

AM 715/25

## NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY AUTHORITY MEETING – 24 JULY 2025

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

**Report by:** Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

#### **Summary:**

This report covers the period since the Authority meeting on 27 March 2025. The report has been formatted to accord with our statutory purposes and duty; these are delivered by the Re:New Forest themes of 'Climate, Nature, People, Place, Partnership and Achieving Excellence' from our agreed Business Plan, summarised as follows:

 Re:New Climate	 Re:New Nature	 Re:New People	 Re:New Place	 Re:New Partnership
Establishing data and evidence baseline and implementing nature-based climate solutions.	Making space for nature and mitigating recreational pressures.	Increasing green skills and jobs - supporting New Forest business / green tourism. Sustainable land management and securing the future of commoning.	Promoting health and wellbeing through contact with nature.	Establishing stronger partnerships within the boundary.
Building a New Forest coalition for a Net Zero economy.	Enhancing natural capital.	Increasing the National Park's resilience to the effects of climate change.	Connecting people with nature and landscape.	Leading the green agenda beyond the New Forest.
Activating communities and increasing sustainable travel.	Supporting nature recovery through Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).	Increasing the availability of affordable housing.	Safeguarding cultural heritage.	Developing a centre of excellence of insights and innovation for the New Forest.
<b>Re:New Organisation: Achieving Excellence</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivering high-quality services through a capable and motivated staff team</li><li>• Maximising resources and using them efficiently and effectively</li><li>• Modernising our use of the office space and our wider ways of working</li></ul>				

**Recommendation:**

**To note the report.**

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**Equality and Diversity**

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics and places us under a duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of our functions. We aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity throughout all aspects of our work. More details regarding our projects and initiatives, such as PEDALL, are set out in the relevant reports and Equality Impact Assessments.

**AM 715/25**

## **NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

### **AUTHORITY MEETING – 24 JULY 2025**

#### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

**Report by:** Alison Barnes, Chief Executive

As we go into the new financial year, we are championing the National Park and inputting our expertise across a number of agendas which will affect the future of the New Forest including devolution and local government reorganisation; climate, nature and access targets; planning and agricultural reform. Each brings significant challenges and risks but changes also present a chance to reinforce protections, assert the importance of the Forest's unique nature and cultural heritage and to seek support, recognition and resources. We are focused on securing a future rooted in understanding of the New Forest as an important landscape and an asset for the local area and the nation. At the same time our own budget has seen a reduction in 9% in revenue from government and an injection of capital funding, presenting considerable challenges but also cause to reflect on priorities, on how we can strengthen and grow our 'Team New Forest' partnership to be greater than the sum of our parts and on ways to pool resources and diversify funding streams.

The momentum and commitment to collaborate to meet the challenges ahead has been seen first-hand from across 'Team New Forest' through a number of visits and events this quarter. Our third annual Partnership Plan Leaders Panel Tour earlier this month took us to the Verderers' Hall, Matley Ridge and Crabb Hat Pound. We discussed the importance of the working Forest, landscape-scale management and grazing for nature, recreation management and the future of commoning – as well as the financial issues and opportunities. The Panel also met in the Forest in late March, focusing on water quality in the National Park and visiting wetland restorations.

We also welcomed a number of members of the Defra Protected Landscapes Team in May, enabling them to learn more about the National Park and how we are implementing our partnership plan and facing into current challenges. They were also able to meet representatives from partner organisations, try out PeDAll inclusive cycling in Ashurst and meet with commoners and Verderers as we work together to secure a future scheme.

We engaged with all four of our local MPs and our Minister, briefing them on the transitions at play at this time and asking them to help us support a positive future for the New Forest, its landscapes, unique cultural heritage and internationally important nature

at this time of change and churn.

We have been focused on delivery for nature as the field season gets into full swing. Significant progress continues across our landscape and nature recovery initiatives. Through the Species Survival Fund, 180 of the targeted 250 hectares have been enhanced, improving key habitats across the New Forest. A June visit from the Lottery Heritage Fund showcased the partnership, project sites and the value of nature improvements.

Following the publication of the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework by government, we have agreed local contributions to national targets for habitat creation, peat restoration and woodland expansion. These will guide future delivery against 30 by 30 and Biodiversity Net Gain goals and be embedded in the next Partnership Plan due in 2027.

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme has entered its fifth year. Year 4 saw 21 new projects, adding to a total of 317 to date, with over 6,000ha of wildlife-rich habitat being improved for nature. The visit from Defra offered an important platform to raise funding concerns for commoning and explore future Environmental Land Management (ELM) opportunities. The PA2 study on supporting New Forest commons through ELM has concluded and will inform the work of the Forest Farming Group. Preparations are underway with partners for the next round of Landscape Recovery funding expected later this year.

Our Planning Policy Team has started the financial year by reviewing feedback on the Local Plan Review – Direction of Travel consultation, which closed in March 2025. Key evidence base studies, including the Habitats Regulation Assessment and Housing Needs Assessment, are progressing well, with an initial draft Plan due for consideration in October. We submitted responses to national planning consultations, including proposals on Biodiversity Net Gain for small developments and a national scheme of delegation for planning committees, welcoming the proposed exemption for national park authorities. At the same time work continues with partners to deliver a strategic approach to mitigating recreational impacts from new development on protected sites.

The archaeology team continues to give planning advice to our Authority and New Forest District Council, and archaeological advice to Forestry England – as well as engaging with community groups and volunteers. Notable excavations near Fordingbridge and Calmore have revealed significant Iron Age and Romano-British occupation, suggesting greater historic settlement around the New Forest than previously thought. There is increasing interest in making such findings more accessible to the public beyond technical reports.

The spring and early summer have seen our engagement and outreach to communities

and visitors step up as more people get out and about. Events began in March with our biggest Awakening Festival yet, running 130 events about the nature and climate emergencies resulting in 4,000 attendees, 1.4m people seeing information about the climate and nature emergencies online and 370,000 engaging with posts or events. This demonstrated a growing appetite for learning about and taking small actions for nature and climate in our communities.

Our engagement with schools this year has seen a very positive start. We launched the annual school travel grant in April, offering £200 to support visits to National Park education providers with 23 schools benefitting so far. We've engaged 1,075 pupils through school visits, residential walks, curriculum-linked sessions, and ranger classroom visits since March. Our first work experience week for Year 10 students took place in June, offering hands-on insight into various National Park roles. Two additional programmes are scheduled for July.

YouCAN (youth for climate and nature) Community Lottery funding enabled several new initiatives this quarter, including programmes for home-educated families and inclusive sessions with Special Educational Needs schools. The green careers network has expanded to support all career stages, with a successful event held at Southampton Sustainability Institute. We also supported Southampton National Park City's Urban Wild Event and introduced our first New Forest Thrive Festival in Ringwood with our Youth Board taking centre stage in both events and ensuring great coverage through their creative communications. The Youth Board are also running a questionnaire over the summer to gather views of their peers about the issues, opportunities and priorities for the National Park. YouCAN activities have been reported widely in the media, including being mentioned in *Have I Got News For You* and we are preparing to showcase more from the scheme at our New Forest Show stand.

We bade farewell to our two apprentice rangers who have finished their 16-month placement. We wish Shona all the best in her new position as New Forest Craftsperson at Forestry England, as well as Abi who is starting as a Ranger at Lepe Country Park. We are thrilled our apprentice schemes have opened so many doors to various careers in the environment sector.

Our rangers continue to be the eyes and ears of the Forest, with engagement activities both within the National Park and in outlying schools and communities. As part of our work towards the Inclusive National Park theme, we continue to remove accessibility barriers to some sections of society, running guided walks and nature connection sessions. We have 'softly' re-launched our Ambassador Scheme which originally started post-Covid for people to help protect the Forest through litter picking and sharing code messaging. Nine volunteers are now helping the ranger team with outdoor engagement activities.

We're further supporting green skills through our GreenPrint network, working with researchers based at the University of Southampton to review the green skills and jobs offer in the New Forest and the wider 'halo' area.

The summer sees us come to the close of our National Parks Health Fellows placement. Fellows Laura and Jennifer have been developing opportunities for people to benefit from nature and the National Park, through our Green Health Hub and other face-to-face activities. It was wonderful to be represented by them at the recent Royal Society of Psychiatry UK Congress and see so much interest in National Parks and nature supporting health and wellbeing by health professionals.

As we gear up towards the New Forest Show – the biggest event in our calendar – we're inviting people to celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. Like any coming-of-age journey, we've been prompted to look back at the moments that shaped our path, from the legislation that first created our National Park, to vital funding secured and partnerships formed.

We're looking forward to connecting with 'Team New Forest' at the showground and engaging with thousands of visitors about the value of the National Park and the people who help protect and care for it. It will be an important opportunity to gain perspectives on the pivotal decisions, reforms and challenges ahead and further understand how we can pool resources and take collective action to secure the Forest for future generations.

## **DELIVERY OF NATIONAL PARK PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS**

The report has been formatted to accord with the statutory purposes and duty, which we often refer to as Protect, Enjoy and Prosper. These are delivered through our Re:New 'Climate, Nature, People, Place, Partnership, Organisation' objectives from the agreed Business Plan, a summary of which is set out on the first page.

Our Business Plan is delivered through annual Work Programmes, progress on which is set out in these reports alongside the formal quarterly reporting under the six themes to the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee; at the end of each year we produce an Annual Review document.

The final section of this report lists the Members', our Chair's and the Chief Executive's activities and events.

### **1 First Purpose: Protect**

*Nature Recovery*

Species Survival Fund

Approximately 180 hectares of the 250-hectare target to improve land for nature has been delivered – including improvements to key meadow, heathland, wetland and woodland habitat. Spring has seen a slowing of practical works to avoid disturbance to key species with further practical works scheduled for the autumn.

The delivery team has been strengthened with the recruitment of Lise Reynolds as Project Coordinator. We have also appointed the consultants Powerlite as our project evaluators. In June, we hosted the fund facilitators, the Lottery Heritage Fund, showcasing a sample of the sites, meeting with landowners and contractors and giving a great feel for the challenges and the unique value of opportunity for nature improvements within the New Forest National Park.

*New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme*

The Verderers HLS scheme, which is due to end in February 2028 received some welcome uplift to the payment rates for some of the management options with the scheme. These include improved payment rates for restoration of wood pasture, species rich semi-natural grassland and lowland heath. There is also a 23% increase on the cattle grazing supplement payment.

*Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework*

In 2024 the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK was Published by Government. The 10 targets are for the Protected Landscapes as places and all have been asked by Natural England to calculate local contributions to three of

these targets: the creation / restoration of wildlife rich habitat, peat restoration and increasing woodland cover.

We have consulted on the apportionment of targets for the New Forest with the Partnership Plan Officer group and Leaders Panel and agreed the revised figures with RAPC in June. The agreed targets will be published on our website by the end of July.

Much of our current work contributes to the delivery of these targets and in future will help guide our work in identifying land that can contribute to 30by30 commitments (30% of land and sea to be conserved for biodiversity by 2030); implementation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.

We will incorporate the Targets in the next iteration of the Partnership Plan due in 2027.

#### *Development Management*

161 applications were received in the period 1 March to 27 June 2025. In the same period 150 applications were determined with an approval rate of 94%.

During this same period, six appeal decisions were received. Five were dismissed and one was allowed.

#### *Planning Enforcement*

Since March the enforcement team has been busy dealing with the initial assessments on 47 new enforcement cases and concluding 44 cases. No enforcement notices have been issued but we are currently dealing with and awaiting decisions on. Once issued, Enforcement Notices are open to appeal, and we are currently dealing with 7 enforcement appeals.

In addition, the Authority has secured compliance with a Breach of Condition Notice and an Enforcement Notice avoiding the time and expense required to prosecute the owners for non-compliance with those notices within the compliance period.

Prosecutions are being pursued in respect of a continuing breach of planning control relating to the unauthorised use of an area of woodland that has been subdivided and used for leisure and accommodation purposes, the use of land for open storage and the continued use of land for the stationing of a residential mobile home.

#### *Policy*

The Policy team has reviewed all of the representations made on the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review 'Direction of Travel' document which closed in March 2025. The key evidence base studies that will inform the revised local planning policies for the National Park area are progressing well. These include the Habitats Regulation

Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, Whole Plan Viability Assessment and Housing Needs Assessment. The next stage in the process will be the consideration of an initial draft Plan at the October 2025 full Authority meeting.

The team prepared and submitted the Authority's responses to several national planning policy consultations following discussions at the Planning Committee held on 15 July. These includes proposed reforms to the system for securing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from smaller developments, and the introduction of a national scheme of delegation for planning committees. It is proposed that national park authorities will be exempt from the national scheme of delegation which, given the profile of development within national parks, is welcomed.

We continue to work closely with partners on the implementation of a strategic approach to mitigating recreational impacts arising from planned new development on the New Forest's internationally designated sites. Recent appeal decisions in neighbouring planning authority areas highlight the importance of securing appropriate mitigation and there are significant benefits to be achieved through the pooling of resources.

### *Archaeology*

During this reporting period the Archaeology Team has consulted on 29 New Forest District Council and 12 Authority planning applications and given comments and recommendations on several other ongoing planning cases. For the SLA with Forestry England the team progressed 14 sites and made visits to sites across Forestry England's Southern District and for the Higher-Level Stewardship scheme the team progressed 11 sites and conducted one site visit.

With the limited opportunities for any large-scale archaeological excavation within the New Forest National Park, consulting on the planning applications for NFDC has enabled us to better understand the range of archaeological material surrounding the New Forest National Park. For example, at Fordingbridge two excavations have discovered significant Iron Age and Romano-British occupation sites and a third at Calmore has also discovered Iron Age (and possibly) Romano-British occupation. These sites, on the outskirts of the National Park would suggest that the New Forest area may have been more populated during these periods than previously thought.

There is a growing need to make these and other findings more easily and readily available to the general public (promote opportunities for the understanding) and remove the barriers of formal archaeological reports that were produced for planning purposes.

Providing these services to FE and the HLS Scheme provides ongoing opportunities to identify, record and protect a range of heritage assets (conserve and enhance the cultural heritage), within the National Park, that could easily be damaged by the heavy vehicles

used in modern forestry and for many habitat restorations. It also facilitates the ongoing detailed assessment of our and new LiDAR surveys which have, so far, often lead to new discoveries outside of operational areas.

The time needed to review and research these new and unexpected findings, with the aim of gaining a more detailed understanding of them, is often lacking and outside the scope of the services we provide. However, the team are working to bring all heritage data together in GIS, which may in the future enable more research to be conducted and disseminated, helping to grow our understanding of the rich cultural heritage of the New Forest.

## **Working with Community Groups**

We are continuing with the LoCATE (Local Community Archaeological Training and Equipment) scheme, supporting archaeological societies and community groups from across Hampshire and Dorset in accessing geophysical survey equipment in partnership with Bournemouth University. The equipment has been in constant use and is being actively handed over and shared between different societies. Community groups are actively teaching each other surveying and data processing techniques upon equipment handovers. Some good examples of the results obtained using the project equipment can be found on the Avon Valley Archaeological Society website:

<https://avonvalleyarchsoc.wordpress.com/reports/>

As part of ongoing Scheduled Monument Improvement, on 20 March, Hilde and James along with NFNPA volunteers cleared gorse and bracken on four Bronze Age barrows on open Crown land, improving their overall condition.

## **New Forest Knowledge website**

The technical support contract for the site has now expired and the site is no longer getting its regular updates. This has started to affect the site functionality, and it is not possible to gain visitor number/view stats for this period. However, the site is still live and currently working. Since 2018, when the analytics were updated, the site has had almost 270,000 unique visitors across 199 countries. We are working with the New Forest Heritage Centre to investigate the best options for retention of our project archival information.

## *Building Design and Conservation*

We are delighted to welcome Megan Donovan into the Building Design & Conservation team this quarter. We continue to receive a broad range of applications and enquiries relating to both designated (e.g. listed buildings) and non-designated (e.g. assets on the New Forest National Park Local List) heritage assets within the National Park. The team

is also working proactively with parish councils within the Forest North East Conservation Area on the Character Appraisal review; and with Copythorne Parish Council on the preparation of their Parish Design Statement (see separate agenda item).

#### *Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) and Environmental Land Management (ELM)*

The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has moved into a fifth year. Data for year 4 is being collated but some headlines include: 21 farmers participating in FiPL projects in the year, bringing the total to date to 317; 1387m of hedgerow planted and over 6000ha wildlife rich habitat managed for biodiversity.

In May we hosted a visit by the Defra Access, Landscape, peatland and soils team. This provided an opportunity to highlight the critical state of funding for commoning in the National Park and discussed how FiPL and future ELM schemes might be tailored to address the specific needs of the New Forest.

The study to identify the management principles for the New Forest commons and how these might be supported through the ELM programme (the PA2 study) has been completed and its findings will be taken up by the Forest Farming Group. Work is progressing with Forestry England and other commons' landowners to prepare for the next round of Landscape Recovery funding which is anticipated later this year.

## **2 Second Purpose: Enjoy**

### *Education and Youth*

At the beginning of April, we were excited to launch this year's travel grant to support schools visiting high quality education providers in the National Park. This year we are providing grants of £200 towards the costs of travel and have already allocated funds to 23 different schools.

Our team has been incredibly busy as always in the summer term and particularly so in the breadth of our delivery to new groups and in a range of settings. We have worked with 1,075 pupils since 1 April. This has included first time experiences of the New Forest through school visits with local academies, supporting local primary schools delivery parts of their curriculum that celebrate local natural and cultural heritage, taking pupils staying on residential for a day's walk in the New Forest as 'downtime' from their week of adventurous activities while better understanding the special qualities of the New Forest and the New Forest Code. We can also thank the ranger team for complementing our work through visiting local schools' classrooms helping pupils better understand the role of a ranger.

The end of June and July has seen several successful work experience weeks, run by Education and Youth Officer, Ella Abbott. Local year 10 pupils who have applied and been interviewed by the team to experience an in-depth programme and insight across all

New Forest National Park teams including communications, planning, IT, rangers, engagement and education. It's a great opportunity to work with colleagues across the authority and inspire the next generation about the range of roles available in supporting protected landscapes.

### *Youth for Climate and Nature (YouCAN)*

This quarter we have marked a number of firsts; we are delighted that YouCAN funding has allowed us to deliver to new audiences and on new themes. Highlights include:

- Junior ranger sessions focusing on Archaeological survey of Bee Gardens
- Junior ranger programmes available to home educated young people and their families
- Partnership working with RPSB at Cameron's Cottage and CODA for both our weekend junior ranger and youth volunteering programmes, still very popular every month.
- Youth Action Project tailored and delivered with pupils from SEN specialist schools we haven't worked with before.
- The total number of young people attending sessions peaked at over 250.

The early green careers network has now evolved to become the 'green careers network', supporting people of all ages who may be new or progressing in their green career. A particularly successful event was hosted by Southampton Sustainability Institute with presentation from early careers researchers sharing and comparing with those in practical conservation and other roles.

We were also proud to support YouCAN project Partners Southampton National Park City by attending their Urban Wild Event, meeting more people from Southampton and where our youth Board led their first 'meet the youth board' walk to kickstart their survey of young people's opinions on the National Park.

### *Public and community events / rangers / recreation management*

As is always the case in Spring and early summer our Forest patrols have focused on the ground nesting bird campaign working with FE keepers to assist with the protection of the sites that identified as priority and reminding Forest users of the New Forest Code.

Pop-up community information events were held in newly occupied residential areas of Totton, Fordingbridge, Milford on Sea and Lymington highlighting the importance of the New Forest for wildlife and how following the New Forest Code will help protect it. Sessions were also delivered to Secondary, Junior and Infant schools across the area Lymington, Lyndhurst, Copythorne, Netley Marsh, Milford on Sea, Marchwood and Poulner. At a number of these there was an opportunity to talk with parents and carers at school pick up which proved very worthwhile.

Jim was invited to assist with the Camping New Forest site wardens training which was very well received.

Rangers have supported the induction and training of new Ambassador volunteers and used them to excellent effect to support our work at the ever popular, very busy, Dogstival and Open Farm Sunday events which saw a cumulative total of 1,330 engagements across 3 days!

Last month we said goodbye to our South Area Ranger Dawn Smith who has left the Authority for a role with Dorset Dogs. Her breadth of knowledge and experience in recreation management, and in particular managing dogs in the countryside, will be very much missed but we are pleased to still be benefitting from her participation as Dorset Dogs representative on the New Forest Dogs Forum.

We also wished our two Apprentice Rangers farewell after successfully completing 16 months of the Countryside Worker programme, gaining experience from 6 Ranger teams across the National Park and training at Sparsholt College. Shona has been successful in securing a role as New Forest Craftsperson with Forestry England and Abi is starting work as a Ranger at Lepe Country Park. The Scheme is currently now on hold whilst we work hard to identify funding opportunities to enable it to continue.

Hayden established a new partnership with Downton4Family, supporting families living on the poverty line. She ran a guided walk and nature connection session at Bolderwood for families who, despite living within the park boundary, had never been out in the Forest due to access barriers. Hayden also continued her collaboration with SWVG, a local refugee and asylum seeker charity, delivering a similar session and partnering with PedALL for an inclusive bike ride.

Gillie took part in a Round Table event in London hosted by Santander at the Climate Innovation Forum as part of Climate Action Week 2025 and facilitated by National Parks Partnership. The session 'Supporting the development of Green Skills for a Greener Economy' saw discussions focused on the growing demand for green jobs across sectors, the role of private organisations and how partnerships can support local communities and drive inclusive job creation.

### *Communications*

As part of the YouCAN project, we supported two new climate and nature festivals – the week-long Urban Wild festival in Southampton with Southampton National Park City and New Forest Thrive in Ringwood. Urban Wild activities included an 'interspecies democracy' event in Southampton City Council chamber with people representing different species to give them a voice. The event was covered by BBC South Today and was featured on Have I Got News For You. A YouCAN performance about air quality and

climate by Theatre for Life quickly sold out and it was highlighted in an article by The Guardian looking at using theatre as a medium to address climate issues. YouCAN will also be the theme of our New Forest Show stand.

The New Forest Awards with the CLA were launched with a good number of nominations and they will be presented at the Show. A new category – Commoning Champion – has been introduced to coincide with our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

Communications support for the Commoners Defence Association has included a video on the commoners' stallions out on the Forest, vlog updates from the Chair, a response to a paper about the lack of back-up grazing and an article about commoners' housing.

We've issued a series of press releases about key milestones in the Species Survival Fund project which have been picked up by media outlets including countryfile.com and BBC Wildlife Magazine.

The Awakening Festival in March was the biggest yet with 130 events about the nature and climate emergencies. There were 4,000 event attendees; 1.4m people saw information about the climate and nature emergencies and 370,000 engaged with posts or events.

In partnership with MoreBus we launched a competition to mark the start of the New Forest Tour season which runs from 5 July to 14 September. Last year 35,000 people used the Tour, saving 220,000 car miles and helping to protect the Forest environment.

We launched a WhatsApp broadcast channel for breaking news, events and New Forest Code messaging which sends out messages rather than a chat function. We can send out alerts depending on the situation on the ground, such as warnings about the threat of wildfires.

To support our health and wellbeing work, we promoted Outdoor Office Day - a national movement which seeks to show that tapping into wellbeing benefits that come from working outside in the fresh air with sunlight and physical activity can be enjoyed by all during the working day.

Working with Forestry England we launched an upgrade to the Knightwood Oak accessible trail. The work was funded by us through a £50,000 grant from Defra's Access for All fund as part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring the National Park is accessible to all.

Work on print materials has included the spring/summer issue of Park Life; the Marque Local Produce Guide and the annual review.

We continued to encourage responsible visits, with messaging around the New Forest code, ground nesting birds and preventing wildfires.

We also encouraged people to respond to the public consultation on the draft Copythorne Parish Design Statement, as well as the public consultation on the Lymington and Pennington draft Neighbourhood Plan.

### *Health and Wellbeing and Inclusive Projects*

Our two National Park NHS Health Fellows are coming to the end of their year placement working two days a week on developing opportunities for people to benefit from connection to nature and the National Park. Their three projects (Green Health Hub, Tatchbury Mount wellbeing trail and the Heritage and Health project with the New Forest Heritage Centre) have all been completed and they are presenting their findings to various groups. These included the Mental Health Leads for Hampshire, Hampshire Improving Mental Wellbeing Board and presentation of two posters of their work at the Royal College of Psychiatrists International Congress held in Newport, South Wales. The New Forest NPA and Bannau Brycheiniog also attended one of the days and promoted the value of National Parks for wellbeing for attendees. Good contacts were made and a survey of psychiatrists indicated that 93% use nature for their wellbeing and 87% recommend nature for their patients, which was a great indication of the support for the role of nature for mental health.

We ran guided walk training for the health fellows, volunteers at the Heritage Centre, New Forest ambassadors and members of the New Forest Youth board.

We supported the work of the National Park artists in residence in May, with an exhibition from artists Em Burrows and Jeremy Segal. Jeremy and Em presented 'New Forest Collage Radio', a sonic map of the Forest that visitors were invited to explore with handheld FM radios. We also welcomed Isabella Martin, who is working in collaboration with local communities to develop experimental clocks that explore experiences of time in the New Forest and will exhibit in October.

We met with the organisation Muslim Hikers, which runs inclusive events in several national parks and national landscapes, to investigate if we can run a partnership walk with them in 2025.

### *PEDALL New Forest Inclusive Cycling*

During this reporting period, PEDALL has delivered 194 group riding sessions, supported five community events, and facilitated 2,146 individual ride slots — representing a 24% increase in participation compared to the same period last year. This growth reflects stronger engagement with existing partner organisations and the successful onboarding of new groups.

We've seen a welcome return of riders to both our Burley and Ashurst bases, with a particularly encouraging rise in participation from residential care homes supporting older

adults living with dementia. In a positive development, Dementia Friendly Hampshire has committed to weekly rides through to the end of the year, enabling regular access to inclusive cycling for a wide network of dementia-focused organisations across the New Forest.

Our work with educational institutions continues to grow, with 13 schools and colleges from the New Forest and Southampton taking part in this period. These sessions provide young people with special educational needs a valuable opportunity to experience the New Forest in a social, active and inclusive environment.

PEDALL has also maintained a strong community presence, delivering rides at Gateway Clubs in New Milton, and at events hosted by Abbotswood, Netley Court, and Cedar Care Homes. In addition, we were pleased to host visitors from Defra and 'Wheels for All', a national inclusive cycling charity. PEDALL is set to join the 'Wheels for All' partner network, aligning us with other inclusive cycling initiatives across the UK and amplifying our voice in campaigns for improved cycling accessibility.

In June, PEDALL Operations Manager Gareth Jones and Jim Mitchell, Access and Learning Manager, completed the 205-mile 'Chase the Sun' cycling challenge, joined by a relay team of PEDALL volunteers and New Forest National Park Authority staff. This effort not only raised awareness and funds for PEDALL but also strengthened connections with the wider cycling community. We look forward to welcoming Chase the Sun representatives to 'Pass the PEDALL 2025' a community cycling celebration event at New Park, Brockenhurst on 27 September 2025.

Looking ahead, preparations are underway for PEDALL's presence at the New Forest Show, where we will once again partner with Forestry England to offer fun, off-road go-kart cycling, aimed at raising both awareness and vital funding to support our ongoing health and wellbeing programmes.

### *Volunteering*

Our Volunteers have provided 135 volunteer days, including 24 days from individuals supported by Flourish In Nature, since the last report. Our new Welfare Van has already allowed us to run tasks on Rights of Way which would otherwise be impossible due to remoteness; further work on the Welfare Van is planned which will further enhance the accessibility of our tasks (including the addition of a toilet).

Co-ordinating with our Health Fellows Laura Pridmore and Jennifer Wyllie, the staff of NHS Tatchbury Mount and volunteers from the New Forest National Park spent two days clearing and preparing a disused footpath in the grounds of the Hospital. This footpath is available to use for staff, patients and visitors alike and is part of the efforts by Russel Slater and the grounds team to improve accessibility across the site. We hope to return to this site to assist with similar improvements in the future.

We have launched the soft reboot of New Forest Ambassadors (previously an initiative

equipping members of the public to combat litter, record verge parking and engage in citizen science surveys) by bringing together a group of nine passionate volunteers keen to assist the NFNPA with engagement and education opportunities. Ambassadors have joined our ranger team on three weekend events, and supported two Junior Ranger sessions with our Education Team, with extremely positive feedback from both the Ambassadors and the staff they've worked alongside. Going forward, we will look at supporting the Ambassadors with additional training such as Outdoor First Aid courses.

Working alongside our National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative Project Co-ordinator, Ellie Bowen, volunteers have begun work on the Breamore Railway Footpath, a project with Hampshire County Council to improve a two-mile stretch of former railway line with vegetation clearance, surfacing and tree works. Across the first three sessions we have cleared almost a mile of footpath, including fully clearing nine railway culverts completely lost to encroaching scrub in preparation for an upcoming survey. A previously unknown tenth culvert has been discovered by volunteers and was partially cleared by staff and work experience students on a recent Discovery Day.

### *Access and Rights of Way*

Our work on the Landscape and Access Project funded by the National Grid continues as we add eight signposts to our promoted routes network and investigate surfacing works on the Tatchbury mount trail.

We are awaiting final confirmation of the Defra Access for All funding whilst working up potential projects to improve accessible cycling facilities at Pedall, to continue our work upgrading accessible trails in partnership with Forestry England and making repairs to our welfare van to aid the comfort of our volunteers.

The Solent-to-Sussex England Coast Path Trail Partnership continues its work to establish and maintain the National Trail from the New Forest to Shoreham. Two further sections of the England Coast Path in Hampshire are due to open this year, adding approximately 45 miles of coast path. As members of the Trail Partnership, we continue to maintain the three miles of trail within the National Park and look forwards to the route of the Highcliffe to Calshot section being determined.

### **3 Duty: Prosper**

#### *Re:New Forest Partnership Plan*

The Partnership Plan Leaders' Panel met on 31 March, with a focus on the water quality of the National Park. Natural England and Forestry England staff led a site visit to the wetland restoration scheme at Fletchers Thorns, near New Park, Brockenhurst. The restoration scheme has improved water quality, helped with flood risk and also improved grazing for commoners' stock. On 3 July the annual Partnership Plan Tour was led by the Verderers of the New Forest and Forestry England. The tour focused on the financial

challenges and opportunities for the New Forest and included visits to Matley Ridge and the Rhinefield Ornamental Drive, with presentations from Head Agister Jonathan Gerrelli and Chair of the CDA Andrew Parry-Norton.

### **Rural Prosperity Fund**

With the support of New Forest District Council, we have secured £45k in grants from the England Rural Prosperity Fund. One grant will support the work PedALL to increase the number of people benefiting from inclusive cycling. The second grant will be aimed at micro and small businesses, with small amounts of funding to help increase productivity.

### ***Fundraising***

Alongside delivery of several of our existing grant funded projects, we are continuing to develop plans for a development phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Landscape Connections strategic initiative. This is designed to support Protected Landscapes to become better for nature and more able to welcome people from all backgrounds including those who rarely visit them now. We held three workshops with stakeholders and staff in April and gathered a wealth of ideas and content that can form the basis of numerous projects and initiatives. This is being used to develop a framework that works cohesively to maximise the outputs from these ideas; something that will be further developed during the development phase. We are working towards submitting a development phase application around September and continuing to talk to the funder about our plans as they progress.

### ***New Forest Skills Development***

A team of researchers based at the University of Southampton have been working with us to review green skills and job in the area and to make recommendations to the 'GreenPrint' network, which is focused on green prosperity for the central south. We have been part of this team and helped run a workshop with local authorities and businesses at the University. This was the second of three Greenprint network meetings this year, with a third to take place in the autumn on green finance.

### ***New Forest Tour***

The New Forest Tour season commenced on 5 July for 10 weeks. The fleet has reduced from six buses to four buses (two green route, one blue, one red). We are creating suggested itineraries to inspire customers and help them maximise their day whilst supporting local businesses.

### ***Sustainable Transport and Active Travel***

We have completed the programme of work funded by Active Travel England under the

National Parks Capability Fund. This included feasibility studies on A35 safer crossings, the off-road cycle network wayfinding study, and the Lyndhurst to Lymington route, identified as Route 120 in the draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). All involved stakeholder consultation through the New Forest Cycle Working Group and other key stakeholders. The wayfinding study and A35 will directly lead to a delivery phase, with NFDC Community Infrastructure Levy funding available to improve the New Forest gravel network and Safer Roads funding via Hampshire County Council (HCC) available to take forward the Rhinefield / Bolderwood ornamental drive crossing of the A35. We are now working with Active Travel England (ATE) to evaluate the programme and hope to benefit from further active travel funding from ATE in the future. We have also co-ordinated the responses from all 10 English National Parks in response to Active travel England's draft rural guidance, which the work in national parks is helping inform.

The New Forest LCWIP is in its final draft stage following amendment from last year's consultation. It is planned to go to HCC Cabinet in September and then to the Authority in early 2026.

#### *Affordable Housing*

Good progress is being made on the redevelopment of the former Lyndhurst Park Hotel site, which will deliver eight affordable dwellings for people in housing need with a local connection to the New Forest. The Local Plan Review will also consider updated evidence on housing need and the viability of development to inform our revised local planning policies.

#### *Sustainable Communities Fund*

Funding of £2,000 was awarded to Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to establish three enclosures on Hurst Spit to create safer breeding areas for Ringed Plover and Oystercatcher. Temporary fencing and roped areas have been erected along with informative signage. Monitoring is being carried out by staff and volunteers with help from cameras deployed 1.5m from nest sites. The data gathered will provide information about nesting attempts and outcomes and aim to increase the breeding success of these species. The project is one of a series of actions identified by the Hurst and Keyhaven Coastal Nature Reserve Forum which includes RSPB, Bird Aware, English Heritage, Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, WINGS (Milford-based wildlife group) and Milford Conservation Volunteers.

#### **4 Organisation: Achieving Excellence**

##### *Human Resources*

As of 18 July 2025, the total staff headcount was 83 or 71.78 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

	<b>Headcount</b>	Variation from previous report	<b>Full Time Equivalents</b>	Variation from previous report
Core funded	61*	0	53.62*	– 0.14
Funded by external projects	22	0	18.16	– 1.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	0	<b>71.78</b>	– 1.22

\*Of the core funded roles, one staff member (1 FTE) is working in shared services, four are on a fixed-term contract and 20 are part-time.

In the last few months we recruited to the following roles:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Contract type</b>	<b>How funded</b>
Landscape Enhancement Project Co-ordinator	Fixed term until March 2028, part-time	Project funded (Landscape Enhancement Initiative supplied by the National Grid)
Project Co-ordinator	Fixed term until February 2026, part-time	Project funded (Species Survival Fund)
Building Design and Conservation Officer	Permanent	Core funded
Compliance and Legal Support Officer	Permanent	Core funded
Solicitor and Monitoring Officer	Permanent	Core funded

We said goodbye to:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Contract type</b>	<b>How role will be filled in future</b>
Executive Director Strategy and Planning	Permanent, core funded	Interim measure – Head of Planning and Place

Ranger x 2	Permanent, part funded by habitat mitigation contributions	Currently assessing vacancies
New Forest Apprentice Ranger x 2	Fixed term, project funded	N/A – apprenticeship completed

We are currently recruiting for:

Role	Contract type	How funded
Senior Planning Officer	Permanent	Core funded
Inclusive Cycling Ride Assistant	Fixed term for 6 months	Project funded (PEDALL)

### *IT & Cyber Security Services*

**Security / Infrastructure** - Configuration changes were made to the backup system after receiving notification from Commvault, the backup provider, that they had modified the communication method of the backup with our Microsoft system. This adjustment followed advice from Microsoft to ensure enhanced compatibility and efficiency.

Defra has sent through a GovS 007 questionnaire which differs from previous years questionnaires by looking at Authority-wide security concerns rather than just IT specific concerns.

We are in the planning stages for using Microsoft Purview to set up retention & sensitivity labels across the electronic data held within the authority. This is an essential piece of security and GDPR work.

**Planning System** - The Tree Protection Order (TPO) portal has been in the user testing stage for the last few weeks and following final testing by the Tree Team we should be able to sign this off and set as live this month.

The microfiche are still with a specialist company undergoing digital scanning.

Digital planning project (DPIF) - we have submitted six of the nine required datasets, which are all showing a live without any issues needing fixing, and the last datasets, all TPO datasets, will be looked at once we have finalised the TPO citizen portal.

There have been no updates regarding the Land Registry / land charges changes.

**GIS** – Regular internal GIS meetings have taken place with key users attending from across the Authority. We ran a GIS survey to help identify the current and future GIS requirements with the purpose of helping identify what the best support for this will be moving forward.

**IT Champions** - The IT Champions program has resumed with new IT champions recently added to the team. The IT Manager conducted a presentation on Artificial Intelligence (AI), highlighting the innovative advancements in the field. As part of the program, two IT champions were granted temporary Microsoft CoPilot AI licenses. These licenses will allow them to explore and utilize some of the new AI capabilities for a month. After this trial period, the IT champions will report their findings and experiences to the IT team and other champions at the next meeting.

**Mobile Phones** – we are due to go out to suppliers via a Crown Commercial Service procurement framework. The current contract expires end of August.

**Audit** – The final IT Disaster Recovery / IT Business Continuity Plans / Cyber Response Plan report has been received with an overall assurance opinion of Reasonable.

**IT Discovery Day** – following on from last year's successful Cyber Security based Discovery Day, this year we are hosting another Discovery Day again based around the IT helpdesk and AI.

#### *Information management*

#### **Year-end statistics for 2024/25**

##### Information requests

We received 73 requests for information between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 four fewer than the previous year which was a record year.

Information requests received by year								
	24/25	23/24	22/23	21/22	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Q1	17	14	18	19	22	11	14	14
Q2	16	33	14	12	19	8	20	10
Q3	13	15	24	20	14	15	12	15
Q4	27	15	11	15	19	19	12	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>47</b>

We met the statutory response timeframe of 20 working days (or one calendar month for subject access requests) in all but one response. The average response time being 14 working days.

Of the 73 requests, two were subject access requests made under GDPR i.e. requests for the requesters own data. Twenty-one (29%) were considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and related to matters such as our IT arrangements, finance and other governance and work practices matters. Three requests were on the topic of EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion).

The remaining requests (68%) were requests for environmental information predominantly related to our planning function and therefore considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the EIRs). Over a third (31) of all requests were related to a specific planning application, tree works application, enforcement case or site, where the requester was seeking additional information which was not already publicly available on the planning register on our website, this included internal communications, pre-application enquiries or the source and details relating to planning enforcement investigations. Four requests were about BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) although three of these were from the same requester.

Information requests are applicant and motive blind, and a requester is not obliged to give reasons why they are seeking the information, although many do voluntarily provide some background to their request. Broadly speaking just over half of requests were from individuals with a personal interest in the information, often planning related, around a quarter could be described as research and were received from journalists, pressure groups, students etc. The remainder were from those with a commercial interest, for example with a view to supplying goods or services or otherwise using the requested information commercially.

In accordance with the presumption in favour of disclosure under the EIR and the strong public interest in transparency, we endeavour to release as much information as possible in response to requests. Where we held the requested information, it was released in 56% of cases, either in full or only subject to minimal personal data redactions (such as names and contact details of members of the public) and a further 23% were partially released. Only nine requests were withheld in their entirety, generally because they were related to sensitive planning enforcement cases or other potential or ongoing legal matters.

In 21 requests (29%) we did not hold the information requested and where appropriate, the requesters were redirected to the relevant public authority that we believe may hold the information. An unusually high number (9) were not responded to and classified as 'lapsed/withdrawn/invalid'. This happens where a request is ambiguous and the requester

does not respond to our request for clarification, or they decide not to pursue the request or in the case of a Subject Access Request fail to provide us with acceptable identification documents.

In only six cases did the requester ask for an internal review of our initial response. In all of those cases the internal review upheld the original decision. Two of these, which are related to the same information, have subsequently been referred to the Information Commissioner. They have yet to be allocated to a case officer, so we are waiting to hear from the Commissioner's office with regards to their investigation.

### Formal complaints

We investigated 19 formal complaints which is five more than the previous year, although four complaints related to the same planning application. As can be seen from the table below the number of formal complaints received do vary year on year but remain relatively low considering the number of planning applications that we consider annually. All were related to a specific planning application, tree works application or enforcement case.

<b>Number of complaints received per year</b>								
	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>21/22</b>	<b>20/21</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>18/19</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Q1	7	3	1	2	3	7	4	9
Q2	6	8	1	3	11	5	3	4
Q3	1	2	5	3	4	2	3	9
Q4	5	4	6	4	3	4	7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>

Our average response time was 19.3 working days, and on six occasions we exceeded the 20-working day target by between two and five days. Two related complaints were partially upheld because we had not notified two adjacent properties owing to an administrative oversight. However, as we had met our statutory duty in terms of the public consultation and the officer's report noted that we had considered the neighbours' amenity when determining the application, it had not caused them significant injustice. The complainants in this case accepted our apology and did not take the matter any further. Another complaint related to a delay in us responding to their pre-application enquiry, we acknowledged that we had not met our target response times and offered an apology and refunded the application fee which resolved the matter for them.

In three cases, on receiving the initial response the complainant requested a review by the Chief Executive under Stage 3 of our process. The original decision was upheld in each case.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman considered three complaints in the period. In all cases the Ombudsman decided not to investigate the complaint and closed

the case after making initial enquiries because they considered it unlikely that they would find fault. These Ombudsman's decisions can be read in full on their website [here](#)

### Data Protection

Under the GDPR data subjects have several rights in respect to the processing of their personal data and we receive a small number of requests each year from individuals wishing to exercise those rights. This year we received two requests.

One from an unsuccessful job applicant asking us to delete their application information. This request was refused, however they were reassured that in accordance with our standard procedures, the applications of unsuccessful applicants are deleted six months after the appointment is made, and they were satisfied with this outcome. The other request was from an objector to a planning application that asked for their name and address not to be published online. They provided details of their particular situation, and we complied with their request.

## **5 Members**

### **5.1 Some Members were involved in some or all of the following meetings and events**

- 15 April – Planning Committee
- 20 May – Planning Committee
- 22 May – Informal Members Session – Local Plan Review
- 2 June – Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
- 5 June – Consultative Panel
- 9 June – New Forest Access Forum
- 24 June – Members Day – University of Southampton
- 26 June - Informal Members Session – Local Plan Review
- 3 July – Partnership Plan Leaders Summer Tour
- 15 July – Planning Committee
- 17 July – Members Workshop – Forestry England
- 23 July - Informal Members Session – Local Plan Review

### **5.2 Forthcoming Members activities include:**

- 29-31 July – New Forest Show
- 19 August – Planning Committee
- 20 August - Informal Members Session – Local Plan Review
- 4 September – Consultative Panel
- 8 September – Resources Audit and Performance Committee
- 15 September – New Forest Access Forum
- 16 September – Planning Committee

- 17 September - Informal Members Session – Local Plan Review
- 24 September – Members Day - TBC

### 5.3 Chief Executive's external engagements

- 27 March – Waterside Steering Group
- 28 March – Regular meeting with Chair, National Parks Partnership
- 28 March – National Landscapes Conference pre-meet
- 1 April – Heart of England Forest visit
- 2 April – Green Leadership interview
- 4 April – Team New Forest Green Leaders session
- 7-8 April – National Parks England (NPE) Board meeting, South Downs
- 8 April – RSA Devolution Event, Southampton
- 10 April – Landscape Connections Stakeholder Workshop
- 10 April – Southampton of University's Civic University Agreement anniversary event
- 11 April – Meeting with Wessex Internet
- 11 April – Regular meeting with Chief Executive, South Downs NPA
- 11 April – Planning session for future Greenprint Network meeting
- 11 April – Green Leader interview
- 14-16 April – Green Leadership content development
- 17 April – Meeting with Re:New Nature Partnership Chair
- 28 April – Meeting with New Forest Heritage Centre Chair and Manager
- 29 April – Greenprint Steering Group meeting
- 29 April – English National Park Officers Group (ENPOG) meeting
- 30 April - 2 May – National Parks UK Chairs & Chief Executive's meeting, PDNP
- 6-9 May – St George's Leadership Fellows Conversation, Windsor Castle
- 9 May – Meeting with Rt Hon Sir Desmond Swayne MP
- 12-13 May – Hosted a visit by Defra Protected Landscapes team officials
- 13 May – Regular meeting with Chief Executive, South Downs NPA
- 15 May – Intro meeting with Green Skills Fellow, Swansea University
- 15 May – Meeting with Director of Conservation & Climate Change, North Yorkshire Moors NPA (UK Nature Recovery)
- 16 May – Regular meeting with Chief Executive, NFDC
- 16 May – Meeting with software company
- 19-20 May – Future Countryside Event, Chatsworth Peak District
- 21 May – Planning meeting for NPA & ENGOs senior leaders national meeting
- 22 May – Speaker at Fresh Water Habitats Trust Headstart Conference
- 23 May – Meeting with John Glen MP
- 1 June – Urban Wild Festival, Southampton
- 2 June – Meeting with NFDC Chair and Chief Executive
- 2 June – Local Government re-organisation briefing with Hampshire County Council

- 3 June – ENPOG meeting
- 6 June – Hampshire & Isle of Wight (HIOW) Public Sector Leaders meeting
- 6 June – Meeting with the Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
- 12 June – Meeting with Culture in Common programme director
- 12 June – Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Chief Executive's meeting
- 12 June - Meeting with Director of Conservation & Climate Change, North York Moors NPA (UK Nature Recovery)
- 13 June – Meeting with ABP
- 13 June – Attendance to Tick Study session
- 13 June – Nature Recovery Policy meeting (national lead)
- 13 June – Meeting with SDNPA
- 13 June – High Sheriff of Hampshire Art Exhibition, guest of SpUD
- 16 June – Southern Water Independent Climate and Environment Group (ICEG) Workshop
- 17 June – Regular meeting with Chief Executive, NFDC
- 17 June – Planning meeting for NPA & ENGO get together
- 18 June – Planning meeting for Greenprint Network event
- 19 June – Team Nature meeting with Defra 30 by 30 team
- 19 June – Waterside Steering Group meeting
- 20 June – Nature Recovery Leaders meeting
- 23 June – Green Leadership content development meeting
- 23 June – Meeting with Chief Executive, Test Valley Borough Council
- 24 June – University of Southampton Partnership event
- 25 June – Business South Regenerate South Conference (ESG)
- 26 June – Meeting to discuss National Parks Partnerships CEO Recruitment
- 27 June – Greenprint Network event – Green Skills and Jobs
- 30 June – 1 July – NPAs & ENGOs get together, Dartmoor National Park
- 3 July – Partnership Plan Leaders Panel summer tour
- 3 July – NPUK Wildfire Group meeting (delegated)
- 4 July – Regular catch up with Chief Executive, SDNPA
- 4 July – Green Leadership content development
- 6 July – New Forest Thrive Festival, Ringwood
- 7 July – NPE AGM
- 7 July – Regular meeting with Chair, National Parks Partnership
- 9 July – National Landscapes Conference tour of the New Forest
- 9 July – Speaker at National Landscapes conference (Question Time Panel)
- 14 July – Phone call with Chief Executive, Solent Freeport
- 15 July – Meet Defra food policy team colleagues visiting the New Forest
- 15 July – Regular meeting with Chief Executive, NFDC
- 15 July – Meeting with Ministry Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG)
- 17 July – Meeting with Friends of New Forest
- 17 July – Meeting with Assistant Director, National Trust
- 21 July – Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme meeting

- 21 July – Meeting with NFDC
- 23 July – Meeting with Chief Executive, Business South

#### **5.4 Chair's engagements**

- 27 March – National Parks Partnerships EGM
- 31 March – Partnership Plan Leaders Panel
- 4 April - 1:1 meeting with chair NPE
- 8 April – NPE Board meeting (attended by Deputy Chair)
- 23 April – Forest Farming Group
- 29 April – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 2 May – Meeting with NFDC
- 16 May - DEFRA Recruitment Meeting
- 28 May - DEFRA CV sift alignment meeting
- 2 June - RAPC
- 2 June - Devolution meeting with NFDC
- 3 June - Farming and Commoning discussion with CEO Dartmoor NPA
- 11 June - NPE Strategy discussion
- 11 June – Meeting with Leader, NFDC
- 18 June – SoS Board representative interviews
- 20 June – SoS Board representative interviews
- 26 June - Informal Members Day - Local Plan
- 30 June - NPE EGM
- 1 July - Capability Programme Delivery Discussion (internal)
- 3 July - NPE arising issue meeting
- 3 July – Partnership Plan Leaders Panel summer tour
- 7 July – NPE AGM
- 10 July – Solent Freeport Board meeting
- 15 July - NPE Strategy Day (attended by Deputy Chair)

Throughout various meetings with individual Officers and Members

#### **6 Recommendation**

**To note the report.**