



New Forest National Park Local Plan Review

Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation

Draft Duty to Cooperate Statement

November 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The New Forest National Park Authority is undertaking a review of the local planning policies covering the National Park – currently contained within the New Forest National Park Local Plan (adopted August 2019). This review is in response to recent changes in national policy and the experiences of applying the adopted policies for the last 6 years. The review will result in the adoption of a revised Local Plan covering the whole of the National Park up to 2043.
- 1.2 The revised Local Plan will form a key part of the statutory ‘development plan’ and will ultimately guide decisions on planning applications submitted within the National Park. The Local Plan will set out how the planning system can contribute towards the vision for the New Forest National Park in 2043 and will include detailed planning policies and allocations that seek to deliver the two statutory National Park purposes and related socio-economic duty.
- 1.3 The National Park Authority is also the minerals and waste planning authority for the whole of the New Forest National Park. The Authority works in partnership with the other minerals and waste planning authorities in Hampshire to prepare the planning policy framework for minerals and waste development within the National Park. The review of the adopted *Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan* (2013) is currently at [independent examination](#) and is due to be adopted in Summer 2026. Given this, Authority’s draft New Forest National Park Local Plan Review document (November 2025) does not include any coverage of minerals and waste planning matters.

2. The ‘Duty to Co-operate’

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a legal requirement for local authorities to plan strategically across boundaries. This ‘duty to cooperate’ is enshrined in law through the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* and Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and is also included within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). The duty applies to all local authorities, national park authorities and county councils in England, as well as other public bodies including the Environment Agency and Natural England (see Annex 2 for the full list of prescribed bodies). The duty requires authorities to “*engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to develop strategic policies*” and to consider joint approaches to plan-making.
- 2.2 National policy confirms that planning authorities (including national park authorities) will be expected to demonstrate how they have effectively cooperated on cross boundary issues when preparing their Local Plan. Cooperation should be a continuous process of engagement from initial thinking through to implementation. This Statement has been prepared in order to set out the work done by the Authority in response to the requirements of the duty, to date. It will be necessary for this Statement to be updated as the Local Plan progresses through its statutory stages.

2.3 National policy sets out the strategic issues where cooperation might be appropriate. This can include where strategic policies are required in order to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area; climate change mitigation and adaptation; and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment. A number of these are reflected in this Statement.

3. Planning within the context of the New Forest National Park



 New Forest National Park boundary

3.1 The New Forest National Park was designated in 2005 and covers 220 square miles of land within New Forest District, Test Valley Borough, the unitary authority of Wiltshire, and the county of Hampshire. The National Park Authority is the statutory planning authority for the whole of the National Park and this covers development control, enforcement, minerals & waste planning and planning policy. Other functions – including economic development, housing, transport, social care, environmental health and education – remain the responsibilities of the district, borough, county and unitary authorities within the National Park. Co-operative working is therefore particularly important within the National Park given the responsibilities of these different organisations.

4. Mechanisms for co-operative working

4.1 By virtue of its role, the National Park Authority has over the course of the last 20 years established close links and co-operative working with other local authorities and organisations in and around the New Forest. Cross-boundary working and engagement with stakeholders is central to the work of the Authority and this is illustrated by:

- (i) **The membership of the National Park Authority** which includes members from each of the local authorities covering the National Park area. This consists of:
- 5 members appointed by Hampshire County Council;
 - 4 appointed by New Forest District Council;
 - 2 appointed by Wiltshire Council; and
 - 1 appointed by Test Valley Borough Council

This reflects the respective geographical areas of the New Forest National Park covered by each constituent authority. Between them, these 12 members make up over half of the 22 total membership of the National Park Authority and this enables a strong connection with other authorities at a member/councillor level. In addition, the Authority's membership also includes 4 members elected by town and parish councils within the National Park, enabling good links to be established between the Authority and the lowest tier of local government.

- (ii) The liaison and co-ordination that is required to prepare, implement and monitor the **New Forest National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027**. The Government has described Management/Partnership Plans as the most important plans covering National Parks and they have a key role in co-ordinating the work of a wide range of partners in delivering the two National Park purposes and related duty. Although the work on preparing the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027 was led by the Authority, it was overseen by a group of key statutory bodies in the New Forest including Forestry England, the Verderers of the New Forest, Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, Wiltshire Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The New Forest National Park 'Leaders' Panel' continues to meet regularly to monitor the progress made on the Partnership Plan and this has resulted in a positive working relationship between the Authority and the other bodies.

- (iii) **Section 245 of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023** introduced a strengthened legal duty on all 'relevant bodies' to seek to further the two statutory National Park purposes in undertaking their functions. The definition of 'relevant bodies' includes national park authorities, neighbouring authorities and statutory consultees and emphasises the fact that the delivery of the two statutory National Park purposes rests with a wide range of organisations – not just the national park authority. The duty means that the Authority has well established relationships with a range of other local and public bodies. The Authority is a statutory consultee on neighbouring authorities' plans and proposals and regular makes representations on emerging Local Plans.

4.2 In addition to the above, the National Park Authority is an active member of a number of local and county-wide groups that help to facilitate working across administrative boundaries. These include:

- (i) The **Partnership for South Hampshire** is a partnership of twelve local authorities – including the New Forest National Park Authority - around the Solent that aim to improve the environmental, cultural and economic performance of the South Hampshire area – see [Home - Partnership for South Hampshire](#). The Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) focuses on several key areas of work, including the delivery of planned new development. This partnership work illustrates the duty to cooperate in action and has resulted in the preparation of a Spatial Position Statement – further details below, nutrient mitigation for planned new development and an updated South Hampshire-wide strategic flood risk assessment. The New Forest National Park Authority plays an active role in the Partnership, being represented at member level at the Joint Committee meetings and Authority officers playing key roles on several of the sub-groups (including being the current Chair of the Natural Environment Group and a member of the Planning Officers' Group).
- (ii) The **Hampshire Development Plan Officer Group meetings** which take place at least 4 times per annum. The Group brings together planning policy representatives from the 16 planning authorities in Hampshire to discuss relevant matters including Local Plan progress; the scope for shared evidence base studies; and cross boundary matters of interest. In addition, the National Park Authority works with the other minerals and waste planning authorities in Hampshire – Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority - on a joint minerals and waste planning framework. The National Park Authority is also represented on the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Planning Officers' Group.
- (iii) The National Park Authority has a **positive working relationship with its main neighbouring planning authority – New Forest District Council**. Over 90% of the National Park falls within New Forest District and the District Council remains the planning authority for much of the area immediately surrounding the National Park. There are well established officer level meetings between the two planning authorities. Although the authorities are producing separate development plans, the respective Local Plan reviews are working to very similar timetables. The Authority and District Council have jointly commissioned a range of evidence base studies on cross-boundary planning issues including a joint Housing Needs Assessment, an updated Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment and an updated Employment Needs Assessment. These joint studies recognise the close links between the National Park and surrounding areas of the District. New Forest District Council is also represented on the steering group that oversees the delivery of the Authority's habitat mitigation scheme for recreational impacts on the New Forest's designated sites and the two planning authorities also jointly support the on-going air quality monitoring work within the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

- (iv) The New Forest has a history of liaison and partnership working through the role of the **New Forest Consultative Panel**. This independent panel is made up of representatives of over 80 organisations and bodies in the New Forest, including all of the main statutory bodies (including Hampshire County Council, the National Park Authority, Natural England, Forestry England and New Forest District Council); all of the town and parish councils within the Forest; and representative groups covering conservation, recreation and business groups. The Panel meets quarterly and provides a forum for sharing a wide range of issues with a broad range of Forest bodies. The Authority has given updates on the review of the Local Plan for the National Park to the Panel.

5. Cooperation in the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review to date

- 5.1 The review of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan Review formally commenced in 2024. Set out below is a summary of the liaison on cross-boundary issues that has taken place to date, recognising that the Authority is still at the initial Regulation 18 stage in the Local Plan review process. This Duty to Cooperate Statement reflects the engagement undertaken around the initial Local Plan Review ‘Strategic Direction of Travel’ consultation in early 2025 and during the preparation of the current draft Local Review Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document.
- 5.2 As part of the consultation process on the draft New Forest National Park Local Plan document scheduled for 5 November to 19 December 2025, the Authority will be initiating further ‘duty to cooperate’ discussions with partners.
- 5.3 Several key parts of the evidence base that supports the Local Plan Review only became available in the latter part of 2025 and so the Authority will use the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation to discuss the evidence and the Authority’s proposed local planning policy approach with duty to cooperate bodies.
- 5.4 Set out below is a summary of the co-operation undertaken between the Authority and a range of key partners during the Local Plan review to date. Annex 1 lists in chronological order the meetings that have taken place, since commencement of the local plan review.

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
Hampshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC appoints 5 of the NFNPA’s 22 members • A statutory consultee on the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review • HCC provides a number of statutory functions within much of the National Park, including education and highways • Represented on the New Forest National Park Leaders’ Panel • HCC and NFNPA work closely on the separate partial update of the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan – currently at examination and due to be adopted in 2026

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC responded to the initial Local Plan Review Strategic Direction of Travel consultation in early 2025. Their responses highlighted the need for the Local Plan Review to refer to the recently updated Local Transport Plan 4; the role of the National Park as part of the ‘natural health service’; and the importance of the ‘blue/green’ infrastructure in the National Park. The Regulation 18 Part 2 draft Local Plan responds to these representations and also includes reference to the New Forest Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (2025) • HCC are an important partner in the cross-New Forest gypsy & traveller needs assessment work which has taken place in 2025 • The NFNPA has also engaged HCC as a landowner in the National Park, with two of the proposed housing site allocations within the Regulation 18 Part 2 draft Local Plan being HCC-owned sites <p><i>Summary: HCC has a statutory role for a range of functions within the National Park, including being the highways authority for circa 95% of the Park. The NFNPA has responded to the representations made by HCC on the Direction of Travel document through several sections in the draft Plan. The NFNPA and HCC are also liaising over the HCC-owned development sites identified in the draft Plan</i></p>
New Forest District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFDC appoint 4 of the NFNPA’s 22 members • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan • Provide a number of statutory functions within much of the Park, including housing, economic development & environmental health. • Represented on the New Forest National Park Leaders’ Panel • NFDC responded to the initial Local Plan Review Strategic Direction of Travel consultation in early 2025. In these representations NFDC highlighted the importance of continued joint working between NFDC and the NFNPA on managing the impacts of development on international nature conservation areas. NFDC’s response recognises that the standard method for calculating housing need does not apply to the NFNPA, but encourages the NPA to ensure that a full range of options in relation to housing provision are considered by the Sustainability Appraisal to evaluate the National Park’s ability to play the fullest possible part

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p>in addressing housing needs, responding to the demographics of the New Forest and halting the decline in population. The Regulation 18 Part 2 draft Local Plan responds to these representations, with the quantum of development proposed sufficient to stop the decline in population and help support local services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFDC are the statutory housing authority for circa 94% of the National Park area. The Regulation 18 draft Local Plan includes the District Council's housing allocation policy in the annex to the Local Plan • The NFNPA and NFDC work very closely on their respective local plan reviews and this includes the commissioning of joint evidence base studies on housing need, employment needs and gypsy and traveller provision. The two planning authorities also have regular officer-level liaison meetings focusing specifically on the local plan review process and cross-boundary matters • This includes agreeing joint methodology developed for the qualitative assessment of existing employment sites in the District and National Park area. • The two authorities have liaised closely on the future of the former Fawley Power Station site, with it common ground that the most appropriate use of the site is for employment-led development (given the site's status as one of the Solent Freeport Tax Sites). • The NFNPA and NFDC have, to date, jointly designated seven Neighbourhood Areas in parishes that straddle the National Park and District Council boundary and supported the making of three of these. The two authorities have worked collaboratively to support the emerging Neighbourhood Plans • The NFNPA and NFDC are part of the partnership of local authorities and Natural England working on a strategic approach to habitat mitigation measures for development close to the New Forest's internationally designated sites. NFDC currently fund a mitigation ranger that is hosted by the NFNPA • The NFNPA and NFDC have also worked closely together to bring forward nutrient mitigation sites. For example, the overarching legal agreement for the Kingwell BNG and nutrient mitigation scheme at Keyhaven is signed by the NFNPA and NFDC to enable new development within the two New Forest planning areas to access the units and credits

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the NFNPA and NFDC are active members of the Partnership for South Hampshire and input into the Joint Position Statement <p><i>Summary: Although NFDC and the NFNPA prepare separate development plans, the two planning authorities liaise closely at both officer and member level. Work on strategic cross boundary issues including the redevelopment of the Fawley Power Station site; meeting housing needs; and habitat mitigation measures is ongoing and the co-operation has also included the joint commissioning of evidence base studies.</i></p>
Wiltshire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WC appoint 2 of the NFNPA's 22 members • WC area a statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan • WC provides a number of statutory functions within part of the National Park, including housing, education and highways. • Represented on the New Forest National Park Leaders' Panel • Wiltshire Council is represented on the steering group overseeing the strategic recreational mitigation work to address impacts on the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar from planned new development • WC and NFNPA are part of the Hampshire Avon working group that meets to address water quality impacts arising from new development on the designated sites of the River Avon. The NFNPA and WC have signed an overarching legal agreement to enable development in the catchment to access phosphate credits at a private mitigation scheme near Downton • The NFNPA attended the 'Duty to Cooperate' Examination hearing session for the draft Wiltshire Local Plan Review in Summer 2025, confirming our view that Wiltshire Council had met the duty in relation to cross-boundary matters with the New Forest National Park • NFNPA and Wiltshire Council officers met in Autumn 2025 to discuss the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review, including the identification of potential development sites in the Wiltshire area of the National Park. This included liaison with Wiltshire Council housing and planning policy officers. Wiltshire Council's allocation policy for new affordable housing – including the local connections tie – has been considered as part of the New Forest National Park Local Plan review and is directly referenced in Annex 4 of the draft Local Plan

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p><i>Summary: WC is represented within the membership of the NFNPA and officer liaison between the two authorities is continuing on the main issues of housing need and developing a co-ordinated approach to habitat mitigation measures (focused on recreational impacts on the New Forest's designated sites and water quality impacts on the River Avon).</i></p>
<p>Test Valley Borough Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TVBC appoint 1 of the NFNPA's 22 members • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan • TVBC provide a number of statutory functions (including housing) within a small part of the National Park. The Borough Council's local connection criteria for affordable housing is summarised in Annex 4 of the draft New Forest National Park Local Plan • Represented on the New Forest National Park Leaders' Panel • TVBC submitted comments on the Authority's Strategic Direction of Travel document in early 2025. In these, TVBC supported the approach taken to tackle climate change, to protect / enhance biodiversity, to ensuring renewable energy schemes are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the National Park; and the approach taken to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the New Forest by working together on strategic environmental issues affecting the New Forest. TVBC supports the NFNPA's approach towards collaborative working with neighbouring authorities, including the work of PfSH • TVBC are represented on the steering group overseeing the strategic recreational mitigation work to address impacts on the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar from planned new development • TVBC and NFNPA are part of the Hampshire Avon working group that meets to address water quality impacts arising from new development on the designated sites of the River Avon. TVBC and NFNPA are also part of the Partnership for South Hampshire who are working to address Solent nutrient issues • NFNPA and TVBC jointly designated a Neighbourhood Area for the parish of West Wellow which straddles the Park boundary. This area is now covered by a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p><i>Summary: TVBC is represented within the membership of the NFNPA and officer liaison between the authorities continues on the two main issues of the housing needs and developing a co-ordinated approach to habitat mitigation measures. TVBC and NFNPA are working (with other partners) on developing a cross boundary strategic approach to habitat mitigation.</i></p>
<p>Dorset Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan. • DC are represented on the steering group overseeing the strategic recreational mitigation work to address impacts on the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar from planned new development • DC and NFNPA are part of the Hampshire Avon working group that meets to address water quality impacts arising from new development on the designated sites of the River Avon • DC submitted comments on the Authority’s Strategic Direction of Travel document in early 2025 In these comments Dorset Council highlighted the need to consider the impact of policies in the emerging Local Plan on parts of Dorset. This relates to the impact of traffic and the use of facilities. When drawing up the Local Plan, Dorset Council emphasised the importance of engaging with Dorset Council as the Highways Authority. Dorset Council also recognise the defined 13.8km ‘zone of influence’ for the New Forest’s designated sites and the need to mitigate recreational impacts. The NFNPA will initiate further Duty to Cooperate engagement with Dorset Council as part of the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation <p><i>Summary: The NFNPA and DC liaise over addressing the impacts of planned new development on the New Forest’s designated sites (recreational impacts) and River Avon designated sites (water quality impacts). None of the Dorset administrative area extends into the New Forest National Park and therefore none of the National Park’s housing need is directly attributable to Dorset</i></p>
<p>BCP Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan. • BCP Council are represented on the steering group overseeing the strategic recreational mitigation work to address impacts on the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar from planned new development. The two

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p>authorities have a legal agreement to enable development in the BCP administrative area to contribute towards mitigation measures within the National Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP Council and NFNPA are part of the Hampshire Avon working group that meets to address water quality impacts arising from new development on the designated sites of the River Avon <p><i>Summary: The NFNPA and BCP liaise over addressing the impacts of planned new development on the New Forest's designated sites (recreational impacts) and River Avon designated sites (water quality impacts). None of the BCP Council administrative area extends into the New Forest National Park and therefore none of the National Park's housing need is directly attributable to BCP</i></p>
<p>Southampton City Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan • SCC are represented on the steering group overseeing the strategic recreational mitigation work to address impacts on the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar from planned new development • SCC and NFNPA are part of the Partnership for South Hampshire who are working to address Solent nutrient issues and have produced a Joint Position Statement • SCC and NFNPA work closely on the separate joint Minerals & Waste Local Plan and related planning framework <p><i>Summary: SCC and NFNPA are both active members of the Partnership for South Hampshire and have contributed to work on the Joint Position Statement, addressing the impact of nutrient neutrality for the Solent's designated sites, and updated evidence base work (e.g. SFRA). SCC are part of the steering group overseeing work to mitigate recreational impacts of development on the New Forest's designated sites</i></p>
<p>Natural England</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging NFNPA Local Plan. • The Government's statutory advisor on nature conservation and landscape so work closely with the NFNPA • As a statutory consultee, NE has input into the Sustainability Appraisal/SEA

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represented on the New Forest National Park Leaders' Panel • Represented on the Steering Group that oversees the implementation of the New Forest National Park Habitat Mitigation SPD • The NFNPA and Natural England are part of the partnership of local authorities and other relevant bodies working on a strategic approach to habitat mitigation measures for development close to the New Forest's internationally designated sites • Given the proportion of the New Forest National Park designated as being of international importance for nature conservation, the NFNPA has met and corresponded with Natural England on key issues as part of the preparation of the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan • Work with the NFNPA and other planning authorities in the Solent on the delivery of the Bird Aware Solent mitigation strategy. The updated Bird Aware Solent Mitigation Strategy was adopted by the National Park Authority in late 2024 • NE made detailed representations on the Strategic Direction of Travel consultation held in early 2025. In these they confirmed their expectation that the revised Local Plan will include strategic policies to protect and enhance valued landscapes, as well as criteria-based policies to guide development. NE noted that the scale and extent of development within National Parks should be limited. They also advised that the revised Local Plan should set criteria-based policies to ensure the protection of designated biodiversity and geological sites. Such policies should clearly distinguish between international, national and local sites. NE highly recommend that the Local Plan review incorporates a policy for biodiversity net gain. The plan's approach to biodiversity net gain should be compliant with the mitigation hierarchy, as outlined in paragraph 192 of the NPPF. NE recommend a review of policy SP9 to consider incorporating the Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework (NEGIF). NE stated that they expect the revised Local Plan to identify a Coastal Change Management Area and set out the type of policies and developments that would be appropriate in it. The Regulation 18 Part 2 Local Plan document responds to NE's feedback, with the main policy areas highlighted in their representations all incorporated in the draft Plan.

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p><i>Summary: As the Government's statutory advisor on landscape and nature conservation, the NFNPA and NE have a close working relationship. NE and the NFNPA are both involved in the cross-boundary Bird Aware Solent recreation mitigation partnership work. NE are working with the NFNPA and others to develop a consistent approach to mitigating the recreational impacts of new development on the protected habitats of the National Park.</i></p>
<p>Historic England</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging Local Plan • The Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment so work closely with the NFNPA • As a statutory consultee, HE also input into the Sustainability Appraisal/SEA for the NFNPA Local Plan Review • Historic England's main representation on the New Forest National Park Review 'Strategic Direction of Travel' consultation in early 2025 focused on the Local Plan giving further consideration to opportunities for integrated management of the historic and natural environment. The HE response also called for the Local Plan Review process to explore the contribution that heritage can make to the NPA's climate change ambitions - recognising the contribution made by buildings to carbon emissions. HE called for the review of the adopted Local Plan to distinguish between the strategic approach to the historic environment and the development management policies. This is reflected in the Regulation 18 Part 2 draft Local Plan document. <p><i>Summary: HE has an important role as a consultee given the wealth of built and historic environment designations in the National Park. Statutory consultee on the Local Plan and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal/SEA</i></p>
<p>Environment Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statutory consultee on the emerging Local Plan • The EA are represented on the New Forest National Leaders' Panel • As a statutory consultee, EA has input into the Sustainability Appraisal/SEA work to date. • EA involved in the modelling inputs for the Partnership for South Hampshire's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which covers the whole of the New Forest National Park • The EA's main representation on the New Forest National Park Review 'Strategic Direction of Travel' consultation in early 2025 focused on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) that forms a key part of

Organisation	Summary of liaison and cooperation to date
	<p>the evidence base for the Local Plan Review. The EA's representations call for the Local Plan to make direct reference to the Hurst Spit to Lymington Flood and Coastal Risk Management Strategy; and confirmed the EA would be interested in the possible designation of a Coastal Change Management Area on this stretch of the National Park's coastline. The EA were also supportive of the inclusion of a BNG target within the Local Plan Review; and highlighted the need for water efficiency in new development. These points are reflected in the Regulation 18 Part 2 draft Local Plan document</p> <p><i>Summary: The EA is a statutory consultee on the NFNPA Local Plan Review and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal / SEA process. The EA have also been involved in the South Hampshire SFRA work</i></p>
<p>Partnership for South Hampshire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NFNPA is one of 12 local planning authorities within the Partnership for South Hampshire • To date nearly 20 nutrient mitigation schemes have been brought forward to address water quality impacts arising from new development on the Solent's internationally designated sites. The NFNPA has signed agreements with 4 mitigation schemes that allow development in the National Park to access credits • In December 2023, Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) published a Spatial Position Statement 2023 setting out the overall need for, and distribution of, development in south Hampshire • The Spatial Position Statement (2023) recognises that new development in the PFSH area (within the 13.8km zone of influence) is contributing to increased recreational pressures on the internationally designated sites within the New Forest National Park • A key priority for the PFSH authorities is to ensure that the natural environment is protected and enhanced alongside providing for the new development needed. PFSH recognise that South Hampshire has a rich and diverse natural environment <p><i>Summary: The NFNPA plays an active role in the Partnership for South Hampshire at both an officer and member level. The partnerships enables cross boundary working on matters including addressing the requirements of the Habitats Regulations (e.g. water quality and recreational impacts) and the level of planned development in the sub-region</i></p>

5. Conclusions - Strategic Priorities for Cooperation

- 5.1 Over the course of the last 20 years, the National Park Authority has established strong working relationships with key partners in and around the New Forest. This is driven by the composition of the Authority – with members drawn from our 4 constituent local authorities as well as the 37 town & parish councils in the National Park; the Authority’s co-ordinating role in the National Park Management/Partnership Plan; and the strengthened legal duty placed on all ‘relevant bodies’ by Section 245 of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the statutory National Park purposes in their work.
- 5.2 Based on our experience and the liaison that has taken place since the review of the Authority’s Local Plan commenced in 2024, there are two main strategic issues that require cross-boundary co-operation. These relate to the provision of housing to meet identified needs (including gypsy and traveller provision); and habitat mitigation measures to ensure the planned level of development in the area does not affect the integrity of the protected habitats of the New Forest (including the Solent coastline and the River Avon). In taking forward these issues under the ‘duty to cooperate’, there is an on-going need to work closely with neighbouring authorities on the production of a consistent evidence base to inform the respective development plans under preparation.

Strategic Priority	Evidence of co-operation and how it has informed the review of the New Forest National Park Local Plan to date
Co-operation on joint evidence studies to provide a consistent evidence base for Local Plan production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NFNPA has jointly commissioned the following studies with NFDC to cover the combined administrative areas: (i) Housing Need Assessment (Iceni and Juston Gardner Consulting, 2025); (ii) Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (ORS, due late 2025); (iii) Employment and Economic Needs Assessment (Lichfields, 2025). An assessment of existing employment sites across the National Park and District areas has been undertaken in-house using consistent methodology. • The Economic Viability Assessment of the Authority’s Local Plan Review (Three Dragons, 2025) has involved engagement with neighbouring authorities. The housing teams at Wiltshire Council and New Forest District Council have been engaged in the viability work, given their roles as the statutory housing authorities for their respective areas of the Park. • The South Hampshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Aecom, 2025) was commissioned by the Partnership for South Hampshire, which has delivered economies of scale and reflects the fact that flood risk is not bound by administrative boundaries. The assessment covers the whole of the New Forest National Park.

Strategic Priority	Evidence of co-operation and how it has informed the review of the New Forest National Park Local Plan to date
A co-ordinated approach to housing provision across Housing Market Areas, co-operating to meet identified housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National park authorities are in an almost unique situation of being local <u>planning</u> authorities, but not local authorities, and therefore they do not receive a 'policy off' housing need figure generated by the Government's standard method to be the starting point for the Local Plan Review process. • In response the NFNPA has jointly commissioned work on housing needs with NFDC which will inform the two respective local plan reviews. This work confirms that there is no separate 'New Forest Housing Market Area', but that the National Park and District are covered by parts of the Southampton, Bournemouth and Salisbury Housing Market Areas. • National policy (e.g. NPPG section on 'Landscape') confirms that the NPPF policies for protecting National Parks "...may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development in full through the plan-making process, and they are unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from adjoining (non-designated) areas." • In line with the recommendations of national policy, the NFNPA has made representations on the emerging BCP, Dorset and Wiltshire Local Plans confirming that there is not the capacity within the National Park to meet the identified housing needs without undermining the purposes for designation. • With the Housing Needs Assessment work now completed, the NFNPA will use the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation to formally engage neighbouring local planning authorities on the options for addressing housing need. The NFNPA will be contacting neighbouring authorities under the 'duty to co-operate' to formally seek assistance in delivering housing to meet identified housing needs. • The NFNPA is also a member for the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) and the PfSH Spatial Position Statement (December 2023) summarises the position on housing delivery in the sub-region.
A co-ordinated approach to habitat mitigation measures to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NFNPA works with Natural England and 14 other local authorities to deliver the Bird Aware Mitigation Strategy. This covers all 26 miles of the New Forest National Park coastline and addresses in-combination

Strategic Priority	Evidence of co-operation and how it has informed the review of the New Forest National Park Local Plan to date
<p>ensure planned new development does not impact the integrity of internationally designated habitats</p>	<p>recreational impacts arising from new development within 5.6km of the coastal designations. The updated Strategy was endorsed by the NFNPA in late 2024. Contributions from developments within the National Park are pooled with those gathered elsewhere to deliver a range of mitigation measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NFNPA works with the Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) to address water quality impacts on the Solent’s designated sites. To date around 20 nutrient credit mitigation schemes have been brought forward and the NFNPA has signed legal agreements in place with mitigation schemes in Eastleigh, New Forest District and the Isle of Wight that enable development in the National Park to access the available credits. The NFNPA currently chairs the PFSH Natural Environment Group meetings which include standing items on nutrient neutrality. • The NFNPA is a member of the Hampshire Avon Working Group, which brings together 6 planning authorities within the catchment of the River Avon to address water quality impacts arising from phosphates on the Avon’s internationally designated sites. The NFNPA has a signed legal agreement in place with the landowner and host authority (Wiltshire Council) to enable development in the National Park to access available phosphate credits. • The NFNPA is leading work on delivering a strategic solution to addressing in-combination recreational impacts on the New Forest’s internationally designated sites. The New Forest Strategic Access & Management (SAMM) work engages 9 planning authorities across Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire within the defined 13.8km ‘zone of influence’. Work on a comprehensive strategy is progressing and in the meantime the NFNPA is working in partnership with several authorities (including Fareham and BCP Council) to deliver interim mitigation. The NFNPA hosts the ‘People & Wildlife Ranger’ funded through developer contributions secured by NFDC. • The NFNPA’s Habitat Mitigation Scheme is overseen by a steering group made up of representatives of Natural England, NFDC, the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the RSPB to guide the implementation of mitigation measures linked to development within the National Park.

Strategic Priority	Evidence of co-operation and how it has informed the review of the New Forest National Park Local Plan to date
Cross boundary co-operation regarding potential strategic development sites that could impact on more than one Plan-area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NFNPA meets regularly with the planning policy team at NFDC to discuss strategic cross-boundary matters. This includes the future of the former Fawley Power Station site – which is located entirely within NFDC’s planning remit – and the various Freeport Tax & Customs sites on the Waterside area of the New Forest (including the Fawley Waterside site, which is partly within the New Forest National Park).

5.3 The Authority will continue to work with partners, consultees and other Duty to Cooperate bodies as the preparation of the revised New Forest National Park Local Plan continues leading up to the Regulation 19 consultation in Summer 2026 and then submission for independent examination in December 2026. The Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation in late 2025 will help to identify further areas of common ground and areas where further co-operation is required.

Annex 1 – Summary of the main Duty to Cooperate meetings and events to date

Date	Events and summary of outcomes
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with planning policy and housing officers at NFDC to agree joint tender for an updated assessment of housing needs arising in the New Forest area. The project inception meeting was held on 30 September 2024 and the project responds to the unique geography of the New Forest (and guidance in the NPPG) to ensure up to date evidence of local housing need is available. • Kings Manor, Isle of Wight legal agreement signed to enable development in the National Park to access nutrient credits and Biodiversity Units on this approved scheme. The nutrient credits are available for development within the Lymington & Beaulieu River catchments of the National Park • Partnership for South Hampshire Planning Officers' Group meeting (18 September 2024). The meeting focused on the proposed revisions to national planning policy arising from the NPPF consultation; and the monitoring of housing completions of the updated annual Statement of Common Ground • Partnership for South Hampshire Inter-Authority Agreement meeting to agree legal principles for the deployment of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Funding. The NFNPA is a signatory of the Inter Authority Agreement, which guides the use of circa £16 million of mitigation funding for the Solent catchment
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFNPA and NFDC planning policy officers' liaison meeting – 8 October 2024. The main focus was on the recent jointly commissioned housing needs assessment work which will cover the combined administrative areas of NFDC and the NFNPA, providing a key part of the evidence base for the respective Local Plan reviews • Project inception meeting for the combined New Forest National Park and New Forest District Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment with the jointly appointed consultants (ORS) (11 October 2024). The assessment will cover the combined planning administrative areas of the National Park and District Council • Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (16 October 2024). The main agenda items were on the deployment of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Funding for the Solent sub-region – guided by the Inter Authority Agreement – and the updated Bird Aware Solent Strategy which provides strategic mitigation for planning authorities within the zone of influence

November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (27 November 2024). The main agenda items were an update on the stage reached for the Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy – which is relevant for local plan-preparation; the updated Bird Aware Solent mitigation strategy; and the Local Nutrient Mitigation Funding
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering & Local Planning Authority Group Joint Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy meeting – 4 December 2024. In person workshop hosted by Hampshire County Council for all supporting authorities (including the New Forest National Park Authority) for the Hampshire LNRS
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (8 January 2025). The meeting discussed the latest nutrient mitigation supply and demand analysis report for the catchment and the implications of the recently revised NPPF Annual meeting of the NPA Habitat Mitigation Steering Group – 9 January 2025. The steering group reviewed the mitigation measures implemented in the previous year and agreed the priorities for the 2025/26 financial year Meeting of the Hampshire Avon Working Group to discuss the deployment of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Funding in the Avon catchment; and the implications of the future upgrades to wastewater treatment works in the catchment to the ‘technically achievable limit’ (TAL) for phosphates
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership for South Hampshire Planning Officers’ Group meeting (11 February 2024). The main agenda item was on the housing supply monitoring figures, which are collated across the sub-region (including completions within the National Park). The monitoring is relevant to the PFSH Spatial Position Statement Liaison with the planning policy team at NFDC to agree consistent criteria for the assessment of existing employment sites across the two planning authority areas. This will inform the employment needs assessment work that is in the process of being jointly commissioned Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (26 February 2025). The meeting discussed the nutrient credit supply & demand analysis across the sub-region to help monitor the supply of credits. Discussions also covered the consistent use of NE’s Solent Nutrient Budget calculator The New Forest National Park Local Plan Review initial Regulation 18 ‘Strategic Direction of Travel’ consultation ran from 4 February to 18 March 2025. As part of this 6-week consultation the NPA contacted a wide range of statutory and other consultees and also

	<p>held 4 public drop-in sessions across the National Park. The consultation was widely publicised and as well as being directly notified of the consultation the NPA offered to meet relevant consultees</p>
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Forest National Park Local Plan Review initial Regulation 18 ‘Strategic Direction of Travel’ consultation continued until 18 March 2025. As part of this consultation presentations were given to the New Forest National Park Parish Quadrant meetings • An update on the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review ‘Strategic Direction of Travel’ consultation was given to the New Forest Consultative Panel at their meeting on 6 March 2025
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the updated assessment of housing need in the combined New Forest area – National Park and District – a workshop was held for all NFNPA members and NFDC councillors to find out more about the emerging findings and the implications for the respective local plan reviews – 2 April 2025 • Partnership for South Hampshire Planning Officers’ Group meeting (4 April 2025). The meeting considered the Spatial Position Statement Monitoring Report, with the majority of authorities unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply. The MHCLG Working Paper: ‘Development and Nature Recovery’ which seeks to essentially centralise the delivery of nutrient and other mitigation projects that facilitate new development was also discussed • NFNPA planning policy and ecology officers met with Natural England officers to discuss in detail their representations on the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review Regulation 18 ‘Strategic Direction of Travel’ consultation – 22 April 2025. The meeting included discussions on impacts such as urban edge, water quality, and recreational pressures that are relevant for the Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment work
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Forest Strategic Access Management & Monitoring (SAMM) steering group meeting (7 May 2025). The main outstanding matter discussed at the meeting was the approach taken to larger developments within the 13.8km – 15km ‘outer’ zone. • Joint site visit between senior NFNPA and NFDC planning officers to the former Fawley Power Station to discuss future options for the site (15 May 2025). This is a key issue for both respective local plans given the extant site allocations. • Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (28 May 2025). The main agenda covered the latest iteration of the nutrient mitigation supply and demand analysis being prepared for the Joint Committee in September.

June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampshire & Isle of Wight Planning Officers' Group meeting – 5 June 2025. The main discussions focused on the impacts of Devolution in Hampshire and the Solent for plan-making; and the implications of the higher housing requirements for the recreation mitigation strategies that many planning authorities have in place • NFNPA - NFDC liaison meeting regarding major projects in the Waterside area of the New Forest – 10 June 2025. The Waterside area includes several key strategic sites, including ABP's strategic land reserve at Dibden Bay; the former Fawley Power Station site and Fawley Refinery. Both planning authorities recognise the need to cooperate and liaise vet the future planning of this area. • Meeting with ABP regarding the Port of Southampton major development proposals – 13 June 2025. This is in advance of an initial public consultation on the proposals at the strategic land reserve site, which would be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and includes land within the New Forest National Park
July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Viability Assessment workshop with developers and constituent housing authorities – 10 July 2025. The workshop was co-hosted by the NFNPA and our appointed consults Three Dragons and gave attendees the opportunity to input into this key piece of evidence base work • Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (23 July 2025)
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison meeting with the Solent Mitigation Partnership to discuss strategic mitigation measures – including the monitoring of the supply and demand of nutrient credits arising from development across the catchment; the established mitigation schemes and options for use of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund
September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with ABP – HCC – NFDC – NFNPA regarding ABP's Strategic Land Reserve and the emerging NSIP proposals – 8 September 2025. All 3 of the 'host authorities' will be required to prepare a 'Local Impact Report' at the appropriate point in the NSIP process. The three authorities are looking to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Associated British Ports and have also jointly appointed an officer to co-ordinate inputs in the process. • Partnership for South Hampshire Natural Environment Group meeting (17 September 2025). The main agenda item was on appraising the implementation of BNG monitoring and compliance by local planning authorities and the opportunities for further joint working to ensure greater consistency.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFNPA and NFDC planning policy officers' liaison meeting – 19 September 2025. The meeting covered the NFNPA's planned Regulation 18 Part 2 Local Plan consultation document and the dates for consultation. Consideration was also given to potential joint drop-in sessions if the timetabling permits. It was agreed that the NPA would share the text of their draft Plan prior to it going into the public domain when the reports are published for the October 2025 full Authority meeting. • NFNPA – Wiltshire Council liaison meeting regarding the NFNPA Local Plan review and the statutory responsibilities of Wiltshire Council. The meeting focused on the Wiltshire area of the National Park and the site allocations being considered. As a result of the meeting the NFNPA further engaged the Housing team at Wiltshire Council to discuss the local connection criteria and how the cascade set out in the legal agreement works for development sites adjacent to the housing authority's administrative boundary (in this case with NFDC). • Partnership for South Hampshire Planning Officers' Group meeting – 24 September 2025. Discussions had focused on the updates and reviews of the Spatial Position Statement (2023) as a demonstration of the duty to cooperate. It was agreed that a statement would be prepared that would reiterate that local authorities have a statutory duty to co-operate with each other on strategic matters, including unmet housing needs; and reiterate that the PfSH Spatial Position Statement, approved in December 2023, supports this duty. The statement will confirm that it is not proposed to seek to update the PfSH Spatial Position Statement given that the proposed Mayoral Combined Authority for Hampshire and the Solent will have new statutory responsibilities to address these strategic planning issues through the new Spatial Development Strategy
<p>October 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with HCC and NFDC regarding the signing of a Planning Performance Agreement to oversee the work on the emerging Solent Gateway 2 proposals – 3 October 2025. The PPA would guide the work of the three 'host authorities' on the emerging Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project at Solent Gateway 2 • Inaugural meeting of the Stakeholder Reference Group and site visit to Solent Gateway 2 – 23 October 2025.

Annex 2

Prescribed bodies for Duty to Co-operate purposes as set out at Part 2 Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and Section 33(A) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

- Environment Agency
- Historic England (English Heritage)
- Natural England
- The Mayor of London / Greater London Authority (GLA) – *not relevant for New Forest National Park Authority*
- Transport for London (TfL) – *not relevant for New Forest National Park Authority*
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) – now Integrated Care Boards (ICB)
- The Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England)
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board
- Local Highway Authority
- Highways England (now National Highways)
- Integrated Transport Authorities (Hampshire County Council)
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Office of Rail and Road
- Marine Management Organisation

Local Enterprise Partnerships (which no longer exist) and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the duty, but Planning Authorities must cooperate with them and have regard to their activities when they are preparing their local plans, so long as those activities are relevant to plan-making.