



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022-23



A letter from the Leader

Although this year saw normal service fully resume following the pandemic, and some significant achievements to be proud of, it also saw increased challenges for our residents and the country as a whole.

In 2022 we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II, followed by the Queen's sad death.

We responded swiftly and appropriately to support our communities to reflect and mourn and arranged for the historic local proclamation of His Majesty King Charles III. The decision to extend the Green Canopy tree planting initiative will be a lasting and fitting tribute to the Queen, with 60 trees being planted in 30 locations.

We made progress on key corporate priorities including the waste strategy, a climate action plan, and the Solent Freeport approval announced in December that will support the Waterside and wider New Forest economy and provide access to higher skilled employment.

During the year we have seen increasing challenges facing our residents and impacting our services and budget as the cost of living, inflation and wider economic factors impact us all. In response we have set up a Cost of Living Steering Group that brings together a shared understanding of what our residents and communities need, and promotes initiatives such as the establishment of Food Larders and 5 Community Hubs to connect people to the support available.

It is this council's ambition to be an employer of choice in order to provide excellent services, and to support this we have reviewed our pay scales to



address recruitment difficulties and to ensure we are paying a minimum wage above the national employer's minimum.

Key pieces of work have commenced to inform our future plans, including the initial phases of a transformation programme that will deliver a leaner, more efficient organisation, characterised by modern business practices, sustainable service delivery and a skilled and motivated workforce, and most importantly ensuring that our residents and customers are at the heart of our decisions.

Through the resident insight survey undertaken during the year we know that although we have a higher than average level of satisfaction across our services, we also have areas for improvement. I am very grateful that the public's trust in the District Council is so high at 74% and we will build on this strong foundation to create future services that meet local priorities for the future.

We are now working on the new corporate plan moving forward with our priorities and major milestones for the next four years.

Cllr Jill Cleary

Leader of New Forest District Council

Portfolio highlights 2022-23

Leader's

UK Shared Prosperity Fund awarded

£1m

78%

of residents are satisfied with how NFDC is run



41%

of staff responded to staff survey



Recruited

82%

of the **177** vacancies filled this year first time

Finance, investment and corporate



Investments within the district now

£29.3m

Distributed **£8,044m+** of Energy Rebate support to

53,631 households

Completed the **Platinum Jubilee Business Park** project

Funding of

£17,700 to

22 organisations for the provision of warm spaces

Planning, regeneration and infrastructure



1,133

planning decisions issued

5 strategic plan sites with consent

£580k

spent on recreational mitigation projects

Increased Building Control market share to **58%**

Partnering and wellbeing

100% of high risk food inspections undertaken



527

offences actively tracked on council CCTV



Nearly **10,000** attendees to active lifestyle classes across all sites

Inactivity levels reduced to **18.4%**

Housing and homelessness

More than

70% of rough sleepers entered housing pathway



Answered

57,759

tenants' calls, emails, and webchats



50 affordable council homes built

23 units of new temporary accommodation delivered

Environment and coastal

Circa **7,600m³** shingle recycled on Hurst Spit

Sold **30k** short stay and **15k** long stay parking clocks, generating a total of **£1.3m**



Installed **12** electric vehicle charging points, saving **18,000kg** CO₂ to date



21,000 garden waste customers

People and places



89%

website accessibility score



£68,792+

awarded in Councillor Community Engagement grants

Community grants approved **£221,600**

Responded to **2,552** fly tipping incidents

Business, tourism and high streets



Carried out **78** Shop Doctor visits

86 beneficiaries of the Youth Employment Hub

49

businesses and residents benefitted from start-up business support



3,566 subscribers to the business support e-newsletter

Key portfolio achievements 2022-23



Leader's

Delivering a sustainable and prosperous New Forest and putting our community first

Ensuring the prosperity of the New Forest area remains a priority. The New Forest District Council received an allocation of £1 million through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Rural England Prosperity Fund provided a further top-up of £540,115 as part of the Rural Development Programme for England. The delivery of the projects directly and through local rural businesses will support delivery of the three investment priorities of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills.

Work continued with developers, landowners, investors and other parties to support and facilitate growth and investment in the district. A key achievement was securing the Government approval of the Solent Freeport Business case and through the Freeport Board and officer support we now move to deliver the benefits of the business case with a focus on securing long-lasting opportunities for the residents of the New Forest. The council has also prioritised community engagement in regeneration with a project being delivered in Totton town centre with residents highlighting priorities for improvement.

The Waterside Steering Group has been re-established and has been meeting regularly, providing a place to co-ordinate developments across the waterside, and discussing cross-cutting issues. Communications and engagement has been a focus to provide updated communication to stakeholders. Interim capacity has been brought in and will be ensuring key New Forest priorities are best placed to secure funding including A326 and public transport improvements.

A draft County Deal prospectus has been discussed positively as a next wave bid with Ministers. Hampshire County Council is leading discussions and it is anticipated that post local elections NFDC will engage as discussions with DLUHC progress to ensure that local priorities are reflected in a future prospectus.

The council is focusing on using data and insight to inform plans and priorities. A New Forest Economic Profile, which covered policy areas and themes relating to: economy,

Priorities

Working with regional and local partners to ensure the prosperity of the New Forest area.

Being an employer of choice.

Excellence in services to our residents and continuing to maintain front line services.

Ensuring effective democratic engagement and representation.

business, population, labour market, skills and occupations, was commissioned in September 2022.

The council also undertook an independent Residents survey which showed that 93% of residents are satisfied with the area as a place to live, and 78% are satisfied with the way that New Forest District Council runs things. Service satisfaction was favourable, and the top rated services were: registering to vote (96%), community recycling banks (90%), garden waste collection (88%), health and leisure centres (87%) and waste and recycling services (83%). There are areas to improve and insight on cost of living and climate concerns will be areas to explore more fully.

We have set ourselves an ambitious target for subscribers to our residents email news letter and continue activity to increase the number of residents who receive updates in this way.

Activity to be an employer of choice continued, including the pay scale review and a revised hybrid working policy. The pay scale review was undertaken to address particular recruitment difficulties, remove the cross-over between certain bands and make the pay scale more consistent. It has also addressed the Leader's clear desire for the District Council to pay a minimum wage above the national employers minimum.

Following overwhelming support from the workforce to continue hybrid working, the final policy has been issued with a view to promote improved work/life balance, saving on fuel costs as well as environmental and financial benefits.

An Employee Engagement Survey resulted in a larger response than previous years, (323 responses, equating to 41% of staff), and an overall action plan is being developed with management and staff.

Activities such as Chief executive staff briefings, visits, new Monthly meets and social activities such as wellbeing walks and the Christmas quiz support wider engagement.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Portfolio indicators above or on target	%	Monitor	58%*	79.25%	
Vacancies filled first time	%	85%	81%	82%	
Subscribers to residents' email	% of residents	14%	8.5%	8.82%	
Average customer rating of residents' email (usefulness, ease of understanding, relevant information)	Score out of 10	9	9	9.33	
Level of customer satisfaction with council services	%	60%	N/A**	78%	

*Partial calculation of 2021/22 based on Q3 and Q4 indicators.

**Customer satisfaction survey first undertaken in 2022. Next comparable score will be available in 2024.



Planning, regeneration and infrastructure

Delivering a sustainable and prosperous New Forest and putting our community first

The Solent Freeport received final Government approval in December 2022, providing an important opportunity to deliver economic growth for the Solent and particularly the regeneration of the Waterside.

Most of the 18 strategic sites identified in the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1 are now in pre-application or application stage, with 5 having a resolution to grant permission subject to completion of a S106. Development has commenced on 2 sites.

The council continues to proactively work with developers to ensure that allocated development sites are delivered successfully, with the necessary supporting infrastructure. The council has also been working with stakeholders to address water quality issues and deliver Biodiversity Net Gain projects.

The council has continued to use the Community Infrastructure Levy (and S106 monies) to deliver much needed infrastructure, including a programme of open space and recreational mitigation projects. Expenditure in 22/23 was on these projects of £580k. A programme of works for 23/24 projects was approved in March 2023.

A local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP) for the Waterside was approved by Hampshire County Council in November 2022 with a separate plan currently being prepared for the remainder of the District. These plans will help to guide future decisions on funding for walking and cycling infrastructure improvements.

The number of planning applications received during the year was 1,358 (1,363 in 2021/22). Of the 1,133 decisions issued 91% were determined within the nationally prescribed timescales (80% in 2021/22). The project to upgrade the Planning and Regulatory Services IT system is progressing and expected to complete in 2023.

Priorities

Delivering the vision of the Local Plan and encouraging development that meets local needs and delivers positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes.

Working with partners, applicants, and developers to ensure a positive, timely and enabling attitude to development.

Working with the Partnership for South Hampshire authorities on a Joint Strategy and Statement of Common Ground to address future growth and unmet housing need.

Using contributions to deliver green infrastructure projects that address the impact of development on the natural environment.

Ensuring Building Control are engaged at the earliest stage to make future development projects safe.

Explore different delivery models to deliver our housing target including maximising the number of affordable homes.

Set a vision for the future of each of our towns.

Building control market share increased to 58%. Work with architects and builders continues to ensure the minimum standards are met and the market share is maintained and improved.

Work continues with local communities to take forward a shared vision for the future of their towns through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Ringwood's Neighbourhood Plan was subject to public consultation in Feb/Mar 2023.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Number of houses completed each year (as set out in the Annual Authority Monitoring Report)	Num	400	79	TBC-July23	
Number of green infrastructure projects delivered each year	Num	3	3	3	
Number of Biodiversity Net Gain projects delivered each year	Num	-	4	15	
Additional employment floorspace created within the district	m ²	-	3,591m ²	TBC-July23	
New Forest District Council building control market share	%	55%	55%	58%	
Determination of planning applications within the nationally prescribed time frames	%	Major 60%, Minor 70%, Other 80%	Major 90%, Minor 65%, Other 85%	Major 100%, Minor 81%, Other 86%	
Number of projects that New Forest District Council are involved in to deliver sustainable transport options	Num	-	9	13	



Housing and homelessness services

Creating balanced communities and housing options that are affordable and sustainable

The Housing teams continued to work towards the strategic objectives set out in the Housing Strategy 2018.

Since a peak of over 90 households in emergency accommodation in June 2022, the number has now reduced to 49, with 20 awaiting to move into longer term accommodation – progress that has been aided through the provision of three additional council owned Temporary Accommodation schemes during 2022/23. And with plans moving forward to refurbish the Parsonage Barn Lane Hostel in Ringwood, more family temporary accommodation is due to complete in the current year. £180k grant funding secured to prevent the use of temporary accommodation for prison leavers.

Our Multi-Agency approach has evolved to focus on building specific partnerships with single agencies or small groups of local voluntary groups. Strategic Partnerships across Hampshire have continued to work on improving hospital and prison discharges.

The Government funding of £729k to fund Rough Sleeper Services for the next 3 years has been secured. This includes employment and counselling services to support rough sleepers back in to work. Two specific buildings for rough sleepers are now in use and the complex rough sleeper cohort reduced from 8 to 1, and rough sleepers on any given night reduced from 30 to 1.

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund has awarded the council £560K to deliver 70 Air Source Heat Pumps this year with 3 members of staff undergoing qualifications in PAS2035 Retrofit Assessment. New retrofit modelling software has been procured and the pilot hot water and heating flat upgrade scheme project has commenced.

The Empty Homes Strategy has been delivered bringing 47 properties back into use and we are currently working on bringing further 72 homes back into use.

During the year a total of 101 new affordable homes were provided across the New Forest, with 50 delivered

Priorities

Meeting local housing needs and promoting sustainable growth.

Increasing the supply of high-quality affordable homes.

Improving the housing circumstances of those most in need.

Enabling the best use of housing to meet the needs of people, including support for a high quality, strong private rented sector.

by the council. 12 new build homes featured enhanced energy efficiency measures and access to electric vehicle charging points, and 23 are addressing the priority need for temporary accommodation. To date a total of 285 additional council homes have now been completed towards the target of 600 additional homes by 2026, with a further 144 in the pipeline or under construction.

Partnerships with Mental Health services go from strength to strength and joint focus is turning to how the MH Practitioner can be funded in the long term.

NFDC has been involved in the co-production of the HCC Care Leavers protocol and is enhancing relationships with practitioners by delivering County Wide training.

Compliance Monitoring has been enhanced with bi-monthly Strategic Compliance Board, monthly Fire Safety Operational Group, quarterly Fire Safety Strategies Group, and the Annual Compliance Report has been published and received scrutiny from EMT and the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel.

New Tenant Satisfaction Measures will require NFDC to report compliance annually to Government in 2024 and two Landlord Forums have been held in 2022 to support a safe and thriving private rented sector and support the council to tackle homelessness.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Additional council homes delivered by 2026 (cumulative figures)	Num	600	24 (235)	50 (285)	
Additional affordable homes delivered by others	Num	60	N/A	51	
Prevention duty cases successfully prevented	%	50%	56%	56%	
Private sector property inspections resulting in Category 1 hazards	%	<40%	27%	24%	
Rough sleepers entering accommodation pathway	%	32%	19%	70.25%	
Households in external emergency B&B accommodation	Num	<70	79	49	



People and places

Engaging with our communities and maintaining the quality of the place in which they live

In support of the arts and cultural heritage of the New Forest the Culture in Common programme has launched and is led by our partners Energise Me. A programme director and a programme administrator have been employed to deliver the 3-year programme. Culture in Common is a community engagement project and Community Anchors have been recruited and trained to ensure that the cultural programme is developed by the targeted local communities. A business and development plan have been written and submitted to the Arts Council England. The district council are a member of the managing consortium.

A number of projects have been delivered, including "Halloween in Hythe", the Totton Lantern Procession, Family Support Services Christmas event with song writing in New Milton, Junk Band workshop with military families, Rap workshop, and Clay Model and Walk Workshops.

As part of our work with the Arts Council England we received partnership funding to recruit a Creative and Cultural Development Officer post. This post has taken on the development of Folio and scoping of future arts and cultural offers within the district.

A Resident Insight survey was undertaken to gauge the views of our residents, resulting in a higher than average level of satisfaction across our services, according to national benchmarks LGA reports. Building on this work, a project has commenced to better understand our processes and service delivery from a customer perspective and the technology opportunities to improve the way we work in this area. The Waste and Operations ICT project contract has been awarded and will focus on improvements to the customer experience.

Total spend on Councillor Community Engagement Grants for 2022/23, was £68,792.16, (this included the spend of carry-over from 2021/22).

Priorities

Putting residents at the centre of what we do and how we do it.

Modernising customer services and responding to changing needs.

Engaging with partners and the community to inform and contribute towards wider outcomes.

Ensuring our open space is clean, accessible, and well maintained, and contributes to the sustainable and natural environment of the New Forest.

Supporting the arts and cultural heritage of the New Forest.

The council also approved community grant awards to 13 organisations of £129,600 (revenue) and 6 organisations of £92,000 (capital). The continuation of Community Transport grants was also approved.

External funding has been identified for elements of the Litter Strategy Delivery with two-year funding secured for a 'Behavioural Insight Post' to help change people's attitude towards littering and its impact on our environment. Funding has also been identified for the second trial area for 'Smart Bins'.

Arrangements have been put in place to collect and dispose of specialist waste containing persistent organic pollutants, such as soft furnishings. Any mixed loads containing these items must now be incinerated and treated as a separate waste stream, in compliance with the legislation announced in August. Consequently, the approach to the removal and enforcement action taken in relation to fly tipping has been updated.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Trees removed from NFDC land	Num	-	376	314	
Trees planted on NFDC land	Num	-	181	296*	
Total fly tipping incidents responded to	Num	-	2,613	2,552	
Specialist fly tipping** incidents responded to	Num	-	N/A	26	
Website optimisations resulting in an improved customer experience	Num	4	17	5	
Website accessibility (Target is government set benchmark)	%	87%	91%	89%	

* Figure includes 60 trees planted for Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee and 236 trees as part of 2:1. 700 whips were additionally planted to as part of Jubilee celebration.

** 'Specialist fly tipping' refers to the incidents that have health or other implications, and require specialists (e.g. asbestos or clinical waste).



Finance, investment and corporate services

Enabling service provision and ensuring value for money for the council tax payer

A balanced budget for 2023/24 was set by the Council in February 2023 with a Council Tax increase of 2.99% in line with the Government's parameters. The council's Medium Term Financial Plan was updated as part of that budget setting report, and actions are underway to address the forecast deficit over the medium term.

Additional support was made available in response to the Cost of Living and energy crisis. Using the Household Support Fund, food vouchers totalling £701,950 were distributed to 8,737 households along with £99,350 to support 363 financially vulnerable households with their housing costs. The government provided Council Tax Support Funding of £208,018 to support households in receipt of Council Tax Support with their council tax bills for 23/24. To date 4,058 households have been supported, totalling £139,681.

A Cost of Living Steering Group has been established with partners to support the Food Larders and 5 Community Hubs with focus on the promotion of the support available, including providing funding of £17,700 to 22 organisations for the provision of warm spaces.

Other support has included 458 businesses being granted £4,356,538 of COVID Additional Relief Funding and a one-off £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate payment was awarded to 53,631 eligible households totalling £8,044,650, and £321,117 to 7,262 households from our discretionary energy rebate scheme. Additionally, the Government has provided funding of £1,435,200 for the Energy Bill Support Scheme and £236,000 for the Alternative Fuel scheme. These schemes support households not eligible for the direct payment support, with a one-off payment of £400 and £200 respectively. These schemes commenced during February 2023 and end on 31 May 2023. To date we have distributed £317,000 to 828 households.

Priorities

Protecting front line services through sound financial planning, including the collection of taxation with appropriate support for individuals and businesses.

Modernisation and innovative use of ICT to enhance operational efficiencies across all services.

Using investments to support financial resilience and the local economy.

Providing support to residents with benefits and welfare reforms, and supporting businesses to access financial reliefs and grants.

The Platinum Jubilee Business Park has been completed and heads of terms have been agreed for 68% of the available space in support of business activity and jobs within the district. £150K was approved for the improvements at Salisbury Road Totton suburban retail units. Appletree Lettings acquired further residential properties and now holds 16 homes in its portfolio providing open market rental housing.

Planning permission was secured for the construction of the new operational depot at Hardley and the council is undertaking the tender process for the appointment of the building contractor.

Modernisation of digital systems continues across services, including an updated payment system, launch of the new housing management system (Locata), a refreshed audio-visual setup in the council chamber and continued adoption of Microsoft 365 tools.

Delivery of additional modernisation proposals will be driven by our customer and transformation objectives as well as continuous digital service improvements.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Achieved a balanced budget with reasonable council tax increases	% / £	Greater of 2% or £5*	£5	2.99% / £5.63 (23/24 bud)	Green
General Fund budget variations	%	+/-3%	-8.10%	-2.74%	Green
HRA Fund budget variations	%	+/-3%	-	3.89%	Yellow
Value of Original Capital programme delivered	%	80%	-	84%	Green
Increase in the value of residential investment	£m	£8m	£3.4m	£5.1m	Yellow
Increase in the value of commercial investment	£m	£30m	£14m	£29.3m**	Green
Maintain high level of Council Tax collected	%	98.50%	98.53%	98.56%	Green
Maintain high level of NNDR collected	%	98.50%	98.45%	98.83%	Green
ICT incidents resolved with SLA	%	95%	96%	96.8%	Green

* 21/22 performance represents setting of 22/23 budget. Target represents setting of 23/24 budget.

** Reported figure includes invoiced and committed amounts for Platinum Jubilee Development.

Key portfolio achievements 2022-23



Partnering and wellbeing

Improving the health and wellbeing of our community

Since the commencement of the second year of the contract in July 2022, Freedom Leisure have continually grown their membership base. Health and Fitness memberships increased by 6.2% in total during the period of July 2022 to March 2023 with just under 2,000 people joining a health and fitness membership.

Membership Numbers have grown by a net 371 members, totalling 5,966 members across the portfolio at the end of March, is the highest number it has been since the contract commenced. Free swimming for under 3's saw 1,339 attendees during the year and nearly 10,000 attendees to active lifestyle classes across all sites.

Freedom Leisure have also largely concluded their £2.4million capital investment programmes at three of the five district leisure centres as at the 31st March. Applemore, Ringwood and Totton improvements included a new reception and café areas, upgraded changing rooms and new soft play facilities.

The contract with MyTime Active at Dibden Golf Centre has shown strong performance, with pay and play golf participation levels increasing, up on pre pandemic levels. The popularity of golf has continued with participation averaging 2,300 golfers per month and the clubhouse hosting several festive functions and weddings during the winter months.

The council continues to work closely with sports clubs to encourage increased levels of participation in sport, which has included supporting the development of new football facilities in Ringwood.

The council's Health and Wellbeing Plan has been adopted to support the outcomes identified in the 'Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of Hampshire'. The identified priorities included 'Increasing Physical Activity' and 'Improving Mental Wellbeing' as well as 'Working in Partnership' with both community, regional and national partners.

The Food and Safety team inspected 100% of the high risk, non-compliant food businesses within the set timescales in the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan. A total of 683

Priorities

Working with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Ensuring that public health prevention principles are embedded within core services of the council.

Increasing the level of physical activity within the district.

Providing affordable, accessible, and sustainable leisure facilities.

Ensuring regulatory services are delivered for the benefit of our residents.

Ensuring the New Forest remains a safe place to live, work and visit.

food premises received an inspection, of which 150 were new food businesses setting up in the district. Currently 82% of food businesses in the New Forest have the top food hygiene rating score of 5 compared to the national average of 77% of businesses.

A review of the Taxi Tariff has been undertaken, with a subsequent increase in fares to support the local taxi trade and the Taxi Licensing Policy is being revised and updated, in order that it reflects all statutory standards and best practice guidance to ensure a safe, inclusive, accessible and attractive service across the New Forest.

Event guidance has been produced for licensed premises which gives advice on the control of noise from premises and health and safety guidance, to assist businesses in running events safely and successfully whilst reducing the likelihood of noise complaints.

Community safety remains a high priority. Public space cameras operate in 7 towns and villages across the District, providing an active deterrence to crime and disorder. The council's CCTV Service actively tracked 527 offences between January and December 2022. 109 partners and professionals attended the 'No Age for Abuse' webinar training event convened by the Community Safety team at the end of 2022. The event highlighted the need for additional therapeutic support for victims of domestic abuse, provided partners with additional tools and resources when responding and supporting this particular vulnerable group.

The upgrade and the digital platform for the Appletree Careline remained on target throughout 2022, commencing the transition stage of switching from an analogue to digital system in early 2023.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Participation in Community Safety engagement events and completion of annual crime and disorder survey	Num	5	5	14	Green
Residents' satisfaction on the low level of reported crime and anti-social behaviour within the district	%	95%	97%	96%	Green
Inactivity levels	%	-	28.7%	18.4%	Green
Level of investment in the leisure centres by Freedom Leisure (cumulative)	£	£2,407,900 (by Jan 23)	N/A	£2,095,000	Yellow
Support Communities through programmes to improve the mental wellbeing of residents (cumulative)	Num	3	3	5	Green
Increase the engagement with lower socio-economic communities (cumulative)	Num	3	3	6	Green
Sedentary adults with recognised medical conditions enrolled in the Freedom Leisure Active Lifestyles referral programme	Num	100	339	347	Green
Inspections of higher risk and non-compliant food businesses to improve public safety	%	98%	83%	100%	Green



Environment and coastal services

Working to reduce the impact on our special environment and protecting communities by managing our changing coastlines

Following the appointment of the Climate Change & Sustainability Manager in November 2022 work is now underway across all four work programmes identified in the Climate Change and Nature Emergency report and Action Plan 2023 - carbon reduction, nature recovery, climate resilience and programme management. With the oversight of the Climate Change and Nature Steering Group, progress has been made on both internal and external projects, with a number of initiatives being driven by services and/or in partnership with key stakeholders.

Notable projects in development include energy assessments of key corporate sites, investigations into fleet and depot electrification, creation of a community renewable energy programme, and collaboration between housing, planning and environmental colleagues to deliver energy and biodiversity improvements across the council's housing estate. Member and staff events have taken place to raise awareness of climate and sustainability and build support to service improvements. Wider engagement included a focused stakeholder event with partners to inform them about the climate and nature emergency.

Cross-service working is underway to ensure that our response to the Climate Change and Nature Emergency is proportionate to the anticipated risks of climate change, and delivered in a way that contributes to corporate and district-wide sustainability.

The council approved a new Waste Strategy in 2022, which will increase recycling, and reduce waste and carbon emissions.

Procurement of goods and services to support the rollout of garden waste wheeled bins in 2024 and the wider service change in 2025 is underway.

Work with Hampshire partners to understand local implications of national waste and recycling policy changes continues. An operations ICT system supplier has been appointed and contract mobilisation is now underway, for implementation by 2024, which will support the council's Waste Strategy.

Plans and funding opportunities to protect our coastline continue to be developed. Christchurch Bay Strategy has been progressing with completion due early 2024.

Priorities

Ensuring sustainability is at the centre of our decisions to preserve resources and the environment for future generations.

Working with others to protect and enhance our natural environment.

Reducing waste and increasing recycling.

Developing plans and funding opportunities to protect our coastline.

Supporting sustainability and the local economy through the strategic review and use of car parking assets.

Developing a strategy for our assets at Keyhaven, considering environmental objectives, flood protection and the local economy.

Investment planning for Hurst to Lymington (H2L) Strategy is to commence around Autumn 2023.

Work on the delivery of future Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) activities has continued through the development of two strategies, with NFDC being involved at both project team and board level. NFDC continued to work with BCP Council on the delivery of the Christchurch Bay and Harbour FCERM Strategy. The draft shortlist options appraisal report has been completed and further engagement with local communities is being planned for June 2023. Investment planning for the Hurst to Lymington (H2L) Strategy is to commence around Autumn 2023.

Hurst Spit recycling works have been completed, circa 7,600m³ of shingle was recycled from North Point back onto the main body of the spit to ensure it has greater resilience to storm events.

The council installed a further 12 public electric vehicle charging points in 2022-23. Phase 2 of the installation programme is progressing with the planned ultra-rapid hub in Ringwood and additional rapid charging points at Lymington St Thomas Street car park.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Household waste sent for reuse, recycling, and composting	%	55%	33%	33.4%	
Number of electric charging points	Num	10	29	12	
Total CO ₂ emissions saved through electric charging points (cumulative)*	kg	9,250kg	7,275kg	18,000kg	
Climate change action plan delivered against target	%	Monitor	-	Adopted in 2023	

*Data (including target) reflects cumulative CO₂ emissions saved through electric charging points since programme launch in January 2022.



Business, tourism and high streets

Helping local businesses to grow and prosper

The council continued to work with partners and businesses this year to grow the New Forest economy.

The council maintains a database on key employers in the district, which helps to inform and target business engagement activities. The council publicises opportunities to support growth and resilience via a business e-newsletter and dedicated social media. Just over 3,500 businesses across the district were subscribed to the business support e-newsletter this past year.

The council administered the government's Covid support Additional Restrictions Grant 6 for businesses, allocating 162 grants totalling £647,590.

The council continued to promote the value of apprenticeship schemes to businesses, as well as the support available to employers. Liaison with the local Job Centre Plus continued to promote services and engage with jobseekers, residents and businesses, and the council has worked closely with providers of skills training, including the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, to encourage businesses to take up the opportunities presented.

The Central and West Hampshire Youth Employment Hub was a partnership between New Forest District Council, other local councils and the Department for Work and Pensions. The Hub connected with and listened to young people, offering skills training and routes into employment, and worked closely with employers and training and education providers. The Hub provided ongoing face to face support to 86 young people from across the district.

Work is ongoing with partners such as the Solent Growth Hub and Get Set for Growth Solent that ensures New Forest businesses have access to support and investment in their business, and council engages with the Department for International Trade to identify key inward investment and to share progress on investment sites.

The council has initiated schemes to support our high streets. The New Forest Shop Doctor programme aims to improve the customer experience in identified town centres

Priorities

Continuing to work with partners and businesses grow the New Forest economy.

Lobbying for essential improvements in broadband and mobile connectivity.

Helping businesses, industries, and high streets respond to social, environmental, and technological changes and innovation.

Supporting the visitor economy across the New Forest district.

Continuing to promote the New Forest as a filming destination.

through a series of mystery shopper visits to participating businesses. The 2023 programme was open to independent retail and hospitality businesses in Hythe, Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst, New Milton, Barton on Sea and Milford on Sea. 78 local businesses were visited, and feedback has been delivered directly to businesses and via feedback events for the towns.

The council provided a short-term loan to the New Forest Enterprise Centre during 2022 to facilitate a major refurbishment project. The centre continues to perform well in terms of occupancy, providing premises to over 60 businesses and organisations.

The council's own investment in property within the district continues to provide accommodation for businesses operating out of the New Forest. The joint project within the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services to build the Platinum Jubilee Business Park is an excellent example of this council playing a significant role in supporting the New Forest economy.

Key performance indicators	Unit	Target	2021/22	2022/23	RAG
Business engaged in the business engagement programme	Num	100	1,633*	357	Green
Film:New Forest - value of filming in the district	£	£75,000	£234,750	£245,300	Green
Subscribers to 'Helping local businesses grow' e-news	Num	3,000	3,687	3,566	Green
New Forest locations available to Film and TV productions via Film:New Forest location database	Num	80	81	107	Green

*Figures for 21/22 include businesses benefiting from Covid support.