

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: CABINET

Date and Time: WEDNESDAY, 1 JUNE 2022, AT 10.00 AM*

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

Enquiries to: democratic@nfdc.gov.uk
Tel: 023 8028 5072 - Matt Wisdom

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Members of the public may watch this meeting live on the [Council's website](#).

*Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) immediately before the meeting starts, on items within the Cabinet's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Friday, 27 May 2022.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

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This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2022 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services

prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To note any issues raised during the public participation period.

4. DIBDEN GOLF CLUB RENT REVIEW AND LEASE VARIATION (Pages 3 - 6)

5. ADOPTION OF THE AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENTS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (Pages 7 - 26)

6. NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2022-2027 (Pages 27 - 64)

7. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENT - NEW FOREST ENTERPRISE CENTRE

New Forest District Council can appoint up to a maximum of three directors on the New Forest Enterprise Centre.

The Council's appointed elected Member representative is as follows:-

- Cllr J Heron – Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services

The Council's appointed officer representative as follows:-

- Andrew Smith – Service Manager, Estates and Valuation

RECOMMENDED:

That the following additional Member be appointed as a director of the New Forest Enterprise Centre, taking the Council's maximum allocation of three directors:-

- Cllr Harris – Portfolio Holder for Business, Tourism and High Streets

To:

Councillors

Edward Heron (Chairman)
Jill Cleary (Vice-Chairman)
Diane Andrews
Geoffrey Blunden

Councillors

Steve Davies
Michael Harris
Jeremy Heron
David Russell

CABINET – 1 JUNE 2022

PORTFOLIO: PARTNERING &
WELLBEING

DIBDEN GOLF CLUB RENT REVIEW AND LEASE VARIATION

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Cabinet approve a 3-year contract variation to the Main Lease at Dibden Golf Centre, commencing on 1st April 2022 as follows:
 - i. To revise the rent to £100,000.00 per annum with effect from 1st April 2022.
 - ii. To introduce a break clause, as part of the contract variation, allowing either party to exit the partnership by providing 12 months written notice.
 - iii. To implement a surplus share arrangement which provides the council with the first £30,000.00 per annum of any surplus generated during the contract variation period. Thereafter, any further surplus generated would be split between parties on a 50/50 basis.
- 1.2 That authorisation is given to the S151 Officer to finalise the necessary documentation to give effect to the above.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 New Forest District Council's partnership with Mytime Active commenced in April 2012. Mytime Active agreed to manage Dibden Golf Centre for a period of 30 years. Running 12 Golf Courses across the country, Mytime Active is a registered charity and as a charity, any surplus generated is reinvested back into the facilities.
- 2.2 Mytime Active lease most of the golf course property from the Council for a 30-year term from April 2012. This Main Lease comprises the 18-hole course, club house, depot, and pro shop. The remainder of the golf course land (9-hole course, driving range) is sub leased from the Council, who in turn lease 2 parcels of land from the Diocese of Winchester and the Barker Mills estate respectively. The rent charged to the council under those 2 leases is simply passed through to Mytime Active under the sub-leases and is not germane to this report.
- 2.3 The current rent payable under the Main Lease is £152,471.00 per annum. The Main Lease contains rent review provisions, and the date of the next rent review is 27th April 2022. The proposed revision of the rent will be payable to the council from 1st April 2022.

3. DIBDEN GOLF CENTRE PERFORMANCE & ASPIRATIONS

- 3.1 The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic to Mytime Active, like all organisations, was significant.
- 3.2 To try to offset some impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the business, the council provided financial support through the form of rent waivers during the pandemic. The council received funding from central government to cover some, not all, of this period of rent relief.
- 3.3 During 2021 the golf course performed well in terms of participation, but it is felt that a return to pre-pandemic levels of usage across the whole offer on the site is likely to be gradual. Whilst golf membership and casual green fee income has performed well, other

ancillary services such as events, functions and food & beverage has understandably not yielded expected levels of revenue due to social restrictions and a lack of consumer confidence associated with the pandemic.

- 3.4 Moving forwards, Mytime Active wish to work with the Council to safeguard Dibden Golf Centres continuation and ensure its operation achieves a sustainable business model and a strong balance sheet.
- 3.5 In broad terms Mytime Active aim to deliver increased membership and average individual spending, deliver a profitable and high-quality food and beverage offer and grow an inclusive junior golf development programme.

4. RENT REVIEW PROPOSAL

- 4.1 To support the common objective to put Dibden Golf Centre on a sustainable financial footing, the parties entered negotiations for the rent and certain maintenance obligations under the Main Lease for the next three financial years covering 2022/23 – 2024/25.
- 4.2 Both parties sought and shared their own independent advice on the market rents and benchmarking the business. Following receipt of those reports, the parties entered negotiations which have been supported through the dialogue and scrutiny of the Dibden Task and Finish Group and Portfolio Holder, who support the proposal.
- 4.3 The proposal is for the rent payable under the Main Lease to be reviewed to £100,000.00 per annum for the next three financial years, effective from 1st April 2022.
- 4.4 In addition to the £100,000.00 per annum, the proposal includes the introduction of a surplus share arrangement that provides NFDC with the first £30,000.00 of any surplus generated at Dibden Golf Centre. Thereafter, any further surplus generated will be shared between parties on a 50/50 basis.
- 4.5 The contract variation proposal includes the introduction of a 12-month break clause which can be triggered at any point during the contract variation period. In triggering the break clause, either party can exit the partnership by providing 12-months written notice.
- 4.6 In agreeing the revised rental figure and surplus share arrangement, whilst the Council may be accepting a reduced rent compared to the present agreement, NFDC will receive rent superior to the independent valuations resulting from the actions noted in 4.2. The surplus arrangements noted in 4.4 provide NFDC with assurance that, should the financial performance at Dibden exceed forecasts set by Mytime Active, the council will realise a financial benefit here that is superior to the market rent valuation received.
- 4.7 The net financial impact of the revised rent will be to have a net receipt to the Council under the Main Lease of £100,000.00 per annum for the next three years. The figure of £70,000.00 is the figure for the market rent that was advised by the Council's advisers as being the current market rent for the Main Lease (such advice assuming the tenant was responsible for repair and maintenance at the Golf Centre).
- 4.8 It is proposed the revised rent will apply for the next three years and after that time the parties agree to revert to the original terms of the Main Lease.
- 4.9 For clarity, the rents due under the 2 sub leases will remain unchanged by this proposal.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 During the agreement to date the Council has accrued an overall surplus from the arrangement of £1,183,593.
- 5.2 The Council has funded £82,699 towards maintenance and replacement of some assets at the golf club including repairs to the clubhouse roof, course drainage work, air conditioning units and replacement steps at the rear of the clubhouse.
- 5.3 The current rent passing under the Main Lease is £152,471 per annum and so the new annual base rent receivable by the Council will be less than the annual rent which has been received over the first 10 years of the contract. Considering the revised rent, the net annual surplus will be £100,000.00, possibly increasing by reference to the proposed surplus sharing arrangement.
- 5.4 An assumed reduction in rent was built into the Council's 2022/23 budget.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It is recommended to cabinet to approve the rent review proposals with Mytime Active, as set out in section 4 of this report.
- 6.2 By implementing this agreement, the council can sustain its partnership with Mytime Active who, in turn, can sustain their management of the facilities at Dibden Golf Centre.

7 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are none.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are none.

9 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are none.

11 PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 11.1 I am pleased to have reached a conclusion in this rent review that retains a good financial return to the Council, and demonstrates the willingness of the Council to recognise the ongoing impact that the covid 19 epidemic is having on the Leisure industry. We will continue to support and work closely with Mytime Active in what is a challenging economic climate.

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Background Papers:

CABINET – 1 JUNE 2022

PORTFOLIO: PLANNING, REGENERATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE / PARTNERING AND
WELLBEING

ADOPTION OF THE ‘AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENTS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT’ SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Cabinet agree that:
 - a. the “Air Quality Assessments in New Development” be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - b. prior to publication, the final editing of the document (attached in Appendix 1 to this report) be agreed by the Executive Head for Planning, Regeneration and Economy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out an approach to Air Quality Assessment in new development including:
 - the type of air quality assessment required to assess the impact of development on local air quality in terms of human health and ecological receptors. Links are provided to further guidance and access to air quality data and information;
 - how to manage and where possible reduce or mitigate activities that unacceptably impact on air quality.
- 2.2 Cabinet agreed at its 2 February 2022 meeting that the draft Supplementary Planning Document be consulted on. The period of public consultation ran from 18th February 2022 to 1st April 2022.
- 2.3 This is a planning document prepared jointly between Planning and Environmental Health, accordingly the views of the Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel were also sought in advance of the public consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Air pollution impacts on everyone’s health and is a major public health concern with the young, elderly and those with chronic health conditions being particularly susceptible. Whilst the New Forest District has the lowest deaths of people over 25 attributed to long term exposure to particulate matter in Hampshire nevertheless it is a material planning consideration.
- 3.2 In broad terms the air quality in the New Forest is generally good and is reflected in the air quality statistics reported by New Forest District Council¹ and Public Health England². The main concerns regarding impacts on local air quality in the New Forest are from:

¹ Air pollution - New Forest District Council

² Air Quality Library - Defra, UK

- increases in vehicles on the local road network (nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM))
- industrial developments (NO₂, PM and sulphur dioxide (SO₂))
- mineral extraction sites (NO₂ and PM)
- construction sites (PM)

3.3 Air quality is a material consideration within the planning regime. All development will have some impact on local air quality and therefore public health and deterioration of the natural environment and nature. To make development acceptable the Council will expect mitigation measures to be implemented by the applicant to reduce emissions to air from all proposed development. The mitigation measures implemented should be proportionate and dependent on the determined impact of the proposed development.

4. CONTENT OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

4.1 The SPD provides supplementary guidance to the Local Plan for the New Forest District Council area. In particular it provides guidance to support Objective SO2 (Biodiversity and environmental quality) and Policy CCC1 (Safe and healthy communities) which aims to prevent pollution or hazards which prejudice the health or safety of communities.

4.2 The SPD provides guidance on when an Air Quality Assessment will be needed to support a planning application and what the assessment needs to address. It also confirms when an Air Quality Statement is required. Where necessary to enable development to take place, appropriate mitigation measures will be required, the document contains suggested mitigation measures.

5. MAIN ISSUES RAISED IN THE CONSULATION

5.1 There were 14 respondents to the consultation.

- Local residents (3)
- Town and Parish Councils (3)
- Other organisations, including the National Highways, Natural England, New Forest National Park Authority, Cranborne Chase AONB, and Hampshire County Council (7)
- Developers and Landowners (1)

5.2 The comments received ranged from general views on the overall content and guidance contained in the document, to more specific elements of detail or apparent errors. There was broad support for the content of the SPD, with a small number of suggestions that will aid clarity.

5.3 A few of the respondents noted that the guidance does not cover the full spectrum of air quality impacts, in particular in relation to nitrogen and ammonia on ecological sites. This is being managed through a contribution to fund monitoring in relation to impacts on protected ecological sites in the New Forest. This is explained in Section 9 (Air Quality and the Natural Environment) of the SPD.

5.4 The full representations received, together with a response to the comments made can be viewed on the website at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/2934/Air-Quality-in-New-Development>.

5.5 The comments referred to above have been reviewed by officers and taken into account in preparing the final version of the Supplementary Planning Document. Whilst minor amendments have been made (set out in red text in the Cabinet version at Appendix 1), the approach set out in the document has remained largely unchanged. The main amendments can be summarised as:

- Paragraph 1.5 - relating to the geographical area covered by the SPD: clarification is provided that the guidance relates to applications within the NFDC planning area but that the assessments may well extend beyond the New Forest Local Plan area.
- Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 – correction to the paragraph numbers referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Paragraph 8.6 – with regard to the criteria for judging whether an assessment or statement is required: an example is provided to aid clarity.
- Paragraph 8.9 – in relation to how traffic figures are to be agreed: further content is added to make clear that assessments must use up to date information or be re-run to reflect the latest position.
- Paragraphs 8.13 – 8.14 (Appropriate Mitigation section) – this section is unchanged but has been moved further up the document to a more appropriate location in the guidance.

6. NEXT STAGES

- 6.1 Subject to Cabinet agreeing to adopt this Supplementary Planning Document, the document will be published as soon as practicable in its final form.
- 6.2 Following adoption, there is also a statutory 3-month period for legal challenges, during which any person with sufficient interest in the decision to adopt the Supplementary Planning Document may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of that decision.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The measures set out in the SPD will be directly funded by applicants and therefore there are no direct financial implications for the Council.

8. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are none.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Poor air quality can have a significant impact on both the health of the public and the natural environment. It is important that the Council ensure that when granting planning permission for new development it is satisfied that the development will have a neutral impact or through infrastructure delivered through the development will improve air quality.

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Poor air quality tends to occur in more densely populated areas of the District, there is often a link between air quality and economic, social and health inequalities. Ensuring air quality is made no worse through development or is improved supports addressing some of these inequalities.

11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are none.

12. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 12.1 As Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure and Portfolio Holder for Partnering and Wellbeing we are both encouraged by this Air Quality SPD as a way of ensuring that the developers within the District are clear about the information they need to submit to enable our officers to fully assess the impact proposed development will have on air quality. Further it clearly sets out infrastructure that can be put in place to reduce emissions and ensure that sustainable development is delivered in our District.

For further information contact:

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(Planning) / (Environmental Protection)
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Background Papers:

Consultation Statement and Schedule of
Responses: [Air Quality in New
Development - New Forest District Council](#)



Air Quality **Assessments** in New Development

New Forest District outside the National Park

Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Cabinet Version May 2022



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1. Introduction

1.1 The quality of the air we breathe can have an effect on human health and quality of life. It can also impact upon local ecosystems and the area's micro-climate.

1.2 The Council has to weigh up economic, social and environmental factors when deciding whether to grant or refuse planning permission and if conditions are required.

1.3 The determination of planning proposals must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Air quality is a material consideration that planners must take into account when making plans and when taking planning decisions.

1.4 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) explains how development plan policies are to be applied in respect of air quality. It sets out an approach to air quality impact assessment of development schemes including:

- the type of air quality assessment required to assess the impact of development on local air quality in terms of human health and ecological receptors. Links are provided to further guidance and access to air quality data and information.
- how to manage and where possible reduce or mitigate activities that unacceptably impact on air quality.

1.5 The SPD covers proposed developments within the New Forest District (outside the National Park) Local Plan Area, shown in the figure below, **however the area covered by the relevant assessment may extend beyond the New Forest District local plan area.**

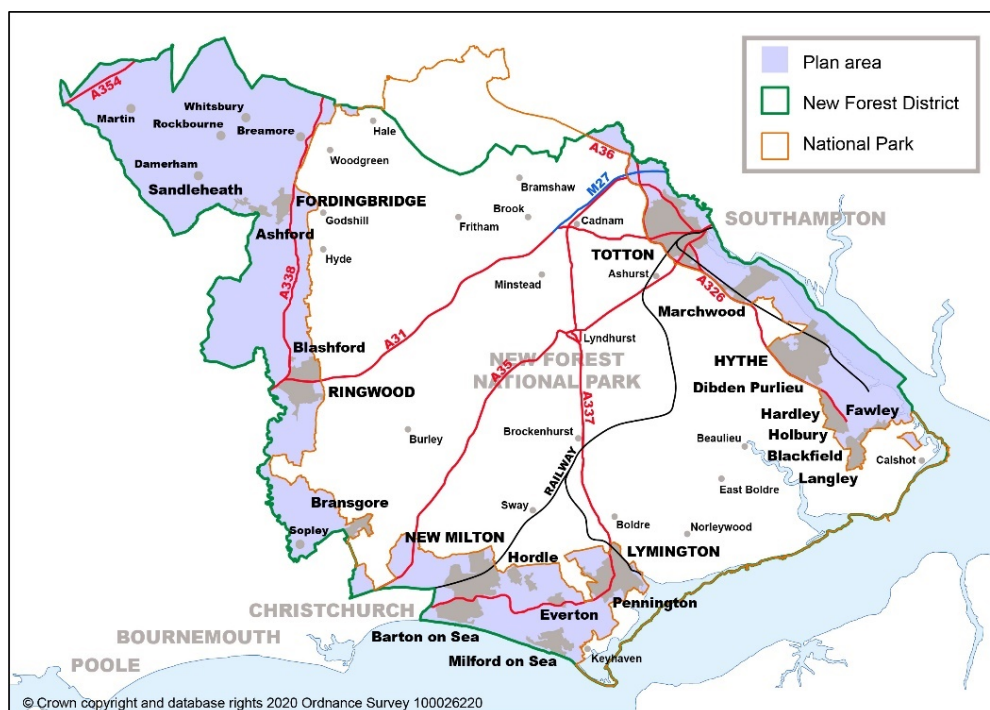


Figure 1: The Plan Area



2. National Air Quality Context

2.1 Air pollution impacts on everyone's health and is a major public health concern with the young, elderly and those with chronic health conditions being particularly susceptible. The impacts on human health are well [documented](#) with up to 36,000 annual deaths in the UK attributed to long term exposure to man-made pollution with the science continuing to evolve.

2.2 In 2014 Public Health England published a report to estimate the number of deaths associated with the long term [exposure to particulate matter](#). New Forest District has the lowest reported figures compared to the other local authorities in Hampshire, (4.9% of deaths of people over 25 are attributed to long term exposure to particulate matter, Hampshire = 5.3%, England = 5.6%).

3. Air Quality in the New Forest District

3.1 In broad terms the air quality in the New Forest is generally good and is reflected in the air quality statistics reported by New Forest District Council¹ and Public Health England².

3.2 The Council has a duty to continually review and assess the air quality in its district following Government guidance under the Local Air Quality Management regime. The Council, in accordance with Government guidance, reports on local air quality on an annual basis in the Annual Status Report. This includes reporting on the monitoring undertaken across the district using automatic and passive monitoring sites.

The main concerns regarding impacts on local air quality in the New Forest are from:

- increases in vehicles on the local road network (nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM))
- industrial developments (NO₂, PM and sulphur dioxide (SO₂))
- mineral extraction sites (NO₂ and PM)
- construction sites (PM)

3.3 Local air quality is assessed against air quality objectives set by Government for named pollutants and over noted assessment periods. If air quality objectives are being, or are likely to be breached, the Council has a duty to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and produce an Action Plan to reduce pollutant concentrations in pursuit of the objective being breached.

3.4 There is currently one declared AQMA in Lyndhurst (outside the planning area covered by this SPD) for the likely exceedance of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective due to emissions from vehicles.

3.5 The latest report which includes the most recent and validated monitoring results can be found at: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/airquality>

¹ [Air pollution - New Forest District Council](#)

² [Air Quality Library - Defra, UK](#)



4. National Policy and Practice

National Planning Policy Framework

4.1 National planning policy is set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The current NPPF places a general presumption in favour of sustainable development, stressing the importance of local development plans. Air quality is a material consideration in the planning process, in line with the following paragraphs of the NPPF:

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [...]:

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans;

186. Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

4.2 The following paragraphs recognise the impact of traffic on air quality and health and the benefits of sustainable transport modes:

104. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: [...]

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; [...]

107. If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account: [...]

e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.



5. Planning Policy Guidance

5.1 Whether air quality is relevant to a planning decision will depend on the proposed development and its location. Concerns could arise if the development is likely to have an adverse effect on air quality in areas where it is already known to be poor, particularly if it could affect the implementation of air quality strategies and action plans and/or breach legal obligations. Air quality may also be a material consideration if the proposed development would be particularly sensitive to poor air quality in its vicinity. It is important that applicants engage early on with the local planning and environmental health departments to establish the need and scope of any assessment to support an application.

5.2 The PPG sets out what specific issues may need to be considered when assessing air quality impacts. These include: changes in vehicle emissions; the introduction of new point sources of air pollution; exposure of people to harmful concentrations of air pollutants, for example, by introducing further development in places with poor air quality; potential adverse effects on biodiversity. It also sets out guidance on the approach to assessment.

5.3 The PPG advises that mitigation options will:

- Need to be specific to the location
- Depend on the proposed development
- Need to be proportionate to the likely impact.

5.4 Planning conditions and obligations can be used to secure mitigation where the relevant tests are met. Examples of mitigation include: maintaining adequate separation between sources of air pollution and receptors; using green infrastructure; appropriate means of filtration and ventilation; electric vehicle charging points; contributing funding to measures designed to offset the impact of air quality arising from new development.

6. Local Plan Policy Background

6.1 This Supplementary Planning Document to the Local Plan provides guidance to support Objective of Policy SO2 (Biodiversity and Environmental Quality) and Policy CCC1 (Safe and Healthy Communities) which aims to prevent pollution or hazards which prejudice the health or safety of communities. Where necessary to enable development to take place, appropriate mitigation measures will be required to prevent, control, mitigate or offset the impacts of development on community health and safety.

7. Development Management

Threshold, Assessment and Mitigation

7.1 The assessment of air quality for relevant planning applications should follow a three stage process;

1. Determining if the development proposal falls within one of the identified thresholds;
2. If it does, assessing and quantifying the impact on local air quality and finally
3. Determining if, applying mitigation measures, the proposal can be made acceptable

7.2 Pre-application discussions between developers and the local authority is encouraged to ensure an application is complete and meets the necessary requirements. Planning



applications must contain sufficient detail to allow the impacts of development to be properly assessed.

7.3 Air quality is a material planning consideration. Consideration will be given to:

- the significance of the impact on (local) air quality;
- the current air quality in the area of the proposed development;
- the likely use of the development, (i.e. the length of time people are likely to be exposed at that location);

7.4 Most forms of development will have an impact on local air quality and therefore public health. To make development acceptable mitigation measures will need to be implemented by the applicant to reduce emissions to air. The mitigation measures implemented should be proportionate to the scale of the impact.

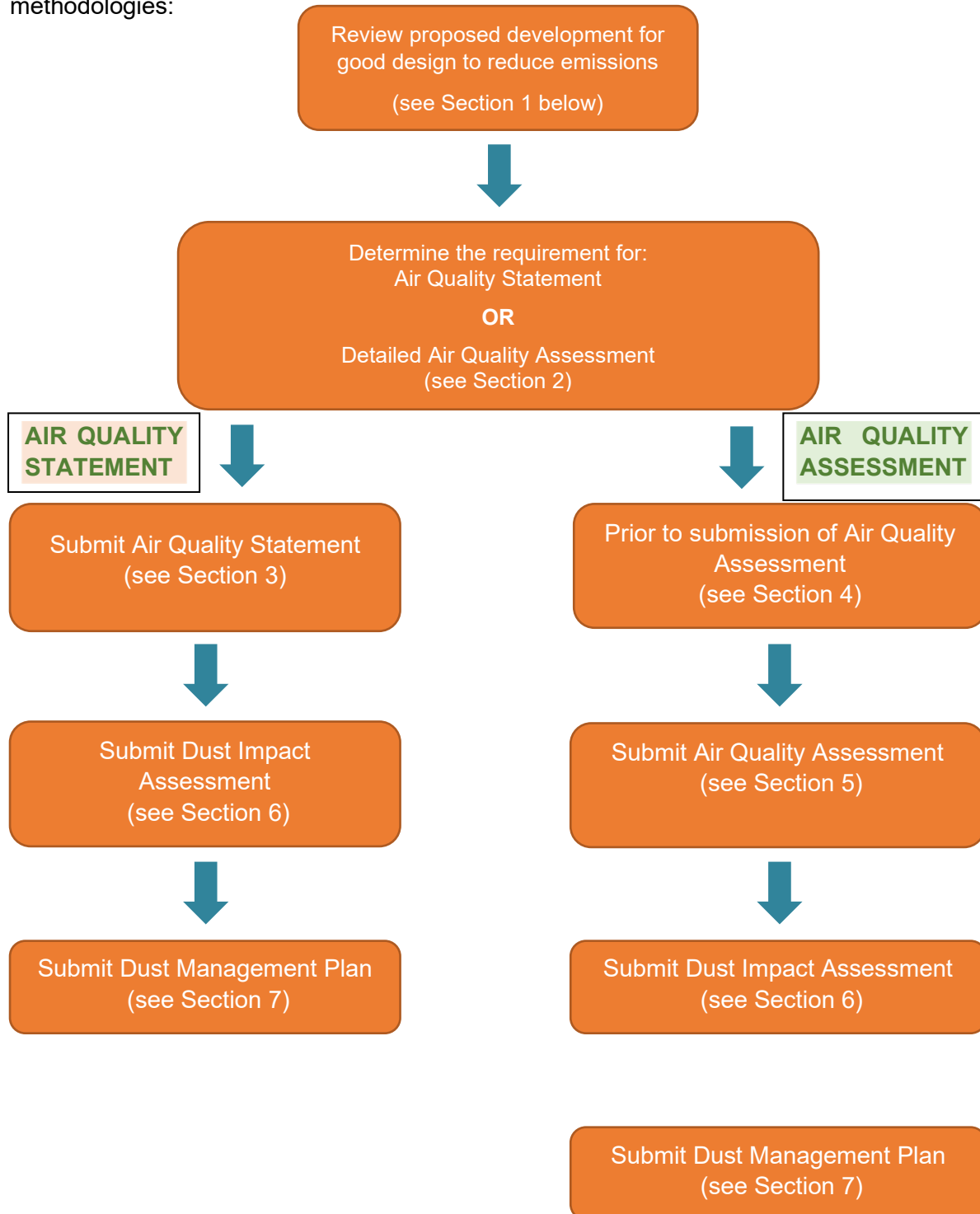
7.5 Impacts on air quality will be determined as 'significant' or 'not significant'.



8. ASSESSMENT OF AIR QUALITY

Figure 2 - Staged Approach

In order to ensure air quality is adequately and proportionately assessed in terms of the planning regime, a staged approach should be taken using relevant guidance and accepted methodologies:



Staged Approach

Section 1 - Development Design

8.1 New Forest District is characterised by generally high environmental quality with towns and villages set within attractive countryside with significant visual, recreational, heritage and ecological value. The qualities of the area and the sensitivities of its landscapes and habitats demand commensurate care and attention to quality in new development.

8.2 Developers should seek ways in which the places and spaces that are created can be sustainable. As Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan sets out, the Council expects development to offer a high-quality living environment for current and future residents.

8.3 Whilst it is acknowledged the design of a proposed development has to consider a number of parameters such as landscaping, property design and layout, the design stage should also consider how emissions could be reduced. This could include the following mitigation measures:

- Minimising the number of vehicles on site
- Removing street canyons by design
- Minimising public exposure to pollutants, for example by siting outside space away from busy roads / industrial sites
- Installation of electric vehicle charging points or a production of an electric vehicle charging scheme
- Energy efficient properties, reducing the need for heating
- Easy connections to public transport, walking and cycling networks to encourage the use of alternatives to cars
- Green Infrastructure, landscaping and planting

Section 2 - Requirement for an Air Quality Statement or Assessment

Air Quality Statement OR Assessment?

8.4 New Forest District Council use air quality planning guidance (*Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality. January 2017*. Environmental Protection UK, Institute of Air Quality Management) to determine whether a detailed air quality assessment is needed as part of the planning application. An air quality assessment is a detailed assessment to predict the impact of a proposed development on local air quality.

8.5 If there is no requirement to provide an air quality assessment, then an air quality statement will be needed. An air quality statement will include a commitment to implement measures to reduce emissions from the proposed development.

8.6 Table 1 summarises the development criteria for an air quality statement or assessment in a stepped process.

As an example, if the proposed development is greater than 10 residential units there may be a requirement for an air quality assessment, however, if the proposed development does not generate more than 500 light duty vehicle movements a day and no other criteria are met, then an air quality statement rather than an air quality assessment will be required.

The criteria presented in Table 1 are provided as guidance, there may be circumstances where an air quality assessment is needed due to local sensitivities outside the criteria.



Table 1 - Air Quality Statement or Assessment

STEP 1		Air Quality Statement	Air Quality Assessment
Development type			
Residential			
Less than 10 residential units or site less than 0.5ha		✓	
More than 10 residential units or more than 0.5ha, plus: More than 10 parking spaces or Centralised energy facility or combustion process			✓
Other use classes			
Less than 1,000m ² of floor space or site less than 1ha		✓	
More than 1,000m ² of floor space or site more than 1ha, plus: More than 10 parking spaces or Centralised energy facility or combustion process			✓
STEP 2			
Specific Criteria			
Traffic numbers			
Developments which generate less than 500 annual average daily traffic flows (AADT) for light goods vehicles (including cars) for outside AQMA or less than 100 AADT in or adjacent to* an AQMA – these figures will be produced from a transport assessment and agreed by the highway authority		✓	
Developments which generate more than 500 annual average daily traffic flows (AADT) for light goods vehicles (including cars) for outside AQMA or 100 AADT in or adjacent to* an AQMA – these figures will be produced from a transport assessment and agreed by the highway authority			✓
Developments which generate less than 100 AADT for heavy duty vehicles for outside AQMA or less than 25 AADT in or adjacent to* an AQMA – these figures will be produced from a transport assessment and agreed by the highway authority		✓	
Developments which generate more than 100 AADT for heavy duty vehicles for outside AQMA or 25 AADT in or adjacent to* an AQMA – these figures will be produced from a transport assessment and agreed by the highway authority			✓
Other			
Developments with 25m of A35 (Totton – Redbridge Causeway)			✓
New bus stations			✓
New road junction close to relevant receptors such as housing or schools			✓
Developments within an AQMA			✓
New substantial combustion plant including biomass boilers and standby emergency generators			✓

Notes:* 'adjacent to' can also include a location where the majority of traffic from a proposed development is travelling through an AQMA even if the development is not physically adjacent to the AQMA. The determination of 'adjacent to' will be at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority.

Section 3 – Air Quality Statement

Content of an Air Quality Statement

8.7 An air quality statement should include the following:

- why an air quality statement rather than an assessment is being submitted, with reference to relevant guidance
- statement confirming 3 mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the development from the list detailed in Appendix 1.

8.8 An Air Quality Statement will be submitted as part of the application.

Section 4 – Prior to submission of an Air Quality Assessment

8.9 It is strongly recommended that the applicant agrees the following points with the Local Planning Authority prior to submission of a planning application to reduce the need to request further information during the application process:

- **The requirement to undertake an air quality assessment** – if there is uncertainty of the potential impact of the proposed development
- **Details of assessment model.** This includes:
 - i. relevant air quality model.
 - I. This depends on what is being modelled for example road or industrial / point emissions.
 - ii. *emission data.*
 - I. If roads are being modelled the most up to date vehicle emission factor should be used
 - iii. *transport data (need to be agreement with HCC/LPA)*
 - iv. *meteorological data*
 - v. *pollutants being assessed*
 - vi. *baseline pollutant concentrations*
 - vii. *background pollutant concentrations*
 - viii. *choice of baseline year*
 - ix. *use of local monitoring data*
 - x. *verification of air quality model*
- **Agreement of extent of assessment** – whether the assessment includes the development alone, other locations and / or other local developments (cumulative impacts). It should be noted that a route / location of interest may be some distance from the development but is still considered relevant to the proposed development.
- **Cumulative Impact - the NPPF (paragraph 181)** recognises that a number of individual developments proposals within close proximity of each other require planning policies and decisions to consider the cumulative impact of them. Difficulties arise when developments are permitted sequentially, with each individually having only a relatively low polluting potential, but which cumulatively result in a significant worsening of air quality. This will occur where:
 - i. a single large site is divided into a series of units, such as an industrial estates
 - ii. a major development is broken down into a series of smaller planning applications for administrative ease; and



- iii. there are cumulative air quality impacts from a series of unrelated developments in the same area

In criteria (i) and (ii) the cumulative impact will be addressed by the likelihood that a single developer will bring forward an outline application for the whole site which should include an air quality assessment as part of an Environmental Assessment. For major developments that are broken down into a series of smaller planning applications, the use of a Master or Parameter Plan that includes an air quality assessment will address the cumulative impact.

- **Agreement of the traffic figures, fleet composition and routes.** This will require agreement from the highway authority. If these traffic figures change, the air quality **assessment may be inaccurate and may require to be re-assessed.**

The traffic figures must be agreed with the relevant highway authority, in consultation with the LPA prior to submission of an air quality assessment.

Section 5 - Air Quality Assessment

Expectations

8.10 An air quality assessment is a detailed assessment which predicts the potential impact of the proposed development on local air quality. An air quality assessment will;

- follow current air quality / planning guidance;
- utilise current air quality assessment methodologies, which have ideally been agreed with the Local Planning Authority in advance of an application being submitted;
- effectively assess the significance of the potential impact of the proposed development on local air quality;
- use professional judgement; and,
- commit the applicant to implementing proportionate mitigation measures to minimise air quality emissions from the proposed development. The types of mitigation measures will be dependent on the outcome of the agreed air quality assessment.

8.11 An air quality assessment is expected to include:

- **Details of the proposed development.**
- **Policy context for the assessment.** This should include local and national policies
- **Description of relevant air quality standards and objectives.**
- **Details of assessment methodologies** – as advised in Section 4.
- **Identify relevant receptors.** This is dependent on the emissions of concern and relevant air quality objectives.
- **Description of baseline conditions**
- **Use appropriate mathematical verification of the model in accordance with guidance**
- **Provide results of the model outputs for all pollutants of concern at all relevant receptors locations.** All modelled results should be presented as;
 - i. baseline pollutant concentrations (current air quality concentrations)
 - ii. pollutant concentrations without development (at development completion year)
 - iii. pollutant concentrations with development (at development completion year)



and if appropriate;

- iv. pollutant concentrations with development plus identified cumulative impacts
 - v. appropriate sensitivity test
- **Provide robust determination of the significance of the likely impact of the proposed development at all relevant receptor locations.** This should follow relevant guidance and use professional judgement when required.
 - **Provide details on mitigation measures based on the determination of significance with regards to the impact on local air quality.**
 - **Summary of the Air Quality Assessment.**

8.12 The methodology to be used for the determination of pollution concentration change should meet the requirement of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Technical Guidance Note LAQM TG (16) or any subsequent **relevant** guidance.

Appropriate Mitigation

8.13 For proposed developments requiring an **Air Quality Statement** there will be a requirement to include a minimum of 3 mitigation measures. A list of suggested mitigation measures is available in Appendix 1, other appropriate mitigation measures can be proposed by the developer

8.14 For proposed developments requiring an **Air Quality Assessment**, the level of required mitigation is dependent on the outcome of the assessment:

- A. Proposed developments determined to have a significant impact on local air quality – the applicant will be required to put in place mitigation measures which can demonstrate compliance with current air quality objectives. This may include an agreed reduction in emissions from the development site that is retained and maintained, and the installation of real time monitoring of pollutants to assess the impact on local air quality.
- B. Proposed developments determined to not have a significant impact will be required to include as a minimum 3 mitigation measures. A list of suggested mitigation measures is available in Appendix 1, other appropriate mitigation measures can be proposed by the developer.

Section 6 – Dust Impact Assessment

8.15 An air quality statement or assessment must also assess the potential impact from dust from the construction phase of the development on local relevant receptors.

Requirement for a Dust Impact Assessment

8.16 A dust impact assessment **is required** where there is a human receptor within:

- 350m of the site boundary, or
- 50m of the route(s) used by construction vehicles on the public highway, up to 500m from the site entrance(s).

8.17 The assessment of dust from construction sites (dust impact assessment) can be undertaken within the air quality statement or assessment, or as a separate assessment, but in either case should follow current relevant guidance (*Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction*. Institute of Air Quality Management. February 2014).



8.18 The significance of the impact of construction dust is determined as a human health and dust soiling (nuisance) impact, and should be assessed for the following construction phases:

- Demolition
- Earthworks
- Construction
- Track out

8.19 The dust impact assessment will identify the potential impact at each phase of construction work against each type of impact (human health and / or dust soiling). The outcome of which may recommend mitigation measures to reduce the predicted impact to an acceptable level.

8.20 The Council advise that only a dust impact assessment is submitted as part of the application process. A Dust Management Plan (see Section 7), if required, will be agreed as part of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) planning condition.

Section 7 - Dust Management Plan

8.21 Should the Dust Impact Assessment identify the likelihood of a dust impact either to human health and/or from dust soiling at relevant receptors the applicant will be required to submit an appropriate Dust Management Plan.

Expectations

8.22 A Dust Management Plan will:

- follow current air quality/planning guidance;
- include the Dust Impact Assessment which **identifies** the locations of potential impact and specific works requiring mitigation;
- be site specific, taking into account site layout, machinery and equipment to be used on site, vehicle emissions and any occupiers of the site as development continues; and,
- commit the applicant by a planning condition to implement appropriate mitigation measures to minimise dust and particulate emissions from the development site. Appropriate mitigation measures are provided in the guidance and should be adopted where appropriate. This may include the need to monitor the dust from the construction site.

Submission of Dust Management Plan

8.23 You may be required to submit of a Dust Management Plan as part of a CEMP condition should planning permission be granted. If you submit a Dust Management Plan as part of the application the Plan will not be reviewed or commented on.

9. AIR QUALITY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

9.1 Modelling of traffic emissions from cumulative traffic growth over the Local Plan period has identified potential for significant adverse effects on parts of the New Forest SPA and SAC and Ramsar from nitrogen deposition and ammonia, particularly near main road corridors through the New Forest in areas lacking screening woodlands.

9.2 The Habitat Regulations Assessment which accompanied the Local Plan Part 1 concluded that implementation of the Local Plan and New Forest National Park Local Plan alone will not



have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site. While there is no evidence of current negative effects from traffic related air pollution, uncertainty remains about whether in-combination traffic growth and related air pollution could adversely affect the integrity of New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site during the Local Plan period up to 2036.

9.3 With this uncertainty in the data, the precautionary principle applies requiring a modest financial contribution from development for ongoing monitoring of the effects of traffic emissions on sensitive locations, to trigger management or mitigation measures and developer contributions to implement them if harmful effects are confirmed in the future.

9.4 The Council has instigated a monitoring regime to monitor the condition of sensitive vegetation within the New Forest SPA, SAC and RAMSAR sites, to assess whether or not nutrient nitrogen deposition, acid deposition and ammonia levels from traffic emissions are having an adverse effect on these designated European sites.

9.5 If air quality monitoring identifies that significant adverse effects are occurring or likely, legal agreements or other appropriate mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that homes subsequently permitted would be required to make reasonable and proportionate developer contributions for air quality management or mitigation.

9.6 The project is monitoring any adverse impacts on short habitats (wet and dry heaths) and tall habitats (woodland) at selected sites and the air quality levels at those same sites. This establishes a monitoring framework and evidence base for measuring any adverse impacts on the integrity of New Forest designated internationally protected sites.

10. RELEVANT GUIDANCE

10.1 Includes guidance noted above for general air quality and planning and dust assessments:
<http://iaqm.co.uk/guidance/>

10.2 Technical guidance for air quality monitoring and modelling (LAQM technical guidance):
<https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/supporting-guidance.html>

CONTACT

For further advice on the planning process or air quality assessments please contact:

To be added when adopted by New Forest District Council



11. APPENDIX 1 – SUGGESTED MITIGATION MEASURES

An Air Quality Statement OR an Air Quality Assessment with a determined insignificant impact on local air quality.

- Development designed to reduce site user's exposure to pollutants, such as:
 - No kerbside development
 - No openable windows on domestic properties adjacent to emission release points
 - Internal layout designed to reduce number of windows on elevations facing emission release points
 - No installation of solid fuel (wood or coal) domestic appliances or open fires to be provided at any property
 - Where provided, gas boilers shall meet the minimum standard of <math><40\text{mgNOx/kWh}</math>
 - Preference should be given to domestic heating systems that utilise low carbon heating technologies
- Development includes cycling / walking infrastructure
- Modal shift -encourage or require travel by vehicles other than the car including measures to improve public transport and promote use
- Car Clubs
- Cycling Hubs and corridors, including hire of bikes and E Bikes
- Installation of an electric vehicle charge point at each property or implementation of an electric vehicle charging scheme
- Implementation of a travel plan for residential or commercial site users including documentation of public transport options
- Public transport provisions provided / supplemented
- Provision of a delivery strategy (commercial development)
- Directions and signage – advertise and encourage vehicular travel to locations using alternative routes subject to the capacity and convenience of those alternative routes
- Low emission vehicles - use of low emission vehicles
- Green Infrastructure – Green networks and infrastructure, planting trees within or adjacent to development, use of green roofs and walls, biodiversity net gain in developments
- Provide a fleet emission reduction strategy/low emission strategy, including low emission fuels and technologies, including ultra-low emission service vehicles.
- On larger scale development provide a range of facilities including retail and employment uses to reduce the need to travel



CABINET – 1 JUNE 2022

PORTFOLIO PLANNING, REGENERATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE / PARTNERING &
WELLBEING

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2022-2027

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Cabinet endorse the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the final draft version of the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan 2022-2027, attached at Appendix 1. The Cabinet at its meeting in September 2021 considered a report Consultation on the draft Partnership Plan 2021-2026. The Cabinet confirmed support for the revised vision, objections and actions set out in the draft Plan.

2.2 The Partnership Plan is an overarching strategic document for the National Park and sets the framework for more detailed plans and strategies prepared by the National Park Authority and partner organisations.

2.3 The National Park Authority approved the plan on 24th March 2022 and has invited the main partner organisation to endorse the Partnership Plan. The National Park Authority intend to adopt the final version of the Partnership Plan in July 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 All national parks are required by statute to have a management plan / partnership plan for their area, to help guide the work of those with responsibilities or an interest in the national park. The plans reflect the two statutory purposes that are the main reasons for their designation and describe the overall focus for their management. The two purposes are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the national park; and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

3.2 In this Partnership Plan, it sets out a refreshed Vision for the New Forest National Park's future in the context of the climate crisis and green recovery and in response to the experiences of the pandemic. It renews the collective commitments to deliver the purposes for which the National Park was designated. This has been articulated into five themes, which will be the focus for the next five years. These are:-

- Nature Recovery – helping habitats to be more resilient, restored, expanded and connected
- Net Zero with Nature – cut land-based carbon emissions through securing and restoring natural habitats and enabling carbon capture
- Thriving Forest – supporting a living, working and culturally rich heritage
- An inclusive National Park – helping people of all socio-economic backgrounds to understand and value the New Forest
- Team New Forest – communities, businesses and organisations working together to deliver the vision of the plan.

- 3.3 The Plan contains actions to deliver the Plan priorities linked to the five themes.
- 3.4 This Partnership Plan has been prepared with input and support from the main statutory organisations who share responsibility for delivering the aims and objectives of the Plan as well other key stakeholders and organisations. Its scope was set by a widely advertised call for views at the New Forest Show in 2019, followed by a public 'snapshot' survey in 2020 with over 2,700 responses. The resulting draft Partnership Plan received responses and feedback from over 380 individuals and organisations as part of the public consultation in 2021.
- 3.5 A number of amendments have been made to the draft Plan in response to the consultation. This includes a work programme which lists the relevant actions for each of the five themes, how these link with the Plan's priorities, with relevant target dates and key measures of success identified. The various partner organisations involved for each action are also listed, as well as national legislation and policy that has a bearing on each of the actions. The Council is identified as being a key partner in developing and delivering a number of the actions.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Given the statutory duty on the Council to have regard to national park purposes in exercising its functions, as it is a main partner organisation and given its role in contributing to the delivery of a number of the identified actions in the Partnership Plan it is considered that the Plan should be endorsed, as requested.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial costs associated with the preparation and publication of the Plan are funded by the National Park Authority. There are therefore no direct financial resource implications for the Council as a result of its endorsement. However, officers take part in meetings of the management plan leadership group which contributed towards its joint preparation. A number of initiatives in the action plan are already underway. The on-going impact on resources both financial and in officer time, will be carefully monitored and prioritised against Corporate priorities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Significant beneficial impact associated with the environmental actions within the Plan.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no equities or diversity issue raising from the content of the Plan.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

9.1 There is no “i” in Team. It’s an age-old motto that’s both grammatically correct and very much relevant in team situations in sport and business – therefore we are most effective when we work in collaboration, understanding our place in the system and bringing together ‘unusual friends’ with different perspectives. The Partnering and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder very much welcomes working with the Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder and partners to deliver the partnership plan.

For further information contact:

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Background Papers:

Cabinet Report
September 2021

Partnership Plan 2021-
2026

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New Forest National Park Partnership Plan

2022 – 2027

Final version for Authority approval

March 2022

Foreword

As we reflect on what has been an incredibly difficult period, our collective experience of the recent Covid pandemic has made us realise just how much we rely on the natural environment for our health and wellbeing. Like all National Parks, the New Forest National Park has provided a vital space for respite and recovery. In turn, this has increased focus on the importance of the natural world and ensuring that the landscape and the nature it supports is sustained for future generations. An urgent step change is needed - many agree that now is the time to redouble our efforts to tackle the twin challenges of our age – the decline of nature and biodiversity and the fundamentally connected threat of the climate crisis. This has been reflected in conversations at a national and international level, such as COP26, measures in the 2021 Environment Act, the Government’s response to the national Landscapes Review (2022)¹ and locally in our discussions and the projects that have emerged in partnership with local organisations and communities where local action is at the fore.

Nationally attention is on a ‘green recovery’, on how we recover the economy, address societal needs as a whole and crucially, the environment is leading to measures to move us towards a greener future. It is not only the UK which has undergone this realisation; globally there is a clear desire to see change.

In this Partnership Plan, we set out a refreshed Vision for the New Forest National Park’s future in this context of crisis and recovery. This renews our collective commitments to deliver the purposes for which our National Park was designated - to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote understanding and enjoyment of the Forest’s special qualities. In so doing we also have a duty to foster the social and economic wellbeing of our communities.

The Government has confirmed its support for strengthening the role of National Park Management/Partnership Plans. The new Partnership Plan is a call to action for individuals, communities, businesses, public bodies, voluntary sector and other organisations to work together to deliver a positive future for this special place.

¹ Landscapes review (National Parks and AONBs): government response, January 2022

Introduction

National Parks are protected landscapes recognised to be of the highest national importance for the natural beauty of their landscapes, the value of their wildlife habitats and cultural heritage, and the opportunities they give for many people to enjoy these qualities.

The New Forest has long been recognised as an exceptional landscape, shaped over millennia by the people who have lived and worked here. It is one of the most important areas for nature conservation in Europe and its open landscape, coastline and unique natural beauty have inspired generations of local people and visitors alike.

In 2019, we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 which led to the designation of the first National Park in England, the Peak District National Park.

We now have 10 National Parks in England and the New Forest was one of the last to be formally designated in 2005. Covering 220 square miles on the central south coast of England, it is the smallest National Park in the UK, other than the Broads. Yet it is also home to more than 34,000 people and 2,500 local businesses. More than 16 million people live within a 90-minute drive of the New Forest and its ease of access make it one of the most visited National Parks in the country.

Our National Parks are the 'breathing spaces' for the nation and 73 years on from the first designation, the Government recognises National Parks as our most iconic and beautiful places, representing our shared heritage and national identity, and home to many of our rural communities and businesses. The Government sets out a vision for nationally protected landscapes as 'A coherent national network of beautiful, nature-rich spaces that all parts of society can easily access and enjoy. Protected landscapes will support thriving local communities and economies, improve our public health and wellbeing, drive forward nature recovery, and build our resilience to climate change.'²

Plan of action

Looking beyond the Covid pandemic, we need to respond to the climate and nature emergencies and as we transition to a new way of life outside the European Union, now more than ever we need a clear, up-to-date plan of action to equip the Forest for the future.

The central role of this Plan is to guide and co-ordinate the work of all those with an interest and influence in the National Park in delivering the National Park purposes and duty. This includes organisations with statutory responsibilities, land management interests, businesses, local communities and user groups. It is a Plan for the National Park, not the National Park Authority. All those with interests in the

² Landscapes review (National Parks and AONBs): Government response, January 2022

New Forest National Park should take account of the Partnership Plan's vision for the area and embed the relevant actions within their own work programmes.

This Plan outlines the key drivers and challenges facing the National Park and sets out how these will be addressed collectively. It sets out an overall approach to managing the National Park for the next five years, which will frame more detailed policies and actions over this period. It will guide and align the priorities and resources of the National Park Authority with those of partner organisations, businesses and communities who are key to the implementation of our collective ambitions. Our intention is that it will also influence wider decisions and investment of all those who have a part to play in protecting this most special landscape. It will also enable the support and engagement of communities in and around the New Forest who have a crucial role in achieving a positive future for the National Park.

We are building on many achievements from the previous Partnership Plan. Its legacy includes success in securing and managing grants for projects across the Forest together, such as the Heritage Lottery funded 'Our Past Our Future' and the Verderers' Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. More recently grant funding has been secured due to this track record of successfully delivering large partnership projects.

This Partnership Plan has been prepared with input and support from the main statutory organisations who share responsibility for delivering the aims and objectives of the Plan. Its scope was set by a widely advertised call for views at the New Forest Show in 2019, followed by a public 'snapshot' survey in 2020 with over 2,700 responses. The resulting draft Partnership Plan received responses and feedback from over 380 individuals and organisations as part of the public consultation in Summer 2021. The feedback and comments received from partners and the local communities have undoubtedly helped to strengthen the Plan.

Our Vision for the New Forest National Park

The Vision for the New Forest is to be a national beacon for a sustainable future, where nature and people flourish. In 2050, the National Park is a unique and immediately recognisable place where:

- people live and work sustainably, having successfully adapted to the impacts of the climate emergency and supporting nature's recovery and resilience
- tranquillity and a feeling of naturalness pervade large parts of the New Forest
- the mosaic of distinctive landscapes and habitats have been conserved and greatly enhanced, supporting wildlife to recover and flourish
- there is a strong sense, understanding of and support for the heritage and living culture of the New Forest, especially the local tradition of commoning
- facilities such as car parks, campsites, walking and cycling routes and community green spaces are in the right places to both protect rare wildlife and to provide a better, more informed experience for people
- all communities and visitors are better informed and gain inspiration, health and wellbeing and enjoy the extensive areas accessible across the National Park whilst respecting the fragile nature, unique environment and rich culture of the New Forest
- local, regional and national organisations recognise and work to enhance the value of the National Park; there is an appreciation of its importance and role within the wider area
- everyone contributes to caring for the National Park as a special place for present and future generations.

The Qualities that make the New Forest special

The [special qualities](#) of the New Forest are those qualities that define it, make it unique and immediately recognisable and, when taken together, distinguish it from all other parts of the country. These qualities are fundamental to the two National Park purposes and are the underlying reason for its designation.

The New Forest's outstanding natural beauty: the sights, sounds and smells of ancient woodland with large veteran trees, heathland, bog, autumn colour and an unspoilt coastline, with views of the Solent and Isle of Wight.

An extraordinary diversity of plants and animals and habitats of national and international importance: the mosaic of lowland heath, mire, ancient pasture woodland and Forest lawns that forms the Open Forest is unique in Britain and Europe. In addition, the Solent coastline comprises extensive areas of mudflats, salt marsh and shingle, backed in places by low cliffs, supporting large populations of wintering wildfowl and waders. In total 56% of the National Park is designated for its national or international nature conservation value - a far higher proportion than any other English National Park.

A unique historic, cultural and archaeological heritage, from royal hunting ground, to shipbuilding, salt making and 500 years of military coastal defence. The cultural landscape of the New Forest has developed continuously from prehistoric times to the present. The National Park has 214 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, constituting almost 10% of all scheduled monuments in the south east region, together with many important unscheduled sites.

An historic commoning system that maintains so much of what people know and love as 'the New Forest' forming the heart of a working landscape based on farming and forestry. The New Forest remains one of the few extensive lowland commons where rights are still widely practised and a strong commoning culture continues. The right of mast allows the turning out of pigs to feed on the acorn crop, while common pasture allows the grazing of ponies, cattle and donkeys.

The iconic New Forest pony together with donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free. The grazing of ponies and cattle has always been central to the pastoral economy of the New Forest. They are one of the most obvious and distinctive features of the area, and for many visitors they are undoubtedly a very important part of their experience of the New Forest.

Tranquillity in the midst of the busy, built up south of England. The tranquillity and sense of remoteness that can still be found in many parts of the National Park is a quality of importance to many people. This contrasts with the increasingly built up and intensively managed landscape of southern England and provides a means of release from the pressures of modern life.

Wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery in one of the last extensive gentle landscapes in the south including unmatched open access on foot and horseback. There is open access on foot or horseback to more than 30,000

hectares (116 square miles) in the centre of the National Park, and an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths across the rest of the area.

A healthy environment: fresh air, clean water, local produce and a sense of 'wildness'. The coastal location and prevailing south westerly winds means that air pollution is generally low, and water quality in the New Forest rivers and streams, and on the coastal beaches, is also good. The variety of food and other products produced and sold locally continues to increase, giving the opportunity for people to live healthily and sustainably and at the same time support the local economy.

Strong and distinctive local communities with a real pride in and sense of identity with their local area. The New Forest communities have a strong cultural identity, with a wealth of local traditions and a thriving commoning community. Many local people have a strong sense of the Forest's history and are deeply committed to the protection of the area and many volunteers support local organisations improve the Forest environment, its culture and local communities.

The role of the Partnership Plan

All National Parks are required by statute to have a Management Plan (often known as the 'Partnership Plan') for their area, to help guide the work of those with responsibilities or an interest in the National Park. The Plan is for the National Park as a place and not specifically for the National Park Authority or any other organisation.

National Parks have two statutory purposes that set out the main reasons for their designation and describe the overall focus for their management. The two National Park purposes as set out in primary legislation are:

1. to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
2. to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

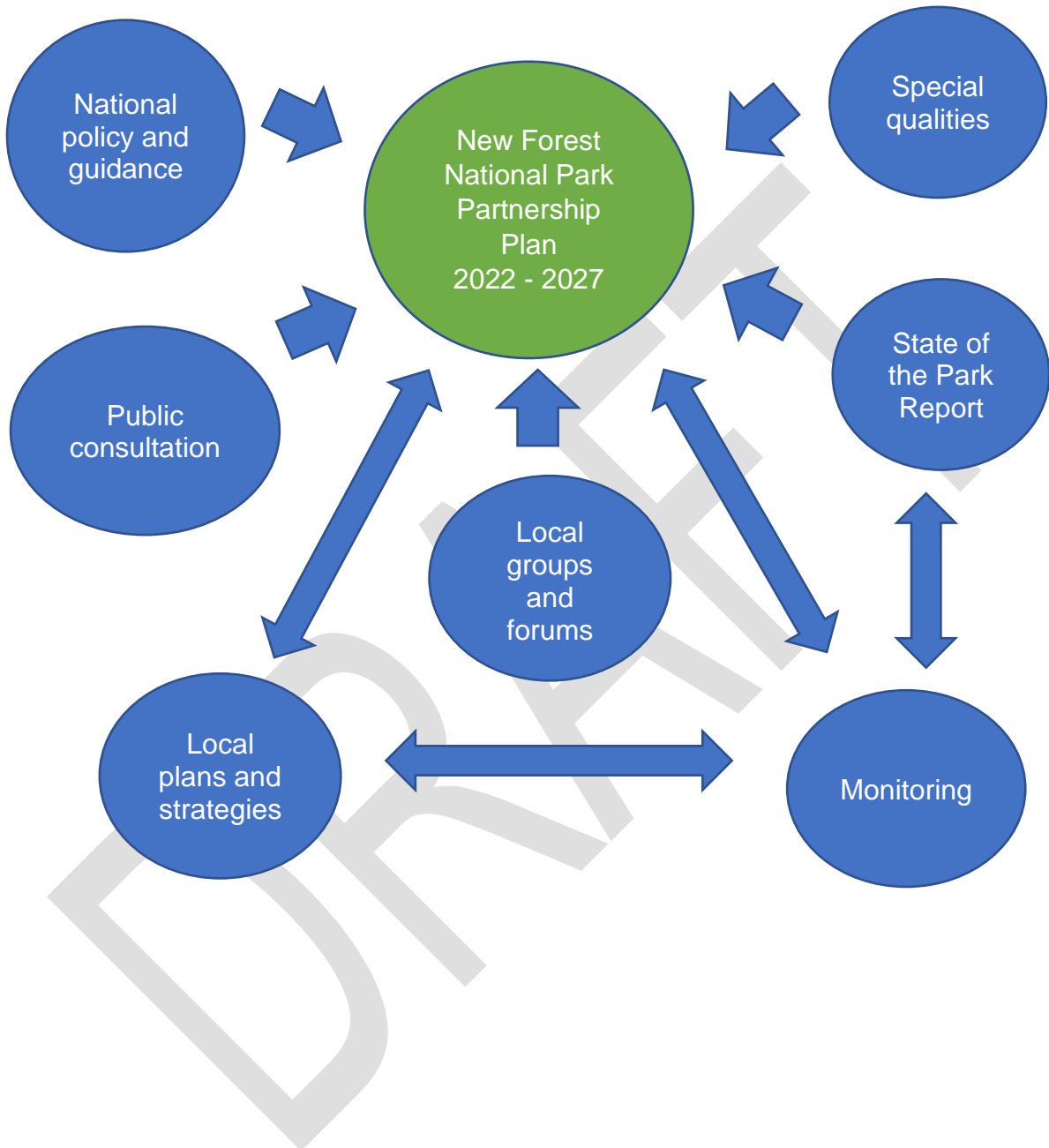
National Park Authorities also have a duty in taking forward the two National Park purposes to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within the National Park.

The relationship between the purposes is commonly known as the 'Sandford Principle', which states that every effort should be made to reconcile any conflicts between the purposes, but that if such efforts fail then the priority must be given to the first purpose of conservation and enhancement. The primacy of conservation is especially important in the New Forest National Park which has the highest proportion of its land (56%) covered by international nature conservation designations when compared to other local authority areas in England.

All public and statutory bodies must have regard to National Park purposes when making decisions or carrying out activities relating to or affecting land within the National Park. This legal 'duty of regard' acknowledges that the fulfilment of the National Park purposes rests not only with those bodies directly responsible for their management but also relies on effective partnership working.

The Government is now looking to strengthen the role of National Park Management Plans and has highlighted their importance in setting priorities and actions for nature recovery and our response to the climate emergency.

How the new Plan brings together existing forums, policies, plans and strategies



Major issues for the New Forest National Park

The New Forest faces a period of significant change as the country recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic, confronts the twin challenges of the climate and nature emergencies and adapts to life outside the European Union. New and emerging domestic legislation and reforms are likely to have a profound and lasting impact on how the National Park is managed in the future, although the future direction of national policy and funding is still to be determined at the time of preparing this Plan. So whilst this Plan sets out our shared Vision, priorities and objectives for the next five years, a more detailed set of actions and targets to guide our collective work over the next two years has been produced. Thereafter, we will review and publish a revised annual work programme for years three, four and five.

Climate and nature emergencies

In 2019 the UK became the first national government to declare an Environment and Climate Emergency. That decision marked a renewed sense of urgency in tackling climate change with the Government legally committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The Government has recognised the key role of protected landscapes in addressing the [climate and nature emergency](#)

In the New Forest National Park, we are already seeing wetter winters, hotter, dryer summers, rising sea levels, an increasing frequency of extreme weather events and longer periods of higher fire risk. Combined, these factors have far reaching implications for our biodiversity, our communities, land managers and local businesses.

More than two-fifths of UK species including animals, birds and butterflies have seen significant declines in recent decades. The State of Nature report (2019), which draws on scientific monitoring since the 1970s, showed that there has been no let-up in net losses for the UK's wildlife. More intensive agriculture is still driving declines in farmland nature, while climate change is also having an increasing effect, with average UK temperatures rising by 1C since the 1980s. The state of wildlife in the New Forest remains a major concern, with just over 50% of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) judged to be in 'favourable condition'.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- Only 53.22% of SSSIs in favourable condition
- Sharp decline in ground nesting birds, in some cases more than 50%
- 33% decline in breeding waders

However:

- 44ha of grassland and heathland has been restored
- 12.5km of wetland sites (channels and drains) restored
- Over 90% of respondents to a recent local public survey (2021) want to see the environmental improvements seen during the pandemic continue

Responding to recreational pressures

A challenging issue for nature conservation and recovery in the New Forest is how to respond to increasing demand for access without compromising the integrity of protected wildlife sites.

Before the pandemic, it was estimated that there were over 15 million day-visits for leisure and recreation each year to the National Park. 75% of these visits arose from just 300,000 relatively local people travelling from home on a regular, often daily basis. The remainder of the visits were by just over one million people who were on holiday. These large numbers and the fact that well over 50% of the National Park is designated for its rich wildlife create a unique management challenge.

In 2019, an extensive consultation known as '[Future Forest](#)' debated and sought views on recreation in the New Forest National Park and surrounding area. Through this work partners have already agreed a comprehensive series of [actions](#) to manage recreation across the New Forest and beyond. Several of the most fundamental actions have been incorporated into this Partnership Plan. In addition, several local planning authorities in and around the New Forest have adopted planning policies and associated mitigation schemes in place to ensure the recreational impacts arising from new development do not impact on the integrity of the New Forest's internationally protected habitats.

Linked to this, one of the Partnership Plan actions is to move towards a more coordinated, strategic approach to mitigate the recreational impacts of the significant levels of new housing proposed in the areas surrounding the National Park. Up and until now, this has largely happened independently in local authorities around the New Forest, but the benefits of a more coordinated, strategic approach are recognised.

For the foreseeable future, there is likely to be an increased demand for 'staycation' holidays and further recreational demands placed on the National Park. A joint 'care for the Forest, care for each other' action plan was put in place for 2021 (and will be repeated in 2022) but we recognise that we need to take forward the longer-term actions that have already been agreed to manage these increasing recreational pressures. This is likely to entail a fundamental review of an increasingly outdated and fragmented infrastructure that includes campsites, car parks and the waymarked off road cycle routes. There is also a need to secure opportunities for significant new nature-rich green spaces for recreation close to where people live, to both take pressure away from the protected habitats of the New Forest and to create healthy communities for the future, such as exploring the feasibility of a new country park to benefit the growing resident populations on the Waterside.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- Estimated increase in the level of recreational access to protected sites of around 11%, solely from new housing within a 25km radius of the New Forest's internationally designated nature conservation sites.
- Almost 130,000 new dwellings / 16.4% increase in housing within 25km of the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites by 2036

Traffic and Transport

Transport is absolutely fundamental to the sustainable future of the New Forest – how we move affects how we live, work and interact; how we experience places; how our businesses operate; and our health and wellbeing.

The New Forest is one of the most visited National Parks in England and traffic within the National Park is a major issue for many residents and visitors. The New Forest also has some of the highest car ownership in the country and the vast majority of visitors travel to the area by car. With a limited range of alternative transport options, an ageing population and lack of connectivity, the opportunities for active travel for some journey types are more limited. There is evidence to show that whilst there was a reduction in traffic in Hampshire during the pandemic lockdowns, traffic levels quickly bounced back to more typical 'pre-Covid' levels.

High levels of car dependency can affect the quality of life of local communities, the quiet enjoyment of the National Park, the welfare of livestock and the integrity of the Forest's landscape and habitats. It is also a significant local contributor to climate change and air quality, with roads and road transport generating the highest emissions in the National Park. Other matters of concern include the volume of traffic generally, verge parking, animal accidents, maintenance of minor roads, congestion in the larger villages (particularly Lyndhurst), failure to observe speed limits, lack of sustainable transport alternatives and commercial lorries'/vans' use of minor Forest roads.

Reducing CO₂ emissions from transport is a major priority. The Government's Decarbonising Transport Strategy (2021) sets out the commitments to fully decarbonise transport by 2050, including greater promotion of cycling and walking. Both Hampshire County Council and Wiltshire Council are preparing new Local Transport Plans with a focus on sustainable transport and reducing dependency on the private car.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- Total carbon footprint in the National Park was 500kt of CO_{2e} (kilo tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) in 2021 with the largest emissions coming from road transport (40%)
- 50 commoners' animals killed on the roads in 2020
- Only 7% of visitors travelling to the New Forest are car free
- Over 100km of off-road cycle paths, although not always well connected to enable round trips/active travel between destinations

Commoning, farming and land management

The New Forest is celebrated as a living, working landscape where sustainable farming and land management systems deliver many benefits to society – increasingly known as 'public goods'. The unique and ancient system of common grazing is a critical component of ensuring the Forest survives as an extensive, intact cultural landscape.

This new Plan coincides with the start of a period of ‘agricultural transition’ following the UK’s departure from the EU. Funds will be diverted from Direct Payments to farmers into a new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) from 2024. This will replace the Higher Level Stewardship scheme that over 12 years has provided more than £22 million to help restore and enhance the internationally-important habitats of the New Forest. Partners on this scheme are now working together to understand what is needed to deliver public goods into the future. From 2021-24, a Farming in Protected Landscape programme will support farmers and land managers in the National Park deliver environmental outcomes and contribute to Government priorities for nature, climate, people and place.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- 22,919 hectares of landcover within the National Park classified as high importance for pollinating insects
- 20 new commoners’ dwellings built since 1992

Affordable housing

The provision of affordable housing in the New Forest is consistently raised as one of the biggest challenges facing local communities in the National Park. The affordability of housing is a major barrier to sustainable communities in the New Forest, where the average house price is around 15 times average earnings – making the New Forest the least affordable National Park in the UK.

The high proportion of larger properties, and the associated high price of housing, make it particularly hard for young people and young families to secure low-cost housing that would enable them to continue living in the area.

There is some early evidence to suggest that the pandemic has accelerated people moving from high density urban areas to the countryside, which together with more people choosing to work from home, is likely to increase pricing pressures on the National Park’s limited housing stock.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- Most expensive National Park in England: average price for a house within the National Park was £643,371 in 2019, about 15 times the average wage of people living in the National Park
- Over 200 eligible applicants on New Forest District Council’s and Wiltshire Council’s housing registers waiting for affordable housing opportunities in the National Park
- 51 new affordable homes have been completed in the National Park since 2006

Connecting with people

The English National Parks were created in part to provide a healing space, both mentally and physically, in the aftermath of the Second World War. The pandemic has similarly raised many fundamental questions about the way we can sustain healthy lives in harmony with our environment. There is a greater appreciation of our natural environment and the benefits of having accessible green space on our doorstep. Just as in the 1940s, National Parks are well placed to be inclusive and accessible places that support the nation's health and wellbeing and to lead the way on sustainable tourism and opportunities for people to volunteer and engage in community projects for the benefit of all. Government is responding to calls for these opportunities to be improved and more open to all by supporting a renewed focus in protected landscapes to reach and welcome people and remove barriers to access to National Parks for all parts of society.

Key state-of-play indicators:

- One of the lowest 'easy to use' footpath network rating compared with other National Parks (taking account of factors such as obstructions, overgrowth, and condition of gates)
- Visitor surveys reveal that of people within 5km of the National Park boundary, 89% of those living in the 10% least deprived areas had visited in the previous year compared to 58% of those in the 10% most deprived areas. This trend continues as you move further from the boundary (source Footprint Ecology 2019)

Working together

There is a huge and diverse range of organisations, charities, groups and fora working in and for the New Forest, with healthy levels of public engagement and participation. There are some excellent examples of partnership working but equally there are many areas where organisations and communities could work better together and pool resources to achieve more and in doing so strengthen the understanding of the New Forest beyond our boundaries, presenting a more unified, powerful voice to national and regional policy and decision makers.

At the time of writing, the Government is consulting on how partner organisations can work together more effectively in protected landscapes. It is also widely recognised that strengthened management plans would secure greater ambition for our special landscapes and to better reflect all parts of society. This Plan takes account of the proposed direction in the Government consultation and is written in anticipation of a strengthened role for management plans and requirement for public bodies to work more collaboratively going forward.

Our shared ambition

In order to deliver the proposed Vision, we have focused on five theme-based 'agendas for action' which describe in more detail what we want to achieve and how we plan to do it. The themes do not cover all of the work that will be ongoing within the National Park but instead highlight the areas where we intend to work together to achieve transformational change. The themes are intended to be taken together as an integrated package of measures that reinforce one another and work across the landscape. The agendas for action in this new Plan are very ambitious, and we recognise that they will be challenging to realise, but their inclusion in the Plan is intended to drive and target efforts to work as a high-performing partnership for the New Forest National Park and to secure the funding and resources required.

For the next five years, our collective endeavour will focus on achieving outcomes in five key interlinked areas:

- **Nature Recovery** – habitats are more resilient, restored, expanded, connected and maintained to enable wildlife to thrive, both within and beyond the National Park
- **Net Zero with Nature** – significant cuts in land-based carbon emissions are secured through restoring natural habitats and enabling carbon capture
- **Thriving Forest** – a living, working Forest is sustained through its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty and support for commoning. There is a vibrant local produce market, access to affordable homes and a growing green economy featuring sustainable tourism and green businesses
- **An inclusive National Park** – people within reach of the New Forest of all backgrounds, abilities and socio-economic groups value the National Park as an important part of their lives and seek to care for it
- **Team New Forest** – communities, businesses and organisations work together as a team to deliver the vision of the Partnership Plan, sharing knowledge, ideas and resources to deliver the best for the Forest

Key themes at a glance

	What we are seeking to achieve
Nature Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a local nature recovery plan to (i) maintain, restore and expand habitats so that they are resilient and support thriving wildlife (ii) mitigate recreational pressures and (iii) ensure recreation takes place in the most resilient areas • Harness the benefits we receive from nature in the New Forest ('natural capital') to generate increased investment and projects to enhance nature and the services it provides • Help landowners, farmers and commoners move to the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) which rewards working with nature
Net Zero with Nature (NZWN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'net zero with nature' programme with partners and communities to ensure the National Park is carbon neutral by 2050. • Promote and develop best practice in nature-based solutions to meet climate and nature goals • Help communities to take action on the climate emergency
Thriving Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect cultural heritage assets and support commoning and local produce to sustain the unique natural beauty of the landscape and culture of the New Forest for future generations • Invest in green skills and jobs, creating a recognised reputation as a centre of excellence for a growing green economy • Provide more affordable housing
An inclusive National Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities to deliver a 'Natural Health Service' within and beyond the National Park, through a programme of measures provided by communities, businesses and the health and environment sectors • Foster a greater appreciation of the New Forest, its landscape and cultural heritage • Help new and diverse audiences connect with nature, discover why the National Park is special and how to care for it, with a particular focus on young people
Team New Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish new ways of engaging with our communities, hearing their ideas and encouraging grassroots action • Ensure the New Forest is leading the environmental agenda by delivering exemplary projects and partnerships and showing how these can support and shape policy and sustainable decisions beyond our boundaries, both regionally and nationally • Develop a data, evidence and insights capability to underpin our collective decisions and actions and use up to date technology to help us manage and communicate across the National Park more effectively

1. Nature Recovery

Outcome:

Habitats are more resilient, restored, expanded, connected and maintained to enable wildlife to thrive, both within and beyond the National Park.

Why is it important?

The New Forest National Park is one of the most valuable areas for wildlife in Europe and has the highest proportion of designated nature conservation sites of any National Park in the country (54% of the National Park is a Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area or Ramsar Site and a further 5% is non-statutory sites (SINCs)). Even though they remain important we can no longer simply protect nature from harm through special sites and reserves. The unique mosaic of heathland, mires, grassland, woodlands rivers and ponds of the Open Forest; the fields, hedges and woodlands of the forest fringe; the species-rich floodplains of the Avon Valley; and the grazing marshes and saline lagoons of the coastal plain - all are under threat from a variety of factors including climate change, recreation pressure, new diseases and invasive species.

The condition of the New Forest SSSIs has shown a slight increase in recent years as a result of large-scale habitat restoration work under the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship scheme, with 53% in favourable condition (2022). There is no comprehensive assessment of the condition of non-statutory wildlife sites. Urgent action is needed to ensure our habitats are more resilient, better managed, bigger and more joined up. Ecosystems need to be restored and wildlife needs to be able to move through the landscape freely if it is to adapt to change, which means looking beyond the Open Forest and working across the wider countryside.

The New Forest is well placed to drive a nature recovery network locally, in particular through increased connectivity within and beyond the boundaries of the National Park. Nature cannot recover if it is restricted to isolated pockets and therefore we need to ensure the nature recovery network is joined up across a landscape scale.

Nature Recovery is a major commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the Government is putting National Parks at the heart of driving forward and delivering nature recovery and building our resilience to climate change. The Government has also committed to protect 30% of land in the UK by 2030 to support nature recovery. By bringing together partners, legislation and funding, we can make an important contribution to this target and provide nature-based solutions that will restore ecosystems, habitats and prioritise key species for recovery and reintroduction.

Our priorities

We will work together, and at scale, to maintain, reconnect and enhance nature. We commit to developing a nature recovery programme for the National Park that:

- 1.1. Makes more space for nature through:
 - 1.1.1. Restoration and expansion of the Open Forest heath, mire and pasture woodland habitats; inclosures suitable for restoration and sites that share a common boundary with the Open Forest
 - 1.1.2. Enhancing grassland and open habitats, rejuvenating hedgerows, woodland and arable habitats of the forest fringe
 - 1.1.3. A programme of river, wetland restoration and pond creation
 - 1.1.4. Opportunities for coastal realignment and saltmarsh restoration
 - 1.1.5. Opportunities to reduce flood risk by working with natural processes within catchments
 - 1.1.6. A programme of halting and reversing the decline of priority species, supporting species recovery, reintroduction of native species where appropriate and control of invasive species
- 1.2. Enhances Natural Capital by:
 - 1.2.1. Valuing and accounting for the public goods provided by the New Forest
 - 1.2.2. Providing accessible nature-rich green space near to where people live
 - 1.2.3. Incorporating natural capital in our policies and programmes
 - 1.2.4. Generating opportunities for increased investment in ecosystem services
 - 1.2.5. Coordinating research to better understand the role of peat and other carbon stores in the New Forest
- 1.3. Supports nature recovery through the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) by:
 - 1.3.1. Working with and through the 'Forest Farming Group' to develop a common approach to land management which delivers on the 25 Year Environment Plan's ambition of 'public money for public goods'
 - 1.3.2. Taking a collaborative approach with private landowners, farmers, land managers and conservation charities
 - 1.3.3. Continuing to provide advice to landowners, farmers and commoners
 - 1.3.4. Providing support for ELMS Test and Trial projects and farm cluster groups across the National Park
- 1.4. Ensures developers deliver a wider range of environmental benefits over and above the full environmental impact of the proposed development by:
 - 1.4.1. Having clear and up-to-date planning policies and new supplementary planning guidance that maximise this Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through new development
 - 1.4.2. Adopting a Design Code for new buildings

- 1.4.3. Developing a better understanding of the impact of development and activities on dark night skies and taking opportunities to mitigate those impacts
- 1.5. Mitigates recreational pressures by:
 - 1.5.1. Developing a spatial plan for where recreation should be accommodated in the New Forest and surrounding areas
 - 1.5.2. Agreeing a strategy to facilitate changes to the location and capacity of car parking on the Open Forest and adjacent commons
 - 1.5.3. Developing a strategic approach to mitigate the potential impacts associated with increasing recreational pressures arising from planned new housing and visitor accommodation on the internationally designated habitats
 - 1.5.4. Increasing the level of funding available for recreation management so that it is sufficient to address both existing and future needs
 - 1.5.5. Using appropriate and proportionate enforcement strategies to deter illegal use of the Forest

2. Net Zero with Nature

Outcome:

Net zero carbon emissions is achieved by 2050, through significant cuts in land-based emissions and the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, to both reduce emissions production and remove emissions from the atmosphere.

Why is it important?

Climate change, along with biodiversity loss, is the greatest long-term challenge of the present day. The impact of climate change on the New Forest is likely to be wide reaching, with warmer, wetter winters, hotter, dryer summers, rising sea levels and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events, the effects of which are already being seen. The overriding challenge for the Partnership Plan is to make a significant contribution to both mitigating and facilitating the adaptation of people and wildlife to a warming world.

The National Park Authority declared a climate and nature emergency in January 2020, with a commitment to reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030. Many of the partner organisations have made similar declarations and we all recognise that progress can only be made through collaborative working and a collective ambition to achieve net zero with nature.

The natural environment is the most important and effective solution we have for capturing and sequestering carbon long-term. As a partnership we will work to safeguard the New Forest landscape, restore habitats to sequester carbon and combat biodiversity loss as well as support behaviour changes to ensure the National Park continues to be a treasured landscape for the nation.

Our priorities

We will provide leadership to reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon sequestration, working towards the National Park being 'net zero with nature' by 2050. Net zero is achieved when the amount of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) emitted by human activities on a global scale are equal to that being removed by the natural environment. We will do this through a programme of work that:

2.1. Establishes baseline data and evidence by:

- 2.1.1. Working collectively to both identify relevant emissions and the pace at which they need to be reduced to meet net zero by 2050
- 2.1.2. Researching and monitoring likely impacts of climate change and how that affects the National Park's ability to maintain its carbon stores and continue to sequester carbon
- 2.1.3. Developing research agendas and links with national level research bodies
- 2.1.4. Mapping both existing carbon storage and sequestration (carbon removal from atmosphere) rates across the National Park, as well as the potential increase in carbon sequestration the Park could support.

- 2.2. Implements nature-based climate solutions by:
 - 2.2.1. Identifying the range of nature-based climate solutions in the National Park and working collectively to agree actions to implement these, e.g. the most appropriate type of habitat restoration, preferred areas for tree and hedgerow planting, woodland creation including natural woodland regeneration ('the right tree in the right place')
 - 2.2.2. Providing advice on low carbon and nature-friendly practices and engaging farmers / landowners in the uptake of agricultural practices that both reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon sequestration (carbon removal from atmosphere where it causes climate change)
 - 2.2.3. Training advisors on low carbon and nature-friendly farming practices
 - 2.2.4. Taking action to protect our existing carbon stores by building resilience into our ecosystems e.g. maintaining genetic diversity within our woodlands to combat pests and diseases that threaten tree survival
 - 2.2.5. Exploring the potential for both public funding and private finance to fund nature restoration at the scale required to tackle the climate crisis
- 2.3. Builds a New Forest coalition for a net zero economy by:
 - 2.3.1. Creating forums for working collectively to reduce carbon emissions across all sectors
 - 2.3.2. Carefully integrating infrastructure projects with the wider natural environment
 - 2.3.3. Promoting measures to reduce demand, increase energy efficiency and use energy from renewable energy sources
 - 2.3.4. Promoting investment opportunities to fund nature recovery that increases carbon sequestration and protects our existing carbon stores
- 2.4. Activates communities through programmes of education and engagement by:
 - 2.4.1. Supporting our communities to take action by encouraging low carbon living and sustainable purchasing
 - 2.4.2. Encouraging visitors to adopt low carbon forms of travel to access the Park
 - 2.4.3. Enlisting more volunteers and support for the New Forest Ambassadors' Scheme
- 2.5. Increases Sustainable Travel by:
 - 2.5.1. Producing and delivering an agreed New Forest Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
 - 2.5.2. Campaigning for lower speed limits across the Forest where appropriate and evidenced, to secure quieter, slower and reduced traffic impacts
 - 2.5.3. Developing a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to sustainable transport through the relevant Local Transport Plans and by developing a New Forest Transport Strategy
 - 2.5.4. Supporting bids for schemes that enable us to decarbonise the transport system

3. Thriving Forest

Outcome:

A living, working Forest is sustained through its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty and support for commoning. There is a vibrant local produce market, access to affordable homes, a growing green economy featuring sustainable tourism and green businesses.

Why is it important?

The New Forest is one of the last remaining extensive areas of unspoilt countryside and semi-natural habitat in lowland Europe. It is a cultural landscape of exceptional natural beauty, shaped over the millennia through the close relationship between the land, the history and culture of its people. It is also a living working landscape that has survived largely because of the persistence of a pastoral economy based on the exercise of common rights of grazing and mast. The New Forest is now one of the few remaining extensive systems of common rights operating in lowland Europe. There are nevertheless concerns about the longer-term viability of commoning, which is particularly vulnerable to recreational pressures.

Maintaining a high-quality natural environment can also contribute substantial economic benefits by supporting the growing green economy, including sustainable tourism and helping to attract high-value businesses and employees. Local produce and local businesses are vital to the health and wellbeing of our rural environment and local economy.

The Government's National Parks Circular confirms that by harnessing the economy to environmental ends, tangible economic benefits can be delivered in National Parks through the delivery of the two statutory purposes³. The New Forest National Park itself is home to 35,000 people and around 2,500 local businesses. Tourism and the visitor economy make a significant contribution to the local economy. It is estimated that tourism-related activities generate over £528 million annually and provide nearly 20% of all local jobs.

For these reasons, national policy recognises the need for small-scale, sustainably located development within National Parks to support the socio-economic wellbeing of our communities. We need to support community and green economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and at the same time take steps to address societal issues such as the high cost of housing and an ageing population.

Our priorities

We will sustain a living working Forest through a collective programme of work that:

³ National Parks Circular, 2010 - [Policy paper overview: English national parks and the broads: UK government vision and circular 2010 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-papers/policy-paper-overview-english-national-parks-and-the-broads)

- 3.1. Increases green skills and jobs by:
 - 3.1.1. Recognising the National Park as a centre of excellence for green skills and jobs and a hub for investment in natural capital
 - 3.1.2. Developing a strategy and opportunities for young people through education and training
 - 3.1.3. Designing an apprenticeship programme building on the 'Our Past Our Future' (OPOF) ranger scheme
 - 3.1.4. Creating a green recovery / investment fund
- 3.2. Supports Sustainable Land Management by:
 - 3.2.1. Developing new business models with landowners to support the delivery of public goods
 - 3.2.2. Maintaining, continuing and enhancing public goods through commoning and farming; safeguard vital back-up grazing
 - 3.2.3. Facilitating the Forest Farming Group
- 3.3. Champions the future of New Forest Commoning by:
 - 3.3.1. Securing the future of commoning by collaborating with relevant organisations to protect and promote commoning
- 3.4. Supports New Forest Business and Green Tourism by:
 - 3.4.1 Encouraging investment by businesses to halve emissions by 2030
 - 3.4.2 Supporting the development of activities delivered by local businesses that provide authentic, sustainable experiences linked to the landscape
 - 3.4.3 Supporting local produce through the New Forest Marque
- 3.5. Increases the availability of affordable housing by:
 - 3.5.1. Providing more affordable housing for local communities, commoners and forestry keepers where appropriate, and retaining the existing stock of affordable and occupancy restricted housing
 - 3.5.2. Facilitating site finding, community involvement and application process through the 'rural exception route'
 - 3.5.3. Better monitoring and reporting of availability of restricted housing stock (conditions/leases/tenancy agreements)

4. An inclusive National Park

Outcome:

People within reach of the New Forest, of all backgrounds, abilities and socio-economic groups, value the National Park as an important part of their lives and seek to care for it.

Why is it important?

People need nature and culture for their physical, mental and spiritual health. The future of the New Forest depends on 'future generations' understanding and valuing this internationally-important landscape – and helping to care for it. Education officers across Forest organisations teach 10,000 children and young people a year with sessions tailored to learning about the New Forest and rangers work with thousands more through their family-focussed events and activities. Many more are engaged through the media, print and online platforms.

We want to encourage greater understanding and appreciation of the National Park, whilst ensuring minimum impact, and support the social and economic benefits that visitors bring in a sustainable way. We also want to specifically help people who face barriers or particular challenges to access so that they can benefit equally from engagement with the National Park. Effective engagement, interpretation and communication programmes with new and existing partners will be required to ensure we are a National Park for all.

Our priorities

We will do this through a programme of work that:

4.1. Promotes health and wellbeing by:

- 4.1.1. Building a strong, mutually beneficial partnership between the health and environment sectors, including a five-year programme of 'Health Education Fellowships' and facilitating effective local networks
- 4.1.2. Addressing health inequalities locally and regionally through improved green space, targeted interventions and nature-based referrals
- 4.1.3. Increasing uptake of walking for health, inclusive cycling for health and volunteering for health programmes.

4.2. Connects people with nature and landscape by:

- 4.2.1. Removing barriers to participation and access – physical and perceived, e.g. affordable public transport
- 4.2.2. Recruiting more rangers, part of whose role is to help people understand and enjoy the New Forest, including apprentice rangers
- 4.2.3. Using data and evidence to create a more accurate picture of the current and possible users of the New Forest National Park and barriers to participation

- 4.2.4. Developing comprehensive and inclusive programmes of health and youth engagement and outreach to build relationships with diverse communities and audiences, including a Youth Action Project and bespoke education activity.
- 4.3. Leads inclusive place-making, celebrates beauty and safeguards our cultural heritage by:
 - 4.3.1. Assisting communities and local organisations to lead and shape cultural and natural heritage projects that foster identity and a sense of place
 - 4.3.2. Bringing together cultural heritage and archaeological datasets, identifying gaps and surveying identified areas to achieve a complete picture for future management
 - 4.3.3. Interpreting and disseminating landscape, cultural and natural heritage through specific outreach such as the New Forest Knowledge website.

5. Team New Forest

Outcome:

Communities, businesses and organisations work together as a team to deliver the vision of the Partnership Plan, sharing knowledge, ideas and resources to deliver the best for the Forest.

Why is it important?

The long-term survival of the New Forest is just as dependent on what happens around the boundary, regionally and nationally as within. We need to consolidate our networks and influence, nurture a culture of collaboration and enable delivery of policies and a package of measures to ensure the National Park landscape, economy and communities thrive. We need to be better than the sum of our parts to meet the challenges ahead and to ensure we are as efficient and effective a team for the New Forest as possible.

We want to harness the wealth of experience, skills and views in delivering this Partnership Plan. The Plan will be a living programme of work that will evolve over time, adapting and improving to new challenges and changing agendas. As well as building effective and impactful working arrangements to deliver, we also need to ensure that we hear and take account of all sections of our community and incorporate their ideas and innovations as we move forwards.

Everyone stands to benefit when we embrace and value the diversity of thoughts, perspectives and ways of working that people from different backgrounds, experiences and identities bring to the National Park. Our work and our National Park will be richer and more impactful if we take account of and include the views, talents and skills of all sections of society.

We will ensure a range of interventions are in place to enable all sectors of our community to have their say, take part and influence action in the National Park.

Data, evidence and understanding of the context we work in must underpin and help guide the Partnership Plan and our work with different organisations and groups. It will also be needed to monitor and measure impact. We will establish a National Park insights capability with universities, businesses and other stakeholders to ensure that our decision-making is anchored in robust research, that our action is monitored and that we are able to capture regular insights into the views of the community and of relevant social, economic and policy context.

Our priorities

We will do this through a programme of work that:

5.1. Works with a wide range of people in our community and beyond by:

- 5.1.1. Growing understanding of each other and our audiences
- 5.1.2. Enabling enriching experiences for a diversity of people

- 5.2. Establishes strong partnerships and relationships within and beyond boundaries by:
 - 5.2.1. Increasing the breadth and depth of our engagement by helping recreational users to understand their impacts on the National Park and the changes residents could make to help contribute to nature's recovery and tackle the climate emergency.
 - 5.2.2. Establishing a new Partnership Board
 - 5.2.3. Advocating regionally, nationally and internationally; identifying key means by which we can realise the ambition of the Partnership Plan
 - 5.2.4. Expanding and consolidating links from the New Forest to Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire
 - 5.2.5. Activating and channelling people's enthusiasm for caring for the New Forest and learning more about it (such as New Forest Ambassadors Scheme); harnessing and supporting existing movements within our communities
- 5.3. Leads the green agenda; seeking to influence, shape and innovate by:
 - 5.3.1. Ensuring blue-green infrastructure is in place, connecting key network areas to help solve climate challenges by building with nature
 - 5.3.2. Managing recreation across the area effectively, seeking new opportunities for sites where people and nature can benefit
 - 5.3.3. Working with the national parks and wider protected landscapes to ensure they are recognised as central to providing nature-based solutions to the climate emergency and recovery of people.
 - 5.3.4. Positioning the Green Halo Partnership to cement our role as thought leaders, influencing, developing and implementing policy in this area
 - 5.3.5. Championing and helping to deliver the green recovery and the 'Greenprint' aspirations of the wider area
 - 5.3.6. Working with Southampton City Council on developing its National Park City campaign
 - 5.3.7. Exploring the National Park City region bid with Southampton City Council, South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- 5.4. Develops our reputation as a 'centre of excellence' through our work together for the National Park and wider area by:
 - 5.4.1. Understanding our evidence needs, the gaps and how to fill them; we are known as a centre of excellence for evidence, data and insights – in its commission, collation and application
 - 5.4.2. Successfully scanning horizons using up-to-date evidence and data
 - 5.4.3. Developing a 'SMART' National Park ambition with greatly improved broadband connectivity and use of up-to-date technologies where they can help solve National Park issues and take beneficial opportunities
 - 5.4.4. Working with each other efficiently, effectively and with respect.

Annex 1 - Actions to deliver the Partnership Plan priorities

The Partnership Plan is an overarching strategic document for the National Park and sets the framework for more detailed plans and strategies, including the annual business plans prepared by the National Park Authority and partner organisations.

A new partnership group will be established to oversee the implementation of the new Plan and to lead the review of future updates of the Plan. This new partnership group, comprising a small core membership of key partner organisations with an independent chair, will also activate and monitor the actions in the new Plan.

Delivery and performance of the Plan will be evaluated by tracking progress against identified measures of success. An annual progress report which will be published detailing key outputs and case studies from projects and other activities. We shall share this information widely with the public and all those helping to deliver our shared ambition for the National Park.

SEE SEPARATE ANNEX

Nature Recovery

Priority	Action	Target date	Measures of success	Partners	Legislation and policy
Making space for nature	NR1: Restore and expand priority habitats NR2: Halt and reverse the decline of priority species (from the Hampshire Notables list)	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% of the National Park well managed for nature and in good or recovering condition • 5,000 hectares of priority habitats brought into active management • 10km of hedgerow created • 75% of SSSI restored to favourable condition • 5km watercourses enhanced • Number of new ponds created • Decline of priority species halted; species reintroductions informed by Local Nature Recovery Strategies • Multi-functional accessible greenspace near residential development created and designed to support nature recovery objectives in the Forest 	NE, HIIWT, RSPB, NT, HIIWT, RSPB, EA / NFCP, FE/FC, NFLAS, Parish councils, WC & HCC	25 YEP, Environment Act 2021, Glover (Proposal 3) State of Nature report
Enhancing Natural Capital	NR3: Promote understanding of natural capital and its role in the New Forest	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural capital baseline adopted and used by partners • Peat resource map established 	NPA, FE, NE	National Climate Change Adaptation Programme, Glover (Proposal 2)
Supporting Nature Recovery through ELMS	NR4: Develop closer working with and better support for land managers	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELM scheme for the Open Forest agreed by 2023 • Increase in number of landowners, farmers and commoners benefitting from advice 	Forest Farming Group, NFLAS, NFDC, TVBC, HCC, WC, RSPB	25 YEP, Glover (Proposal 5)
Mitigating recreational pressures	NR5: Agree and publish a spatial plan which identifies more appropriate locations for recreation and associated infrastructure	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Park Local Development Order (LDO) developed in tandem with spatial plan (2024) • Mitigation strategy agreed • Funding for recreation management secured • Availability of new enforcement powers to address illegal use & activities on the Forest • App to distribute New Forest code messages and collect recreation management data launched 	NPA, NE, Mitigation project steering group, NPA, FE, GNF, NFT, NFDC, RSPB	Footprint Ecology reports, Habitats Regulations

Net Zero with Nature

Priority	Action	Target date	Measures of success	Partners	Legislation and policy
Establishing data and evidence baseline	NZN1: Enhance understanding, identification and monitoring of carbon data	2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon emission baseline for the National Park agreed by 2022 Carbon storage and sequestration rates for National Park habitats established and mapped by 2022 Actions to reduce emissions to Net Zero identified by 2023 Management interventions to increase carbon sequestration rates identified Target carbon sequestration rate identified for the National Park Climate change effects on National Park's carbon storage and sequestration capabilities investigated 	NPA, FE, NE, EA, NFDC, HCC, HIWWT, RSPB	Glover (Proposal 3), Net Zero with Nature strategy due 2022
Implement nature-based climate solutions	NZN2: Implement nature-based climate solutions to reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon sequestration by identifying suitable interventions, working with land managers and securing sufficient finance	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of land-based emissions in line with a trajectory that is compatible with preventing global warming to 1.5C Actions that sequester carbon prioritised Maintain habitats' carbon storage capabilities and prevent their degradation The New Forest's peat resource is protected and enhanced Woodland creation carried out where appropriate Hedgerows created and restored Areas set aside for woodland to naturally regenerate Coastal saltmarsh protected Soil carbon stores enhanced and protected Number of farmers / landowners engaged and collaborating with others at a landscape scale Public and private finance secured to restore nature and sequester carbon 	NPA, HIWWT, FE, NFLAS, land management community, NE, HCC, National Trust, RSPB, NFDC	Forest Design Plan, Local Nature Recovery Design Plan, NEIRF project, Glover (Proposal 3), 25 YEP, Net Zero with Nature strategy due 2022
Building a New Forest coalition for a net zero economy	<p>NZN3: Work collectively to reduce carbon emissions and identify investment opportunities</p> <p>NZN4: Require all developers to build zero-carbon homes</p>	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forums established to work together to reduce emissions Emissions reduced in line with limiting global warming to 1.5°C Encourage residents and visitors to use sustainable forms of travel to access the National Park Reduce energy use and increase low-carbon energy use in buildings across the National Park Reduce waste creation in the National Park Zero carbon homes policy adopted in new National Park Local Plan 	Green Halo / PFSH, NFLAS, NF Business Partnership, HCC, NFDC	Glover (Proposal 3), Net Zero with Nature strategy due 2022
Activating communities	NZN5: Support communities, businesses, and visitors to	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and engagement programme established by 2022 	NPA, NFDC, WC, NFBP, RSPB,	Glover (Proposal 3), Net Zero with

	adopt a more carbon friendly way of living and visiting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for sustainable living initiatives secured (in addition to SCF) • Increased number of volunteers taking part in climate, nature and heritage activities 	education and youth work partnerships, tourism partnerships, parish councils, green groups	Nature strategy due 2022
Increasing sustainable travel	NZN6: Adopt and implement sustainable transport plans	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Forest Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) agreed and network improvements made • Lower speed limit trial implemented and analysed • Bespoke New Forest transport and rural roads approach established, as part of Local Transport Plans • Funding for sustainable transport schemes secured • Reduced number of visitors using the private car as their main mode of transport (2019 baseline 93%) • Increased number of people using the New Forest Tour (compared to 2019 baseline) 	NPA, NFDC, HCC, , WC, RSPB Police, SWR, MoreBus	DfT guidance on local cycling & walking infrastructure plans, Net Zero with Nature strategy due 2022

Thriving Forest

Priority	Action	Target	Measures of success	Partners	Legislation and policy
Increasing green skills and jobs	TF1: Promote opportunities in the green jobs sector, especially for young people	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and training strategy for young people established, including an apprenticeship programme More young people reached Green recovery / investment fund created 	NPA, LEP, NFDC, RSPB, education and youth work partnerships, Energise Me, universities	Greenprint, Freeport
Supporting sustainable land management and securing the future of commoning	TF2: Collaborate with relevant organisations to protect and promote commoning	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commoners' review updated Public's knowledge about commoning and its heritage increased No net loss of back-up grazing land 	CDA, Verderers, RSPB	NEIRF, ELM
Supporting NF business and green tourism	TF3: Increase green investment opportunities for businesses TF4: increased number of households benefitting from superfast broadband	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment in green infrastructure and initiatives Percentage of households benefitting from superfast broadband 	Go New Forest, LEP, NFDC, WC, RSPB, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, NFBP, HCC	Green Leaf
Increasing the availability of affordable housing	TF5: Work collectively in identifying and facilitating site finding, community involvement and the application process	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 new affordable dwellings delivered through rural exception sites No net loss of existing stock of affordable and occupancy restricted dwellings to open market housing 	NPA, NFDC, HHH, FE	Forestry England Housing Review, Local Plans, National planning policy and guidance
Increase the Park's resilience to the effects of climate change	TF6: Increase the resilience of the Park's habitats and adapt Park infrastructure where necessary	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change impact assessments carried out on Park green infrastructure and natural capital resilience-building interventions carried out Identify infrastructure at risk to climate and nature impacts and carry out remedial works carried out 	NPA, NFDC, HCC, WC, FE, NE, HIWWT, RSPB, National Trust, NFLAS	Climate Change Adaptation Manual 2020 by Natural England, Independent-Assessment-of-UK-Climate-Risk-Advice Climate Change Committee 2021

An inclusive National Park

Priority	Action	Target	Measures of success	Partners	Legislation and policy
Promoting health and wellbeing	INP1: Implement a variety of health and nature-based interventions	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people benefitting from new partnerships between the health and environment sectors, with a focus on health inequalities • More people taking part in walking / cycling / nature activities for health programmes, with better information sharing and signposting to offers • New PedALL centre established in Ashurst 	NPA, NHS, Bournemouth Uni, PedALL, NFDC, RSPB, Community First	National Parks England & Public Health England Joint Accord 2017, Glover (Proposal 10)
Connecting people with nature and landscape	INP2: Establish programmes to engage with more people from diverse backgrounds and support initiatives	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New programmes established that remove barriers to participation and access to nature • Increased number of rangers working in the National Park • Increased number of people from specific audiences engaged • Increased number of volunteers and ambassadors are from under-served groups • Youth Action project established 	FE, NT, HCC, NPA, NF, RSPB, Access Forum, New Forest Educators' Forum	Glover (Proposal 7), Statutory National Park purposes
Safeguarding cultural heritage	INP3: Establish programmes for communities and residents in fostering local identity	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More local communities (heritage groups, parish councils, interest groups, local organisations) involved in cultural and natural heritage projects • Cultural heritage and archaeological dataset consolidated • Maintain 'NF Knowledge' website and increase participation • Successful 'Culture in Common' Arts Council England-funded project 	NPA, NFHC, RSPB, NFDC, parishes, Energise Me	Statutory National Park purposes, HLS

Team New Forest

Priority	Action	Target	Measures of success	Partners	Legislation and policy
Establishing stronger partnerships within the New Forest boundary	TNF1: Deliver the annual action plan TNF2: Annual review and relaunch 'Care for the Forest, Care for Each Other' Action Plan	2023 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6,000 people/year engaged through programme of regular collaborative surveys and consultations by the partnership Establishment of new partnership group to oversee, activate and monitor the actions in the new Plan Care for the Forest campaign delivers measurable reduction in recreation impacts with more organisations / individuals supporting it 	NPA, constituent local authorities, other statutory bodies	Section 62, Environment Act 1995
Leading the Green Agenda beyond the New Forest	TNF3: Establish stronger links with neighbouring business communities and councils	2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of business engaged / signed-up to Green Halo Number of projects arising from Greenprint Southampton CC supported in national park city bid National Park City region concept scoped out 	NPA, LEP, SCC, SDNPA, AONB, Universities, Green Halo Partnership, HIOWWT, PFSH, Future South, Business South, Greentech South, BCP, Dorset Council, Wiltshire Council, TVBC	
Developing a Centre of Excellence of insights and innovation for the New Forest	TNF4: Understanding our evidence needs, the gaps and how to fill them	2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated State of the Park report published Audit of insights/data/evidence available completed and gaps identified to enable delivery of the Partnership Plan Dashboard-style webpage providing relevant data available on NPA website Improved broadband connectivity and use of up-to-date technologies to help solve National Park issues 	NPA, HCC, HBIC, universities	