

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022



Although the impact of the pandemic was still felt during 2021/22, the year also saw a return to normal for most service areas. It did, however, change the way council staff work and these changes will continue as we look at opportunities to further modernise the way we

work and provide services to our residents.

Covid financial support continued, and the council awarded self-isolation grants to individuals and local businesses as well as hardship funding. Services such as environmental health were able to deal with a backlog of work to support local business whilst still responding to changing guidelines.

Our Health and Leisure centres were transferred to Freedom Leisure during the year, marking a significant change to the organisation with 385 staff being transferred to the new provider. Not only will this arrangement provide a more sustainable service for our communities, but it is also set to deliver financial savings of £4m over ten years.

The council declared a nature and climate emergency with an action plan to help support delivery of this significant issue, and development of the waste strategy continued, with changes proposed that will further support the commitment to sustainability and the protection of natural resources.

Our planning and housing services continued to support the delivery of high-quality affordable housing, with the

implementation of greener housing initiatives and green infrastructure projects.

During the year, the highly complex combined Hampshire County Council and postponed Police and Crime Commissioner elections were successfully delivered, despite the Covid restrictions in place.

Significant progress was made on the Solent Freeport and discussions with our Hampshire partners on devolution taking into account the Government's levelling up agenda. The new Chief Executive joined us towards the end of the year, further supporting these initiatives.

The following annual report identifies the many achievements during the year and highlights each Portfolio's performance against the priorities we set.

We must now look forward, with new challenges to meet such as the rising cost of living, particularly from energy costs. We will support our community in developing the skills they need and promote opportunities for business growth, in turn providing employment and economic opportunities for our residents. This is further enhanced by the once in a generation opportunity on the waterside through the Solent Freeport to provide 26,000 jobs and £1.6bn in private sector investment. We will also be asking our residents for feedback on our services and delivery in a representative and cross cutting way and we do not underestimate the value of this input in informing our future strategic direction.

Cllr Edward Heron

Leader of New Forest District Council

Introduction - The New Forest



The New Forest is an area of southern England which includes one of the largest remaining tracts of unenclosed pastureland, heathland, and forest in the heavily populated south east. It is a unique place of history, wildlife and beauty and was established as a royal hunting preserve.

The local government administrative area of New Forest District Council (290 square miles) includes the New Forest National Park (206 square miles) and within the district there are 145 square miles of Crown land, managed by Forestry England.

The New Forest is a working forest that has prospered for nearly 1,000 years. Many of the historical agricultural practices are still retained, overseen by the Verderers. The most significant of these is the depasturing of ponies, cattle, pigs and donkeys in the open forest by authorised inhabitants known as Commoners.

The District Council was created on 1 April 1974 and is one of the most populated non-unitary authorities in England (179,649 - 2020 ONS mid year estimate).

Hampshire County Council are responsible for upper tier services and operating within the heart of the District Council area is the National Park Authority (NPA) established in 2005. The NPA is the planning authority for its area, and other services share responsibilities and work in close collaboration with New Forest District Council.

The latest data (pre-pandemic) shows that the New Forest was home to the third largest economy in Hampshire, with a total Gross Value Added of £4.4bn. The district contained just under 8,000 businesses in total. Leisure, tourism and marine along with their associated supply chains are significant employment and economic sectors within the district.

The very special nature of the New Forest, coupled with its excellent transport connections to the rest of the UK and to Europe, makes it an extremely attractive place to live, both for those in work and those wishing to retire (29.6% of the population is over 65 - 2020 ONS mid-year estimate). As a result, housing, and particularly affordable housing for local people, is a particular issue in the district.

Approximately 70% of the population live in the New Forest District Council authority area in the medium-sized towns of Hythe, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton.

There are 37 active town and parish councils within the district area representing a number of different communities, both rural and urban, each with their own identity and needs. The demographics can vary widely with the major towns having a significantly younger population compared to some of the more rural and coastal villages. For instance, the predominant age band in the ward of Totton North is 45 to 49, with 14.03% of the ward's households with dependent children aged 0 to 4, compared to the coastal village of Milford where 70 to 74 is the predominant age band and households with dependent children aged 0 to 4 only represents 3.91% of the ward's households.

The town and parish councils and the community and voluntary sector, including Community First and Citizens Advice New Forest are key partners in understanding and responding to these local needs and the broad range of organisations and community groups that exist means that the Council works collaboratively with and in the community to deliver solutions.

Portfolio Highlights 2021-22

LEADER'S

Trained **24** mental health first aiders.



Online meetings viewed over **5.6k** times.



Employed **four** apprentices

Recruited **92%** of the **248** vacancies filled this year first time.

FINANCE, INVESTMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES

Awarded **£16.7m+** in Covid-19 support grants to businesses and **£13.6m** in Business Rate relief.



Five properties purchased by Appletree lettings.

Paid out **+£79k** in Household Support Fund payments to **202** households.



ICT helpdesk tickets received.

Commercial: **£14m**

Residential: **£3.4m**

Value of investments

PLANNING, REGENERATION & INFRASTRUCTURE



Maintained **55%** market share and carried out **7,459** building control inspections.

Received **+1,600** calls to the duty planning officer.



Received **1,363** applications, and made **1,334** decisions.



PARTNERING & WELLBEING

Received **235** registrations for new food businesses. Issued **629** food hygiene interventions.



475 golf course members.

Carried out **90** animal welfare inspections



4,413 people registered for swimming lessons.



Held **five** community safety events
Raised **44** safeguarding concerns.



339 adults signed up to the Active Lifestyles programme.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

Received **1,467** approaches for homelessness support and prevented **56%** from becoming homeless



Built **24** new homes and **six** new temporary accommodation properties

Answered **43,616** calls, received **8,669** emails, and replied to **743** webchats.



ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL



Collected **60,000** tonnes of waste & recycling.

Imported **12,000** tonnes of rock to protect coast lines, and managed **760** beach huts.

21,626

Garden Waste Customers.



Sold **13,156** parking clocks.



Installed **29** electric vehicle charging points saving **+7,200kg** CO2 to date.

PEOPLE & PLACES



181 trees planted on NFDC land

Responded to **2,613** fly tipping incidents.



1.4m website page views

Awarded **+£244k** in community grants



14,865

subscribers to resident e-newsletter



Answered **65,930** calls

Received **29,618** emails

Replied to **3,574** webchats

BUSINESS, TOURISM AND HIGH STREETS

£234,750 value of filming in the district

81 filming locations available



29 Participants in the Youth Employment Hub

Carried out **82** Shop Doctor visits

Ran an online highstreets conference for **57** attendees



3,687 subscribers to business e-newsletter





Leader's

Delivering a sustainable and prosperous New Forest and putting our community first

Most significantly for this Portfolio a **climate and nature emergency** was declared in October 2021 and this will drive our sustainability agenda as a priority moving forward. A sustainability strategy and action plan has been developed, and a report was considered by the cabinet. This outlined key strategic actions, governance and a climate and nature emergency action plan with provisions made in the budget for investment into skills and capacity needed to prioritise and progress this key agenda. We look forward to welcoming a Climate Change manager to the council to lead on this cross-cutting work.

Ensuring that council assets were used in the most sustainable way was a key area of activity this year and construction began on two new-build developments on council-owned sites in Hythe and New Milton to provide homes for residents. These are being built to enhanced standards that will reduce carbon emissions and will be significantly more energy efficient, and will incorporate electric charging vehicle points and benefit from air source heat pump technology.

The PV solar panelling at Lymington Town hall was replaced during 2021/22, offering improved performance and it is planned that PV solar panelling will be incorporated into the Crow Lane development which will provide enough electricity for these buildings' average use.

The council continues to perform well and has been successful in returning all services to normal during the year. Members returned to face-to-face meetings in 2021, and online streaming of meetings has been maintained to further public engagement. Meetings were viewed over **5,600 times** during the year.

Last year the recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) were agreed, reducing the **number of district councillors** from 60 to **48**, with **26 new district wards**. Work is now being undertaken, with approved additional resources, to implement the changes arising from the review ahead of the May 2023 District and Parish elections.

The Worksmart initiative, a hybrid-working policy, was introduced offering staff the opportunity to work partly from home, or an alternative off-site location. This has been well received and will be reviewed later in 2022. Appletree Court reopened fully towards the end of 2021/22 and latest government guidelines were monitored and actioned to ensure the safety of staff and residents. The employee assistance programme was also reviewed to prioritise staff wellbeing.

The new chief executive has been keen to engage with staff and held

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Portfolio indicators above or on target	%	↑	-	-*	58%**	-
Vacancies filled first time	%	↑	-	94%	92%	↓
Sick days per FTE	Num	↓	-	5.81	11.63	↑
Total sick days	Num	↓	-	4579	7865	↑

Priorities

- Ensuring sustainability is at the centre of our decisions to preserve resources and the environment for future generations
- Excellence in services to our residents and continuing to maintain front line services
- Being an employer of choice
- Working with regional and local partners to ensure the prosperity of the New Forest area
- Ensuring effective democratic engagement and representation.

several staff engagement sessions throughout the year to ensure a good understanding of the issues they face and the opportunities to move services forward. The council will use the forthcoming staff survey as a tool to plan further focused engagement.

During the year, there was recruitment of staff into **248 vacancies**, 5 of which were employed under the government kickstart scheme, which provides funding for the creation of new jobs for 16–24 year-olds on Universal Credit. As a reflection of the current national recruitment picture, the percentage of vacancies filled first time dropped to 71% during the year, although this is now starting to recover and on average **92%** of vacancies have been filled first time.

To ensure residents' views are reflected in service delivery, and to maintain this performance at the level expected, work commenced on developing a representative residents' survey for delivery during 2022/23. This will help inform the council's future plans.

The council is playing a key role in wider regional partnerships with a drive to deliver opportunities for residents and businesses in the New Forest. There has been a significant step-change in the progress in setting up the new Solent Freeport. The outline business case has been approved by Government and a full business case has now been developed and submitted. This will help strengthen the local position and rebuild the economy attracting much-needed investment into the area, supported by skills development and education. Site specific agreements were put in place and scoping work began on a green framework to underpin the freeport.

Additionally, the Government published the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, providing much needed clarity to inform the continued work of this portfolio with Hampshire partners to understand the opportunities this brings at a district level, and to develop a devolution deal that meets the criteria.



Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure

Encouraging development that meets local needs and enhances the special qualities of the environment

Delivering the vision of the local plan and encouraging development that meets local needs and delivers positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes remains a priority. This portfolio will be instrumental in the Solent Freeport and waterside regeneration.

Most of the **18 strategic sites** identified in the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1 reached the pre-application or application stage by the end of 2021/22. The council continues to work collaboratively with site developers to bring the strategic sites forward successfully.

The number of new planning applications received during the year fell slightly to **1,363** (1,437 in 2019/20). Of the **1,334** decisions finalised, there was a significant increase in the number determined within the nationally prescribed timescales. This demonstrates that planned mitigation actions throughout 2021/22 were successful.

Calls in to planning remained steady averaging around **1,000 calls** per month, in line with last year. The procurement project to upgrade the IT system to deliver a more efficient customer friendly experience continued and is progressing as planned. The contract has been awarded to the chosen supplier and staff are now involved with the design of the new system.

The review of all supplementary planning documentation continued to be key area of activity for the portfolio with several reviews ongoing.

Building control market share remained steady at **55%**. All income targets were met for the third year in a row giving an opportunity to re-invest surplus within the service.

Work continued with Hampshire County Council on the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan for the Waterside, recognising the

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Number of houses completed (as set out in the Annual Authority Monitoring Report)	Num	↑	300	421	Expected July	-
Green infrastructure projects delivered	Num	↑	3	3	Expected July	-
Biodiversity Net Gain projects delivered	Num	↑	-	4	Expected July	-
Total amount of open space, play and sports provision, and cycling and walking infrastructure (projects)	Num	↑	-	3	Expected July	-
NFDC Building Control market share	%	↑	65%	55%	55%	↔
Determination of planning applications within the nationally prescribed time frames	%	↑	Major 60% Minor 70% Other 80%	Major 41% Minor 62% Other 86%	Major 90% Minor 66% Other 85%	↑ ↑ ↓
Additional employment floorspace created within the district	m ²	↑	-	3591 (net)	Expected July	-
Projects that NFDC are leading on with key partners to promote and/or deliver sustainable transport options	Num	↑	-	9	9	↔

Priorities

- Delivering the vision of the Local Plan and encouraging development that meets local needs and delivers positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes
- Working with partners, applicants, and developers to ensure a positive, timely and enabling attitude to development
- Using contributions to deliver green infrastructure projects that address the impact of development on the natural environment
- Ensuring Building Control are engaged at the earliest stage to make future development projects safe
- Working with the Partnership for South Hampshire authorities on a Joint Strategy and Statement of Common Ground to address future growth and unmet housing need
- Explore different delivery models to deliver our housing target including maximising the number of affordable homes
- Set a vision for the future of each of our towns.

importance of this area in addressing the impact of climate change and promoting the health and wellbeing of residents.

The council continues to require biodiversity net gain on all new development plans and is supporting landowners to identify potential additional projects.

Agreed in May 2021, planning for the green infrastructure strategy, has begun. Work is progressing and will remain a focus for the coming year. Work commenced on infrastructure projects at Fawley and Bartley Park, with a detailed scheme of projects for further years being finalised.



Housing and Homelessness Services

Creating balanced communities and housing options that are affordable and sustainable

The Housing teams continued to work towards the strategic objectives set out on the Housing Strategy 2018.

207 households were offered emergency temporary accommodation during the year. The period of high demand for homelessness services post Covid restrictions in 2021 coincided with the Government removing the ban on evictions in the private rented sector. Family homelessness has increased significantly as landlords have sought to gain possession of their properties. The scale of the increase in homelessness at this time had an impact on the medium-term aspiration to minimise the use of external B&B accommodation.

In total, the Homelessness Team received **1,467** approaches for assistance, with over **56%** of them prevented from becoming homeless and **215** households supported to secure alternative accommodation.

The Allocations Team relet **412** social housing properties during the year for registered providers in the district, including **342** council properties.

During the year a total of 28 new affordable homes were provided across the New Forest, with **24** delivered by the council. To date a total of **235** additional council homes have now been completed towards the target of 600 additional homes by 2026.

District Council completions during the year included an additional **six** homes for temporary accommodation. With a further two schemes nearing completion, the total number of newly provided and refurbished temporary council accommodation dwellings will reach **51** during 2022/23 offering an improved alternative to B&B accommodation.

The implementation of greener housing initiatives remained a key area of activity for the portfolio. A Greener Housing strategy, informed by work completed with consultants, will be taken through the formal decision-making process in early 2022/23. The ongoing project to upgrade homes of tenants on lower incomes through the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps is set to deliver 50 ASHPs by July 22.

Priorities

- Meeting local housing needs and promoting sustainable growth
- Increasing the supply of high-quality affordable homes
- Improving the housing circumstances of those most in need
- Enabling the best use of housing to meet the needs of people, including support for a high quality, strong private rented sector.

The governments priority to end rough sleeping continues to shape service delivery and the council's multi-agency approach has evolved to focus on building specific partnerships with local authorities and other public bodies and the voluntary sector. Work on Strategic Partnerships across Hampshire has continued to work on improving hospital and prison discharges.

A partnership with Community Mental Health Services and inpatient teams within the district has been formed to work on crisis prevention amongst homeless clients, and a new role has been recruited to promote better pathways to getting mental health support at an earlier stage.

A new scheme was launched to encourage private landlords in the New Forest District to 'Call before you serve' (CB4YS) where landlords can approach the council for support and resolution before they feel it necessary to serve an eviction notice.

During 2021/22, **43,616 calls** were handled by the housing customer contact centre with **72%** of these calls answered within 90 seconds. **743 webchats** and **8,669 email** contacts were also made throughout the same period.

The Tenant Involvement Group continued online group meetings this year and carried out digital satisfaction surveys to collate and action feedback on new tenancies and repairs, as well as continuing to publish the Home Talk magazine.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Additional council homes delivered by 2026 (cumulative figures)	Num	↑	600	64 (211)	24 (235)	↑
Prevention duty cases successfully prevented	%	↑	60%	49%	56%	↑
Private sector lease properties*	Num	↔	-	141	119	↓
Private sector property inspections resulting in Category 1 hazards	%	↓	-	42	27	↓
Rough sleepers entering accommodation pathway	%	↑	-	62**	19	↓
Households in external emergency B&B accommodation (at year end)	Num	↓	30	69	79	↑

*Focus has been shifted to the quality of PSL properties as opposed to increasing stock. **2020/21 figure significantly high due to the pandemic



People and Places

Engaging with our communities and maintaining the quality of the place in which they live

Throughout the year the council continued to support the community and the voluntary sector as we returned to a sense of normality. In total **£158,500** in **revenue grants** and **£85,600** in **capital grants** were approved to support local community organisations and projects with funding also focussed on organisations working with clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) individuals to help with self-isolation, group activities and getting back into the community.

The council's redesigned website entered its second year and continues to be the most used customer channel with over **1.4 million pageviews** during 2021/22. Website accessibility standards were monitored and improved throughout the period. The residents' email communication channel set up in response to the pandemic continued to be regularly used and at year end had over **14,800 subscribers**.

Customer Services saw a reduction in demand compared to the previous year, with **calls** down by 17% to **65,930**, emails down by 25% to **29,619** and **webchats** down by 30% to **3,574**. This decrease was due to the temporary suspension of the Garden Waste service which affected call volumes until Feb 22. After closing as a result of the pandemic, all Information Offices re-opened across the district. The procurement of a new back-office system during the year for our operational services will ensure that residents can report issues in the most efficient way.

Operation Wolf resumed in 2021/22, which saw this portfolio working with partner organisations to complete random checks on vehicles in the area and resulted in the issuing of more than **12** waste carrier notices.

The **#Crabby** campaign which encouraged littering behaviour change was nominated for a MJ Local Government award. In partnership with the National Park Authority, Forestry England and the National Trust, roadside screens were installed with rotational messages, to dissuade

Priorities

- Putting residents at the centre of what we do and how we do it
- Modernising customer services and responding to changing needs
- Engaging with partners and the community to inform and contribute towards wider outcomes
- Ensuring our open space is clean, accessible, and well maintained, and contributes to the sustainable and natural environment of the New Forest
- Supporting the arts and cultural heritage of the New Forest.

visitors from lighting fires, using barbeques and to encourage them to take their litter home.

Smart compactor bins were installed at Lymington Town Quay and proved effective. Work is underway to roll out sensors in bins in locations across the district and usage data collected will inform the new emerging litter policy.

The review of cemetery space remains a key area of activity within this portfolio with potential sites identified at Calshot and New Milton to help meet demand.

Supporting the creative and cultural potential of the area was added as a new focus for 2021/22 after The New Forest was designated as a priority place by the Arts Council. Together with partners Energise Me, NFDC has been successful in a Creative People and Places bid, which will see the district benefit from up to **£1m** over three years for creative cultural development.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Number of fly tipping incident responded to	Num	↓	-	3600	2613	↓
Trees removed from NFDC land	Num	↓	-	384	376	↓
Trees planted on NFDC land	Num	↑	-	38	181	↑
Website optimisations resulting in an improved customer experience	Num	↑	30*	-	17	↓
Website accessibility	%	↑	87%	90%	91%	↑
Subscribers to residents' email	% of residents	↑	14%	-	8.3%	↓
Average customer satisfaction rating of residents' email	Num	↑	9	9.4	9	↓

*Programme started in June 2021, target adjusted to reflect the number of active months.



Finance, Investment and Corporate Services

Enabling service provision and ensuring value for money for the council tax payer

A balanced budget was set in February 2021 for 2022/23. Although the medium-term financial plan continues to show a budget deficit, robust financial planning means that the council is well positioned to meet this gap over the period to 2025/26.

The partnership with Freedom Leisure commenced in July 2021. The open book accounting arrangement the council has with them has been in operation since the date of transfer. The council has been working with Freedom Leisure to mitigate the impact of utility price increases to the Leisure Centre customers.

Investment in upgrades to the council's ICT business tools has continued to be a priority this year to modernise the organisation, including going live with Microsoft Teams as the council's singular platform for calls and collaboration, rolling out SharePoint, and the maintenance of the Remote Access System. The projects to upgrade the back-office systems for regulatory services and operational services continued to make good progress throughout the year.

During the financial year, the council purchased two commercial properties, bringing the total to nine. An offer has been accepted on a further property and several other opportunities, all located within the district, are under investigation. A budget of **£8.44m** has been approved for the completion of the Crow Lane development for a new business park supporting economic activity and jobs within the district and is currently under construction.

Five further residential properties were purchased during the financial year by Appletree Property Lettings, led by the council, bringing the total to twelve.

The external report on the council's waste depot strategy has been received and will be considered in the context of the council's overall Waste Strategy, which will inform operational depot requirements.

Priorities

- Protecting front line services through sound financial planning, including the collection of taxation with appropriate support for individuals and businesses
- Modernisation and innovative use of ICT to enhance operational efficiencies across all services
- Using investments to support financial resilience and the local economy
- Providing support to residents with benefits and welfare reforms, and supporting businesses to access financial reliefs and grants.

An updated project brief for a new depot at Hardley has been prepared and the design team has been remobilised to update the design and prepare cost estimates.

The portfolio continued to work closely with partner organisations, including Citizens Advice New Forest, and with those applying for Household Support Fund to support vulnerable households. To date **202** households have been supported with awards totalling **£79,267**. To support businesses, **£11.8M** in Restarts Grants as well as **£2.5M** in Omicron grants and **£2.4M** Additional Restriction Grants were distributed. This portfolio was also responsible for administering the Test and Trace Support payments and voucher scheme to support those having to self-isolate, totalling **£480,000**.

Work to deliver the **£150** government energy rebate to eligible households in council tax bands A to D began towards the end of the financial year, with payments expected to be made in early 2022/23, as well as developing our discretionary scheme. We will work with partners to prepare for the migration on to universal credit.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Maintain high level of council tax collected	%	↑	98.5%	98.31%	98.53%	↑
National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected	%	↑	98.19%	97.79%	98.45%	↑
Achieve a balanced budget with reasonable council tax increases	-	-	Greater of 2% or £5*	For 21/22 budget £5 (2.88%)	For 22/23 budget £5 (2.7%)	-
Budget variations (general fund)*	%	-	+/- 3%	-12.8%	- 8.1%	-
Increase the value of commercial investment	£m	↑	£20m	£9.89m	£14m	↑
Increase the value of residential investment	£m	↑	£4m	£2.08m	£3.4m	↑
ICT incidents resolved within SLA	%	↑	85%	92%	96%	↑
Maintain Remote Access Solution (VPN)	%	↑	99.5%	99.9%	99.9%	↔

*Not including implications of business rates



Partnering and Wellbeing

Improving the health and wellbeing of our community

This year's Active Lives report, published April 2022, showed that amongst New Forest adults inactivity levels rose to **28.7%** (19.5% in 20/21) with a decrease to **61.5%** being physically active (64.6% in 20/21). The pandemic has had a major impact and widened existing inequalities and this important challenge will remain a key priority of this portfolio.

The new partnership with Freedom Leisure began on 1 July 2021 to manage our **5** health and leisure centres. During the ongoing monthly partnership and monitoring meetings, focus has been on developing the **£2.4m capital programme** to improve the centre facilities. A health and safety maintenance audit was undertaken, scoring well at **95%**. Swimming lesson participation has reached pre-pandemic levels, with **4,413** learners enrolled. The contract with MyTime Active to manage Dibden Golf Course will continue with an agreement reached regarding the 5-year rent review. The course experienced high pay and play participation in 2021/22 but golf memberships, although recovering, trail pre-pandemic levels by **3%** with **475** members.

During this year, a Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan was developed and this has been informed by the Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and data on health inequalities and priorities. Work will now begin with the council's partners to deliver on the key priorities of the plan.

During the period, Environmental Health continued to redirect resources during the pandemic and recovery of programmed inspections began. The reviewed Licensing and Gambling Policies were approved and the service continues to support businesses and tourism through advice to licensed premises, taxis and event organisers. There were **235 registrations** for new food businesses and this year all were triaged according to risk, with 83% of them receiving an inspection. A total of **629 food premises** received an intervention, which included **51** highest risk premises.

Animal welfare inspections recommenced with **90 inspections** taking place of animal boarders and breeders, riding establishments, pet shops and zoos. Working with the planning service, a Supplementary Planning Document has been developed for all new developments, to reduce impacts on air quality.

Priorities

- Working with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents
- Ensuring that public health prevention principles are embedded within core services of the council
- Increasing the level of physical activity within the district
- Providing affordable, accessible, and sustainable leisure facilities
- Ensuring regulatory services are delivered for the benefit of our residents
- Ensuring the New Forest remains a safe place to live, work and visit.

Environmental Protection maintained their investigatory service, investigating **638 complaints** and **578 responses** to consultations.

44 safeguarding referrals were completed and submitted to Adult and Children Services (63 in 20/21). The Safer New Forest webinar was held in November for over **100 delegates** and focused on the hidden harm of legal substances, and living in an abusive household. **Five** resident engagement events took place to promote the Safer New Forest partnership and next year's key priorities were directly influenced by the insights gathered at these events.

Appletree Careline saw a drop in demand of **7%** responding to **39,513** calls during this year, likely due to the easing of national restrictions and residents accessing support from friends and family.

The portfolio continued to work for the Local Response Centre (LRC) taking **20 referrals** from The Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline, offering support to clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) individuals during the continued pandemic. The LRC was monitored regularly until the service came to an end in March 2022 although support continued through community grant funding to organisations working with CEV individuals to help with self-isolation, group activities and getting back into the community.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Inactivity levels	%	↓	-	19.5%	28.7%	↑
Sedentary adults with recognised medical conditions enrolled in the active lifestyles referral programme	Num	↑	-	-	339	-
New business start-ups receiving an inspection during the year	%	↑	-	100%	96%	↓
Inspection of all higher risk food establishments to improve public safety	%	↑	-	99%	83%	↓
Community safety engagement events	Num	↑	5	4	5	↑
Residents' satisfaction on the low level of reported crime and anti-social behaviour within the district	%	↔	95%	95%	97%	↑
Programmes to improve the mental wellbeing of residents	Num	↑	3	-	3	↔
Increase the engagement with lower socio-economic communities	Num	↑	3	-	3	↔



Environment and Coastal Services

Working to reduce the impact on our special environment and protecting communities by managing our changing coastlines

The Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2022. Services within this portfolio will play an important role in delivering this action plan including through reviewing the council's vehicle fleet, providing additional vehicle charging points, reducing the carbon emissions associated with managing waste, and delivering a new waste strategy.

The council maintained weekly collections to **82,000 properties** and collected over **60,000 tonnes** of household waste in 2021/22. A contribution to this **5% decrease** in tonnage was the suspension of the Garden Waste service in July 2021 due to the impact of the pandemic and HGV driver shortages. A phased return began in September 2021 and the service was resumed fully in March 2022 which represented a return to full waste services following 9 months of disruption. Despite this, Garden Waste recorded a record number of customers in 2021/22 (**21,626**).

The development of the new, modern waste strategy has continued, and is on schedule to be taken to Council in July 2022. Recent work included working with partners in Hampshire on new joint working arrangements as well as awaiting further strategic Government announcements in late spring 2022 which should provide clarity on timelines and future funding arrangements.

The review of depot facilities continued. The design phase for the new depot at Hardley is nearing completion and the process to appoint a supplier for detailed design and build will be a key area of activity in 2022.

The installation of electric charging points across our district continued this year, and since early 2020, **29 charge points** have been installed at no extra cost to the council, resulting in an emission saving of almost **8,000kg** of CO₂. Work is being undertaken to investigate how technology can be best used in our carparks.

Priorities

- Working with others to protect and enhance our natural environment
- Reducing waste and increasing recycling
- Developing plans and funding opportunities to protect our coastline
- Supporting sustainability and the local economy through the strategic review and use of car parking assets
- Developing a strategy for our assets at Keyhaven, considering environmental objectives, flood protection and the local economy.

A review of cycle parking provision was undertaken and concluded that there was sufficient provision in key areas of the district.

Coastal services carried out urgent works to protect and replenish the coastline after this year's winter storms. This included importing **12,000 tonnes of rock** as well as the management and inspection of **760 beach huts** along the coast.

Working with partner organisations, planning began on the business case to protect Hurst Spit which will be presented to the Environment Agency once contributions from partners have been agreed.

Work with BCP Council in the delivery of the Christchurch Bay & Harbour Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy continued in 2021/22. Engagement activity with key stakeholders resulted in **147 responses** across both authorities.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	2020/21	2021/22	Actual DOT
Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	%	↑	50%	34%	33%	↓
Increase in coastal funding to achieve specific actions based on contributions required for identified schemes (by 2028/29)	£	↑	£4.5m	£0	£0	-
Electric vehicle charging points installed in council carparks (by end 2022/23)	Num	↑	10 doubles	-	29	↑
CO ₂ emissions saved through electric vehicle charging points	Num	↑	-	-	7,279.3kg	-



Business Tourism and High Streets

Helping local businesses to grow and prosper

The council continued to work with partners and businesses this year to grow the New Forest economy.

The Economic Development team continued their work to review and update data on key employers in the district, which helps to inform and target business engagement activities. The team also ensured that businesses receive regular updates and opportunities to support growth and resilience via the businesses e-newsletter and dedicated social media. Over **3,600 businesses** across the district subscribed to the business support e-newsletter this year.

Over the past year, Economic Development administered the government Covid support Additional Restrictions Grants for businesses allocating **1,533 grants** totalling **£2.6m**.

Work to promote the value of apprenticeship schemes to businesses, as well as the support available to employers, was ongoing throughout the year. Liaison with the local Job Centre Plus continued to promote services and engage with jobseekers, residents and businesses, and the team have worked closely with providers of skills training, including the Solent Growth Hub, to ensure opportunities are taken up by businesses.

The Central and West Hampshire Youth Employment Hub is a partnership between New Forest District Council, other local councils and the Department for Work and Pensions. The hub connects with and listens to young people, offering skills training and routes into employment, and works closely with employers and training and education providers. Since November 2021, the hub has provided ongoing face to face support to **29 young people** in Brockenhurst & Totton, with additional capacity planned from April 2022.

Work is ongoing with partners such as the Solent Growth Hub and Get Set for Growth Solent that ensures New Forest businesses have access to support and investment in their business, and staff liaise regularly with the Department for International Trade to identify key inward investment and to share progress on investment sites.

The New Forest High Streets and Village Centres conference was held on 20 October 2021 and was attended by **57 delegates** from businesses and stakeholders from across the district.

Initiatives have been in place this period to support our high streets. The New Forest Shop Doctor programme began in January 2022 and aims to improve the customer experience in identified town centres

Priorities

- Continuing to work with partners and businesses to grow the New Forest economy
- Lobbying for essential improvements in broadband and mobile connectivity
- Helping businesses, industries and High Streets respond to social, environmental and technological changes and innovation
- Supporting the visitor economy across the New Forest district
- Continuing to promote the New Forest as a filming destination.

through a series of mystery shopper visits. The programme prioritised local independent retail and hospitality businesses in Fordingbridge, Lymington and Pennington, Ringwood, and Totton. **82 local businesses** were visited, and feedback has been delivered directly to businesses and via feedback events for each town. This complemented other initiatives to support high streets and town centres throughout this period, including those funded by the Welcome Back Fund.

The council utilised **£190,000** from the Welcome Back Fund (funded through the European Regional Development Fund) to support the safe return to high streets and recovery from the pandemic. The council worked with Towns and Parishes to deliver a wide range of projects which included a 'Supporting our Community' shop local campaign, the installation of solar compacting bins and water filler stations as well as obtaining footfall data and bin sensor data which will help the council plan its services in the future.

Our film office, Film:New Forest, assists film and TV productions to find filming locations in the district, works with property and land owners to develop a portfolio of locations and provides opportunities and training for local film crew and businesses providing services to the sector. Film and TV productions using the New Forest as a location contributed over **£234,750** to the local economy in 2021/22 which was calculated using formula approved by The BFI (British Film Institute) & Production Guild. This is in addition to the economic benefits from 'screen tourism' visits by the public to locations used in film and TV productions.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs	Unit	Desired DOT	Target	20/21	21/22	Actual DOT
Businesses engaged in the economic development initiatives programme	Num	↑	100	2232*	1633*	↓
Subscribers to 'Helping local businesses grow' e-news	Num	↑	3000	3780	3687	↓
Participants in Youth Employment Hub	Num	↑	100	-	29	-
Value of filming in the district	£	↑	£75,000	£6,500**	£234,750	↑
New Forest locations available to Film & TV productions via the Film New Forest locations database	Num	↑	80	77	81	↑

*Figures for 20/21 & 21/22 include businesses benefitting from Covid support **20/21 figure significantly impacted by national covid restrictions

Action plan and achievement measures

2022/23

The following pages contain the plan of specific actions that will directly contribute towards the delivery of the priorities within each portfolio. These actions will be refreshed annually to keep them up to date.

Achievement indicators for each portfolio have been identified to help monitor progress against the delivery of the priorities and provide tangible measures of success.

Progress updates on specific actions and achievement indicators will be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel during the year.



Leader's	Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure
Specific Actions	Specific Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of the economic growth and inward investment in the New Forest • Develop a UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan to deliver the three investment priorities of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills • Continue to work to deliver the Solent Freeport with a focus on the development of skills and education, including working with the Education Sector and the Waterside Skills Forum • Identify and deliver a programmed approach to assets, services, and ways of working through a council-wide focus on transformation to further enhance modern working practices that meet the needs of our staff in delivering services that meet the needs of our residents • Update on the delivery of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the planning service takes reasonable steps to support housing delivery across the district, proactively working with developers • Develop and deliver an annual programme of projects to enhance natural green spaces and maximise the associated benefits, including biodiversity and air quality, and secure quality open space through development across the district • Review all supplementary planning documents and the community infrastructure levy process, to include Air Quality SPD and Climate Change SPD • Design and deliver new ICT system to improve and modernise delivery of the service in 2023, enabling officers to focus on delivering positive planning outcomes and enhancing the competitiveness of building control • Retain and look to improve the market share for building control to ensure the safety of development • Determine planning applications and related submissions within the appropriate timeframe • In partnership with others, work to develop and deliver sustainable transport and water management projects across the district that support our communities and local economy
Achievement Indicators	Achievement Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of portfolio indicators above or on target (%) • Increase in vacancies filled first time (%) • Level of customer satisfaction (%) • Climate change action plan delivered against target (%) • Increase in subscribers to residents' email (Number) • Average customer satisfaction rating of residents' email (%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of houses completed each year (as set out in the Annual Authority Monitoring Report) (Number) • Increase in the number of green infrastructure projects delivered each year (Number) • Increase the number of Biodiversity Net Gain projects delivered each year (Number) • New Forest District Council building control market share (%) • Determination of planning applications within the nationally prescribed time frames (%) • Amount of additional employment floorspace created within the district (m²) • Number of projects that New Forest District Council are involved in to deliver sustainable transport options (Number)

Housing and Homelessness Services

Specific Actions

- Seek to provide 600 new council homes by 2026 and monitor the overall delivery of affordable housing across the district
- Continue to develop initiatives and schemes which prevent homelessness from the Private rented sector
- Continue to monitor and review the delivery of the Allocation Policy 2018
- Continue to deliver the actions from the Empty Homes Strategy
- Maintain and develop new and existing multi-agency partnerships developed from the strategic action to design and deliver a multi-agency forum approach to tackle homelessness across the district
- Hold two landlord Forums each year which support a safe and thriving private rented sector and which support the council to tackle homelessness
- Monitor compliance across housing services to enhance safety of tenants/maintenance of housing stock and report annually to Housing & Homelessness Overview & Scrutiny Panel
- Adopt the greener housing strategy during 2022/23

Achievement Indicators

- Number of additional council homes delivered (Number)
- Number of additional affordable homes delivered by others (Number)
- Increase in prevention duty cases successfully prevented (%)
- Reduction in private sector property inspections resulting in Category 1 hazards (%)
- Percentage change in rough sleepers entering accommodation pathway (%)
- Reduction in the number of households in external emergency B&B accommodation at year end (Number)

People and Places

Specific Actions

- Annual awarding of community grants
- Understanding the changing needs of our communities, residents and customers to inform future strategy
- Deliver the Grass Strategy, designed to support biodiversity
- Interim review and monitoring of Tree Strategy, in response to future challenges and opportunities
- Develop the future Litter Strategy for consideration by Panel during 2022/23
- Work with partners on initiative such as 'Operation Wolf' as part of fly tipping enforcement and continue to promote behavioural change on littering, supported by an environmental crime policy
- Commence delivery of the 'Culture in Common' programme under the Creative People initiative

Achievement Indicators

- % of standard fly tipping incidents responded to within 24hrs (%)
- % of specialist fly tipping incidents responded to within 3 days (%)
- Number of trees removed from NFDC land (Number)
- Number of trees planted on NFDC land (Number)
- Website optimisations resulting in an improved customer experience (Number)
- Website accessibility (%)

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services	Partnering and Wellbeing
<p data-bbox="53 153 286 188">Specific Actions</p> <ul data-bbox="53 213 1079 568" style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced budget agreed annually in February with supporting actions to deliver a financially sustainable medium term financial plan (MTFP) Deliver modernised ICT applications and infrastructure, including Regulatory Services and Operations, and implement the new Digital Strategy Review the Commercial Property Strategy and continue to deliver the objectives of both this and the Residential Property Investment strategy Continue to work closely with partners in preparing for the migration to Universal Credit Continue to deliver central government and locally funded support measures to residents most in need Commence delivery of new depot facilities aligned to future requirements Deliver the energy rebate scheme in accordance with government timeline 	<p data-bbox="1111 153 1344 188">Specific Actions</p> <ul data-bbox="1111 213 2188 893" style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the New Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan by 2024 Monitor the delivery of the strategic outcomes and KPIs from the Health and Leisure partnership with Freedom Leisure Monitor the delivery of the Mytime Active contract for Dibden Golf Centre against operational, commercial and strategic KPI's Undertake and develop community safety engagement opportunities to promote the work of the partnership and ensure the views of residents are reflected within key priorities Develop and host web-based training sessions with a focus on the key Safer New Forest priorities. Participation and enrolment will be for partner agencies, including the voluntary sector who currently assist/can help with the delivery of the Safer New Forest Partnership Plan Report on the delivery and successes of the Safer New Forest Partnership Plan Manage the transition of digital switchover for Appletree Careline and focus activities on developing new areas of business growth opportunities Continue with Phase 2 of the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan targeting resource at those highest risk food businesses in order to protect the consumer and secure compliance with non-compliant businesses Commence development of a Clean Air Strategy, to demonstrate the council's commitment to continuing to improve air quality within the New Forest Commencement of the review and revision of the Taxi Licensing Policy to ensure a safe, inclusive, accessible and attractive taxi service can be provided in the New Forest
<p data-bbox="53 999 394 1034">Achievement Indicators</p> <ul data-bbox="53 1059 887 1353" style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain high level of council tax collected (%) Maintain high levels of NNDR collected (%) Achieved a balanced budget with reasonable council tax increases (%) Budget variations (general fund) (%) Increase in the value of residential investment (£m) Increase in the value of commercial investment (£m) ICT incidents resolved within SLA (%) Maintain a Remote Access Solution (VPN) (%) Energy rebate scheme payments made (%) 	<p data-bbox="1111 999 1460 1034">Achievement Indicators</p> <ul data-bbox="1111 1059 2188 1513" style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in inactivity levels (%) Number of sedentary adults with recognised medical conditions enrolled in the Freedom Leisure Active Lifestyles referral programme (Number) Level of investment in the leisure centres by Freedom Leisure (£ value) More people undertaking physical activity in Freedom Leisure venues in the district (%) (quarterly) Increase participation in Community Safety engagement events and completion of annual crime and disorder survey (Number) Maintain residents' satisfaction on the low level of reported crime and anti-social behaviour within the district (%) Support Communities through programmes to improve the mental wellbeing of residents (Number of programmes) Increase the engagement with lower socio-economic communities (Number of projects) Inspections of higher risk and non-compliant food businesses to improve public safety (%)

Environment and Coastal

Specific Actions

- Contribute towards the overall Climate Change and Nature Emergency action plan, identifying local actions to address the impact of climate change
- Approval of the Waste Strategy, which aims to increase recycling and reduce carbon emissions, during 2022, with implementation 2022-2027
- Continue to work with Hampshire partners to understand local implications of national waste and recycling policy changes
- Procure an operations ICT system during 2022/23 in order to support the council's waste strategy
- Support the delivery of future Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) activities and the council's role as the Coast Protection Authority
- Continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency to support beach management plan operations for Hurst Spit
- Work with the Environment Agency to develop a FCERM Strategy for Hurst Spit to Lymington
- Work with BCP Council in the delivery of the Christchurch Bay & Harbour FCERM Strategy
- Continue to develop a Car Parks Strategy and continue to increase the number of electric charging points
- Identify further opportunities for funding and increasing capacity to develop and deliver coastal schemes

Achievement Indicators

- Increase in household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (%)
- Increase in coastal funding to achieve specific actions (£)
- Increase the number of electric charging points by 10 by 31/3/2023 (Number)
- Total CO2 emissions saved through electric charging points (Number)

Business, Tourism and Highstreets

Specific Actions

- Identify all businesses within the district using a range of sources and continue to engage with businesses on a regular basis using business e-news email contact
- Establish a single point of entry to the council for businesses by 2022/23
- Identify and map areas of poor connectivity to assess the potential impact on businesses and inform the future action plan
- Establish a programme of activities across the year to support an increase in footfall in our High Streets
- Work in partnership to increase the uptake of apprenticeships and upskilling opportunities, including through Solent Apprenticeship Hub
- Forge connections with location finders within the filming industry to promote the New Forest as a filming location
- Launch new programmes and networks with partners to enhance support for businesses in the district
- Work with partners to set up the youth employment hub and collaborate on New Forest Young Entrepreneurs
- Work in partnership with Go New Forest to share key messages. Promote wider use of the district in order to manage capacity and improve visitor experience

Achievement Indicators

- Increase in businesses engaged in the business engagement programme (Number)
- Increase in subscribers to 'Helping local businesses grow' e-news (Number)
- Film New Forest - Value of filming in the district (£)
- New Forest locations available to Film & TV productions via the Film:New Forest locations database (Number)