

# **BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018**

## **First Quarter, 2015-16 Work Programme**

### **Prosper**

**We will foster the National Park's social and economic well being.**

#### **Prosper Priority 1: Supporting a distinctive and prosperous local economy**

**We will encourage a strong and distinctive local economy that benefits the communities of the National Park, by:**

- championing the local rural economy with Local Enterprise Partnerships and national and European funders
- enabling long-term success of local producers through high quality products, promotion, events and access to local outlets
- playing an active role in the New Forest Business Partnership and New Forest Tourism Association
- encouraging land based businesses to develop opportunities for positive management of the landscape.

Action/Outcome	Team	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Work to ensure Sustainable Tourism in the National Park is embraced and recognised as a key part of the New Forest tourism destination management partnership.	Mark Holroyd	NPA staff have attended the NFTA steering group meetings and the majority of sector group meetings. Priority areas of joint working are currently; the promotion of car-free travel options to visitors before they arrive in the Forest through a targeted advertising campaign led by NFDC and the redevelopment of the Brand New Forest smartphone app.		
Lead on developing a Rural Economy portfolio within the New Forest Business Partnership.	Paul Walton	Working with fellow Director on the New Forest Business Partnership. Approach to be agreed by November Partnership meeting.		
In partnership with New Forest District Council provide a more coordinated approach to our involvement with the Brand New Forest campaign and destination management partnership.	Paul Walton	Attended meeting of the Brand New Forest group in April. Participated in the first local business Expo at Lymington in June, sharing the pitch with New Forest Marque members. A good opportunity to promote the local economy of the New Forest.		
Secure funding for the New Forest Marque network of local producers.	Paul Walton	Following the decision by the directors of the New Forest Produce Limited (NFPL) to not renew the contract of the Marque officer, work is continuing to prepare a Business Plan for the Marque. The commitment of the directors means the Marque continues to thrive and membership is increasing but a long term plan for the business is needed. With many grants now limited to support for capital projects, revenue support is proving difficult to obtain.		A lack of grant funding means that NFPL are unable to employ an officer to develop the Marque. The directors are working to promote the Marque and NPA officers will examine alternative local produce schemes in other Protected landscapes.

Action/Outcome	Team	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Work with the Local Economic Partnerships and LEADER Local Action Group to ensure the New Forest economy can benefit from England's new Rural Development Programme.	Paul Walton	The LEADER funding programme is yet to start. The NFNPA is represented on the Enterprise M3 LEP through the Rural Action Group. Officers attended a Forestry support workshop on 4 June and a meeting for the M3 Rural Group on 30 June.		
Appoint contractors to build and let two new affordable homes in Bransgore using developer contributions.	Steve Avery	A quantity surveyor has now been appointed and tenders for the building contract are to be evaluated in the first week of September. Oral report/update to be made at RAPC meeting on 7 September.		
Work with New Forest District Council, parish councils and other partner organisations to 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.	Steve Avery	This work is ongoing, with the involvement of HARAH and the rural housing providers. One potential scheme for up to 18 new affordable homes is currently the subject of pre-application discussions. Awaiting details on Government proposals to increase availability of housing in rural housing, including the use of exception sites to deliver Starter Homes.		

## **Prosper Priority 2: Promoting sustainable transport**

**We will promote sustainable transport for the benefit of residents and visitors, by:**

- working with highway authorities to improve the network of sustainable transport options available
- supporting tourism businesses to encourage existing visitors to travel to and around the National Park by sustainable transport
- working with transport operators to sustain existing bus services, and grow use of the New Forest Tour and Beach Bus
- working with partner authorities to improve aesthetics and safety of the highway network.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Deliver the New Forest elements of the Two National Parks Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) 2015/16 extension.	Mark Holroyd	The first quarter of delivery of this one-year programme has been on track with significant preparation for the summer season in Q1. Approximately £145k was spent and claimed in Q1, with around half the programme budget committed with firm orders for services.		
Complete the New Forest Family Cycling Experiences programme (NFFCE) by the end of Q2 and develop use of improved infrastructure.	Mark Holroyd	Most projects are currently on track for full commitment by the end of Q2. The Family Cycling Centre project which RAPC approved a grant for in 2014/15 hit some delays with consent from Network Rail. However, further clarification from DfT, has enabled us to commit this money for final completion in Q3 which will mitigate any minor delays in delivery.		
Develop plans to ensure a sustainable legacy for transport experiences developed through LSTF and NFFCE programmes to date, ready for the end of current funding in March 2016.	Mark Holroyd	A review of our involvement in passenger transport is currently being carried out internally. A key outcome from this review will be a new partnership agreement with the New Forest Tour operator for services in 2016 onwards.		
Deliver the three New Forest Tour routes and the Beach Bus with overall increased passenger journeys (from 50,000 in 2014).	Mark Holroyd	Preparation for these services took place as planned. The New Forest Tour commenced operation on 27 June 2015. In addition to these services, the Authority introduced the Forest Bus and Forest Bus Baby services on 24 May. The transport and tourism team is working with the bus operator and partners to resolve issues resulting from the closure of Lymington Bus Station.		

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Work with Hampshire County Council to complete and promote guidance to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness of the highway network, and deliver a quiet lanes pilot project.	Mark Holroyd	Draft local distinctiveness guidance is currently being finalised by HCC. Funding has been allocated to Quiet Lanes project by HCC; NPA staff are ready to assist in consultation and delivery when required.		
Run at least four training events for tourism businesses, inspiring and enabling them to become more sustainable, to benefit from and convey the National Park's special qualities and encourage their guests to leave their cars at home	Mark Holroyd	A member of staff departing prevented us from starting these activities in the Spring. Events are to be planned for Q3 and Q4 when tourism businesses have greater availability.		Activity planned for Q3 and Q4 when tourism businesses to attend.

### **Prosper Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable communities**

**We will support new local initiatives that create more self-sufficient and resilient communities, by:**

- supporting specific projects that incorporate business opportunities, renewable energy and efficient use of resources.
- promoting sustainable living and good environmental practice to residents and businesses
- supporting the sharing of innovative ideas through grassroots local action groups and Sustainable Communities Fund partners.

Action/Outcome	Owner	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Support beneficiaries of the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) to complete their programme claims, redistributing funds to new projects as necessary.	Fiona Wynne	The fund is currently supporting 16 projects. Two overdue claims are currently in progress. One project was withdrawn and funds redistributed to another project, as agreed by the Assessment Panel.		
Review projects supported by the SCF (and the former Sustainable Development Fund) over the past 10 years to help inform targeting of future funding programmes.	Fiona Wynne	An initial desktop review has been carried out, highlighting that we have supported 206 projects with funds of almost £2.2m, bringing in match funds of £3.4m. Further work will identify areas for follow up.		
Develop plans to encourage more community-based or social enterprises in New Forest villages.	Fiona Wynne	Initial work is focusing on supporting a social enterprise to develop their supply chain and potential access to market, and consider opportunities for funding.		
Develop ways to encourage an increase in the number of woodfuel installations, both domestic and non-domestic, within the New Forest.	Andy Brennan	Attended EM3 woodfuel workshop looking at building the business case for funding for woodfuel market from the M3 LEP – potentially £2 million in grants for business.		