

20 years
2005
2025



Greener, Wilder and More Accessible

Consultative Panel

4 September 2025

Nigel Stone
Head of Resources



Future direction

20 years
2005
2025



Where are we – Quotes from David Bence, our Chair:

‘Now we stand at a crossroads: with devolution, local government reorganisation, climate transition, and agricultural reform all converging at once.

‘These bring serious challenges, but also rare opportunities: to reinforce protections for the Forest, formally recognise its unique culture, support a vibrant green economy, and shape a resilient future for both nature and people.

As the National Park looks to the future, he said the challenges ahead include:

- Climate change continues to threaten our delicate ecosystems.
- The future of commoning which sustains the landscape.
- Increasing visitor numbers challenge our wildlife, habitats, and historic landscapes.
- Housing and development pressures which test the balance between conservation and community need.
- Ensuring that access to the Forest remains inclusive and sustainable for all
- Reducing resources.



NPA Position

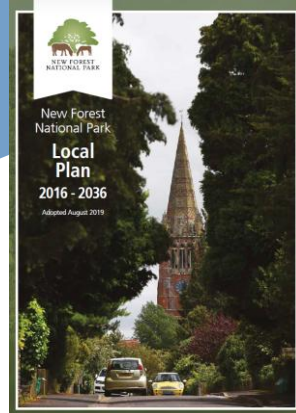
Who does what?:

Steve Avery left the Authority end of April, interim arrangements are currently in place:

- David Illsley – Interim Head of Planning & Place
DM Team structural change to have a Principal Planning Officer and two Senior Planning Officers.
- Myself – Health & Safety, Quadrants, Consultative Panel
- Paul Walton – Ranger Team, Recreation Management
- Gareth Hale - New Legal & Monitoring Officer.

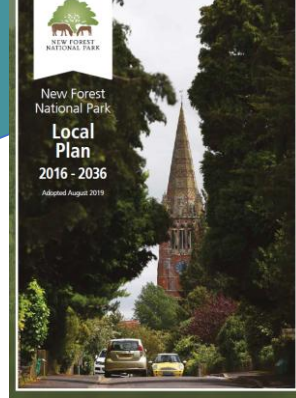
- 3 New Members starting in September.

Structure of the revised Local Plan



- We are undertaking a partial, focused review of the adopted local planning policies for the National Park
- The overall structure of the adopted Local Plan is considered broadly fit-for-purpose
- The Vision and Strategic Objectives have been amended to provide further links to the National Park Partnership Plan and the defined special qualities of the National Park
- A new chapter (Climate Change) has been introduced following the declaration of a nature & climate emergency and focus on climate change as a priority.

Local Plan Review Timetable



- 16 October 2025 full Authority meeting: Draft Local Plan
- 6-week public consultation on Regulation 18 draft Local Plan: November – December 2025
- Further revisions to plan in light of representations received and further evidence base work: Spring 2026
- Publication of proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) for 6-week consultation: Summer 2026
- Submission to Secretary of State for independent examination: December 2026.

Key Planning Updates

Vernon Dene - Campsite in North Ripley (between Bransgore & Ringwood)

National Park Authority revoked a Certificate of Lawfulness on the site in October 2023

Taken to a hearing in the High Court in April 2025, with the case won by the Authority. Site owners have applied (appealed) for the Court of Appeal to hear the case.

A326

Hampshire County Council currently engaging with the Authority in advance of submitting an application later this calendar year. HCC will determine areas outside of the National Park.

NPA Updates



Successful New Forest Show:

- Celebrated our 20th Anniversary
- 12th year of the New Forest National Park Awards – Young Farmer, Best Supporter of Local Produce, Sustainability champion and more
- Talking Nightjar model – story of belonging, linking its migration pattern
- Youth for Climate and Nature (YouCAN) project played a prominent role
- Hosted Baroness Taylor, Minister at MHCLG:
“I gained a real appreciation of the unique New Forest community and landscape which is internationally important for nature. A highlight was the opportunity to meet the commoners, some of the next generation of people caring for the Forest and staff and volunteers from the [PedAll](#) inclusive cycling charity, set up by the NPA.”

NPA Updates



Meetings with our Defra minister (Mary Creagh MP), our local MPs and many other stakeholders.

Partnership Plan Leaders Panel – July Summer Tour – landscape scale management, grazing for nature, recreation management, future of commoning, financial issues and opportunities

Year 5 of Farming in Protected Landscape scheme – so far 64 projects supported and 6,000ha of habitats improved for nature.

The Authority has agreed its national protected landscapes targets for habitat creation, peat restoration and woodland expansion (towards the governments 30x30 and Biodiversity Net Gain goals) – Info on our website

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – paper to our Authority meeting in July setting out our position. Keeping a watching brief on updates.

New Forest Tour season coming to an end on 14 September – 35,000 people last year saved 220,000 car miles.

Thank You

Any Questions??

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