

## National Park Access Updates March 2023

### **DEFRA Access For All funding**

We have received the first payment of a three-year Infrastructure project by DEFRA which seeks to improve access and accessibility within National Parks and AONB's. We have until March 2023 to spend the first tranche of £85,000, with no funding in year three and then £90,000 in year three.

Year one spending has focused on buying new accessible bikes for Pedall, the inclusive cycling charity, a redesign of our promoted routes including a new suite of accessible routes, footpath improvements at Walhampton Farm and the replacement of two stiles with gates on two of our promoted walking routes.

### **Inclusive National Parks programme**

We are planning a series of activity days with Open Sight Hampshire, local dementia groups and diverse community groups from Southampton. Activities will include guided walks, guided cycle rides and pottery classes at Spudworks in Sway. We will invite all groups back to participate in the New Forest Walking and Cycling Festival which we hope to make into the most inclusive festival yet.

### **Volunteer Access Work**

We will start our Path Clearance work in April. Visiting overgrown paths and giving them a haircut. As in previous years our work will target our promoted routes network but we welcome suggestions from HCC on which paths may be in need of clearance.

### **National Grid Landscape Enhancement Project**

We have finally received the funds for this project and so have started on the year one deliverables. Year one will deliver NPA signage on two promoted walking routes and wildlife and access improvements on the Cadland Estate.

*Adam Vasey,  
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