

New Forest National Park Authority - Corporate Risk Register
September 2026

NFNPA RAPC 602/26

	Risk Event	Implications	Likelihood 1(low) - 5(high)*	Impact 1(low) - 5(high)*	Severity/ Priority	Risk change since RAPC March 2026	Countermeasures	Owner	Activity / Outcomes
	First Purpose - Protect								
1	Failure to achieve annual milestones on taking forward the Authority's conservation priorities set out in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. HM Government published the first review of the 25YEP in January 2023 - the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP).	Perception that the NPA is failing to deliver its key purpose(s) and risk that the special qualities are not maintained. Brief review of Activity / outcomes needed in the light of EIP.	2	3	6	↔	Work with partners at local and national level to highlight the contribution the NPA is making to the delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan. Suite of success indicators established and agreed. <i>Development of the new 2027-32 Partnership Plan.</i>	SLT	Working with local authority leaders to promote the 25YEP - promoting Net Environmental Gain, the Green Halo Partnership and Hampshire Greenprint. Working with National Parks England to ensure all Parks deliver the aims of the 25 YEP. Priorities include responding to the Glover Review, developing a Nature Recovery Network and contributing to the ELM scheme development.
2	Authority is unable to protect and grow Natural Capital across the National Park and its surrounds.	Diminished levels of natural capital and functioning ecosystem services reduces the quality of the environment within and around the National Park, adversely impacting on the special qualities for which the National Park was designated.	4	3	12	↑ <i>Risk likelihood has increased to 4</i>	Provide leadership regarding the significance of natural capital to the economic performance of the National Park and the wider area. Establish a shared approach to natural capital accounting that can inform economic decisions for the National Park and its surrounds, working with and through the Green Halo Partnership. Work with partners to develop a programme of natural capital investment opportunities that can be supported by economic funding programmes.	Paul Walton	Protecting and growing the Natural Capital across the National Park. Convene the Green Halo Partnership - realising the benefits of natural capital. Baseline prepared.
3	<i>Significant habitat or species loss within the New Forest (through any natural or man-made means). E.g. Major wildfire in the New Forest in August 2026.</i>	<i>Diminished special qualities which define a National Park. Wildfires during 2026 resulted in a significant loss of environment, plant and other species in the New Forest. Extremely hot and dry conditions are predicted to continue over subsequent summers.</i>	4	5	20	↑ <i>reworded risk – following significant wildfires in the New Forest</i>	<i>Working internally and with core partners on nature recovery measures – identify damage to specific habitats and species and assist in their recovery. Promoting public awareness of fire safety and highlighting the dangers of open fires and the ban on BBQs. Working closely with and supporting the Fire and other Services on fire prevention actions and assisting in a rapid and co-ordinated response to wildfires which may occur in the future as well as other climate related incidents such as flooding.</i>	<i>Paul Walton</i>	<i>Mechanisms and action/mitigation plans to increased public awareness of fire safety. Close working with the Fire and other Services.</i> <i>Maintain close links with key Forest partners and community groups to identify, categorise and monitor risks.</i>
4	Failure to achieve annual milestones on taking forward the Authority's Net Zero with Nature priorities.	Inability to deliver a net zero national park within our own and the government-set timescales. Authority seen to be ineffective in delivery of a core / primary objective.	2	5	10	↔	Greenhouse gas emissions assessment provides a roadmap to Net Zero identifying the National Park's potential to contribute to nature-based climate solutions.	SLT	Review of work on Net Zero with Nature presented in January 2025. Continue to engage with, and contribute to, the work of other organisations as everyone develops their own action plans.

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	Second Purpose - Enjoy								
5	Failure to maintain wide support for the strategic actions in the Recreation Management Strategy or failure to deliver key NPA actions in the Strategy.	The Authority is criticised for failing to deliver on its first and second purposes. The Authority is directly impacted by the actions or inactions of other partners e.g. we are currently getting a significant number of questions and queries around FE's introduction of car parking charges, taking NPA staff away from their other workloads.	4	4	16	↔	Through the Recreation Management Advisory and Strategy Steering Groups and through regular contact 'on the ground' we are working proactively with the key organisations responsible for recreation management across the National Park, especially in the more sensitive areas and where there are particular recreational impacts. This includes public consultation and awareness raising about the issues so that there is public support for any changes in recreation management. Engaging with communities, often through forums like the Quadrants and Consultative Panel, around live issues such as the introduction by FE of car parking charges in the Forest.	SLT	<i>The agreed RMS actions are now incorporated into the Partnership Plan and reflected in the individual work programmes of partner organisations.</i>
	Duty - Prosper								
6	Reduction in sustainable transport in the New Forest due to lack of government funding and poor public take-up.	Perceived or actual resultant increase in use of private vehicles impacts on local people and the environment and the NPA is considered to be responsible.	3	3	9	↔	In recent years the NPA has worked with partner organisations (especially HCC) to bid for and invest significant Department for Transport funding in supporting and promoting a range of sustainable transport options including the use of buses (especially New Forest Tour) and trains, walking and cycling. On the ground improvements (e.g. new and improved cycle routes and junctions) are still in situ, the Tour is ongoing and many businesses now routinely promote public transport for traveling both to and around the New Forest. The NPA does not have the remit or resources to underwrite unprofitable public transport but will continue to look for opportunities to make a difference where it can. We are currently working with HCC and others on a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for the New Forest which should help attract new funding for agreed improvements.	Jim Mitchell	The NPA's positive contributions and willingness to continue to work in partnership with other organisations to reduce impacts of traffic on the New Forest are appreciated.
7	Failure to deliver sufficient levels of affordable housing to meet local housing needs and support the management of the working National Park landscape.	Less opportunity for local people working in the New Forest to live within the National Park. Commoning becomes unsustainable, which in turn will affect the architecture and uniqueness of the Forest.	2	5	10	↔	Policies are set out in Local Plan to secure more affordable housing, additional focus on delivering smaller homes. Retain ability to levy contributions in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing. Adopt a more proactive approach to delivering affordable housing, e.g. our schemes at Bransgore, Foxlease and Burley.	David Illsley	Affordable housing continues to be delivered through a combination of on site provision and the pooling of developer contributions to fund 'off site' schemes. The NPA is taking forward a new NPA led affordable housing scheme on a site in Burley.

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	Achieving Excellence								
8	Short-term core budget becomes insufficient due to cumulative reductions in Defra grant and/or in-year requirement for savings - exacerbated by the strain on government finances. Failure to achieve sufficient short-term external partnership funding.	Failure to match resources and workloads across the organisation. Work programme suffers and Authority lacks capacity to support other work. Short-term financial decisions have to be made, rather than a slower considered approach. Potentially significant impact(s) on statutory and other key services.	3	5	15	↓ <i>Risk likelihood has decreased to 3</i>	Ongoing discussions with defra about core grant. Budget balanced for current financial year plus one further year. <i>Additional £1.7m revenue stability grant received in 2026/27.</i> Quarterly budget monitoring and review undertaken by RAPC. Effective work prioritisation process through work programme.	SLT / CFO	Adequate resources are in place across the organisation to take forward the Authority's current work programme and priorities. The Authority was given a one-off additional £1.7m by Defra in 2026/27 to aid its future financial stability, and a significant proportion will be set aside in the Earmarked Reserves for use over multiple years.
9	Medium/Long-term core budget becomes insufficient due to cash and/or real-terms reductions in Defra grant - exacerbated by the strain on government finances. Failure to achieve steady external partnership funding.	Failure to match future resources and workloads across the organisation and its partners. Resources not available to deliver on all priorities.	4	5	20	↔	Outcomes from the report on the review of designated landscapes (the 'Glover Review') recommends more resources for national parks, however current defra revenue grant has recently been decreased by 9%. Strong track record in attracting external funding to leverage our core defra grant as far as possible.	SLT / CFO	Effective work prioritisation process through our Business Plan. We continue to develop and push the case, together and separately, for more resources for national parks.
10	Consequences as a result of the disclaimed 2022/23 Audit Opinion (as driven by the national auditing issues).	The disclaimed audit opinion in 2022/23, caused by the national auditor issues and through no fault of the Authority (and its ongoing impact which will be seen in future years) leads to wider, unfounded concerns around the financial health and position of the Authority. Funders have concerns about our audit position.	3	2	6	↓ <i>Risk likelihood has decreased to 3</i>	Clearly understood as a wider national audit issue, the fact that it was a 'lack of audit' not a 'bad audit finding' and we continue to highlight the stability of our finances whenever possible and especially within the Accounts/Audit documentation. We have maintained an ongoing, positive dialog with the Auditors as to how to mitigate/reduce the length or breadth of its impact after 2022/23.	Nigel Stone	2022/23, 23/24 and 24/25 Accounts both now completed and signed off with disclaimed or qualified audit opinions but clean value for money conclusions. <i>National audit rebuild plan projects the Authority could receive a full audit opinion from the 2026/27 financial year.</i>
11	Risks arising from operation of PedAll all-inclusive cycling programme.	Risk of injury to riders, staff, partners and public and damage to equipment and/or Authority/Pedall reputation if an incident or accident should occur	2	4	8	↔	Multiple risk assessments completed. Representative from Pedall Board included in all meetings of NPA's Health and Safety Forum. Representative to conduct regular checks of equipment and activities and report to Pedall Management any potential risk areas for their immediate attention and resolution. Health and Safety representative involved in all discussions on rides and notes made of all risks/countermeasures before these commence.	Jim Mitchell	All reasonable care is taken to protect riders, partners, staff and public from possible injury, incidents or accidents
12	Accident or incident involving staff, volunteers, visitors, members or the public resulting in serious injury or death.	Breach of statutory duties, possible litigation and cost against the Authority	2	4	8	↔	Strategic Health and Safety (H&S) advice provided by NFDC H&S advisors. Clear templates for risk assessments available. Audit of our H&S procedures and policies has been completed - recommendations being followed up by senior management and has been reported to Health and Safety Forum. Measures put in place to address mental health and welfare of staff.	Nigel Stone / David Stone	Regular reporting events; accidents and near misses reported to H&S Forum meetings which includes member representation. Annual H&S report to RAPC. H&S activity including sickness stats reported to Executive Board.

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13	Post-Brexit / new arrangements impact on funding for conservation, recreation, commoning and research funding and designation of protected sites in the New Forest.	Internal impacts but considered a defra-level risk. Changes to environmental and agricultural policy, current environmental legislation and level of resources for on-going conservation and recreation projects in the New Forest. Reduction in Direct Payments (Basic Payment Scheme) will impact on the viability of commoning, especially cattle grazing.	3	5	15	↔	Working with partners on a farm support system through the Forest Farming Group (FFG) which will also aim to ensure continued support for land practices that help deliver environmental enhancement and sustain the practice and culture of commoning. Work individually and jointly with local partners, businesses and communities to demonstrate that public investment in the New Forest delivers a high level of benefit to build on good practice in the Crown Lands and beyond. Separately, and with other NPAs and NPE engage with Defra, MPs and central and regional government in highlighting the profile and importance of maintaining current protection and funding to NF and new initiatives which would have benefitted from EU funding.	Paul Walton	New Agriculture Bill for England in place. Working with NPE and FFG to ensure that policy changes and changes to government funding continue to support the purposes of the National Park. Enhanced working with government and regional bodies as well as local businesses and communities.
14	Failure to influence policy makers and decision takers at sub-regional, regional and national levels, i.e. significant developments on the boundary of the National Park and the Government's independent review of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).	Updates section 62 responsibilities of relevant authorities to have 'to further' to National Park purposes not observed. National park purposes not delivered and special qualities undermined.	3	4	12	↔	Engagement and consultation (letters, face-to-face meetings and visits), publicity and engagement. Collective lobbying nationally through National Parks UK. Maintain and strengthen strong relationships with Defra, other key government departments and regional and local authorities and partner organisations. Strategic direction provided by Partnership Plan and Business Plan with both reflecting the ambitions of the 25 Year Environment Plan and Defra's 8 Point Plan for NPs. Planning framework provided by the Local Plan. Proposed revisions to NPPF to give greater consideration to setting of National Parks for development outside but close to the National Park. Impact(s) of devolution for Hampshire & Solent area currently being considered.	CEO / SLT	Authority's views fed into the Landscapes Review. Close working with neighbouring authorities, Defra and jointly with National Parks UK, NFDC, HCC, FE, etc following the outcomes of the Landscape Review, delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan, 8 Point Plan and other issues affecting National Parks. Greater understanding of the NPA's purposes and objectives.
15	Breach of the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act and/or the Environmental Information Regulations. Non-compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.	Unauthorised disclosure of personal and sensitive data, i.e. through an IT breach, website or human error, resulting in failure to meet statutory obligations, fines being imposed, loss of reputation.	3	4	12	↔	Continue to promote awareness of responsibilities under DP/FOI/EIR and the requirements of the GDPR. Carry out relevant training through compulsory e-learning course on GDPR. Staff to make use of internal advice and expertise. Continually review, update and monitor existing processes, website security, internal communications policies and security measures. Compliance with Transparency Code. Remain vigilant on guidance from the ICO on future implications.	Solicitor and Monitoring Officer / Nigel Stone	Compliance with DP/FOI/EIR/GDPR requirements and reduce possibility of a data breach, negative reputational impact and possible fine.

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16	Significant disruption to National Park Authority operations, i.e. breach of IT systems and servers (virus attack), loss of key IT staff.	Major loss of premises and/or failure of ICT systems impacts on the NPA's operational ability. Data collection, storage and decision making affected impacting on performance and effectiveness of the Authority's work. Time and cost of data retrieval and systems recovery and/or in replacing loss of IT expertise.	3	5	15	↔	Business Continuity Plan sets out procedures for recovery from a variety of major incidents. Anti-virus software is installed as soon as new security updates become available through Microsoft. New PCs/laptops have been rolled out to staff with latest technology and software. We have run programmes to increase staff security awareness and training, alongside better password protection. We look to continually build up strength and resilience in the Authority's ICT resources. A Cyber Incident Response Plan has been drafted and tested through a table top exercise.	Nigel Stone / IT & CS Manager	Effective continuation of the Authority's operations and IT support in the event of a major disruption of the Authority's operations.
17	NPA's reputation damaged through negative public perception and/or judgement of Authority's actions, decisions and behaviour and which reflected badly on the Authority's nature conservation and environmental credentials.	Negative public confidence and faith in the NPA's abilities and its strategies. NPA perceived as setting poor standards of stewardship and leadership. Harms expectations and relationships with partners, stakeholders, local and regional communities.	3	4	12	↔	Maintain engagement and joint working with key partners and stakeholders in respect of clearly defined targets, goals and milestones. Build on communication with local communities through publicity and consultation and promote involvement through quarterly quadrant meetings and local forums such as the NF Consultative Panel. Visible high-quality leadership, strong communications and consultation with relevant stakeholders; increased emphasis on joint working. Sound project planning and early member involvement in projects and initiatives to provide direction and input and fully informed decision making - regular member updates on developments and progress. Close engagement with and understanding of local expectations and concerns. Ensure that the Authority's communication strategy is resourced to provide timely and regular support.	SLT	Develop close and positive working relationships with partners, stakeholders and communities. Enhanced public and stakeholder engagement, support and input into key projects with clearly defined outcomes and measures of success. NPA perceived as providing exemplary leadership in preserving the conservation and enjoyment of the New Forest.
18	Planning decisions challenged through judicial review.	Authority resources are severely stretched in defending judicial review challenges. Financial and reputational risks to the organisation should the Authority lose its case.	4	5	20	↔	Legal advice sought at each stage; legal costs estimate sought early on in proceedings (Funds are held in a financial reserve for this specific purpose/risk). Planning procedures regularly reviewed.	SLT / Solicitor and Monitoring Officer	SLT and Members to be kept informed of case progress.
19	New Partnership Plan for 2027-32 is successfully drafted and implemented	NPA and partners needs to be fully engaged in the process over the next 18-months and will need to align resources to deliver the Plan and its implementation over the five years. Drawn up at a time of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation	3	4	12	↔	Clear timetable for development has been set - Partners will discuss at the next Partnership Plan Leaders Panel. Ensure any opportunities from devolution/LGR are taken and that potential risks are understood & mitigated.	SLT	SLT and Members to be kept informed of progress.
20	Successful delivery of a significant new Capital Programme involving purchases and works	The Authority is now receiving capital funding from Defra, which can be used for multiple purposes including income generation, invest-to-save and 30x30 initiatives. Capital projects are more likely than revenue projects to suffer delays and/or budget overspends.	3	4	12	↔	A Capital Strategy has been approved by the Authority in 2025/26 and an officer group established to take forward cost / benefits analysis of potential competing options for the funding and to monitor agreed projects throughout their lifecycles. Defra asked to provide more surety for future capital grant allocations (due to the time it takes to get projects ready and that one initial project, e.g. a site purchase, often then needs further capital investment in future years).	Nigel Stone / SLT	SLT and Members to be kept informed of progress.

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	Key:								
	Below 10 - Green								
	below 20 - Amber								
	20 and above - Red								
	Likelihood*	Impact*							
	1: not likely	1: None - no impact on time, cost, quality							
	2: unlikely	2: limited							
	3: likely	3: some							
	4: very likely	4: serious							
	5: virtually certain	5: major damage							