

Consultative Panel On behalf of Forestry England

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5 December 2024



The HLS Scheme funds the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of works includes removal of mature conifer, clearance of felled conifer and removal of natural regeneration, on areas of wet and dry heathland open to grazing livestock.

There's a rolling programme of work:

- Removal of non-native conifer and western hemlock completed at Woosons Hill (13ha) and Markway Lawn (9ha), and birch and pine seedling regeneration removed at Longdown (29 ha).
- Further work will target pine and birch regeneration at Markway, Dur Hill, Ipley and Knightwood. Pine/conifer regeneration will be removed from Highland Water.



Riverfly Partnership

Over the last nine years, the HLS scheme has supported the citizen science Riverfly Partnership Project.

Volunteers are trained to identify and survey specific groups of freshwater invertebrates, whose diversity and numbers can tell us about the overall health and characteristics of forest streams.

This year, our citizen science volunteers have surveyed two sites (Pondhead and Millersford) from April to October. The volunteers have finished their sampling for the year and the data is being analysed and reviewed.



Cycling has been a much-debated topic over the years and views are often polarised.

Two years ago, we began working with representatives of the Verderers, local community environmental groups, and the cycling community to try and find a way forward.

Our key objective is to improve the management of cycling. It's clear that the current network simply isn't working. People get lost and are making their own connections into and out of the forest.

Our proposal offers a long-term, sustainable way to manage more responsible and enjoyable cycling.



All year round our Ranger team reminds people about not feeding and petting ponies.

Reminding them that it's a fineable offence to feed or leave food out for New Forest ponies and donkeys.

This included pumpkins, which are not natural to the forest and can make ponies, and the wildlife, such as hedgehogs, very poorly.



November and December are the deadliest months for animal accidents, and our rangers have been reminding motorists to expect the unexpected when driving in changeable conditions.

The vast majority of the hundreds of drivers caught speeding this year were on their daily commute and only 5% were visiting the area.

Two-thirds of all drivers stopped as part of Operation Mountie lived within the boundaries of New Forest District Council.

This joint effort - Operation Mountie recently marked its 3rd anniversary!



We continue to work with local partners NFDC, the police, VOSPA and the NPA, carrying out random spot check on vehicles carrying waste.

Recently we extended these checks to include private estates (Beaulieu and Longdown) that are also suffering with similar issues.

Our joint campaign highlights how we're proactivity tackling offenders in the New Forest.



We have seen significant increases in the cost of maintaining our car parks - with rises in the cost of materials and changes in weather patterns causing greater damage.

With less than 10% of our core funding now coming from government this puts further pressure on our ability to maintain such a large network (130 car parks).

This may result in additional car park closures this winter as we work through the list of required repairs.



Forestry England's staff have been carrying out tree safety check surveys.

Every year they inspect the condition of hundreds of miles of Forest roads and our car parks - looking for signs of decay, rot and damage and checking the trees' stability.



Our team have recently completed resurfacing the walking trail at Blackwater near Brockenhurst. This was funded through a DEFRA accessibility grant secured for this site.

The path has been completely resurfaced, repaired and levelled making it accessible for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility vehicles.

Our trails and paths through the New Forest are used by millions of people every year to connect with nature. Looking after them across the forest is a big job and we are increasingly relying on other funding options we can access.

