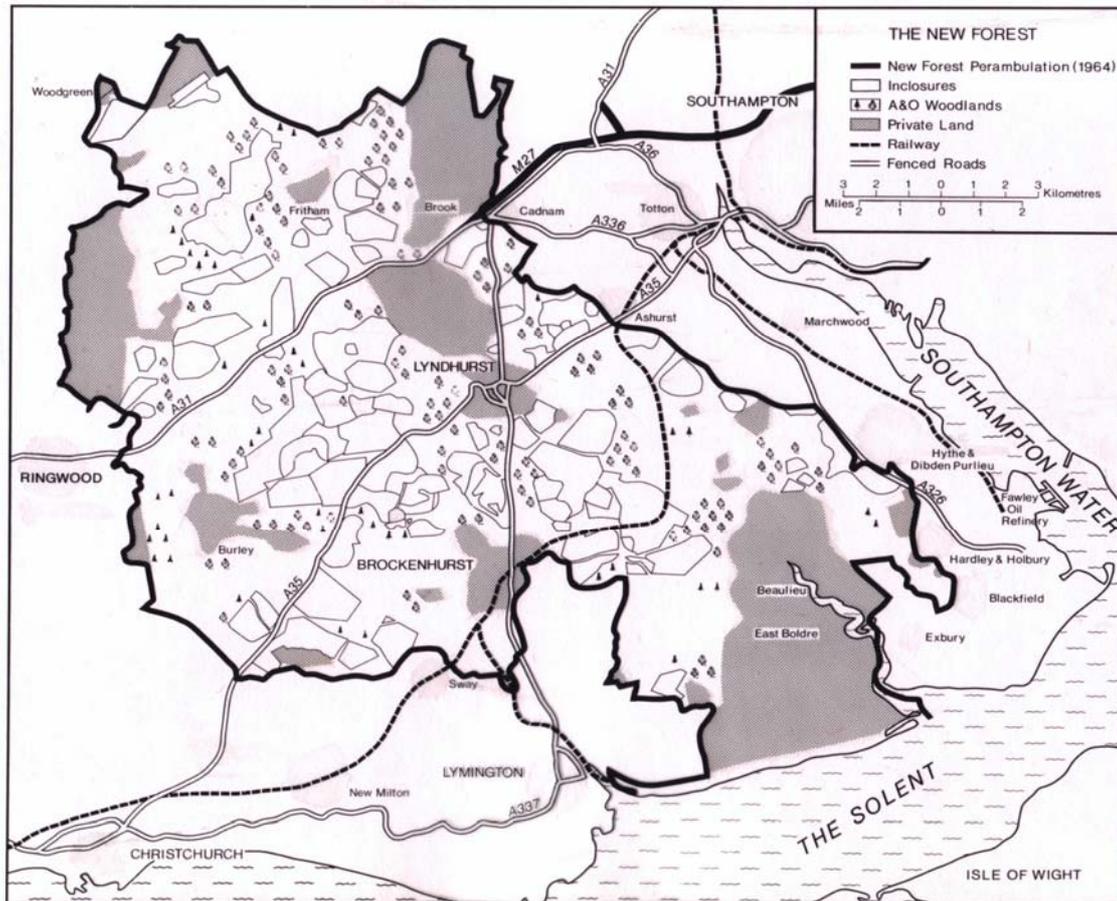


New Forest Fact File

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW FOREST



WHERE IS THE NEW FOREST?

This 375 sq. km. area is in south-west Hampshire, lying to the west of Southampton Water and between the two conurbation's of Southampton and Bournemouth. Its southern edge comes to the shores of the Solent between Lymington and Calshot spit. To the west the River Avon forms a distinct boundary and to the north the land gradually rises to the edge of the chalk forming the Hampshire Basin. It is easily accessible by the M3 and M27 motorways which lead on to the A31 trunk road to the west country. The main London to Weymouth railway also crosses the New Forest.

WHAT IS THE NEW FOREST?

It certainly isn't new and it isn't by any means all forest! It has been described as a unique survival of medieval Britain and in many people's minds it is a 'natural' area but this is only partly true. What most people think of as the New Forest is a unique landscape. It is a pleasing mixture of heathland, imposing ancient woodland, wetlands, grassy plains and inclosures of both coniferous and deciduous trees set in a gently undulating lowland landscape. Access to the vast majority of this land is open and free because it is crown land. The enjoyment of this landscape is further enhanced by the presence of grazing animals, notably ponies, cattle and in the quieter areas, deer.

NEW FOREST AREA BOUNDARIES (refer to map)

Perambulation

This is an historic term for the boundary of the area governed by Forest law. It is defined in the New Forest Act 1964 and encompasses Crown land (managed by the Forestry Commission), privately owned land and manorial wastes subject to common rights, and privately owned enclosed land. The area within the perambulation makes up the heart of the New Forest.

New Forest Heritage Area

The area which has planning policies as if it were a National Park. The boundary is defined through the local plan process. It extends beyond the perambulation, but does not include the Avon Valley, a number of coastal areas on Southampton Water and Lower Test Valley, or the towns of Ringwood and Lymington.

New Forest National Park Designation Order boundary

The area which has been designated to be included in the New Forest National Park.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Areas :

Land within the perambulation:	38,000 ha
Land managed by the Forestry Commission (Crown Land)	25,825 ha
	Incllosures 8,500 ha
	Open Forest 17,325 ha
Land within Heritage Area boundary	53,320 ha
Land within the New Forest District Council boundary (Figures from NFDC 2001)	75,100 ha

Population:

People living within the Heritage Area	approx	38,506
People living within New Forest District Council boundary	approx	172,735

(Figures from NFDC 2001)

Commoning:

Animals depastured in the New Forest:

	1999	2000	2001
Ponies	3885	3990	3744
Cattle	2890	2991	1658
Pigs	172	107	71
Donkeys	83	84	87

Forestry:

Timber production (2002 – 2007 average forecast))	Softwood	42,500 tonnes (m ³)
	hardwood - saw logs	2,000 tonnes (m ³)
	- pulp	15,000 tonnes (m ³)
	Total	59,500 tonnes (m ³)

Tree planting (2002/2003)

	Area (hectares)	No. in Thousands
Conifer	30	81.0
Broadleaves	15	40.5
Total	45	121.5

Recreation:

Total visitors per annum	20 million
	- 12 million local resident day visitors
	- 8 million day visitors
Camper nights (2001)	650,000 camper nights

Estimated that 95% of visitors travel to the New Forest by car. Includes 81% of local residents.

Source: *Enjoying the Forest: Access and Recreation Plan. June 2001.*

Conservation:

National and International Conservation designations:
Site of Special Scientific Interest (1959)
National Nature Reserve (1969)
Special Protection Area (1993)
RAMSAR Site (1993)
Proposed as Special Area of Conservation (1995)
Proposed National Park (1999)