

20 years

2005
2025



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

Chief Executive's report

January 2025



Business Plan themes

Incorporating the five themes of the National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27, plus improvement goals and targets for our Authority under Re:New Organisation – Achieving Excellence.



Re:New Climate



Re:New Nature



Re:New People



Re:New Place



Re:New Partnership

Re:New Organisation – Achieving Excellence

75th Anniversary of UK National Parks

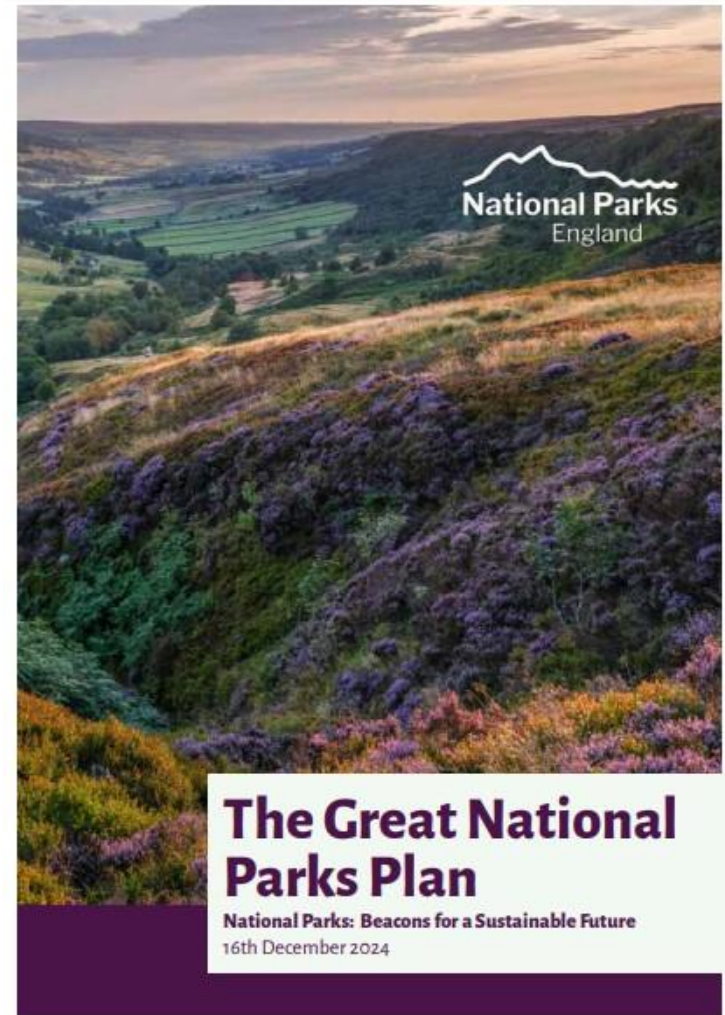
Marked the 75th Anniversary of National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Great National Parks Plan with National Parks England. Sets out national parks' role:

- tackling the climate crisis
- at the heart of nature recovery
- creating national parks for all
- driving economic growth.

Through increased:

- resources
- powers
- partnerships.



75th Anniversary of UK National Parks

Government announcement:
strengthened purposes for nature
recovery; power of competence;
governance reform.

Highlighted funding shortfall,
challenge and opportunity deliver
for climate, nature, people and
places through media with NPE
(including BBC Countryfile, Farming
Today, World at One).

75th Anniversary of the National Parks Act: New legislation to ensure Protected Landscapes are fit for the future

[Amber Inman](#), 16 December 2024 - [30by30](#), [Access and engagement](#), [Nature](#), [Protected Landscapes](#), [Wildlife](#)



Dartmoor National Park. Credit Paul Glendell, Natural England.

Today is the 75th anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act.

Duty to further guidance

- Strengthened legal duty became law on statutory bodies and statutory undertakers such as water companies to **'seek to further'** national park purposes in performing their functions if they affect national parks.
- Previously they only had to **'have regard for'** our purposes.
- Covers over 600 bodies.



20th Anniversary of the New Forest National Park



We kick off marking the 20th anniversary with:

- a celebration of the Hampshire Hedge reaching its half-way milestone
- the Volunteer Fair
- a staff tree planting opportunity to help create a mini Forest at New Park, Brockenhurst.



Protect – First Purpose

To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area



Housing figures

- Revised National Planning Policy Framework - includes new housing need figures.
- New Forest District:

1,501 dwellings/year = six times the recent average of 246 dwellings/year.

However: 80% of the district is protected green space including the National Park designation...

- Working together with other national parks on response to Government's '**Planning Reform Working Paper: Development and Nature Recovery**'.



Planning

- 130 applications received 1 October to 23 December and 133 applications determined (approval rate of 95%)
- Seven appeal decisions received (four dismissed, three allowed).
- 36 new enforcement cases, 48 concluded.

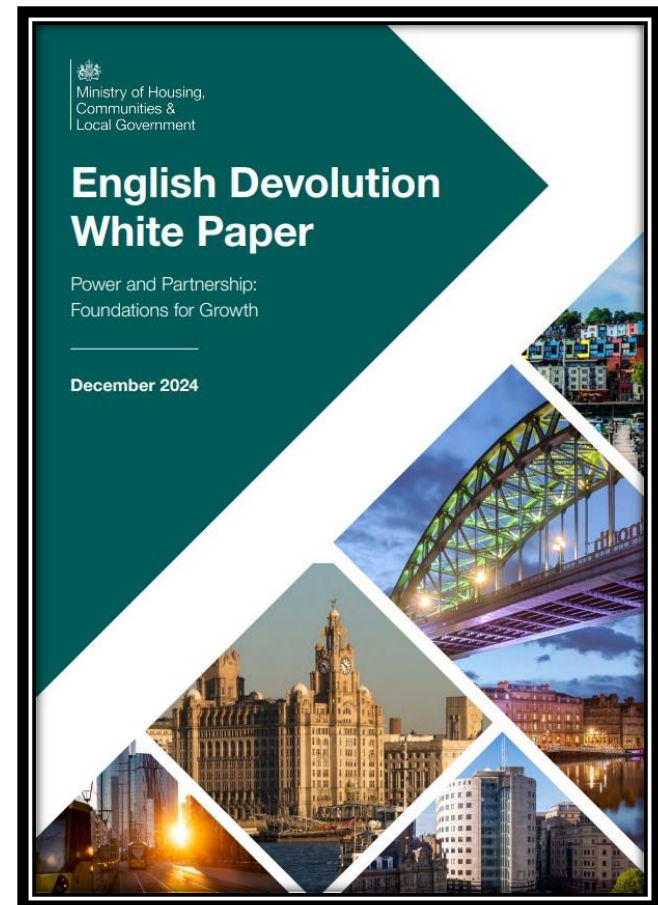


Devolution

Devolution White Paper sets out plans to change the structure of local government.

A number of aspects could affect national parks:

- More environmental powers for strategic authorities
- New powers to decide on planning applications of strategic importance
- New powers to establish a levy so new developments have associated infrastructure.



Schemes for nature through planning

- Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund
- Inter Authority Agreement (PfSH)
- Biodiversity Net Gain – training and implementation
- Kingwell environmental mitigation scheme at Keyhaven launched (right)



Future farming in the New Forest update

Farming In Protected Landscapes - extension confirmed for a further year. By March £850,000 in grants will have been given to farmers, commoners and landowners to benefit nature during the scheme started in 2021.

A study on future funding options for commoning has been commissioned by the Future Farming Group and is due to report in March/April.

Commoners Defence Association communications provided by the NPA has seen 97k impressions and 10k engagements on social media since August.



Species Survival Fund

**SPECIES
SURVIVAL
FUND**



Funded by
UK Government

Heritage
Fund

- £1.3m scheme to restore New Forest habitats and increase wildlife.
- Improving 250 hectares for nature over more than 20 sites – the equivalent of 350 football pitches.
- Six partners (Freshwater Habitats Trust; Amphibian and Reptile Conservation; Commoners Defence Association; Wildlife Trust, Wild New Forest, NFNPA).
- Updated stats from 10 sites surveyed just in:
 - 860 species recorded.
 - 370 animals, 265 plants, and 225 fungi and slime moulds.
 - 150 records of 36 priority species.
 - Nationally-rare species included Hampshire Purslane (top right), raft spider and ashen woodwax (bottom right).

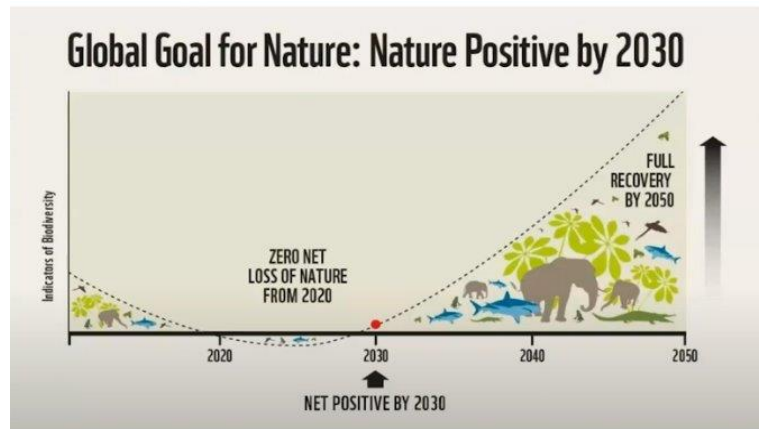


UK Chairs Forum – Nature Recovery update

National parks as ‘backbone of nature recovery’ and covenying 'Team Nature'

Ambition:

- 165,000ha for nature recovery across England's national parks
- Investment needed is £800,000,000



Enjoy – Second Purpose

To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.



Education and Youth

Generation Green II:

- £78,000 to work with the Countryside Education Trust, Beaulieu
- funded visits for over 600 eligible young people living in areas of social disadvantage
- enabling them to connect with the National Park.

Visits organised for 610 young people learning about national park management, recreation and special qualities.

Junior rangers programme (right) – 11 youngsters achieved bronze certification.

Youth volunteering in full swing.

YouCan – local and national careers fairs



Walking Festival and Rangers



Over 15 organisations organised walks over two weeks in October/November for our Walking Festival. It was well-attended with many sold out, including a walk about commoning (right).

There were walks to suit all interests and abilities, covering topics such as wildlife, photography, archaeology, and the arts.

Rangers engaged with over 2,500 people this period. They took part in partnership Operation Mountie sessions to reduce animal accidents; volunteer and education sessions; and commoning awareness walks.



New Forest Code **working in partnership**

2024
Highlights



Sharing the New Forest Code

3.8m+ 

impressions
(up from 1m in 2023)

600 

social media posts
(up from 350)

6

joint press releases

595,000

people reached via
newsletters and
publications (up from
500,000 last year)

20

tourism information
boards featuring the New
Forest Code placed in
key villages, towns
and campsites

Community support

Attended
45
community
events and
shows

New Forest
National Park
Volunteers
gave over
800
hours
to support
the Forest

Forestry England
volunteers
gave over
7,600
hours to supporting
patrols and
conservation
projects across
the Forest

Forestry England's team
helped the commoning
community manage
the annual drifts for
New Forest livestock with
75
car park and cycle
route closures

Supported
20+
community
litter picking
events



Patrols

Over
4,300

hours of ranger patrols

35 

joint patrols with the
emergency services

160+

wildlife patrols and monitoring sessions
for ground nesting birds & during the deer rut



Taking Action

Spoke directly to over

1,100 people

providing education on Public Spaces
Protection Orders (PSPO) banning
fires/BBQs and petting/feeding ponies

Intervened in over

200

incidents of
banned behaviour

A series of joint fly-tipping spot
checks on vehicles carrying waste
across the Forest resulted in

140

vehicles stopped and action
taken against **45** drivers



Animal and road safety

13

joint "Operation Mountie"
actions to improve animal
safety on Forest roads

130 

cars stopped on
Forest roads

40 

tickets issued for
speeding and other
offences

5

responsible dog walking
pop up events in New
Forest car parks

92

dog walking businesses
signed up to the
professional charter



Forestry England



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL



HAMPSHIRE
CONSTABULARY

Volunteering update

Volunteering reboot in October thanks to new resources.

- 20 sessions
- 74 volunteers
- 731 hours of volunteering time.

Focus on restoring Copythorne Common Site of Special Scientific Interest for nature.

Annual Volunteer Fair 26 January.



Arts

- Sponsored the SpudOPEN and helped with judging at SpudWORKS in Sway.
- Support the community of artists from across the New Forest to engage with topics relevant to the National Park and the wider region.
- Winner was Stephanie James, public choice awards.
- Will S Woods – best in show.
- Scarlet Pope – youth prize 'Hold on Let go' (right).



Photo credit: SpudWorks

PedAll

2024 :

- Supported 11 new organisations in 2024 (including Tottot College, Clay Hills School, Sheiling College, Headway charity, Totton Dementia Hub)
- Community outreach sessions (bike repairs and social rides) at Ashurst base.
- Set to be record year for numbers with people riding later into year: 1145 riders in 134 sessions this quarter.
- Signed off Strategic Plan at AGM; grateful for Cranfield Trust support.



Prosper – Our Duty

Working in partnership with other organisations it is also the Authority's duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park.



Green skills and careers

Green Careers Week: 'where are they now' blogs about previous apprentices and interns (right).

Funding secured for green skills and jobs study with University of Southampton.

Joined New Forest District Council group to develop local skills delivery plan to address skills gap and seize any opportunities provided by Freeport status.



Brilliance in Business Awards – New Forest Business Partnership



Winner of our sponsored category - Sustainable Business of the Year - was **New Forest Escapes**.

New Forest Escapes promotes sustainable holidays through its collection of guest accommodation. This passionate, independent team is a strong supporter of the local area, proactively encouraging guests to choose New Forest produce and suppliers, and to enjoy the New Forest responsibly.

It also won Chewton Glen Award for New Forest Business of the Year.



Health and wellbeing

NHS Health and wellbeing fellows Laura Pridmore and Jennifer Wylie (right).

Delivering test and learn projects in Lyndhurst, Lymington and Totton.

Working to understand audiences and pathways to green social prescribing.

Raising awareness among NHS psychiatry professionals.

Rangers started working with 'Memory Works' dementia group in Lyndhurst.



Excellence



Partnership Plan leaders panel

Leaders Panel visit joined by Southern Water
Behind Scenes campaign conclusion:

- 950,000 impressions and 57,000 engagements on NPA socials
- 3,000 visitors to exhibition at New Forest Show.



Business South annual conference

Addressed 200+ business leaders



Photo credits: Business South

Team New Forest

A cohort of up to 30 people have thought about their role as leaders in Team New Forest and forming a leadership community.



Landscape Connections

Supports long-term projects to boost nature recovery and connect more people to our most treasured landscapes.

Around 20 projects will be invested in over 10 years up to £10m to work with local communities, organisations, landowners and farmers to put entire landscapes and habitats into recovery.

Funding is open to those who care for or can partner with National Parks and National Landscapes.

Process:

- Submit expression of interest.
- Apply for development phase.
- If successful, delivery phase.



Photo credit: National Lottery Heritage Fund

Volunteer Fair

- Over 50 organisations attending the 11th Fair
- Sunday 26 January, 10.30am – 4pm
- Brockenhurst Village Hall
- Focus on opportunities for young people, with volunteer opportunities and talks for 18 to 30-year-olds supported by the Youth for Climate and Nature (YouCAN) scheme.

