

EXECUTIVE DECISION DAY NOTICE

Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities
Decision Day

Date and Time Thursday, 8th December, 2022 at 1.00 pm

Place Remote Decision Day

Enquiries to members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This decision day is being held remotely and will be recorded and broadcast live via the County Council's website.

AGENDA

DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

NON KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

1. PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL INVESTMENT FUND - APPROVAL OF LARGER GRANTS (Pages 3 - 18)

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services seeking approval for grant applications to the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund.

KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

2. TITCHFIELD HAVEN NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE - FUTURE PROPOSALS (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX) (Pages 19 - 154)

To consider a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services on proposals regarding the future of Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve and its associated buildings.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDATION:

That the public be excluded from the Decision Day during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraphs 1,2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

4. TITCHFIELD HAVEN NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE - FUTURE PROPOSALS - EXEMPT APPENDIX (Pages 155 - 196)

To consider an exempt appendix in relation to Item 2 on the agenda.

NON KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL)

None

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS SESSION:

The press and public are welcome to observe the public sessions of the decision day via the webcast.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities
Date:	8 December 2022
Title:	Parish and Town Council Investment Fund - Approval of Larger Grants
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

Contact name: Lisa Wood, Rural Programme Support Officer
Jo Heath, Assistant Director, CCBS

Tel: 0370 779 5211 **Email:** Lisa.wood@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to request approval from the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities for four applications to the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF).

Recommendation

2. That the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities approves the four proposed grant applications to the PTCIF as detailed under Section 9 below.

Executive Summary

3. The budget for 2022/23 for the PTCIF is £335,000. In addition, the Climate Programme Team has contributed £150,000 to the PTCIF grant scheme with the latter required to be spent by the end of March 2023. This equates to a total budget of £485,000.
4. Details of four grant applications, for which this paper seeks approval, are given in Section 9. The Detailed assessments of each application are given in Appendix A – C. The total amount requested is £72,730.

Contextual Information

5. The Rural Programme supports the County Council's support of rural Hampshire and assisting Parish and Town Councils to respond to local priorities, including management of the [PTCIF grant scheme](#).
6. The priority of the PTCIF is to support partnerships between Parish and Town Councils or local community groups and the County Council. It provides investments to schemes which respond to local needs and aims to reduce pressure on County Council Services.
7. Hampshire County Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019. In November 2021 it was agreed that the PTCIF scheme guidance would be extended to include Energy Efficiency applications from Parish and Town Councils or Community Groups for improvements to the energy efficiency of community buildings, where it can be demonstrated that the improvements contribute to [HCC's climate change targets](#).
8. Each applicant to the PTCIF is required to submit a full business plan, to include rationale, costings, quotes, and measurements. For Energy Efficiency applications, this business plan needs to provide adequate information to the Climate Programme Team for them to evaluate the financial and carbon footprint benefits of the project. If these evaluations are favourable, and demonstrate a contribution to HCC's Climate Emergency targets, then the project is supported by that team, and will be recommended for funding here.

Finance

9. Of the original £485,000 grant fund available, £387,220 remains. The four grants for which approval is sought are as follows:
 - 9.1 Hampshire Young Farmers Club (CG00025833) - £30,000 for works to improve their HQ building in Brockenhurst, as per the Assessment Form in Appendix A.
 - 9.2 Compton and Shawford Parish Council (CG00025830) - £15,369 for the installation of solar PV and batteries, as per the Assessment Form in Appendix B.
 - 9.3 Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council (CG00025891) - £12,360.88 for installation of an updated heating system, as per the Assessment Form in Appendix C.
 - 9.4 Shedfield Parish Council (CG00025903/CG00025904/CG00025939) – A total of £15,000 contribution towards the installation of an air source heat pump, associated new radiators, and solar panels, as per the Assessment Form in Appendix D.
10. This would leave £314,490 remaining in the PTCIF.

Performance

11. The Climate Programme Team has contributed £150,000 towards funding Energy Efficiency projects. This proportion of funds are available until March 2023. Grant awards to date, including these two for Compton and Shawford Parish Council and Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council, amount to £140,511. This would leave £9,489 available from this proportion of the funding.
12. The grant application from Hampshire Young Farmers Club is to be funded from the £335,000 portion of the PTCIF. This would leave £305,000 available.
13. These grants have been reviewed by the Climate Programme Team and the Rural Programme Team respectively, against the grant scheme criteria detailed via the link in Section 5, and approval is only sought following their recommendation to support.
14. It is likely that the Energy Efficiency applications in the pipeline will require more than the £9,489 remaining in this specific funding pot. Funding for Energy Efficiency projects remains a priority, and as such the £305,000 PTCIF funding remains available for such projects when this is diminished.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
EMPR Report - Update on the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund and Associated Rural Issues	25.04.2019
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
HCC Climate Change Initiatives	13 July 2021
Hampshire 2050 – Vision for the Future	22 Feb 2019

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment: No negative impacts are anticipated.

Appendix A – Hampshire Young Farmers Club

Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2022/23

Funding assessment form

Organisation name:	Hampshire Young Farmers
Project title:	Brockenhurst Young Farmers Club
Project location:	Brockenhurst
Application reference:	CG00025833
Total project cost:	£50,500
Amount requested:	£30,000
Match funding – cash:	£12,170
Match funding - volunteer hours:	£8,330
Match funding - in-kind:	
Match funding – total value	£20,500
AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:	£30,000

Eligibility checklist	Yes/No
Is the applicant a Parish or Town Council, or a Local Community Group, directly benefitting the local community, with clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the scheme priorities (to build community resilience and ease pressure on HCC Services)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes

Project summary
<p>Brockenhurst Young Farmers are aged between 10 years – 26 years old. By supporting young individuals to learn and develop as well as giving them the tools and opportunities to reach a full potential for their futures, without the intervention of local authority help services.</p> <p>As an organisation, we have found we have been able to help combat many issues and challenges that they may be facing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ loneliness and isolation, ➤ lack of communication, ➤ anxiety and depression, ➤ peer pressures, ➤ motivation & self-esteem, ➤ rural migration, ➤ social media, ➤ vulnerability

With a strong farming heritage present in the culture of the club which supports and promotes a community resilience and a commitment to inclusivity, you don't have to be a farmer to join young farmers!

Hampshire Young Farmers own Brockenhurst Young Farmers Club Head Quarters. It is a place where young people find development of themselves with other young people.

Brockenhurst YFC HQ is in dire need of improvement. The building is necessary in order to provide a safe and friendly place for young people to meet, learn and support each other. Without this, our youth group face many challenges and obstacles.

The funding will focus on introducing hot running water to the facility installing double glazing to replace the old metal framed single glazed windows, and improving the kitchen and toilet facilities.

HCC – Officer feedback/comments (relevant Services)

Lisa Wood - Partnering with Rural Programme Team:

The Hampshire 2050 Commission of Enquiry covered, within the [Rural Theme](#) of the inquiry, issues facing the rural farming community, in particular the youth community. A number of Strategic Priorities emerged from the research, including:

Self-help - We want to support volunteering and community-led initiatives in rural communities.

This led on to the identification of three key areas of focus - Rural Environment (leading on from the Natural Environment and Quality of Place Theme), Land based Sector and Farming (particularly as the industry is poised for major change) and Rural Communities.

This application and business plan goes to the heart of the issues faced by the rural farming community, through their headquarters in the centre of the New Forest, and supports the findings documented in the COI.

They are committed to providing a 'fit for purpose' building to support the youth and young adults in rural Hampshire, an often overlooked section of the rural and farming population, locally and for the wider Hampshire population.

By partnering with the Rural Programme team, we expect to be able to monitor the positive impacts that this project will have on the rural farming community. As their activities are not ring-fenced to only those working in farming, they also offer a vehicle for increasing interactions between all members of the youth and young adult population in rural Hampshire.

Rob Stead - Adults Health and Care:

This grant offers a great opportunity to tackle social isolation and loneliness in rural communities. Adults Health and Care knows loneliness and dislocation from your community to be one of the biggest drivers of poor and decreasing mental health and overall lower levels of wellbeing which can lead to increased reliance on council resources and support. We support this application as it focuses on, and seeks to deliver, increased social connectivity and wellbeing in rural areas, something which our HCC Local Teams have been asking for.

Being able to refer to this service will give Local Teams, Support Workers and NHS Social Prescribers a solution for younger adults at risk of social isolation and loneliness, which will deliver increased health outcomes where previously there has been limited provision. Hampshire is a predominantly rural county and being able to offer younger adults activities and the opportunity to socialise with like-minded individuals and those with an interest in rural life and skills is why we are happy to support this application.

Officer comments and recommendation

Lisa Wood – Rural Affairs Programme Support Officer

This project's Business Case presents a well-planned, targeted youth programme, focussed on working with members of the youth population in a known provision target area for HCC.

The programme has been clearly set out with measurable targets against planned benchmarks. Regular monitoring is planned with updates to the Rural Programme team and Adults H&C.

In light of the above, and the efforts to supplement the service with substantial pledged volunteer time, as well as £12,170 match funding from other grants, I would recommend this application is taken to the next available Decision Day for approval for the requested £30,000.

Local Member comments

Feedback requested from Cllr Fran Carpenter – no response

Felicity Roe: Any comments and approval of above recommendation

Supported to proceed to Decision Day

Date: 20/10/2022

Appendix B – Compton and Shawford Parish Council

Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2022/23

Funding assessment form

Organisation name:	Compton & Shawford Parish Council
Project title:	Pavilion Solar Panels
Project location:	Compton & Shawford
Application reference:	CG00025830
Total project cost:	£15,369.00
Amount requested:	£15,369.00
Match funding – cash:	
Match funding - volunteer hours:	
Match funding - in-kind:	
Match funding – total value	
AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:	£15,369.00

Eligibility checklist	Yes/No
Is the applicant a Parish or Town Council, or a Local Community Group, directly benefitting the local community, with clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the scheme priorities (to build community resilience and ease pressure on HCC Services)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes

Project summary

Compton & Shawford Parish Council own the clubhouse at the Memorial Playing Fields at Compton. The venue is incredibly popular and serves a wide variety of clubs and groups within the community. The building is let on a 25 year lease, until September 2032, to Compton & Shawford Sports Club who is responsible for the management of the sports club and have been there since it was built in 2003.

The club serves a growing community in the surrounding areas of Compton, Shawford and Otterbourne with over 300 people a week using the facilities within the clubhouse alone (pre-pandemic.) Whilst the sports club has traditionally been the main user of the building, in recent years it has grown to become central to the community with yoga classes, the Ladies Guild, Pre-School quiz, private hire for local parties, beer and wine tasting, Jigglywrigglers and cookery demonstrations, and the walkers club.

The project is intended to install a solar and battery system scaled to achieve a target of around 75% of the average total electrical consumption of the facility.

Consumption of energy on site can be periodic, often the tennis court floodlights are used a lot at night for example, therefore at peak, solar power production

surplus energy will be sold to the Grid. Whereas during peak consumption, there will be reliance on battery systems, topped up with energy imported at off-peak times.

HCC – Officer feedback/comments (relevant Services)

Lisa Wood - Rural Programme Team:

Compton and Shawford PC have provided a comprehensive application providing evidence of their projected costs and demonstrating a potential cost saving of £3120 annually against a project cost of £15,368.

Their submission does not include any match funding, but they have already undertaken other energy saving measures, such as converting all lights to LED. They are currently actively investigating the cost benefits of changing the internal fluorescent lights to LED, and we would require that this work should be completed first, as a condition of the grant.

Subject to signoff by the Climate Change Programme Manager, this project would be recommended for approval.

Christopher Dear – Climate Emergency Dept.

Compton and Shawford PC have already demonstrated their commitment to the climate emergency by taking steps to ensure their building is very energy efficient. The installation of solar PV will help the applicant to become increasingly self-sufficient in terms of energy consumption. The project is forecast to achieve annual financial savings of in excess of £3,000 and realise annual carbon savings of 1.45tCO₂e.

On this basis, the application is supported.

Officer comments and recommendation

Lisa Wood – Rural Affairs Programme Support Officer

This project's Business Case presents a positive continuation of their well-planned energy efficiency programme, focussed on delivering against HCC's Climate Emergency targets. The supporting statement from Chris Dear mirrors this evaluation.

For the reasons stated above, and subject to the completion of additional internal lighting alterations to LED, I would recommend the organisation is awarded £15,369.

Appendix C – Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council

Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2022/23

Funding assessment form

Organisation name:	Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council
Project title:	Mapledurwell & Up Nately Village hall – Energy Efficiency Project
Project location:	Mapledurwell & Up Nately
Application reference:	CG00025891
Total project cost:	£12360.88
Amount requested:	£12360.88
Match funding – cash:	
Match funding - volunteer hours:	
Match funding - in-kind:	
Match funding – total value	
AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:	£12360.88

Eligibility checklist	Yes/No
Is the applicant a Parish or Town Council, or a Local Community Group, directly benefitting the local community, with clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the scheme priorities (to build community resilience and ease pressure on HCC Services)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes

Project summary
<p>The hall has very aged heating and lighting systems. It was agreed an Energy Efficiency Audit with recommendations by a qualified specialist (NFU Energy) was required to advise and make suggestions as to how the Trustees and Board members of the Village Hall and the Parish Council from whom the hall is leased could improve our energy consumption, reduce our carbon footprint and be a more sustainable community asset.</p> <p>The Parish and Town Council Investment fund has already supported the parish with funding for this report and for recommended building fabric works.</p> <p>This application seeks funding of £12360.88 to change the heating system (which accounts for approx. 78% of electricity usage) from inefficient night storage heaters to a split inverter A/C Unit.</p>
HCC – Officer feedback/comments (relevant Services)
Lisa Wood - Partnering with Rural Programme Team:

Mapledurwell & Up Nately Village hall have provided the results of the Energy Efficiency Audit carried out by NFU to demonstrate the benefits for each element of their planned Energy Efficiency project.

This final application seeks funding from the Parish And Town Council Investment Fund in line with HCC's energy efficiency grant funding, to address their antiquated heating system.

They have provided a comprehensive application providing evidence of their projected costs and demonstrating a potential cost saving of approx. £8000 annually against a project cost of £12,360.88.

They are in the process of addressing all 'fabric first' energy improvement elements of their Village Hall, and this funding would be conditional on that work being completed first.

Subject to review by Chris Dear, I would support this application.

Chris Dear - Climate Programme Team:

Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council have already demonstrated their commitment to the climate emergency and HCC has already recognised this by awarding grant funding to support an initial energy audit, and subsequent building improvements. Taking account of the recommendations of the audit report, this application seeks to continue to reduce carbon emissions and make the village hall increasingly energy efficient by installing a modern, efficient heating system. HCC forecasts annual financial savings of almost £8,000 and an annual carbon saving of 3.27tCO₂e.

On that basis, the application is supported.

Officer comments and recommendation

Lisa Wood – Rural Affairs Programme Support Officer

This project's Business Case presents a positive continuation of Mapledurwell & Up Nately Parish Council's well-planned energy efficiency programme, focussed on delivering against HCC's Climate Emergency targets. The supporting statement from Chris Dear mirrors this evaluation.

For the reasons stated above, and subject to the completion of additional internal building fabric works, I would recommend the organisation is awarded £12,360.88.

Appendix D – Shedfield Parish Council

Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2022/23

Funding assessment form

Organisation name:	Shedfield Parish Council
Project title:	Shedfield Pavilion – ASHP, Radiators, Solar
Project location:	Shedfield
Application references:	CG00025903, CG00025904, CG00025939
Total project cost:	£30,698
Amount requested:	£15,000
Match funding – cash:	£15,698
Match funding - volunteer hours:	
Match funding - in-kind:	
Match funding – total value	£15,698
AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:	£15,000

Eligibility checklist	Yes/No
Is the applicant a Parish or Town Council, or a Local Community Group, directly benefitting the local community, with clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the scheme priorities (to build community resilience and ease pressure on HCC Services)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes

Project summary
<p>Shedfield Parish Council are extending their pavilion hall so that they can offer a better space to any community groups that may wish to use the new facilities provided. The entire project is costing £530,000 funded by large contributions from the FA, WCC, and the rest from the Parish Council.</p> <p>As part of this they aim to improve the current main pavilion community space and office space which currently is small, cramped and in a poor state of repair. It is also in a poor condition with regard to energy efficiency measures. Following their energy efficiency audit and building fabric measures, all funded by this scheme, the installation of energy creation measures and associated radiators is the final stage of works to be carried out to address their building energy efficiencies.</p>
HCC – Officer feedback/comments (relevant Services)
<p>Lisa Wood - Rural Programme Team:</p> <p>Shedfield Parish Council have provided the results of the Energy Efficiency Audit carried out by Focus Green to demonstrate the benefits for each element of their Community Building Improvement project.</p>

Using substantial funding from WCC and the FA, as well as contributions from the Parish Council, a wide scale improvement and extension project of their community facility is ongoing. The Parish Council conducted an extensive tender process prior to commencing with the build, and selected Quaystone as their preferred partner. This occurred prior to the grant fund being made available by HCC. Their full tender document and project gaant chart have been shared to confirm that quotes as stated.

This and subsequent applications seek funding from the Parish And Town Council Investment Fund in line with HCC's energy efficiency grant funding. Their 'fabric first' approach has ensured that all elements of energy saving within the building have already been addressed first.

This request for funding focuses solely on the installation of solar panels on the existing building. Their energy audit demonstrates kW/hr savings of 2500 annually (£1309), against a project cost of £6250 (£5000 requested), a repayment period of between 4 and 5 years.

This request for funding focuses solely on the installation of an air source heat pump. Their energy audit demonstrates kW/hr savings of 2070 annually (£1308), against a project cost of just over £19,000 (£5000 requested), a repayment period of between 4 and 5 years.

This request for funding focuses solely on the installation of the radiators required to operate with their air source heat pump. Their energy audit demonstrates kW/hr savings of 1623 annually (£849), against a project cost of just over £5435 (£5000 requested), a repayment period of between 4 and 5 years.

Subject to review by Chris Dear I would support this application.

Chris Dear - Climate Emergency Dept:

Shedfield Parish Council have already demonstrated their commitment to the climate emergency and HCC has already recognised this by awarding grant funding to support works for the transformation of their pavilion hall.

Taking account of the recommendations of the audit report, this application seeks to continue to reduce carbon emissions and make the facility increasingly energy efficient by installing solar PV. Based on figures provided by Shedfield Parish Council, HCC forecasts that this measure will deliver annual financial savings of almost £1,309 and an annual carbon saving of 0.58tCO₂e.

In addition, as a combined package, taking account of figures provided by Shedfield, HCC forecasts that replacing the radiators and installing a heat pump will deliver annual financial savings of almost £1,932 and an annual carbon saving of 0.86tCO₂e.

On that basis, the application is supported.

Officer comments and recommendation

Lisa Wood – Rural Affairs Programme Support Officer

This project's Business Case presents a positive continuation of Shedfield Parish Council's well-planned energy efficiency programme, focussed on delivering against HCC's Climate Emergency targets. The supporting statement from Chris Dear mirrors this evaluation.

For the reasons stated above, I would recommend the organisation is awarded £15,000.

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities Executive Member for Policy and Resources and Economic Development
Date:	8 December 2022
Title:	Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve - Future Proposals
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities & Business Services

Contact name: Jo Heath
Jo Montague

Tel: 07545 735629
03707 797040

Email: Jo.Heath@hants.gov.uk
Jo.montague@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Executive Member Decisions on proposals regarding the future of Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve and its associated buildings following a period of staff consultation and public engagement.
2. This is a single report but, as a consequence of the constitutional responsibilities of Hampshire County Council Executive Members, the recommendations in paragraphs 3 to 9 need to be considered by the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities and the recommendations in paragraphs 10 to 13 by the Executive Member for Policy, Resources and Economic Development. The decisions for these Executive Members have therefore been scheduled to follow each other and the decisions of the Executive Member for Policy, Resources and Economic Development will be contingent upon the decisions for the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities:

3. Notes the level of local community interest and supports the actions identified in response to the feedback from the public engagement exercise.
4. Notes that Haven House has been listed as an Asset of Community Value which may delay any disposal by up to 6 months.
5. Agrees, during any period when Haven House cannot be sold because of any restriction imposed as a consequence of Haven House being listed as an Asset of Community Value, to consider carefully any viable and fully costed proposals for the future ownership of Haven House and the Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve that meet the objectives set out in paragraph 35 of this report, which are cost-neutral for the County Council and which transfer the statutory responsibilities to the recipient as appropriate.
6. Approves the closure of the café, shop and visitor centre located in Haven House, Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, with effect from 23 December 2022.
7. Declares Haven House surplus to the requirements of Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service.
8. Recommends to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources and Economic Development to dispose of Haven House ensuring that the County Council achieves best public value in so doing.
9. Recommends to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources and Economic Development to retain the full value of the capital receipt from the sale of Haven House and Haven Cottage to be reinvested in Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources and Economic Development:

10. Approves the disposal of Haven House at Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, following the decision made by the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities to declare Haven House surplus to service requirements.
11. Agrees that the full value of the capital receipt from the sale of Haven House and Haven Cottage be invested in Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve with any funds that are surplus to the immediate needs held by the County Council for the sole purpose of benefitting the Nature Reserve in the future.

12. Approves the phased investment programme set out in the report, subject to Cabinet approval.
13. Note that work will not commence until a capital receipt has been agreed and that Haven House has been listed as an Asset of Community Value which may delay any disposal by up to 6 months.

Executive Summary

14. Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve (THNNR) has been owned and managed by Hampshire County Council since 1972. It is an internationally important site for wildlife and along with the National Nature Reserve status it is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is part of the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area.
15. The reserve includes Haven House which serves as a visitor centre with a café, shop and toilets and Haven Cottage, a Grade II listed building which has been vacant for many years.
16. The current operating model at THNNR is financially unsustainable with increasing net costs to run and manage the site. The current running costs are £641,000. These costs are met through income (£505,000) and an annual cash limit of £136,000 from the Hampshire County Council Countryside Service budget.
17. An analysis of the site's financial position has identified that over the next 3 years the site would cost the County Council an estimated additional £1.8m if no changes are made. This includes increased running costs, the projected investment required for the ageing buildings, and funding required for investment in the nature reserve itself.
18. Haven House requires significant investment to maintain it for the future. The costs of bringing it up to acceptable modern standards alongside ongoing maintenance are estimated to be £411,000. The residential Haven Cottage requires an investment of £263,000.
19. The Nature Reserve also requires investment - two of the most popular bird hides on the site have been closed recently due to their declining state. The projected investment needed for the reserve's infrastructure such as boardwalks and bird hides for the next 3 years are £670,000.
20. A detailed business case with an options analysis for alternative operating models proposed that the management of the National Nature Reserve should be prioritised, that the visitor centre with the café and shop should close, and that Haven House be sold to reduce revenue and capital liabilities and to generate a capital receipt to support the future of the Nature Reserve. The

redacted version of the business case can be found in Appendix E, and an unredacted version of the business case is attached as Appendix F which is an exempt appendix and is therefore not publicly available.

21. In addition, the business case proposed that Haven Cottage (which had been empty for some years) be declared as surplus to requirements and that it be sold in order to reinvest in the Nature Reserve. The decision to declare Haven Cottage as surplus to service requirements and to market for sale was taken by the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services on 20 July 2022.
22. The affected staff were formally consulted between 27 September 2022 and 27 October 2022. Some adjustments were made to the proposals following the initial feedback and the period of consultation was extended to 14 November 2022.
23. The proposals were made public to seek views and understand the potential impact of the proposed changes on visitors, annual membership holders of the Nature Reserve and the local community. This five-week public engagement exercise commenced on 27 September 2022 and concluded on 1 November 2022. There was a high level of interest and concern expressed by the respondents which is evident from the 2,997 responses that were received, the majority from the local community. These are detailed, with responses, in Appendix D(i).
24. Following the publication of the proposals, the County Council's Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities, and senior County Council officers, have directly and extensively engaged with all interested parties to listen to their views, respond to questions and provide further information as requested. The two Executive Member decision makers have been provided with all emails and letters received since the launch of the engagement process and also all written comments included in the survey response forms.
25. It is clear, and was acknowledged in the original business case, that the visitor centre, café and garden at Haven House are highly valued by local residents specifically in the Titchfield area and the proposals have generated significant interest from people keen to preserve the facilities for the future. The level of response clearly shows the strength of feeling and sense of importance of these facilities within Haven House to the local community and its wellbeing. However, provision of these facilities is not a statutory duty for the County Council, with the community of users not reaching the thresholds relating to the County Council's social care responsibilities. The costs of maintaining this provision for the local community, subsidised by the County Council, have to be balanced with consideration of the financial sustainability of the National Nature Reserve and the prioritisation of the County Council's statutory responsibilities therein. It also needs to be considered within the context of the extremely challenging financial position for the County Council overall.

Contextual Information

26. Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service aims to inspire people to connect with and enjoy the countryside, while making space for nature to thrive. The Service has several statutory functions including the management of Hampshire's 3,000-mile public rights of way network and 7,400 acres of land for recreation, wildlife and heritage. Around 85% of the land that The Countryside Service manage for HCC is designated for its wildlife or heritage value.
27. THNNR was acquired by Hampshire County Council in 1972 and designated as a National Nature Reserve in 1995. It is an internationally important site for its habitats which support a wide variety of wildlife throughout the year, including many important overwintering bird species. The Nature Reserve has recorded 200 different types of birdlife along with over 300 types of plant, of which six are noted as nationally scarce. It is protected by a number of environmental designations including Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR).
28. THNNR covers 135 Hectares with a series of birdwatching hides and boardwalks providing access to the reserve. There are two properties that form part of the HCC holdings at Titchfield Haven, namely Haven House and Haven Cottage, along with a small number of associated parking spaces, a yard and storage area.
29. Haven House is a former private residence (650sqm) constructed in c. 1820. It now serves as the main visitor area comprising a reception area, retail shop, small exhibition area, café/catering space and toilets. The upper level is solely office and meeting space for reserve staff, with a residential flat. A small garden is located to the side of the Visitor Centre. Located behind the Visitor Centre is Haven Cottage (recently Grade II listed in Jan 2022) which has not been used for public access or service delivery and is currently vacant.
30. Titchfield Haven receives around 100,000 visits each year, many of which are repeat visits from regular visitors and annual reserve membership holders (in the survey responses - para 69 below - around 1750 people identified themselves as regular visitors). Admission to the visitor centre (Haven House) is free and represents the majority of the visits (85,000). Visitors wishing to enter the reserve (15,000 visits per annum) pay an admission charge (£6.50 for adults, £3.50 for children) or an annual membership (£60 for an individual adult, £80 for a joint adult and £8 for a child). Currently there are around 650 annual members. The average spend per head in the café is £3.80 and in the shop is 0.75p.
31. Since 2015 the County Council has been investing in Country Parks to create a suite of modern parks that are operationally self-financing. These investments have been based on robust financial business cases for generating greater

income and reducing the reliance on County Council funding. Additional funding has been secured from a variety of sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund which has contributed a total of just over £5m over the past 7 years.

32. The opportunities for generating significantly more income are unfortunately very limited at THNNR, due to the nature and location of the site. Therefore, developing a more financially sustainable way of managing the Nature Reserve for the future has been under consideration by the County Council for a number of years. During this time, the Countryside Service has commissioned several studies to assist with identifying the options for the future management of the nature reserve and associated facilities. Details of these studies can be found in Appendix A.
33. The total cost of running THNNR is currently £641,000. These costs are met through income (£505,000 of which £315,000 is catering) and an annual cash limit of £136,000 from the Hampshire County Council budget. Table 1 of this report sets out the current budget position.
34. An analysis of the site's financial position estimates that over the next 3 years the site will cost the County Council an additional £1.8m if no changes are made. This includes increased running costs, the projected investment required for the ageing buildings, and funding required for investment in the Nature Reserve itself.

Proposal

35. In order to consider future options for THNNR, four key objectives were developed within the context of Hampshire County Council strategic priorities, statutory responsibilities, and the sustainability of the reserve in the long term. They were that THNNR should be:
 - **Financially sustainable:** Increase economic sustainability, reduce reliance on HCC and ensure the best use of public assets and resources.
 - **Environmentally sustainable:** Develop a future strategy which responds to opportunities for improved habitat management and adapts to be more resilient to climate and coastal change.
 - **Community focused:** To ensure THNNR has a thriving role within the local community and a strong and supported volunteer network.
 - **Visitor experience:** To increase access at a landscape scale level, understanding and engagement of the local environment, climate, and coastal change.
36. After revisiting previous research (Appendix A) and undertaking further analysis the following four options were considered in greater detail and presented in a Business Case.

Option 1 - Do nothing. No change to current management of visitor offer. This does not address the increasing financial pressures (as outlined in paragraph 48 - Table 2).

Option 2 - Develop the Offer. Invest in the current visitor centre at Haven House or a new visitor centre. This would require significant additional investment with limited revenue return and would not provide investment for the Nature Reserve.

Option 3 - Transfer to a third party. This would be considered if a competent organisation could meet the objectives set out in paragraph 35 and remove the financial liability for Haven House and THNNR from the County Council. During the investigation and engagement stages, discussions took place with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT), National Trust and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), but no viable and fully costed proposals have been received to date.

Option 4 - Change Focus. Prioritise the reserve and manage it without the café and shop. This is currently the only viable costed option and now forms the approach recommended in this report. It is closely aligned with the four key objectives set out above.

37. Appendix B provides a cost/benefit analysis of each option.

38. **Option 4 - Change Focus** - The key benefits of this option are:

- a) It is the most viable approach to ensure the long-term environmental sustainability of THNNR which is nationally important for wildlife and habitats.
- b) It reduces the revenue costs of THNNR to Hampshire County Council while investing capital to secure the long-term future of the Nature Reserve.
- c) It provides an opportunity to take a wider strategic landscape scale approach and to improve access to the site for the local volunteers and the community.

39. The following changes and actions are proposed. These would enable the County Council to put nature first and prioritise investment in the National Nature Reserve, as an internationally important site for wildlife.

- a) Closure of the café, shop and visitor centre in Haven House;
- b) Disposal of Haven House and Haven Cottage;
- c) Reinvestment of £775,000 from the proceeds from the sale of the properties to establish a low maintenance operational base for staff and volunteers, improve visitor access and complete urgent works;

- d) Reinvestment of the proceeds from the sale of the properties to protect and enhance the special habitats for wildlife, as well as improving visitor access to the reserve;
 - e) Any remaining balance from the sales retained for future investment in THNNR as required.
40. The County Council is committed to meeting its statutory obligations to manage this important National Nature Reserve whilst ensuring the best use of public assets and resources. The corporate policy is for all capital receipts from any sale to be held centrally. However, in this instance the recommended commitment to re-invest all the proceeds from sales of the properties into the Nature Reserve represents a major commitment from the County Council to the future of the reserve.

Impacts of the Proposal

41. It is recommended that the café, shop and visitor centre close with effect from 23 December 2022. Haven House would remain in minimal operational use until a new staff and volunteer base is established to ensure continuity of the management of the reserve. This closure date is proposed to reduce the considerable overhead costs as soon as possible, including utilities and cleaning, and to limit the impact on staff by reducing the period of uncertainty.
42. The closure of the café, shop and visitor centre would mean a reduction in staffing requirements of 6.49 FTE (10 members of staff). THNNR is currently supported by a team of 16 members of staff, equal to 11.15 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. There are 5.05FTE in catering, 3.24FTE supporting the visitor centre and administration, 2.86FTE supporting the reserve. There are also 15 casual working arrangements in place supporting the café and shop.
43. If the proposal is approved, the net operational revenue costs would be reduced from £136,000 to £76,000 making an annual saving of £60,000.
44. The following table shows a revised revenue forecast for the new operating model at Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, based on the updated recommendations set out in this report. This forecasts a net cash limit reduction of £60,000 to contribute to the Hampshire County Council savings target for 2023.

Table 1 - Current budget and proposed budget following implementation of proposals.

BUDGET	CURRENT (2022/23)	PROPOSAL
Staffing	226,000	139,000
Premises	57,000	30,500
Travel	11,000	9,000
Supplies and Services	63,000	16,000
Expenditure	357,000	194,500
Grant Income	(20,000)	(20,000)
Sales	(76,000)	(6,000)
Donations	(5,000)	(5,000)
Admission & Memberships	(57,000)	(57,000)
Rents	(7,000)	(2,500)
Annual SLA	(22,000)	(22,000)
Income	(190,000)	(112,500)
Net	167,000	82,000
Net Catering	(31,000)	(6,000)
Total cost of THNNR	136,000	76,000
Reduction in costs	Baseline	60,000

45. Haven House requires significant investment to maintain it for the future. The costs of bringing it up to acceptable modern standards alongside ongoing maintenance are estimated to be £411,000. The residential Haven Cottage requires an investment of £263,000.
46. The disposal or sale of Haven House and Haven Cottage would remove the unbudgeted asset condition liability to the County Council which is currently £674,000 (includes roof repairs, staircase replacement and window repairs). An additional £226,000 condition liability is forecast over the next 3 years as further works to Haven House would be required.
47. The Nature Reserve also requires investment - two of the most popular bird hides on the site have been closed recently due to their declining state. The projected investment needed for the reserve's infrastructure such as boardwalks and bird hides for the next 3 years is estimated to be £670,000.
48. **Table 2** details the asset liability pressures of £1.57m and the revenue pressures of £261,000 over the next three years without any changes to the current operating model.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Revenue Budget Pressure - SP23	60,000	60,000	60,000	180,000
Building condition liability – Haven House (current)	137,000	274,000		411,000
Building condition liability – Haven Cottage (current)	263,000			263,000
Forecast condition liabilities – Buildings			226,000	226,000
Forecast condition liabilities - Nature Reserve	280,000	280,000	110,000	670,000
Net revenue running cost increase	25,000	27,000	29,000	81,000
Total pressure against budget	765,000	641,000	425,000	1,831,000

49. Haven Cottage was declared surplus to Countryside Service requirements on 20 July 2022 by Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and is currently being marketed.
50. The capital receipt value from the sale of both properties is expected to be in the region of £2m. This report contains a recommendation to retain 100% of the capital receipts from the sale of Haven House and Haven Cottage to be invested in a low maintenance operational base for staff and volunteers and in the infrastructure of the Nature Reserve. It is recognised that there are external factors that may impact on both the capital receipt and the estimated expenditure, so it is recommended that any funds remaining after the immediate capital investment are ringfenced to assist with the long-term investment and management of the Nature Reserve.
51. The current estimate of the investment required for Phase 1 is £775,000 to fund the replacement operational base, complete urgent works to the reserve and meet the costs for selling the property.
52. Phase 2 will see the remainder of the balance used to support a further programme of work within the National Nature Reserve to ensure compliance with the County Council statutory duties and responsibilities and to build resilience in mitigation of climate change impacts.
53. **Table 3** illustrates the current estimates for capital receipt and expenditure.

Estimates	22/23 '000	23/24 '000	24/25 '000	25/26 '000	Total '000
Haven Cottage capital receipt	500				500
Haven House capital receipt		1,500			1,500
Total Income	500	1,500			2,000
Phase 1 estimated costs (asset disposal costs, replacement operational base and urgent works)	10	765			775

Estimates	22/23 '000	23/24 '000	24/25 '000	25/26 '000	Total '000
Phase 2 estimated costs (works on the reserve e.g., watercourse management, boardwalks, hides etc.)		135	280	110	525
Total Costs	10	900	280	110	1,300

54. The costs of the staff redundancies will be met from Departmental funds ringfenced to support redundancy costs associated with the savings programme delivery. Other costs related to the closure of the café, shop and visitor centre will be met within the Countryside Service.

Consultation and Equalities

Staff Consultation

55. Formal consultation on the proposed future structure and ways of working commenced with Trade Unions and staff on 27 September 2022. The proposed HR processes to be followed and timeline for key activity and decision making was shared. The consultation information stated that any recommendations following consultation would be subject to consideration and approval at the Executive Member's Decision Day scheduled for 8 December 2022.
56. The proposal included potential redundancies and staff and Trade Unions were advised that any meetings to provide formal notice of redundancies would take place after the Executive Member Decision Day.
57. The staff consultation closed on 27 October 2022, however in response to feedback received during this consultation period, some elements of the proposal were amended, and the consultation period was extended until 14 November 2022 for staff affected by these changes. Trade Unions were also advised of the amendment and extension to consultation.
58. As a result of the feedback from **staff** the following detailed amendments have been made to the proposals:
- The staffing structure is changed to provide 7-day cover to support both visitors and volunteers.
 - To establish a dual approach for tickets, with both online and onsite sales.
 - To include signage and wayfinding as part of the changes to maintain visibility for visitors and a public presence for the reserve.
 - To consider the alternative option of utilising the current reception building as the operational base.

- e) A phased delivery, which retains visitor services staff during a 12-month transitional period, including the establishment of online ticketing, to provide support for visitors, members and volunteers.

59. Appendix C outlines the main feedback and outcome of the staff consultation.

Public Engagement

- 60. Detailed information on the feedback received from the public engagement exercise along with the response to concerns and suggestions is shown in Appendix D(i).
- 61. A full pack of the written responses to the public engagement exercise and copies of all other correspondence has been provided to the two Executive Members who will be considering the recommendations in this report. The Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities has confirmed that he has read each piece of correspondence received at the time of receipt.
- 62. The Equalities Impact Assessment (summarised on pages 23-24 and shown in Appendix G) sets out the demographics and equalities characteristics of THNNR users and survey respondents.
- 63. The age range of THNNR members is significantly skewed towards the older age ranges, with the three younger ranges (18-25, 26-35 and 35-45) all below the average for the base population, while 46-55, 56-65 and 66+ are all above average.
- 64. Approximately 3 in 5 members fall into the older half of the age profile while, in contrast, only 1 in 10 falls in the youngest 18-25 range. The most significant variances are in the 26-35 age range (lower by 5%) and the 66+ age range (higher by nearly 8%).
- 65. The County Council engaged with visitors, local residents and other key stakeholders to provide their views on the proposals. A website was produced with comprehensive information on the proposals for THNNR. An electronic and paper questionnaire was designed to collect and evaluate the views of the public in advance of any formal decision. The public engagement exercise was open from 27 September 2022 until 1 November 2022.
- 66. Respondents were asked to share how they used and experienced THNNR; to comment on proposed plans to improve the sustainability of the site and to share their ideas about how the County Council could invest in THNNR for the future.

67. Anyone with an interest in THNNR was invited to help shape the future of the site. This opportunity was promoted via a range of channels including, but not limited to:
- A website presence including all key information, a link to the survey and a 'frequently asked questions' section;
 - Media engagement through press releases (published on www.hants.gov.uk) and media statements;
 - Social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) which prominently featured the proposal and public engagement;
 - Direct communications to key stakeholders, annual members and volunteers.
 - Posters, business cards (including QR codes) and paper copy surveys on site to ensure casual visitors to the site were made aware
 - The proposals and the opportunity to contribute to the public survey were given additional profile through media coverage including on BBC Online, ITV Meridian, The News and The Daily Echo.
68. A total of 2997 survey responses were received (2677 electronically and 320 on paper). 38% of the respondents were from the immediate Fareham area, with 13% from nearby Gosport and 13% from Eastleigh. Of the remaining responses 27% were from the wider Hampshire County Council area, and 9% outside the Hampshire County Council area.
69. The responses included 1723 who defined themselves as a regular visitor to Titchfield Haven, 246 annual members, 56 volunteers, 8 democratically elected representatives, and 7 organisations, groups or businesses.
70. Whilst respecting the importance of the reserve, many respondents felt that visitor access and facilities should be prioritised as a gateway to appreciating nature and a place to pause and appreciate the beautiful surroundings. There was therefore much concern about the potential loss of the current facilities.
71. The main areas of feedback related to:
- a) impact on the local community;
 - b) changes to the visitor offer including risks to revenue;
 - c) ideas for income generation including parking;
 - d) priorities and suggestions for catering facilities; and
 - e) suggestions for transferring to a third-party and education opportunities.
72. The key points raised are summarised in paragraphs 72 to 92 and subsequently addressed below.

73. **The importance of Haven House to the local community and health benefits.** Many of the respondents lived in the areas surrounding the reserve and were concerned about the impact on the local community – particularly with regards to the closure of Haven House, which was regarded as an important hub that enabled people of all ages and abilities to come together and provided a destination at the end of a walk – benefitting both mental and physical health.
74. Hampshire County Council recognise the value that the local community place on Haven House as a location to come together. There are, however, other venues in the local area that offer a similar provision including Titchfield Community Centre and Titchfield Parish Rooms. There is a pub and café within a 10-minute walk of THNNR and in the heart of the community.
75. The reserve will remain open to the public providing open space for people to benefit physically and mentally from connection with nature. The original proposals have been amended to enhance accessibility including an accessible toilet (including baby changing facilities), an accessible parking space and improvements to the boardwalks and hides.
76. **The reduced revenue income resulting from the closure of the café and a request for alternative catering provision.** The accounts show a £31k net surplus for the café. This is based on accounting for the direct costs of service provision only (food, goods and staff costs). The costs of the premises (Haven House) from which the café operates are accounted for in the overall running costs for Haven House and the café, shop and visitor centre (with 100,000 visits a year) will make up the majority of the electricity, gas, water and cleaning costs (the rest of the premises being used by staff). When the costs of running Haven House are taken into consideration, the overall cost to run the Visitor Centre and cafe gives a net operating loss of around £80k annually.
77. The refreshment needs of those visiting the reserve could be met by the nearby pub and café and could provide additional income to these venues. However, in response to the concerns raised through the engagement, if the recommendations in this report are approved, Hampshire County Council will explore the option for providing a temporary or seasonal catering offer. There would also be the opportunity for Fareham Borough Council to consider offering mobile catering concessions on land in their ownership along the beachfront. There are further planned focus group sessions that would inform the requirements for future catering provision.
78. The likely reduction in visitor numbers to the reserve and reduction in income from entrance charges. There was recognition that the buildings in their current state may not be the best fit for purpose. However, the desire remained, even amongst those who prioritised the reserve, for a visit to incorporate information about the site, places to rest and some form of refreshments and toilet facilities that would enable an extended stay, an extended season and facilitate visits

from further afield. It was feared that without these, visitor numbers and therefore income to support the site may reduce. Hampshire County Council are keen to reduce the risk of a reduction in visitors benefitting from the reserve and have amended proposals to include additional visitor support to mitigate this risk. A phased delivery is now proposed to provide cover 7 days per week for visitor and volunteer support during a 12-month transitional period, including a dual approach for tickets, with both online and onsite sales. Should the buildings be sold, respondents highlighted a long list of features around the reserve, such as signage and wayfinding, that might benefit from additional consideration or investment. Further engagement work with visitors, reserve members, volunteers and interested groups would help to inform how the County Council can best invest in the reserve to encourage and welcome visitors.

79. **Opportunities for income generation.** Respondents put forward a range of suggestions to increase income, including fundraising, introducing new activities, or alternative management options and application for support from grant funding. The most frequent suggestions from respondents related to increasing retail, renting out the residential flat, room hire and education.
80. The space within the building is limited with little opportunity to expand. The site is restrictive for both access and parking for buses/coaches and there is no formal meeting room or other internal space to use for education groups. Opening in the evening for events was also suggested but has associated additional staff and overhead costs. Therefore, whilst there are opportunities to generate some increases in income, the potential for a net surplus is limited and would not address the larger pressures of building condition liability or investment in the reserve.
81. The Countryside Service already benefits from government grant funding and Titchfield Haven has for the last 12 years benefitted from funding from the DEFRA Higher Level Stewardship scheme. Titchfield is also thankful to receive regular donations. However, there is a risk associated with relying on these forms of funding in the long term, as it is not guaranteed.
82. **In the course of the public engagement further exploratory discussions have been held with several organisations but no viable and fully costed proposals have been received.** Hampshire County Council will be open to discussions with any appropriate and competent organisations who have an interest in the future management of THNNR. The Asset of Community Value makes provision for a 6-month moratorium on the sale of Haven House, once an EOI has been received, and therefore a period of time for any such negotiations to take place.
83. **Concern over the future use of Haven House and Haven Cottage once sold.** Respondents raised concerns over what might be done with the land once sold, the disruption of development, and that access would be restricted if

put into private hands. The sale of Haven Cottage was seen as more palatable – particularly if some of the funds could be used to retain visitor facilities. An important aspect of the proposal is to maintain and improve access to the reserve and this has been taken into account when considering the boundaries of both buildings.

84. A range of covenants will be included in any transfer designed to restrict the way in which the Haven Cottage is occupied and the activities which are allowed to take place, reflecting the sensitive location of the cottage. A similar approach is proposed for Haven House, with specific reference to the sensitive location on the edge of the National Nature Reserve. We anticipate that Haven Cottage would likely remain a residential dwelling. Any change of use or alternations of this Grade II listed building would require further permissions to be sought by the purchaser from the local planning authority (Fareham Borough Council) in the usual way as would any change of use for Haven House.
85. **The impact of parking charges levied by Fareham Borough Council on the visitors to the reserve.** A number of respondents asked if the recent introduction of charges had impacted on visitor numbers and if parking income could support Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve. The local car park is managed by Fareham Borough Council, Hampshire County Council do not receive any income from the parking charges.
86. Whilst HCC cannot measure the exact impact this has had on visitor numbers to the café or reserve, there has been a slight overall reduction in visitor numbers when comparing 2021/22 to 2019/20. Fareham Borough Council parking charges apply for both volunteers and staff which has added to the operational costs for THNNR.
87. The County Council will provide for an accessible parking space and the provision of bike racks as part of the proposals for the future operation of the nature reserve.
88. **Lost opportunity to educate.** This was raised by a large number of respondents, specifically the opportunity to educate children about nature, to talk to other site visitors and volunteers and as a space for school activities, talks and events.
89. There is currently no formal schools programme at Titchfield due to a lack of appropriate facilities on site, which is restrictive for both access and parking for buses and there is no education room or other internal space to use as a base. There are group bookings for the reserve but the offer is in line with a regular reserve visit. It is unlikely that a visit to THNNR would be attractive to many schools as the costs of hiring transport for a visit that (even if there were appropriate facilities) would at best be half a day, would be prohibitive. The pressure on school budgets means that they are unlikely to be expanding the

range of external visits they undertake and for these reasons it would be unwise to rely on any additional income coming from this source.

90. As part of the proposals, the need for further investment into information and interpretation in the reserve has been identified. If proposals are approved, focus groups with visitors, members and volunteers will be held to develop the focus of this interpretation for different visitor groups, including families and children.
91. **Suggestions regarding the transfer of the management of Haven House to another organisation.** Discussions have been held with potential organisations over several years, including during this recent engagement period, to consider the current proposals but no viable and fully costed proposals have been received. If a viable and fully costed alternative option was proposed that would meet the objectives set out in paragraph 35 and fully remove the liability of Haven House and the National Nature Reserve from the County Council, it would be given due consideration.
92. **General concerns** about the proposals overall varied amongst different respondent types, reflecting their priorities and their relationship with the site. A key concern across most groups was the impact the proposal could have on the local community:
- **Café/Haven house visitors**, who used the café/shop monthly or more often, identified impact to the local community as their main concern.
 - **Volunteers** also identified the impact on the local community as a key concern, but also the potential impact on the visitor experience and the risk of reduced visitor numbers.
 - **Annual members** were primarily concerned with the impact this might have on their visit or the visitor experience at the reserve.
 - **Reserve visitors** were concerned with the impact proposals might have on their visit and the local community, and a for a fewer number of reserve visitors who have not used the café in the past year, they identified that investment in the nature reserve should be prioritised and were unconcerned with the closure of the café.
 - **Organisations** that responded identified impact on the local community as their main concern, alongside a loss of the opportunity to educate.
 - **Elected representatives** survey comments recognised the investment needed for the reserve, and also identified concerns about the impact on the local community and risk of losing accessible facilities. Some felt that selling Haven Cottage would be acceptable, the same number were apprehensive about the potential loss of historical buildings.

Summary of Amendments as a Result of the Public Engagement

93. In summary the following amendments have been included in the final proposal following public engagement:
- a) Accessibility will be enhanced by including an accessible toilet (as per the original proposal), now including baby changing facilities and an accessible parking space. The County Council will provide the provision of bike racks as part of the proposals for the future operation of the nature reserve.
 - b) Hampshire County Council will explore the option for providing a temporary or seasonal catering offer. There are further planned focus group sessions that will inform the requirements for catering provision.
 - c) Proposals have been amended to include additional visitor support during a 12-month transitional period to reduce the risk of a reduction in visitors benefitting from the reserve.
 - d) The County Council is open to discussions with any appropriate and competent organisation who have an interest in the future management of THNNR during any period when Haven House cannot be sold because of any restriction imposed as a consequence of Haven House being listed as an Asset of Community Value and will consider carefully any viable and fully costed proposals for the future ownership of Haven House and the THNNR that meet the objectives set out in paragraph 35 of this report, which are cost-neutral for the County Council, and which transfer the statutory responsibilities to the recipient as appropriate.
 - e) A range of covenants will be included in any transfer designed to restrict the way in which the Haven Cottage is occupied and the activities which are allowed to take place, reflecting the sensitive location of the cottage. A similar approach is proposed for Haven House, with specific reference to the sensitive location on the edge of the National Nature Reserve.
94. It is clear, and was acknowledged in the original business case, that the visitor centre, café and garden at Haven House are highly valued by local residents specifically in the Titchfield area and the proposals have generated significant interest from people keen to preserve the facilities for the future.
95. The level of response clearly shows the strength of feeling and sense of importance of these facilities within Haven House to the local community and its wellbeing. However, provision of these facilities is not a statutory duty for the County Council, with the community of users not reaching the thresholds relating to the County Council's social care responsibilities.
96. The costs of maintaining this provision for the local community, subsidised by the County Council, have to be balanced with consideration of the financial sustainability of the National Nature Reserve and the prioritisation of the

County Council's statutory responsibilities therein. It also needs to be considered within the context of the extremely challenging financial position for the County Council overall.

Engagement with Organisations and Elected Representatives

97. In addition to the public survey, the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities has met with local organisations, wildlife charities, local elected members and members of parliament to discuss the proposals.
98. These meetings provided an opportunity for more thorough discussions and challenge on the detail of the proposals and a broader exploration to understand if there are any alternative viable solutions.
99. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds confirmed that the acquisition of Haven House is not a strategic priority for them as they are planning on significant investment in their existing nature reserves, and as a charity, they have limited funds and must ensure that their funds are targeted. They are however keen to work in partnership with HCC should the opportunity arise.
100. Discussions have also taken place with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the National Trust. Neither of these organisations have confirmed their positions as yet.
101. Hampshire County Council have met with the Hill Head Residents Association who have not, as yet put forward a proposal that meets the objectives set out in paragraph 35 of this report, which are cost-neutral for the County Council and which transfer the statutory responsibilities to the recipient as appropriate.
102. However, the Hill Head Residents Association have indicated their intent to put forward a proposal working with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for the future management of the National Nature Reserve and Haven House Visitor Centre.

Other Considerations

Petition

103. A petition entitled "SAVE OUR HAVEN CENTRE", led by the community was received by Hampshire County Council on 24 November 2022 (Appendix H). The verified total number of signatures was 9991 which demonstrates the strength of feeling and sense of importance of these facilities within Haven House to the local community. The number of signatures is below the threshold of 32,000 signatures that would enable the petitioner to request for the matter to be debated at a full Council meeting.

Emails and Letters

104. The content of emails and letters were considered alongside the analysis of the survey returns. In addition, The Executive Member for Countryside, Culture and Communities confirmed that he had sight of all emails and letters as they arrived. A full pack of written responses to the survey, emails and letters was made available to both Executive Member decision makers.

Asset of Community Value

105. On 11 November 2022, an application was accepted by Fareham Borough Council to list Haven House as an 'Asset of Community Value' which gives third-parties or community groups the opportunity to submit a proposal to buy. The nomination was made by Hill Head Residents Association, a local group who also led the application for Haven Cottage to become Grade II listed (January 2022). The County Council chose not to oppose this application.
106. If the County Council expresses an intention to sell the asset, a third-party organisation or community group would be entitled to register their interest to purchase within six weeks. If an interest is registered, this creates a six-month moratorium on the sale of the building to allow time for a proposal to be submitted and considered by the County Council. This has been taken into consideration as part of the recommendations in this report.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

107. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
108. This climate impact assessment considers two areas of work.
109. Firstly, the proposal to sell the Haven visitor centre and cottage with some of the proceeds re-invested into the provision of a small new depot construction. In principle this will require the use of the carbon mitigation and adaptation tools to make a climate assessment. This would be carried out subject to the outcome of the decision paper and approval of the project. There is an opportunity to improve the climate position for Haven House by future owners upgrading the building to be more climate friendly and potentially reduce the carbon footprint.

110. Secondly, for the management of the NNR an initial assessment of climate change vulnerability was carried out using the adaptation tool. Having completed this the conclusion is that this will have a positive impact on carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Original Options Studies
 APPENDIX B - Cost Benefit of Options 1-4
 APPENDIX C - Staff Consultation Summary
 APPENDIX D(i) - Public Engagement Summary and D(ii) Survey Analysis
 APPENDIX E - Original Business Case (REDACTED)
 EXEMPT APPENDIX F - Original Business Case (UNREDACTED)
 APPENDIX G - Equalities Impact Assessment
 APPENDIX H - Petition (Online and Paper Front Pages)

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<p>Titchfield Haven sits within a SPA (Special Protection Area) and a RAMSAR and is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), LNR (Local Nature Reserve) and NNR (National Nature Reserve)</p> <p>NNRs are designated under sections 16-29 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and then strengthened under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. NNRs have the highest level of designation under UK legislation (as opposed to European designations).</p>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment

3. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed to assess the impact of the proposed changes on protected characteristics for both staff and service users.
4. The overall equality impact is judged to be neutral. However, the proposed changes are likely to have a (low) negative impact on age and people with disabilities, due to the Haven House Visitor Centre providing a community space and facilities for those who may have limited mobility, suffer with health problems and as it currently provides a positive impact on wellbeing for people with mental health needs.
5. There would also be an impact on families and children with the loss of a family friendly facility and opportunities to educate/embed a love of nature.

6. However, by investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors of all ages now and in the future. The reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site where people can rest.
7. The impact on rurality was also assessed to be (low) negative because rural communities are ageing faster than urban and, taking into consideration that the majority of Titchfield users fall into the higher age brackets, isolation could be a factor due to the proposal to remove an existing rural service.
8. Conversely, there are other venues in the local area that can provide a similar provision to the visitor centre. Titchfield Community Centre is available to all and the centre is used by many community groups covering a range of recreational, educational and social pursuits and is also available for hire for private functions. Titchfield Parish Rooms also provides this provision.
9. There are also free green spaces within the wider area for people to enjoy along with a pub and café less than a ten-minute walk/short drive from the THNNR, as well as a larger recreation area and café at Alver Valley Country Park run by Gosport Borough Council on the other side of Titchfield.
10. For staff the impacts were judged as negative (low) for sex, age and poverty, as staff are predominantly female, fell into the higher age brackets and the grade profile of staff working at Titchfield Haven is skewed towards the lower grades.
11. The geographical impact has been assessed as all Hampshire, as we know from membership data that people who visit Titchfield Haven live across the county and also live outside of Hampshire Postcode data taken from the survey indicated that 38% of respondents live in Fareham, and concerns raised particularly flagged the detriment to the local community which implies that proposed changes would impact on people living in this particular area within the local authority most significantly.
12. The full EIA can be found in Appendix G.

TITCHFIELD HAVEN NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE - FUTURE PROPOSALS

APPENDIX A: ORIGINAL OPTIONS STUDIES

Acknowledging the challenges at Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, previous work was undertaken by the service and external consultants to explore various options for a sustainable future for the reserve.

As part of the Country Parks Transformation Programme, Planning Solutions Consulting undertook a review in 2015 across all 8 sites within the Country Parks portfolio to establish future priorities and ideas for developing these sites as more sustainable visitor attractions. The report recognised the challenges and uniqueness of THNNR and concluded it did not have the same opportunities as the wider programme developed for country parks as it has a very different operating model, specifically this includes:

- Smaller capacity, fewer visits (15,000 compared to 150,000 at Staunton Farm)
- More sensitive and designated ecology and wildlife
- No parking area or parking income to reinvest into managing the site

As this report had a more commercially focused assessment, there were no recommendations within this report on the wider challenges for land management.

Subsequently, in 2017, WWT Consulting reviewed the activity at THNNR with a greater consideration of the land management and habitat protection requirements and obligations of the site as a National Nature Reserve, alongside visitor experience.

It also recognised that the current 'hold the line' approach to protect the freshwater setting will require significant ongoing investment. The approaches suggested by WWT Consulting took a much more considered look at the future land management requirements, however, they also required significant investment which was disproportionate to the potential financial return. In summary, following these two reports, the Council considered the following opportunities and potential impact of developing these opportunities to grow income generation.

	Opportunity	Impact	Outcome
1	Introduce family orientated offer within the visitor centre and also on eastern area of reserve e.g. natural play and more family orientated bird hides.	Resistance to introducing play on to the reserve as increasing visitors risks disturbance of sensitive and important habitats and wildlife protected within the reserve.	Not suitable due to the nature of the site.
2	Explore potential to extend entrance area to reconfigure retail/ admission space and introduce interpretation area.	In 21/22, the shop made a total income of £54k with cost of goods at £27k. Assuming an increase of 10% retail income with improvements, this could achieve an additional £2.7k direct surplus.	Need investment in building to increase retail space. Return on investment is relatively low.
3	Explore partnership opportunities to develop former ranger's cottage into an education centre which can also be used for other uses e.g. social functions.	Haven Cottage would require significant investment to bring back into serviceable use, estimated at £200k (2015 original estimate). Built as a family home, with several smaller rooms, not well laid out as accommodation for groups or for functions.	Likely to be suitable for small group activity only, limited financial return, not progressed.
4	Introduce kiosk to service casual users and relieve pressure on main café.	This would have involved significant alterations and investment to the building.	Decision to focus on opportunities to extend catering within the building / existing space.
5	Revisit existing catering offer in terms of design and layout and also introduce small extension.	Potential to increase income and extend indoor catering capacity for visitors to the reserve and visitors to the area.	Café extended to include Widgeon Room (previously kept as a function space) and increase the number of internal covers for catering.
6	Enable catering operator to have more flexibility over opening hours and menu choice.	Opportunities to more closely target offer to visitor demand, potential to increase sales. Extended opening hours would need careful consideration to ensure income was sufficient to cover costs (e.g. staffing).	The Countryside Service moved the catering in-house in December 2019 to enable greater flexibility in service delivery.

	Opportunity	Impact	Outcome
7	Upgrade existing Visitor Centre.	£256k condition liability for Haven House Visitor Centre identified in 2014 before any additional investment. Upgrading the existing building, previously residential, has limited opportunity for growing income due to the nature of the interior space. Larger investment/upgrade estimated at £500k - £1m.	Assuming catering covers and income doubled as a result, could generate additional annual £31k surplus, before overheads. Return on investment would not be proportionate to justify level of investment required.
8	Down-size visitor related functions / services in the Visitor Centre.	The main functions within the visitor centre are catering and retail. This would likely reduce income, but unlikely to significant change overhead and building costs. Reputational impact, potentially dissatisfied customers.	Anticipate this would increase overall net costs of running the Visitor Centre. Not progressed.
8	Construct a purpose-built Visitor Centre at a new location in an appropriate location closer to the reserve.	To enhance visitor experience, engagement and encourage visitors into the pay zone.	Cost estimate £800k-£1m based on similar facilities at other sites. Option to include parking, dependant on the site. Potential estimate for parking income £15,000 per annum before cost of parking system ¹ . Return on investment would not be proportionate to justify the level of investment needed.
9	Potential funding options for capital investment in a new Visitor Centre.	Bid to Bird Aware Solent submitted in 2019 to transform the Visitor Centre at Titchfield Haven Nature Reserve and create a coastal centre of excellence for the Solent.	Fundraising bid to Bird Aware Solent was unsuccessful.

¹ Based on Country parking income per visitor (average parking spend per head 80p - £1).

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APPENDIX B: COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS 1-4

Following further options analysis based on the key objectives, the below options were considered:

Option	Description	Benefits	Disbenefits
1	Do nothing – no change to current management of visitor offer	<p>Financial No capital outlay.</p> <p>Environmental Continue to meet NNR statutory obligations to protect special wildlife and habitats.</p> <p>Community No change for volunteers who continue to carry out their roles and local welfare facilities provided. Visitor Centre continues to be a community hub.</p> <p>Visitor experience No change for visitors who use the visitor centre and benefit from the information and resources currently on offer.</p>	<p>Financial Increasing net revenue cost (currently £136k). Asset repairs and maintenance liabilities (£674k) unbudgeted. Increasing costs of labour, materials and contractors exacerbating the pressure on meeting the statutory obligations for managing the reserve. Increased risk of legal challenge if lack of investment. Risk of increasing cash limit required from HCC.</p> <p>Environmental Increased risk of not meeting statutory obligations, increasing risk of resource and funding required to meet standards. Hold the line approach requires significant investment to maintain.</p> <p>Community Volunteers may become unhappy with the lack of investment which could lead to attrition.</p> <p>Visitor experience Visitors are likely to see a decline in standards and may reduce visitor numbers.</p>

2	Develop Offer - Investment in the current visitor centre at Haven House or a new visitor centre.	<p>Financial Alternative site could provide additional income streams e.g., parking, providing better opportunities to reduce cash limit in the long term. Increased income opportunities through improved facilities at Haven House.</p> <p>Environmental Demonstrates HCC's commitment to the NNR and potential for increased focus on environment and education. Potential to join up on wider land use and locate on a site less at risk from coastal change. Opportunity for eco-friendly/sustainable building e.g., solar panels, heat pumps.</p> <p>Community Draw more visitors to the area by making significant improvements, promoting and establishing role in local area and investing in the community. Improved facilities for volunteers may attract more volunteers. Creating something new and exciting in the local area.</p> <p>Visitor experience Increased investment would result in greater customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>Financial Additional investment required: c.£1m development cost for Haven House, more for a new build. Limited return on investment.</p> <p>Environmental Potentially more disturbance when building new centre. Potential carbon emissions from creating new site.</p> <p>Community Selling Haven House to invest in a new Visitor Centre may not be popular. May be perceived as loss of an historic building. Residents may be against development/private ownership.</p> <p>Visitor experience If the Visitor Centre was moved, this could dissatisfy users who primarily want to enjoy the café and the sea views (85% of customers).</p>
3	Transfer - Transfer to third party	<p>Financial Revenue costs reduced/removed. Potential to reduce assets liabilities if assets transferred.</p>	<p>Financial If operational management only, would not address building investment needed. Likely to require significant dowry prior to transfer.</p>

		<p>Environmental If transferred to an environmental organisation e.g., RSPB or HIOW Wildlife Trust, likely to focus on conservation value rather than recreational value.</p> <p>Community Visitors and volunteers may welcome an organisation who are experts in nature to manage the site.</p> <p>Visitor experience Reserve visitors would continue to enjoy the nature and wildlife, which would likely become the focus.</p>	<p>Environmental Lose autonomy to join landscapes in that area. Potentially less of an offer to visitors if infrastructure reduced.</p> <p>Community Access to the reserve could be reduced with less infrastructure in place e.g. bird hides, boardwalks</p> <p>Visitor experience Nature organisations likely to have limited resources to manage and provide facilities that enhance a visit (e.g., catering, shop) and on-site facilities/infrastructure (e.g. bird hides, boardwalks).</p>
4	<p>Change Focus - Prioritise the reserve and manage without café/shop.</p>	<p>Financial Provide £60k reduction in annual costs. Re-invest income without additional public funding. Cost avoidance e.g., building maintenance. Re-invest into the reserve from capital receipts from selling two buildings.</p> <p>Environmental Focus on statutory management of nature reserve. Spend plan to manage the reserve and invest in its future. Increased resilience to the impacts of coastal and climate change. Provides opportunities to take a wider strategic landscape scale approach</p>	<p>Financial Limited opportunities for income generation. Cash limit still required.</p> <p>Environmental None.</p> <p>Community Selling Haven House and Haven cottage likely to be unpopular with local residents and visitors, potential loss of a community hub and could impact negatively on volunteer support.</p> <p>Visitor experience</p>

		<p>Community Focus on the NNR and investing in improvements demonstrates commitment from HCC in its local importance and national significance. Improved access and recreation to the site for the local volunteers and the community</p> <p>Visitor experience Increased investment in the reserve would result in greater customer satisfaction for those who use the NNR.</p>	<p>Negative impact on visitors to the café and shop. Reduction in visitor numbers.</p>
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APPENDIX C: STAFF CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary Table: Outcome of Staff Consultation

Staff feedback	HCC Response	Action Taken/Recommended Changes to Proposal
As pay to enter site, a staff presence is important to provide assistance and information to visitors and manage any issues with their visit. Rangers are working away from the main visitor area.	Staff feedback taken into account and discussions with staff took place to understand how this could be improved.	In response to the staff feedback, it is proposed that there be a phased delivery, which retains visitor services staff during a 12-month transitional period, including the establishment of online ticketing, to provide support for visitors, members and volunteers.
Concerns were raised about Rangers needing to pick up visitor related queries and issues, potentially reducing time available to spend on the reserve.		As indicated above, a phased delivery is now proposed to provide cover 7 days per week for visitor and volunteer support during a 12-month transitional period. Proposal for weekend day duty manager role to be shared between appropriate staff on a rolling 3 week rolling cycle.
Customers want access to the reserve earlier, suggestion to alter opening hours to 9.00am-4.00pm.	To better meet the needs of the customers, it is acknowledged that there could be changes or more flexibility in opening hours.	Consider adjusting opening hours to 9am – 4pm. Further feedback on opening times at the reserve will be included in focus groups/ workshops with wider stakeholder group.
Although an online booking system could work, the visitors to Titchfield Haven are often not comfortable using digital technology, which has also been seen from the number of paper copies requested for the current engagement survey. This could deter visitors and reduce income.	Options for sale of tickets on site or a dual approach, both online and onsite tickets sales to meet customer needs considered.	Proposal to establish a dual approach for tickets, both online and onsite tickets sales to meet customer needs to support visitors during the transitional period at Titchfield Haven.

Initial feedback from discussions with volunteers is indicating that they may stop volunteering if the visitor centre is closed. Volunteers are a very important part of the delivery at Titchfield Haven and the support and management of volunteers will be very important through this period, which may be reduced if Visitor Services staff are no longer present.	As indicated above, proposed visitors services staff to provide cover 7 days per week for visitor and volunteer support.	Proposal to establish a staff and volunteer welfare facility on site.
The proposed arrangements for the Yard, including the operational building will need to ensure storage arrangements for the site are sufficient and the shared access with Haven Cottage will need to ensure turning space for towing vehicles.	Discussions and meetings held on site with staff to review options and clarify operational yard needs to ensure it is the right solution for staff, volunteers and visitors.	Options for amendments to the proposal have been identified to better meet these needs should the decision be approved.

APPENDIX D(i): PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Summary Table: Outcome of Public Engagement

Public Feedback	HCC Response	Actions
<p>Highlighted the importance of Haven House to the local community as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and accessible local amenity Well used by elderly, disabled and vulnerable people and family groups Hub, focal point that brings the community together Useful for local groups, events & exhibitions 	<p>The level of response clearly shows the strength of feeling and sense of importance of these facilities within Haven House to the local community and its wellbeing. However, provision of these facilities is not a statutory duty for the County Council. The reserve would continue to remain open to the public so people would still be able to spend time together on the reserve.</p> <p>As part of this process, an Equalities Impact Assessment was completed, and we recognise that these proposals will have a negative impact on age and disability characteristics which has been evidenced in the survey respondent submissions.</p> <p>There are other venues in the local area that can provide a similar provision. Titchfield Community Centre is available to all, and the centre is used by many community groups covering a range of recreational, educational, and social pursuits and is also available for hire for private functions. Titchfield Parish Rooms also provides this provision.</p> <p>There is also a pub and café less than a ten-minute walk/short drive from the THNNR.</p> <p>Hill Head Residents Association have nominated Haven House as an Asset of Community Value which has been approved by Fareham Borough Council.</p>	<p>The future proposals for facilities on site would include an accessible toilet (including baby changing facilities), and the reinvestment plan includes making improvements to the reserve including board walks and bird hides.</p> <p>We would retain one accessible parking space in the yard for visitors to the reserve.</p>

<p>The proposal would result in reduced revenue, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income from thriving café which supports the nature reserve • Ongoing revenue lost by selling assets • Assets can only be sold once 	<p>The 'net' £31k profit that the cafe generates is as a result of direct costs only (food and staff) having been accounted for against income. This does not include premises costs and other overheads.</p> <p>However, the cafe is operating out of a large former residential dwelling which is not fit for purpose. As we cannot separate the cafe from the house, we must consider the position overall. When the costs of the house are considered (utilities, council tax, upkeep, all shown separately from the cafe in the business case), keeping the service provision running to house the cafe and visitor centre gives HCC an estimated net operating loss for Haven House of £80k.</p>	<p>HCC will explore the option of providing a temporary/seasonal catering offer (either HCC or third-party provider). Feedback will also be sought as part of the planned focus group sessions.</p>
<p>Proposal could result in a reduction in visitor numbers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticket kiosk needed, concerns of evasion • Decline in visitor numbers/frequency if café closes, especially casual visitors/ tourists • Reduced word of mouth promotion • Improve advertising/marketing of the site 	<p>Respondents who had used the café were asked what they would do if it closed. Overall, their responses indicated a reduction of around 40% in visitor numbers to the site. 41 of the 246 annual members and 8 of the 56 volunteers who responded indicated that they would “no longer visit THNNR”. However, most felt they would continue to visit – either for a shorter period or with their own refreshments</p> <p>Examples of marketing activity across the past five years includes a professional rebrand, onsite photoshoots, social media consultation, design assistance with interpretation and maintenance of the internal website and third-party advertising platforms such as Visit Southeast England and Visit Hampshire.</p>	<p>To reduce the risk of a reduction in visitors, additional visitor services staff have been included in the updated proposals to support visitors as well as sell tickets on site.</p> <p>Focus groups will be held with members, volunteers, other regular visitors and interested groups to shape and prioritise the visitor improvements planned for the reserve. It is hoped that improvements to the reserve will retain existing and attract new visitors to the site.</p> <p>The website will be reviewed and updated, and a marketing actively will be developed to promote/market the reserve.</p> <p>New signage and wayfinding will also be included to ensure visibility from the roadside.</p>

<p>Detrimental to Reserve visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With no café a visit is less enticing - solely educational rather than an outing or event • Café offers shelter and a place to warm up – extending the visiting season • Visitor facilities enable a longer visit • Facilities enable a visit from further afield • Visitor facilities an integral part of experience 	<p>The café and visitor centre are currently subsidised by Hampshire County Council and therefore does not financially support the reserve. Many National Nature Reserves operate without café facilities.</p> <p>In the survey, respondents were asked if the café at THNNR were to close, what would you do instead? 50% of annual members and 46% of volunteers said they would bring their own refreshments.</p>	<p>To support the visitor experience, visitor services staff have now been included in the updated proposals.</p> <p>HCC will explore the option of a temporary/seasonal catering offer (either HCC or third-party provider), feedback will also be sought as part of the planned focus group sessions.</p>
<p>Impact on Health & Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Café encourages people to walk / exercise • Local meeting place reduces social isolation • Calming and peaceful place to relax/unwind - encourages mindfulness, good mental health • People with mobility issues can enjoy nature from the café 	<p>HCC agrees that nature is important for people's mental health and wellbeing. The Countryside Service's aim is to inspire people to connect with and enjoy the countryside and have a life-long active and emotional connection with the outdoors, a love of nature, and a desire to protect and support its recovery.</p> <p>The nature reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site for people to rest.</p> <p>There are also free green spaces within the wider area for people to enjoy along with a café and a pub with views of the Solent less than a ten-minute walk/short drive from the site as well as a larger recreation area and café at Alver Valley Country Park run by Gosport Borough Council on the other side of Titchfield.</p>	<p>By investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors now and in the future.</p>
<p>Priorities and suggestions for catering facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important a catering offer is provided • Can a café be incorporated into new buildings • Could the community run the café? • Could catering facilities be outsourced? • Would a mobile caterer be viable? 	<p>There is limited benefit to lease the café to a third party as this would not remove the significant costs of the condition liabilities of the building.</p> <p>The proposed facility is for staff and volunteers, and there is no room to house a café within the site.</p>	<p>HCC will explore the option of a temporary/seasonal catering offer (either HCC or third-party provider).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby alternatives too far / expensive / busy 	<p>However, the option of a temporary or kiosk option will be explored.</p> <p>There is also a café and pub ten minutes' walk from the site.</p> <p>Breezes café which is just down the road charges £2 for a cup of team and £2.60 for a small latte (£2.90 for a large). Sandwiches and wraps range from £6.50 to £7.50.</p>	
<p>Impact and options to transfer management to another organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about current site management Partner with or pass responsibility to a charitable organisation <p>Preference for RSPB, HIOW Wildlife Trust, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, or National Trust</p>	<p>Of those respondents who suggested to transfer management to another organisation, 41 people referenced RSPB, 29 HIWWT and 9 National Trust.</p> <p>The potential to explore other options has been considered, however, previous discussions held with potential partners, established that this is unlikely to be an appealing option without a significant level of investment from HCC.</p> <p>Further discussions have since taken place with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the National Trust. Neither of these organisations have confirmed their positions as yet.</p> <p>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds confirmed that the acquisition of Haven House is not a strategic priority for them as they are planning on significant investment in their existing nature reserves, and as a charity, they have limited funds and must ensure that their funds are targeted. They are however keen to work in partnership with HCC should the opportunity arise.</p>	<p>Continue discussions with appropriate organisations/partners who may have a role in supporting the reserve in the future.</p>

	Hampshire County Council have met with the Hill Head Residents Association who have not put forward a proposal regarding the future management of Titchfield Haven. However, the Hill Head Residents Association have indicated their intent to put forward a proposal working with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for the future management of the National Nature Reserve and Haven House Visitor Centre	
Concerns on the future use of the buildings and land proposed for disposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about flats or housing • Adverse effect of building works or unsympathetic development on surrounding area • Can restrictions be placed on how the land is used if sold? 	<p>We anticipate that Haven Cottage would likely remain a residential dwelling. Any change of use or alternations of this Grade II listed building would require further permissions to be sought by the purchaser from the local planning authority (Fareham Borough Council) in the usual way.</p> <p>Haven House would be advertised on the open market for any potential buyer. Any significant change of use of this building would also require further permissions from the local district council in the usual way.</p>	<p>A range of covenants will be included in any transfer designed to restrict the way in which the Haven Cottage is occupied and the activities which are allowed to take place, reflecting the sensitive location of the cottage. A similar approach is proposed for Haven House, with specific reference to the sensitive location on the edge of the National Nature Reserve.</p> <p>When undertaking any development work on the site, we would ensure that we comply with legislation relating to the protection of wildlife including bats and other protected species.</p>
Education – opportunities lost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place to talk to and learn from other site visitors, volunteers, and staff • To educate children about nature • Drawing people in who wouldn't normally be interested in environmental issues • Space for talks and events • Provision for schools and activities for children 	<p>There is no formal schools programme due to a lack of appropriate facilities on site e.g., unsuitable indoor and outdoor space for large groups of children.</p> <p>There have been no formal learning groups using either the reserve or Haven House in more than two years. The site is restrictive for both access and parking for buses and there is no education room or other internal space to use as a base. There have been group bookings for the reserve, but the offer is in line with a regular reserve visit.</p>	<p>As part of the investment into the reserve, and focus groups with visitors, ideas for information and interpretation around the site will be included for different visitor groups, including families and children.</p> <p>It has been acknowledged in the feedback that staff and volunteers are very knowledgeable. Rangers and volunteers would continue to be on site and engage with visitors helping them to learn about nature and the wildlife.</p>

<p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have charges impacted visitor numbers? • Can charges be removed or reduced? • Can parking income fund THNNR? • Can more parking be provided? • Lack of parking – encourage more alternative travel 	<p>Fareham Borough Council manage the car park and therefore Hampshire County Council receive no income from the parking charges. Whilst we cannot measure the exact impact this has had on visitor numbers to the café, we have seen an overall reduction in visitor numbers since this change to the management of the car park.</p> <p>There is no space on the land HCC own to provide a public car park but as part of the proposal we would look to provide one accessible parking space within the yard area (there is also accessible parking in the Fareham Borough Council owned car park opposite).</p>	<p>Ensure we provide one accessible parking space within the yard area for visitors to the reserve.</p> <p>Provision of bike racks for cyclists to encourage greener travel.</p>
<p>Other income generating ideas/suggestions</p>		
<p>Shop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase or improve the offering in the shop • The shop is used to buy food to feed the birds • Purchasing gifts 	<p>Income from the small retail/visitor area doesn't cover the costs of the staff who run it and HCC are unable to expand the shop without considerable investment to change the layout of the building.</p>	<p>Continue to sell bird food from the ticket kiosk and small items for sale e.g., cards.</p>
<p>Flat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent out the flat as a holiday let or living accommodation • Use rental income from the flat to fund the visitor centre 	<p>The County Council is heavily constrained by legislation in terms of the tenancies it may grant without creating a secure tenancy and potentially the Right to Buy. It may however grant tenancies, without this risk, to employees for the better performance of their duties (service tenancies) and to other new employees (for up to one year). Haven Flat has been used in this way and the rental income has been included to support the running of Titchfield Haven.</p> <p>The Council can offer holiday lets, but significant investment is required for the flat to be suitable accommodation.</p>	<p>None.</p>

<p>Cottage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell the cottage to invest in the house and reserve • Retain the cottage and invest in improvements so it can be used as a holiday let • Alternative use such as a museum or to run courses 	<p>The sale of the residential cottage alone would not provide enough funding to cover both the costs of investment needed to manage the nature reserve and maintain Haven House Visitor Centre.</p> <p>The Council can offer holiday lets, however significant investment is required for the cottage to be able to offer suitable accommodation.</p> <p>As a local authority, the County Council is heavily constrained in how it can let residential property without creating a secure tenancy and potentially the Right to Buy. We cannot grant assured shorthold tenancies or anything similar.</p> <p>Haven Cottage would require significant investment to bring back into serviceable use. Built as a family home, with several smaller room, it is not well laid out for groups or for functions. Likely to be suitable for small group activity only.</p>	<p>Feedback from the proposals has indicated that there is support for the cottage to be sold.</p> <p>Hampshire County Council has put the cottage on the market.</p>
<p>Room Hire/ Events/Functions/ Art Exhibitions/Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational workshops • Art and photography courses • Trails and tours • Provision for schools and activities for children • Hire out for functions such as weddings, local group meetings or evening classes 	<p>The site is restrictive for both access and parking for buses but also there is no formal meeting room or any other internal space to use.</p> <p>Opening in the evening is an option but will have associated additional staff costs and overheads. This is a modest income generating opportunity and whilst it might help to improve the revenue position it won't help address the condition liabilities or ongoing maintenance and repair costs.</p>	<p>Opportunities will be explored as part of developing visitor improvements, including as part of the focus group sessions. This is likely to include activities such as guided walks/tours and self-guided information for visitors.</p>
<p>Grant Funding</p>	<p>The Countryside Service already benefits from government grant funding for which it is currently</p>	<p>Continue to apply for relevant grant funding</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain grants from nature organisations such as Natural England, RSPB, Forestry Commission, Heritage Lottery Fund • Obtain grants from central government 	<p>eligible, including Titchfield Haven. Titchfield Haven has for the last 12 years benefited from funding from the DEFRA Higher Level Stewardship scheme and other additional grant funding relating to appropriate land management at this site.</p> <p>Strategic partnerships are already in place with other organisations, NGOs, and government bodies (for example Natural England, Environment Agency, Local Authorities and Coastal Partners) firstly through the Local Nature Partnership and secondly through working to achieve a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Both are designed to identify priorities across the County with a view to placing them at the forefront of new funding streams being developed by government. The sale of the properties would help prime the long-term requirements of the site and enable HCC to plan with greater surety in taking this forward</p> <p>A grant application to Bird Aware in 2019 was submitted to transform the visitor centre and create a coastal centre of excellence. However, this was unsuccessful.</p>	
Donations/Crowdfunding/Community Fundraising	<p>Titchfield receive regular donations, averaging £8,000 per year over the last 5 years. The majority of the donations have gone towards works in the reserve, including boardwalks.</p> <p>There is a risk associated with relying on these forms of funding in the long term (especially due to the costly ongoing repairs and maintenance required) and it is not guaranteed.</p> <p>There is potential for members of the community to raise funds to buy Haven House and, as it is now listed as an</p>	<p>Actively promote donations on the website, through social media and around the reserve.</p> <p>Look at potential for smaller amounts of crowdfunding for enhancements to the reserve e.g., bird hides.</p> <p>Work with Hill Head Residents Association on community fundraising events to enhance the reserve.</p>

	Asset of Community Value, there is an opportunity for more detail proposals to be submitted to the County Council.	
Reserve Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the hides (including making accessible, more hides around the site) • New/more information boards • Opening hours extended, especially in the summer (electronic system to allow members early/late access) • Connect the east and west sides 	If proposals are approved, focus groups will be run with annual membership holders, volunteers, and appropriate organisations /partners /community groups to prioritise investment within the reserve.	<p>The updated proposals recommend a change to opening hours to an early time.</p> <p>Other options for future activities that will be considered include special early and/or late access.</p>

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Titchfield Haven Future Strategy Survey Analysis

Produced by the Insight and Engagement Unit, November 2022

Project Background



Hampshire County Council has developed proposals for the future management of Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve (THNNR), which aim to invest in THNNR to improve and protect the environment, special habitats and wildlife; increase resilience to coastal and climate change; to place THNNR on a financially stable footing; and to secure the future of THNNR for the local community, volunteers and visitors.

The proposals included the sale of two buildings - Haven Cottage (currently disused) and Haven House (currently hosting the café, shop, and visitor centre - which would close).

Anyone with an interest in THNNR was invited to help shape the future of the site. This opportunity was promoted via a range of channels including, but not limited to: Press releases, Social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), direct communications to key stakeholders, annual members and volunteers. Visitors were also made aware by posters, business cards (including QR codes) and paper copy surveys on site.

Respondents were asked to share how they used and experienced THNNR; to comment on proposed plans to improve the sustainability of the site and to share their ideas about how the County Council could invest in THNNR for the future.

The feedback survey was open from 27 September until 1 November 2022. A total of **2997 survey responses** were received.

NB: Respondents do not provide a representative sample of the Hampshire population. All questions were optional and the analyses only take into account actual responses. As such, the totals for each question generally add up to less than the total number of respondents who replied. Open-ended responses were analysed by theme, using an inductive approach. This means that the themes were developed from the responses themselves, not pre-determined based on expectations, to avoid any bias in the analysis of these responses. This report focuses on key themes - all comments have been read and considered by the project team.

Exec summary



Whilst respecting the importance of the reserve, many respondents felt that visitor access and facilities should be prioritised as a gateway to appreciating nature and a place to pause and appreciate the beautiful surroundings. There was therefore much dismay about the potential for the current facilities to be lost.

Many of the respondents lived in the areas surrounding the reserve and were concerned about the impact on the local community – particularly with regards to the potential sale of Haven House, which was regarded as an important hub that enabled people of all ages and abilities to come together and provided a destination at the end of a walk – benefitting both mental and physical health. There was trepidation about what might be done with the land once sold, the disruption of development, and that access would be restricted if put into private hands.

There was recognition that the buildings in their current state may not be the best fit for purpose. However, the desire remained, even amongst those who prioritised the reserve, for a visit to incorporate information about the site, places to rest and some form of refreshments and toilet facilities that would enable an extended stay, an extended season and facilitate visits from further afield. It was feared that without these, visitor numbers and therefore income to support the site may reduce.

In this context, the sale of Haven Cottage was seen as more palatable – particularly if some of the funds could be used to retain visitor facilities. However, respondents also put forward a range of other suggestions to increase available resources, such as investigating alternative income and fundraising streams, considering alternative uses for the buildings, or alternative management options (for café or site).

Should the buildings be sold, respondents highlighted a long list of features around the reserve that might benefit from additional consideration or investment. Further engagement work would help to inform the best use of resources.



Who responded – respondent type: The vast majority of respondents were individuals who visited the site on a regular or occasional basis. The respondent base also included 76% of THNNR’s volunteers and 38% of annual members, as well as staff from the wider Countryside Service, local elected officials and a number of wildlife organisations

Individuals (2978)

Volunteers

56

Annual members

246

Regular visitors

1723

Occasional visitors

1065

THNNR / Countryside Staff

18

Interested but do not visit

44

None of the above

25

Organisations, groups and businesses (7)

A Rocha UK

London Camera Exchange

HART Wildlife Rescue

Shopping social

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Winchester U3A Birdwatching Group

Southampton & District Bird Group

Democratically Elected Representatives (8)

Constituencies represented:

Hill Head

Stubbington

Whiteley and Shedfield Ward

Fareham, Town Division

Fareham, Titchfield Division

Aldershot North

Gosport

Crofton

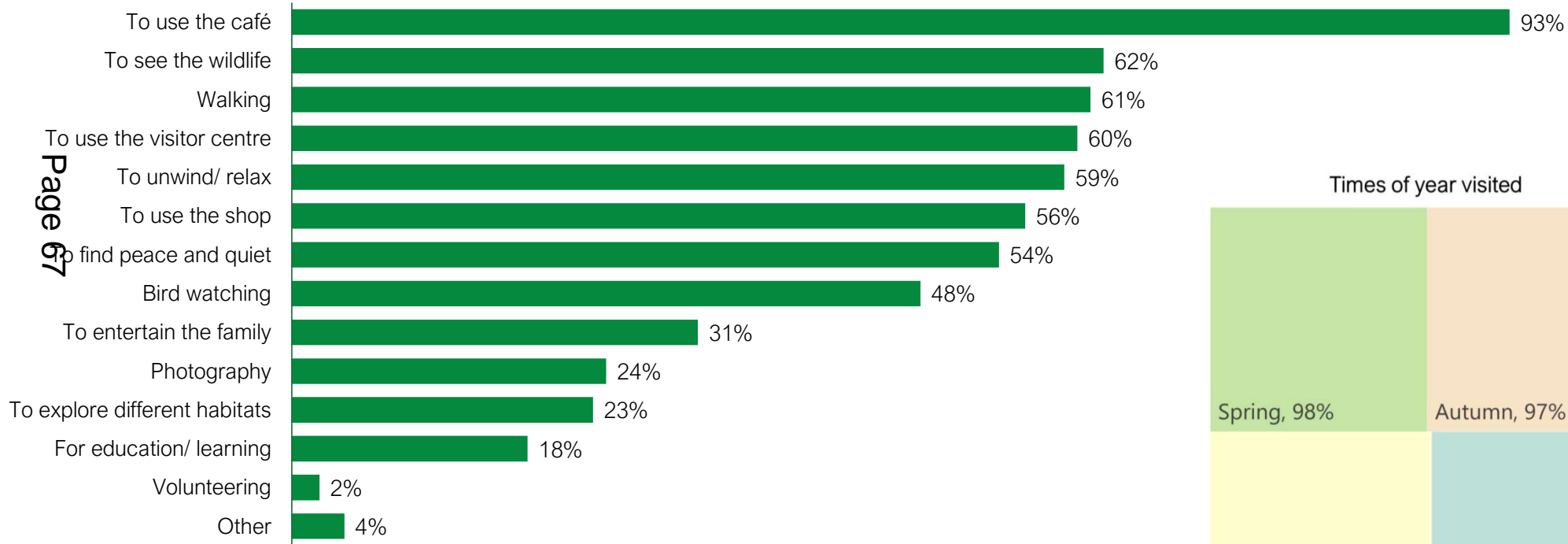
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Q: In what context are you responding. . .? Respondent Base: 2993 (NB: 4 respondents did not reply to this question)
Q: How would you describe your connection to THNNR? (Multichoice). Respondent Base: 2970
Given the relatively low number of organisations / Democratically Elected Representatives, volunteers and staff in the sample base, the usefulness of percentages in quantifying their views is limited. However, analysis has been completed by 'respondent type', using indicative percentages in order to help illustrate any contrast between their views and those of individuals – recognising their 'expert' view and/or that they speak on behalf of a larger audience.

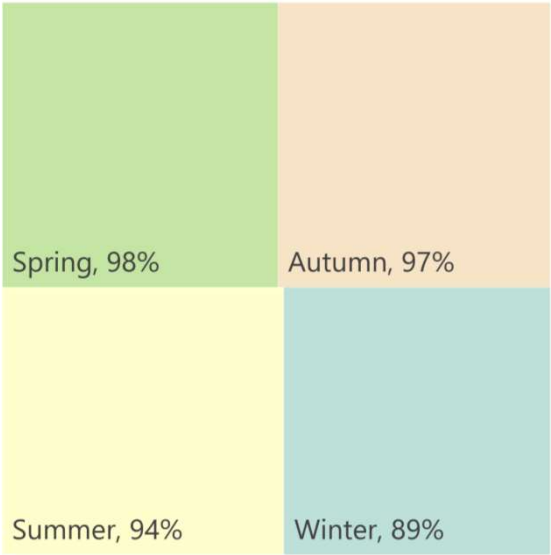
Who responded – site usage: Respondents visited THNNR throughout the year for a range of reasons, with café use predominating amongst this group. Just over six in ten respondents were attracted by the wildlife, with a similar proportion visiting for exercise, relaxation or to use other facilities within Haven House.



Key reasons for visiting THNNR



Times of year visited

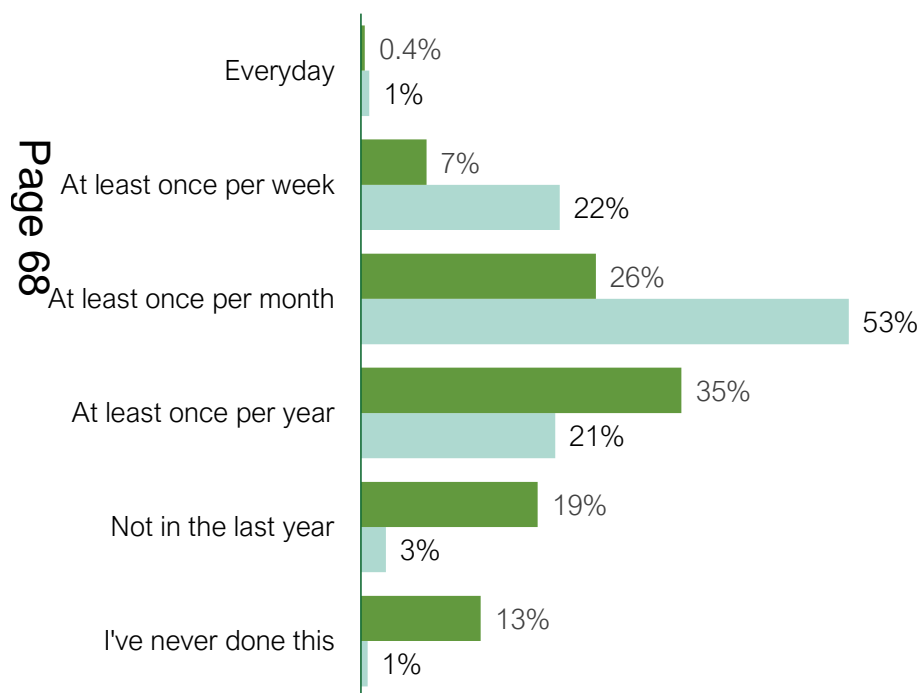


Q: What are your key reasons for visiting THNNR? Respondent Base: 2886
Q: At what times of the year do you like to visit THNNR? Respondent Base: 2883

Who responded - site usage: On average, responding café/shop users visited for up to an hour at least once a month whilst responding reserve visitors stayed for a couple of hours at least once per year. Many respondents used both parts of the site, although around a quarter visited the café/shop at least annually, but had not visited the reserve in the past year.

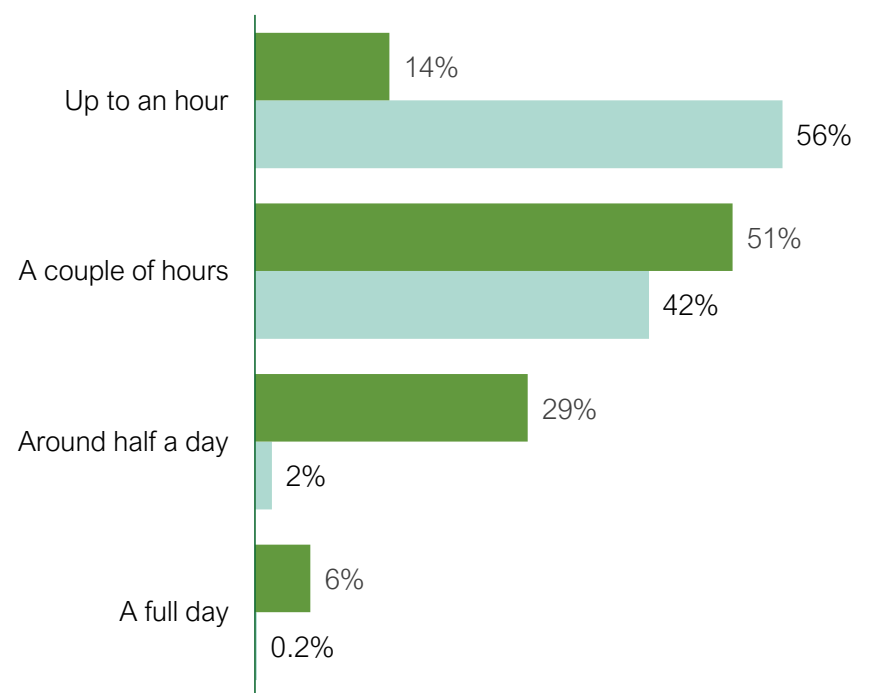


How often do you visit THNNR in order to . . . ?
(Base 2463, 2847)



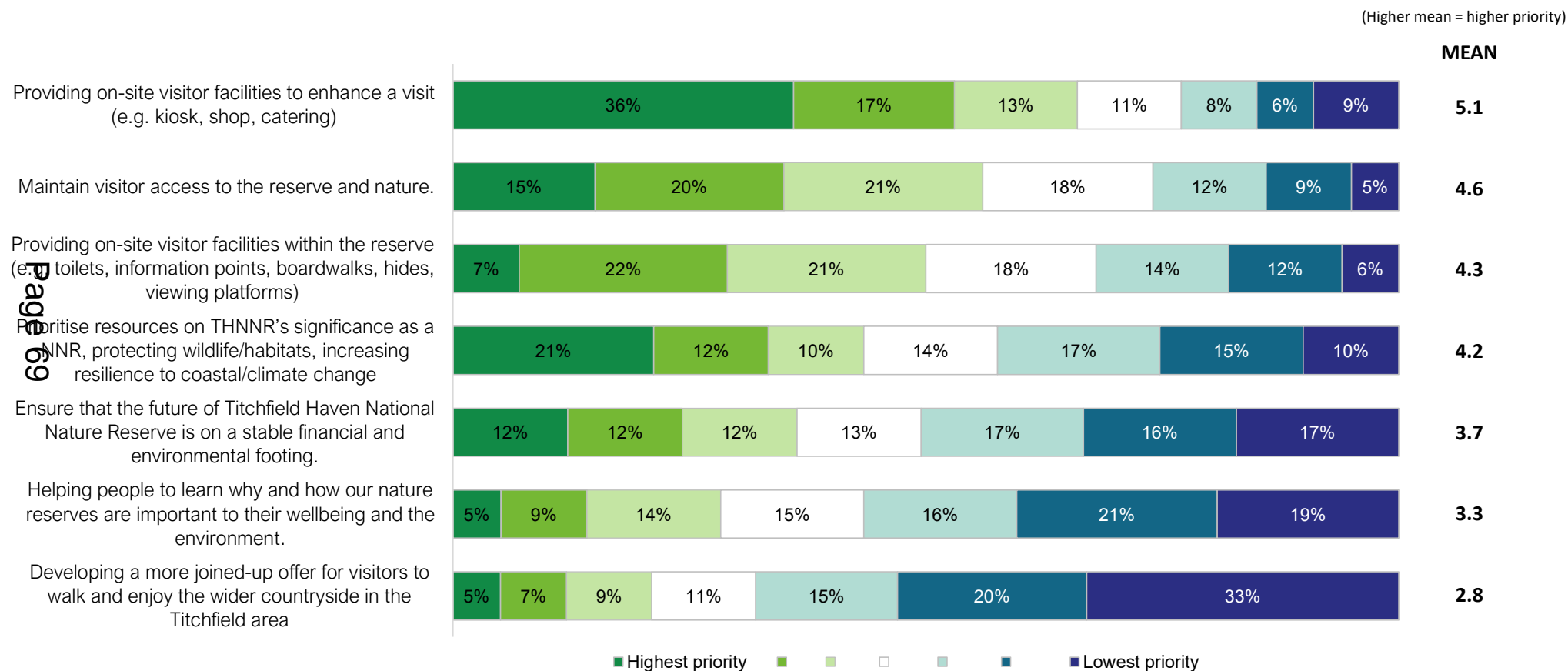
■ Enter the reserve (ticketed area) ■ Use the café and/ or shop

When visiting THNNR, how much time do you usually spend?
(Base 1915, 2743)



■ Out on the reserve (ticketed area) ■ In the café and/ or shop

Priorities: When asked to choose how they would prioritise resources to support and improve THNNR, respondents generally prioritised the continuation of visitor access to the site and the facilities that enhanced and enabled this, whilst also recognising the importance of protecting THNNR's habitats and wildlife



Q: How should the County Council prioritise its resources to support and improve THNNR in future? Respondent Base: 2439 ranked all seven priorities as requested.
 NB: Some respondents chose to rank less than seven priorities – analysis including these responses gave the same mean priority order and less than 1% variance to the scores shown above

Priorities: Providing on site visitor facilities (such as a café or shop) to enhance a visit was particularly important to responding organisations, groups and businesses and café users, who generally prioritised all aspects of the visitor experience within their top three choices.



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	Providing on-site visitor facilities to enhance a visit	Maintain visitor access to the reserve and nature.	Providing on-site visitor facilities within the reserve	Prioritise resources on THNNR's significance as a NNR	Ensure that the future of THNNR is on a stable financial and environmental footing.	Helping people to learn why and how our nature reserves are important to their wellbeing and the environment.	Developing a more joined-up offer for visitors to walk and enjoy the wider countryside in the Titchfield area
Individuals	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
Organisations, groups and businesses	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	7 th	6 th
Used café/shop, but not reserve in the past year	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
Uses café/shop monthly or more often	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th

Priorities: Other respondents had a slightly different focus, with annual members, volunteers and reserve visitors prioritising visitor access to the reserve and nature. There was also more reference to the reserve itself amongst the top three priorities chosen, with securing the future of the reserve a particular priority for staff and elected representatives.



	Providing on-site visitor facilities to enhance a visit	Maintain visitor access to the reserve and nature.	Providing on-site visitor facilities within the reserve	Prioritise resources on THNNR's significance as a NNR	Ensure that the future of THNNR is on a stable financial and environmental footing.	Helping people to learn why and how our nature reserves are important to their wellbeing and the environment.	Developing a more joined-up offer for visitors to walk and enjoy the wider countryside in the Titchfield area
Elected Representatives	4 th	2 nd	3 rd	5 th	1 st	7 th	6 th
Countryside staff	7 th	3 rd	6 th	1 st	2 nd	5 th	4 th
Volunteers	5 th	1 st	3 rd	2 nd	4 th	6 th	7 th
Annual Members of THNNR	5 th	1 st	4 th	2 nd	3 rd	6 th	7 th
Uses reserve annually or more often	2 nd	1 st	4 th	3 rd	5 th	6 th	7 th

Proposal: Sell two buildings: Haven House and Haven Cottage



Both buildings are ageing and requiring significant investment to maintain.

Haven House (Visitor Centre)

This would include the closure of the current reception, café, and shop. Toilet facilities and an information point for visitors would be retained at the entrance to the East Reserve.

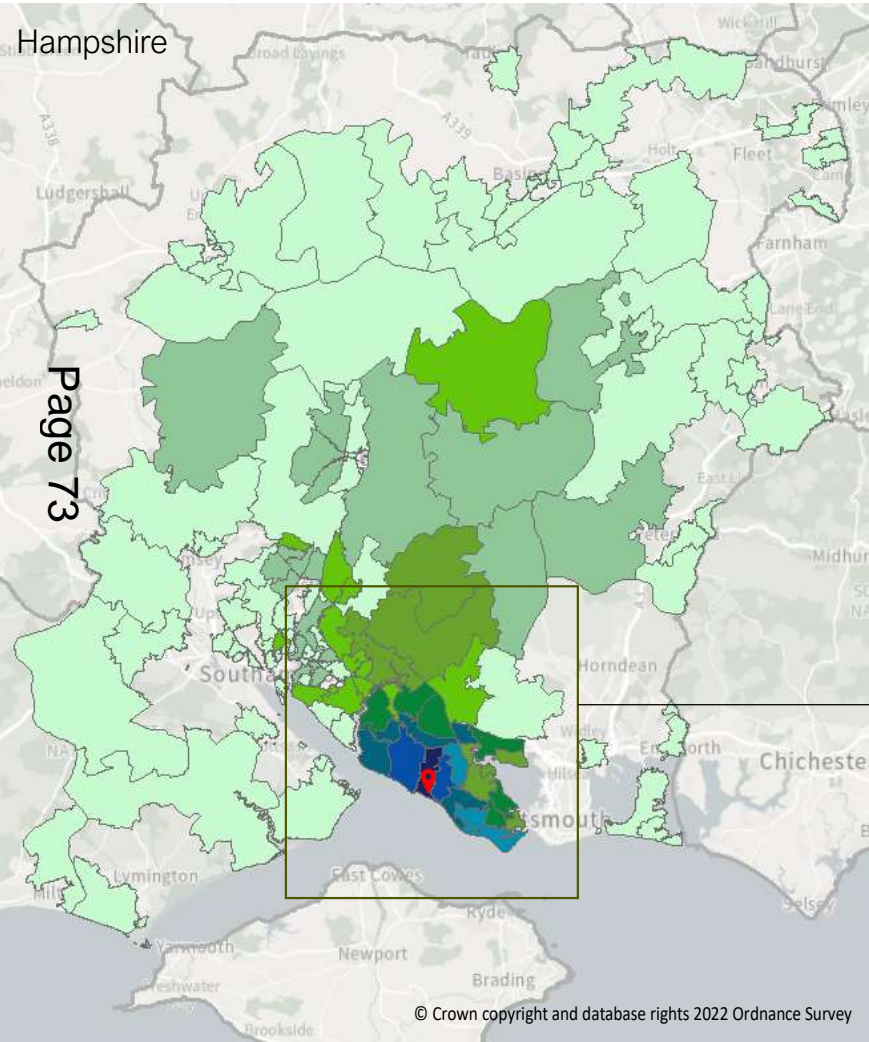
Haven Cottage

This is a vacant residential building, Grade II listed, with no public access.



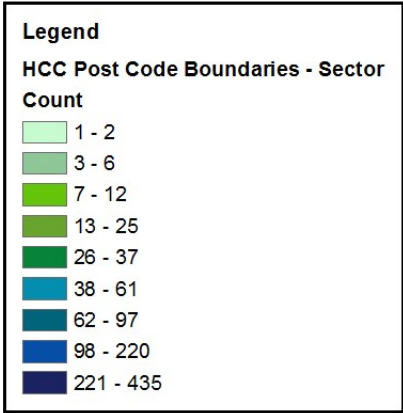
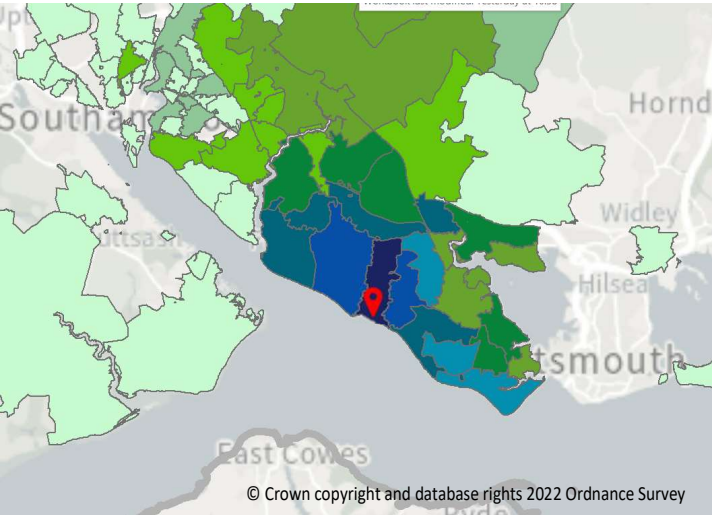


Who responded - location: The responses include representation from across Hampshire and beyond, with the highest concentrations from the areas surrounding Titchfield Haven.



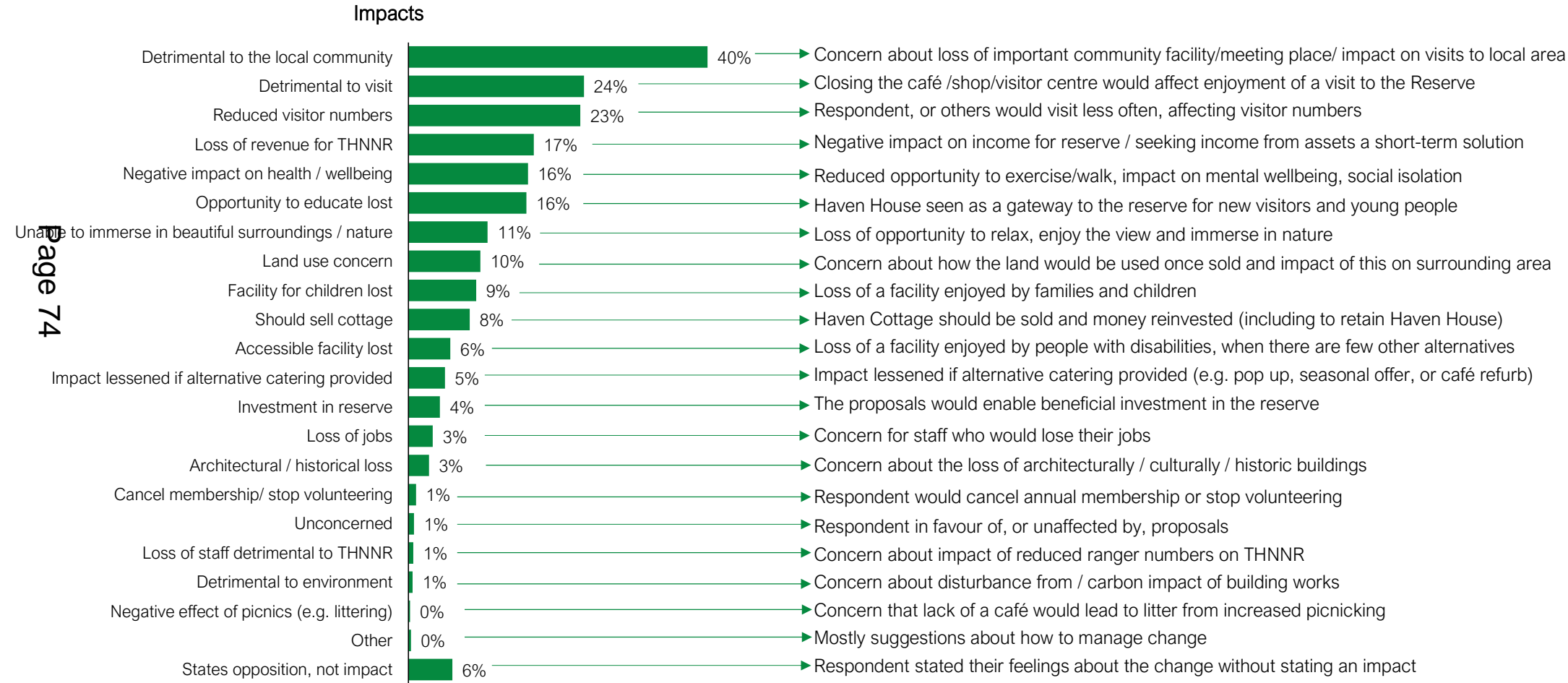
These maps show the number of responses within Hampshire by postcode sector. Postcode sector is identified by the first part of the postcode, plus the next number (e.g. SO23 9). 2351 individuals, groups, businesses or organisations provided a postcode that could be mapped at this level.

Focussed view – area surrounding THNNR



Indicative location of THNNR

Response to proposal: The predominant concern was the potential impact on the local community - particularly with regards to the proposed sale of Haven House. It was felt this change would also be detrimental to a reserve visit, thereby reducing visitor numbers and impacting revenue.



Q: If you would like to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect you or the local area then please do so in the box below. Quantified verbatim (multicode). Respondent Base: 2273 (excludes n/a).



Response to proposal: A search of key terms within comments about potential impacts helps to further illustrate respondents' key areas of focus with regards to the proposals.

Café = 1525 mentions



Shop = 663 mentions



Visitor Centre = 442 mentions



Haven House = 338 mentions



Haven Cottage = 276 mentions*



*Of which 188 suggested that the cottage should be sold



Impacts: Key concerns about the closure of facilities at Haven House are outlined in more detail below. They document the role that the centre plays in drawing people to the site, thereby helping them to engage in nature and with others, and apprehension about what the proposals might mean for the local area and the future of the reserve.

Community value of Haven House

Affordable and accessible local amenity
Well used by elderly, disabled and vulnerable people and family groups
Hub, focal point that brings the community together
Useful for local groups, events & exhibitions

Haven House is one of the few local places here that provides a centre for the local community."

Reduced revenue / visitor numbers

Income from thriving café supports reserve
Ticket kiosk needed, concerns of evasion
Ongoing revenue lost by selling assets
Assets can only be sold once
Decline in visitor numbers/frequency if café closes, especially casual visitors/ tourists
Reduced word of mouth promotion

"Visitors numbers would drop and the income from local and non-bird watchers would cease altogether thus the advantage from selling haven House and the Cottage would diminish!"

Detrimental to Reserve visit

With no café a visit is less enticing - solely educational rather than an outing or event
Café offers shelter and a place to warm up – extending the visiting season
Visitor facilities enable a longer visit
Facilities enable a visit from further afield
Visitor facilities an integral part of experience

"The tea room at the reserve is an asset which really makes a visit complete. I like to meet birding friends there as well as take a rest there between sites."

Health and wellbeing / immersion in nature

Café encourages people to walk / exercise
Local meeting place reduces social isolation
Calming and peaceful place to relax/unwind - encourages mindfulness, good mental health
People with mobility issues can enjoy nature from the café

"I have a neurodiversity and find it helps me manage my health because of the peaceful and beautiful surroundings"

Education – opportunities lost

Place to talk to and learn from other site visitors, volunteers and staff
To educate children about nature
Drawing people in who wouldn't normally be interested in environmental issues
Space for talks and events

"The café and shop encourage those who might not normally visit a nature reserve to visit and this provides a teaching opportunity to those who are less aware of the importance of habitats which are so frequently lost"

Land use

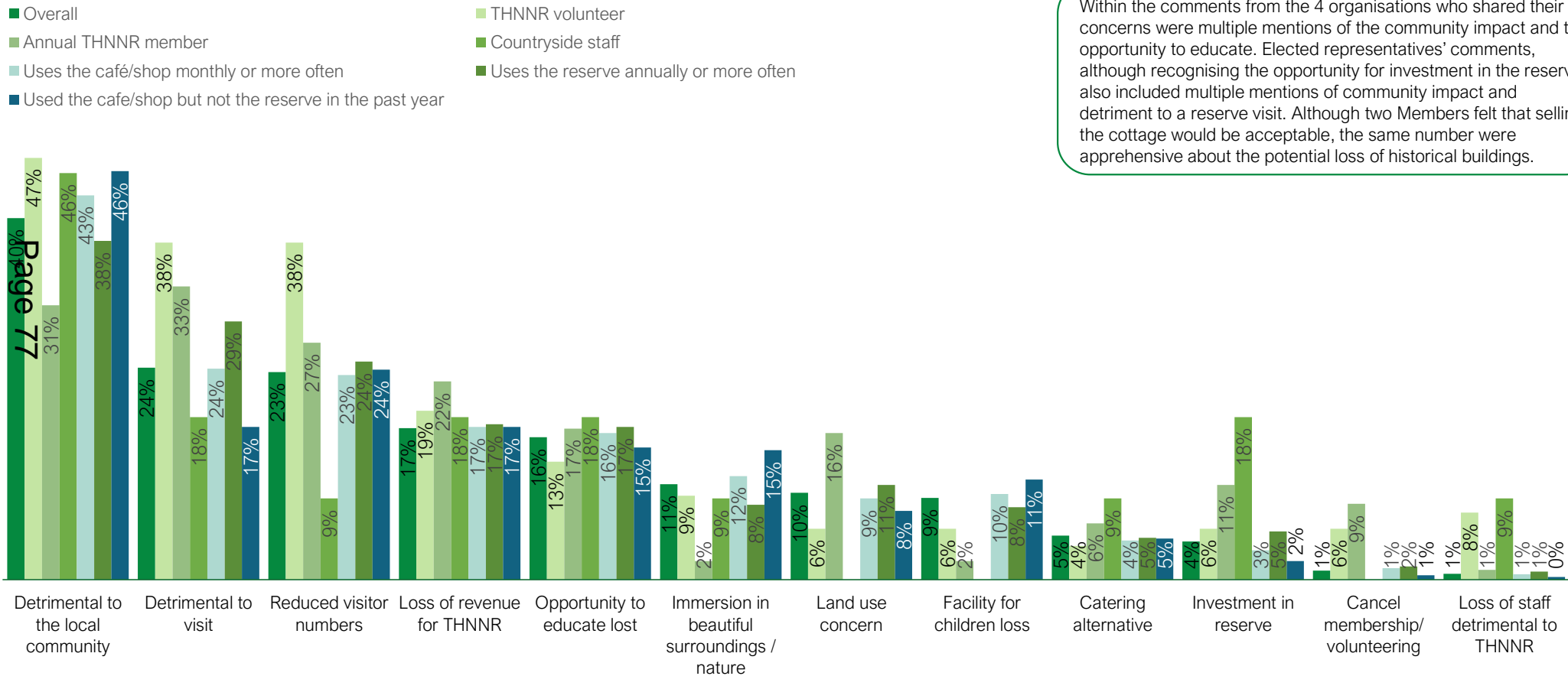
Concern about flats or housing
Adverse effect of building works or unsympathetic development on surrounding area
Can restrictions be placed on how the land is used if sold?

"This beautiful site which is part of the local community will be sold off for greed profit where houses are going to be built by developers and will ruin the landscape"

Impact: Concerns did vary slightly amongst different respondent types, often reflecting their priorities and their relationship with THNNR. For example, café/shop users were those most worried about the impact on the local community; volunteers and annual members were those most concerned about the detrimental impact on a reserve visit and visitor numbers.



Impacts by respondent type



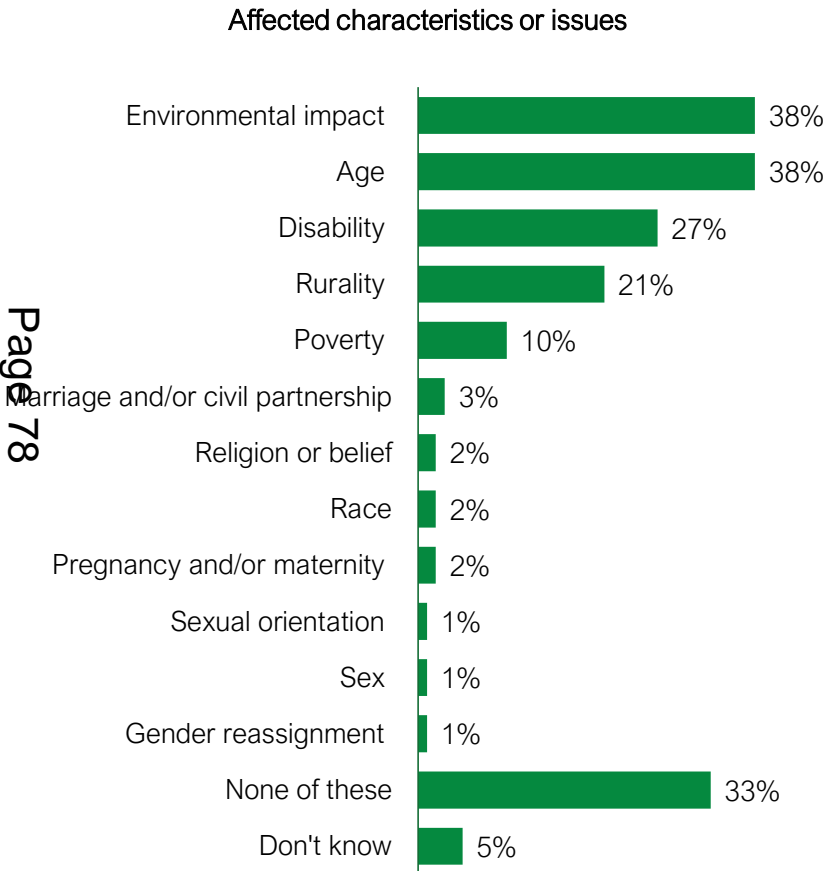
Within the comments from the 4 organisations who shared their concerns were multiple mentions of the community impact and the opportunity to educate. Elected representatives' comments, although recognising the opportunity for investment in the reserve, also included multiple mentions of community impact and detriment to a reserve visit. Although two Members felt that selling the cottage would be acceptable, the same number were apprehensive about the potential loss of historical buildings.

Q: If you would like to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect you or the local area then please do so in the box below. Quantified verbatim (multicode) by respondent type. Respondent Base: 2273, 53, 189, 11, 1742, 623, 608, 1268. Shows impacts where variance between groups is 5% or more



Impacts: Around a third of respondents classified the impact of the proposals by affected characteristics or issues. Of these, impacts on people based on their age were most commonly anticipated, together with impacts relating to the environment.

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Environmental impact: Emphasised concerns about how the land would be used if properties sold and the impact of works on the local community. Comments also stressed the loss of opportunities to generate interest in the natural environment and the importance of protecting it.

Age: Predominantly focussed on older and younger people. For the elderly, there were particular concerns about the impact on health and wellbeing and increased social isolation caused by the loss of community focal point. For children, comments focussed on loss of a family friendly facility and opportunities to educate / embed a love of nature.

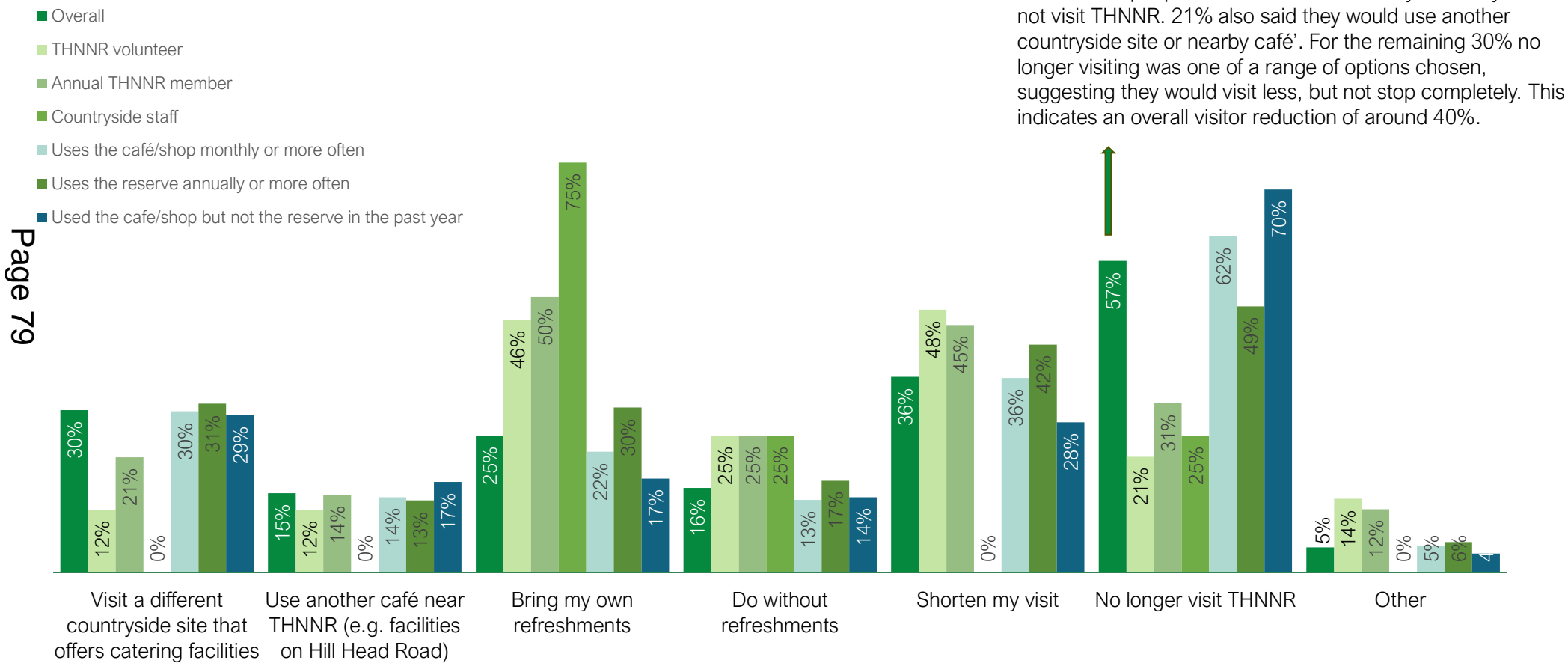
Disability: Comments described the lack of other accessible facilities in the area, and the importance of the café in providing a place for rest that enables people with mobility issues to enjoy the reserve. Health and wellbeing of people with mental health needs was also a focus, with respondents highlighting the Haven as a peaceful sanctuary.

Rurality: Particularly concerns about the detrimental effect the closure of Haven House could have on the local community, citing the loss of a central hub and amenity that brings local people together and contributes to a sense of community. Also flagged concerns about the impact of commercial / property development in the area.

Poverty: Encompassed a range of factors relating to universal access to amenities, including community facilities, affordable ways to support wellbeing, access to nature, and activities for children and people with disabilities and health issues. Also emphasis on loss of jobs and revenue to support the Reserve.

Q: Do the effects that you have mentioned relate to any of the following characteristics or issues? Multicode. Respondent Base: 1099. Commentary reflect impacts which are notably higher than average.
For more information, please refer to the project equalities impact assessment

Impact: Respondents who had used the café/shop were asked what they would do if it closed. Around half indicated that they would “no longer visit THNNR” – higher amongst those who predominately visit for café/shop facilities. Others, particularly annual members and volunteers, would continue to visit – either for a shorter period or with their own refreshments.



Q: If the café at THNNR were to close, what would you do instead? By respondent type. Multicode. Respondent Base: 2807, 52, 232, 4, 2130, 1610, 746



Suggestions: The most common suggestions for an alternative approach are outlined in more detail below. Often these encouraged the involvement of external agencies in funding, running or partnering to enhance or develop the site's potential.

Alternative income streams

Consider fundraising or savings options
Lobby government for funding
Increase council tax
Use developer contributions / CIL towards upkeep of site.
Apply for grants (e.g. Natural England, Forestry Commission, National Lottery, ExxonMobil)
Seek community funding or business sponsorship
Crowdfunding, donations
Engage the community in work parties, volunteers, bequests, donations or fundraising activities
Create a trust / charity to open alternative funding streams
Increase membership, entrance or café prices
Charge aircraft using nearby airport a subsidy
Sell Life Memberships

"Fund raise. Target members for bequests. Work with the community do they invest in the reserve. More community engagement"

Site management alternatives

Concerns about current site management
Partner with or pass responsibility to a charitable organisation
Preference for RSPB, HIOW Wildlife Trust, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust or National Trust

"Look into the possibility of a joint venture with some other wildlife provider. ie RSPB or HIWWT. So that a proper visitor centre and cafe/toilets are provided."

Catering / café management alternatives

Important a catering offer is provided
Can a café be incorporated into new buildings
Could the community run the café?
Could catering facilities be outsourced?
Would a mobile caterer be viable?
Nearby alternatives too far/expensive/busy

"Please preserve some sort of meeting area with a covered area with catering provision even if it is different."

Parking

Have charges impacted visitor numbers?
Can charges be removed or reduced?
Can parking income fund THNNR?
Can more parking be provided?

"Where is all the extra money from the local car parking charges going? Use that."

Encourage more visitors

Educational workshops
Art and photography courses
Trails and tours
Provision for schools, activities for children
Function hire (weddings, meetings, classes)
Increasing range or size of shop
Longer opening hours for café or site
Encourage local business use
Improve marketing activities, disabled access

"Offer more facilities not remove those that are there. Offer talks and education. Organise and advertise regular informative walks"

Suggestions: Respondents expressed less concern about the proposal to sell Haven Cottage than the proposed plans for Haven House, with some agreement evident. However, others remained keen to explore if alternative uses could be viable.



In total, 271 respondents proposed that Haven Cottage be sold in order to enable investment in other parts of the site. Many of these felt that the proceeds from the Cottage could be used to protect Haven House from closure.

However, 111 respondents felt that the Cottage could be retained, refurbished and re-purposed. Suggestions included using it as a holiday let, a rental property, a museum or a function space to help generate interest and income to support the reserve and visitor centre.

Additionally, 50 respondents suggested that the existing flat within Haven House could be converted to a holiday or rental let to help fund the visitor centre.



"By all means sell the cottage but please retain the visitor centre"

"My suggestion is that Haven Cottage is sold to fund renovations of Haven House. This could include converting the upstairs of Haven House into a residential apartment, which could then be sold to raise further funds for THNMR whilst maintaining the downstairs for the shop and cafe."

"The cottage could be used for accommodation for weekend stays for people attending courses to learn about birds, wildlife and the environment. Alternatively the cottage could be made into an education centre to run courses for people of all ages."

"Consider using the accommodation at Haven House and Haven Cottage as holiday lets to get a valuable income stream"

Proposal: Re-invest the proceeds from the sale of the two properties in the nature reserve

This would include investment in:

- the nature reserve, increasing the investment in our management to help protect and enhance the habitats for wildlife;
- visitor facilities and access to the reserve (toilet, membership and admissions, a new digital booking system, information boards);
- a new sustainable operational base for staff and volunteers.

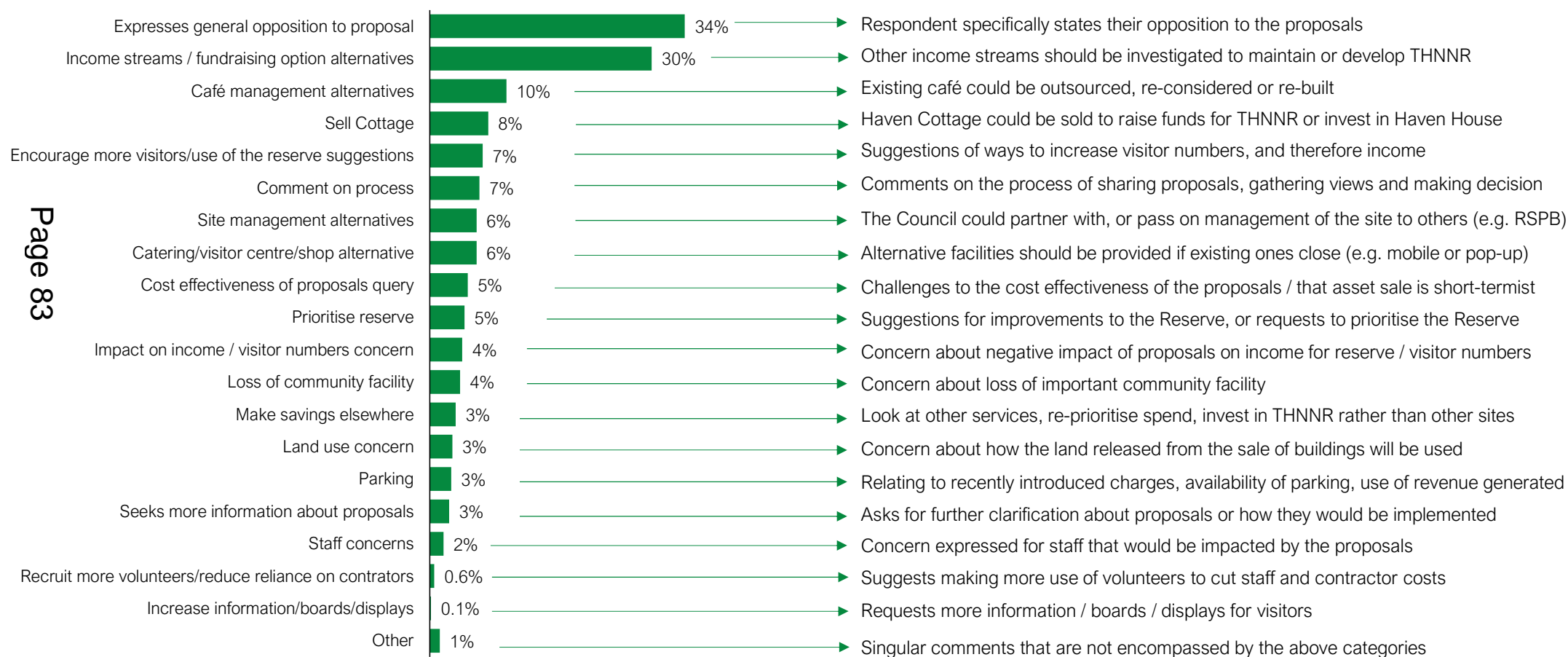
Respondents were invited to help shape this future by sharing their experiences of THNNR and recommending areas for improvement.



Further comments and suggestions: Respondents submitted a range of suggestions as to how the proposals could be adapted to lessen the impacts raised, with investigating alternative income streams the most common idea. In the most part, further comments added more emphasis to key points made within previous questions.



Further comments and suggestions

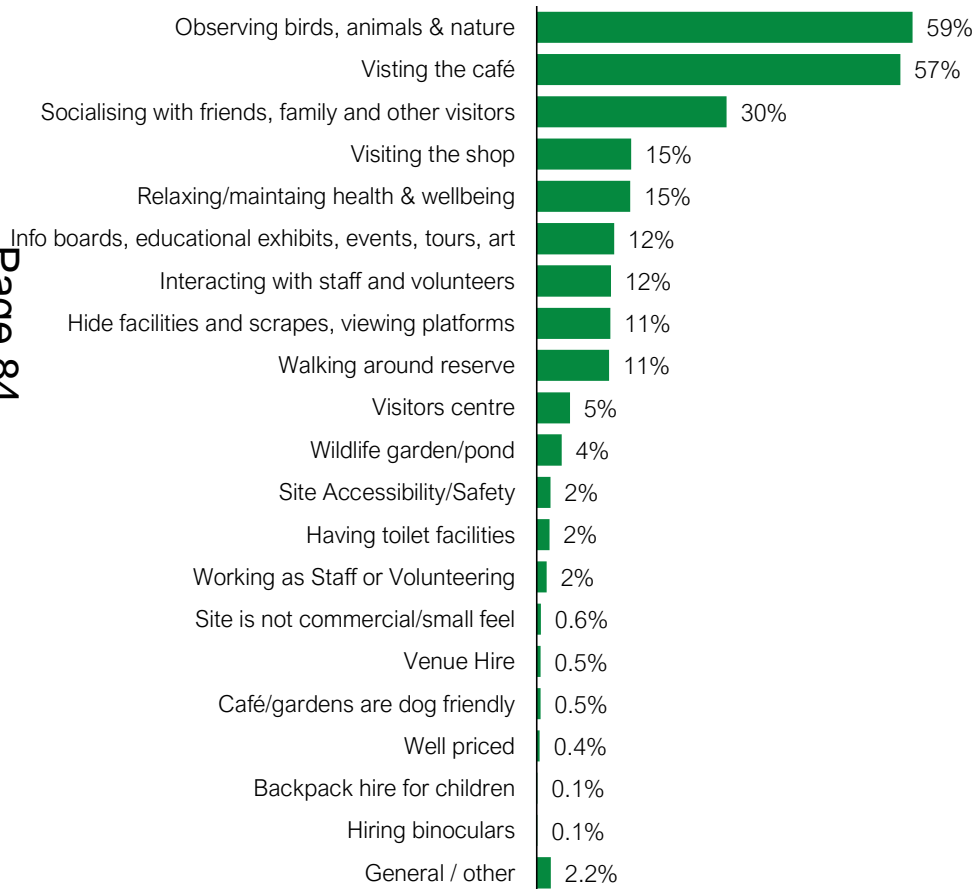


Q: If you have any further comments, or suggestions as to how the County Council could continue to meet its statutory duties at THNNR, please summarise these below. Quantified verbatim (multicode). Respondent Base: 1354 (excludes n/a).

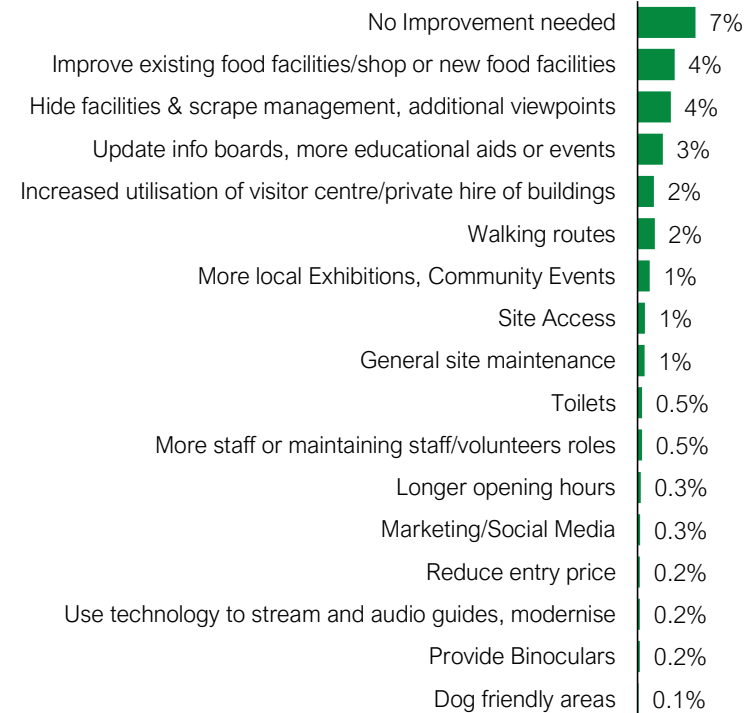


Ideas for investment: Nature was at the heart of many respondents' favourite experiences at THNNR, often combined with a visit to the café and an opportunity to spend time with others. For most, there was little that would enhance these experiences, but some felt a few improvements to catering, viewing facilities and educational resources could be beneficial.

Favourite experiences



Areas for improvement to enhance these experiences

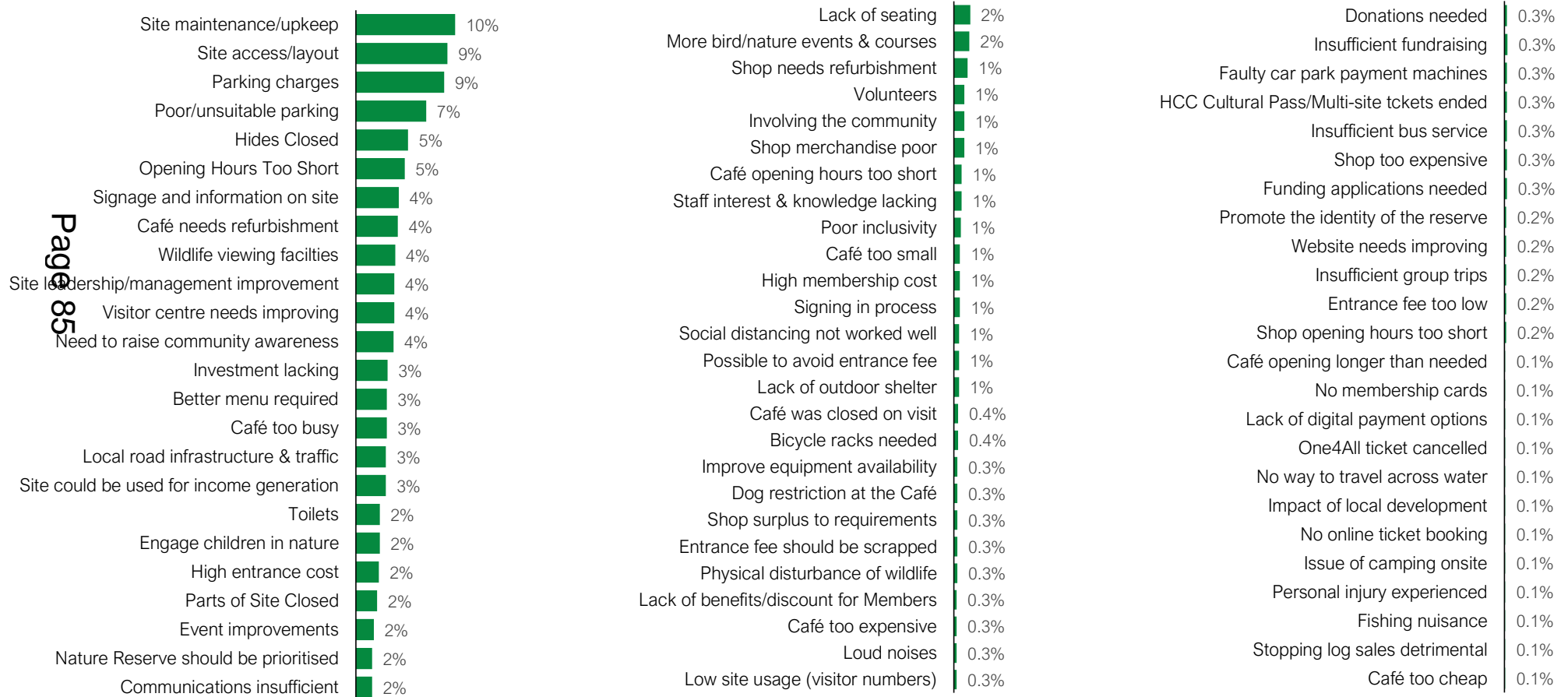




Ideas for investment: A focus on things that worked less well at THNNR flagged no major concerns, but did reveal a long list of areas that might benefit from additional consideration or investment, including site maintenance and access, viewing and informational facilities, parking and extended opening hours.

30% of comments said that no improvement was needed

Not working so well – improvements needed

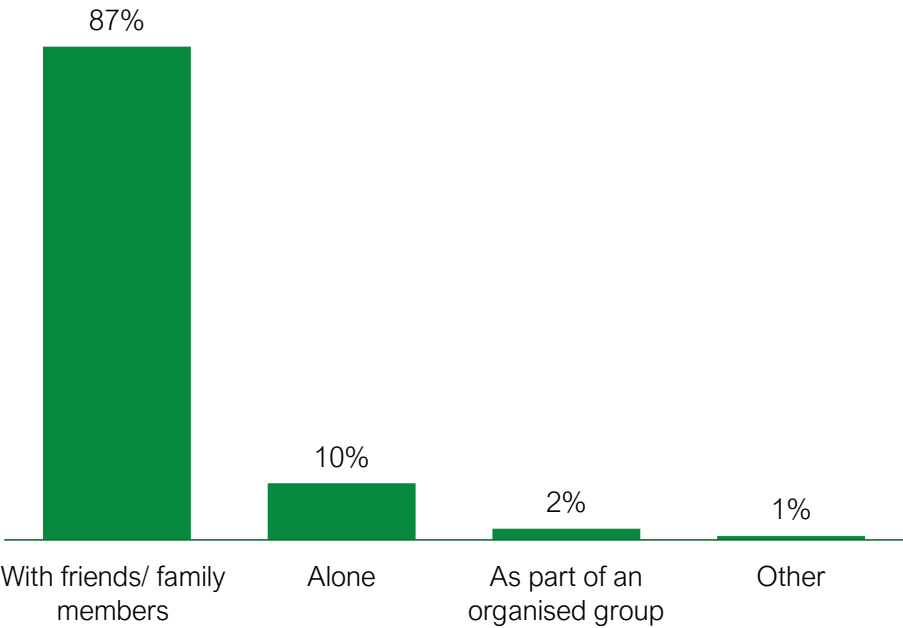


Q: What has not worked so well at THNNR and how might this be improved?. Quantified verbatim (multicode). Respondent Base: 1199 (excludes n/a).

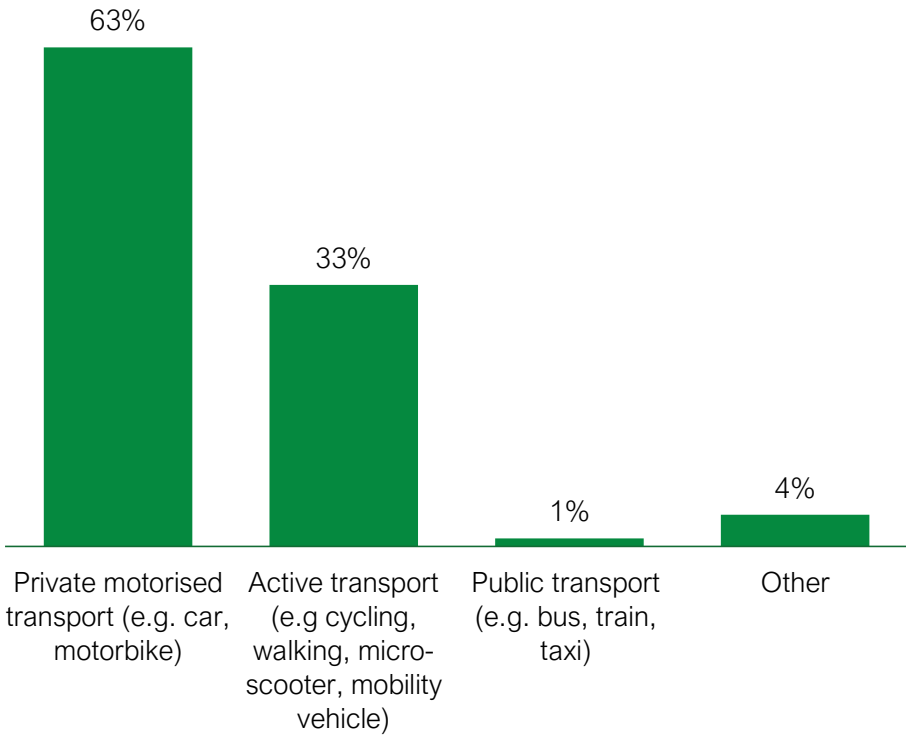
Appendix: Respondent Demographics



When you visit THNNR, do you usually come. .? (Base 2,872, multi-code)



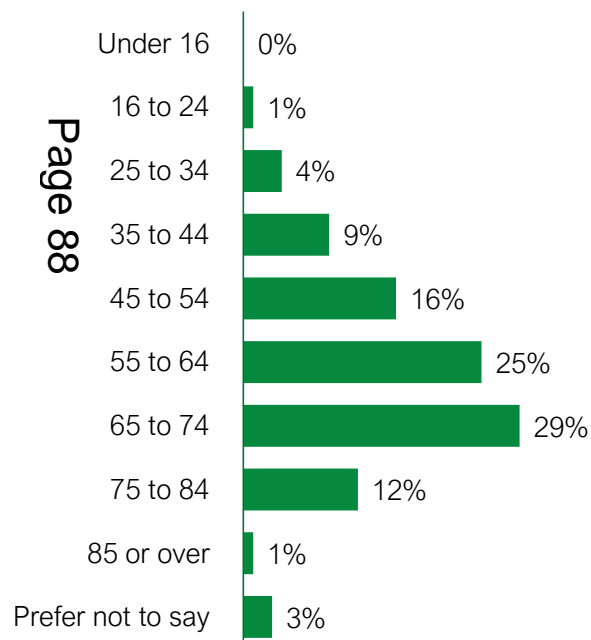
How do you usually travel to THNNR? (Base 2,872)



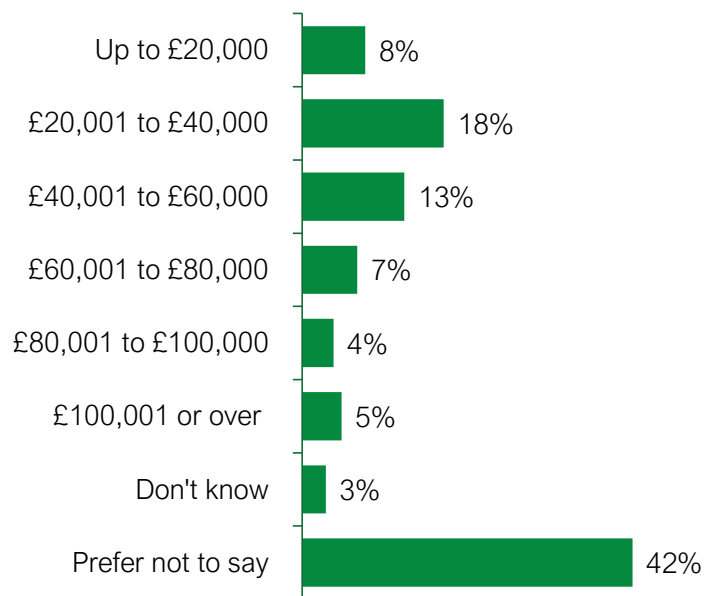
Respondent demographics: Age, income and household makeup



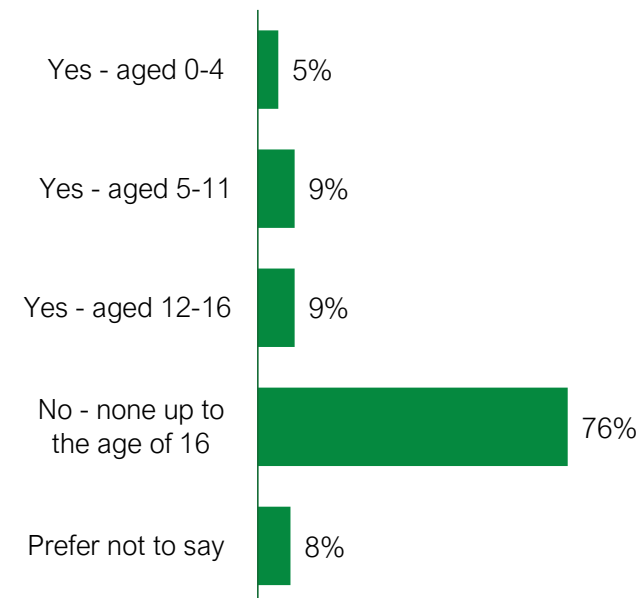
What was your age on your last birthday? (Base 2,898)



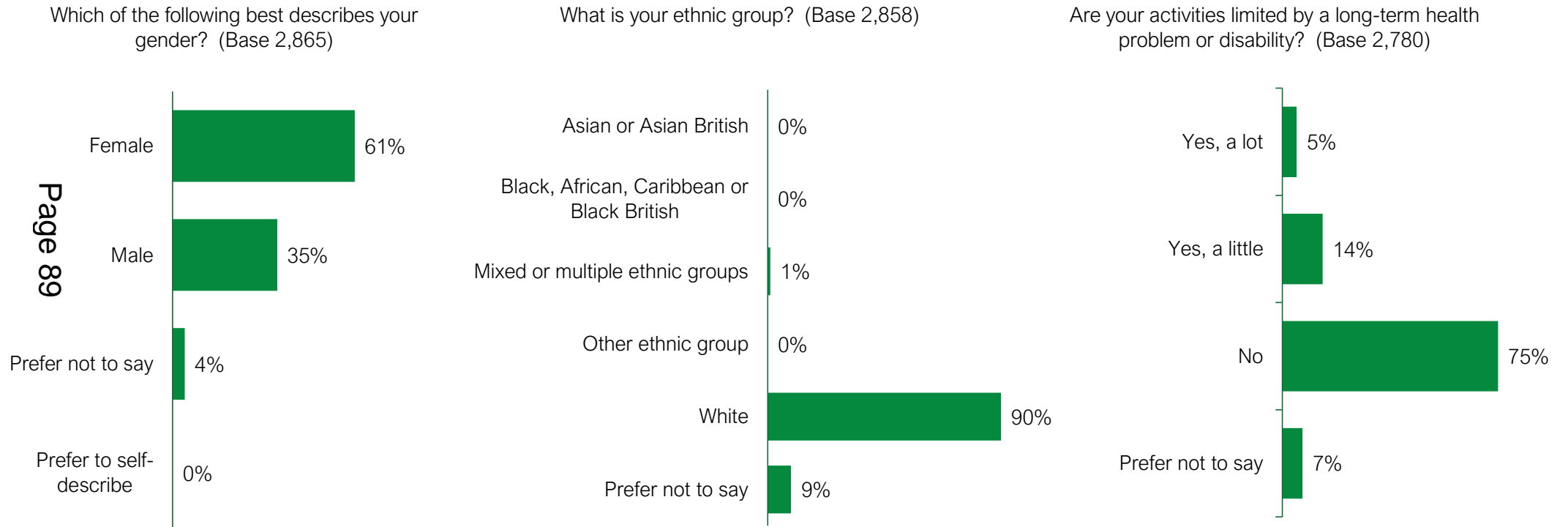
What is your annual household income from all sources? (Base 2,517)



Are there any children or young people living in your household? (Base 2,830, multi-code)



Respondent demographics: Gender, health and ethnicity



Insight. Marketing. Communications.

Titchfield Haven Business Case

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This business case sets out the context, drivers for change and recommended approach for the future management of Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve (THNNR).
- 1.2. The following key objectives for this business case have been developed within the context of Hampshire County Council strategic priorities, statutory responsibilities, and the sustainability of the reserve in the longer term:
 - **Financially sustainable:** Increase economic sustainability, reduce reliance on HCC and ensure the best use of assets and resources
 - **Environmentally sustainable:** Develop a future strategy which responds to opportunities for improved habitat management and adapts to be more resilient to climate and coastal change
 - **Community focused:** To ensure THNNR has a thriving role within the local community and a strong and supported volunteer network
 - **Visitor experience:** To increase access at a landscape scale level, understanding and engagement of the local environment, climate, and coastal change
- 1.3. THNNR is internationally important for its habitats that support a wide variety of wildlife throughout the year, including many important bird species. The nature reserve has recorded 200 different types of birdlife along with over 300 types of plant, of which six are noted as nationally scarce and has key environmental designations including SINC, SPA and a SSSI.
- 1.4. Over 100,000 people visit Titchfield Haven each year. Admission to the Visitor Centre (Haven House), including a café, reception/retail area and toilets, is free and receives most of the visits (85,000). Visitors wishing to enter the reserve (15,000) pay an admission charge or annual membership fee; currently 700 active members.
- 1.5. The visitor centre, café and shop are enjoyed by residents and visitors to the area. There is strong local support for and engagement with THNNR, including volunteering; currently over 80 active volunteers in both the reserve and visitor centre who collectively contribute nearly 8,000 hours each year (equivalent of 4 full time members of staff).
- 1.6. The site also includes Haven Cottage, a residential building close to Haven House, which has not been used for public access or delivering services and is currently vacant. This building was recently Grade II listed (Jan 2022), increasing the County Council's obligations in relation to this asset.
- 1.7. The annual net cost of managing Titchfield Haven is £136,000, including visitor facilities and the wider nature reserve. This is increasing year on year, and, in turn, this is increasing pressures and risks for the County Council in effectively managing the nature reserve in line with statutory obligations. Environmental and coastal changes are likely to add to this pressure. Therefore, to be financially and environmentally sustainable in the long term, the current approach is no longer viable.

- 1.8. The financial data and analysis reveal of the £136,000, the management of the visitor centre, café and shop (non-statutory) are running at a net cost of £88,000 and the nature reserve management at a net cost of £48,000. The trend analysis also indicates that admission and membership income for the reserve has a steady growth pattern while the net café surplus is stable, and sales/retail income has had a significant decline.
- 1.9. Unlike Country Parks managed by HCC, options to increase income are limited at THNNR, with no dedicated parking and a need to limit visitor numbers due to the sensitive nature of the site. Haven House which includes the café and shop, is not fit for purpose and there are limited options to change the current use of space without significant capital investment.
- 1.10. There are also additional pressures to consider, including the current condition liability of the buildings, estimated at just under £700k. Even with this investment, it would be unlikely to significantly affect the revenue position for the site, and as a result would be unlikely to provide a reasonable return on investment.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Based on the information and analysis in this report, the recommendation for a future sustainable operating model at THNNR, which supports the objectives in 1.2, is to:

- ***Manage the reserve without a visitor centre, retain admission and memberships.***
- ***Declare built assets surplus to service requirements.***
- ***Recommend asset disposal to re-invest and support the long-term viability of the reserve.***

In addition, further recommendations are:

- Declare Haven Cottage surplus to service requirements and recommend asset disposal
 - Approval to proceed with the staff consultation and public engagement
 - Request corporate approval to offer EVR in this instance
 - Support the proposed future operating model as set out in this report, including staffing structure and revenue budget
 - Support the recommendation to request retention investment / retention of capital receipts from asset disposal to invest in THNNR
- 2.2. The key benefits of this approach are that it enables the County Council to:
 - Prioritise resource on the long-term environmental sustainability of the National Nature Reserve and its nationally important wildlife and habitats and meet statutory obligations
 - Reduce revenue costs (£60,000 annually) with the potential to deliver change without additional financial support from HCC (if Haven Cottage/Haven House are sold with capital receipts reinvested in the long-term management of the NNR)
 - Provides opportunities to take a wider strategic landscape scale approach, improve access and recreation to the site for the local community and volunteers

NOTE: The estimated sale value of Haven Cottage (£500k) and Haven House (£1.5m) is a total of £2m. If achieved, capital receipts could be reinvested at THNNR without additional investment required from HCC to manage these changes and support the long-term sustainability of the reserve.

3. Background

3.1. Nature Reserve

Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve is a coastal nature reserve located to the southwest of Fareham covering 369 acres of the Lower Meon valley. The site includes over 14km of water ways including main ditches, the River Meon and Titchfield Canal (the second oldest man-made water way in Britain built in 1611). It also incorporates reed beds, scrapes and meadows and is a wetland environment. The site is a highly managed water-based/catchment environment, in which control and water levels are managed by engineered structures such as sluices and water gates. A sluice gate managed by the Environment Agency (EA) is positioned at the southern end of the reserve, which essentially separates the tidal salt water from the fresh river water and creates the harbour.

3.2. It is internationally important for its habitats that support a wide variety of wildlife throughout the year, including many important bird species. The nature reserve has recorded 200 different types of birdlife along with over 300 types of plant, of which six are noted as nationally scarce. The changing seasons and wildlife ensure there is always something different for visitors to see throughout the year. Key environmental designations include Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Site of Scientific Special Interest (SSSI).

3.3. The reserve is managed by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and was first declared as a Local Nature Reserve in 1973, whilst achieving the status of National Nature Reserve in 1995. HCC own most of the reserve, however, a small section is owned by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT), who have a keen interest in its development. A map detailing the leasehold area is included in Appendix A and the lease can be found [here](#). Under the law, leases of this nature continue to run past the end date stated in the document until one of the parties to the lease serves notice to bring it to an end. No notices have been served here, so the lease continues. It will continue until a notice is served.

3.4. THNNR sits within a wider coastal landscape which includes neighbouring private land, Hampshire County Council (HCC) owned land with public access and HCC land leased to tenant farmers through the County Farms Estate (as a smallholdings authority as defined in Part III of the Agriculture Act 1970). There is also a large network of public rights of way, including the Solent Way (further information on land ownership of the reserve and the surrounding area is included in Appendix A).

3.5. Community and Visitor Engagement

Over 100,000 people visit Titchfield Haven each year. Admission to the Visitor Centre, including a café, reception/retail area and toilets, is free and receives most of the visits (85,000). Visitors wishing to enter the reserve (15,000) pay an admission charge or annual membership fee; currently 600 active members. This provides access to the reserve and a network of boardwalks and bird hides.

3.6. As a sensitive environment, there is a balance to be struck between being accessible to the public and careful visitor management, to protect the habitat and wildlife from potentially damaging disturbance.

3.7. There is strong local support for and engagement with THNNR, including volunteering; currently over 80 active volunteers in both the reserve and visitor centre who collectively contribute nearly 8,000 hours each year (equivalent of 4 full time members of staff), and value in the Visitor Centre and facilities.

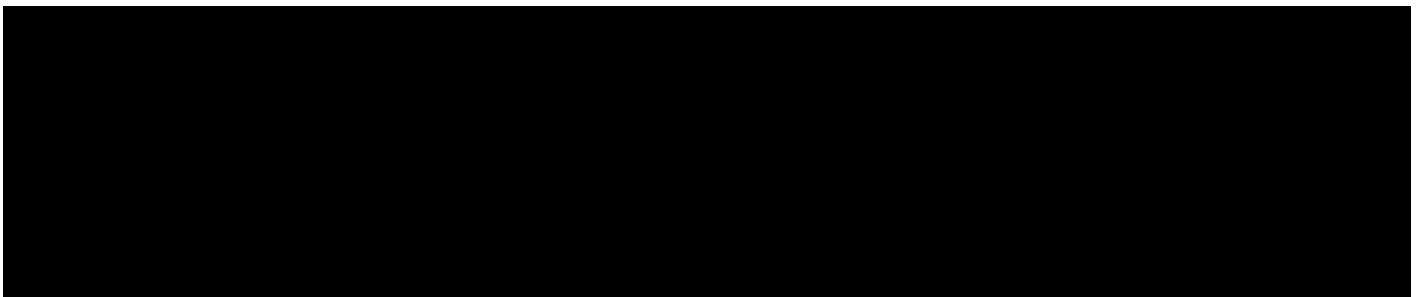
Further detail on visitor trend analysis and volunteers is included in Appendix B (info from RH).

3.8. **Facilities and Resources**

The main built infrastructure includes:

- Haven House which incorporates a cafe, retail space and toilets on the ground floor, with offices and a residential flat (currently vacant) on the first floor.
Legislation heavily restricts how we can let the flat, without creating a secure tenancy where the tenant would have a right to stay there and potentially also a right to buy the flat. There is a list of exemptions whereby a secure tenancy is avoided. One is a letting to a member of Countryside staff for the better performance of their duties. This is a service tenancy and can last for years, but we must be satisfied that the letting means the employee can do their job better. A caretaker is an obvious example. Such a tenancy can only be up to one year in length, after that it becomes secure. We have had both service tenants and new employees occupying the flat at various times.
- Haven Cottage, which is a residential building close to Haven House, has not been in public use and is currently vacant. This building was recently Grade II listed (January 2022).
- The reserve includes eight bird hides (one of which is outside the pay zone) which are in use but in need of investment to keep them in a good state of repair, costs ranging from £30-60k per hide.
- A 500m network of boardwalks within the pay zone, which are predominantly in good condition, and many have been upgraded in recent years (300m).

3.9. There is no dedicated parking for visitors to Titchfield Haven and parking in the area is limited. There is a small pay and display car park opposite the Visitor Centre, next to the Sailing Club, operated by Fareham Borough Council. HCC owns two small permissive parking areas in the wider area (Chilling), and a small area of land used regularly for illegal parking by local walkers/visitors to the headland.



3.11. The total cost of running THNNR is currently £641,000. These costs are met through earned income (£505,000 of which £315,000 is catering) and an annual cash limit of £136,000 from Hampshire County Council budgets. Further budget detail is included in Appendix C.

3.12. In terms of the local area, there are several other cafes within easy reach of THNNR as well as Alver Valley Country Park, which provides a recreational area for people to enjoy nature, including parking, a play area, and a newly opened Garden Centre, including a large coffee shop.

4. **Strategic Context**

4.1. The management of Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve currently sits within the Country Parks portfolio of the Countryside Service at Hampshire County Council. As custodian of a National Nature

Reserve, the Council has a responsibility and statutory obligation to manage and maintain the site for the protection and conservation of the habitat and wildlife.

- 4.2. It is internationally important for its habitats and supporting wildlife and is managed in line with its statutory duty as a SSSI and within an SPA as well as both the National Nature Reserve Strategy and HCC Countryside Service Strategy priorities:

[England's National Nature Reserve Partnership](#), on which Hampshire County Council sits as Local Authority representative. The focus of the NNR Strategy is to take a joint approach, putting NNRs “*at the heart of 21st century conservation*”, to inspire people, promote learning, and encourage involvement in the wider landscape. This focuses on four key strands:

- Conservation
- Environmental research
- People (enjoyment and engagement with natural heritage), and
- Partnerships (create stronger links between NNRs, surrounding landscapes and communities).

The [Countryside Service Strategy 2020-2030](#) aims to:

- Develop a deeper connection with our customers
- Help nature recover
- Deliver services that are economically sustainable
- Be the first choice for people wanting to work/volunteer in the countryside sector

- 4.3. It is also important to note that the coastal area around Titchfield is subject to a ‘hold the line’ management position which requires that coastal defences are maintained but no further defences are added to protect against impacts of sea level rise and coastal erosion/flooding. However, a review of coastal management is expected in 2024, and any change to this position would impact on the currently freshwater reserve, potentially allowing the retreat of the shoreline and the creation of inter-tidal habitat. In the future this may lead to opportunities for managing through ‘natural processes’ which could provide a more sustainable mechanism for future management.

5. Opportunities and Challenges

Developing a sustainable way of managing THNNR for the future, both environmentally and financially, has been an area of consideration for the Countryside Service for several years (further detail included in section 6). However, due to the specific nature of THNNR, this presents both opportunities and challenges.

- 5.1. [National Nature Reserve](#) management is complex and has a growing need for investment to maintain the current habitat to the statutory standards required. Current estimates are a minimum of £10k additional annual revenue and £650k for asset management and improvements over the next three years (including sluice water management, culvert repairs, path improvements and bridge repairs). There are increasing risks to management costs in the context of climate change, coastal erosion, flooding, and rising water levels (coastal flooding limits access and risks road closures).

Local Community: There is strong local support for THNNR as both an important community asset and more actively through volunteering and donations. Titchfield frequently receives donations of support; most recently it has achieved £20,000 to support boardwalk improvement works.

Currently, THNNR has over 80 regular volunteers who support both visitor engagement and the NNR management and who collectively contribute nearly 8,000 hours a year (the equivalent of 4 full time

members of staff). Most of the volunteering is focused on the reserve, with around 10 volunteers who also support the reception and shop.

The Hill Head Residents Association (HHRA) have recently lobbied for Haven Cottage to be preserved for its [historical interest and has been Grade II listed](#) (January 2022).

5.2. The Visitor experience has two quite separate offers:

- The National Nature Reserve, which predominantly appeals to specialist bird watchers rather than for wider recreation use. This accounts for around 15,000 visits a year.
- The Visitor Centre with café and shop, which attracts around 85,000 visits a year. Many are drawn by the coastal location and the picturesque harbour.

The existing customer journey doesn't flow easily, with two separate reserve entrances at each side of the reserve which are both disconnected from the visitor centre, the ticket sales point. This makes ticketed entry challenging to manage, enforce and promote. Parts of the reserve are inaccessible and there is no circular route around the reserve, which would appeal to visitors.

In addition, as a site with sensitive habitats and wildlife, it is not a suitable location for large numbers of visitors or dog walkers (a key visitor group at Country Parks) as they can disturb wildlife, such as overwintering bird populations.

5.3. Visitor facilities are based in the Haven House Visitor Centre, a former residential property constructed in 1850. The interior spaces are restrictive and not ideally designed to house the shop, reception, café, and toilets. There is limited capacity for refurbishment or improvement without significant alterations at significant cost. The building management and maintenance costs are increasing (further information in section 7), and the building is at future risk due to flooding and coastal changes.

A [condition report](#) was undertaken in 2015 to inform the investment strategy at the outset for the Country Park Transformation (CPT) Programme.

Since this report some liabilities have since been addressed, however it is likely existing liabilities noted will have continued to deteriorate and therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that the same level of liabilities as described in the CPT condition report, plus a level of inflation since the original condition budgets were noted. This is estimated as a total current condition liability cost of £674k (£263k for the Haven Cottage and £411k for Haven House). See Appendix F for further information on the condition liability asset cost estimates.

As well as the planned maintenance work undertaken, compliance and reactive maintenance work continues to add an annual cost pressure. According to the most recent [expenditure summary report](#), planned, reactive and compliance costs for Titchfield Haven overall have amounted to £282,000 in the last six years, which has predominantly been on Haven House.

A lack of parking on site, and recent introduction of pay and display charging at the car park opposite, are likely to further impact on visitors to the reserve and Visitor Centre.

Engagement and interpretation on site is limited and there is no formal schools programme due to a lack of appropriate facilities on site e.g. unsuitable indoor and outdoor space for large groups of children.

- 5.4. In summary, costs are increasing to meet [SSSI public body](#) and [SSSI land management](#) statutory obligations and there are insufficient income streams to cover these costs. For THNNR to be financially and environmentally sustainable in the longer term, the current approach is no longer viable.

6. **Options Explored**

Acknowledging these challenges, previous work has been undertaken by the service and external consultants to explore various options for a sustainable future for the reserve.

6.1. Country Parks Transformation Programme

As part of CPT, [Planning Solutions Consulting](#) undertook a review in 2015 across all 8 sites within the Country Parks portfolio to establish future priorities and ideas for developing these sites as more sustainable visitor attractions. The report recognised the challenges and uniqueness of THNNR and concluded it did not have the same opportunities as the wider programme developed for country parks as it has a very different operating model, specifically this includes:

- Smaller capacity / fewer visitors (15,000 admissions compared to 150,000 at Staunton Farm)
- More sensitive and designated ecology and wildlife
- No parking area or parking income to reinvest into managing the site

While this piece of work proposed some opportunities to develop new markets to grow income generation, the ideas needed sizeable investment (£400-600k) and the natural limit on capacity at the site meant the return on investment would not be proportionate or quick enough to justify such investment. As this report had a more commercially focused assessment, there were no recommendations within this report on the wider challenges for land management.

6.2. Wildlife and Wetland Trust Consulting

Subsequently, in 2017, [WWT Consulting](#) reviewed the activity at THNNR with a greater consideration of the land management and habitat protection requirements and obligations of the site as a National Nature Reserve, alongside visitor experience. This report highlighted:

- Limitations and the need for significant refurbishment and investment of buildings.
- Most effective wetland sites provide visitor centres within/overlooking reserves, to enhance visitor experience and engagement and encourage visitors into the pay zone.
- Potential options of refurbishing existing facilities or relocating the visitor centre, or potentially downgrading visitor facilities to a kiosk.
- The option to obtain additional land to adapt to future environmental change and the need for habitats and wildlife to migrate inland.
- Potential focus to work closer with neighbouring farms to encourage their management in a way that benefits species present on the reserve and provide extra habitats.

It also recognised that the current 'hold the line' approach to protect the freshwater setting will require significant on-going investment. The approaches suggested by WWT Consulting took a much more considered look at the future land management requirements, however, they also required significant investment which was disproportionate to the potential financial return.

Collectively both reports clearly identify some of the significant challenges and opportunities at THNNR, however, neither presented a convincing financially sustainable approach. As a result, it is

acknowledged that a different strategy is required at THNNR to establish a future approach that takes account of these challenges.

7. Recent Drivers for Change

7.1. During 2020/21, there have been some wider developments which may have an impact on how THNNR is able to operate in the future. Specifically:

- Fareham Borough Council has recently (July 2021) introduced parking charges to the Sailing Club car park (the one used most by visitors to THNNR) and to the additional parking along the foreshore, creating an additional pressure, potentially deterring visitors, members, and volunteers.
- A developing partnership approach to the future management of nearby Hook-with-Warsash Local Nature Reserve, approx. 5 miles along the coast, may provide new opportunities to link up land management and visitor engagement on a wider scale across this coastal area. Like Titchfield, this site is managed as coastal grazing marsh and for overwintering birds. This project, which is being overseen by Coastal Partners (including Hampshire County Council) is currently undertaking a feasibility study. The development of this 500-acre site, offering varied coastal habitats of shingle, grassland, wetland, and woodland at the mouth of the River Hamble, will have similar considerations to THNNR, including the impact of coastal flooding and visitor engagement, potentially with a visitor centre. The outcome of this work is due later in 2022/23, and the service regularly engages with the project team.
- A new County Farms Policy, with opportunities to consider different or more collaborative approaches to land management and the potential of conservation farming.
- An increasing focus on the impact of climate change and coastal change. The coastline around THNNR currently has a 'hold the line' approach (which protects the freshwater setting) but this will require significant and increasing investment to maintain. A review of this approach is due in 2024 by the Environment Agency and any change could have a significant impact on THNNR.
- A recent [Natural Wealth](#) report by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Nature Partnership (April 2022), recognises the likelihood of increased flooding as a significant risk to biodiversity loss.

8. Options analysis

- 8.1. It is evident that efforts to develop a future for THNNR have consistently come up against the same barrier - no single overarching solution meets the needs of both visitor engagement and nature reserve management. Indeed, there is a tension in managing the two aspects, as increasing visitors risks disturbance of sensitive and important habitats and wildlife protected within the reserve.
- 8.2. As a result, an alternative approach has been taken which moves away from seeking a holistic solution for THNNR to instead consider how each different service area could be delivered independently of each other (whilst considering the management of assets and inter-dependencies).
- 8.3. This approach is also based on the assumption that HCC will continue to manage the reserve. The potential to explore other options has been considered, however, discussions held with potential partners, including the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT), established that this is unlikely to be an appealing option without a significant level of investment from HCC.
- 8.4. The current activity at THNNR separates into three service/activity areas:
- 1) Nature reserve management

- 2) Community engagement, including volunteers
- 3) Visitor facilities, including café, shop, and toilets

Based on this, a detailed options analysis assessed options against the objectives in 1.2, revealing one pivotal decision – should a future solution at THNNR be delivered with, or without, visitor facilities?

Specifically, the options are:

Option 1: Do nothing

Option 2: Manage the NNR with visitor facilities

- a) improve the current site and buildings, or
- b) develop a new sustainable facility (potential HCC sites have been identified in the local area)

Option 3. Minimal visitor facilities, with toilets, admission/memberships seasonal catering offer

Option 4: Manage the NNR without visitor facilities, the reserve is opened for free access

- 8.5. A table and scoring matrix are included in Appendix D, setting out the main benefits, disbenefits and high-level financial impact of each option. This identified the highest scoring option as:

Option 3: Manage THNNR without visitor facilities, retain admission and memberships, dispose of built assets to support the long-term financial viability of the NNR.

Key benefits:

- Most viable option for the long-term environmental sustainability of the National Nature Reserve, nationally important wildlife, and habitats.
- Reduced revenue costs to HCC and potential to deliver without additional financial support from HCC (if Haven Cottage/Haven House are sold with capital receipts re-invested in the long-term management of the NNR)
- Focus HCC resource and investment on strategic priorities of managing an NNR
- Provides opportunities to take a wider strategic landscape scale approach, improve access and recreation to the site for the local volunteers and the community

- 8.6. In summary, taking this approach would result in the following changes to the visitor offer, operational management, staff, and volunteers:
 - Closure of Visitor Centre, café, toilets and shop and small-scale activities
 - Improved access to the East reserve, additional information, and online/digital ticketing
 - Ranger staff (4/5) transfer to Countryside Sites management team, with greater expertise and peer support for habitat management
 - Visitor Centre staff, Café staff (10) and casual worker (17) roles put at risk
 - Reserve volunteering to continue (70), loss of visitor centre volunteering opportunities (10)
 - Opportunity to reduce the cost of running THNNR while increasing investment in the reserve

9. Future Business Case

- 9.1. Further steps have been taken to assess in more detail the viability of this option towards establishing a sustainable future management model for THNNR.
- 9.2. It is important to note that a key dependency of this proposal is the investment required for the essential costs of change in establishing the new operating model (as set out in 11.2). This proposal

includes a recommendation to dispose of 2 building/land assets as part of the changes to reduce revenue costs and provide a source of income from capital receipt, which would cover investment costs required if retention and reinvestment of capital receipts from these disposals is approved.

An impact summary focusing on finance, visitor and workforce is also included in Appendix E.

10. Financial Information and Analysis

10.1. Financial analysis has been undertaken to assess the current capital and revenue performance and pressures, as well as the financial implications of the proposed changes (details are included in Appendix B). This includes:

- Current operational and financial position overall and of each service/activity type
- Financial trends, particularly focused on income, and identified pressures
- Asset condition liabilities and investment needs for each service/activity type
- Estimated property valuations for sale

10.2. Current revenue position

The current revenue position shows:

- Overall, the net revenue cost of THNNR is £136,000 per annum.
- NNR management has a net cost of £48k (assuming pay zone is retained).
- Visitor Centre has a net cost of £80k (including a surplus from catering of £31k).
- Costs are increasing year on year, with a £50k increase in cash limit since 2019/20. There have been some reductions in transport and supplies and services costs, but overall, there has been an 8% increase on costs and 11% decrease in income during this period.
- Income trends show strong performance for admissions and memberships (income up 44% and 40% respectively) and underperformance of retail (down by 23%).
- Overall, café performance is relatively stable, while income is up (9%), costs are also higher, so the % net surplus is stable at around 10%.

***NOTE:** Trend analysis and performance comparisons are based on Q2-Q4 2021/22 in relation to the same period 2019/20 due to the Covid-19 restrictions affecting Q1 2021/22.*

10.3. An overarching financial impact assessment has also been completed to understand the total pressures if there is no change at THNNR, which is a potential unbudgeted pressure of £1.8m over next 3 years (Appendix C).

10.4. Revenue impact of proposed changes

The summary budget below sets out current revenue income and expenditure at THNNR and a future budget model based on the proposed changes set out in this report.

Overall, net operating costs are estimated to reduce by £79,000. However, it is proposed to retain some budget in the existing parks team to support wider management costs currently allocated to THNNR. This would result in a net cash limit reduction of £60,000 and contribute towards the SP23 departmental savings target.

Key changes include reduced premises costs, predominantly related to managing Haven House, and reduced supplies and services, of which the key reduction in expenditure relates to retail (also reflected in reduced sales income). The forward budget also includes increased maintenance, from £14,000 to £24,000, for management of the nature reserve and delivering our statutory obligations.

Assumptions are that other income streams will remain at a stable level apart from catering, which has been removed apart from £6,000 income for a seasonal catering offer (this is based on comparable income from catering concessions at Country Parks).

Description	CURRENT (2022/23)	FUTURE
THNNR		
Employee Costs	226,000	105,000
Premises	58,000	36,500
Travel	11,000	11,000
Supplies and Services	62,000	16,500
Expenditure	357,000	169,000
Grant Income	(20,000)	(20,000)
Sales	(76,000)	(2,000)
Donations	(5,000)	(5,000)
Admission & Memberships	(57,000)	(57,000)
Rents & charges	(10,000)	0
Annual SLA	(22,000)	(22,000)
	(190,000)	(106,000)
NET	167,000	63,000
CATERING		
Employee	144,000	0
Supplies and Services	45,000	0
Catering Provisions	95,000	0
Income	(315,000)	(6,000)
NET	(31,000)	(6,000)
TOTAL NET	136,000	57,000

10.5. Assets and Capital

There are two properties within THNNR, Haven House and Haven Cottage, with an additional yard and storage area. Haven House is the main visitor centre and Haven Cottage is a residential building which has not been in public use and is currently vacant.

10.6. In terms of current condition liability, the total cost estimate for both Haven Cottage and Haven House is £674k (further details are included in Appendix F):

- Haven Cottage: £263k
- Haven House: £411k

There is also a forecast condition liability over the next 3 years of a potential £226k.

10.7. An initial asset needs assessment for the wider nature reserve has revealed asset/condition liability in the region of £670k of works required over the next three years, a summary of which is set out in the table below (further details are included in Appendix G, if proposals are supported, work to refine these cost estimates will be required).

Asset Category	Description	£ Year 2023/24	£ Year 2024/25	£ Year 2025/26
Nature reserve and water management	Improved water management and hydrology plan, including scrapes, reedbeds, sluices and culverts	£60,000	£60,000	20000
Boardwalks & bridges	Various boardwalks and bridges for visitor and staff access, including vehicle access.	£90,000	£70,000	
Bird hides & viewing platform	8 bird hides requiring repair / replacement, potential to change/ reduce the number of bird hides or create more viewing platforms. Essential for maintaining visitor income (£50,000 annually).	£70,000	£90,000	£90,000
Footpaths	Visitor and staff access, footpaths and tracks need resurfacing	£60,000	£60,000	
Total		£280,000	£280,000	£110,000
				£670,000

10.8. Asset Value

It is anticipated that Haven Cottage and Haven House will be attractive to buyers. It is recognised that Haven Cottage requires considerable expenditure to bring it up to standard, but it has the potential to be a lovely family home in a great location. The recent listing of the building is not considered to be a significant issue in terms of asset value; indeed, many buyers will potentially find the listed status appealing.

For Haven House, whilst in better condition than Haven Cottage, there remains considerable expense in adapting it for alternative use, most likely housing. The location is important, and whilst this also leads to risk of flooding, it is anticipated there will be strong interest from buyers considering the location by the harbour.

10.9. In terms of property value, this is currently estimated by HCC Estates team to up to £2m:

- Haven Cottage, £500k
- Haven House (Visitor Centre), £1.5m

10.10. One off cost of proposed changes

The table below sets out the estimated costs of implementing the proposed changes.

Action	Cost
Redundancy exit costs if offering EVR Scheme and including pension strain costs where applicable*	£98,000
Yard & Depot (initial costings only, tbc) (For staff - simple depot building with staff area, toilet, dry room/boot room, shower, kitchenette, equipment store / workshop, yard improvements and fencing) (For visitors - reception hatch, covered entrance way/information point and toilet)	£520,000
Visitor Access & Information	£90,000

(new boardwalk/path to create a safe accessible route to NNR east entrance, visitor signage and information point)	
Cost of asset disposal, division of the current land holding (initial costings only, tbc)	£20,000
Digital Ticketing – admissions and memberships (set up costs)	£2,000
TOTAL	£730,000

* A cost analysis has been estimated for both CR and EVR on posts which would be at risk. The preferred approach is to offer EVR to all eligible staff at a cost of £97,286.49 (compared to CR at £74,818.95).

10.11. Financial Summary

The future operating model without a visitor centre, demonstrates net revenue costs could be reduced by £60,000 annually.

To deliver this change, transition investment would be required (estimated £730k) to establish a work base and improved yard area, improved visitor access and costs of closure and redundancies.

However, if declared surplus to requirements, the disposal of Haven Cottage and Haven Cottage could return up to £2m as a capital receipt. If achieved, this could be re-invested at THNNR to cover the costs below, without additional investment required from HCC:

- Transition costs, including improved access and information (£730k)
- Asset liabilities within the reserve (£670k), to improve our environmental management and reduce risks of meeting statutory obligations
- Support developments at Titchfield as part of wider, long-term landscape scale approach to support nature recovery, mitigate risks of recreational access routes and consider longer-term risks related to coastal change (£100k) (further details in Appendix H)

11. Detailed Proposal

The table below sets out a summary impact assessment on the proposed changes:

	Current Model	Proposed Future Model	
Cash Limit	£130,000	£70,000	↑
Management of Reserve	£14,000 annual maintenance	£24,000 annual maintenance	↑
Visitors (entering reserve)	15,000	15,000	→
Visitors (not entering reserve)	85,000 café/shop visitors (unknown number of visitors to reserve & hide outside pay zone)	0 (unknown number of visitors to reserve & hide outside pay zone)	↓
Ranger Staff Team			→
Visitor/Admin Staff Team			↓
Catering Staff Team			↓
Volunteers	80 (70 reserve, 10 visitor centre)	70+ future volunteering opportunities	↓

11.1. The specific impact in relation to each core area of service delivery is set out in more detail below:

- Visitor operations and community engagement
- Workforce changes; impact on staff and volunteers
- Land management
- Asset management, disposal, and investment

11.2. **Visitor Operations and Community Engagement**

The Visitor Centre would close, and the café, retail and indoor activities would cease. Seasonal catering units (HCC or third party) could provide a temporary offer at peak times.

Admissions and membership of the reserve would be retained, and moved to a 'digital' offer, which does not require a physical point of sale. This has the potential to extend hours visitors can access the reserve.

Improved information and signage will be developed to improve routes across the reserve, including links to wider routes across the local landscape, and provide additional information for visitors on wildlife, habitats, coastal and climate change.

Visitor offer changes summary:

- Close Haven House Visitor Centre, including café, shop, toilets, and garden (propose December 2022)
- More welcoming entrance to the East reserve including information points and a visitor toilet
- New digital ticketing system for admissions and memberships (ticket checks will continue on a spot-check basis by staff and volunteers)
- Develop the visitor offer within the reserve. Feedback from visitors and volunteers will be invited as part of the public engagement process, including future opening hours, access routes, site facilities and additional information

11.3. **Land Management**

The land management of the reserve would transfer from the Countryside Service Country Parks team (recreation/commercial focus) to the Countryside Service Sites team (land management, conservation).

This would enable the THNNR Ranger team to join a larger team who focus on conservation and habitat management, providing greater peer support and more effective resource management.

A Landscape Scale Strategy project will also be commissioned to establish a longer-term management plan for the NNR and the wider local landscape, considering future coastal and climate change and investment strategy (draft brief attached as Appendix H).

Operational changes summary:

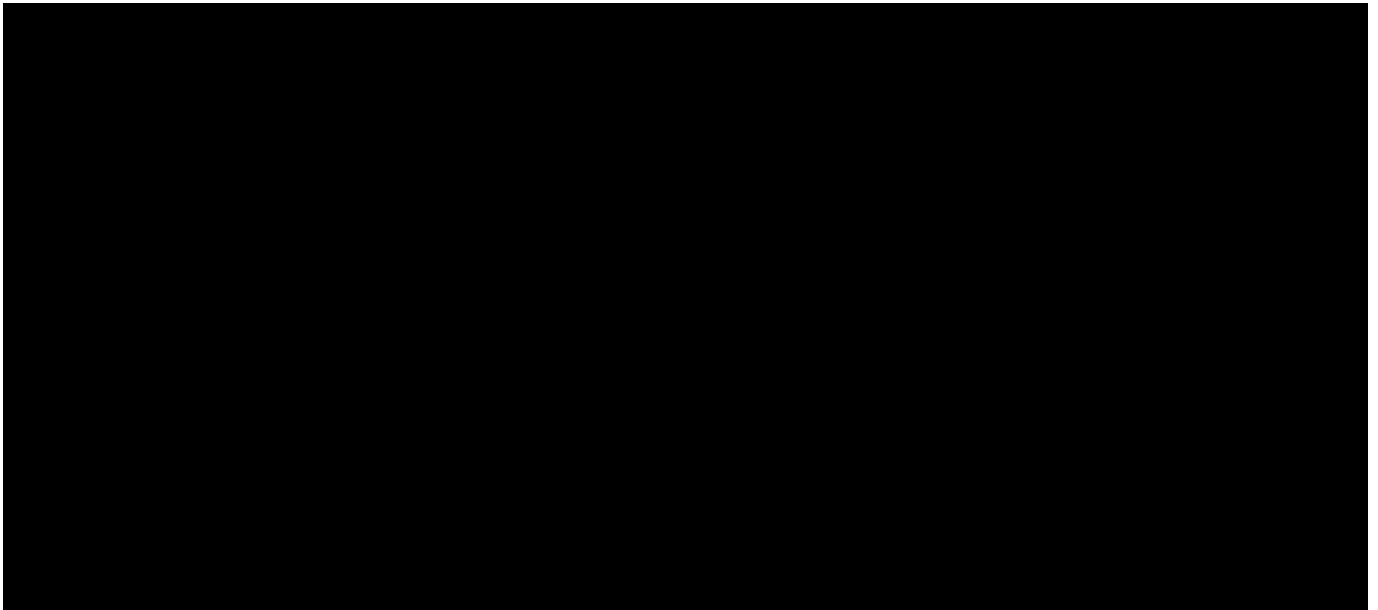
- Establish new workshop and improve yard area, including flexible workspace, shower, storage, and workshop area with gated yard for vehicles (details of yard feasibility included in Appendix I)
- Move work base for remaining staff and volunteer team to operate from the new yard/depot facility (estimated Sept 2023)
- To prioritise the management of the nature reserve and statutory obligations at the site
- To include THNNR as part of a wider Landscape Scale Strategy for the longer term

11.4. **Asset management, disposal, and investment**

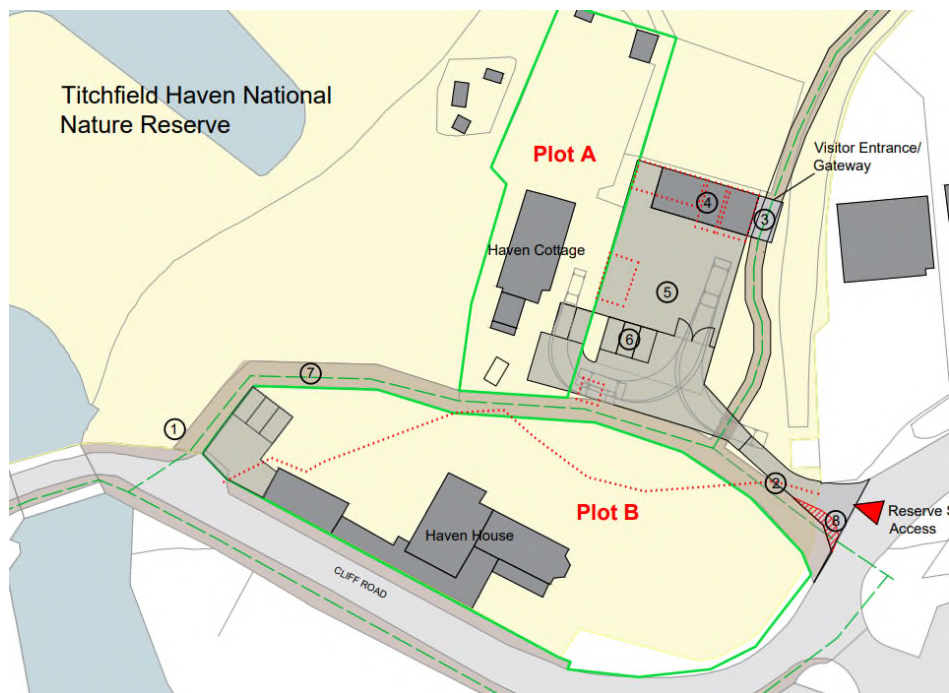
The options for asset management and disposal have been considered as part of this business case, including viability of developing an operational yard to meet future staff and visitor needs if current visitor facilities are removed.

It has also been identified that there is an asset investment need required beyond condition liability, with a focus on meeting statutory obligations, environmental sustainability of wildlife and habitats, operational management needs, visitor access and experience, and volunteer engagement.

It is proposed that the current land holding at THNNR is divided to create 2 separate land holdings for disposal, shown as Plot A and B in the site map below, retaining the remainder of the land for improved visitor access and entrance way and an operational depot/yard.



Site Map:



Asset changes summary:

- Declare Haven Cottage (Plot A) surplus to service requirements and recommend for disposal.
- Following the outcome of staff consultation and public engagement, if proposals are supported (formal decision by Executive Member December 2022) Haven House (Plot B) declared as surplus to service requirements and recommend for disposal

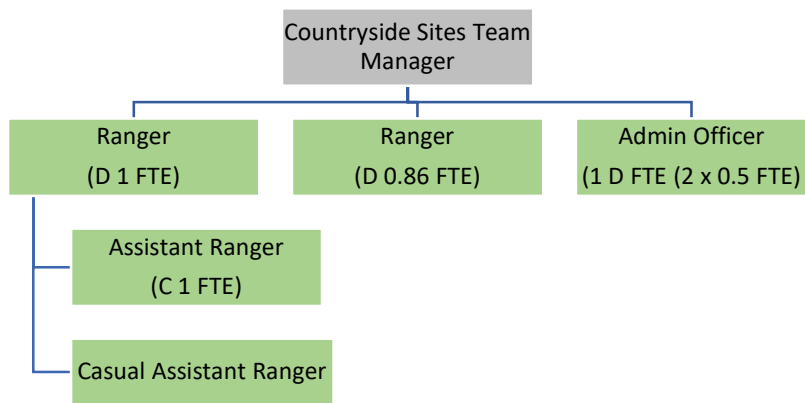
- Investment to support changes and manage condition liabilities of NNR:
 - a) Transition costs of implementation including improved access and visitor information (£550k)
 - b) Immediate asset liabilities within the reserve (£280k) including improvements to the visitor access and facilities within the reserve (interpretation/access routes/hides/digital)
 - c) Future asset liabilities within the reserve (£370k)
 - d) Future development at Titchfield as part of wider, long-term landscape scale approach to mitigate risks longer-term risks related to coastal change (£100k)

11.5. Staffing Impact

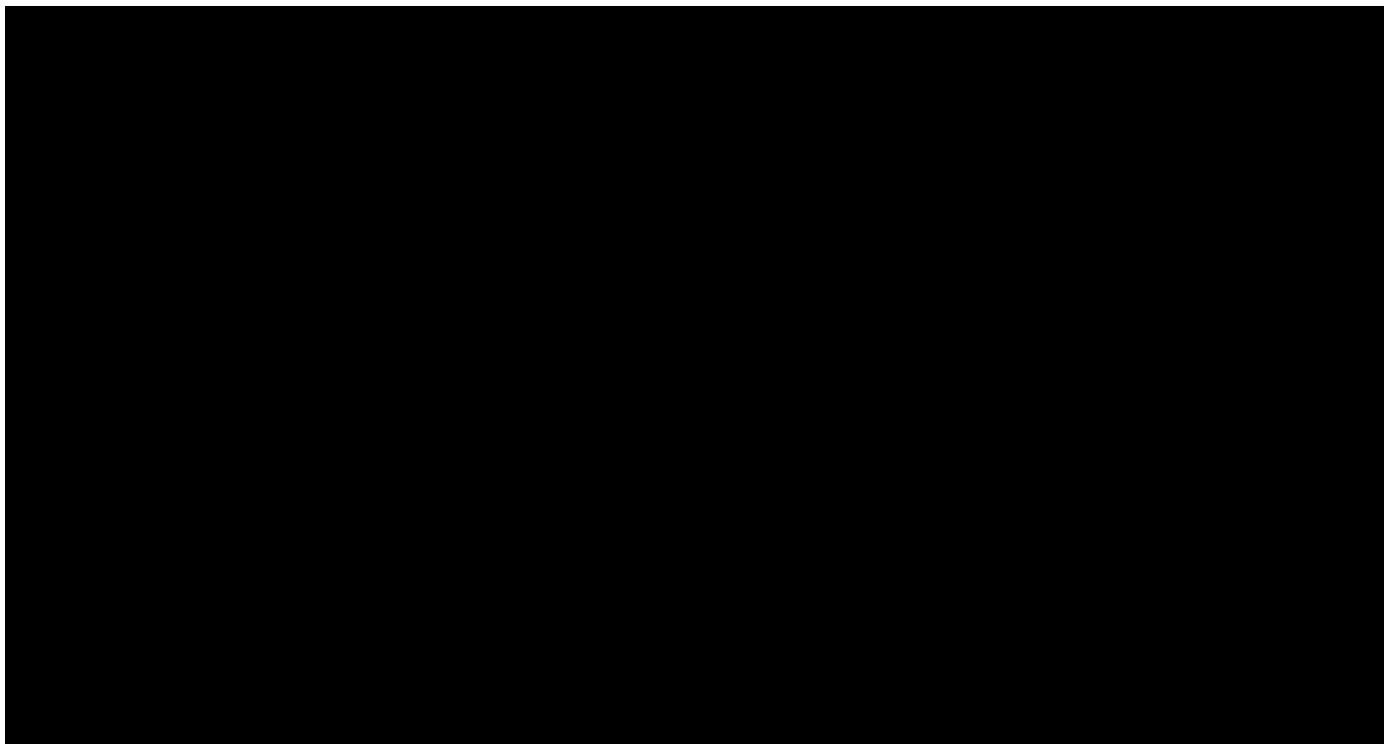
There are 15 employees (10.7242FTE) aligned to the current staffing establishment at THNNR. The chart below shows the current structure including 15 casual working arrangements in place across the team.

The chart below shows the proposed future structure.

PROPOSED FUTURE STRUCTURE



If approved, the proposal would mean the following changes:



The estimated exit cost associated with the anticipated CR process is £74,818.95. This figure captures estimated CR payments and pension strain costs and includes the exit cost for ending the fixed term contract.

Should approval be obtained to use the council's Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy (EVR) Scheme, the estimated cost of exit would be £97,286.49. By offering the EVR Scheme to this review, it is hoped employees may exit the council's employment on more financially beneficial terms to them, the number of redundancies achieved through voluntary measures is maximised, and the amount of management time to work through potential CR processes is reduced. It is therefore management's preference to seek the necessary approval to offer the EVR Scheme to those in scope of this review and eligible to apply.

A formal consultation with staff in scope of the review and Trade Unions would commence in September 2022 and run for 30 calendar days. This would be timed to compliment the public engagement activity. Due to the political decision-making process associated with this review, regular communication will be required to update staff on the progress of the change process. Final confirmation of the decisions would be required immediately following final approval in order to issue contractual notice and redeployment support where appropriate in order to achieve exits by 2 March 2023

12. Risks and Dependencies

12.1. Community

The main risks relate to the role of THNNR within the local community. Haven House Visitor Centre receives both local visitors and tourists to the area and has a strong group of volunteers who support the running of the reception and shop. The proposed closure has the potential to generate significant local and political resistance. The project team has engaged HCC Insight & Engagement Unit and Corporate Communications to plan the careful messages required to mitigate this as much as possible.

- 12.2. The local resident's association have also been instrumental in recently obtaining Grade II listed building status for Haven Cottage, although this building has not had any previous public use. Many

buyers are attracted by the prospect of owning a listed building so it is not anticipated this will impact significantly on sale value. However, Fareham Borough Council can serve an urgent works notice if it considers the preservation of the building to be at risk due to its disrepair. To mitigate this risk, it is recommended that Haven Cottage be declared surplus to service requirements and recommended for disposal.

12.3. Although the Visitor Centre is not a statutory responsibility for the County Council, it is likely the proposed approach could be met with opposition from residents and stakeholder groups, particularly those with an interest in the historical heritage of the site, as well as staff and volunteers. Careful consultation with these groups will be important to ensure the reserve remains an important community asset is crucial.

12.4. In the local area, there are several cafés including at the recently opened Alver Valley Garden Centre, meaning that similar café amenities to Titchfield will potentially cater for some of the needs of the community following the closure of the visitor centre.

12.5. Asset of Community Value

Under the Localism Act 2011, anyone can nominate a property to be placed on the list of assets of community value. The application needs to be made to the local council, in this case Fareham Borough Council, and they will decide whether to add to the list. Haven House and Haven Cottage are not currently listed, and there appears to have been no application made to do so. Advice from HCC Estates team is that it is unlikely any application would be successful, as there is need to show that the premises provide an important local community facility, such as village shop, pub or indeed library. It is not believed that this test would be met, as the premises are used to administer the reserve and provide café, shop for visitors rather than just the local community. The risk of any application could delay the disposal of assets and impact on the delivery timescale.

12.6. Asset valuations and disposal timescales

There are some risks around the valuations, specifically the ability of purchasers to obtain any necessary planning consents from Fareham Borough Council is crucial. This is particularly so in relation to Haven House, and the valuation assumes that permission will be granted for change of use and conversion to residential. There is a risk of resistance in some quarters to the loss of the current facility and this may impact on the ability to secure the necessary consents.

Delays in disposal could also delay capital receipt income to reinvest in managing the costs of implementing change. However, some mitigation for this would be the early disposal of Haven Cottage (as it is not in use and has no public or service management function).

13. Timescales

Timescales for public engagement are dependent on the timeline for staff consultation, as the recommendation from HR is that these should be managed concurrently. It is acknowledged that the future of Titchfield Haven will be of significant interest to the local community and that the messages associated with this project are communicated at an appropriate time to align with staff consultation.

A full risk log has been established for the project, further details are included in Appendix J. Key dates for implementation are set out below, a full project timeline is included in Appendix L.

June/July 22

Chief Officer Haven Cottage as surplus and recommend initiating disposal (Sept 2022)

Yard feasibility study completed

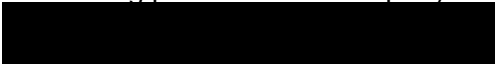
Approval request for retention of capital receipts/cost of change investment

July 22

Decision to proceed with consultation (Chief Officer) (Full and HR business case)
Staff consultation plan completed
Community engagement plan completed (stakeholder, residents, and volunteers)

Mid-September – end of October 22

30 days period of formal consultation period with staff and Trade Unions
Community engagement period
Preparations for sale of the asset (cottage)
Planning permissions for depot/yard improvements



Dec 22

Final recommendation and decision on whether to proceed with proposals.
Asset disposal and reinvestment plan (operational yard, asset improvement plan, landscape strategy)
Final decisions communicated to affected staff, Trade Unions and casual workers
Visitor Centre closure

Jan – Sept 23 - Implementation and transition phase

Ranger and Administration teams transfer to report into the Countryside Sites team 1 Feb 2023

Full Completion: Sept 23 (est.)

14. Recommendation

14.1. Based on the information and analysis in this report, the recommendation for a future sustainable operating model at THNNR, which supports the objectives in 1.2, is to:

- ***Manage the reserve without a visitor centre, retain admission and memberships.***
- ***Declare built assets surplus to service requirements.***
- ***Recommend asset disposal to re-invest and support the long-term viability of the reserve.***

In addition, further recommendations are:

- Declare Haven Cottage surplus to service requirements and recommend asset disposal
- Approval to proceed with the staff consultation and public engagement
- Request corporate approval to offer EVR in this instance
- Support the proposed future operating model as set out in this report, including staffing structure and revenue budget
- Support the recommendation to request retention investment / retention of capital receipts from asset disposal to invest in THNNR

15. Consultees

- Deputy Head of Legal Services, Corporate Services, Hampshire County Council
- Senior Finance Business Partner, Corporate Services, Hampshire County Council
- Senior HR Advisor, HR, OD, Communications and Engagement, Hampshire County Council
- Estates Team Leader (ETE & CCBS), Hampshire County Council
- Delivery Manager, Property Services, Hampshire County Council
- Head of Insight and Engagement, Corporate Services, Hampshire County Council

APPENDIX LIST

APPENDIX A: Current Site Plan and Map of THNNR including leasehold area

APPENDIX B: Visitor Trend Analysis and Volunteer Data

APPENDIX C: Revenue Budget Information & Overarching Financial Impact of ‘No Change’

APPENDIX D: Options Analysis Table and Scoring Matrix

APPENDIX E: Business Change Impact Summary

APPENDIX F: Condition Liability Costings

APPENDIX G: Asset Investment Summary & Financial Breakdown of implementing the preferred option.

APPENDIX H: Landscape Scale Strategy – Consultants Brief (draft)

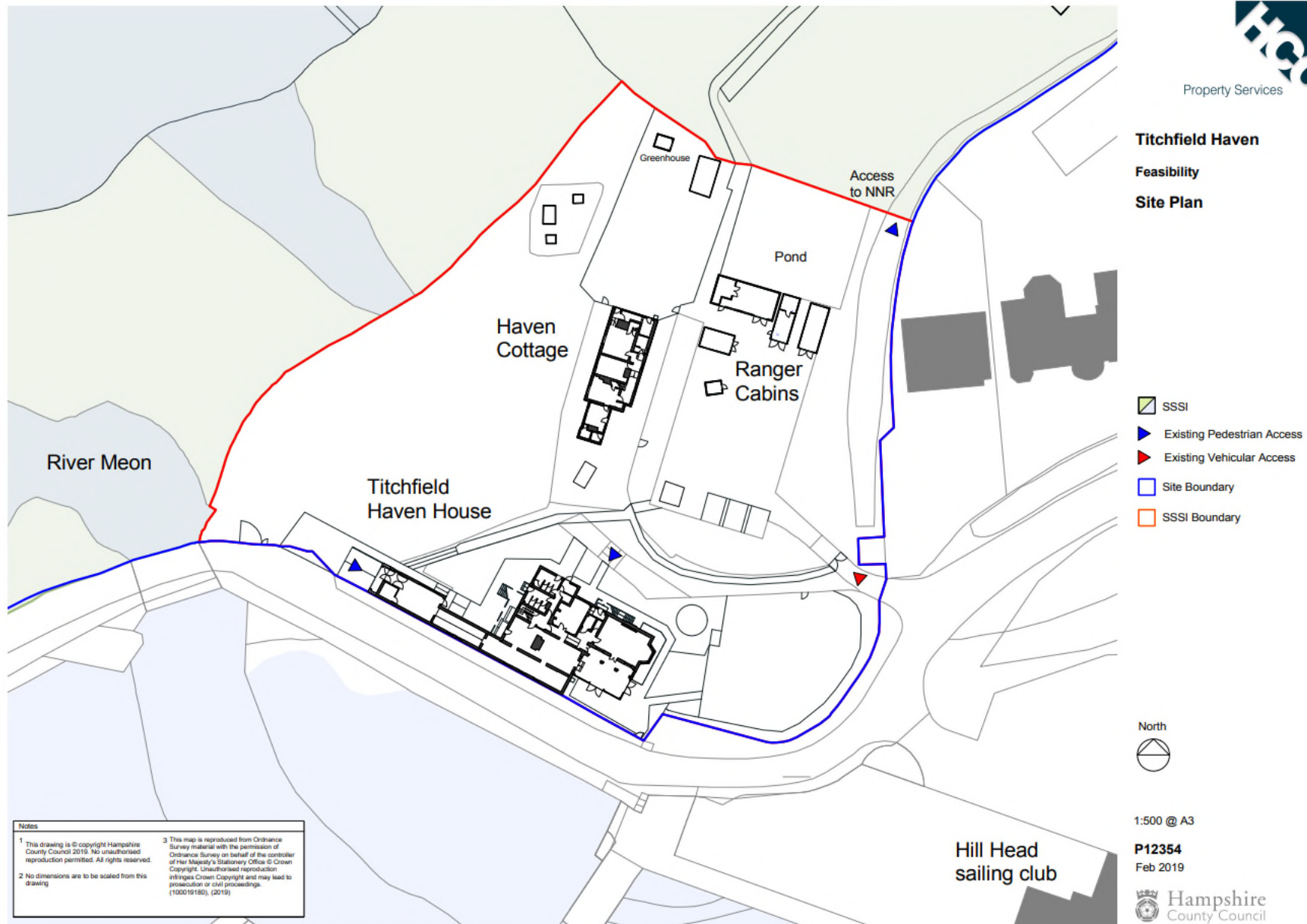
APPENDIX I: Yard Feasibility

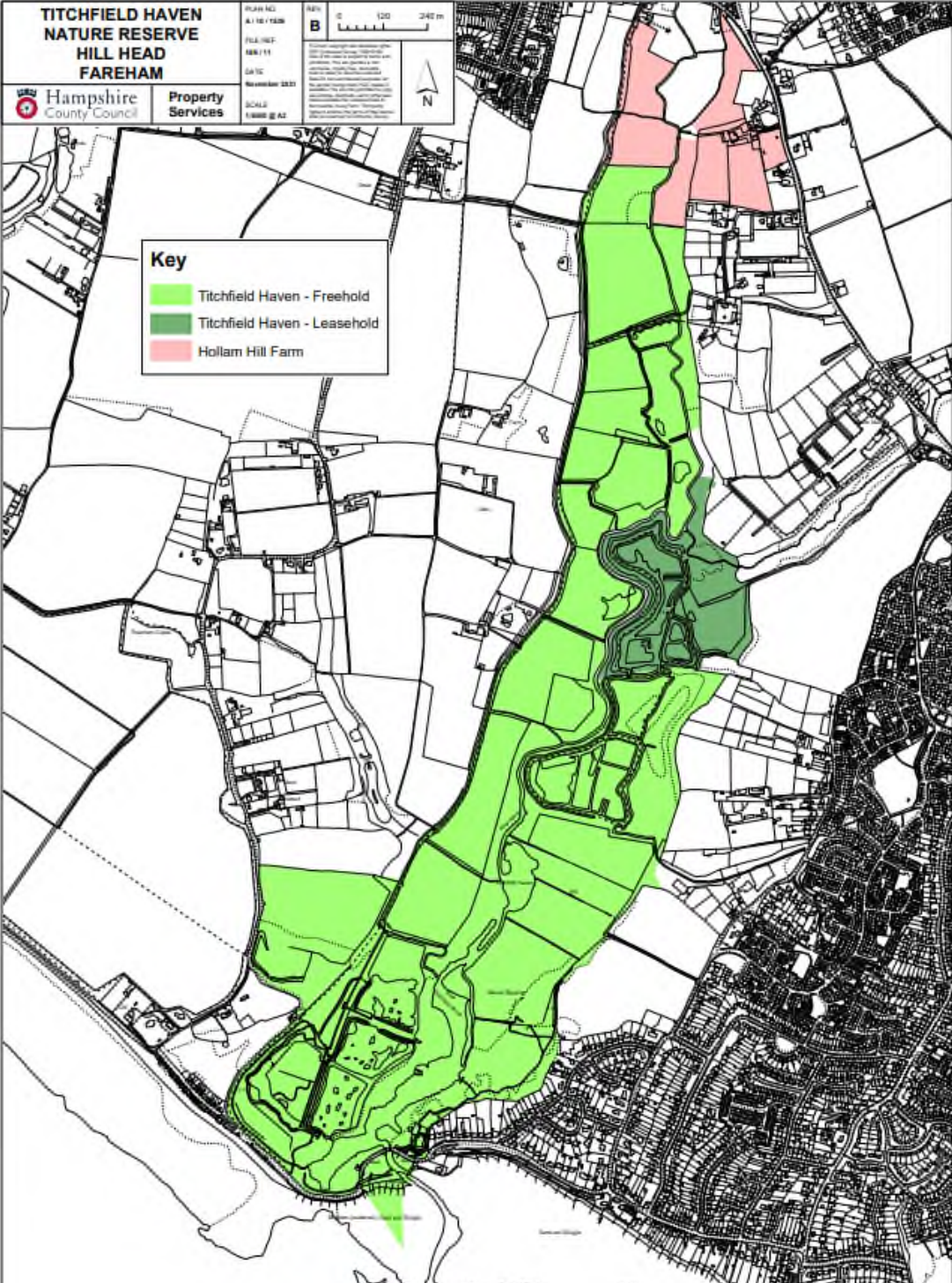
APPENDIX J: Risk Log

APPENDIX K: Staff Structures Current (April 2022) and Proposed

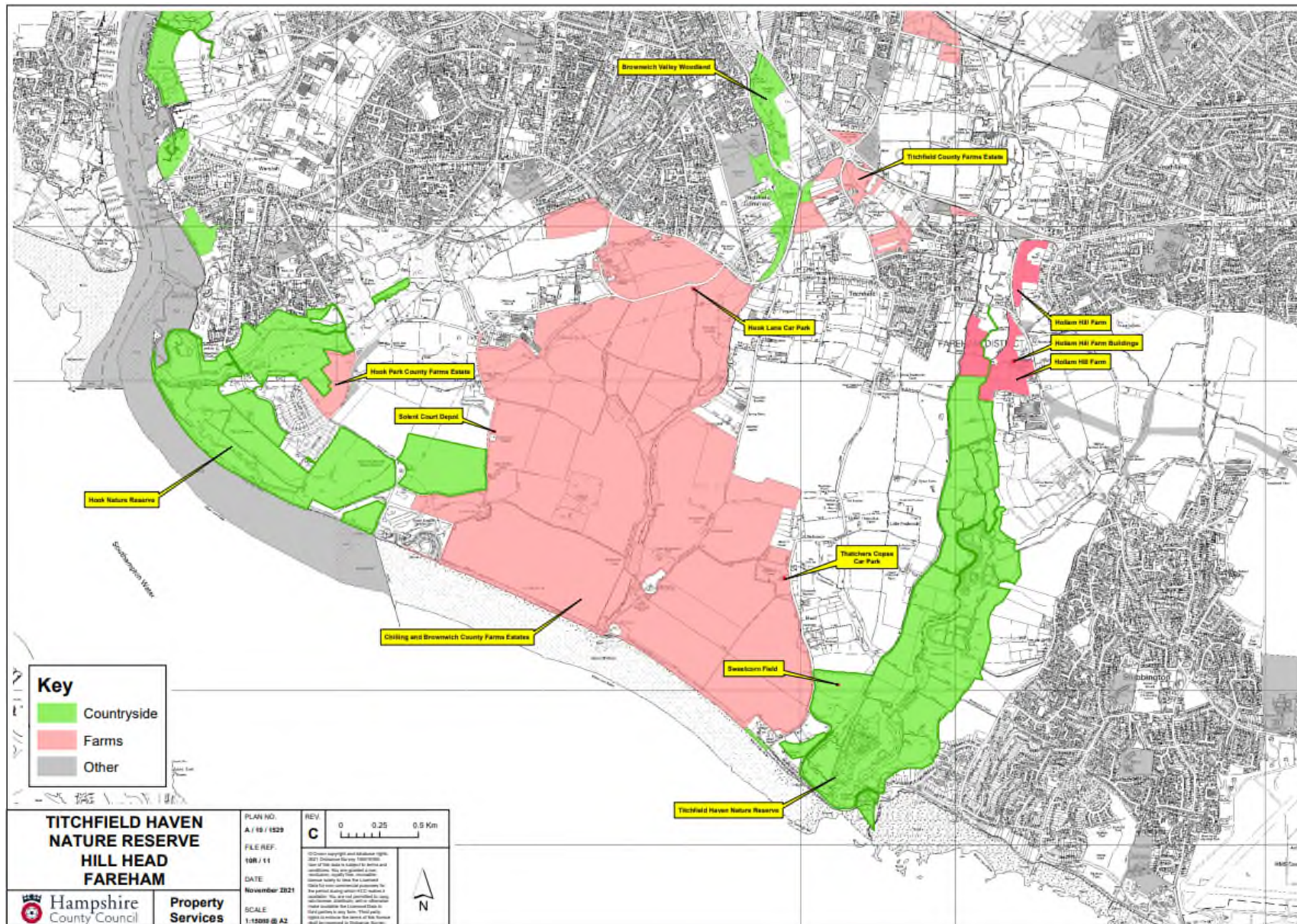
APPENDIX L: Implementation Timeline

APPENDIX A: Current Site Plan and Map of THNNR including leasehold area

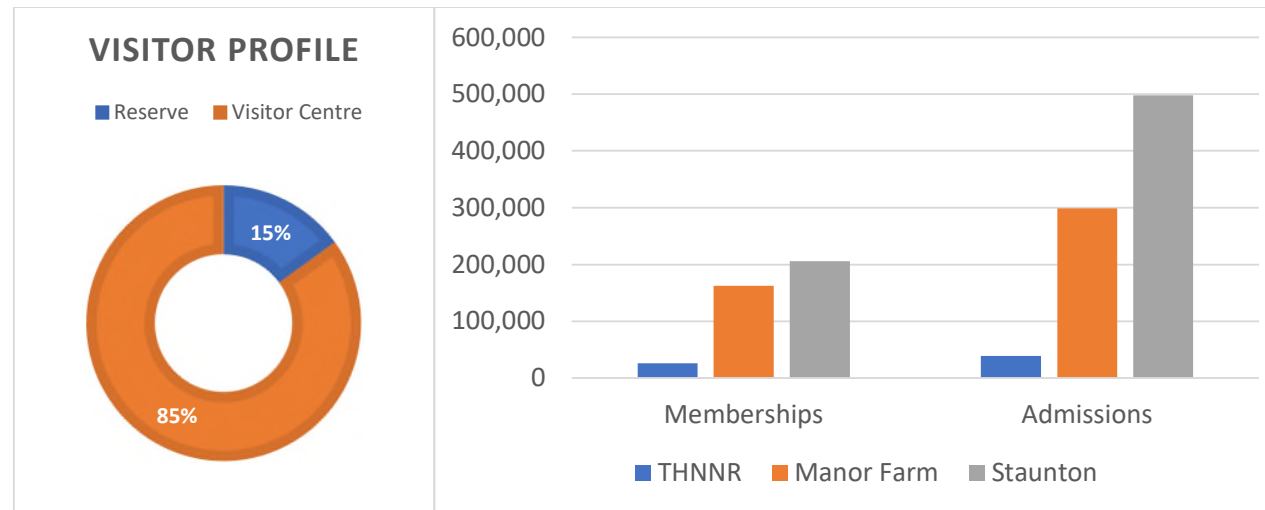




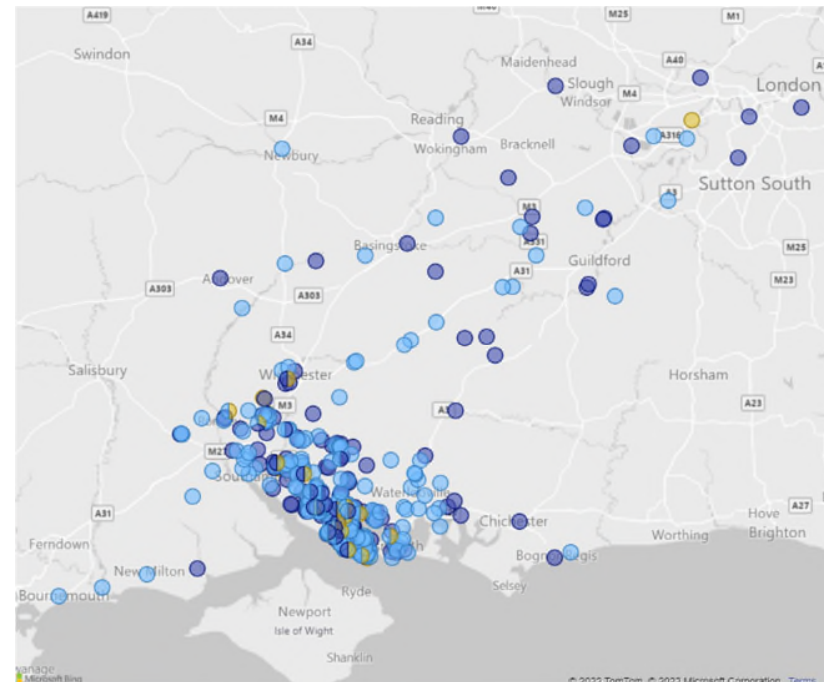
Wider coastal landscape (including County Farm Estate and Hook-with-Warsash Local Nature Reserve)



APPENDIX B: Visitor and Volunteer Data [Visitor and Volunteer Information.xlsx](#)



Annual Membership: Post code Heat Map



APPENDIX C: Revenue Budget Information

1. Breakdown of Costs by Service Area

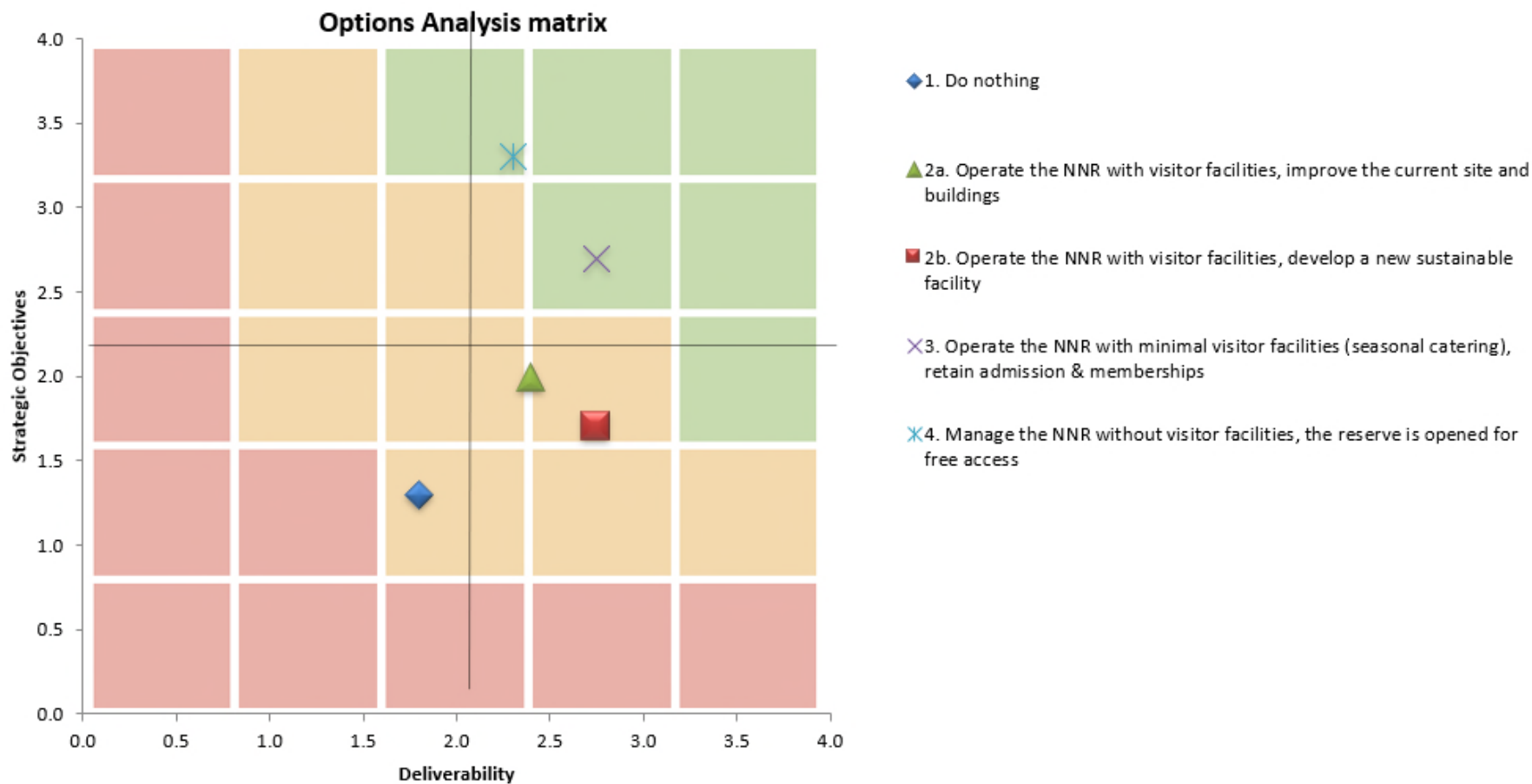
Sum of Budget 2022-23	Column Labels						
Row Labels	Café	Cottage	Engagement /Education	Nature Reserve Management	Visitor Centre	TOTAL CURRENT	FUTURE PROPOSED
Staffing	144,000		2,000	111,000	105,000	362,000	105,000
Employees	144,000		2,000	111,000	105,000	362,000	105,000
Expenditure	140,000	8,000	1,000	42,000	83,000	274,000	64,000
Premises		8,000		14,000	38,000	60,000	36,500
Transport				10,500	500	11,000	11,000
Supplies & Services	113,000		1,000	17,500	44,500	176,000	16,500
Support Services	27,000					27,000	0
Income	-315,000		-3,000	-105,000	-77,000	-500,000	-112,000
Fees & Charges				-57,000	0	-57,000	-57,000
Grants & Contributions				-25,000	-3,000	-28,000	-25,000
Sales Income	-315,000		-3,000	-1,000	-72,000	-391,000	-2,000
Rental Income					-2,000	-2,000	-6,000
Income Recharges				-22,000		-22,000	-22,000
TOTAL CURRENT	-31,000	8,000	0	48,000	111,000	136,000	57,000

2. Overarching Financial Impact of 'No Change'

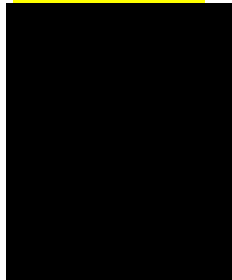
Do Nothing (Current Model)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Revenue Budget Pressure - SP23	60,000	60,000	60,000	180,000
Building condition liability – Haven House (current)	137,000	274,000		411,000
Building condition liability – Haven Cottage (current)	263,000			263,000
Forecast condition liabilities – Buildings			226,000	226,000
Forecast condition liabilities - Nature Reserve	280,000	280,000	90,000	650,000
Net revenue running cost increase	25,000	27,000	29,000	81,000
Total Do nothing – (saving) / pressure against budget	765,000	641,000	405,000	1,811,000

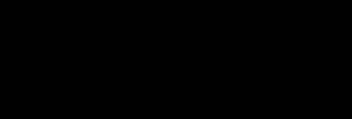
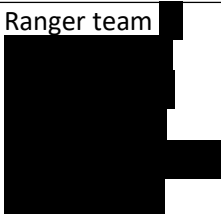
APPENDIX D: Options Analysis Table and Scoring Matrix

	Option 1: Do Nothing	Option 2: Manage the NNR with visitor facilities		Option 3: To provide minimal visitor facilities	Option 4: Manage without visitor facilities, free access
		2a) Improve current buildings/location	2b) New facility Includes seasonal catering and toilets. Retain admission charging (via new digital solution)	Retain admission charging (via new digital solution)	
Benefits	<p>Maintains local café, shop, and toilets for the local community and visitors to the reserve.</p> <p>Provides local welfare facilities for reserve volunteers.</p> <p>Provides passive surveillance of the reserve.</p>	<p>Maintains existing customers and facilities for the local community and visitors to the reserve.</p> <p>Provides a base for staff and reserve volunteers.</p> <p>Provides a local point of sale for tickets and memberships.</p>	<p>Purpose built, fit for purpose and sustainable, reduced maintenance liability, and running costs.</p> <p>Opportunity to be a location less at risk from coastal change and more centrally located to support wider land access and visitor information.</p> <p>Potential additional car parking, reduce pressure on sensitive sites & generate income.</p>	<p>Catering offer maintained to meet the needs of the visitors to THNNR. Provided at peak times with kiosk only approach is likely to be the most cost-effective model with capacity to generate a modest surplus</p> <p>Revenue generated supports statutory requirements of managing the NNR, rather than providing café/shop.</p> <p>Allows for extended opening, meeting needs of specialist bird watchers wanting to visit early/late (currently restricted to visitor centre opening times).</p> <p>Retain management of visitor numbers to limit impact on habitats and wildlife</p>	<p>Increased access for all visitors at all times.</p> <p>Reduced administration and staff time needed.</p>
Disbenefits	<p>Financial trends indicate growing income levels may be challenging in the current facilities.</p> <p>No dedicated parking, new parking charges impact on visitors/ staff/volunteers.</p> <p>Building condition liability estimated at £400k not including improvements to visitor facilities.</p>	<p>The building is not fit for purpose and interior spaces are restrictive, with limited capacity for improvement, even with investment and refurbishment.</p> <p>Building management and maintenance costs are increasing (condition liability estimated at £400k) before any improvements to visitor facilities.</p>	<p>Retail and café likely to be more modest offer for visitors and impact on staff (risk of redeployment or redundancy).</p> <p>Risk of losing visitor centre volunteers if they do not choose to take up opportunities at alternative site.</p> <p>Perception of HCC loss of a prestigious site.</p>	<p>Current café visitors are not the same as those who visit the reserve, likely to be a limited market.</p> <p>No toilet facilities would be available at the reserve (however, there are public toilets close by in the car park opposite).</p> <p>Staff/volunteers required to check tickets (this could be a spot check process).</p> <p>Negative feedback if tickets can only be purchased on-line.</p> <p>Increased risk of non-payment (10% = £6k ').</p>	<p>No restrictions could increase visitors and risk use by dog walkers, increased risk to sensitive habitats and wildlife.</p> <p>Staff and/or volunteer time would be needed on site to manage this.</p>
Key Financial Impacts	<p>Minimum £400k to maintain current facilities.</p> <p>Increasing revenue costs for both Visitor Centre and reserve management.</p>	<p>Minimum £400k to maintain current facilities, for improvements to the building this cost could double without clear ability to increase revenue.</p>	<p>Estimated build cost (on HCC land) £1-1.2m.</p> <p>If sustainable, reduction of revenue costs £80k per annum.</p>	<p>Capital receipts from the buildings could provide a longer-term endowment to directly support the NNR.</p> <p>Retain income (currently £57k per year).</p> <p>Kiosk income estimated £10k per annum.</p>	<p>Reduced administration and cost (c. £13k).</p>
Other			<p>Option to sell Haven Cottage (£500k) to re-invest in improving facilities and longer-term management of NNR.</p>	<p>Sale of Haven House c. £1.2m capital receipt.</p>	



APPENDIX E: Business Change Impact Summary

Core Functions	Current	Future Proposed	People Impact	Service Delivery Impact	Statutory?	£ Impact
VISITOR CENTRE Visitor facilities: Café providing food and refreshments. Shop Community activities / education Toilet facilities	85,000 visitors to visitor centre (inc. café and shop) Full public access, not directly linked to NNR entrance 15 employees, 15 casual working arrangements CAFÉ: £315k cafe income, £33k surplus SHOP: £72k Income, £30k Surplus EDUCATION: Low level of education activities, facilities limited. £3k income	Full closure and sale of building. Propose to retain capital receipt and re-invest in long-term management of the NNR. Seasonal catering (HCC or third party) could provide a temporary offer at peak times. Modest level of engagement activities to continue in the NNR e.g., guided walks/talks, dependant on demand.	Posts at risk: 	Reduction of service. Closure of a café and shop serving residents, visitors, and tourists to the Fareham area.	No	Reduce annual revenue spend by £80k net. Sale of Haven House estimated £1.2m capital receipt.
Staff facilities: Rangers' depot Offices Welfare	Upstairs use of visitor centre for office (4-6 desks) and welfare facilities. Residential flat previously occupied by staff. Change in contractual arrangements limits use and currently vacant. Ranger yard used for storage of materials, machinery and equipment.	Full closure would result in closure of all facilities within the visitor centre. Proposal to develop Ranger yard to include welfare facilities for staff.	Changes to welfare facilities, reduced level. Interim arrangements on site with solution in the medium term.	Operational change, no additional service impact to above.	No	Part of reduction above. £60k capital of operational changes.
Visitor Experience of NNR:	Admissions and memberships can be purchased online or at the Visitor Centre.	Admissions and memberships purchased online only. Option to extend opening hours (early and late), dependant on demand,	15,000 visitors to the reserve.	Access maintained, no significant changes.	No change to statutory service of managing the NNR.	No net change to £, reduced administration costs included in visitor

Admissions and memberships to NNR Access, signage & information	Tickets are checked 'on request' by staff and volunteers. Signage in place to indicate entrance to the reserve and pay zone area of the NNR. Rights of way and a network of paths. 8 hides for wildlife viewing	without restriction of visitor centre opening hours. No change to ticket checking or signage. Additional information point for visitors to be included at entrance.  Clear asset strategy for managing the hides and boardwalks.		Potential to extend access / opening hours. No on-site purchasing, digital tickets a standard practice for visitor attractions. Well maintained and accessible hides.	As an NNR, a visitor experience is desirable, but this does not require a visitor centre. Hides improved as part of the visitor experience & interpretation.	centre closures.
Land Management of NNR Site of scientific special interest (SSSI), as landowner HCC have statutory obligations.	Rangers team part of wider THNNR team, lead the delivery of land management and support duty management at the visitor centre. NNR detailed management plan to ensure delivering statutory obligations of NNR management.	Management to move from Parks to Sites operational management. THNNR ranger team to join a larger sites team who focus on conservation and habitat management, providing greater peer support and more effective resource management. Landscape Scale strategy commissioned to establish a longer-term management plan for the NNR and the wider local landscape.	Ranger team 	Improved resource management, focused more on NNR. Increased revenue investment of £25k per annum to improve quality of land management and ensure HCC meeting statutory obligations.	Yes, no change to statutory service. Reduced risk of not meeting obligations, increased resource and £.	Proposal to increase revenue contribution by £25k, reallocating savings from Visitor Centre closure.
Haven Cottage	Not currently in use. Previously staff accommodation (10 years empty), no public or staff use. Building received listed status in Jan 2022	Sale of building. Propose to retain capital receipt and re-invest in long-term management of the NNR.	No change.	No service delivered with this asset.	No.	Sale of Haven Cottage estimated £4-500k.

APPENDIX F: Condition Liability Costings

[CPT - CONDITION SURVEY REPORT - TH nature reserve.pdf](#)

Haven House

Total estimate of current liabilities: £411k

The [CPT condition report](#) from 2015 has been considered and it is recognised that the liabilities will be similar in 2022. The report specifically excludes professional fees which have now been included.

- Liabilities from CPT report £256k + 38% inflation (Building Cost Information Service increase between 2014-2022) = £353k
- 16.5% for professional fees

Haven Cottage

Minimum estimate of current liabilities: £263k

The cottage was not included in the [CPT condition report](#) so these costs should be treated in addition to the liabilities for Haven House.

Using the estimate of 200k from a [capital scheme appraisal form](#) completed in 2019 (and using mid 2019 as a base point):

- 10% increase for inflation (Building Cost Information Service increase between 2019-2022)
- 5% for the listed building status impacting on the work involved and materials
- 16.5% for professional fees

APPENDIX G: Asset Investment Summary

[THNNR Asset Priorities .xlsx](#)

Asset Category	Description	£ Year 2023/24	£ Year 2024/25	£ Year 2025/26
Nature reserve and water management	Improved water management and hydrology plan, including scrapes, reedbeds, sluices and culverts	£60,000	£60,000	£20,000
Boardwalks & bridges	Various boardwalks and bridges for visitor and staff access, including vehicle access.	£90,000	£70,000	
Bird hides & viewing platform	8 bird hides requiring repair / replacement, potential to change/ reduce the number of bird hides or create more viewing platforms. Essential for maintaining visitor income (£50,000 annually).	£70,000	£90,000	£90,000
Footpaths	Visitor and staff access, footpaths and tracks need resurfacing	£60,000	£60,000	
	Total	£280,000	£280,000	£110,000
				£670,000

Asset Category	Description	£ Year 2023/24	£ Year 2024/25	£ Year 2025/26
Depot and Yard	New sustainable depot for staff and volunteers, including visitor toilets.	£520,000		
Access Path and Visitor Information	Revised and improved east reserve access route and improved visitor information.	£90,000		
	Total	£610,000	£0	£0
				£610,000

				£1,280,000
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Financial Breakdown of Implementing the Preferred Option.

Estimates	Capital/ Revenue	22/23 '000	23/24 '000	24/25 '000	25/26 '000	Total '000
Income		500	1,500			2,000
Haven Cottage capital receipt	Capital	500				500
Haven House capital receipt	Capital		1,500			1,500
Costs		10	1,030	310	150	1,500
Disposal costs	Capital	10	10			20
Operational base (staff and volunteers)	Capital		610			610
National Nature Reserve (watercourse management, paths, boardwalks, hides)	Capital		280	280	110	670
Landscape Strategy	Revenue		30	30	40	100
Staff redundancy (based on EVR)	Revenue		100			100

APPENDIX H: Landscape Scale Strategy – Consultants Brief (draft)

South Hampshire Landscape Scale Strategy: Consultant Brief (DRAFT)

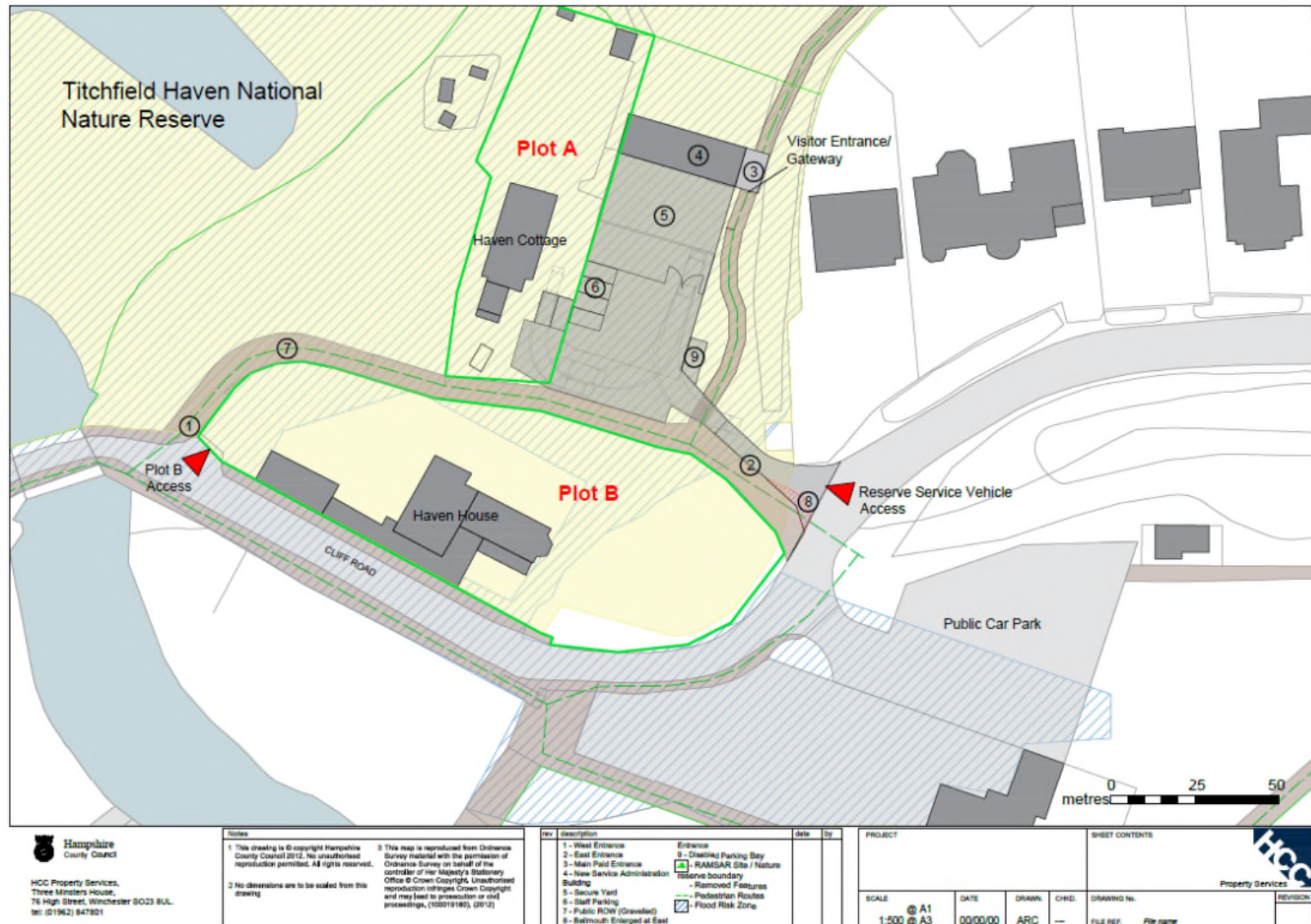
Hampshire County Council Countryside Service is looking to create and shape a vision for a landscape scale project area within South Hampshire.

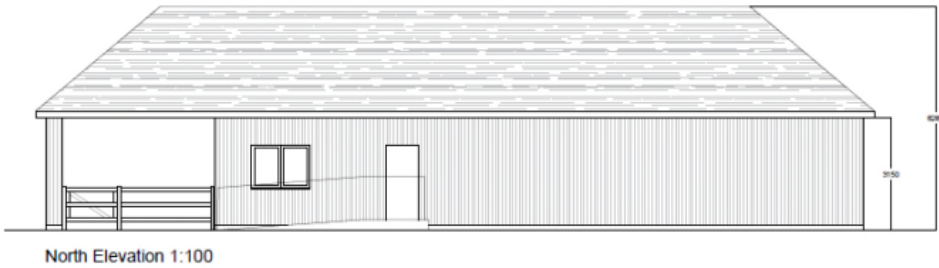
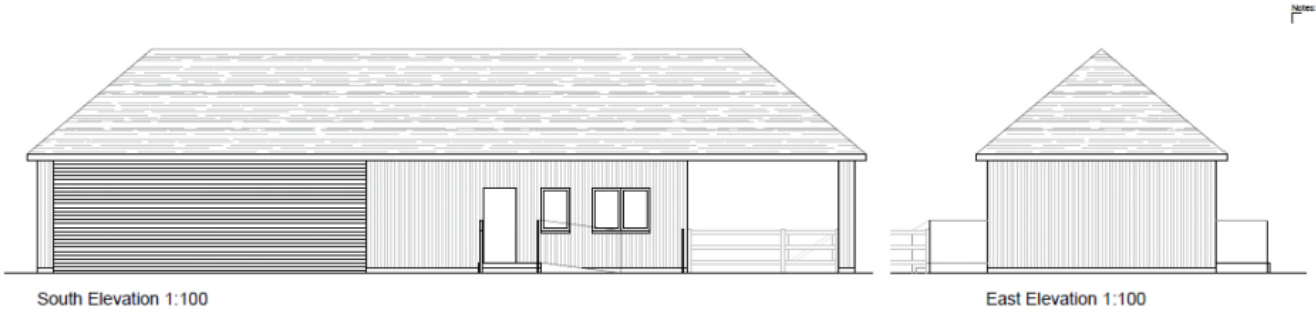
The purpose of the project is to Create a strategy for a landscape scale area within South Hampshire in which.


- Defines the landscape area and priority issues in environmental terms. Summarises key issues for coastal change and shoreline management.
- Identifies issues that may impact the area due to climate change (see above)
- It facilitates an integrated plan for the enhancement of biodiversity in terms of delivery across the landscape area with particular regard to the National and Local Nature reserves. Considers the sensitive nature of the area and its proximity to the Solent and Southampton SPA coastal area.
- Identifies scenarios for the management of the landscape area.
- Identifies the skillset required based on the areas for operational delivery.
- Identifies potential stakeholders and partners that would need to be involved in a collaborative approach to landscape scale management.
- Identifies potential land that HCC may wish to acquire /manage in delivering its vision.
- Takes account of local and HCC strategies for example Hampshire County Councils Climate Change strategy, Environment and other strategies for Brent geese, bird aware and other mitigation strategies.
- Identifies new ways for delivering outcomes through others including landowners, farm tenants and landowners.
- Provides for the consideration of funding opportunities including Biodiversity Net Gain, grant funding and other mitigation opportunities.
- Considers a joined-up approach to permissive public access/ Rights of Way and coastal footpaths across the landscape area.
- Identifies key opportunities for visitors and visitor management across the landscape area along with income generating potential.

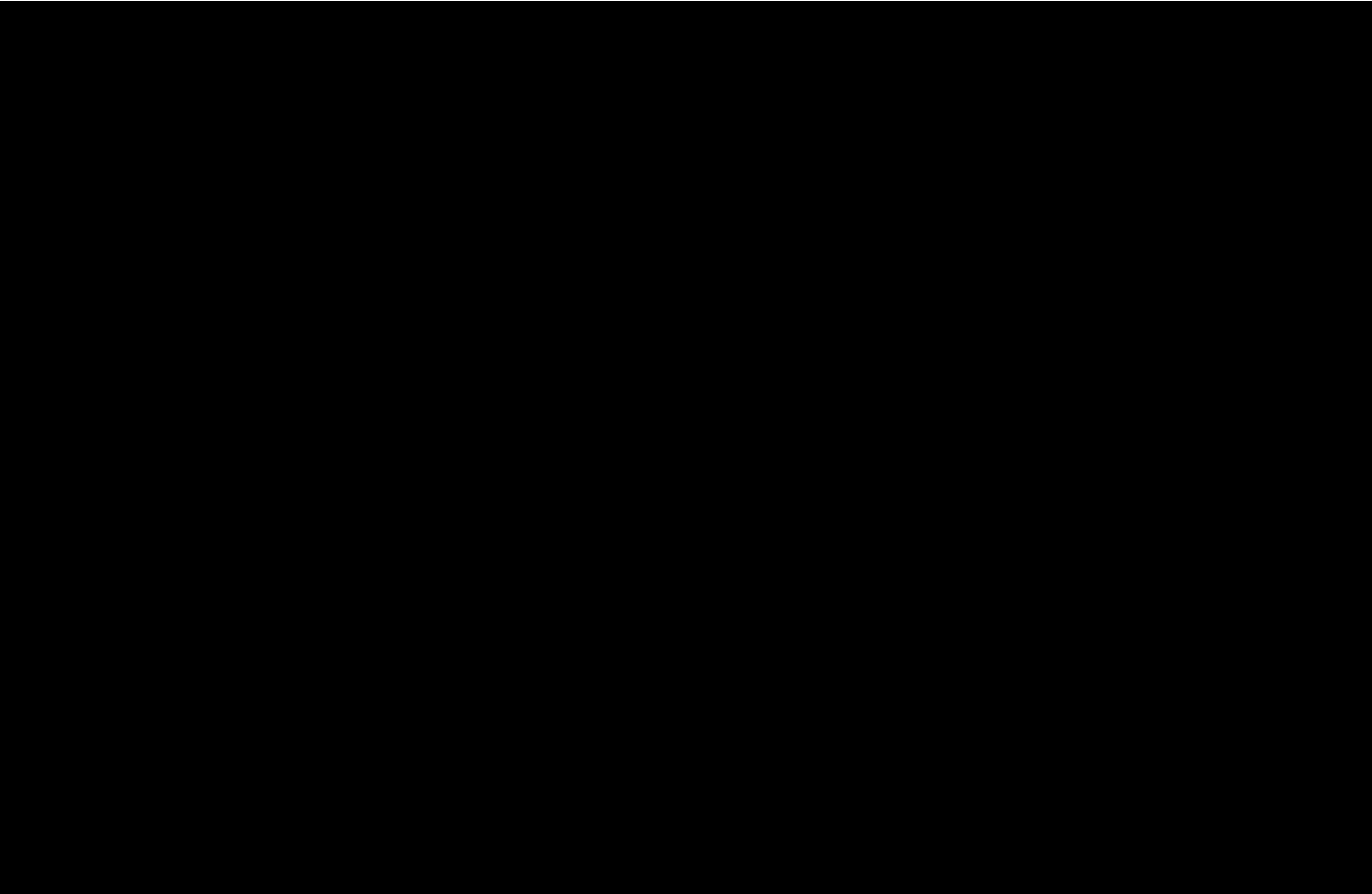
APPENDIX I: Yard Feasibility

PROPOSED FUTURE SITE PLAN & YARD INITIAL FEASIBILITY [P12354 - Titchfield Haven - Viability April 2022.pdf](#)

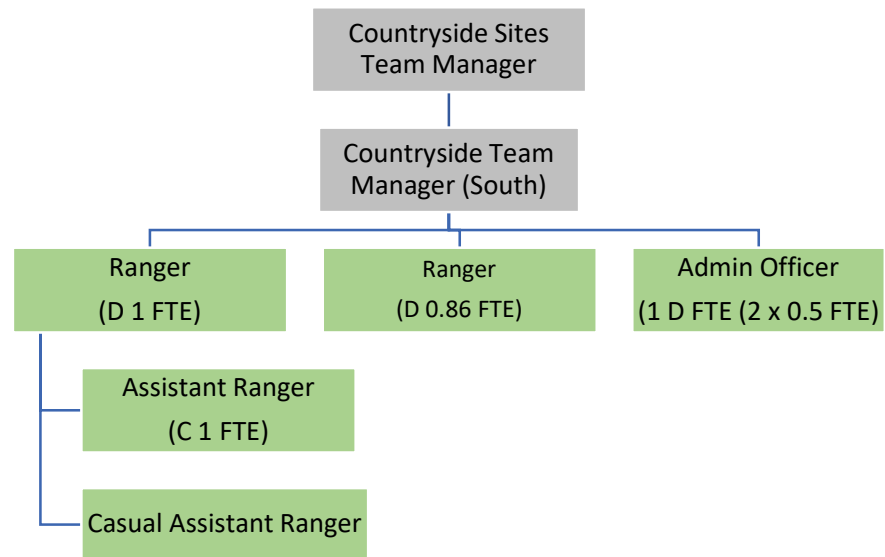




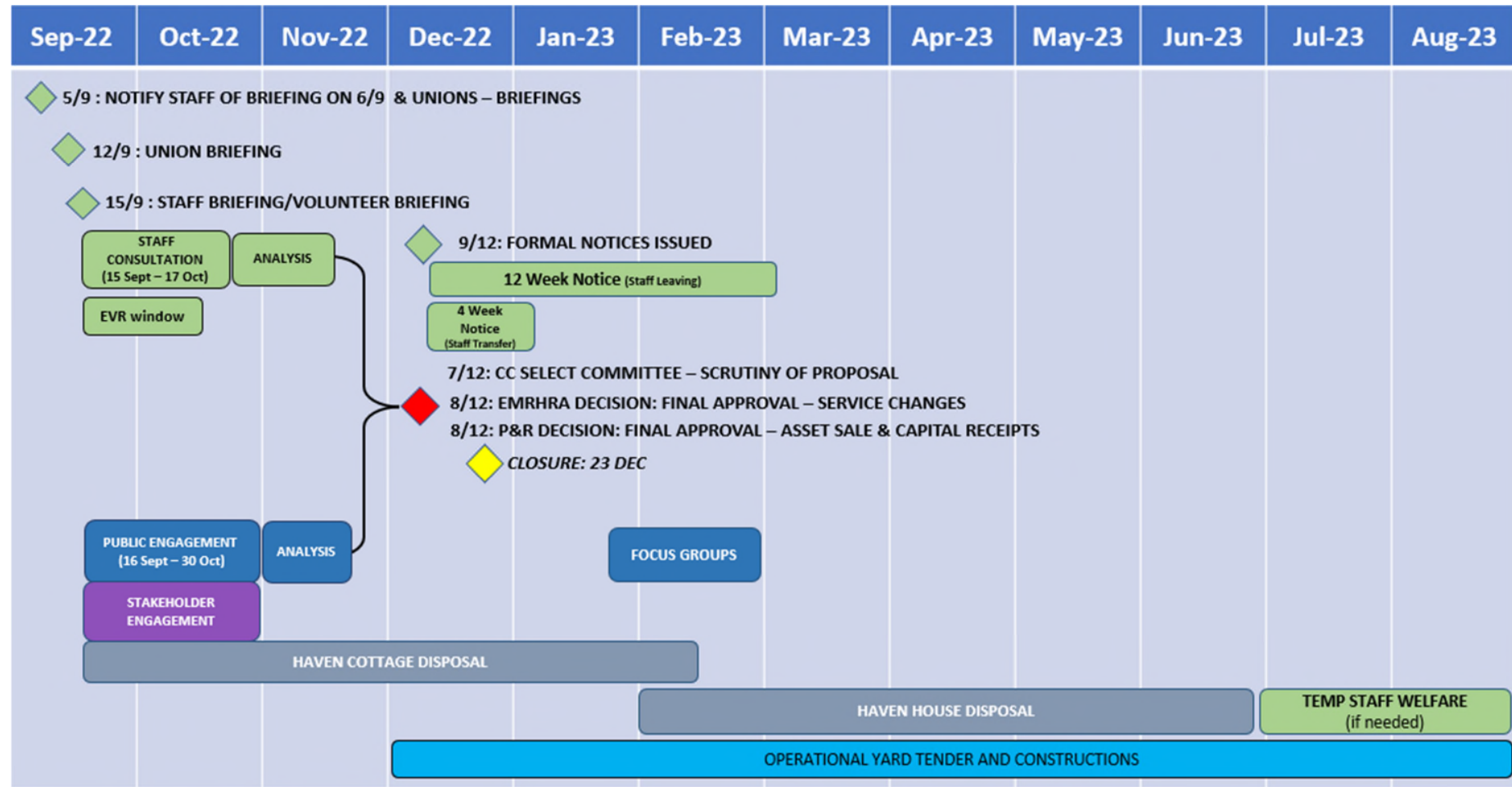
P1	30	INITIAL STATUS	421002	33	33
Site	Location	Date	By	Time	
421 Project Details Project Name: 421002 Project Location: 421002 Project Status: 421002					
PROJECT NAME Thailand Natures Reserve - Railway Building					
SHEET NAME Elevations Proposed					
TOTAL		DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME
1:100 (A3)		L/D	XXX	XXX	
P12154-HCC-XCC-DS-A-3000 P1 00					
50 INITIAL STATUS					



Proposed Staffing Structure



APPENDIX L: Implementation Timeline



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
Rachel Gelormini	Transformation Manager Culture, Communities and Business Services	rachel.gelormini@hants.gov.uk Tel:03707 791417

Title:	Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve Future Proposals
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: 321

EIA for Savings Programme:	Yes EIA - CCBS - THNNR
Service affected	Countryside Service, Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve.

Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	<p>Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, which is managed by Hampshire County Council Countryside Service, is a coastal nature reserve located to the southwest of Fareham covering 369 acres of the Lower Meon valley. The site includes over 14km of water ways including main ditches, the River Meon and Titchfield Canal. Titchfield Haven is located two miles south of Titchfield, a village in the western part of Fareham.</p> <p>Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve has two quite separate offers to the visitor experience. The National Nature Reserve predominantly appeals to specialist bird watchers, with access to a network of boardwalks and bird hides. This accounts for around 15,000 visits a year. There is an adjoining Visitor Centre (Haven House) with café and shop, which attracts around 85,000 visits a year. Admission to the Visitor Centre is free, and visitors wishing to enter the nature reserve pay a daily admission charge, or annual membership fee. There are currently 651 active members (Oct 2022). Located behind the Visitor Centre is Haven Cottage (recently Grade II listed in Jan 2022) owned by the Hampshire County Council which has not been used for public access or service delivery and is currently vacant. There is also a work yard with timber framed buildings, sheds and workshop facilities for ground staff to store and maintain machinery and equipment.</p>
New/changed service/policy/project	<p>There is a growing need for investment to maintain the Nature Reserve and its habitats to meet statutory standards now and in the future. The recommended option which most closely supports the strategic objectives, is to manage the reserve with minimal visitor facilities. In order to improve and invest in the Nature Reserve, two assets within the site are recommended for disposal; Haven Cottage, a residential property which has been vacant for 10 years, and Haven House (which houses a café, shop and reception area). The closure of Haven House will impact on the estimated 85,000 annual users of the visitor centre/café as they will no longer benefit from the facilities currently provided. Research shows that café amenities remain in the local area, and could cater for these community needs in a similar way. The 15,000 annual users of the Nature Reserve can expect a positive impact as the reinvestment plan includes making</p>

improvements to the reserve and other features such as boardwalks and bird hides. The proposed changes would therefore predominantly impact on visitors who use the facilities currently provided by Haven House (visitor centre) whilst the Nature Reserve can continue to be enjoyed by visitors now and in the future. The proposed change will impact a number of staff, whose roles will no longer be required to manage and operate both the visitor centre and catering facilities currently on offer at Titchfield Haven. There are currently 16 employees (11.15FTE) aligned to the current staffing establishment at THNNR, and 15 individuals engaged via casual working arrangements (as at Oct 2022). The service would retain the ranger roles and reduce its administrative/visitor support provision.

Engagement

The impact of this proposed change on users of Titchfield Haven NNR and its facilities has been assessed following a public engagement survey which was open from 27 September 2022 to 1 November 2022. A total of 2997 survey responses were received.

Anyone with an interest in THNNR was invited to help shape the future of the site. This opportunity was promoted via a range of channels including, but not limited to: press releases, social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), direct communications to key stakeholders, annual members and volunteers. Visitors were also reminded by posters, business cards (including QR codes) and paper copy surveys on site. Respondents were asked to share how they used and experienced THNNR; to comment on proposed plans to improve the sustainability of the site and to share their ideas about how the County Council could invest in THNNR for the future.

The comments, suggestions and feedback received from the survey responses have been summarised and included in the Executive Member for Countryside, Culture & Communities Decision Day report for consideration on 8 December 2022.

Formal consultation with staff and Trade Unions commenced on 27 September 2022. The proposal included potential redundancies and staff and Trade Unions were advised that any meetings to provide formal notice of redundancies would take place after the Executive Member Decision Day. Staff provided feedback on the proposals directly to their management team and HR.

The staff consultation closed on 27 October 2022, however in response to feedback received during this consultation period, some elements of the proposal were amended and the consultation period was extended until 14 November 2022 for staff affected by these changes. Trade Unions were also advised of the amendment and extension to consultation.

In order to assess the impact of protected characteristics on staff, equality and diversity data was extracted and provided by HR, and used in this report.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

Rationale	<p>The results of the survey show that (of the 2898 responses to this question) the highest proportion (29%) were in the 65 to 74 age category, with the next largest categories being 55 to 64 (25%) and 45-54 (16%). 67% of respondents were aged 55 or above.</p> <p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Age'. 38% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that the Nature Reserve and its facilities provide people of all ages with a hub to explore nature. It performs an important role for the elderly, who may have limited mobility, suffer with health problems, and provides a space to socialise and connect with nature. There were particular concerns about the impact on health and wellbeing and social isolation caused by the loss of a community focal point. Comments also focused on the impact on families and children (27% had children living in their household - aged 18 or below) the loss of a family friendly facility and opportunities to educate/embed a love of nature.</p> <p>Acknowledging the comments and feedback, it is assessed that there is a negative (low) impact on age as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, the age group that would be impacted most by these changes are 55-64 year olds (47%), followed by 45-54 year olds (27%). The number of staff falling into the 55-64 age bracket is higher than the CCBS and wider HCC average; which are 23% and 24% respectively.</p>
Mitigation	<p>HCC agrees that nature is important for people's mental health and wellbeing. Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service inspires people to connect with and enjoy the countryside, and have a life-long active and emotional connection with the outdoors, a love of nature, and a desire to protect and support its recovery. By investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors of all ages now</p>

and in the future. The nature reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site where people can rest.

There are also free green spaces within the wider area for people to enjoy along with a café and pub less than a ten minute walk/short drive from the site as well as a larger recreation area and café at Alver Valley Country Park run by Gosport Borough Council on the other side of Titchfield. Titchfield Community Centre is available to all and the centre is used by many community groups covering a range of recreational, educational and social pursuits.

As part of the investment into the reserve, we could look at including ecological and environmental information boards and interpretation around the site for visitors and continue with bird handouts for children.

For staff, HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.

Disability

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were asked 'Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?'. Of the 2780 respondents to this question, 14% said yes, a little and 5% said yes, a lot.</p> <p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Disability'. 27% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments including that the visitor centre is accessible which is valued either by themselves and/or family members they visit with. Comments described the lack of other accessible facilities in the area, and the importance of the café in providing a place for rest that enables people with mobility issues to enjoy the reserve. Health and wellbeing of people with mental health needs was also a focus, with respondents highlighting the Haven as a peaceful sanctuary.</p> <p>Currently, the yard area has provision for three accessible vehicle parking spaces, and the proposed changes would reduce this provision to one accessible parking space.</p>

	<p>Acknowledging the comments and feedback, it is assessed that there is a negative (low) impact on disability as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	<p>HCC agrees that nature is important for people's mental health and wellbeing. Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service inspires people to connect with and enjoy the countryside, and have a life-long active and emotional connection with the outdoors, a love of nature, and a desire to protect and support its recovery. By investing in the reserve, this ensures that the reserve can continue to be accessed and enjoyed by visitors of all ages now and in the future. The nature reserve is accessible for those with mobility issues and has benches around the site where people can rest.</p> <p>The proposed changes would include improved access to the nature reserve to continue to support the health and wellbeing of visitors and would include a more accessible entrance path, an accessible toilet and an accessible parking space. Whilst the accessible parking provision would reduce, this is proportionate to the expected reduction in visitor numbers. Accessible parking spaces that visitors currently make use of in the car park opposite the site can continue to be used.</p>

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Mitigation	
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Gender reassignment'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with two individuals making specific reference to the need for the space to support people going through gender reassignment. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Pregnancy and/or maternity'. 3% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>The future proposals for facilities on site would include an accessible toilet including baby changing facilities, and the reinvestment plan includes making improvements to the reserve including board walks and bird hides, which would impact positively on this group.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	

The results of the survey show that individuals' ethnic group is predominantly White (90%) with 9% preferring not to say, and 1% from a mixed or multiple ethnic group.

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Race'. 2% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that THNNR benefits a cross section of the community and is a welcoming environment for those from diverse backgrounds who may otherwise feel excluded, and that the café welcomes and increases the diversity of users of the nature reserve.

For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

Mitigation

Religion or Belief

Impact on public

Neutral

Impact on staff

Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Religion or belief'. 2% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments. It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>The data provided for the staff in scope are that two people have indicated they are Christian, one has stated 'no religion or belief' and the rest have no data provided (July 2022). Therefore, there is limited evidence to suggest that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes. HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

Rationale	<p>The results of the survey show that respondents were mostly female (61%) with 4% preferring not to say.</p> <p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Sex'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, however there was no clear mention of how this group would be impacted from the comments.</p> <p>Currently there are separate male and female toilets on site. The proposed toilet would be gender neutral and accessible for use by all reserve visitors.</p> <p>It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>87% of staff working at Titchfield Haven are female, whereas 13% are male. These figures are proportionate to the data across CCBS (78% female) and HCC (76% female). 12 out of the 13 staff at Titchfield who work part time are female (92%) which is higher than the trend across CCBS (71%) and HCC (45%).</p> <p>The majority of the roles in scope of the review are within the administration and catering teams, roles which could be perceived to be 'typical' roles occupied by women.</p>
Mitigation	<p>HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.</p>

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Sexual orientation'. 1% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with two individuals making specific reference to the need for the space to support people who need time to consider their sexual orientation.</p> <p>It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposal.</p>
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Marriage and/or civil partnership'. 3% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with respondents commenting that Haven House could be used as a potential wedding venue in order to increase revenue.</p> <p>It has been assessed that there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p> <p>For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposal.</p>
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Negative - Low

Rationale

The results of the survey show that (of the 2517 responses to this question) 42% of survey respondents preferred not to indicate their total household income. For those who did, 10% indicated the £20,001 to £30,000 category, 8% indicated the £30,001 to £40,000 category, and 7% indicated the £40,001 to £50,000 category. Overall, 26% of respondents indicated their household income was £40,000 or below, and 29% indicated their household was over £40,001 or over.

Using Mosaic profiling for the area, we know that the average household income for Titchfield Haven members is higher than the average for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton, reflecting a relative affluence in the core customer segments.

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Poverty'. 10% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments including that Titchfield Haven provides an affordable option for people on low incomes. Overall, comments encompassed a range of factors relating to universal access to amenities, including community facilities, affordable ways to support wellbeing, access to nature, and activities for children and people with disabilities and health issues. Also emphasis on loss of jobs and revenue to support the Reserve. Consideration is also given to the current economic climate and increased cost of living.

The café at Haven House is a subsidised facility run by HCC available to all, as opposed to other more expensive facilities in the immediate area.

Using evidence from the household income information and the comments by individuals who felt there would be an impact on poverty, it has been assessed that this protected characteristic would not be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

The grade profile of staff working at Titchfield Haven is skewed towards the lower grades. 73% of staff are grades A to C and 27% are grades D to E. This grade profile reflects the nature of the roles required (administration, front-of-house, catering, facilities management, care of nature reserve). Whilst it is recognised that lower pay does not necessarily equate to poverty, workforce changes at lower grades may have a disproportionate impact in relation to this characteristic. Consideration is also given to the current economic climate and increased cost of living.

Mitigation	<p>Following feedback from the staff consultation, it has been recognised that it would be beneficial to retain more visitor focused aspect to staff roles. As a result, it has been recommended that two Visitor Services Assistants are retained as part of the future structure. Therefore, opportunities have been provided for future employment and for some current staff to retain employment in HCC.</p> <p>HR policies and procedures will be followed to ensure fair treatment to all in scope of the proposed changes. Where possible, management will make staff aware of alternative employment opportunities elsewhere in the service to help them maintain employment. Where necessary, redeployment support will be available to all those confirmed at risk of compulsory redundancy to help individuals maintain employment within HCC.</p>
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Rurality

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>Survey respondents were given the opportunity to tell us how the County Council's proposals for THNNR may affect them or the local area. If they responded to this question, they were also asked if the effects that were mentioned relate to the protected characteristic 'Rurality'. 21% of survey respondents indicated that the proposals would impact this protected characteristic, with comments stating that the area is a rural community which provides job opportunities, and that the closure could have a detrimental effect on the local community, citing the loss of a central hub and amenity that brings local people together and contributes to a sense of community. They also flagged concerns about the impact of commercial / property development in the area.</p> <p>63% of survey respondents told us that they usually travel to Titchfield Haven using private motorised transport (e.g., car, motorbike) and 33% said they used active transport (e.g., cycling, walking, microscooter, mobility vehicle). There are no anticipated impacts to current travel arrangements as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>Rural communities are ageing faster than urban, and taking into consideration that the majority of Titchfield users fall into the 55 or above age categories (67%), isolation could be a factor due to the proposal to remove an existing rural service such as the café. For staff, there is no evidence that this protected characteristic would be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.</p>
Mitigation	<p>There are other venues in the local area that can provide a similar provision. Titchfield Community Centre hosts regular group activities and affordable rooms for hire for events, as does Titchfield Parish Rooms. There is also a pub and café less than a ten minute walk/short drive from THNNR.</p>

Geographical Impact: All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

The geographical impact has been assessed as all Hampshire, as we know from membership data that people who visit Titchfield Haven live across the county and also live outside of Hampshire. Postcode data taken from the survey indicated that 38% of respondents live in Fareham, and concerns raised particularly flagged the detriment to the local community which implies that proposed changes would impact on people living in this particular area within the local authority most significantly.

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SAVE OUR HAVEN CENTRE



[Caroline Herbert](#) started this petition

Victory

This petition made change with 6,236 supporters!



SAVE OUR HAVEN CENTRE

Share on Facebook

Send an email to friends

Tweet to your followers

Copy link

Hampshire County Council is planning to close and sell off Haven House, the visitor centre - incorporating the shop and cafe, at Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve. The centre is in a prime position providing a hub for all locals as well as people from far and wide, to meet, eat, drink and share ideas as well as for bird watchers to refresh themselves after a tour around the nature reserve. Many Societies and clubs meet at the centre regularly and the conference room is excellent for art exhibitions, craft fairs, family parties and lectures. The centre encourages people to exercise, as it is close to popular walking, cycling and windsurfing areas as well as the nature reserve itself. It also has educational exhibitions regularly for both children and adults to expand their knowledge about birds, wildlife, archaeology and other environmental subjects.

If the centre was run to its full potential it could be even more profitable than at present and could help fund work on the unique nature reserve that it currently supports. The plans for future development could include selling to a developer to change into accommodation which would not benefit the community.

We need an opportunity to come up with a plan that will benefit all. Hampshire County Council must now provide the community with this opportunity. If we have enough support by way of the many thousands of anticipated signatures on this petition, we consider they will realise how important the centre is to the community and allow other options to be considered.

PLEASE SHARE THIS PETITION WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY. THANK YOU.

AS THE UNDERSIGNED WE CALL ON HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TO WITHDRAW THEIR PROPOSALS FOR THE CLOSURE AND SALE OF THIS VITAL COMMUNITY ASSET AND TO WORK WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO DRAW UP AND IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE PLANS TO RETAIN THE VISITOR CENTRE FOR THE FUTURE.

SAVE OUR HAVEN CENTRE

Hampshire County Council is planning to close and sell off Haven House, the visitor centre at Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, which includes the café and shop. Not only is Haven House integral to operation and good management of the Reserve which attracts visitors from far and near, it provides significant benefits to the local community which cannot be replaced. We the undersigned call on Hampshire County Council to withdraw their proposals for the closure and of this vital community asset and to work with the local community to draw up and implement sustainable plans to retain the visitor centre for the future.

Please note, by signing this petition you are agreeing to your data being shared with Hampshire County Council.

POST	SIGNATURE	PRINT NAME
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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