

PMP Contents list and proposed structure

Our Partners (1 page on inside front cover)

Foreword from Margaret (1 page)

Map of National Park (2 page fold out)

Contents list (2 pages)

INTRODUCTION:

People, Pressure and Proximity

Why a National Park? (2 page spread with one page text and one page In a Nutshell Infographic)

What England Expects: National Park Purposes (1 page – diagram plus text)

What makes this place special? (1 page diagram)

Our Vision: Thriving Communities in Inspirational Landscapes (2 page, image led spread)

The First 10 Years: How Have We Done (3 page fold out spread)

Major issues and challenges (1 page)

Followed by 2 Page pull outs on key issues such as:

- **The Climate Emergency**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Rural economy and housing**
- **Wellbeing**

Our Ambitions for the next Five Years (3 page spread [ie double page spread with a fold out – we did similar in State of the park report]– image led showing 10 outcomes and 21 Priorities)

How the Plan Delivers National Policy We will create a NEW DIAGRAM graphically showing national policies on left, our plan in middle and local outcomes on right

How this Plan was made and reviewed (1-2 pages)

How We Will Make It Happen (1/2 pages with an icon for each way of working that will then be used throughout the text, where relevant)

Monitoring and Review (1-2 pages)

Outcome 1: Landscape & Beauty

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 1.1: Protect Landscape Character

Priority 1.2: Create Green Infrastructure

Priority 1.3: Target New Payments

Outcome 2: Increasing Resilience

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 2.1: Improve Soil and Water

Priority 2.2: Improve Trees and Woodland

Outcome 3: Habitats and Species

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 3.1: Join Up Habitats

Priority 3.2: Priority & Invasive Species

Outcome 4: Arts & Heritage

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 4.1: Heritage

Priority 4.2: Contemporary Arts and Crafts

Enhance : How Can You Help?

(box outlining how individuals and communities can help deliver on Enhance outcomes)

CONNECT

Outcome 5: Connecting people

Why is it important?

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 5.1: Disadvantaged and hard to reach groups

Priority 5.2: Accessibility

Priority 5.3: Sustainable Transport

Outcome 6: Lifelong learning

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 6.1: Outdoor learning for young people

Outcome 7: Health & Wellbeing

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 7.1: Health & Wellbeing

Outcome 8: Creating Custodians

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 8.1: Volunteering

Connect: How Can You Help?

(box outlining how individuals and communities can help deliver on Connect outcomes)

THRIVE

Outcome 9: Great places to live

Why is it important?

Examples of Projects that will deliver this outcome

Priorities for the next five years

Priority 9.1: Affordable Housing

Priority 9.2: Vibrant Communities

Priority 9.3: Digital Infrastructure

Outcome 10: Great places to work

Priority 10.1: Enterprise

Priority 10.2: Destination awareness

Priority 10.3: Sustainable tourism

Thrive: How You Can Help (box outlining how individuals and communities can help deliver on Thrive outcomes)

Appendix 1

PMP policies (the 57 from original document)

Partners helping to deliver the South Downs Partnership Management Plan

Below is a list of all of the partners so far committed to delivering the shared objectives set out in this Partnership Management Plan for the South Downs National Park. This list is by no means exhaustive, and we hope it will continue to grow as our partnerships strengthen and grow and our delivery plan incorporates more projects.

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust
Archaeology Groups
Arts Council England (ACE)
British Library
Butterfly Conservation
Catchment Partnerships
Churches Conservation Trust
Community groups
Community Rail Partnerships
Council for British Archaeology (CBA)
County Councils
County Garden History Societies
Crafts Council
District Councils
Duke of Edinburgh Award groups
English Folkdance and Song Society
Environment Agency
Experience West Sussex
Farmers
Foresters
Forestry England
Gatwick Airport
Hampshire and IoW Wildlife Trust
Health and Wellbeing Boards
Heritage Crafts Association
Heritage owners
Historic England
Historical Societies
Land managers
Large estates
Local and regional museum networks
Local business organisations
Local communities
Local health providers
Lynchmere Society
MOD
National Citizens Service
National Park Experience Collection Partners (UK National Parks)
National Trust
Natural England
Natural Partnerships CIC
NHS Clinical Commissioners
Parish Councils

Portsmouth Water
Primary Care Networks
Public Health teams at Local Authorities
Rivers Trusts
RSPB
SDNP Volunteer Network
Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
South Downs Forestry Partnership
South Downs Learning Network
South Downs National Park Trust
South East Historic Environment Research Framework Partnership (SERF)
South East Museum Development (SEMD)
South East Water
Southern Water
Sussex Heritage Trust
Sussex Modern
Sussex Police
Sussex Wildlife Trust
The Keep, Brighton
The Living Coast
U3A
Uniformed Groups
Unitary Councils
Universities in the South Downs Learning Partnership
Visit Hampshire
Woodland Trust

INTRODUCTION

People, pressure and proximity

By 2020, the South Downs National Park will have been established for ten years. Its first National Park Partnership Management Plan (PMP) was launched in 2014 to provide *“a vision, framework and rallying point for all those who derive their livelihoods and their inspiration from Britain’s newest and most populated National Park, and who are committed to making it a better place in the future”*. Since then, an impressive amount has been achieved by the many people and organisations who are passionate about and have a stake in this very special corner of Southern England.

Positive action in support of the National Park continues to grow, but in a rapidly changing world so too do the pressures and challenges of maintaining its special qualities – the aim is managing change rather than trying to fossilise the landscape. With such a large population in and around it there is a wealth of talent, resources, ideas and commitment to draw upon, and there is a growing list of powerful case studies of farmers, conservation groups, volunteer organisations, parishes and businesses making a positive difference. This first review of the plan builds on that positive momentum for the next five years: increasing the ambition, deepening the partnerships, and delivering more for nature and people.

Why a National Park?

The South Downs National Park covers over 1,600 square kilometres of England’s most valued lowland landscapes shaped, over millennia, by the people who have lived and worked here. It has immense variety and is greatly loved. Its inspirational landscapes, internationally important wildlife, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant market towns and villages hold a special place in the hearts of many millions. During both World Wars the area became symbolic of an England that was worth fighting for. But, situated as it is in the most crowded corner of Britain, it is also under intense pressure.

Most of the South Downs is privately owned and farmed. It is heavily populated compared to other National Parks and is used intensively by its 117,000 residents. Its future, like its past, is interdependent with the communities that surround it. More than two million people - including those in Chichester, Winchester, Worthing, Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Alton - live on its doorstep, and London is just over an hour away. Wildlife, the visual landscape, and water know no boundaries. They bridge the National Park and neighbouring administrative areas, requiring a joined up approach and strong partnerships to help maintain what is valued.

The natural capital and the ecosystem services that flow from the National Park underpin the economy and quality of life in this part of southern England. Millions depend on its water, benefit from its wildlife, use its timber and enjoy food and drink produced from its soils. It offers wonderful opportunities for outdoor learning and improves the health of all who simply enjoy fresh air, exercise and the tranquillity which can be found amongst its chalk downland, farms, heaths, villages, woods and river valleys.

But there is no room for complacency. It is remarkable, given the pressures, that the special qualities of this National Park have remained sufficiently intact to merit its designation alongside other nationally iconic landscapes such as the Cairngorms, Snowdonia or the Lake District. But these qualities cannot be taken for granted, nor, sadly, are they always in the best condition. Challenges include habitat fragmentation, erosion of landscape quality, loss of built heritage, challenges to farming, loss of public services, and lack of

affordable housing. Most significant of all, climate change is having fundamental effects on biodiversity, agriculture and water resources. Adapting to it and other pressures will require a post-Brexit deal that supports the rural economy through a major transition.

Insert one-page In a nutshell diagram

What England expects: National Park Purposes

All National Parks in England have two statutory purposes

ADD DIAGRAM

Public bodies, and statutory undertakers such as utility companies, when undertaking any activity which may have an impact on the designated area, have a duty to have regard to these purposes:

The Government also places a corresponding social and economic duty upon National Park Authorities themselves – to be considered when delivering the two purposes. This avoids the risk either that the needs of National Park residents and businesses will be ignored, or that others will ignore its designation when going about their business.

For further information about the aims and purposes of National Parks: ADD

What makes this place special?

The seven special qualities of this National Park were defined in 2012, with input from over 1,000 residents, visitors, landowners, farmers, businesses, school pupils and parish councils. They capture what has attracted people for centuries: the ‘stocks’ we have inherited and which we need to nurture and enhance over time. They define sense of place, distinctiveness and the characteristics that make this place special and valued.

Add diagram

Our vision: thriving communities in inspirational landscapes

If we want the South Downs to remain a special place in 2050, we need to make sure that its landscape provides more benefits to people, and that more people are able to enjoy, understand and take action to support that landscape.

This means that (links to Vision below)

By 2050 in the South Downs National Park:

The iconic English lowland landscapes and heritage will have been conserved and greatly enhanced. These inspirational and distinctive places, where people live, work, farm and relax, are adapting well to the impacts

of climate change and other pressures.

People will understand, value, and look after the vital natural services that the National Park provides. Large areas of high-quality and well-managed habitat will form a network supporting wildlife throughout the landscape.

Opportunities will exist for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the National Park and its special qualities. The relationship between people and landscape will enhance their lives and inspire them to become actively involved in caring for it and using its resources more responsibly.

Its special qualities will underpin the economic and social wellbeing of the communities in and around it, which will be more self-sustaining and empowered to shape their own future. Its villages and market towns will be thriving centres for residents, visitors and businesses and supporting the wider rural community.

Successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the National Park will actively contribute to, and derive economic benefit from, its unique identity and special qualities.

The First 10 Years: How Have We Done

This will be a 2/3 page pull out highlighting the key achievements from the last 10 years

Major Issues and Challenges

The landscapes, culture and settlements of this National Park have been shaped by, and have adapted to, millennia of human influence. These ranged from the prehistoric clearance of the forest, the Black Death, changes in the price of wool or corn, the demand for timber for shipbuilding and charcoal, the arrival of the railways, and now the return of vineyards absent since Roman times. Trying to fossilise this landscape at any given point in time is neither feasible nor desirable. Instead, this plan is a shared endeavour to shape the future of the National Park in order that its special qualities endure.

Whilst change has always been with us, it is arguable that the combined pressures on the South Downs today are more intense than at any time since the last Ice Age. For example, the following are even more apparent now than when the first version of the plan was launched in 2014:

Each of the following sections will be turned into a two-page pull out with key stats:

The Climate Emergency - the National Park is already experiencing more unpredictable weather events causing drought, soil erosion and flooding. This is changing the landscape as habitats come under pressure and agricultural systems and infrastructure struggle to adapt. The 2019 report of the Climate Change Committee sets a radical target of achieving a zero carbon UK by 2050 and like all parts of society, National Parks must up their game now to meet this challenge. The SDNPA's first ever Local Plan, adopted in July 2019, creates a single overarching policy framework for new development. It will ensure that the

approximately 4,500 new homes to be built in the National Park within its timeframe are low carbon, and that settlements develop in a way which reduces car dependency by encouraging walking and cycling. All Local Plans for the areas around the South Downs need to respond to the Climate Emergency. There is an urgent need to decarbonise transport, and to roll out energy efficiency and renewable energy in ways that are appropriate in this special landscape. Turning to this plan in particular, radical changes will be needed in land management – for example by encouraging forms of agriculture and forestry which emit less greenhouse gases or lock up more carbon, and by creating more space for nature so that species and habitat can move.

Biodiversity is increasingly under pressure, with growing national evidence about decline in insect populations, soils, water and air quality, and the onset of new pests and diseases (such as Ash Dieback) becoming evident. It is hard to state with confidence whether wildlife in the South Downs is yet bucking national trends of decline. Despite many impressive actions by, farm clusters, estates, environmental NGOs, species groups and communities; and despite individual success stories such as the reintroduction of the water vole and the red kite, increasing numbers of some farmland birds, and the recovery of the Duke of Burgundy butterfly; the challenge remains huge. Rewilding projects, such as that at the nearby Knepp Estate, reveal just how much wildlife had already been lost from our landscapes by the early 20th century, but also show how quickly nature can recover if given the chance. Our most precious habitats - such as chalk grassland, heathland or coppice woodland – arose from lowland mixed farming and forestry systems, so wholesale abandonment of farming could be ecologically, as well as culturally and economically, undesirable. The intention in the plan is therefore to build more consensus amongst those who own and manage the National Park about how to use agriculture, forestry and rewilding approaches together to rebuild our natural capital alongside not instead of producing food.

The **economy** of the South Downs includes more than 8,000 businesses linked to national and international markets, and a thriving National Park economy is essential if the landscape is to be sustainably managed (see above). When the UK leaves the EU, a major transition will take place: changing for example subsidy regimes, commodity tariffs and availability of seasonal labour, all with highly unpredictable impacts. Our land-based businesses produce crops and products in response to market signals and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The CAP will be replaced by a New England Land Management Scheme (NELMS), which will use public money to pay farmers for public goods such as clean water, better soils, wildlife or access. Working through farm clusters, many farmers in the South Downs have already agreed to be part of the national pilot for this new scheme. Market forces could become more influential, new crops may appear, and new technology will be applied with both positive and negative landscape impacts. Concerns over global food security may also encourage some farmers to intensify production, others to extensify or take land out of agriculture.

A large proportion of National Park rural businesses are not land based, and even those that are have often diversified to the point where agriculture provides a minority share of profit. Mobile phone signal coverage, broadband connectivity and speeds are limiting factors, and will require new forms of Government support for rural development. This plan also sees a scaling up of work on tourism and the visitor economy, encouraging people to stay longer, do more and spend locally.

New Housing and Infrastructure. Because of its location in the heavily populated South East, this National Park will experience major housing development around its borders. Whilst the sites themselves are outside the designated landscape, the ecological footprint of these new communities will inevitably have a significant impact, for example on water abstraction and treatment, transport systems and because people will want to have access to and enjoy the South Downs. This plan therefore includes commitments to work with neighbouring local authorities to develop people and nature” networks across boundaries.

In response to development pressure, and because of the geographical location of the South Downs, there are an increasing number of proposals for new national infrastructure including road and rail schemes, pipelines, reservoirs and cable routes. Many of these could cut through the National Park, and more resources will be need to be devoted by a range of bodies to working with their undertakers to find better

routes/locations, reduce negative impacts and look for ways to achieve net gain for the environment. The process for developing these schemes needs to take far more account of protected landscapes.

The South Downs is a living reservoir providing freshwater for important species and habitats and over 1.2m people. Despite significant projects with water companies during the five years of the first plan, the status of these freshwater resources is still often poor, with low flows, increasing nitrate levels and pollution incidents from sewage treatment. Although abstraction has been reduced on some vulnerable and important catchments like the Itchen, both the chalk aquifers and river flows remain vulnerable to over abstraction, and household per capita consumption is still higher than the national average. Growing pressure on water resources has implications for biodiversity and agriculture, resulting in the need to further reduce abstraction and to increase availability through rainwater harvesting schemes or new reservoirs. In parts of the National Park, including behind Brighton, on the Rother and above Portsmouth, there have been some very innovative pilot projects by water companies, working with the SDNPA, farmers, NGOs and government bodies to change land use and reduce nitrates at source. This often has other benefits for example to biodiversity and soil carbon, and this plan sees commitments to mainstream these successful approaches.

Wellbeing. Since the first plan was published, national and global evidence has continued to grow of the physical and mental health benefits of connection with nature, yet the national trends are still largely in the wrong direction. Much has been done to increase use by schools in and around the National Park, support volunteering and improve access for walkers and cyclists via the South Downs Way, the wider Rights of Way network and new dedicated routes. At the same time, cuts in public transport have increased car dependency and many sectors of society, including many who would benefit the most, still face barriers to using the National Park. In this plan there are commitments to do much more – for example by establishing a new outcome and priority on health and wellbeing and involving communities just outside the boundary who suffer from poor health.

Our Ambitions for the Next Five years

This will be a 3 page spread – double page with a fold out – image led showing 10 outcomes and priorities

Policies

As part of the first plan in 2014, in line with Defra guidance, a set of 57 policies were created. Even with the adoption of the SDNPA Local Plan and its policies, the 57 policies continue to provide a broader foundation. They are set out in Appendix 1. General policies apply to a wide range of partners and stakeholders, others are more relevant to a particular ‘industry’ or specific interest. For example, those on water are most relevant to the water companies, Environment Agency and local abstractors, whereas those for education and lifelong learning are most relevant to local authorities, learning providers and education charities.

How this Plan Delivers National Policy

We will create a NEW DIAGRAM graphically showing national policies on LHS, our plan in middle and local outcomes on RHS based on the text below

Chapter 2 “Enhance” (Outcomes 1-4)

The priorities under this chapter are relevant to or help to deliver a range of national policy and will help to reverse downwards trends in the UK ‘State of Nature’ assessmentⁱ.

Key policies are within the Defra 25 year planⁱⁱ and 8 point plan for National Parkⁱⁱⁱs, and the proposals for a new England Land Management Scheme set out in “Health & Harmony and the Agriculture Bill. Also relevant are the reports and advice from the Natural Capital Committee^{iv} about natural capital accounting and delivery of ecosystems services, and the latest report from the Climate Change Committee on the need for urgent action on land use and agriculture.

Other important policies include the Tree Health Resilience Strategy and the Prof Sir John Lawton report ‘Making Space for Nature’.

Chapter 3 “Connect” (Outcomes 5-8)

Across Government there is recognition and an increasing commitment, to promote and support healthy communities by highlighting the benefits of engagement with the environment, and the priorities in this Chapter will help to deliver outcomes for Defra, Public Health England, the NHS and Sport England. For example:

The Defra 25 year Plan¹ aims to connect people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing, specifically makes reference to the use of social prescribing, and calls for more people from all backgrounds to be involved in projects to improve the natural world. It calls for measures to encourage children to be close to nature, in and out of school, with particular focus on disadvantaged areas, and to make 2019 a year of action for the environment, to help children and young people from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment.

The Sport England strategy ‘A Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation 2015-22’² contains a range of cross-Government measures to reduce physical inactivity and spread the benefits of sport and physical activity to everyone.

Public Health England³ has clear priorities on health prevention and on working towards a healthier, fairer society. National Parks England and PHE have signed a joint Accord to promote the Health and Well-Being benefits of the National Parks.

The NHS Long Term Plan⁴ commits to increasing funding for primary and community care by at least £4.5bn over the 10 years from 2019. This is to support a range of initiatives including increasing physical activity and supporting people with mental health conditions, including by increasing support for social prescribing.

The Defra 8-point plan for National Parks^v, 2016, has ambitions to ‘Connect young people with nature’ by doubling the number of young people to experience a National Park as part of National Citizen Service by 2020; creating a new package of teaching materials for schools based on National Parks; and setting a target for National Park Authorities to engage directly with over 60,000 young people per year through schools visits by 2017/18.

¹ Defra 2018 Policy Paper: 25 Year Environment Plan

² DCMS 2015

³ Public Health England 2014 Corporate report: ‘From Evidence into Action’

⁴ NHS 2019 Long Term Plan

Chapter 4 “Thrive” (Outcomes 9 and 10)

This chapter is relevant to delivering Government policy on economy, tourism, community and rural productivity. In particular:

The Localism Act⁵ which sets out the ambition to devolve power to communities to take a more active role in planning for their future and includes tools such as Neighbourhood Planning, Community Right to Build and Community Right to Bid; designed to empower local communities to undertake small-scale, site-specific community led developments and to preserve assets of community value such as village shops or the local pub or library.

The English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010⁶ states that National Park Authorities *“have an important role to play as planning authorities in the delivery of affordable housing”*. It also states that it is a priority for National Park Authorities to *“foster and maintain vibrant, healthy and productive living landscapes and working communities”*. It also states that *“for the Parks to be a viable place for businesses and for communities to thrive, the communications infrastructure needs to be fit for purpose.”*

DEFRA’s 10-point plan⁷ for boosting productivity in rural areas seeks to reduce the significance of lower physical density and greater remoteness from economic centres, by focussing on delivering superfast broadband to 95% of UK households and businesses.

The Industrial Strategy⁸, which states that infrastructure is, *“the essential underpinning of our lives and work, and having modern and accessible infrastructure throughout the country is essential to our future growth and prosperity”*

The Environment Act 1995⁹ emphasises the importance of the economic and social wellbeing of communities to the long-term sustainability of the National Park and its special qualities.

The Defra 25 year Plan¹⁰ recognises the role the tourism sector has to play in working towards environmental targets, such as through achieving zero avoidable plastic waste and through income generation initiatives to support conservation and countryside management schemes such as visitor giving initiatives. It also underpins Government Agriculture Policy on ‘public payments for public good’.

The DEFRA 8¹¹ point plan identifies international tourism growth as a key driver for National Parks and aims to increase annual visitors from 90m to 100m, generating an estimated £440m for local businesses.

The Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are key to determining investment priorities that will support and sustain economic growth and create jobs within their local area. There are three LEPs that cover the National Park; Enterprise M3, Coast to Capital and South East. Their Local Industrial Strategies will help guide future rural development funding.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 encourages ‘the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses’. It also supports sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

⁵ UK Government Localism Act 2011

⁶ DEFRA. 2010. English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010

⁷ DEFRA. (2015). Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas.

⁸ UK Government. (2018) Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future.

⁹ HM Government Environment Act 1995

¹⁰ HM Government. (2018). A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment

¹¹ National Parks England. (2016). 8-Point Plan for England’s National Parks

The SDNPA Local Plan sets out policies for how this will be delivered in the South Downs National Park.

How this Plan was made and reviewed

The first plan in 2014 was first ever for the National Park. It was the culmination of three years of joint working with a wide range of people and organisations, facilitated by the SDNPA, and for the entire community of the National Park. Great efforts were made to ensure that a wide range of consultees had the opportunity to have significant input. The contributors included representatives from key sectors such as tourism, farming and forestry, environmental NGOs, several thousand individuals via public events and the online South Downs Forum, and many more specific groups such as the South Downs Partnership, technical working groups, local authorities and parish councils. As a result, the plan was shared by many and included commitments from land managers, communities, businesses, statutory agencies and many others. It drove the corporate plans of the SDNPA itself, but was also reflected in the plans of many other organisations.

Both SDNPA members and key partners agreed that the Partnership Management Plan 2017-19 framework remained largely sound and that the emphasis in reviewing and updating the plan should be on upping the level of ambition and concentrating on delivery. The review has been undertaken on behalf of many stakeholders by SDNPA officers overseen by its Members, with strategic advice from the South Downs Partnership. Building on the very extensive engagement process conducted from 2011-2014, consultation has involved Parish workshops, and a variety of stakeholder groups. The technical working groups built up for the original plan have evolved into a variety of delivery networks such as the South Downs Forestry Partnership, the Learning Partnership and the major Environmental NGOs. These networks have been very influential in shaping future plans and will play a major role in making them happen.

The first plan provided the foundation for the SDNPA Local Plan: planning being a key mechanism to deliver some of the outcomes for example, on ecosystem services and affordable housing. It is important that the Local Plans of Local Authorities overlapping the National Park adopt similar policies. However, it is also important to remember that many of the factors influencing the wider National Park landscapes have nothing to do with the planning system.

The first plan took account of a range of national and EU policies for example, the *National Parks Vision and Circular 2010*, the *Natural Environment White Paper*, the EU Water Framework Directive and European Landscape Convention. Since then there has been a raft of new policy – important examples for the National Park being the Defra 25 Year Strategy, the Agriculture Bill, National Planning Policy Framework, Localism Act, Industrial Strategy and Environment Bill. The diagram shows how this plan will help deliver a wide range of Government objectives within this area.

ⁱ RSPB et al (2016) State of Nature

ⁱⁱ Defra (2018) A green future: our 25 year plan to improve the environment.

ⁱⁱⁱ Defra (March 2018) 8 point plan for England's National Parks

^{iv} Natural Capital Committee (2012-19) annual reports to the economic affairs committee of the cabinet

^v Defra (March 2018) 8 point plan for England's National Parks

How We Will Make It Happen

The Partnership Management Plan is a collective vision for the future of the South Downs National Park. Its 10 Outcomes can only be delivered by joint working between land managers, other organisations, communities, volunteers, businesses and a wide range of other partners and individuals.

Together, the SDNPA and its partners will work in the following ways to deliver this Partnership Management Plan. Some projects will be led by the SDNPA and some by other partners:

(Please note each of the methods below will have an icon which will appear where relevant in the main body of the report)

- **Use the best evidence and support new research.** Using the most up to date evidence and data, for example the latest technology to monitor landscape change, sharing data and evidence among the partners.
- **Make best practice, common practice:** Share best practice between partners, whether land managers, communities, local authorities and agencies, businesses and NGOs.
- **Build skills for the future: For example by** equipping the farmers and foresters of today to make the best plans and decisions for tomorrow, and investing in the future by bringing new entrants into the profession
- **Network to form partnerships:** Create Joint Accords and work collaboratively with expertise from across sectors.
- **Empower communities:** Help individuals, parishes and communities to take action locally on the issues which matter to them – for example climate change, wildlife, affordable housing, dark skies, urban trees, and tranquil places.
- **Develop ways to evaluate the benefit of all projects in terms of natural capital, social and community value**
- **Reach out to new audiences. Use communication channels across many organisations** to ensure full and active participation for all in this National Park.
- **Develop the National Park as a national hub of excellence.**
- **Ensure support for creative engagement** with the landscape and its heritage.
- **Build on existing successful pilot initiatives** and scale them up.
- **Engage new volunteers from underrepresented groups** and provide a cohesive volunteering offer that supports innovation and training.
- **Support individuals to make small changes and incremental difference** through behaviour change campaigns and promoting micro-volunteering ideas

Specifically, the SDNPA will:

- **Work to get net gain from major infrastructure:** work with utility companies, developers and their agents to develop high-quality schemes that go beyond avoiding damage and instead improve the landscape and biodiversity of the National Park.
- **Add value through the planning system:** use the SDNPA Local Plan and development management service, and those of partner local authorities, to achieve net gain from developers.
- **Support the creation of resilient markets and sustainable supply chains.** We will work with the supply chain to maximise the value of, for example, sustainably produced timber and forest products, thereby increasing the economic value of our woodlands.

Monitoring and review

Delivery of the Partnership Management Plan will be monitored by tracking the progress against a set of overarching indicators and by annual reporting by partners against the projects they have committed to the plan.

The SDNPA and Partners have agreed an initial list of projects and other work they will deliver towards achievement of PMP outcomes and priorities over the next 5 years. The list of projects for each priority is set out in full on the SDNPA website. This project list will continue to evolve over the five year plan period as new projects are developed by partners.

On behalf of all involved, the SDNPA will write to partners annually, asking for a RAG status and description of progress. Every year the SDNPA will produce an annual PMP Report which will be a high level update detailing key outputs and case studies from projects and other activities. This information will then be published, and shared with the NPA and the South Downs Partnership, as well as the sector groups helping to deliver the work. In addition to monitoring project delivery we have updated the set of indicators against the Outcomes – these monitor the overall progress towards the 2050 vision. Where possible we have retained indicators from the previous partnership management plan, to enable long term trends to be identified.

Progress against all of the PMP indicators will be collected annually where it is possible to do so. It is likely that some of the indicators will not show change as frequently as every year, but will need to be measured over a longer time period, possibly even at 5 or 10 year intervals. Significant changes and updates to indicators will be included in the Annual PMP Report.

Periodically, we will arrange for an independent review of the how well the activities of the South Downs National Park Authority and its Partners are delivering the long term vision. This will help us understand whether we need to change what we are doing or how we are doing it.

Further information can be found on our website.

ENHANCE

Outcome 1 - Landscape and Beauty

By 2050 the landscape character of the South Downs, its special qualities, natural beauty and local distinctiveness have been conserved and enhanced by avoiding or mitigating the negative impacts of development and cumulative change

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

(This will include a number of projects that have been committed)

Why is it important?

The landscape character of the South Downs National Park is varied and complex - a rich tapestry reflecting its underlying geology and centuries of human influence. It has been and continues to be shaped by historic patterns of land-use, agriculture and human settlement.

The eastern downs have an open and expansive character, with scenic views across the weald and out to sea, and include the Heritage Coast around Cuckmere Haven and the Seven Sisters. In the central and western Downs, woodland is a more characteristic feature. North of the chalk downs, the Wealden greensand is more enclosed and intimate, with its remnant heathland and sunken lanes.

But pressures upon these landscapes are many and varied: from small scale clutter and local highways schemes to large scale infrastructure such as new roads, pipelines or cable routes the cumulative impact can be to erode its special quality.

Priorities for the next five years

1.1 Protect landscape character

To protect and enhance the natural beauty and character of the SDNP and seek environmental net-gain from any infrastructure projects

Additional text to come

1.2 Create Green Infrastructure

To improve green and blue infrastructure to deliver nature recovery networks and connect people to nature within and around the SDNP

Green Infrastructure is a national approach that incorporates natural solutions and strategic investment in the natural environment to deliver a wide range of benefits. These include: water & flood risk management, the economy, biodiversity, access, health & well-being, resources (food, fuel), climate change adaptation. It can be thought of as a “people and nature network”

We will create a “people and nature network” in and around the National Park. We have begun by identify the areas which can offer the greatest benefits, establishing a series of pilot projects and setting out some common principles for planning, delivery and management of natural capital assets in the area.

1.3 Target new payments

To maximise environmental, cultural and economic benefits of agri-environment and forestry schemes across the National Park

As Britain leaves the EU, the current farming and forestry support schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy will cease to apply. Over the next five years the a major transition will start to take place toward a new England based regime which provides public money for public benefits like better soils, clean water, access or wildlife. We will bring farmers, foresters, estates, other land managers and water companies together with Defra and Natural England to pilot these new types of support so that the new scheme works for the South Downs and other lowland mixed farming landscapes.

Outcome 2 – Increasing Resilience

By 2050 there is increased resilience within the landscape for its natural resources, habitats and species to adapt to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.

Why is it important?

Climate change is having fundamental impacts upon the National Park, with more unpredictable and more extreme weather events. This will lead to changes in landscape, habitats and crops, and increase soil erosion and flooding.

Priorities for the next five years

2.1 Improve Soil and Water

To improve soil and water by reducing soil erosion, improving carbon capture and filtration and reconnecting wetland habitats

Over the last 50 years there has been a national decline in soil health leading, locally, to erosion and increased sediment, fertilisers and pesticides in our rivers. Water quality has also declined as a result of increased nitrates from agriculture, roads and sewage, and other chemicals have also begun to appear in our water sources. Climate change and increasing population is increasing pressure on a limited natural resource, meaning that the South East of England has been designated a region of severe water stress. Meantime, extreme weather events are increasing flood risk, often exacerbated by use of non-porous surfacing and changes in vegetation cover.

We will use the increased understanding of the impact of land management and the pilots develop during the last Plan changes to practices. These often have multiple ecosystem benefits - for example the use of winter cover crops can reduce nitrate leaching by 90%, keep nitrogen in the soil for the following crop, provide excellent winter habitat for farmland birds, stabilise soil, add humus and fix carbon.

We will also scale up the use of natural habitats to alleviate flooding, by reconnecting rivers to their floodplains so they can adapt naturally as water levels continue to rise. By making more room for water we will restore wetland habitats such as floodplain meadows, reed beds and marshes, and take the pressure off urban areas.

2.2 Improve trees and woodland

We will improve the resilience and quality and quantity of trees and woodlands in the National Park and ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place

Over a fifth of our National Park is woodland. This locks up thousands of tonnes of carbon, slows water flows, provides valuable habitat and a sustainable source of home grown timber. These multiple benefits are now better understood, and the need for action well integrated into national policy, and there is also better scientific data available to help those who are managing and planting trees. But as with all habitats, our trees and woodlands are under an unprecedented threat, from the effects of climate change, damage from browsing animals pests and diseases and poor management.

To tackle this we will increase resilience by, for example, use of a wider range of species and provenances, creating greater diversity of age structure within our woodlands and creating conditions for woodlands to regenerate naturally so they can evolve with the changing climate. We will also ensure carefully targeted planting of new trees able to adapt, thrive and enhance their urban or rural surroundings

Outcome 3 - Habitats & Species

By 2015 a thriving and connected network of habitats and increased population and distribution of priority species now exist in the National Park

Why is it important?

The National Park contains many (nationally and internationally) important species and habitats but its ecosystems have, as elsewhere, suffered significant damage over the last 150 years through loss of habitats, their fragmentation and degradation. Factors such as climate change, new diseases and invasive species add to this pressure. In order to create more resilience, habitats will need to be better managed, bigger and more joined up. Species will need to be able to move through the landscape if they are to adapt to change and survive. This means looking well beyond nature reserves and working across the wider farmed countryside.

The National Park has a high proportion of sites designated for their wildlife value, including nationally and internationally important sites and over 800 locally designated wildlife sites, there are also two neighbouring Marine Conservation Zones. Habitats include chalk grassland, lowland heathland, ancient woodland, farmland, rivers and other wetland habitats, coastal and adjacent marine.

Our priorities for the next five years

3.1 Join up habitats

We will create, restore and improve areas of priority habitat to be more, bigger, better, and joined up at a landscape scale

The South Downs has a rich mosaic of habitats including species rich chalk grassland, crystal clear chalk streams, acid heathland and ancient deciduous woodland. However, many are fragmented and some species populations have become isolated. We will continue the approach set out by Prof Sir John Lawton in "Making Space for Nature": joining up important areas of habitat, making key sites larger and improving their management condition.

To achieve the above will require pulling together information from the habitat capability mapping tool, biodiversity opportunity areas and ecosystem service mapping. Land owners and land managers will work together with conservation organisations to target the best locations to develop connectivity, enlarge existing habitats and improve their quality (see also 3.1 above)

3.2 Priority and Invasive species

We will increase the genetic diversity and resilience of target species and implement a landscape scale strategy for tackling tackling invasive species, pests and diseases

The National Park supports many iconic species such as burnt orchids, sand lizards, barbastelle bats and brown trout. Many are rare and localised but the populations of some - such as the otter and Duke of Burgundy butterfly – are recovering through sensitive land management and improving habitat connectivity. Other species, such as the wart biter cricket and the water vole have had a helping hand through introduction of new populations. We will increase species by the actions in 3.1, creating corridors for species movement, and genetic diversity will be improved as populations can exist across a wider geographical range, supplemented where necessary with introductions.

Invasive non-native species, pests and diseases are a major issue on a global scale - both in terms of damage to native ecosystems but also health and economic impacts. In the UK the economic impact of control and containment is estimated at £2 billion per annum. Locally, in the South Downs, both invasive non-native species and pests and diseases are a growing problem. We will focus on the prevention, control and eradication of those that are most harmful to biodiversity.

Outcome 4: Arts & Heritage

By 2050 cultural heritage of the National Park is enhanced and widely understood and enjoyed

Why is it important?

The cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park charts the history of an inspirational landscape and buildings that has evolved through human activity and continues to contribute to our sense of place. Cultural heritage is not static, and change comes with both threats (such as climate change)¹ and opportunities (such as digital technologies)², but its value is in helping us to engage with the present, by understanding our human journey.

Our cultural heritage helps us to understand our past in the context of changing ecologies and responses to the landscape and built environment. It does not exist in isolation, but is intimately tied to how we have used, adapted and valued landscapes and places - their character, natural resources, biodiversity, built forms, views and vistas.

Cultural heritage delivers significant wider benefits that address contemporary concerns, as recognised in a growing number of evidence-based studies³. The value of culture was outlined in the DCMS Culture White Paper (2016):

¹ See: ASC (2016) UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Evidence Report – Summary for England; May Casser (2005) Climate Change and the Historic Environment;

² DCMS (2018) Culture is Digital

³ For health and wellbeing, see: National Alliance for Museums, Health & Wellbeing (2018) Museums as Spaces for Wellbeing; Helen J. Chatterjee, Paul M. Camic, Bridget Lockyer & Linda J. M. Thomson (2018) Non-clinical community interventions: a systematised review of social prescribing schemes, Arts & Health, 10:2, 97-123; Susan Potter (2013) Arts on Prescription 2010-2012; Veall, D. et al (2017) Museums on Prescription: A guide to working with older people.

For economic value, see: Fiona Tuck, Scott Dickinson (2015) The Economic Impact of Museums in England; Heritage Counts (2018) Heritage and the Economy; Oxford Economics (2016) The Impact of Heritage Tourism for the UK Economy;

- The intrinsic value: Culture creates inspiration, enriches lives and improves our outlook on life.⁴
- The social value: Culture has important social benefits in terms of health, education and community cohesion.⁵
- The economic value: the contribution culture makes to economic growth.⁶

We preserve aspects of our cultural heritage by using designated protections (such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, designated conservation areas or registered parks and gardens, etc.), but our understanding of the past continues to grow and change, with new sites still being discovered, and new technologies revealing hidden stories and perspectives on our material culture. Much of the cultural heritage in the National Park can be used to inspire new audiences with this special landscape.

[Insert: Cultural Heritage Infographic]

Priorities for the next five years

4.1 Heritage

To increase conservation, awareness, access to and understanding of South Downs cultural heritage

Cultural Heritage in the National Park is intrinsically linked to the natural environment, contributing to this valuable asset⁷. It is threatened by similar factors to those which affect species and habitats, and our heritage assets need to be actively looked after to ensure they survive for future generations. We also need to ensure that the skills needed to maintain them are not lost.

The role of cultural heritage in facilitating health, wellbeing, engagement and inclusion is widely recognised. In addition, it is a key contributor to local business and tourist economies, making some cultural heritage projects a sound economic investment. However, there are significant challenges around diminishing funding, skills and resources, and threats to preservation and conservation from climate change and land management, heritage crime, large-scale infrastructure projects and development pressures.

Our approach will balance conservation and preservation with access and engagement:

We will : protect and conserve

- We will monitor, record and conserve Heritage at Risk and related vulnerable sites, structures and buildings that contribute to the Park's special character.
- We will promote awareness of heritage crime and its impact, encouraging public custodianship of heritage assets.

⁴ Links to South Downs National Park priorities: Enhance, Experience and Thrive Outcomes 1, 5, 7 and 9.

⁵ Links to South Downs National Park priorities: Experience Outcomes 6, 7 and 8.

⁶ Links to South Downs National Park priorities: Thrive Outcomes 9 and 10

⁷ DEFRA (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment.

- We will develop partnerships, projects and research focused on heritage protection and adaptation in the context of climate change.
- We will support joint initiatives, including apprenticeships and mentoring, which address skills loss or increase expertise and capacity to deliver conservation and access to cultural heritage.
- We will increase investment in cultural infrastructure, heritage protection, and increased interpretation and access through use of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy money, where appropriate and relevant.

We will : increase access and understanding

- We will support initiatives that increase awareness of, and engagement with, culture and heritage.
- We will support projects that increase knowledge and understanding of our cultural heritage.
- We will develop and promote the contribution of cultural heritage engagement to health and wellbeing.
- We will recruit volunteers to be the next generation of ambassadors for cultural heritage
- We will foster engagement between museums, galleries, libraries and archives holding collections relating to the history of the South Downs to develop projects and initiatives that grow our understanding of material culture relating to the Park and its special qualities, and which engage the public.
- We will build stronger collaboration between a broad range of cultural heritage organisations from within the Park and its immediate environs through initiatives such as the South Downs Volunteering Network.

4.2 Contemporary Arts and crafts

We will promote creativity and understanding of the landscape and traditions of the South Downs through contemporary arts and crafts

The National Park has a rich cultural heritage of art, music and rural traditions. There is a strong association with well-known writers, poets, musicians and artists who have captured the essence of this most English of landscapes, and drawn inspiration from its special qualities and sense of place: Virginia Woolf, Jane Austen, Hilaire Belloc, Edward Thomas, Gilbert White, Edward Elgar, Joseph Turner, Eric Gill and Eric Ravilious, among many others. Today, traditions continue through activities such as folk singing and events like Findon sheep fair. Intangible cultural heritage - such as oral traditions, festivals and traditional practices - are fragile but emotive links to knowledge transmitted from our ancestors. Culture is also continually renewed with new art and creative expression inspired by the landscape, while continuing to celebrate the strong traditions of the past.

- We will develop a strategic relationship with Arts Council England to support, nurture and disseminate creative practice across the arts, libraries and museums.
- We will encourage participatory events with artists / practitioners inspired by the South Downs, which empower participants through a process of enabling to owning creative content.
- We will support a diverse range of artists and arts organisations, to respond creatively to the National Park.

- We will encourage the use of traditional skills and crafts as inspiration for contemporary artistic responses to the South Downs landscape, wildlife and history.
- We will support and promote a wide range of the 50 or more festivals active in the South Downs, promoting creativity inspired by its landscape, wildlife and history, and engaging wider audiences.

Enhance: How can you help?

This box will appear at the end of the Enhance, Connect and Thrive chapters and will include ways for both individuals and communities/businesses to get involved in delivering these outcomes.

How We Will Make It Happen

The How We Will Make It Happen section at the start of the Plan sets out how we will go about delivering our work. Each 'way of working' will be represented by an icon and this icon will be displayed in the report next to the relevant outcomes and priorities

National Policies

A National Policy section will appear at the start of the document. Icons for National Policies that we are contributing towards will appear beside the relevant Outcome.

CONNECT

Outcome 5 – Outstanding experience for all

By 2050 outstanding experiences for communities and visitors are supported by high quality access and sustainable transport networks

Why is it important?

National Parks are designated for everyone¹, and the South Downs provides outstanding recreational opportunities associated with its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. It is really important that local communities, and visitors from neighbouring towns, and cities and further afield to have a wide range of opportunities to visit; to learn and be inspired; and to improve their health and wellbeing. However, evidence shows that certain groups are consistently under-represented (see 5.1 below).

The most recent SDNPA visitor survey² indicated that 98% of visitors rated their experience of the National Park as high or very high, 77% of visitors counted our scenic landscape and breath-taking views as key factors in their enjoyment, and going for a walk was by far the most popular activity amongst visitors - with 73% identifying this as their main activity.

The priorities in this section of the plan will help protect these experiences, address barriers to access, and manage pressures of growing visitor numbers in some hotspots. Barriers on the Rights of Way network include steps and stiles which prevent access by less mobile individuals and a lack of good 'family friendly' routes connecting to major settlements in and around the National Park. In some areas these are compounded by poorly promoted public transport and declining services. The severance caused by major highways on the edge of the National Park, and increasing motorised traffic flows on roads within it, is significant.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

Families Inclusions Project using the John Muir Award

Spending time together whilst working towards a shared goal is recognised as a positive approach to building relationships. For families and young people who have had little access to wild places, often from the most deprived sectors of society, it offers ways to share new and positive experiences.

The John Muir Award is an environmental award scheme focused on wild places. It supports people to connect with, enjoy and care for nature, landscape and the natural environment. It's for people of all backgrounds and ages, is non-competitive, inclusive and accessible.

The Award ask participants to meet four challenges;

¹ 8-Point Plan for England's National Parks, Defra, March 2016

² SDNPA Visitor Survey 2018

- Discover a wild place,
- Explore it by a walk, camp, bike ride or cycle;
- Conserve it through practical conservation or campaigning; and
- Share your experiences through making a film, talking to friends and family, or making a display of photos or poems.

Since 2014, we have used the award very successfully to engage schools and outdoor learning organisations. Building on this success we now want to turn our attention to families based in areas of deprivation around the National Park, working in partnership with already established groups at support centres in towns and cities including Food Banks, Sure Start Centres and Social Services.

Priorities for the next five years

5.1 Disadvantaged & hard to reach groups

Encourage everyone to experience the National Park and widen participation for under-represented groups through targeted activities and promotion

The visitor profile of the National Park shows that certain groups are currently under-represented. In particular:

- Young people (16-24) - Staying visitors are much more likely to be from older age groups (>55 years)
- People from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. Our visitors are overwhelmingly white, with only 1% from BAME communities (compared to 14.8% in the populations surrounding the National Park)
- People with disabilities - 26% of people polled cited 'Health issues prevent me' as a key reason for not visiting
- People from areas of social deprivation - 16% of people surveyed said they 'can't afford to go/it is too expensive' as a main reason for not visiting

In addition, although the National Park is in an area of relative wealth there are significant pockets of deprivation, poverty and need³. Disadvantage is about people, as well as places, and there are people struggling in the most apparently affluent areas.

Working together we will reduce the barriers to visiting the National Park, leading to improved access for everyone. These include:

Physical barriers - including gates, stiles, path surfaces, steep gradients and as appropriate toilet facilities – which may exclude people with disabilities.

³ Sussex Community Foundation (2016) Sussex Uncovered: Bridging the Gap

Economic barriers - Transport for young people who don't drive or have low incomes can be a big challenge. It can be expensive to travel, to stay places, to eat, and to join activities.

Cultural and social barriers – A lack of appropriate information can be a significant barrier. Evidence⁴ suggests individuals who have had a positive experience are more likely to share information within their communities, and this has greater impact than officially produced literature.

5.2 Accessibility

Improve accessibility through a network of high quality routes connecting communities with the landscape, heritage, attractions and transport hubs and gateways

With over 3300km of public paths, this National Park has one of the most extensive Rights of Way networks in the country. The 2018 visitor survey⁵ showed 73% of visitors came to enjoy a walk, yet we aware that many people who live close by are not experiencing it. There is a shortage of 'family friendly' paths suitable for inexperienced cyclists and vulnerable users - who seek traffic free, level, easily navigable trails that are easy to access. Connectivity from market towns and transport hubs can be an issue, and major highway corridors – in particular across the A27 to the coastal fringe, and across the M3 to Winchester - present significant barriers to access.

The SDNPA Strategy for Cycling and Walking⁶ Sets out an ambitious agenda to improve accessibility for all through a network of traffic free routes that are easily reached by communities within and near to the National Park and well connected to public transport. *Insert vision map from Cycling and Walking Strategy.* Enabling more people to access the National Park for walking, cycling, horse riding and other activities creates multiple benefits. It improves health and wellbeing, encourages greater visitor spend⁷ in the local economy, eases traffic hotspots, and improves air quality by taking cars off the road.

A wide range of projects are underway or planned by various partners. These range from strategic off-road routes for Non-Motorised Users to smaller schemes such as the Gatwick Airport sponsored *Miles without Stiles* programme, which is opening up more of the National Park to the less mobile by removing stiles and path resurfacing. Many of the projects feature in Local Highways Authorities' Local Transport Plans and Countryside Access or Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

5.3 Sustainable Transport

Encourage sustainable access into and around the National Park, encouraging the retention and expansion of rural transport services

The South Downs is under pressure from car use: the 2018 Visitor Survey estimates that 77% of visits were made by car, creating carbon emissions, air pollution, noise and congestion. Improving public transport into and around the boundary is therefore vital.

Many places in the National Park are well served by rail, with stations acting as visitor gateways linking directly to destinations such as the South Downs Way National Trail, or connecting with bus

⁴ Sussex Community development Association (2015) BME Inclusion and Access to the South Downs National Park

⁵ SDNPA Visitor Survey 2018

⁶ South Downs National Park Authority Cycling and Walking Strategy 2017-2024

⁷ Add evidence of economic value of National Trail as an example...

routes for onward travel. However, evidence shows⁸ that visitors still need more information about how to get around and that there is a lack of confidence in the ‘final mile’ – meaning visitors arriving by more sustainable modes are uncertain of how to reach their end destination. This is being tackled through a variety of projects including the development of Travel Hubs at gateway stations; digital mapping, on the ground signposting and more joined up ticketing services.

Insert map showing rail network etc

We will also encourage the retention and expansion of rural transport services:

A transport network that works for both residents and visitors is a key factor in supporting communities and enabling outstanding visitor experiences, yet rural bus services have reduced in the last five years through cuts in the budgets of Passenger Transport Authorities. This has an impact on young people’s ability to access education and employment, and increases isolation amongst elderly or disabled rural residents who do not have access to a car.

Nationally, trends in transport suggest mobility services will look very different in the future, with continuing decline in scheduled routes and the rise of more app-based, on demand, sharing services. Without strong advocacy it is unlikely that rural areas will become early adopters of these new technologies, but we are very keen to find new ways of keeping rural communities connected and would therefore welcome projects from partners interested in exploring this with us.

Outcome 6 – Lifelong Learning

By 2050 there is widespread understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and the benefits it provides

Why is it important?

Worldwide, there is compelling evidence of a growing disconnect between people and the natural environmentⁱⁱ. The National Park provides a real opportunity for people to take part in life-long learning opportunities, which help people move from inspiration to taking action and getting involved.

With 893 schools inside, or within 10 kilometres of the boundary, there is huge potential. Nearly 200 providers of outdoor learning opportunities, from farm visits to museums and adventurous activities, offer a diverse range of learning experiences. Changes to the National Curriculum and OFSTED Inspection Framework have given us the opportunity to support schools with locally relevant learning across the whole curriculum. However, barriers include the rising cost of transport to sites and the confidence and skills of some school staff in leading groups outdoors.

Adult and life-long learning is also a key sector and organised groups are well represented, including the University of the Third Age (U3A) which has over 38 branches in and around the Park. There are 42 higher and further education establishments on the South Downs Learning Partnership, many of which have areas of academic interest aligned to our Purposes. Creating a shared knowledge of the

⁸ Find research evidence relating to the ‘final mile’ as part of the DEF work!!

National Park and building a robust evidence base to guide future delivery is a key opportunity for this sector.

With over 70 per cent of the National Park classified as agricultural, and with a rich cultural heritage, the land-based economy and traditional rural businesses and crafts have historically provided local jobs and support many of the special qualities. Long-term commitment and support for training and skills development is vital for the future.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

Text to come

Priorities for the next five years

6.1 Outdoor learning for young people

Provide high-quality outdoor learning opportunities as part of a locally relevant curriculum

There is clear evidence from a wide range of academic publications and research studiesⁱⁱⁱ that learning outside the classroom (LOtC) is beneficial for young people's social, physical and academic development. In a SDNPA survey of 213 schools in 2017^{iv}, 96% of school head teachers or outdoor learning coordinators said LOtC was good for children's physical and mental health and improved their personal, social and emotional development. 77% found that LOtC improved behaviour, and 75% stating that it raised attainment.

We will continue to work with the successful Learning Network across the SDNP to deliver high quality learning outside the classroom opportunities for young people. These activities will include designing locally relevant programmes of study with head teachers and curriculum planners, delivering teacher training and INSET day sessions with school staff, working with Universities to up-skill trainee teachers, targeting learning through initiatives that support health and wellbeing and providing supporting infrastructure through the Learning Zone, Learning Map and School Travel Grant.

Outcome 7 – Health and Wellbeing

By 2050 we want the South Downs National Park is a well-used and recognised asset for sustaining mental and physical health and wellbeing

Why is it important?

There is compelling evidence that access to open space and the natural environment improves mental and physical health. Increased physical activity, taken outdoors in a natural environment, closer to nature, has proven benefits for reducing stress and improving general well-being. The South Downs are cheek by jowl to over 2million people in major urban centres whose population is diverse and often suffer from health inequalities and deprivation. *See General Health, Bad or Very Bad (Census 2011).*

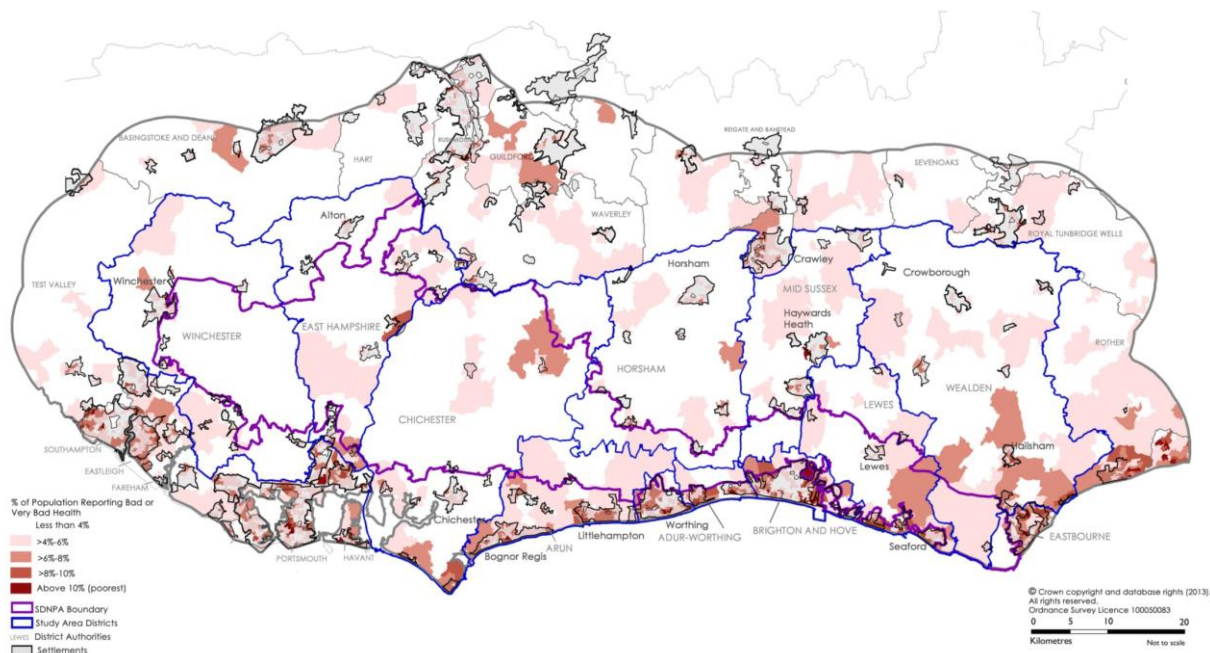
By providing opportunities for social interaction and helping to create a sense of community, the National Park can also provide wider social benefits. Neighbouring communities often feel quite disconnected from the South Downs and the health and well-being benefits it can provide, and some rural communities inside the boundary also suffer from higher than average levels of poor health.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

Developing the use of virtual reality to connect people to the South Downs for H&WB.

Creating bespoke communications for health professionals to get them to understand the links between contact with nature and cultural heritage and arts as a good opportunities for social prescribing, is a confirmed project that we are doing.

Priority 7.1 Health and wellbeing



Develop initiatives which enable local communities and individuals to improve health and wellbeing

The inspiring landscapes, natural beauty and special qualities of the National Park provide a wide range of opportunities for communities and individuals to improve physical and mental health. The South Downs is an important national and regional asset in this respect, and we intend to do more to make it available to a wider range of people from more diverse backgrounds and locations.

Overlapping the Park there are 19 Local Authorities with a public health remit, each with its own Health and Well-being Board. There are 6 Clinical Commissioning Group areas and 15 Clinical Commissioning Groups. The introduction and increase in coverage of Primary Care Networks adds further complexity. Most Health and Well-Being Boards have similar priorities,

- Starting well

- Living and working well
- Ageing well
- Dying well

but with a different emphasis on each depending on the assessed level of need (See website).

Partners agree that it is best to focus work in specific locations which have multiple deprivation and instances of poor or very poor health. Many are already delivering activity through a range of mechanisms and are now developing social prescribing as a way of using the National Park to support improvements in mental and physical health. The SDNPA is building a partnership with health bodies and local networks of providers and commissioners, both in and around the National Park, to encourage a better appreciation of the potential of the South Downs as a place for healthy outdoor activity and relaxation, and as a place where mental health and emotional well-being can be nurtured and supported. The SDNPA Local Plan, and those of neighbouring Local Authorities, also have a crucial role in ensuring that the built environment and adjacent green infrastructure provides more opportunities for healthy living.

Outcome 8: Creating Custodians

By 2050 we want more responsibility and action is taken by visitors, communities and businesses to conserve and enhance the special qualities and use resources more wisely

Why is it important?

One of the key challenges facing the National Park is to increase the opportunities to enjoy and benefit from it without creating unsustainable pressure on it. Encouraging widespread knowledge and understanding, and creating a greater sense of place, residents, businesses (see also Chapter 4) builds a stronger connection to the landscape and encourages more people to make a positive contribution. One of the best ways to do this is through volunteering.

Within the South Downs there are currently 3440^v volunteers undertaking activities relevant to National Park Purposes, delivering huge benefits and creating a large army of ambassadors (see below). This includes the SDNPA Volunteer Ranger Service and volunteers working for many other conservation and heritage organisations. The large number of people living in and around the National Park provide a great opportunity to further expand and diversify these activities. Since volunteering is not currently representative of the demographic around the Park, we are also working to remove the barriers (both physical and perceptual) some groups face to accessing these opportunities.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

8.1 Volunteering

Increase and diversify volunteering opportunities that support the National Park

Over 170 organisations facilitate volunteering opportunities relating to National Park purposes, and a cohesive network of these organisations forms the key delivery mechanism for supporting this priority over the next five years. An estimated 3440 volunteers contributed 95,120 days each year, a staggering £5,136,480 cash equivalent (using living wage calculations). Volunteers therefore provide a great practical resource, make a huge impact as ambassadors and, at the same time, improve their own physical and mental wellbeing.

However, at present the volunteering profile in the South Downs is not representative of the regional demography. In particular, young people (age 16-24), people with disabilities, people from more socially disadvantaged communities and people from BAME communities are under-represented and this is something we intend to address.

Whilst there are a number of factors affecting the current demographic of volunteers, the nature of tasks offered is certainly one, so it is important to offering volunteer activities which respond to people’s evolving needs and interests. To date, the main category of work offered is countryside and recreation based activity, with 98% of organisations asked citing practical tasks/conservation as their main volunteering roles. This appeals to some people more than others, and there is plenty of scope to diversifying the range of activities and roles available and to think creatively about new ways in which people can give their time in support of the National Park. We will also address other barriers to volunteering where clearly identified.

Enhance: How can you help?

This box will appear at the end of the Enhance, Connect and Thrive chapters and will include ways for both individuals and communities/businesses to get involved in delivering these outcomes.

How will we work

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National Policies

A National Policy section will appear at the start of the document. Icons for National Policies that we are contributing towards will appear beside the relevant Outcome.

ⁱ Louv, R (2005) Last Child in the Woods

ⁱⁱ Natural England (2012) Learning in the Natural Environment: Review of social and economic benefits and barriers

ⁱⁱⁱ Natural England (2016) Natural Connections Demonstration Project Final Report

^{iv} SDNPA (2017) Survey of schools' usage of outside space for learning

^v SDNPA (2016) Survey of volunteering in the South Downs National Park

Chapter 4: THRIVE

Outcome 9 - Great places to live

Communities in the National Park are more sustainable with an appropriate provision of housing to address local needs and improved access to essential services and facilities

Why is it important?

The residents of the National Park play a pivotal role in sustaining its vibrant communities and shaping its unique landscape. There is real pride in our towns and villages, and many dedicate time and resources to enhancing community life, conserving what is important to their local area and planning for the needs of future generations.

PMP partners want to help our communities to become more sustainable and resilient and to provide environments that improve health and well-being, where residents have better access to housing, jobs, facilities, infrastructure and services they need.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

To be added eg Bluebell Community Hub in Cocking, an Affordable Housing project

Priorities for the next five years

9.1 Affordable housing

To increase affordable housing stock in the National Park, with focus on exemplary design and using local sustainable materials

All National Parks have higher house prices than the average for their constituent counties, with average house prices equivalent to 11.6 times local earnings. In the South Downs there is a premium of more than £200,000 to buy a house in the National Park when compared with an equivalent property in some adjacent areas.

The high proportion of larger properties, and the associated high price of housing, makes access to affordable housing a key issue facing many local communities. Young people and young families, in particular, find it difficult to get low-cost housing that would enable them to continue living in the area. This has the potential to increase the average age of the population in our communities, placing further pressure on existing services, and increasing the need for people to travel to find suitable affordable accommodation and employment.

9.2 Vibrant Communities

We will support community-led initiatives which enhance the towns, villages and landscapes of the National Park

The majority of National Park residents live in the market towns of Lewes, Petersfield, Midhurst and Petworth, along with the larger villages. These vibrant larger settlements provide essential services and facilities for their residents, but importantly also for those from the surrounding rural areas. The individual character and appearance of our smaller and more isolated settlements make them attractive places to live, but it is here that accessing services and facilities is most difficult.

There are 176 active Town and Parish Councils - and even more distinct communities - across the National Park. The majority are already engaged in community led planning and initiatives to improve local quality of life and make them more resilient and attractive for residents and visitors.

The South Downs National Park Authority has already supported the preparation of over 150 Community Led Plans, including 56 Neighbourhood Plans, and these are invaluable to understand local issues and aspirations. In a protected landscape such as ours, Neighbourhood Planning provides an important way to reconcile the need to conserve and enhance the landscape whilst allowing for appropriate levels of growth, and the groups that have formed to create them may often go on to start other projects in their communities.

9.3 Digital infrastructure

To support improvement in digital infrastructure, speed and coverage throughout the South Downs National Park

At 82%, the percentage of superfast broadband available to premises in the South Downs National Park is significantly lower than the national average (just under 95%) and the UK Government target (97%¹). 'Not spots' (where properties are unable to receive 2 Mbit/s) cover 1.3% of the area, whereas the national average is 0.4%.

Availability of superfast broadband is crucial if the National Park is to attract and retain high value businesses, for whom this is becoming the baseline requirement. Better digital connectivity also benefits residents and encourages more home working which will reduce out-commuting.

There is currently 9.1% full fibre technology coverage in the National Park, which is above the National coverage average of 7.1%. Full fibre is seen as the future of digital infrastructure. In order to start, grow and retain business in the National Park we must future proof by using digital infrastructure in our towns and rural areas.

Outcome 10 - Great places to work

A diverse, sustainable, dynamic economy which is positively linked to the special qualities of the National Park

Why is it important?

¹ DCMS. (2018). Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review.

Establishing and maintaining a healthy economy is essential to underpin the landscape and communities of the South Downs National Park. There are over 8000 businesses within the boundary, providing jobs for 54,480 people. 98% are micro businesses with fewer than 10 employees, or small businesses with 10-49 employees².

Farming and forestry is the 3rd largest sector, with over 700 land-based businesses employing around 3000 people, and our natural capital is heavily dependent on this sector. As described elsewhere, woodland provides a wide range of public benefits, 32% is managed on a commercial basis, and much of the remainder for amenity purposes. The visitor economy, which currently accounts for only 10% of businesses and has potential for growth, greatly relies on the landscape and the special qualities of the National Park to provide opportunities for recreation, food and drink and health and well-being.

Examples of projects that will deliver this outcome

National Park Experience Collection - Discover England Fund

In 2017, nine English National Parks bid for Discover England Funding to create a set of new bookable experiences which would be marketed to the travel trade in Germany and Australia, to raise the profile of UK National Parks to international audiences. This was the first time UK national parks worked together on a project of this nature.

The project aims to deliver four strategic elements, all of which were informed by international best practice from Canada, Ireland and elsewhere:

1. Development of an overarching experiential brand in England's National Parks, specifically designed to unify the proposition and achieve cut-through to our favoured overseas markets via the travel trade;
2. Development of a framework to enable local businesses to be engaged in the offer, improve their productivity and enhance the overall visitor experience;
3. Creation and delivery of a range of compelling world-class experiences within all of the National Parks highlighting the distinctive nature and assets of each; and
4. Development of a travel trade strategy to stimulate commercial partnerships that successfully connect the brand and its bookable product with our targeted overseas markets.

In January 2019, the English National Park Experience Collection launched a set of 72 new visitor experiences along with 85 accommodation providers across these nine National Parks to the industry after a year of working with businesses and the trade.

West Sussex County Council: Full Fibre Backhaul Project

The 'Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review' produced for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) called for an 'Outside-in' approach to digital infrastructure to be rolled out to ensure rural areas are not left behind.

² SDNPA. (2018). Economic Profile

West Sussex County Council is working with the SDNPA and many others in developing an ambitious project to install a “full fibre backhaul”. This would create a digital rural spine, thus enabling smaller providers and local self-build co-operative groups to serve rural ‘not spot’s (which currently cover 3.8% of the county). An additional benefit will be the boost in coverage from mobile operators as at present in most rural parts 4G coverage is not available or provided by only one operator.

The map shows the planned or current super-fast broadband areas as well as the ‘not spots’. The project aims to deliver a fibre spine between Chichester and Horsham/Crawley potentially through the South Downs National Park.

Our priorities for the next five years

Priority 10.1: Enterprise

To strengthen and support sustainably managed land-based industries and local enterprise

A key challenge in the changing economic climate is to nurture the existing businesses that exist in the South Downs National Park and support investment in new enterprise. However, it is also important for our businesses to improve their sustainability, by boosting their environmental performance and actively seeking to employ local people, source local products and support other local businesses.

Local businesses play a crucial role in ensuring the economic viability of National Park communities (see above), and a positive community economic cycle³ is crucial. Research⁴ has shown every £1 spent locally is worth more than 400% to the local economy. By encouraging our communities to buy locally, we can ensure that more young people and young families are able to choose to live and work in the community they call home, thus reducing the amount of out commuting, currently at 43% in the SDNP. We will work with government to increase the amount of business support, and ensure a good supply of employment space through the operation of the SDNPA Local Plan and the planning decisions of the host authorities who help deliver it within the National Park.

Priority 10.2: Destination awareness

To increase awareness and desirability of the South Downs as a special place to visit

Supported by a wide variety of holiday accommodation, we want visitors to delve deeper and connect with wildlife, history, culture and cuisine. Therefore we will encourage partners to work together and create unique experiences for visitors which also benefit our communities and businesses.

³ Scott, J. (2001). Living Economy: the Reuters guide to the economy of modern Britain. Published by Reuters, London.

⁴ Local Multiplier 3. Online. Available: <https://www.lm3online.com/about> (accessed on 11th May 2019)

Local awareness of the National Park has grown steadily - in 2018 82% of respondents⁵ noted that they were aware of being inside it, compared to 77% of people surveyed in 2011⁶. But it still has a low national and international profile and we intend to enhance this.

Research has shown that once people are aware the sensitivity of their surroundings they are more likely to take action and care for the place, and therefore have less impact. Working with tourism partners and local providers, the SDNPA Communications and Engagement Strategy aims to take visitors on a journey from awareness to becoming an active champion for the Park.

Priority 10.3: Sustainable Tourism

To establish the South Downs as an exemplar in sustainable tourism

The South Downs attracted an estimated 18.8million visits in 2016, the highest of any UK National Park. However, at £342 million, the attributed visitor spend was one of the lowest per head, though it still supported approximately £4,900 full time equivalents (TEAM Report, 2017). The low figure per head is because the majority are day visitors, either living or staying in the surrounding area. The visitor economy also differs across the Park: in 2018 only 6% of total visitors surveyed were using accommodation inside the Park, whereas the figure around Lewes and Alfriston was 17%, showing the potential for growth in provision elsewhere. Growth in international visits will help increase the economic impact of tourism to the South Downs and support employment opportunities by increasing demand and visitor spend.

Alongside the economic benefits, the high number of visits in particular hotspots creates local environmental and social impacts, such as erosion to Rights of Way, disruption to wildlife, traffic congestion and pollution. It is therefore also important to help businesses and visitors reduce negative impacts, for example by providing tourism experiences and accommodation accessible through public transport, and helping to reduce their environmental impacts.

A combination of partners including tourism businesses and operators, the SDNPA, other UK National Park Authorities, Visit England and Visit Britain and local destination partners, will build on existing projects and develop new projects which support a resilient sustainable tourism economy in the National Park, in line with the South Downs Local Plan and the SDNPA Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

Thrive: How can you help?

This box will appear at the end of the Enhance, Connect and Thrive chapters and will include ways for both individuals and communities/businesses to get involved in delivering these outcomes.

⁵ South Downs National Park Visitor Survey 2018

⁶ South Downs National Park Visitor Survey 2012

How We Will Make It Happen

The How We Will Make It Happen section at the start of the Plan sets out how we will go about delivering our work. Each 'way of working' will be represented by an icon and this icon will be displayed in the report next to the relevant outcomes and priorities

National Policies

A National Policy section will appear at the start of the document. Icons for National Policies that we are contributing towards will appear beside the relevant Outcome.

