

## Get involved in the New Forest National Park A quick and easy guide

### The New Forest – a 1000 years of history

The New Forest is one of the smallest National Parks in the UK but one of the most visited due to its proximity to many major cities such as London, Southampton & Salisbury. You don't need a car as it has excellent public transport links with a regular train service to 4 rail stations between Southampton & Bournemouth, plus a regular open top bus service in summer.

The New Forest is the best place to take groups walking or cycling because of the gentle gradients, so the going is easy. For those new to the joys of cycling, it is a great place to learn to ride, with lots of safe, off road cycle tracks to tempt even the most dedicated of couch potatoes.

### All this is free!

- 219 square miles of open countryside, heathland which is a spectacular purple in September, wooded areas with some of the largest and most massive trees in Britain.
- Reptile Centre near Lyndhurst – you may never see a reptile in the UK until you visit the New Forest Reptile Centre. Find out about the UK's only poisonous snake – the rare adder. [New Forest Reptile Centre](#)
- Visit Bolderwood during the summer to see fallow deer - this could be the closest you ever get to one of the UK's largest mammals: [Bolderwood/DeerWatchTrail](#)
- Bookable barbeque sites, seashore safaris, pond dipping, birdwatching with Lepe Country Park. Contact Lepe to book a Ranger to work with your group. Car park charges apply. [Lepe Country Park](#)
- Hampshire Wildlife Trust nature reserves in and around the Forest, such as Blashford Lakes, check out the website for details of all year round family events: [HWT Blashford Lakes](#)



*Sand Lizard*



*Bird-watching at Lepe Country Park*

- Check for events in the New Forest essential guide magazine or website, lots of activities are free although there may be a charge for some. [What's On: New Forest](#)
- Get active & join a conservation task - they run all year & are the best way to beat the winter blues, e.g. removing thick scrub to open up grazing for ponies, cattle, donkeys & deer. No previous experience necessary. [Volunteering:](#)

## New Forest

### Your voice is powerful – can you help the next 1000 years of the New Forest?

- Could you give a talk about the New Forest to a group in an urban area?
- Do you have connections with communities & faith groups? Could you take information about the New Forest to any shows and meetings you are attending where people might be interested to find out more?
- Feeling creative? Share your impressions by writing an article for the New Forest National Park website and local press in your city.
- Help on the New Forest stall at shows, such as the Southampton Mela (see image right.)
- Give the New Forest National Park Authority copies of photos of you and your group enjoying the New Forest.
- Involved with community radio? Can you host a programme to let others know about the New Forest?
- Influence the strategy of the New Forest by becoming a Secretary of State appointment to the Authority's governing body – find out more by speaking with an existing Member. Contact Nigel Matthews for details (see below).
- Do you have opinions about the New Forest and its services? The New Forest National Park Authority seek Champions who are happy to feedback and give advice on products and services provided by the Authority, such as its website and publications, or on venues, products and services provided by other organisations.
- The New Forest National Park Authority would love to work with you on agreed joint community projects which help others enjoy the New Forest National Park, such as an exhibition of photos of your impressions of the Forest, at the New Forest Centre.



*Promoting the New Forest at Southampton Mela*



For more information, contact Gillie Hayball (Lead Ranger) or Nigel Matthews (Community and Visitor Services Manager) at the New Forest National Park Authority.

Telephone: 01590 646684

Email: [Nigel.Matthews@newforestnpa.gov.uk](mailto:Nigel.Matthews@newforestnpa.gov.uk)

[Gillie.Hayball@newforestnpa.gov.uk](mailto:Gillie.Hayball@newforestnpa.gov.uk)

Website: [www.newforestnpa.gov.uk](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk)

