

OPEN SESSION: There were 3 members of the public present who wished to speak on planning applications.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 5th June 2015 at 10.00am

Cllr Christopher Treleaven (Chairman)
Cllr Tim Ward (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Christine Ford
Cllr Angela Wiseman

IN ATTENDANCE: Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Meetings Administrator

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr P Day, Cllr E Blake, Cllr M Steele and Cllr D Deane.

P/5205

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared at this stage.

P/5206

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 1st May and 20th May 2015, having been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

P/5207

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

The Chairman informed the Committee that he believed that the Student Advisors absence was due to exam commitments. He confirmed that the certificates would either be presented at a future meeting or posted to them.

RESOLVED: That alternative arrangements be made to provide the Student Advisors with their certificates

ACTION N VODDEN

P/5208

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

With the agreement of the Committee planning applications 15/10427 and 15/10461 were brought forward for the benefit of those present.

15/10427 – 21, North Poulner Road - Mr Jenkins presented his application to the Committee and acknowledged the objections submitted. He maintained that the proposal was in keeping with the street scene, as there were a diverse range of properties on

North Poulner Road. He provided pictures and detailed alterations, which had been undertaken at neighbouring properties.

Cllr Ward indicated that property was in a row of 7 or 8 similar, modest bungalows and the street scene had to be taken into consideration in determining the application, along with the impact on the neighbours.

Cllr Wiseman and Cllr Ford agreed commenting that the proposal would make the property too bulky, given its position, and that objections from neighbours regarding intrusion and overlooking needed to be taken into account.

Members voted on the application and recommended refusal of the application. They were concerned that the impact of the significant alteration proposed, increasing the height and roof mass of the property, with the new dormer windows looking towards the neighbouring properties, would result in overlooking and an invasion of privacy. They viewed the plans as out of keeping with the street scene, which comprises a row of modest bungalows with low roof forms.

15/10461 – 30, Northfield Road – The Deputy Town Clerk indicated that the plans had been scaled back from a previously refused application. The Planning Officer's concerns with the new application were its bulk and height, being visually at odds with the character of the adjacent properties, which were of low profile, and the impact on neighbouring properties. Although reduction in the roof mass would improve the aspect of No 32, the extension would be close to the boundary.

Mr Pine addressed the Committee indicating that neighbours at No 28 and at the rear were supportive of the plans, which had been re-submitted with significant amendments; the reduction in height increase to 50cm, alteration of the roof design and the reduction in size and number of windows in the first floor bedroom. Proximity to the boundary would be 1.3m rather than 0.75m, the smallest gap being obscured by the garage. He felt that properties in the area had had similar alterations and that the plans should now be acceptable.

Cllr Ward commented that any alterations to the other fairly uniform bungalows in the area had been done sympathetically and he viewed this proposal as a significant alteration, which would be too big and imposing. Cllr Wiseman appreciated that the revised plans had a reduced ridge height, however Local Distinctiveness and the street scene were important considerations.

Cllr Ford indicated that she would look favourably on a rear extension as it would back onto the neighbour's garage and there would be no privacy issues. Cllr Briers indicated that he would be prepared to recommend permission.

A discussion took place and by majority Councillors decided to recommend refusal, but they would accept the planning officer's decision. The Committee supported the Officer's view that the proposal would be visually incongruous and compromise the street scene, being at odds with the character and form of the adjacent properties.

Members considered the remaining planning applications and noted applications dealt with under delegated powers (*Annex A*).

RESOLVED: That the observations summarised in *Annex A* be submitted

ACTION Nicola Vodden

P/5209

POULNER INFANT SCHOOL

The Committee considered the proposal to permanently enlarge the premises of Poulner Infant School (Annex B).

The Chairman indicated that this consultation had arisen from the expected need for more infant school places, as an implication of the Crow Lane site and would partly be funded by developer's contributions from Linden Homes.

The Deputy Town Clerk indicated that there was little information at this stage and this consultation invited comments and was an opportunity to indicate support or objection to the proposal.

The Committee wished to underline their concerns in respect of parking provision at drop off and collection times. They were conscious that there could be loss of some green space and were concerned that the proposed enlargement should not inhibit outdoor activities. In addition, members were supportive of there being a hall incorporated in the plans, for the children's community use.

RESOLVED: That Hampshire County Council be notified, in respect of the consultation in relation to the enlargement of Poulner School;

- 1) the concerns in relation to parking issues,
- 2) the loss of green space and the impact on outdoor activities, and
- 3) incorporating into the plans, a hall, as a community area.

ACTION Jo Hurd

P/5210

CONSULTATION ON THE REVISED DRAFT OF THE NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee considered submitting further comments on the revised draft of the National Park Management Plan (Annex C).

The Deputy Town Clerk indicated that previous comments had been submitted in December 2014. At that stage a number of proposed actions were highlighted as important to the Council (Paragraph 2).

There had been a few changes and additions, however all the actions that had been highlighted in December were still included in the document. The Committee agreed that there were no additional concerns and wished to make no further comment.

RESOLVED: That no further comment be made on the consultation.

ACTION Jo Hurd

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 12:35pm.

RECEIVED
24th June 2015

APPROVED
3rd July 2015

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

Ringwood Town Council - Planning Observations - NFNPA

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/00358	Land at St. Andrews Lodge, Forest Lane, Hightown Hill, Ringwood. BH24 3HF	Agricultural building	Permission (1)	Members made this recommendation subject to justification to the officer that the building is not unnecessarily large.
CONS/15/0432	The Fish Inn, The Bridges, Ringwood. BH24 2AA	Fell 1 Conifer	Refusal (4)	The justification given, to improve the beer garden, is not sufficient reason to fell the tree, which is well established and encloses a telegraph pole. It is not clear how the beer garden could be improved.
CONS/15/0497	Flat 1, Forest Gate, 30, Hightown Road, Ringwood. BH24 1NN	Reduce the height of 1 Fir tree by 20ft	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Ringwood Town Council - Planning Observations - NFDC

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10322	Ringwood Social Club, 19, West Street, Ringwood. BH24 1DY	Office building; 2 pairs of semi-detached houses; demolition of existing club extension & single-storey rear extension; parking	Refusal (2)	The Committee supported the Planning Officer's recommendation to withdraw the application. The applicant should re-consider addressing the Conservation Officer's concerns before re-applying. It was felt that the plans did not fulfil Ringwood's Local Distinctiveness Document and there were reservations concerning layout of the site altogether, the height of the residential properties, quality of the design, insufficient parking, ecological and drainage issues, noise issues, relating to the proposed orangery and large patio area, and servicing of the club.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10323	Ringwood Social Club, 19, West Street, Ringwood. BH24 1DY	Office building; 2 pairs of semi-detached houses; demolition of club extension; make good rear wall & insert windows; single-storey rear extension; block door; remove stud walls; create door; lift (Application for Listed Building Consent)	Refusal (2)	The Committee supported the Planning Officer's recommendation to withdraw the application. The applicant should re-consider addressing the Conservation Officer's concerns before re-applying. It was felt that the plans did not fulfil Ringwood's Local Distinctiveness Document and there were reservations concerning layout of the site altogether, the height of the residential properties, quality of the design, insufficient parking, ecological and drainage issues, noise issues, relating to the proposed orangery and large patio area, and servicing of the club.
15/10355	Seven Fish, 2, Southampton Road, Ringwood. BH24 1HY	Repaint window frames; new step; stud walls; extraction vent and ducting; 1 non illuminated hanging sign; 1 externally illuminated fascia sign (Application for Listed Building Consent)	Permission (1)	Members were pleased that the concerns of the Conservation Officer in respect of lighting and exterior painting appeared to have been addressed.
15/10356	Seven Fish, 2, Southampton Road, Ringwood. BH24 1HY	Display 1 non illuminated hanging sign; 1 externally illuminated fascia sign (Application for Advertisement Consent)	Permission (1)	Members were pleased that the concerns of the Conservation Officer in respect of lighting and exterior painting appear to have been addressed.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10371	Land rear of 84 & 86 Eastfield Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1UR	House; carport; detached garage; access	Refusal (4)	The Committee felt that this proposed property, which would be positioned on a cramped site, overlooking Nos. 80, 82 and properties to the west, would not be in keeping with the Local Distinctiveness Document, in relation to the gaps between properties, deep garden spaces and the impact on amenities. There would also be an increase in noise and disturbance to No.82 from the use of the proposed access to the property.
15/10403	1, Northfield Road, Ringwood. BH24 1LS	Two-storey side extension; single-storey rear extension; front and rear dormers in association with new first floor; roof lights; raise ridge height; front porch; fenestration alterations	Permission (3)	
15/10417	108a, Christchurch Road, Ringwood. BH24 1DR	4 houses with undercover parking (Outline application with details only of access, appearance, landscaping & scale)	Refusal (2)	The committee supported the Conservation Officer's concerns. In addition, parking provision is not sufficient and does not comply with the Parking Standards SPD. Parking in the area is already an issue and this proposal would add to road congestion and compromise highway safety.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10427	21, North Poulner Road, Ringwood. BH24 1SN	Roof alterations; raise ridge height, side dormers in association with new first floor; two-storey rear extension; juliette balcony; single-storey side extension	Refusal (4)	Members were concerned that the impact of the significant alteration proposed, increasing the height and roof mass of the property, with the new dormer windows looking towards the neighbouring properties, would result in overlooking and an invasion of privacy. They viewed the plans as out of keeping with the street scene, which comprises a row of modest bungalows with low roof forms.
15/10461	30, Northfield Road, Ringwood. BH24 1LU	Two-storey side & rear extension; roof alterations; raise roof height; dormers & roof lights	Refusal (2)	The Committee supported the Officer's view that the proposal would result in a visually incongruous development, which would compromise the street scene and be at odds with the character and form of the adjacent properties.
15/10513	Land of The Ten Steps, Salisbury Road, Ringwood. BH24 1AU	Two-storey dwelling; parking	Refusal (4)	The Committee felt that the overall height of the proposal was an issue and were concerned about potential overlooking of The Pines from the rear dormer window. The proposed parking would necessitate vehicles reversing across the well used public footpath (also part of the Avon Valley Path), putting walkers at risk. The proposed positioning of the tree could have a detrimental impact on the footpath access to The Ten Steps. The site suggested by the Tree Officer (south east corner of the site) would compromise parking arrangements proposed.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10524	57, Addison Square, Ringwood. BH24 1Y	Two-storey rear extension; side dormer; roof light	Permission (1)	
15/10526	12, Carvers Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1LB	Single-storey side extension with lantern roof light; roof alterations to existing side extension; replacement roof and fenestration alterations to existing rear extension	Permission (1)	
15/10529	165, Christchurch Road, Ringwood. BH24 3AL	Demolition of building (Demolition Prior Notification Application)		Demolition Prior Notification Application - Details not required to be approved.
15/10533	Brookside, 26, Quomp, Ringwood. BH24 1NT	Removal of Condition 4 of Planning Permission 14/11199 Code for sustainable homes	Permission (1)	
15/10552	148, Hightown Road, Ringwood. BH24 1NP	Two-storey front extension; fenestration alterations	Permission (1)	
15/10556	51, Addison Square, Ringwood. BH24 1NY	Removal of Condition 4 of Planning Permission 15/10058 code for sustainable homes	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10566	Whitford, Hightown Road, Hightown, Ringwood. BH24 3DY	Raise roof height, dormers and rooflights in association with new first floor; rear conservatory	Refusal (4)	Members objected to the proposal due to its bulk and mass and felt that it would be inappropriate in the context of the street scene and the property's proximity to the road.
15/10574	Cranberry House, 70, Southampton Road, Ringwood. BH24 1JD	Two-storey rear extension	Permission (1)	
15/10579	Electricity Sub Station, Mill Lane, Ringwood.	Repair of river wall	Officer Decision (5)	
15/10609	22, Beatty Close, Poulner, Ringwood. BH24 1XR	First-floor side extension; one and two-storey rear extension; rear balcony with steps	Permission (1)	
15/10678	59, Hightown Road, Ringwood. BH24 1NH	Single-storey rear extension with roof lights; fenestration alteration	Permission (1)	
15/10695	20-22 Southampton Road, Ringwood. BH24 1DE	Use of ground floor as retail unit; creation of separate office at first floor with lobby entrance extension; shopfront alterations	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
15/10704	Pullman Business Park, Pullman Way, Ringwood. BH24 1HD	Additional parking; bollards; relocate bike shelter	Permission (3)	The Council supports the provision of additional parking to help relieve current inappropriate parking around the estate and on Castleman Way.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Applications decided under delegated powers: to be noted

on 5th June 2015 at 10:00 am

Number	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal
FELL/15/0402	C. Denton	Sir John's Wood, Bisterne, Ringwood.	Clear/Fell Norway Spruce 1/5/15: Permission (1) Recommend Permission, but would accept Tree Officer's decision



Children's Services Department
Elizabeth II Court North,
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Hampshire SO23 8UG

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Consultees

Enquiries to	Gemma Wigman	My reference
Direct Line	01962 846686	Your reference
Date	24 April 2015	E-mail strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

Dear Consultees

Enlargement of Poulner Infant School - Consultation

I am writing to invite your views in respect of Hampshire County Council's proposal to permanently enlarge the premises of Poulner Infant School, Ringwood.

Hampshire County Council is proposing to increase the physical capacity of Poulner Infant School to allow them to offer 90 places for Year R (age 4+) children. This expansion will allow the school to cater for up to 270 pupils. This is nearer to the existing admission number at Poulner Junior School which is already at 87 places per year (a total of 348).

The demand for school places is a result of a rise in the number of births in the area and new housing developments. It is intended that permanent new facilities will be available to the school from September 2017.

Reason for proposal

Hampshire County Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. Owing to an increase in the number of children in the school's catchment area, and in particular demand for Year R places, there is a need for additional places to be provided. Where a Local Authority proposes to permanently enlarge a school's capacity by 25% or more it must follow a procedure set out by the Department for Education.

The Consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to seek the view of stakeholders on any educational impacts they think this proposed expansion might bring. Whilst at this early stage in the process we may not be able to answer all your questions fully, we are interested in your wider views of this proposal so that we can seek to develop the most appropriate and effective solution.

Deputy Chief Executive & Director of
Children's Services
John Coughlan, CBE

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This consultation will run from 1 May to 12 June 2015. Officers will then take into consideration all the consultation responses before deciding whether the proposal should continue to the formal publication stage. If so, a statutory Public Notice will be published, setting out Hampshire County Council's intent to enlarge the school. It is anticipated that, subject to the above, this will be published during June - July 2015.

Following the publication of a statutory Public Notice there will be a four week period in which representations can be made. After the conclusion of this period the County Council will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal and it is anticipated that a decision will be made by August 2015.

Further Information

A drop-in session where you will be able to discuss these proposals with County Council officers is planned for **Monday 11 May** from **3pm to 6pm** at the school.

A website has also been set up with the details of the consultation which includes some 'Frequently Asked Questions' that may address some of the questions you may have. The link is shown below:

<http://consultations.hants.gov.uk/active.aspx>

Initial work on the design solution for the expansion of the school is underway with the Headteacher and Governors and once concluded plans will be made available on the County Council's consultation and School websites. A second consultation event will then be held prior to a planning application being submitted, this will provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to feed in the final design solution.

If you are unable to attend this initial event or visit the above website and wish to make a comment then please write to, Gemma Wigman, Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department, Ell Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG or e-mail strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk **by 12 June 2015**.

Yours sincerely



Gemma Wigman
Strategic Development Officer
Children's Services Department

**REPORT TO PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
5TH JUNE 2015**

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE FOR 2015-20

1. A draft update of the National Park Management Plan has been produced by many of the statutory organisations in the New Forest. This document will supplement the existing Management Plan, bringing it up to date and suggesting new actions to be taken forward between 2015 and 2020.
2. This Committee considered an initial consultation ('Call for Views') in December 2014 (*P/5178 – 5/12/14 refers*) to help refine and improve the document prior to full public consultation. At that time, the following comments were made:

“At this stage we would simply like to highlight the proposed actions of particular importance to the Council, which we feel should be retained in the next draft, those being:

- Improved conditions of river catchments (this ties in with clearance works to Crow Stream undertaken by the Town Council this year and proposed rehabilitation of the gravel bottom in Spring 2015)
- Improved management of flood risk (the above works were carried out to alleviate flooding, but there is still more work to be done)
- EP2 – working with individual communities ... to help improve local rights of way (the extension of the Castleman Trailway to Burley could be one such project)
- LC9 – developing .. 'wildplay' sites (Ringwood has a documented shortage of open space and play areas, and being on the edge of the National Park, could meet the criteria for a 'wildplay' site)
- Appropriate use of the road network, particularly TT1 (this is a concern locally) and TT3 (the Town Council is also working with the Highways Agency to bring about improvements on the A31 at Ringwood)”

3. A Revised Draft has now been published for consultation, with a deadline for comments of 22nd June. An extract from the document, outlining priority actions for 2015-2020 is attached as Appendix A. The full document can be viewed in the office or online at http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/downloads/file/1111/draft_for_consultation_may_2015
4. All actions referred to in paragraph 2 above remain in the document, and an additional 4 actions have been added (see EP4 and TT9, 10 & 11).
5. Members are asked to consider whether any further comments should be submitted on the Revised Draft.

For further information, please contact Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
01425 484721 or jo.hurd@ringwood.gov.uk

A Partnership Plan for the New Forest National Park

*- updating the National Park Management Plan with
proposed actions for 2015-2020*

REVISED DRAFT



Produced jointly by

Environment Agency
Forestry Commission
Hampshire County Council
Natural England
New Forest District Council

New Forest National Park Authority
Test Valley Borough Council
Wiltshire Council
Verderers of the New Forest

Amendments made to the initial draft are shown in red-brown type

Priorities for Protect

Enhancing the Forest's landscapes and habitats

To enhance the large scale landscapes and habitats that are characteristic of the New Forest, the actions over the next five years include:

Natural habitats of better quality and greater resilience

57% of the National Park is covered by Sites of Special Scientific Interest and in addition there are 380 sites of local importance for nature conservation.¹² Improving the condition of these sites and connecting them to the wider countryside will help to create a more robust and valuable network for wildlife.

LH1 Improve the condition of locally important nature conservation sites¹³, working with site owners and prioritising the most vulnerable grassland, heathland and wetland habitats. The target is to enhance at least 30 local sites.

Lead organisation: New Forest Land Advice Service

LH2 Work with landowners and managers to maintain the national SSSI condition targets of 95% of SSSI¹⁴ units in favourable or recovering condition, with 50% of these in favourable condition by 2020. Whilst these are national targets it will be the ambition of the delivery partners to aim higher locally, within the New Forest, to achieve 60% favourable condition by 2020.

Lead organisations: Natural England and other partners

LH3 Create links between habitats through a better network of hedgerows, woods, streams, road verges and field margins, working with private and public sector landowners. The target is to develop and complete at least one major landscape scale project within the Park by 2020.

Lead organisation: New Forest Land Advice Service

LH4 Seek opportunities for large-scale habitat restoration, including continuing the major restoration work at Foxbury¹⁵ which will return the area to heathland and broad-leaved woodland, improve access for visitors and complement the open landscapes of the nearby Bramshaw commons.

Lead organisations: National Trust, National Park Authority and other partners

LH5 Continue to monitor coastal change to inform the conservation and creation of habitats, and help in the development of schemes to stabilise saltmarsh.

Lead organisation: New Forest District Council

¹² Figures from Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre.

¹³ Refers to sites designated as SINC (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) or County Wildlife Sites. These do not have statutory protection, but are of great value locally.

¹⁴ Sites of Special Scientific Interest (nationally important sites which are given statutory protection). They cover 57% of the land area of the National Park. Those areas which have habitats in good condition are termed 'favourable'.

¹⁵ A large area of National Trust owned land near Wellow.

Improved condition of river catchments

37% of rivers within the Park currently have good water quality, while 63% are of moderate or poor quality.¹⁶ The aim is to involve all agencies and local communities in improving water quality, wildlife and amenity value, looking at the river system as a whole.

LH6 Promote an **integrated** approach to river catchment management¹⁷ in the New Forest, including wildlife conservation, surface and ground water quality and flood prevention, working with all agencies, communities and landowners.

Lead organisations: New Forest Catchment Partnership, National Park Authority, Freshwater Habitats Trust, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

LH7 Improve the water quality and ecological value of river catchments by carrying out practical enhancements to at least 43 km of rivers and 5 ponds, working with land managers.

Lead organisations: New Forest Catchment Partnership, National Park Authority, Freshwater Habitats Trust, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

LH8 Expand the project to remove invasive non-native plants along river corridors, working with landowners to target at least 40 prioritised locations.

Lead organisation: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Reduced impacts from new development

Wording amended for clarification:

Future development may increase visitor pressure on the protected habitats of the Open Forest and coast. This can be helped by funding additional visitor management and by providing new or improved green spaces in less sensitive locations.

Wording amended for clarification:

LH9 **Reduce the impacts** of any new development **which may have an effect on the internationally** protected habitats of the National Park by access management, education and awareness-raising projects and the provision of new **or improved** areas for countryside recreation, all funded by developer contributions.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, New Forest District Council, Wiltshire Council, Test Valley Borough Council

LH10 Develop a green infrastructure plan¹⁸ for the National Park to help identify opportunities for an improved network of open spaces and attractive alternative locations for recreation, **with benefits for health and well-being**, linking with the green infrastructure strategies of neighbouring local authorities and identifying joint projects.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, neighbouring local authorities

¹⁶ Environment Agency figures based on data from Water Framework Directive monitoring stations.

¹⁷ Management of the whole river system: including the main river, its tributaries and other water bodies.

¹⁸ See glossary.

Greater knowledge of wildlife and habitats

Although the wildlife of the New Forest has been much studied, there are still gaps in knowledge especially of some of the rarer species and more fragmented habitats. A fuller understanding would help to inform management decisions and enable long term monitoring of trends.

LH11 Carry out a targeted programme of surveys of protected or vulnerable species to assess population levels and inform conservation needs.

Lead organisation: Forestry Commission

LH12 Publish a comprehensive Ancient Woodland Inventory for the National Park, and promote to land managers as the basis for ancient woodland restoration projects.

Lead organisation: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

LH13 Establish clear methods for monitoring the status of wildlife and habitats, contributing to the Government's Biodiversity 2020 targets¹⁹, including the extent and condition of priority habitats and the number of local people engaged in wildlife issues.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Encouraging sustainable land management

To encourage farming, commoning and woodland management that sustains the special qualities of the Forest, the actions over the next five years include:

Better access to local advice and training

There has been great demand for land management training and advice since the New Forest Land Advice Service²⁰ was established. The continued availability of local advice and a greater number of training courses will help land managers to access funding and improve habitats and landscapes on private land. More strategically, ecosystem services mapping (see LM3) shows how different land uses and natural resources contribute to quality of life and benefit the local economy

LM1 Provide New Forest-focused land management advice and supporting information, including Lidar and infra-red data²¹ where appropriate. The target is to provide advice to 250 landowners, farmers, commoners and woodland managers over five years.

Lead organisations: New Forest Land Advice Service

LM2 Provide practical training on best practice for land management, aimed at farmers and commoners, with at least six courses arranged each year. The target is to enable training for 600 land managers and at least 30 new and young commoners.

Lead organisations: New Forest Land Advice Service, New Forest Commoners Defence Association

¹⁹ See section 4.2 above.

²⁰ An independent advice service for land managers, established in 2010 by the National Park Authority, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Natural England.

²¹ Methods of aerial mapping which reveal archaeological features beneath vegetation cover.

- LM3 Promote the use of ecosystem services maps²² of the National Park and surrounding area as an aid to sustainable land management and to show the value of the natural environment for social well-being and the economy.
Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Improved economic viability of land management

There are a number of opportunities to support commoning, woodland management, farming and other land-based businesses, and to generate income in new ways. Particular issues include high land values in the area, which affect the availability of back-up grazing for commoning, and the extent of privately owned woodland which it is currently not viable to manage.

- LM4 **Seek to maintain existing** back-up land for commoning and increase **its** availability **on** land managed by public and voluntary sector organisations. The target is to provide at least 20ha of additional back-up land.
Lead organisations: National Park Authority, New Forest Land Advice Service

- LM5 Increase the economic viability and environmental value of woodlands by establishing 'management hubs' of nearby woodland owners²³ and expanding the markets for local timber products, working with the industry and neighbouring local authorities. The target is to improve the management of at least 2000 ha of woodland by 2020.
Lead organisation: New Forest Land Advice Service

- LM6 Research potential new markets for the products of Open Forest management²⁴, to aid the economic and environmental sustainability of these important habitats.
Lead organisation: Forestry Commission

- LM7 Co-ordinate and promote the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme²⁵, in particular encouraging uptake from farmers and landowners adjacent to the New Forest SSSI.
Lead organisation: Natural England

New action added:

- LM8 **Support commoners and smaller farmers in adapting to changes in the Common Agricultural Policy, including events for land managers to raise awareness and help with the new on-line system for payments.**
Lead organisations: National Farmers Union, New Forest Land Advice Service

²² A way of showing how the natural environment contributes to quality of life and the economy, including flood alleviation, drinking water, crop pollination, human health and well-being and many others (see para 4.1 above). The maps include the National Park and the surrounding 20km.

²³ Working collaboratively helps to make the management of smaller woodlands more viable.

²⁴ Such as heather, bracken and wood products.

²⁵ A new government funding scheme, replacing the current Environmental Stewardship Schemes, but continuing to offer support to farmers and landowners for good environmental management.

Conserving local distinctiveness

To conserve the many features that contribute to local distinctiveness within the National Park, the actions over the next five years include:

Better understanding of archaeology and the built environment

Improved knowledge of the archaeology, historic buildings and local character of the National Park would help to conserve features of interest and encourage greater interest and involvement from land and property owners and local people.

LD1 Complete a comprehensive record of vernacular buildings²⁶ and structures, and work with owners to ensure their local importance and conservation value is recognised.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

LD2 Bring together all available information on archaeology and identify gaps in knowledge, focusing on specific time periods or themes each year, including the Bronze Age, Roman period, historic industries and ancient route ways.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

LD3 Develop a WWI project, involving local people in recording family memories and mapping wartime locations in the Forest, and developing an on-line archive of WWI material.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

LD4 Design and take forward a project to assess changes in the local distinctiveness of settlements over time, with the involvement of communities.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Improvements to local distinctiveness through practical projects

There are about 620 listed buildings and over 200 scheduled monuments in the National Park. The number assessed to be 'at risk' is relatively small, but varies each year. The targets given aim to achieve an overall improvement in condition over the five year period. A pilot project is also proposed to restore some of the traditional boundaries of villages adjacent to the Open Forest, working with local communities.

LD5 Work with property owners to encourage the renovation and active use of historic buildings where these are 'at risk'. The target is to improve the condition of 20 historic buildings by 2020.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

LD6 Actively manage the scheduled and unscheduled ancient monuments on the Crown Lands and Open Forest²⁷ to bring them into good condition. The target is to improve the condition of at least 10 sites on the Crown Lands each year.

Lead organisations: Forestry Commission, National Trust, Hampshire County Council, Historic England, National Park Authority

LD7 Maintain the character of Forest edge settlements by working with, initially, two local communities to protect traditional boundaries and other features,

²⁶ Traditional buildings characteristic of the local area.

²⁷ See glossary

and prevent encroachments on Forest land.

Lead organisations: Forestry Commission, Verderers of the New Forest

- LD8 Deliver a range of projects to enhance the Western Escarpment Conservation Area²⁸, including recommendations for the design of new highway infrastructure and addressing damage to verges, **and evaluating success for use in other Conservation Areas.**

Lead organisations: Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group, National Park Authority

Local guidelines for future development

A number of villages have completed Village Design Statements and others may be considering Neighbourhood Plans. Advice and support is available for parishes thinking about producing their own local development policies or design guidelines.

- LD9 Support communities wishing to produce Village Design Statements or Neighbourhood Plans, including policies that take into account the local distinctiveness of their area.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Wiltshire Council, New Forest District Council, Test Valley Borough Council

Planning for climate change

To plan for the likely impacts of a changing climate, the actions over the next five years include:

Planning for changes to the natural environment

There are concerns about the spread of plant diseases, changes to the coastline and potential drying of wetland habitats, all of which may be partly due to changes in the climate. The proposals seek to address some of these issues and also develop an agreed plan for dealing with a wide range of long-term climate impacts.

- CC1 Raise awareness about the increased risk of tree diseases and pests, and agree a strategy to sustain the woodlands of the New Forest in the long-term; including a public seminar in 2015 and other discussion / consultation events.

Lead organisation: Forestry Commission

- CC2 Research the effects of coastal change on winter bird roosts and recommend key sites to safeguard in the future.²⁹

Lead organisation: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

- CC3 Maintain the New Forest's important function as a carbon sink³⁰ by protecting and restoring natural habitats, including wetland and mires.

Lead organisation: Natural England

²⁸ This large Conservation Area includes a number of Forest edge settlements in the parishes and towns of Hale, Woodgreen, Godshill, Hyde, Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley, Fordingbridge and Ringwood. The steering group comprises representatives from the local councils of these areas and aims to agree practical local projects to maintain the character of the Conservation Area.

²⁹ Part of a Solent-wide project co-ordinated by the Solent Forum.

³⁰ The absorption and holding of CO₂ in soils or vegetation.

CC4 Produce and promote a climate change adaptation plan for the National Park, identifying likely future climate-related impacts and suggesting ways of adapting to them.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Improved management of flood risk

Recent storm and flood events have affected a number of communities locally. Further funding is needed to protect the most vulnerable areas, while support is being made available to help communities prepare for any future extreme weather events.

CC5 Support communities wishing to prepare Emergency Response Plans, or establish Flood Action Groups, to plan ahead for future flood or other extreme weather events.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, Wiltshire Council, New Forest District Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Environment Agency

CC6 Seek further support and funding for identified flood relief, coastal defence and beach management works designed to reduce flooding and coastal erosion in the future.

Lead organisations: New Forest District Council, Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council, Verderers of the New Forest (where common rights allow stock to graze)

Safeguarding tranquillity

To help maintain and enhance the tranquillity of the National Park, the actions over the next five years include:

Effective monitoring of the overall tranquillity of the National Park

Mapping of the tranquil areas of the National Park was last carried out in 1996, while the later national mapping by the Council for the Protection of Rural England produced uncertain results when applied locally. New mapping specifically for the Park is in progress, using updated criteria to provide a baseline for future monitoring.

ST1 Complete the updated tranquillity mapping for the National Park, involving a range of interested organisations and local people.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

ST2 Agree ways to maintain and enhance the tranquil areas of the National Park over time, including ways to reduce disturbance from low flying aircraft, working with interested groups and local communities.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Reducing visual intrusion

There are currently several funding opportunities available for reducing the visual effects of power cables on the local landscape, involving the energy suppliers SSE and the National Grid.

ST3 Progress the undergrounding of low voltage cables in appropriate locations, prioritising the most visually sensitive areas.

Lead organisations: SSE, National Park Authority

ST4 Seek national funding for protected landscapes to underground high voltage cables and remove pylons, focusing on the pylons in the north of the Forest and close to the Waterside.
Lead organisations: National Grid, National Park Authority

Priorities for Enjoy

Understanding the special qualities

To further people's understanding of the special qualities of the New Forest, the actions over the next five years include:

Better public awareness of New Forest issues

*There have already been a number of successful campaigns promoting messages about the New Forest to visitors and local people, involving many local organisations and the various ranger services. These will continue, using a variety of ways to encourage people to understand, **value and care for the Forest.***

SQ1 Promote public awareness campaigns on specific New Forest issues, with initiatives targeted at both visitors and local people. The aim is to achieve, year on year, fewer road traffic animal deaths, less disturbance of ground nesting birds, **greater protection of fungi**, reduced dog fouling and litter and lower incidence of feeding ponies.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Verderers of the New Forest, New Forest District Council, Commoners Defence Association, New Forest Dog Owners Group and others

Greater involvement of local volunteers

There is a great deal of interest in various aspects of volunteering in the New Forest, with more than 20 organisations offering volunteer opportunities relating to conservation and understanding of the area. The proposals give just a few examples of the support available.

SQ2 Support and help co-ordinate the work of volunteer groups and networks, enabling them to become an integral part of delivering specific projects in the National Park, including (as examples) mapping of local heritage features, archaeological field work and removal of invasive plant species. The target is to involve as many local people as possible, with a combined total of at least 5000 volunteer days over five years.

Lead organisation: New Forest Landscape Partnership

SQ3 Fully support the New Forest Volunteer Ranger Service through the provision of staff resources, funding and training. The service will aim to deliver about 1,400 volunteer days annually.

Lead organisation: Forestry Commission

Easier access to information and education about the Forest

There are a variety of ways to help people find out more about the National Park, including bringing together existing studies and research in one place through an on-line information centre and developing a Forest-specific curriculum for local schools. Innovative use of new media, such as mobile phone apps, can be used to help visitors learn about the National Park while reducing the need for on-site signage.

SQ4 Further develop targeted, effective and suitable interpretation that helps tell the story of the New Forest to a wide variety of audiences, using, for example, exhibitions, self-led trails and new media.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Forestry Commission, National Trust, New Forest Ninth Centenary Trust, Hampshire County Council

SQ5 Establish an E-cademy on-line centre for research and studies related to the New Forest, enabling access to a wide range material held by different organisations and academic institutions.

Lead organisation: New Forest Ninth Centenary Trust

SQ6 Organise a **regular** New Forest Wildlife Forum event bringing together the many wildlife organisations and researchers to exchange ideas and publicise projects.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Wording amended to add more detail:

SQ7 Support educational activities and programmes that encourage **learning about the National Park, from Forest School activities for pre-school children to Countryside Management courses for university students, including expanding the New Forest Curriculum³¹ for local schools and colleges and annual conferences for teachers and secondary school pupils.**

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council

SQ8 Improve understanding of commoning traditions by restoring the historic features of the Verderers Hall and enabling free public access.

Lead organisations : Forestry Commission and partners

Enjoying the special qualities of the National Park

To add to people's experience and enjoyment of the National Park, while safeguarding its special qualities, the actions over the next five years include:

Greater community involvement in access and open space improvements

Many local communities have got involved in improving the open spaces and rights of way within their area, with the help of local volunteers. Advice and funding is available for interested local groups.

EP1 Improve specific areas of open space for people and wildlife in parishes within and around the National Park, working with interested local communities. The target is to work on projects with at least ten communities and local groups.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

³¹ A major new resource for educators showing how the complex landscape and special qualities of the Forest can contribute to life-long learning across the curriculum – see newforestcurriculum.org.uk.

EP2 Work with individual communities to design and fund at least five projects annually to help improve local rights of way or access to countryside recreation.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

Safer, more enjoyable and responsible use of routes within the National Park

Wording amended for clarification:

The aim is to make the roads and agreed off road tracks safer, more enjoyable and, where possible, better connected for non-car users (see also actions under 'Improving traffic and transport' below), including people with disabilities.

Wording updated and clarified:

EP3 Improve the safety and connectivity of routes used by pedestrians, horse-riders and cyclists to travel between settlements and places of interest, and encourage the responsible shared use of the network of roads and agreed tracks by all.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council, Forestry Commission

New action added:

EP4 Establish a volunteer-led organisation to give people with disabilities the opportunity to experience cycling in the National Park, using specially adapted bikes.³²

Lead organisation: New Forest National Park Authority

Wording updated:

EP5 Through the Public Events and Safety Advisory Group work with event organisers to improve the running of all large-scale events within the National Park, ensuring they can be enjoyed by those involved while reducing impacts on the Park and its communities.

Lead organisations: New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council, National Park Authority, Hampshire Constabulary

High quality countryside facilities for visitors which also reduce pressure on sensitive habitats

High quality countryside facilities close to centres of population, or near the boundary of the National Park, may provide attractive alternatives for visitors and help to reduce pressure on the more sensitive habitats in the centre of the Forest. Moors Valley Country Park, to the west of the National Park, already attracts more than 800,000 visitors each year.

EP6 Develop a new 'Forest Park' in the southern Test Valley to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation close to communities in Romsey, Eastleigh and Southampton, helping to reduce pressure on the sensitive habitats of the National Park.

Lead organisations: Test Valley Borough Council, Forestry Commission

EP7 Develop the facilities at Blashford Lakes nature reserve to create an important centre for visitors near the western edge of the National Park.

Lead organisation: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

³² The project will involve trained supervisors and use agreed cycle routes in the Park.

EP8 Redevelop the visitor facilities at Lepe to provide a flagship country park, incorporating sustainable design and creating an innovative centre for interpretation, education and volunteering relating to the coast and Forest.
Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

Priorities for Prosper

Supporting local communities

To help strengthen the well-being, identity and sustainability of local communities, the actions over the next five years include:

Community involvement in local heritage and wildlife conservation

Support, funding and advice is available for local communities wishing to record and help conserve various aspects of the history and natural environment of their area. There has already been considerable interest in the Community Wildlife Plans project, with plans now produced for several parishes, including Milford-on-Sea, Landford, Wellow and Marchwood.

LC1 Work with communities to identify heritage features of importance to them, and help them record and celebrate these to a wider audience; initially involving eight local communities.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

LC2 **Continue to support** the Community Wildlife Plans initiative³³, helping **eight** local communities to deliver their action plans, **including practical environmental improvements.**

Lead organisation: New Forest Land Advice Service

Improved local facilities and services

There has been a gradual loss of local services in many of the more rural areas of the National Park, particularly village shops and post offices. The proposed actions aim to improve this situation where there is a particular local need. This includes advice and funding for shops and community facilities, a network of locally-based Village Agents and seeking more affordable housing for local people.

LC3 Provide best practice advice and potential funding support for village shops, community buildings and other community facilities, including organising an annual Hampshire village shops conference to share information and encourage collaborative working.

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

LC4 Expand the Village Agents programme within the New Forest, enabling older residents to gain advice on transport, home maintenance and financial matters from volunteers within the community.

Lead organisations: Age Concern Hampshire, Hampshire County Council

³³ A project helping local people to record and map the wildlife and habitats of interest in their area.

- LC5 Identify possible sites for affordable housing, including suitable publicly owned land, and agree new schemes designed for local people which are of high quality and sustainability, and are in keeping with the character of the area.
Lead organisations: New Forest District Council, National Park Authority, Action Hampshire, registered housing providers
- LC6 Use the Forestry Commission's housing stock in ways which benefit the special qualities of the area, by including lettings to practising commoners and those involved in local land-based businesses or organisations.
Lead organisation: Forestry Commission
- LC7 Reduce fly-tipping by monitoring the main hotspots on council land in order to tackle known offenders, and improving awareness of the best means for households to dispose of unwanted bulky waste.
Lead organisations: New Forest District Council
- More healthy and sustainable lifestyles**
Health and well-being have become important national issues in recent years and the National Park offers many opportunities to help improve the situation locally, involving work by a number of organisations. Actively encouraging more sustainable lifestyles is one aspect of this, including practical support for community-led projects such as local food production.
- LC8 Actively involve local communities in a variety of initiatives to improve health, **mental health** and well-being, including the New Forest Health Walks programme, dementia awareness training and projects to encourage a more active younger generation.
Lead organisations: New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council, Wiltshire Council, National Park Authority, Community First New Forest
- LC9 Help young people to become more involved in the National Park by removing barriers and providing new opportunities, including developing at least three 'wildplay' sites³⁴ enabling direct experiences of the natural environment, and encouraging confidence and skills through the Mosaic Youth Project.³⁵
Lead organisations: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, National Trust, National Park Authority
- LC10 Support a range of local initiatives that encourage more sustainable lifestyles and economies, including energy conservation, local food production and sustainable transport. The target is to support at least 50 community projects over five years.
Lead organisations: National Park Authority, New Forest Transition

³⁴ Areas which are suitable for young people to experience nature in a safe environment, located outside the Open Forest within easy reach of nearby centres of population.

³⁵ The Mosaic Youth Project is a national initiative to enable 16-25 year olds to become more positively involved in National Parks, helping to develop confidence, leadership skills and knowledge of the natural environment.

Fostering economic well-being

To encourage a diverse and sustainable local economy that benefits the communities of the area, the actions over the next five years include:

Support for investment, marketing and distribution

Various funding opportunities are available to help businesses, derived from EU funding (such as the new LEADER programme) or from national government, through the recently established Local Enterprise Partnerships. The proposals aim to ensure that these result in investment in local businesses in and around the National Park. In addition projects such as the Fair Booking initiative and the New Forest Marque seek to promote the New Forest as a brand and bring benefits to the tourism and local produce sectors. The statutory organisations will continue to work closely with the New Forest Business Partnership, which represents many of the business interests in the Park.

EW1 Continue to promote the Brand New Forest campaign encouraging greater use of local businesses by local people, including a pilot Fair Booking initiative, establishing a locally based visitor accommodation booking system.

Lead organisation: New Forest District Council

EW2 Deliver the Rural Development LEADER Programme³⁶ for the New Forest, funding the growth and creation of jobs in rural businesses and supporting local services.

Lead organisations: New Forest Local Action Group, New Forest District Council

EW3 Work closely with the relevant Local Enterprise Partnerships³⁷ to identify initiatives that both support a sustainable local economy within the Park and help deliver the LEPs wider economic objectives.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, New Forest Local Action Group, National Park Authority

EW4 Encourage private sector investment in forestry and land management by providing a range of business opportunities for work on the Crown Lands, suitable for companies of different sizes and expertise.

Lead organisation: Forestry Commission

EW5 Promote the New Forest Marque³⁸ as the recognised symbol of local produce and help to support and develop new and existing local produce businesses. The target is to achieve 160 businesses as Marque members by 2020.

Lead organisations: New Forest Produce Ltd, National Park Authority

EW6 Provide practical means of connecting local producers with outlets, such as hotels, shops and pubs, through the European funded 'DEAL' project, providing supply chain software and a centre enabling the easy distribution of products.

Lead organisation: New Forest District Council

³⁶ An EU funding programme, forming part of the government's Rural Development Programme, which enables investment in rural businesses in a particular area to meet local needs.

³⁷ See section 4.10 above.

³⁸ A system of accreditation and promotion for local producers and retailers, showing that their products have a strong connection to the New Forest. There are currently about 120 members.

Improved broadband coverage

Superfast broadband is a vital requirement for many businesses, particularly in the more rural areas. A national programme is being co-ordinated in the area by Hampshire County Council and Wiltshire Council, but more funding is being sought from the Rural Community Broadband fund to cover the more remote areas of the National Park.

EW7 Help rural businesses and communities to function more efficiently by supporting the national programmes to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of premises, and seek additional funding to provide a more complete coverage **throughout** the National Park.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, Wiltshire Council, National Park Authority, New Forest District Council

Access to local advice and training

Practical advice and training is being made available for people wishing to establish rural businesses or social enterprises, or for those already involved in the local economy. They include training in rural skills and sustainable tourism (see also 'Encouraging sustainable land management' above).

EW8 Support **a range** of skills training related to the local area, including providing apprenticeships in environmental conservation, training at least 125 people in traditional building skills.

Lead organisations: National Park Authority and other partners

EW9 Arrange training for at least 100 tourism businesses and staff to help make their business more sustainable, and to better promote the special qualities of the Park to visitors.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

EW10 Actively encourage the development of social enterprises within rural communities, providing practical support, advice and guidance on funding.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, Action Hampshire

EW11 Increase interest and demand for courses in rural and land-based skills through improved marketing and promotion.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council and education providers

Improving traffic and transport

To reduce the impacts of traffic on the Forest and promote sustainable transport alternatives, the actions over the next five years include:

Appropriate use of the road network

The volume and speed of traffic on Forest roads has been a continuing issue for local people. These proposals aim to help reduce traffic pressure and HGV use on the minor roads as far as possible, including investigating the possibility of a 'Quiet Lanes' network and encouraging through-traffic to use the major routes.

TT1 Investigate measures aimed at reducing HGV through-traffic by encouraging the use of more appropriate roads, including a web-based route planning

system that identifies preferred routes.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, Wiltshire Council

TT2 Review speed limits for the minor roads in Wiltshire that lie within the National Park, considering suitability and enforceability, in order to reduce traffic speed.

Lead organisation: Wiltshire Council, National Park Authority

TT3 Work with the Highways Agency to help minimise delays and improve the reliability of journey times on the A31 and M27, in order to reduce the use of other routes through the Forest by long distance traffic.

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

TT4 Develop a 'Quiet Lanes' network in appropriate locations, initially as a limited **pilot** project, to help maintain the rural character of minor roads and enable their safe use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, as well as motorists.

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

Improved highway design and maintenance

Highway infrastructure, such as signs, kerbing and crossings, have an important effect on the character of the National Park. There are opportunities to reduce visual and ecological impacts while still ensuring highway safety, using designs and ways of working that take into account the special qualities and character of the area.

TT5 Reduce unnecessary sign clutter within the National Park, particularly targeting the minor road network.

Lead organisations: Hampshire County Council, Wiltshire Council

TT6 Publish design guidelines for highway infrastructure to ensure that new works to the road network respect local distinctiveness and avoid suburbanisation, including the appropriate design and location of signs, kerbing, footways and other elements.

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

TT7 Produce and implement a maintenance plan and specification for highway operations, setting out agreed standards within the National Park, taking into account the sensitivity of its protected landscapes and habitats.

Lead organisation: Hampshire County Council

More opportunities for sustainable travel

Currently about 80% of visitors access the National Park by car, but the success of the New Forest Tour (open top bus), which now links the Park with nearby towns, indicates an interest in using other methods of transport where these are easily available. It is hoped that improved public bus services for both visitors and local people will help to reduce private car use in the future.

TT8 Improve opportunities to use a range of sustainable transport options, including the New Forest Tour³⁹, Beach Bus, other seasonal bus services, **rail links, walking and cycling**. The target is to achieve a 5% reduction in the number of visits by car by 2020.

Lead organisation: National Park Authority

³⁹ See Chapter 3 above.

New action added:

TT9 Rebrand and promote existing local bus routes into and across the National Park, adding a New Forest theme and providing commercially viable services for residents. To include routes between Lymington and Southampton, Bournemouth and Salisbury and Southampton and Salisbury.
Lead organisations: National Park Authority, Wiltshire Council, Hampshire County Council, bus service operators

New action added:

TT10 Explore the funding and feasibility options, such as the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, for adjacent to carriageway cycle routes between main settlements to improve safe access for commuting and leisure cycling, including a link between Lymington and Cadnam.
Lead organisations: Minstead Parish Council, National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council

New action added:

TT11 Undertake an 'active travel' programme, encouraging walking and cycling to reduce car use and improve health through a series of guided walks, cycle skills training and other initiatives, aimed at people of all ages and abilities.
Lead organisation: National Park Authority