

### **Actions Where Wiltshire Council has been identified as a Lead organization**

The New Forest Management Plan lists the role of Wiltshire Council as “Wiltshire Council is responsible for a wide range of public services including education, social care, transport and waste management. It is the highway authority, including public rights of way, for the Wiltshire part of the National Park, and the Southern Wiltshire Area Board helps address community priorities within this area.”

Since 2010 there have been continuing cuts to the core budgets of all the main statutory organisations in the Forest. Therefore, organisations have had to prioritise carefully to maintain core functions and services. Furthermore, organisations have had to find resources for new work which will be of benefit to the landscapes, communities and businesses of the Forest.

This has placed increasing importance on external funding to deliver large-scale projects in the Forest. Local organisations, working in partnership, have been successful in bidding for government and EU funding, and a number of the actions suggested below may be dependent on such funding. Therefore, some of the actions and targets may need to be updated over time, as details of the available funding are finalised.

#### **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:*

#### **Reduced impacts from new development**

*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.*

- LH10 Reduce the impacts of any new development which may have an effect on the internationally protected habitats and species 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***

- LH11 Develop a green infrastructure plan 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***

### **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:*

#### **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:*

#### **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***

### **Supporting local communities**

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

#### **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***

### **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:*

#### **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**

### **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*

#### **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**

#### **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**

#### **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.*

- TT9 Rebrand and promote existing local bus routes into and across the National Park, adding a New Forest theme, providing user-friendly information and enabling 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***