stop and play. You can find it at [coastandcountrycanines.org](http://coastandcountrycanines.org).

■ Ranger Julie leads guided bird walks at Lepe Country Park on the first Saturday of each month between October and March. It's a drop-in event, so feel free to join! You can find more details online at [birdaware.org/solent](http://birdaware.org/solent).



Left to right, dunlin; black-tailed godwit; curlew  
Pictures: Charlotte Goswell



# Working towards ‘net zero with nature’

**Building greener communities**

Climate change is the greatest long-term challenge for the National Park.

The impact of climate change on the New Forest is likely to be wide-reaching, with warmer, wetter winters, hotter, drier summers, rising sea levels and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events, the effects of which are already being seen. This will have significant detrimental effects for our wildlife, local livelihoods and human health.

We’ve made a commitment to work with partners and communities to make the National Park ‘net zero with nature’ by 2050, as well as working to become a net zero organisation by 2030.

Research we’ve commissioned shows what’s causing harmful greenhouse gas emissions in the National Park, how the National Park can reach net zero and the role New Forest



These youngsters are looking forward to seeing what moves into their bug and insect hotels

## Take the pledge

We can all help to protect the Forest and our planet. Taking a few steps no matter how small can all add up to making a positive impact on our fragile New Forest environment. Join the 1,200 people who have already pledged to make a difference: [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/pledge)

habitats can play in nature-based climate solutions.

All the research is freely available on our website [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk).

New Forest communities working together is crucial in

tackling climate and nature recovery.

The National Park Authority regularly convenes a ‘Green Groups’ network – sharing information and expertise, working together on events

such as the New Forest and Hampshire County Show, climate cafes, eco fairs, repair cafes, workshops and film screenings.

The network joins up on projects, gives talks, helps to

promote local community green activities and finds funding, such as through our Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF).

The SCF has given around £2.4m to over 300 projects since 2006 which have helped to reduce the carbon footprint of the New Forest National Park and improve nature.

Want to get involved? Contact your parish council about local green initiatives, or see the list of Green Groups in and around the National Park at [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/greengroups](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/greengroups)

**Sustainable transport**

We encourage more sustainable forms of transport and behaviour such as improvements to more than 80km of cycling and walking infrastructure, supporting cycle hire businesses, running the New Forest Tour (an open-top bus service encouraging people to leave their cars at home), establishing the

## Awakening Festival 2024

The New Forest Awakening Festival – led by the New Forest National Park Authority with a range of partners – is back in 2024! Everyone is welcome to join the festival which is running throughout March.

Through a series of online and in-person events, talks and workshops, people can discover why the New Forest is so special, its role in the climate and nature emergencies, what people are already doing to protect it, and how everyone can help.

■ Keep up to date at [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/awakening](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/awakening)

PEDALL inclusive cycling charity and creating the New Forest Walking and Cycling Festival (see page 4).



### Join us for Morning Coffee Lunch, Afternoon Tea & Dinner

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