
THE CROWN LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Crown Lands

Part B of the Forestry Commission (New Forest) Management Plan deals with the Crown Lands of the New Forest. The Crown Lands cover around 26,756 hectares of the New Forest forming a mosaic of heathland, mires, grassland (referred to locally as lawns), Ancient and Ornamental woodland, forestry Inclosures and agricultural land. The Crown Lands of the New Forest have been managed by the Forestry Commission, on behalf of the Secretary for State, since 1924.

The New Forest is one of the most important sites for wildlife in the UK, and is widely recognised as being of exceptional importance for nature conservation on a European and International level. Outstanding examples of thirteen habitats of European interest are represented together with two priority habitat types – bog woodland and riverine woodland. Indeed the majority of New Forest habitats support an exceptional variety of plants and animals including the richest moss and lichen flora in lowland Europe, scarce flowering plants and an outstanding community of invertebrates. The New Forest also supports important bird populations and is one of the largest areas for breeding waders in southern England.

The quality and diversity of the habitats have arisen due to the historic and present day land use and management. Of particular importance is the pastoral economy based upon the Rights of Common. The commoners' stock, mainly comprising ponies and cattle have the right to roam freely over extensive areas. Over the years grazing patterns have helped to develop a unique ground flora and kept more aggressive species such as bracken and purple moor grass in check.

Among the growing conurbations of South East England the Forest represents one of the last few remaining wild areas of any significant size. The landscape, heritage and ecology of the Crown Lands are enjoyed by millions of visitors and local residents each year. However the challenges of population growth and visitor management are set to grow. Future housing allocations set out in Regional Spatial Strategies, notably the South East Plan and South West Plan are likely to result in significantly more visitors to the Crown Lands¹. Meanwhile timber production from Inclosures and management of the heathlands and other habitats provides employment and economic benefits both within the Forest itself and wider afield.

It is not surprising that the Crown Lands are covered by a wide range of local, national and international designations reflecting the nature conservation, landscape, heritage and recreational importance of the New Forest. The designations of National Park, Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR, and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) together with the commoning and recreational

¹ The South Hampshire sub-region (including Southampton, Portsmouth, Totton and the Waterside) has a target of 80,000 new houses by 2026. An additional 2,400 houses are proposed in New Forest District outside the National Park. To the west the conurbation of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole has a planned total of 34,000 houses over the same period.

interests are particular driving forces behind the challenges, priorities and techniques used in managing the Crown Lands.

1.2 Aim of the Crown Lands Management Plan

The key aim of the Crown Lands Management Plan is to inform local Forestry Commission staff on the management direction and associated policies and actions that need to be implemented over the next five years taking into account requirements of the:

- Ministers Mandate
- Special Area of Conservation Plan (SAC Plan)
- New Forest Acts
- National & Regional Forest Policy
- New Forest National Park Management Plan
- Other relevant legislation

Of particular importance is the fact that the Plan forms Part IV of the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Plan which was produced as part of the Life II Project. Part IV is essentially the implementation part of the SAC Plan, which demonstrates how landowners intend to maintain and enhance the nature conservation interest of the SAC.

The Crown Lands Management Plan can also be used to:

- Demonstrate that the requirements of UKWAS are being implemented
- Address other local issues.

However, the uniqueness and importance of the New Forest means that a number of statutory bodies and a great number of other organisations and individuals take a considerable interest in how the Forest is managed both strategically and on a day to day basis. Therefore, stakeholders can also reference the plan to find out what actions the Forestry Commission propose to take over the next 5 years to address specific issues of interest.

1.3 Format & Direction of the Crown Lands Management Plan

The current management direction has largely been set by the Ministers Mandate for the New Forest 1999 to 2008 which, dictates the format and content of the Crown Lands Management Plan². The revised Plan covers the background, management objectives, policies and actions for each of our key component area subject areas, notably:

- ◆ Inclosures (Chapter B3)
- ◆ Ancient and Ornamental Woodlands (Chapter B4)
- ◆ Heathlands (Chapter B5)

²The original 'Management Plan for the Crown Lands Management Plan' was published in 2001 following the Minister's Mandate 1999-2008. It was a requirement of this former plan to produce component/subject plans for the management for the management of the Inclosures, Ancient and Ornamental Woodlands, Open Forest, Access & Recreation, Community and Deer. These Plans needed be consistent with the Special Area of Conservation Management Plan² and the Strategy for the New Forest prepared by the New Forest Committee (now superseded by the New Forest National Park Management Plan). The Forestry Commission took an undertaking to review the Crown Lands Management Plan after 5 years and this process started in 2006.

- ◆ Archaeology & Cultural Heritage (Chapter B6)
- ◆ Recreation & Community (Chapter B7)
- ◆ Estates (Chapter B8)

Although the former direction still stands, there have been a few notable developments in the intervening years that have been taken account of in the revised plan, notably:

- ◆ The publication of new national and regional Forest Policy (which is very much in keeping with the Ministers Mandate).
- ◆ The designation of the New Forest National Park in 2005 and creation of the New Forest National Park Authority.
- ◆ The commitment of the Forestry Commission to a Public Service Agreement Target to improve 95% of the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to favourable condition by 2010.
- ◆ Outcomes from major projects undertaken since 2001, such as Life 2, Life 3, Pathfinder and PROGRESS.
- ◆ Revisions to the Habitats Directive in respect of European Protected Species which influence the way in which forestry and other related operations need to be carried out.
- ◆ Developments in the Forest Design Plan and UKWAS in relation to the Management of Inclosures.

1.4 Consultation

Through the review process, consultation both within FC and with our statutory consultees and stakeholders been vital in helping to shape our management objectives, policies and resulting actions.

1.5 Monitoring

The policies & actions presented in the Plan have been assessed and monitored to check that they comply with National Park Purposes and the SE Forestry and Woodland Framework. The implementation of our policies and actions will be monitored through a half term review and again at the end of the plan period. However the success of our Policies and actions are also picked up through other targeted monitoring such as SSSI condition monitoring, UKWAS monitoring, FC national monitoring programmes and monitoring carried out by the Sustainable Development Commission.

2. HISTORY OF THE CROWN LANDS

The history of the New Forest and its associated legacy is intricately responsible for the management structure, customs and condition of the Crown Lands today. On one hand the historic management has helped to create and maintain the valuable mosaic of habitats found in the Forest today while on the other it has led to the decline and degradation of the wetland habitats and loss of heathland and ancient woodland. In order to understand why the Crown Lands are managed as they are today and the issues involved, it is important to appreciate the historic legacy and the associated conflicts, which have led to the current day position.

Certain key historical periods and events have been particularly important in shaping the development of the Crown Lands as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: History of the Crown Lands

Date	Historic Significance
1079 - The designation of the New Forest as a royal 'forest' by William I	Forest managed exclusively for deer and other game. Removal of all fences and introduction of Forest Laws. Common rights granted as recompense
Act of 1542	Creation of the post of Surveyor General of the King's Woods to increase the commercial function of Crown woodlands. This new office was under the direction of the Exchequer with responsibilities for timber and 'profit of the king'.
1698 Act of the Increase and Preservation of Timber in the New Forest	First large scale afforestation through the creation of Inclosures. Conflicts with commoners over loss of grazing and imposition of Forest Laws. By end of 18 th C Forest poorly managed and timber supplies declining.
1808 Act of the Increase and Preservation of Timber in Dean and New Forests	Confirmed allowances of 1698 Act resulting in Inclosure of 6000 acres at any one time in a rolling programme.
1845	Opening of Southampton & Dorchester railway bringing artists, naturalists and other recreational users to the New Forest.
1846-52	First drainage schemes to improve Forest for grazing
1851 Deer Removal Act	Culling of deer in return for Crown enclosing 10,000 acres of open forest. Forest Laws of fence month and winter heyning still imposed which together with loss of grazing led to large scale revolts among commoners and gentry. Large scale introduction of conifers and drainage works
1877 New Forest Act	No further creation of Inclosures permitted other than that granted under previous Acts. No further enclosure of Ancient & Ornamental woodland allowed. "Re-creation" of Court of Verderers to administer common rights and pastoral interests remote from Crown influence. Introduction of ornamental trees into Forest by Victorians
The War & Inter War Years	Forest intensively managed for timber production. Large tracts of land acquired for airfields, firing ranges and food supply.
1920's-30's	Further drainage of the Open Forest
1924	Forestry Commission takes over responsibility for management of New Forest from the Crown. National forest policy ensures that afforestation is vigorously pursued
The New Forest Act 1949	Revived Verderers Court and clarified responsibilities between Verderers and Forestry Commission. Act set out requirement for Forestry Commission to maintain drainage and scrub control for grazing interests. Led to significant drainage between 1965-1986. Creation of Verderers Inclosures in return for compensation payments. Enclosure of small areas of Ancient and Ornamental woodland allowed to secure future regeneration.
The New Forest Act 1964	Alteration of perambulation boundary and addition of fencing and cattle grids to help control livestock movement and prevent accidents Provision for creation of campsites Obligation for Forestry Commission & Verderers to give due regard to nature conservation interests. Permission to carry out silvicultural maintenance to preserve Ancient & Ornamental Woodland.
The Ministers Mandate 1971	In recognition of the unique environment of the New Forest, permission was granted to allow forest management to diverge from national policy of large scale conifer planting.
1959,1971, 1987	Designation & extension of New Forest SSSI
The Ministers Mandate 1991	Places obligation on the Forestry Commission to conserve the natural and cultural heritage and places a high priority on maintaining the Forest's traditional character
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)	Legislative requirements place duty on organisations and individuals to promote the interests and sustainability of the Forest and to achieve favourable status of habitats.
The New Forest National Park Establishment Order 2005	New Forest designated a National Park
2005	New Forest receives full status as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

3 THE INCLOSURES

Inclosure Management Objectives

1. To transform Inclosure woodland in accordance with Forest Design Plans to enhance the special nature conservation and landscape qualities through appropriate habitat restoration and management.
2. To manage sustainable timber production from the Inclosures through the generation of reliable production forecasts and provision of a regular supply of good quality timber to the market place.
3. To work in partnership with stakeholders in the revision of Forest Design Plans.
4. To carry out targeted monitoring to ensure that our Inclosure woodland is being managed in a sustainable way and meeting our management objectives in relation to UKWAS.
5. To encourage the use of Inclosures by recreational users of the Forest.

The process of enclosing open land for timber production in the New Forest began in the 1700s, and became legalised by the New Forest Acts of 1698, 1808, 1877 and 1949. The most recent Inclosures date from 1968. (A general history of the Inclosures is recounted in Part B2). Today, the total area covered by New Forest Inclosures extends to around 8,500 hectares. The Inclosures are clearly demarcated areas of predominately plantation woodland supporting both conifers and broadleaves. They may or may not be separated from the grazed Open Forest by stock fences. There are four legal categories of Inclosures:

- ◆ **Statutory Inclosures** formed under the New Forest Acts of 1698, 1808 and 1851 are held in perpetuity. These Inclosures were originally set up to grow timber for the Royal Navy and comprised predominantly oak or beech plantations. Most of the early plantations dating from the 18th century were felled during the 19th and 20th centuries, often being replanted with conifer³. In 1924 the Forestry Commission took over the management of the New Forest Crown Lands which resulted in a period of more intensive forestry production with a greater emphasis on conifer production to support the national need for timber. Statutory Inclosures currently cover 7115 hectares.

³ Parts of the 18th century Inclosures have survived in North and South Bentley, Pitt's Wood, Sloden, Raven's Nest and Long Beech. Pasture Woodland enclosed in the 18th century has survived in Burley Old, Ocknell, Puckpits, Coppice of Linwood, Sloden, Raven's Nest and Woodfidley.

- ◆ **Verderers' Inclosures** formed under the New Forest Act 1949 are held on 150 year leases and must be open to stock for much of the time. They currently cover 664 hectares, mainly on former heathland and have been subject to more intensive commercial forestry based on conifer production. However, the emphasis within current Forest Design Plans (FDPs) is on restoring these Inclosures to heathland and mire habitat
- ◆ **Crown Freehold Woods** have their origins in the early 19th century. They cover 461 hectares and the Forestry Commission have given an undertaking to manage these woods along the same lines as the Statutory Inclosures.
- ◆ **Leasehold Woods** cover 197 hectares and are managed for a variety of timber production/habitat restoration objectives

The Inclosures were generally established on former heathland or ancient woodland sites and remnants of these former habitats still survive within the modern day Inclosures. Where recognisable, these remnant heathland and woodland habitats are often of international importance representing important examples of Annex 1 habitats as identified by the European Habitats Directive⁴. Of particular significance are the 400 hectares of pasture, riverine and bog woodland communities that were incorporated into the 18th and 19th century Statutory Inclosures.

Whilst the Inclosures were initially established to provide a timber resource they now provide a much wider range of benefits to society and are increasingly recognised for their nature conservation and recreation value in addition to their ability to yield quality timber.

A summary of the Issues Policies and Actions for the Inclosures are given below.

⁴ In 1992 the European Union adopted Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, known as the Habitats Directive. This directive identifies a number of important rare or threatened European habitats known as Annex 1 or 2 habitats. The UK Government approved statutory regulations to implement the requirements of the Directive in October 1994. These are known as the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (the 'Habitats Regulations').

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 5 Protection for European Protected Species (EPS) & Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Targets							
<i>Policy B3-8: We will work to protect European Species (EPS) through the use of good practice and appropriate mitigation.</i>	Ensure that GIS database contains known records of EPS records for the Crown Lands to inform OSA process.	Planning, Ecology	◆				
	Commission surveys for EPS where required	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Provide staff/operators with appropriate training and awareness relating to EPS and good practice	Ecology	◆				
	Ensure adequate forward planning for Working Blocks & OSAs to take into account the guidelines/working practices required to safeguard European Protected Species	Planning, Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Make EPS licence application where required	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
<i>Policy B3-9: We will continue to manage the Inclosures to take account of BAP habitats, species and specific BAP targets in accordance with relevant FC actions set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Hampshire and the New Forest.</i>	Ensure that GIS database is up to date with regard to BAP species records for the Crown Lands	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	BAP Reporting	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Assist NPA with development of New Forest BAP	Ecology		◆			
	Implement actions from New Forest Biodiversity Plan	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Manage deadwood resource in accordance with UKWAS/FC national guidance	Ecology	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
Issue 6 Timber Production & Markets							
<i>Policy B3-10: We will continue to meet our 5 yearly timber production forecasts based upon long term Forest Design Plans and at the same time respond to any changes in market opportunities or competing forest interests.</i>	Appropriate planning and flexible management to sustain an even supply of timber throughout the year	Planning, Operations, Harvesting	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Restocking in accordance with Forest Design Plans	Planning, Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
<i>Policy B3-11: Non –native trees, shrubs and other exotic or pest species will be systematically removed or controlled within Inclosures where they present an invasive threat to the natural ecology</i>	Continue removal and respray programme for <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Monitor and respray sites where <i>Gaultheria shallon</i> has been removed and continue to look for alternative methods of treatment	Ecology, Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Continue removal of Turkey Oak, Red Oak, Sycamore (especially along water courses) and Western Hemlock	Ecology, Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶
	Monitor location and spread of any existing or new exotic species and treat as appropriate	Ecology, Operations	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....▶

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 7: Removal & Control of Pest species & Exotics within Inclosures							
<i>Policy B3-11:</i> Non –native trees, shrubs and other exotic or pest species will be systematically removed or controlled within Inclosures where they present an invasive threat to the natural ecology	Continue removal and respray programme for <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	Operations→				
	Monitor and respray sites where <i>Gaultheria shallon</i> has been removed and continue to look for alternative methods of treatment	Ecology, Operations→				
	Continue removal of Turkey Oak, Red Oak, Sycamore (especially along water courses) and Western Hemlock	Ecology, Operations→				
	Monitor location and spread of any existing or new exotic species and treat as appropriate	Ecology, Operations→				
	Prepare a District Squirrel Management Strategy based upon Operations Instruction No 15 - The Management of Grey Squirrels	Keepers, Operations→				
	Control deer in accordance with Deer Management Plan	Keepers, Operations→				
Issue 8 Plant Health							
<i>Policy B3-12:</i> We will continue to monitor the health of our timber crops, carry out surveys as required and take any necessary measures to control the spread of disease following advice from Forest Research and DEFRA	Comply with the 5 year moratorium on the planting of Corsican Pine to combat the problems of Red Band Needle Blight	Planning, Operations→				
	Survey young crops for symptoms of Red Band Needle Blight in June, in conjunction with weeding surveys.	Operations→				
	Formalise a district approach to the monitoring & treatment of Red Band Needle Blight.	Operations		◆			
	Support any national monitoring schemes such as the annual pinewood nematode, red band needle blight and phytophthora ramorum surveys.	Operations→				
	On the advice of Forest Research, investigate incidences that give rise to concern, recording the circumstances and outcomes in the tree health file.	Operations→				
	Forest district staff will remain vigilant to the possibilities of outbreaks of pests and diseases	Ecology, Operations→				
Issue 9 Addressing Climate Change							
<i>Policy B3-13:</i> We will take note of research and national advice regarding climate change and take a proactive approach in implementing measures to adapt to climate change	Review species & provenance choice	Planning, Operations→				
	Continued restoration of mires, riverine woodland and associated floodplain habitats	Ecology, Operations→				
	Ensure FDPs include habitat linkages & corridors to allow species migration	Planning, Ecology→				
	Alter annual cycle of management as required	Operations→				
	Utilise most appropriate operational methods to minimise carbon outputs.	Operations→				
	Support local woodfuel initiatives & national delivery plan	Planning, Operations→				

.....→ On-going Action
 ◆ Target Implementation Date

4. THE ANCIENT & ORNAMENTAL WOODLANDS

Management Objectives for the Ancient & Ornamental (A&O) Woodlands

1. To maintain the unique character of the 'A & O' Woodlands by preserving the traditional structure, habitats and landscapes.
2. To ensure that any intervention that takes place in 'A & O' woodland is purely for the benefit of conserving or restoring important habitats, landscapes or maintaining traditional forest Rights.
3. To support and encourage the pastoral traditions of the 'A & O' Woodlands.
4. To carry out focused monitoring to ensure the health and well being of the 'A & O' Woodlands.

The ancient beech and oak woods are one of the glories of the New Forest and cover 3692 hectares of the Crown Lands. Indeed the New Forest ranks as one of the finest surviving sites for wood-pasture in Europe. Christened "Ancient and Ornamental" by the New Forest Act 1877, their apparently timeless beauty has been enjoyed by generations of residents and visitors alike. Together with the wide open heaths, these old woods form the heart of an ancient landscape, surprisingly well preserved amongst the surrounding urban spread and intensive agriculture of the late 20th century. Two hundred years ago the same general pattern was evident but the amount of open forest woodland was substantially greater. Since then, much has been incorporated into Inclosures and replaced by plantations, although some old-growth beech and oak stands remain as "pre-Inclosed woodland" within Inclosures.

The A & O woodlands are *semi-natural* in that they owe their features to both natural processes and the influence of people through the centuries. Although the ancient beech and oak stands form the core of the Ancient and Ornamental woodland, there are also other types of woodland which are intermingled with the old beech and oak stands in a complex mosaic. Some are associated with particular soils, while others may be the natural precursors of the beech and oak woods or degenerate forms of them. In addition, many of the habitats found in the A & O woodlands are of European importance. The following woodland types essentially make up the A & O woods:

- ◆ Ancient oak and beech woodland (2,481 ha)
- ◆ Mature Oak/Beech Woodland (437 ha)
- ◆ Emergent Broadleaved Woodland (331 ha)
- ◆ Riparian/Riverine Woodland (290 ha)
- ◆ Scots Pine stands (153 ha)

The general structure resembles most wild woods in having large trees, large quantities of dead wood, small and moderate gaps in the canopy and a pattern made up of groups of trees of similar ages which collectively span the whole age-range of the main tree species of beech and oak. The strong natural elements in the structure have developed under the influence of natural processes and forces, such as storm, drought, mortality in old age and natural regeneration, acting on the mature woodlands inherited from previous centuries

However, the structure is not completely natural and has been extensively influenced by people through the ages. The effects of past pollarding in the giant, spreading, multi-branched oaks, beech and holly can still be seen and the trained eye can readily detect the cohort of trees and shrubs which sprang up in the late 19th century when deer browsing was much reduced. The absence of low branches and a distinctive browse line reflects the current high populations of horses, deer and cattle.

It is the grazing by ponies and cattle which help to give the A & O woodlands their distinctive character by maintaining a high forest canopy interspersed with open glades arranged in a mosaic of different habitat types. The degree of grazing pressure is important in determining the vegetation balance. Too much grazing leads to a lack of regeneration while under grazing results in a rapid regeneration of trees and shrubs which subsequently impacts on ground flora as well as light levels and microclimate. This can be unfavourable for established lichens and bryophytes.

Table 3 gives a summary of the Policies & actions to deal with A& O management issues.

Table 3: Summary of Issues, Policies & Action for the Ancient & Ornamental Woodlands

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			,08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 1 Core decay and the need to maintain regeneration of A & O Woods							
<i>Policy B4-1: The current configuration of the A & O Woods will generally be maintained. No felling to influence the age structure of native woodland stands will take place. However, any dramatic decline in tree numbers within the heart of a wood may prompt actions to stimulate regeneration. Some expansion and contraction of woodland area will be acceptable so long as the ratio of woodland habitat to grazing land on the Open Forest is maintained</i>	Long term monitoring using aerial photography to ensure ratios of open forest to woodland are being maintained	Ecologist			♦		
	Monitoring study to assimilate and evaluate the success of regeneration trials over the years to determine most successful techniques in case 'emergency' regeneration actions are required in the future.	Ecologist			♦		
	Monitor and map collapsing beechwoods	Ecologist			♦		
	Undertake Bracken control to permit successful tree regeneration where necessary	Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Any emergency actions required to promote regeneration should be carried out in accordance with SAC Plan Generic Prescription 3.4.2Ba - Promotion of regeneration	Ecologist					→
	Contribute as a partner organisation to the New Forest Ancient & Veteran Tree Project and undertake follow up actions as required.	Operations Manager, Ecologist, Planning					→
Issue 2 Removal & Control of non-native invasive exotic species and inappropriate native species							
<i>Policy B4-2: Non-native trees, shrubs and other exotic or pest species will be systematically removed or controlled within the A & O woods where they present an invasive threat to the natural ecology.</i>	Continue removal and respray programme for Rhododendron ponticum	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Continued removal of invasive Sycamore	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Continue removal of Turkey Oak & Sweet Chestnut (where appropriate)	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Removal of small stems of Red Oak and removal of large stems if they are shading out native oak species.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Beat Forester					→
	Retain Sweet Chestnut where it forms important historic plantings but remove small stems elsewhere to prevent spread to surrounding woodland. Large stems will be retained unless they are threatening to shade out oak.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Beat Forester					→
	Removal or control of other exotics or invasives where they pose a threat or there is a statutory requirement to do so.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Removal of beech planted in woods dominated by oak high forest. Trees will be cleared and replaced with oak established from sown acorns or protected natural regeneration	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Beat Forester					→
Issue 3 Management of regeneration plots							
<i>Policy B4-3: The thinning programme for regeneration plots will be concluded and thereafter sites will be integrated into the overall management needs of individual woods.</i>	Carry out management in accordance with A&O Atlas/SAC Plan prescriptions and on-going management plans (Table B4-2) with the consent of Natural England.	Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→
	Retention of Birch to biological maturity, especially in those areas where the development of young woodland of oak, beech and birch is desired.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					→

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			.08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 4 Treatment of Scots Pine							
<i>Policy B4-4: The removal of larger stands of Scots pine from the A & O woods will continue except where they provide shelter to groves of ancient trees, form an important landscape feature (either as a stand or individual tree) or lie deep within a wood where their removal would be damaging to the surrounding habitat.</i>	Review and update 1973 survey of Scots Pine carried out by Pasmore & Lavender in relation to the landscape value of pine stands in consultation or partnership with the National Park Authority	Ecologist					
	Heavily thin marginal pine regeneration taking care not to expose old beech to wind blow	Open Forest Manager, Beat Forester					
	Selective removal of stands deeper within the woodland providing the felling process will not result in excessive damage to soils or woodland structure. Other methods of control, such as ring barking or felling to waste of younger trees will be considered where appropriate.	Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					
Issue 5 Management of Emergent Woodland							
<i>Policy B4-5: The removal of emergent woodland will only take place where there are clear benefits for restoration of glades, lawns or heathland edge.</i>	Uphold policy B4-5 when planning open forest maintenance programme and implementing habitat restoration works.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					
	Where treatment needs to be carried out this will only be done in accordance with SAC generic prescription 3.4.2Bb- Treatment of emergent woodland	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					
Issue 6 Pollarding to obtain large spreading trees and to protect valuable lichen communities							
<i>Policy B4-6: Some trees of appropriate age and size (generally <40cm diameter breast height) will be pollarded. Beech and ash will be preferred whilst oak may be pollarded around the edge of lawns. Pollarding a new generation of oak, beech, ash and holly will be integrated with other Open Forest management.</i>	Continue to carry out selective pollarding of oak/ beech/ash on the fringes of glades, wood edges and tracksides as part of routine management and maintenance of A & O Woods.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					
	Accurately recorded the location of new pollards on the GIS database to ensure the future management and maintenance of these pollards.	Ecologist, Walk Forester					
	Pollard squirrel damaged beech within the A & O Regeneration Plots.	Ecologist, Walk Forester					
	Continue with the annual programme of Holly Cutting in accordance with specifications for holly cutting.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester					
Issue 7 Dead Wood							
<i>Policy B4-7: The treatment of fallen deadwood will be carried out in accordance with local FC Management Guidelines for Fallen Wood while the treatment of dangerous standing deadwood will be carried out in accordance with OGB1 Tree Safety and FC Management Guidance for Bats.</i>	Treat dangerous trees in accordance with FC Operational Guidance Booklet (OGB) 1 Tree Safety and SAC Plan Generic prescriptions for management of veteran trees for safety & Bat protection guidance.	Operations Manager					
	Keepers to survey Beats and record where deadwood is causing a significant obstruction along tracks.	Operations Manager, Open Forest Manager, Beat Keepers					
	Obstructions along paths and tracks to be treated in accordance with defined set of criteria for removal specified in the Management Guidelines for Fallen Wood in A&O Woodland and Fallen Timber on Fallen Lawns (refer to Part D).	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Keepers					
	Two A & O Woods to be managed each year to maintain adequate access for commoning and drifting purposes.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager, Keepers					
	Monitor to ensure that deadwood policy and criteria for removal are working effectively in the field.	Ecologist, Open Forest Manager					
	Continue to work with Forest Holidays to educate the public and campsite managers on ways to preserve fallen deadwood on site.	Ecologist					

5. The Heathlands

Heathland Management Objectives

1. To maintain and restore heathland habitats in order to support and enhance the important nature conservation interest and landscape character of the open forest.
2. To support the traditional depasturing of commoning stock through appropriate and targeted heathland management techniques and maintenance of access.
3. To develop the economic returns from heathland by-products to help fund and sustain heathland management activities.
4. To carry out targeted monitoring to inform heathland management decisions and to ensure that heathland management objectives are being achieved.

Heathland and grassland covers around 12,306 hectares of the New Forest Crown Land and accounts for around 46% of the area managed by the Forestry Commission⁵ in this part of the District. Heathland is found both on the Open Forest⁶ and within restored areas of Inclosures. The term heathland covers a variety of vegetation/habitat types including:

- ◆ Dry Heath – 714 ha
- ◆ Bracken – 803 ha
- ◆ Gorse – 347 ha
- ◆ Humid Heath – 4,498 ha
- ◆ Wet Heath – 1692 ha
- ◆ Valley Mire – 1444 ha
- ◆ Wet Lawn – 911 ha
- ◆ Lowland Acid Grassland – 1864 ha
- ◆ Partially Improved Grassland – 12 ha
- ◆ Ponds – 21 ha

Grazing by horses and cattle is an integral part of New Forest heathland management. The heathland, mires and grasslands have been grazed by commoning stock for centuries, which has led to the unique landscape and habitats so characteristic of the

⁵ The Forestry Commission has legal title to manage 26756.06 hectares of land the majority of which lies within the New Forest Perambulation (NB This figure does not include FC management of small lanes/verges around Marchwood and Sway).

⁶ Open Forest refers to the Crown Lands which lie outside Inclosures and includes both Heathland and Ancient & Ornamental Woodland

Open Forest. Indeed many of the traditional heathland management techniques that have been practised through the ages are still applied today.

In the last 10 years heathland management and restoration has progressed significantly due to funding from the New Forest Life 2 project (1997-2001) and New Forest Life 3 Project (2002-2006).

To make management more efficient and effective, the New Forest heathlands are divided up into 10 management units. Work programmes are devised for each management unit annually. Much of the current work is focused around the condition of SSSI condition units and the requirements of the New Forest Act 1949 to keep the open Forest 'sufficiently free of coarse herbage, scrub and self-sown trees'.

Table 4 summarised the issues, policies & actions relating to heathland management.

Table 4: Issues, Polices & Actions relating to Heathland Management

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date					
			,08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	
Issue 1 Consultation & Stakeholder involvement								
<i>Policy B5-1: The Forestry Commission will work closely with the Open Forest Advisory Committee, Natural England and other bodies as required to apply and deliver Heathland Management Plan objectives</i>	Seasonal management programmes drawn-up through the workings of the Open Forest Advisory Committee.	Open Forest Manager						
	Networking with other heathland managers to keep abreast of new research and developments.	Open Forest Manager						
Issue 2 Protection & Enhancement of New Forest SSSI								
<i>Policy B5-2: We will carry out our obligations as land managers under Section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to protect and enhance the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Every effort will be made to achieve our PSA Target for Open Forest (Heathland) SSSI units by 2010.</i>	Continue to develop work programmes to restore Open Forest heathland SSSI units to favourable condition using appropriate techniques (refer to Issue 3)	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager						
	Make reference to the NF Wetland Management Plan/Practitioners Guide to determine suitable techniques for carrying out wetland restoration, prioritise areas for restoration and identify issues that need to be considered as part of project planning.	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager						
	Timely consultation and liaison with Natural England and other key stakeholders including the Verderers and CDA. Implementation of Open Forest Operational Sites Assessments (OSAs).	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager						
	Development of integrated GIS based open forest management system based upon SSSI condition assessment units.	Open Forest Manager						
	Use findings of recent report on 'Channel erosion in New Forest Drains' to help target essential works	Ecologist						
Issue 3 Habitat Restoration of Heathland & Grassland within Inclosures								
<i>B5-3: The Open Forest Team will assist with the habitat restoration process to recover lost heathland habitats from within Inclosures and in time will take over the management of such sites as part of Open Forest Programme as the development of habitats dictate.</i>	Work with forestry teams to implement appropriate techniques and treatments to ensure the successful transformation to heathland habitat.	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager						
	Take over the management of these areas once the succession to heathland has advanced to an appropriate stage.	Open Forest Manager						

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date					
			.08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	
Issue 4 Seeking Financial Support								
<i>Policy B5-4: We will continue to seek sources of funding and methods to generate income to allow heathland restoration and maintenance to continue</i>	Seek opportunities to submit bids to secure external funding.	Senior Management Team	.....					▶
	Raise revenue through sales of heathland by-products in existing markets.	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Look for new market opportunities	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
Issue 5 Depasturing of Commoners' Stock								
<i>Policy B5-5: The Forestry Commission will continue to support the depasturing of commoners' stock on all Open Forest heathland & grassland habitats and where possible will seek opportunities to improve the availability of grazing while operating within the constraints of the SAC Plan and Forest Design Plan.</i>	Seek opportunities in conjunction with major projects to derive a benefit for grazing.	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Implementation of the Fencing & Grazing Plan	Planning, Walk Forester	.....					▶
	Consultation with the CDA through biannual liaison meetings to review issues associated with the depasturing of commoners' stock	Ecologist & Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Roadside Cutting Programme	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Ragwort Pulling Programme	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Developments in the control of ragwort outside of the New Forest will be monitored for cost-effective solutions which may be applicable to Forest conditions.	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Bracken control (refer to Issue 8)							
	Cut & burn programme (refer to Issue 6)							
Passageway access & maintenance (refer to Issue 10)								
Issue 6 Delivery of the Cut & Burn Programme								
<i>Policy B5-6: It is our aim to deliver annually agreed programmes within the timetable set by season and legislation to customary high standards</i>	Implementation of the cutting programme, starting in October and continuing until the onset of spring.	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Management of the burn programme. Most burning will occur in a 6 week period from late February to the end of March as vegetation dries out following the worst of the winter rains. However the programme will vary according to weather conditions, bird nesting season and reptile emergence.	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶
	Three skilled teams will be assigned to the burning programme, weather permitting. An average of 12 hectares (30 acres) will be covered each day when suitable weather conditions persist. Fire fighting equipment will always be present on site. The fire service and, if necessary, the police, will be notified of the location, start and completion time for each burn. Care will be taken to locate fire traces to avoid their subsequent use as paths, especially by horse-riders	Open Forest Manager	.....					▶

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			,08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 7 Control of Exotics & Invasive Species including Birch and Pine							
<i>Policy B5-8: We will continue to control the spread of birch seedlings and other invasive native woody species in line with the principles contained within Section 11 of the New Forest Act 1949</i>	Where location allows, control invasive woody species using techniques such as controlled burning, swiping, forage harvesting or hand pulling.	Open Forest Manager					
	In more sensitive areas, where due to conservation requirements or where the age of the established birch or pine is such that it would not be controlled by the above operations then the use of herbicides or chainsaws may be necessary.	Open Forest Manager					
	Remove mature pines in accordance with Forestry Commission good practice either using a mechanised harvester, manual chainsaw or skyline.	Open Forest Manager					
<i>Policy B5-8: It is our aim to eradicate Rhododendron from the heathlands of the New Forest, and control the spread of other exotic and pest species.</i>	Progress with a programme of return visits to treat re-growth from stumps and newly germinating Rhododendron seedlings as necessary. Return visits will continue until there are no obvious signs of further regeneration.	Open Forest Manager					
	As little is known about the effects of the build up of toxins in the soil generated by rhododendron, a selection of sites will be monitored to record rates of vegetation recovery. Monitoring results will guide specifications for further management actions, if these are found to be necessary.	Ecologist					
	Continue to follow developments in new technologies for treating persistent pest species.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Carry out trials as opportunity allows. Where methods are successful and funding allows, embark on a progressive programme of removal based upon the most appropriate method and treatment rotation.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Monitor the location and spread of any existing or new exotic species across the New Forest heathlands.	Ecologist					
Issue 8 Bracken Control							
<i>Policy B5-9: We will manage the range and density of bracken using a combination of cutting, forage harvesting and, treatment with approved herbicides and trial new methods as appropriate</i>	Continue to treat large areas of bracken treatment using a tractor mounted spray where possible.	Open Forest Manager					
	Treat smaller more intricate areas using back pack sprayers or spray mounted quad bike.	Open Forest Manager					
	Look at introducing contracts for cutting bracken for animal bedding						
	Update of records using aerial photographs and ground survey to generate a reliable map to show areas of bracken which threaten key SAC habitats and to show which of these areas are accessible to wheeled vehicles. Use results to guide future decisions on the distribution and size of individual treatment units, including the location of areas to be retained.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Identify sites where bracken occurs over botanically rich sites which could be damaged from inappropriate bracken control.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Trial bracken control using pigs. It was found during Gaultheria trials that pigs rooted up and destroyed bracken rhizomes which were mixed in with the Gaultheria. Therefore trial areas will be fenced off and pigs introduced to test their effectiveness solely against bracken	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Review seasonal restrictions on the timing of treatments. This should include networking with the RSPB and Natural England to improve our understanding of the distribution of Nightjar nests so as to extend the season when cutting and spraying of bracken may occur.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Review new or alternative methods to carry out forage harvesting as the current forage harvesting machines are no longer being manufactured. This could lead to problems in maintaining and acquiring spare parts for existing machines	Open Forest Manager					
	Looking at new ways of overcoming constraints relating to livestock, scale of treatments and topography	Open Forest Manager					
	Consider feasibility fo re-introducing traditional techniques such as bracken stomping	Open Forest Manager					

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 9 Management of Lawns & Mires							
<i>Policy 5-10: The rotational programme for maintenance of mires and lawns across the Forest will continue</i>	Continue programme of Mire and lawn restoration required to meet 2010 PSA target.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Manage succession on grasslands to control encroachment of woody species.	Open Forest Manager & Ecologist					
	Monitor of rates of recovery on restored lawns and mires to establish the degree of recovery and the appropriate time to integrate these sites into rotational maintenance programmes	Ecologist					
	Evaluate feasibility of restoring lost lawns taking into account habitat value, location and integration with FDPs	Planning & Ecologist		•			
Issue 10 Passageway and access maintenance							
<i>Policy B5-11: We will undertake rotational maintenance to ensure the continued access for Commoners, Forestry Commission staff and the Fire & Rescue Service, to manage the livestock and vegetation of the Forest and also enable public access.</i>	Maintenance and upkeep of forest tracks with an emphasis on the use of soft engineering techniques with repairs concentrating on wet hollows and crossing points for watercourses.	Open Forest Manager					
	Draw up an annual management programme for repair of tracks through OFAC & the Access Forum.	Open Forest Manager					
	When determining the methods for repair check ecological interests on a site by site basis.	Ecologist					
Issue 11 Survey, Monitoring & Research							
<i>B5-12: Surveying and monitoring will be strategically planned to provide targeted information to help inform heathland management decisions and address areas of particular concern.</i>	Carry out a review of existing data to: -Establish what monitoring has actually been done -Review results and incorporate findings into management decisions (N.B Gorse Plots) -Store data in GIS System or shared drives	Ecologist		•			
	Prepare Strategic Monitoring Programme Plan to :-Identify what specific information is required to guide management decisions -Determine monitoring techniques required to establish the success or otherwise of heathland management regimes, restoration techniques and maintenance requirements.	Ecologist		•			
	Collate the results of trials to allow identification of areas that give require further treatment/action						
	Provide support for student research projects relating to heathland.	Ecologist					
	Provide a proactive approach to universities for specific area that FC would like investigated to ensure that topics are included on prospective student project lists and are interesting enough to engage students.	Ecologist					
Share & exchange of data with amateur groups who gather species data on the forest often using experienced and qualified recorders to allow the exchange of information particularly in relation to the location of rare and endangered species and/or BAP species to help inform the Open Forest OSA process	Ecologist/Planning						

6. ARCHAEOLOGY & CULTURAL HERITAGE

Archaeology & Cultural Heritage Objectives

1. To record, preserve, manage and increase the understanding of the wealth of archaeological sites on the Crown Lands to help protect the ancient heritage of the New Forest
2. To manage sites in such a way that they integrate with the surrounding habitats and landscape and retain their cultural heritage value as well as their value for nature conservation
3. To take opportunities to restore and enhance cultural heritage sites as they arise
4. To record, protect and preserve examples of more recent man-made structures relating to activities in the Forest to inform the cultural heritage of the future

The New Forest contains a unique and special archaeological resource, which has been largely well preserved due to the land use history, the protection afforded by Forest Law and by modern day conservation designations and management. The Crown Lands contain around 155 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) and numerous unscheduled ancient monuments (uSAMS) which need to be protected during forestry and other related operations. In addition, there is an important recent historical resource, such as World War sites, which also require consideration to preserve examples of sites for the future. The Hampshire County Council Archaeologist, New Forest National Park Archaeologist and Hampshire Field Club provide advice on the location and nature of these sites.

Buried archaeological evidence is rarely found at any great depth and there is often no visible evidence at ground level, therefore it is vulnerable to disturbance by forestry and land management operations as well as windthrow, tree roots, bracken rhizomes and erosion from burrowing animal activity and people.

The Schedule of Ancient Monuments contains only a relatively small proportion of known archaeological features found within the Crown lands of the New Forest. Many sites, even though they are unscheduled, are extremely valuable. Advice regarding the location, management and protection of these unscheduled sites is provided by the Hampshire County Council County Archaeologist, the National Park Archaeologist and the New Forest section of the Hampshire Field Club. Information and data from these sources is used to protect all known archaeological sites from disturbance or damage during forest operations through the Operational Site Assessment (OSA) process which considers all environmental sensitivities in the vicinity of an area to be impacted by forest operations.

In particular the FC relies on the Hampshire Field Club's grading system, which identifies where archaeological sites are located and what their susceptibility is to damage. Sites

are evaluated during operational site assessments to determine their vulnerability while accessing and working the site. Sites deemed to be at risk of damage are then marked to avoid accidental damage.

Table 5 gives a summary of the policies & actions relating to the management of archaeology & cultural heritage issues.

Table 5: Summary of Issues, Policies & Actions relating to Archaeology & Cultural Heritage

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12*	12/13*
Issue 1 Preservation and Protection of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)							
Policy B6-1: We will prepare and maintain management plans in consultation with English Heritage for all Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) on Crown Lands	Update Management Plans based on 5-year review period re-set where necessary to coincide with FDP review.	Planning	----->				
	Obtain Scheduled Ancient Monument consent from the Dept of Culture, Media and Sport to carry out any repairs to SAMs	Planning	----->				
	Implement necessary actions on the ground required as part of individual SAM management plans	Walk Forester, Open Forest Manager	----->				
	Prepare management plans for any new SAMs	Planning	----->				
Issue 2 Preservation of Unscheduled Monuments							
Policy B6-2: Information and advice regarding the protection of unscheduled Ancient Monuments (uSAMs) will be sought from the Hampshire County Archaeologist, National Park Archaeologist and Hampshire Field Club.	Continue to liaise with organisations involved in data collection of archaeological sites to build up our knowledge of archaeological and cultural heritage interests and sites on the Crown Lands.	Planning	----->				
	Work with the National Park Archaeologist and others to determine the importance of such sites in relation to strategic planning & management issues.	Planning	----->				
	Work with the National Park Archaeologist and local experts to ensure identification, marking and protection of unscheduled sites in the field to ensure their protection during the planning and implementation of ground operations. Particular reference should be made to Hampshire Field Club's marking system.	Walk Forester, Open Forest Manager	----->				
	Implement training programme for field operatives to raise awareness of importance and protection of archaeological sites.	Planning		◆			
	Work in partnership with NPA to obtain Lidar survey coverage of the Crown Lands	Planning	----->				
Issue 3 Consideration of Nature Conservation interests in relation to Archaeological Sites							
Policy B6-3: In carrying out any repairs to a SAM or uSAM we will protect the nature conservation value of the site.	Apply Reptile Protocol to all existing SAMs	Planning & Ecology	----->				
	Assess & apply Reptile Protocol to any new SAMs	Planning & Ecology	----->				
	Evaluate ecological sensitivities through the OSA process	Planning & Ecology	----->				
	Consult Natural England where sites are identified as being particularly sensitive.	Ecology	----->				
	Call in external assistance to advise when internal FC expertise is not sufficient.	Planning	----->				
Issue 4 Management of Scheduled Ancient Monuments on Heathland							
Policy B6-4: All open heathland SAMs should be maintained under heather or grassland cover and managed as part of the surrounding habitat.	Implementation of individual site management plans to ensure that sites are kept clear of scrub, gorse, holly, bracken either through mechanical means or as part of the burn programme	Open Forest Manager	----->				
	Where site have an identified reptile interest appropriate special treatments will be applied	Open Forest Manager	----->				

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12'	12/13'
Issue 5 Management of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Inclosures							
Policy B6-5: SAMs in Inclosure woodland will generally be maintained in open space with low, shallow rooted ground cover, except where mature broad-leaved trees predominate (see Policy below), and will be subject to management review under the Forest Design Plan process	Review and update management plans for each SAM during FDP review or as part of 5 year rolling programme.	Planning	----->				
Issue 6 Management of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in A & O woodland and mature broad-leaved Inclosures							
Policy B6-6: SAMs occurring in area of mature broad-leaved trees will be maintained under tree cover unless the trees become unstable or damaged by windblow	Removal of unstable or windblown trees where SAM is at risk of damage.	Walk Forester	----->				
Issue 7 Protection against damage & erosion							
Policy B6-7: SAMs will be protected from erosion and disturbance from people and wildlife.	Repair monuments using techniques agreed with English Heritage in accordance with consents and approved management plans.	Planning, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester	----->				
	Where necessary, cover sites in netting to protect from excavation by mammals	Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester	----->				
	Where a site has been restored or repaired and is at risk of on-going damage from visitor pressure, provide either on site interpretation (if appropriate depending upon location) or interpretation via leaflet/podcast/education event where a SAM is located close to tracks or paths.	Planning, Walk Forester, Open Forest Manager	----->				
Issue 8 Preservation of recent archaeological heritage for the future							
Policy B6-8: We will preserve more modern archaeology such as recent Inclosure earthbanks and World War features to ensure that the recent archaeological heritage of the Forest is preserved for the future.	Retaining earth banks when Inclosure fences are removed as part of fencing plan	Planning	----->				
	Avoid using Inclosure banks and crater rims as sources of spoil	Planning, Open Forest Manager, Walk Forester	----->				
	Through partnership working, identify and record any built WW1 and WW2 structures that should be protected and retained for the future.	Planning	----->				
	Contribute to and carry out any subsequent actions as a result of the Cultural Heritage Strategy being prepared by the NPA (due 2009).	Planning			◆		

7. Recreation & Community

Recreation & Community Objectives

1. **To provide clean, safe and modern facilities in keeping with their surrounds for people to enjoy.**
2. **Increase people's understanding, enjoyment and contribution towards the natural wild spaces of the New Forest**
3. **High quality delivery in partnership with others, to generate benefits for people and places, by staff at the forefront of their profession.**
4. **Building and using data and evidence to inform future policy and management actions.**

For centuries the New Forest has been used by people for recreation but it was its creation as a royal hunting ground by William I that formed the origins of recreation in the New Forest today. The eleventh century act of declaring the area as royal forest caused all other considerations to become secondary, and only a chosen few could enjoy the Forest as a recreational pastime. With the decline of hunting in the fifteenth century, the main interest of the Crown became timber production, and the conflict between these two uses formed the main strand of the Forest's history up until the nineteenth century.

The building of the railways in the nineteenth century made the New Forest accessible to the wider population for the first time. Butterfly collecting was a popular pursuit and at certain times of year the lodging houses of Lyndhurst would not have a bed to spare as collectors descended upon the area. However, it was the explosion of leisure in the 1950's and 1960's, associated with the growth of car ownership, that led to the Forest becoming widely accessible and used for recreation on a scale never before seen. It was at this time that the first policies designed specifically to manage recreation were introduced.

Probably the most far reaching initiatives to manage recreation in the area were the measures contained in the report "Conservation of the New Forest" (1971). Up until this time recreational access had been largely unrestricted on the Crown Lands of the Forest. This report recognised that such access was causing long term damage to the fabric of the Forest and recommended a series of measures aimed at restricting and directing car access. The measures, which were implemented by the Forestry Commission in the 1970's, were based on a strategy to disperse people over the whole Forest by:

- Limiting vehicle access to certain areas of the Forest by the provision of ditches and barriers and the building of car parks to control parking.

- Making some areas of the Forest more attractive by the provision of facilities such as toilets or self guided trails.
- The restriction of camping to designated sites.

This dispersal strategy has formed the core of recreation management on the Crown Lands up until the present day.

Visitor Numbers

Thirty five years ago it was estimated that around 3.5 million day visits were made to the New Forest each year. Recent surveys suggest that this number has increased to around 13.5 million visitor day visits⁷ of which a significant proportion visits the Crown Lands. It is thought that this number is likely to increase further with the expansion in new housing planned for the south-east together with a higher awareness of the New Forest through creation of the New Forest National Park⁸.

Among holidaymakers to the forest, walking, relaxing and enjoying the views, visiting towns & villages, off-road cycling on tracks and picnicking tend to be the most popular activities. For non-local day visitors, dog walking, general walking, relaxing and enjoying the views/picnicking and watching wildlife are popular activities whilst among locals, dog walking and general walking are the most significant activities. Indeed, many of the most popular reasons for visiting the Forest involve use of Forestry Commission infrastructure, in particular the network of car parks, tracks and paths.

Access & Provision of Recreational Facilities

The public has had access to a large part of the Forest within the Perambulation on foot and on horseback since time immemorial. Rights of access on foot and horseback exist under the Law of Property Act 1925 and so most of the Crown Lands are exempt from the CROW Act. However at least 800 hectares of Crown Freehold Inclosures are subject to the CROW Act and will be dedicated for open access under this Act. Cycling is encouraged on a cycle network using tracks and roads around the Forest. The Forestry Commission Ranger Team has a key role in educating the public about the Forest and its environment and regulating recreational activities.

Other specialist activities are controlled by a permission system. However, certain activities are further regulated by national and local agreements, for example orienteering, to ensure that the number of events/competitors is maintained at levels that do not damage the Forest. Furthermore all activities are assessed for their compatibility with the Forest environment. Given the presence of European designated sites on the Forest together with legislative requirements governing these sites it is important that permission is not granted for activities where it cannot be shown that there will be no adverse impact on a European feature.

⁷ The New Forest Visitor Survey carried out in 2004/05 estimated that total visitor volumes = 13,555,400 visitor days (excluding business tourists and personal and social visits to friends or relatives).

⁸ The South Hampshire sub-region (including Southampton, Portsmouth, Totton and the Waterside) has a target of 80,000 new houses by 2026. An additional 2,400 houses are proposed in New Forest District outside the National Park. To the west the conurbation of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole has a planned total of 34,000 houses over the same period.

The powers conferred to the Forestry Commission for the provision and management of recreation under the New Forest Acts are only exercisable with the agreement of the Verderers. However the two parties have not always been able to agree whether particular items legally require the agreement of the Verderers. Therefore a *Memorandum of Understanding Between the Forestry Commissioners and the Verderers of the New Forest (2002)* has been drawn up to clarify the position and is intended to be binding in honour only.

Table 6 summarised the policies and actions relating to recreation & community issues.

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date					
			,08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	
<p>Issue 3 continued.....</p> <p><i>Policy B7-3: We will help to protect the New Forest by increasing the understanding of all visitors and users about what makes the Forest special and how people can contribute to its future.</i></p>	Provision of work experience placements for local schools and colleges	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Work in partnership with Local Education Authorities to ensure that our educational programmes meet the needs of the National Curriculum	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Provision of support for undertaking dissertations and field studies as part of academic studies.	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Provision of accessible events for those with disabilities	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Targeting of younger audiences	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	We will continue to maintain and develop the information contained in the FC New Forest Website and provide additional information in response to visitor feedback.	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	PR monitoring will continue to ensure that our focus is correct and reaching the required media outlets	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Aim to provide information in all car parks and update signage to give site specific details and information on how to enjoy the forest and highlight site sensitivities.	Communications Manager/ Recreation Manager	.....					▶
	We will continue to take an exhibition stand at the New Forest and Hampshire County Show as a means of providing face-to-face contact for visitors and locals alike, and explaining our work.	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Continue to develop our own range of District FC leaflets and booklets	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Continue to contribute and provide information for external publications	Communications Manager	.....					▶
	Look for innovative approaches to the joint production of communication mechanisms to reach target audiences (e.g. holiday cottages & campsites).	Communications Manager	.....					▶

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			.08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 4 Managing Recreational pressure on Crown Lands							
<i>Policy B7-4: We will continue to promote and welcome the widest range of opportunities for access and recreation on the Crown Lands but at the same time actively manage the focus and location of these activities to protect the special qualities of the New Forest and to prevent adverse impacts.</i>	Review and formalise written guidance on the steps that need to be taken internally to determine and grant permissions	Recreation Manager		◆			
	Prepare updated guidance for external organisations on the Organisation and leading of events	Recreation Manager		◆			
	Implement a range of pilot actions	Progress Project Manager	◆				
	Follow consent protocols set down by Natural England in undertaking recreational activities.	Recreation Manager					→
	Work in partnership with other organisations to improve the condition of SSSI units that are in unfavourable condition as a result of recreational activities.	Recreation Manager					→
	We will continue to manage our woodlands in East Dorset to provide alternative opportunities for access by local residents, and to maintain Moors Valley Country Park in partnership with East Dorset District Council as an alternative regional attraction to the New Forest	Head of Rec, Strategy & Planning/Ops & Rec Manager (Dorset)					→
Participate in the development and actions arising from the National Park Authority recreation strategy as it is developed	Recreation Manager					→	
Issue 5 Measures to tackle anti-social behaviour							
<i>Policy B7-5: We will work to reduce the incidences of Anti-Social Behaviour on the Crown lands through implementation of our own initiatives and in joint partnership with others.</i>	Use of an incident recording data base to record anti-social behaviour incidents and locations.	Recreation AO					→
	Work with Hampshire Police Roads Policing Unit to apply Section 51 of the Road Traffic Act to target anti-social behaviour in vehicles off the public highway	Recreation Manager					→
	Work with Police, New Forest District Council and the NPA to reduce vehicle crime in FC car parks in the New Forest including initiatives associated with signage and vegetation management.	Recreation Manager					→
	Employment of a dedicated Community Ranger to work with communities in the Waterside to help engage and educate different social groups about the Forest.	Communications Manager					→
	When out and about on patrol, Rangers will continue to issue contact cards to members of the public detailing contact numbers to ring to report anti social behaviour.	Communications Manager					→
Issue 6 Access to recreational facilities							
<i>Policy B7-6: We will continue to manage unrestricted access to the New Forest Crown Lands in accordance with bye-laws & relevant legislation (except where operations require temporary restrictions on health & safety grounds). Activities, other than those on foot and horseback may be granted in accordance with our permissions system and in accordance with national or local recreation agreements.</i>	On dedicated Freehold land we will implement new procedures for restricting or excluding public access where necessary due to health and safety issues, during operations on our land in accordance with OGB 30 'Access Management Under Crow'	Recreation Manager & Ops Manager					→
	Improve our facilities and ease of access to the Forest for disabled people through implementation of our Accessibility Plan.	Communications Manager & Recreation Manager					→
	Encourage other group activities & events through granting of permissions.	Recreation Manager					→

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			.08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 7 Maintenance & upkeep of recreational facilities							
<i>Policy B7-7: We will target our resources to maintain our existing recreation facilities to a defined set of quality standards to enable people's enjoyment of the Forest.</i>	Draw up a set of defined standards for facilities	Recreation Manager	◆				
	Review existing sites against the set of defined standards.	Recreation Manager		◆			
	Where facilities do not meet standards seek to ascertain the underlying reasons and either address these or remove the facility.	Recreation Manager			-----▶		
	Apply mitigation measures where facilities are deemed to be resulting in unacceptable pressure or impact upon surrounding habitats.	Recreation Manager	-----▶				
	Seek opportunities to obtain additional funding or contributions in kind to assist our management of recreation and associated facilities, in keeping with our environmental objectives, through partnerships with the private sector, government initiatives, National Park, local clubs and other bodies.	Head of Land Management & Head of Rec, Strategy & Planning	-----▶				
	Car park meters requesting voluntary donations will continue to be sited in certain carparks to provide a means of visitor payback such that those benefiting from the facilities can contribute towards management of the site and Forest.	Recreation Manager		-----▶			
	Explore other opportunities to raise funds for maintenance and upkeep of facilities.	Ops & Rec Manager (Dorset)	-----▶				
Issue 8 Appropriate Design of facilities							
<i>Policy B7-8: Any new facilities will be designed such that they are fully in keeping with the character of the Forest landscape.</i>	Prior to any major refurbishment or installation of new facilities, the economic viability and appropriateness of facilities must be reviewed	Ops & Rec Manager (Dorset)	-----▶				
	Consult and submit the appropriate planning consents to the National Park Authority and where required carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment and/or Appropriate Assessment.	Recreation Manager	-----▶				
Issue 9 Campsite Management							
<i>Policy B7-9: We will work with our Joint Venture Company (Forest Holidays) to ensure that Forestry Commission campsites in the New Forest are managed in a sustainable manner to prevent further degradation to important habitats.</i>	Comply with the 'Methods and specifications for carrying out routine campsite maintenance' where FC conduct work on behalf of Forest Holidays.	Recreation Manager	-----▶				
	Provide support for training of campsite managers	Recreation Manager Communications Manger	-----▶				
	Assist with preparation of a site leaflet/booklet detailing the nature conservation importance of the sites, the actions that campers are requested to take to protect the sites and the reasons behind these measures.	Recreation Manager & Ecology		◆			
	Provision and display of additional literature on notice boards and in the reception areas, including the Forest Codes and seasonal advice such as the presence of nesting birds and fire risk ratings.	Communications Manager	-----▶				
	Additional placing of temporary signs and warning of bird nesting during the spring	Communications Manager	-----▶				
Issue 10 Promoting Forests for Health & Enjoyment							
<i>Policy B7-10: We will promote the benefits of the Forests for health, relaxation and active play.</i>	Continue to incorporate health related events into our Active Woods Campaign	Communications Manager	-----▶				
	Explore and implement national initiatives to promote forests for informal play on the Crown Lands.	Communications Manager	-----▶				
	Explore ways to promote health and enjoyment opportunities to different ethnic and social groups.	Communications Manager	-----▶				

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 11 Traffic & Transport Impacts							
<p><i>Policy B7-11: We will work to minimise the impact caused by road traffic on the Crown Lands and work in partnership with others to encourage the use of public transport and other initiatives to minimise car use.</i></p>	The installation and maintenance of dragons teeth, roadside ditches and banks to try and minimise damage to road site verges and prevent inappropriate roadside parking will be continued through the Annual maintenance programme for Dragons Teeth, Banks & Roadside Ditches.	Recreation Manager					
	Rangers will continue to enforce the Parkwise Scheme by placing awareness stickers on cars parked in inappropriate locations.	Communications Manager					
	We will contribute to Hampshire County Council's New Forest Transportation Strategy through FC representation on the New Forest Transportation Strategy Officer's steering group	Head of Land Management & Head of Rec, Strategy & Planning					
	Publish details and links about accessing the Forest using public transport on our web site.	Communications Manager					
	Work with Sustrans, the NPA, the Verderers and other relevant organisations to look at ways of developing better links in the Forestry Commission Cycle Network with other cycle routes, delivery of the Strategic Cycle Network and local centres of population.	Recreation Manager					
	Consider licensing any other alternative transport initiatives providing they contribute to the sustainability of the Forest	Head of Land Management & Head of Rec, Strategy & Planning					
Issue 12 Monitoring							
<p><i>Policy B7-12: Monitoring will be strategically planned to provide targeted information to help inform recreation management decisions and address areas of particular concern.</i></p>	Liaise with Natural England to determine where monitoring needs to be carried out and target those areas where monitoring results would be most valuable in informing future management.	Recreation Manager & Ecologist					
	Monitor the effectiveness of pilot actions from the Progress Project	Progress Project Manager & Recreation					

8. Estates

Estates Management Objectives

1. To maintain a core housing stock for essential Forestry Commission Staff.
2. To support the commoning community through the provision of rented accommodation and provision of back-up grazing land to practising commoners at discounted rents.
3. To ensure that utility companies adopt a sensitive and responsible approach when carrying out work on Crown Lands and that applications for inappropriate development are resisted.
4. To ensure that local communities continue to enjoy sporting activities on the network of sports pitches and golf courses on Crown Lands and that those facilities are managed with due regard to the environmental sensitivities prevailing on the site.
5. To increase the energy efficiency and environmental sustainability of core buildings.

Our Estates team has a large remit covering the management and maintenance of the Forestry Commission Crown Freehold and Leasehold estate property including the:

- ◆ Upkeep and maintenance of all operational buildings including The Queen's House, Depots, Deer Larders and sheds
- ◆ Leasing and maintenance of Forestry Commission farms, cottages and houses (over 60 properties in total)
- ◆ Leasing of back-up grazing land
- ◆ Upkeep of tracks and verges located outside the Perambulation⁹
- ◆ Managing over 2500 access licences to private properties and access requirements for the network of utility corridors and wayleaves across Crown Lands
- ◆ Permissions & access for County Council highway maintenance along unfenced roads
- ◆ Management of leases for campsites, sports pitches and golf courses
- ◆ Management and liaison with landlords regarding Forestry Commission leasehold land.
- ◆ Administration of compensation payments in respect of Verderers Inclosures and other activities relating to New Forest Acts.
- ◆ Trespass and Byelaw prosecution

The Estate Office also covers the Commissions' landholding in Dorset.

⁹ As a result of the 1964 New Forest Act a number of tracks and verges running to Southampton Water were excluded from the New Forest Perambulation (area open to grazing)

As a government organisation, a large part of how the Forestry Commission can manage its land and property is dictated by statute. On the Crown Lands, Estates management is largely governed by:

- ◆ The New Forest Acts 1877, 1949, 1964, 1970
- ◆ Forestry Act, 1967 (as amended)
- ◆ Agriculture (Miscellaneous provisions) Act
- ◆ Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)
- ◆ Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- ◆ Forestry Commission Byelaws

In addition other documents have had a significant bearing on policy direction such as the Illingworth Report (1991) and its recommendations on how to support and sustain commoning.

Table 7 provides a summary of the policies & actions to manage Estates issues

Table 7: Summary of Policies & Actions to manage Estates Issues

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			,08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 1 Maintenance of Housing Stock							
B8-1: We will maintain Forestry Commission housing stock to modern standards to provide accommodation for essential Forestry Commission Staff. Any additional properties will be let at discounted rates to Commoners	Housing stock maintained for essential Forestry Commission staff	Area Land Agent					
	Additional stock let at discounted rents to practising commoners	Area Land Agent					
	Explore opportunities to build additional houses on Crown Lands to rent to commoners	Area Land Agent					
	Where properties are not linked to the main sewer, carry out programme to ensure that cesspits/septic tanks meet current day standards.	Building Surveyor					
	Rolling programme to upgrade heating systems, kitchens, bathrooms and insulation to modern standards.	Building Surveyor					
	Explore additional opportunities to improve the environmental sustainability of the housing stock.	Building Surveyor					
Issue 2 Accessibility of Core Buildings							
B8-2: We will provide disabled access to core buildings.	Improve disabled access within Queen's House taking in to account constraints imposed by Listed Building status.	Building Surveyor	◆				
Issue 3 Leasing of Back-up grazing land							
B8-3: We will lease spare grazing land to Commoners with the aim of providing affordable back-up grazing	Continue to lease back-up grazing land to commoners	Area Land Agent					
Issue 4 Management of Utility/Infrastructure Corridors							
B8-4: We will manage utility and infrastructure corridors in the interests of maintaining, protecting and where possible enhancing the special qualities of the Forest.	Negotiation of access permissions	Area Land Agent					
	Support and encourage the underground re-routing of overhead lines.	Area Land Agent					
	Prepare specifications for utility companies to take account of environmental sensitivities	Area Land Agent					
Issue 5 Management of Access Licences to Private Properties							
B8-5: We will manage access licences to private properties in the interests of maintaining, protecting and where possible enhancing the special qualities of the Forest	Negotiation of Access Permission	Area Land Agent					

Policy	Action	Implementation Responsibility	Target Implementation Date				
			.08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Issue 6 Inappropriate Development							
B8-6: Under powers conferred by the New Forest Acts we will only provide consent for development opportunities that are in keeping with the special qualities of the New Forest	Continue to resist applications for siting of transmitter masts/mobile phone masts on Crown Lands	Area Land Agent					
	Resist applications for other inappropriate developments that could threaten the integrity of the Crown Lands such as major pipelines, oil/gas drilling and other such infrastructure	Area Land Agent					
Issue 7 Management of Sports Pitches							
B8-7: We will continue to maintain our network of sports pitches and golf courses on the Crown Lands.	Draw up plans in conjunction with Natural England and NPA to ensure that sports pitches are managed in a way that avoids adverse impact on the New Forest environment.	Area Land Agent			◆		
Issue 8 Environmental Sustainability of Core Buildings							
B8-8: We will take action to improve the environmental sustainability of core buildings	Increase volume of recycling from The Queens House	Office Manager/Building Surveyor		◆			
	Explore ways to increase energy efficiency	Office Manager/Building Surveyor					
	Minimise water use through implementation of water efficiency measures.	Office Manager/Building Surveyor	◆				
	Rationalise use of depots and removal of surplus buildings	Building Surveyor			◆		
	Look at ways of reducing emissions from vehicles	Land Manager					

 On-going action
 Target implementation date