

SSCP Landscape Management Plan 2021- 2026 - Mid Plan Delivery Review (November 2024)

Mid Plan Review – Table of Overarching Objectives and summary of progress against objectives.

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Habitats: Calcareous Grassland	Improve the condition and extend the area of lowland chalk grassland and link it to adjoining sites to achieve landscape scale nature improvement	<p>Maintain existing extent of habitat, Improve grazing and scrub management on SSSI units to bring existing species rich chalk grassland into condition.</p> <p>Monitor for specific species recorded in the past to assess if still present e.g. Burnt Tip Orchid, Early Spider Orchid, Small Hare’s Ear and Red Star Thistle</p>	Monitor development of the species diversity on the grassland with the aim of linking species rich chalk grassland areas together	<p>Improve the quality and extent of the species rich Chalk Grassland habitat. Opportunity to demonstrate and run trials of chalk grassland re-creation on selected plots of species poor pasture.</p> <p>Create more suitable habitat for ground nesting birds and butterflies – Skylark and Adonis blue.</p>
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2021/22 consistent livestock grazing has taken place, initially with cows from Plumpton College and more recently moving to a local farmer able to supply larger volume sheep and cows for grazing; alongside continued pony grazing from a different grazier which has changed the extent of Tor Grass within the park • Lengthy work to agree a Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) through 2022-23 included a great deal of focus and negotiation with Natural England on linking up SSCP areas of good quality chalk grassland to increase the extent through appropriate mapping of prescriptions. • In partnership with neighbouring landowners and as part of CSA, working to a roadmap of linking chalk grassland across the wider National Park landscape – which is not without its challenges / conflicts. • Work on the CSA through 2022-23 also included more relaxed (lower grazing intensity) grassland prescriptions in our dry valley and other areas that have anecdotally benefited Skylark nesting. Evidenced by the lower (possibly zero) amount of nesting taking place where the cows have been on Exceat Hill (Unit 3) compared to opposite unit in Lambing (Unit 5). • A baseline sward enhancement plan and rare species survey were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of the Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) and Rangers have been undertaking follow up rapid condition assessment surveys in 2024/25 • The first chalk grassland survey was undertaken in summer 2024 and included testing a framework for future monitoring from 2024/25. • Anecdotal monitoring confirms that Burnt Tip Orchids and Early Spider Orchids have not been seen on the park for some time. 			

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024/25 chalk grassland seed collection was undertaken in early September, seeds are now drying and will be sown in spring 2024, in areas to extend the chalk grassland. Rare species including Red Star Thistle, Small Hare’s Ear and others listed above, were surveyed in the Rare Species Survey (2023), one population of Red Star Thistle was identified at the Pill Boxes in unit 11 and Barracks - all other rare species above were not present during 2023 surveys. Sensitive resting of overgrazed previously nutrient improved grassland has yielded the development of a large and growing colony of yellow meadow ants, indicated by the frequency of ant hills over previously flat areas – essential habitat for the rare Adonis Blue butterfly. 			
Habitats: Improved or semi-improved grassland	To initially rest and monitor the areas of improved/semi-improved grassland and then allow them to become more species diverse/floristically rich and become part of the calcareous mosaic.	Reduce grazing and allow regeneration of areas which have been heavily grazed resulting in low diversity pasture. Increase species diversity within the sward and create a better mosaic of habitat. Use seed from current chalk grassland to help restore areas across the site as part of the plan to encourage chalk grassland to spread. Identify small areas which could be managed as traditional hay meadows.	Monitor numbers and species of chalk grassland plants extending into this area and assess the action needed to extend the chalk grassland. Reassess the future management for areas which show no increased biodiversity. Allow for mosaic habitat of brambles and emerging scrub to develop to create edge habitat and patches of grazed and emergent vegetation. In areas identified for meadow management, Reduce nutrient content in first year or two Monitor transition and colonisation of meadow species.	Monitor increase in diversity and ecological interest of the existing sward as mosaic habitat develops and grassland species establish. Monitor breeding bird population. Monitor maturing Meadow Habitat – Establish a longer management rotation for some areas on the site.
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a departure from this LMP, Countryside Stewardship Agreement seeks to continue to graze semi improved grassland, rather than create a mosaic of scrub and grassland; due to alternative areas of scrub in other areas of SSCP and adjoining land; the CSA also does not include any plans for the management of hay meadows so the LMP needs to be amended to reflect the changes within the CSA. Evidence of patches of semi-improved grassland moving to chalk grassland as part of landscape management are identified in unit 7 as the extent of grassland increases. These areas will be annually surveyed so progress can be monitored. Grazing was rested for a 2-year period, and reintroduced in 2024 with low density sheep, cow and pony grazing in units 5 and 7. Within ‘layback’ land, no evidence to date of scrub returning in units 5 & 7. Grassland requires more resting to create this mosaic – this objective will require further conversation with Natural England in preparation for the next Countryside Stewardship Agreement after 2029. Species surveys were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of the Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) and will be monitored. 			

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Habitats: Scrub	To create a mosaic of habitats on the chalk and increase the biodiversity. Including creating areas of shelter for stock, aim to achieve a dynamic area of scrub of 15% by area.	<p>Manage scrub, particularly European Gorse, on the SSSI units and areas where there is the best opportunity to restore chalk grassland. Ensure scrub removal on scheduled sites to protect above ground features. Ensure removal is in line with requirements for historic environmental assets, including removal and disposal.</p> <p>Assess/identify which areas of scrub to maintain as habitat and to create structural diversity across the site and provide shelter and nest sites for wildlife and stock.</p>	<p>Monitor species that colonise areas where scrub has been removed and assess if further intervention is needed to encourage chalk species.</p> <p>Use targeted grazing as necessary to aid recovery from scrub back to chalk grassland flora</p>	<p>Allow for some areas of scrub to naturally colonise areas of low diversity, previously agriculturally improved pasture and manage scrub as an important habitat, where possible in locations where it will benefit the overall mosaic of habitats providing greater opportunities for species diversity, to contribute to carbon sequestration and provide shelter.</p>
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a departure from this LMP, the Countryside Stewardship Agreement / Natural England seek to graze more areas than reintroduce scrub and create a mosaic of scrub and grassland; due to alternative areas of scrub in other areas of SSCP and adjoining land; so the LMP needs to be amended to reflect the changes within the CSA. • Winter scrub clearance undertaken around long barrow, lagoon islands, unit 8 and Haven Brow as part of a scheduled programme and managing remaining areas of scrub with edging and channels to create habitats and potential new chalk grassland. • There is a requirement in the CSA to cut and reduce 2.11 hectares of scrub in specific areas by December 2026. This works is capital funded through the CSA and will be undertaken in-house with the assistance of Eastern team Ranger ‘away day’, programmed volunteer opportunities and paid contractors. • Planned, targeted grazing in 2024/25 on cut scrub area continued with livestock in units 8 & 11 			
Wetland Habitats in the Cuckmere Catchment	Working alongside partners and stakeholders to embrace natural processes in an adaptive approach to managing the	<p>To better understand the way the system in the Cuckmere Valley works.</p> <p>Working at a catchment wide scale assess the potential for adaptive management, restoring natural processes whilst enhancing protection of communities.</p>	<p>To develop and agree the best way forward with partners and stakeholders e.g. feasibility work on Chyngton Brooks and review work on the Pathfinder project.</p> <p>Assess costs and implementation timescale.</p>	<p>To realise a riparian/ intertidal system functioning with natural processes which has been co-designed and is owned by all relevant parties.</p>

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	Cuckmere Catchment		<p>To consider new potential mechanisms such as agri-environment, offsetting and natural flood management.</p> <p>To work with the Cuckmere and Pevensy Catchment Partnership and other stakeholders to communicate the way forward.</p>	
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the pandemic the Cuckmere Estuary Group (sub-group of the wider Pevensy and Cuckmere Catchment Partnership) was disbanded. Catchment-wide conversations with partners now happen through the Catchment Partnership. Further work is needed to understand the water level management of the wetland component of the Country Park, especially in light of climate change. Working in partnership with the Water Level Management Board to seek their expertise when planning the repair and restoration of the sluice gates to manage water levels in the meanders. The National Trust project at Chyngton Brooks: restoring intertidal habitats, is underway. It is currently a live planning application and is going through an EIA. Whilst the Environment Agency has pulled back from river maintenance, river mouth shingle clearance is undertaken under emergency situations. The Lagoons and Exceat sluice gates will be repaired by winter 2024. 			
Habitats: Salt Marsh areas	To increase the saltmarsh areas through allowing natural processes and link them to adjoining salt marsh creating a bigger, better more joined area of habitat	<p>Maintain existing extent of habitat and reduce the impact of disturbance on nesting/roosting birds.</p> <p>Establish a regular litter pick for plastics and work on a sustainable way of disposing of the plastics, large and small (as in nurdles).</p>	<p>Monitor the natural processes and assess the way of extending the salt marsh.</p>	<p>To expand the extent of the saltmarsh habitat, either by natural processes or through artificial means. Currently two options for achieving this:</p> <p>Non-intervention and allow a natural breach to occur.</p> <p>Managed retreat via a ‘man-made’ breach, to create two new compartments both North and South of Foxhole embankment and utilising the existing sluice to open it and allow saltwater intrusion into the lower areas. .</p>
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring impacts of tidal changes in the area to feed into wider, longer term conversations of managing salt marsh habitat. E.g. exceptional weather led to high tides and a temporary flooding of Redshank and the lagoon area from the salt marsh area in 2023/24 winter. Salt Marsh habitat is threatened by steadily rising sea levels, increasing the frequency of lowland floods. Monitoring the restoration of intertidal habitats on Chyngton Brooks will inform our approach for inland migration of salt marsh habitat. Without creating opportunities for inland migration, the current Salt marsh habitat will decrease in extent in the longer term. 			

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated a range of regular volunteer litter picking groups, alongside corporate volunteering opportunities to litter pick key areas Created a partnership with charitable organisation ReAP for regular collections of recovered plastics for recycling and reuse. Improvements to the Salt Marsh outside of the CSA, may include transplanting to extend the extent of the Salt Marsh within the timeframe of the CSA.
Habitats: Floodplain Grazing Marsh	To achieve a more naturally functioning flood plain: Restore the freshwater drainage system in North Brooks Meadow. Work with the EA and NE to manage the changing gradient of salinity as sea level rises and weather patterns change	Maintain existing extent of habitat, address the issue of poor diversity within the grassland. This is effectively split in two areas – the floodplain grazing areas adjoining the meanders, and the land compartment to the North of the A259 which has scope for habitat enhancement. Restore the ditch systems on the North Brooks Meadow (north of A259) and enhance through in-field scrapes to provide a functioning drainage system. Survey the plant species of all marginal habitats, around the water bodies.	To enhance the freshwater grazing area and the area around the meanders and increase the species diversity. Examine the potential to use active habitat management to direct visitors and reduce disturbance. To encourage key breeding bird species, look at ways to create areas that remain suitably wet into the breeding season. Identify possible small areas to be managed as traditional meadows with summer grazing excluded,	Improve the quality and extent of the habitat by creating areas of reed bed, new scrapes and re-grading the banks to create wetland ‘edge’ habitat and scallops. This would benefit wintering wildfowl and create new emergent habitat. Increase the diversity of the sward through active management.
Program of Works:				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the Farm Business Tenancy grazing agreement is in place with a local Farmer, alongside the small plot of land still held by ESCC in anticipation of the Exceat Bridge works progressing any changes to North Brooks Meadows is not yet programmed. Repaired the Redshank sluice gate in 2024/25 to improve control of water in the meanders and lagoons as part of the CSA, and the Exceat sluice gate will be restored by winter 2024. This will give greater control of the water levels in the meanders as highlighted in the wetland habitat improvement plan. Wetland Habitat species surveys were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of a wetland improvement plan for the Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) which included recommendations for additional scrapes in the meanders planned for years 1 and 2. In autumn 2024, wetland enhancement works were completed on the creation of two new scrapes and the regrading of four sections of meanders to create shallow, muddy habitats or wading birds along with the deepening two ditches to deter predators near ground nesting areas. In 2024/25 less intensive pony grazing was introduced into unit 16 to create habitats with more tussocks; using electric fences, relocation of a dog waste bin and visitor engagement messaging to raise awareness of the need for ‘Take the Lead’.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units 14 & 15 at the meanders were grazed with sheep and cows for first time this summer to reset the baseline conditions as a summer grazing concession to wider grazing plans. 			
Habitats: Saline lagoon	Manage the saline lagoon to increase its biodiversity and adapt the management as the estuary changes.	Maintain existing extent of habitat. The existing lagoon is a manmade scrape, so not listed as a SSSI feature. However, it is believed that some rare and/notable species are present. This would need to be confirmed by the survey work on the site.	Recreate the bare islands to reinstate them as nesting and roosting sites and consider creating more islands.	Improve the quality and extent of the habitat. The Islands are also valuable as nesting habitat so should be managed to maximise their potential. Clear some of the existing vegetation. Try to manage disturbance to the site, mainly as a consequence of dogs not being under proper control. Consider the use of temporary predator fencing – though this may be visually intrusive.
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species surveys were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of the Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) but are not scheduled to be repeated in 2024/25. 3 lagoon islands were cleared of scrub in winter 2023 to encourage nesting and roosting, further islands to be cleared during winter 2024. Repaired the Redshank sluice gate in 2024/25 to improve control of water as part of CSA and maintain water levels in the lagoon which provides safe ground nesting on the islands and then being able to purposefully lower levels at certain times of the year to aid migrating bird feeding opportunities. As part of the wetland restoration works a ditch at the lagoons was deepened to deter predators near ground nesting areas. 			
Habitats: Open Water	Manage the open water to improve the diversity of habitat for wildlife and allow recreational activities on the meanders and the river where they don't conflict with wildlife. Manage the meanders as	Meanders - Extend open water areas and improve edge habitat for feeding opportunities for waders and other birds – create muddy margins and areas of emergent vegetation. Using the information gathered through the Pathfinder project and observations on site draw up a plan to show how the meanders function and the use of the sluices. Assess their current condition of the sluices. Allow the wet areas around the meanders to increase, particularly shallow standing water.	Assess the potential to create more open water areas, Potential to create new dew ponds to support grazing on site. Further investigate the feasibility of reconnection of the meanders as part of a more naturally functioning system, take forward with partners as part of a wider catchment approach for the Cuckmere. Allow water entering North Brooks, notably from chalk stream from West Dean, to flow more naturally through the area creating a dynamic habitat, led by natural processes.	Implement actions to produce a more naturally functioning system, take forward as part of a wider catchment approach for the River Cuckmere. Working with neighbouring landowners to investigate the potential for introducing species such as the beaver, which can help in managing the wetland areas.

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	<p>part of the dynamic system of the Estuary, favouring natural geomorphic processes, which will be adapted as climate change impacts</p>	<p>Ponds -Survey existing ponds and carry out suitable management.</p> <p>Ditches - restore ditch system on the North Brooks Meadow (north of A259) and enhance through in-field scrapes. Restrict area used for water activities in southern part of Meanders to provide refuge from disturbance for water birds (e.g. little grebe)</p>		
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the Farm Business Tenancy grazing agreement is in place with a local farmer, alongside the small plot of land still held by ESCC in anticipation of the Exceat Bridge works progressing any changes to North Brooks Meadows is not programmed. • Perspectives vary as to if the Meanders Water system should be managed solely as a freshwater habitat (a modern picture), or closer to a historic intertidal brackish system allowing controlled tidal ingress and egress through the meanders. The Pathfinder project previously investigated this, but proposals were not implemented due to expense and clear lead organisation. The Pathfinder project has been ‘put to bed’ and an alternative has not come forward. • As part of the CSA, Natural England have very firm views about how water levels should be maintained in the meanders using rainfall and not high tides to maintain a freshwater environment, which can be in conflict with other users eg Buzz Active and site interests when water levels reduce. • Reinstated the boundary line signage on the meanders preventing watercraft proceeding into wetland areas and bird habitats. • Repaired the Redshank sluice gate in 2024/25 to improve control of water in the meanders and lagoons as part of the CSA, and the Exceat sluice gate will be restored by winter 2024. This will give greater control of the water levels in the meanders as highlighted in the wetland habitat improvement plan. • Pond species surveys were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of the Pounds 4 Ponds funding initiative prior to dew pond restoration works at New Barn and Foxhole, and a follow up Ranger survey was conducted in May 2024. A pond species third year University dissertation was also undertaken and results are awaited. • With Ponds 4 Pounds funding, the Foxhole and New Barn Dew Ponds were restored in 202. Outside of the CSA programme, a new dew pond will be created in the dry valley between the other ponds to aid habitat connectivity, making landscape permeable • Studies for flood scenarios and modelling were understood to have been undertaken as part of the planning process for the proposed Exceat Bridge expansion and will be able to inform the wider agenda in this area. 			

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Habitats: Maritime Cliff & Slope	Maintain and Interpret the geological features to the public to gain a greater understanding of how they were formed and their dynamic nature. Manage the safety of the public accessing the area	Identify the key features and any management needs. For example, if there are any exposures, geomorphology or stratigraphy that need active management to maintain them. Talk to Sussex Geodiversity Partnership – they will have access to site information on key features and could identify any that needed active management.	To ensure the features have maintenance plans and are interpreted to the public	Improve the quality and condition of the maritime coastal vegetation communities on the cliff tops.
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDNPA is a partner in the Cliff Safety Group. This group of partners works operationally with respect to cliff safety, involving emergency services and first responders, Beachy Head Chaplaincy, ESCC Public Health Team, other coastal landowners within the Sussex Heritage Coast, mental health support providers and local authorities. SDNPA has also been and continues to be a partner in relation to suicide prevention and a multi-agency approach. • Natural England conducted geological surveys in 2024 – awaiting results to inform management requirements. • Aquifer and Cliffs interpretation are part of the Visitor Centre engagement displays • During summer 2024, redirection of cliff end permissive paths were undertaken to take visitors back to the main path, due to erosion and damaged chalk grassland. 			
Habitats: Vegetated Shingle	Bring this rare and dynamic habitat back into favourable condition, increasing the species diversity, and work with the public to reduce disturbance and	Maintain existing extent of habitat. Establish a regular litter pick for plastics and work on a sustainable way of disposing of the plastics. The existing extent of vegetated shingle is small. Disturbance and trampling by visitors are the main issues. Consider excluding public from some areas to allow nesting birds including Ring Plover.	Monitor recovery of vegetated shingle from heavy trampling. Monitor Ringed Plover breeding areas. Finesse methods for minimising disturbance.	Some limited potential for expanding the extent of existing habitat. Potential mechanism to achieve this as mitigation for other development along the coast. However Natural England have objected to the area within the SSSI being used for mitigation.

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	<p>increase the opportunities for ground nesting birds</p>			
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One third of vegetated shingle was roped off in 2023/24 and extended in 2024 along with engagement signage to reduce trampling and damage to habitats. • Shelters introduced to encourage Wheat Ear and in the longer-term Ringed Plovers to nest, which will be monitored over the next 5 years. • Facilitate range of regular volunteer litter picking groups, alongside corporate volunteering opportunities to litter pick key sites • Created a partnership with charitable organisation ReAP for regular collections of recovered plastics for recycling and reuse • Species surveys were undertaken in 2023/24 as part of the Countryside Stewardship Agreement (CSA) but are not scheduled to be commissioned in 2024/25 • Informal NE training studies in the area demonstrated positive signs of nature recovery in a short period 			
<p>Shoreline</p>	<p>Work with natural processes to establish a naturally functioning estuary mouth</p>	<p>Establish monitoring that shows the changes over the past century in the estuary and plots the likely scenarios for the next half century.</p>		<p>To have an agreed a long-term landscape aim that allows the Estuary to function naturally</p>
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An objective area still to be progressed in some detail. • Following the pandemic the Cuckmere Estuary Group (sub-group of the wider Pevensey and Cuckmere Catchment Partnership) was disbanded. Catchment-wide conversations with partners now happen through the Catchment Partnership. • The National Trust project at Chyngton Brooks: restoring intertidal habitats, is underway. It is currently a live planning application and is going through an EIA. • Whilst the Environment Agency has pulled back from river maintenance, river mouth shingle clearance is undertaken under emergency situations. • Single point photo posts to be installed in 3 locations in 2024/25 to include one at the estuary to monitor changes at the river mouth 			

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Habitats: Woodland	<p>Manage the small areas of woodland to provide habitat for birds and bats and shelter for fauna.</p> <p>Maintain the total area of woodland as an important and rare feature in this landscape. Grade woodland into Scrub where possible.</p>	<p>The extent of this habitat is limited across the site, except for areas of screening around the Car Park.</p> <p>A tree assessment for all the trees across the site is required including those around all the buildings, and around the car parks.</p> <p>A heronry on the western edge of the car park (south of the A259) needs to be taken into consideration in any tree works.</p>	<p>To ensure the trees are managed to maintain safety and extend their life as important habitats.</p> <p>Investigate drone survey of heronry. As wetland habitats improve, heron and egret breeding success will be a good indication of health of wetland habitats.</p>	<p>To maintain the areas of woodland across the site in appropriate places.</p> <p>Consider development of wet (carr) woodland in North Brooks Meadow and surrounding land which is absent from landscape and very scarce habitat.</p>
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full tree assessment undertaken at the purchase of SSCP • Regular programme of 18 month seasonal rotation tree surveys undertaken, noted that some trees approaching end of life / impacted by rising water table within 5 – 10years which may provide longer term opportunities to implement changes in the north car park to improve parking efficiency and capacity. • No formal surveys of Heronry undertaken but anecdotal awareness of herons present in nesting season; however in preparation for the sewage treatment plant works ecological surveys and drone footage evidences Little Egret nesting in 2024. 			
Heritage Environment	<p>To record and conserve the Heritage assets (scheduled and significant non-scheduled) ensuring they all have management plans in place and</p>	<p>To ensure long term conservation through production of individual management plans for heritage assets, with integrated workflows for Rangers and Voluntary Rangers;</p> <p>Highlight heritage assets and points of interest on maps at the visitor centre and on the website; provide interpretation of sites and historic landscape.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop collaborative projects that address the</p>	<p>Seek to provide in depth interpretation of historic and archaeological features in an interactive way. Provide routes that take in a section of history or explore key historic environment themes in the landscape setting.</p> <p>Look at options for digital interpretation of the site.</p> <p>Move away from interpretation that focuses solely on farming and land management into the wider human history of this coastal area (i.e. Palaeolithic) – this can further support</p>	<p>Implement and deliver a plan to address complete or partial loss of heritage assets to coastal erosion and link to the wider site story on climate change and adaptation; ensure appropriate research and investigative projects are in place to mitigate loss through preservation by record;</p> <p>Plan and deliver a communications campaign to take the public on a journey of loss on change.</p> <p>Explore the opportunity for the site to be used as a data hub for the historic environment,</p>

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	to develop programming and interpretation to allow visitors to engage with the heritage of the site	loss of archaeological features and finds to rapid coastal and flood activities.	messaging around sustainability, reuse and recycling of materials, use of natural materials, seasonality etc.); Explore implementation of citizen science opportunities such as single point photography points of heritage assets / coastal change to monitor seasonal impacts and change over time.	collating habitat data from historic buildings, biodiversity data from scheduled assets and seasonal change to paint a picture of the historic environment in the context of climate and habitat (in line with current Historic England ambitions – i.e. big butterfly count data being mapped to HER data layers to understand links between habitat and historic environment).
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolving SDNPA resource capacity focuses LMP delivery to ensure that any on site interpretation opportunities include stories from the archaeology and cultural heritage as and when they arise, a slight variation to the original objectives. • SSCP Rangers to undergo training in 2024/25 for the annual monitoring and recording of Scheduled Monuments to update Historic England’s ‘Enrich the List’ • Scrub clearance, litter picking and impacts of visitor / grazing erosion around Scheduled Monuments is managed as part of the day to day on site operations and as part of the annual work programme of in the CSA. • Current on-site visitor interpretation includes maps, website and social media posts promoting points of interest and heritage assets within the park with ambitions to develop a wider interpretation offer in the future. • Events programme has included Walk the Chalk and themed talks providing engagement opportunities for heritage themes and an ambition to include walks as part of the Heritage Open Days annual event. • Accessible and Audio trails available to inform visitors and highlight heritage assets • Single point photo posts to be installed in 3 locations in 2024/25 to include two at cliff end and one on Rams Field to monitor changes in the area and encourage Citizen Science • Provided engagement opportunities and Ranger led activities to capture data via iNaturalist as Citizen Science whilst supporting annual events such as Big Butterfly Count and Big Garden Birdwatch. 			
Buildings	To sympathetically refurbish and adapt the built assets of SSCP to ensure they support the long term success and delivery of	Phase 1 is an enabling phase focused on the delivery of crucial infrastructure across the Country Park and visitor experience enhancements such as through improved public realm and facilities e.g. improving the visitor centre, grab and go facilities, internet, office space, and storage	Phase 2 is focussed on further maximising assets within the park through renovation and repurposing of physical assets within the SSCP. All Phases of work on the buildings and facilities will deliver against the climate change aspirations primarily through the	The long-term aspirations for the SSCP include: the creation of a climate change centre. Woodland play areas for children, and sustaining and improving the educational offer Working with county highways partners to solve the challenge of a new crossing of the

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	<p>the vision for the Country Park, To ensure the development and operation of the buildings within the SSCP positively contributes to the challenges of climate change-through mitigation and adaptation.</p>		<p>generation of renewable energy from the site.</p>	<p>A259</p> <p>Aim to provide renewable energy generation sources throughout the Country Park</p> <p>Help to support cultural heritage, sustainable local businesses through activities in the Country.</p> <p>To repurpose the pillboxes for biodiversity/play, while simultaneously conserving the structures</p>
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2m invested in developing Visitor Centre, Grab & Go outlet, improved toilet facilities alongside office and meeting space accommodation. • External water refill station at the Grab & Go • Pump Barn furnished with AV and meeting room equipment funded by South Downs Trust. • Restoration of Foxhole Cottages to create 3 x self-catering cottages launched in 2024 • Refurbishment of Camping Barn and construction of purpose-built facilities block for camping guests opened in April 2024. • Phased investment in energy efficient lighting and heating at Exceat and Foxhole – including air source heat pumps. • In 2024, £400k investment in sewage treatment plant to replace the reed bed and improve discharge levels and odour mitigation (funded by DEFRA) • Project to install solar panels at Exceat to improve energy efficiency timetabled for 2024 • £50k CIL funding awarded to create a wild play space between 2024 - 2026 • Installed new visitor orientation, way finder, sense of place signage and notice boards across Exceat and into the wider park. • Ongoing high level meetings with ESCC Highways re: pedestrian crossing on A259 with discussions including funding, accident recording prioritisation data and the proposed Exceat Bridge development. • £50k allocated as phase one funding to make changes to car parks to create more efficient capacity for all types of vehicles. 			
<p>Visitors and the Community</p>	<p>To increase community and visitor engagement of</p>	<p>To ensure that visitors can safely access the site and enjoy the open access, beach and cliff top walks. Develop community support for SSCP and</p>	<p>To increase the engagement of visitors with the site and encourage them to stay longer, get greater enjoyment from the site and potentially spend more.</p>	<p>Engaging people and local communities in the Country Park to ensure better understanding and appreciation of the Country Park and the long-term enjoyment of it.</p>

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	<p>the site, which appeals to a diverse range of people, and makes a positive difference to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the place.</p>	<p>encourage community science and micro volunteering. To improve the visitor facilities as part of Phase one, including better toilets, new interpretation, and retail offer. To work with the public to understand the impact of climate change on the site and the mitigation/ adaptive action that should be taken Work with visitors to develop a visitor engagement plan around access, value of the landscape and threats to the Country Park, e.g. areas sensitive to erosion by large numbers of people and to disturbance by people and dogs.</p>	<p>To ensure that the delivery of Phase 2 (New Barn and Foxhole) provide opportunities for staying visitors to learn about the biodiversity and cultural heritage of the site. Create and improve multi-user routes to connect the park to Seaford, Litlington, Birling Gap and Eastbourne. To increase community use of the site, utilising the facilities and using it as a base for learning and enjoyment. To develop experiences and volunteering opportunities which allow people to actively participate in conserving and improving the biodiversity and heritage of the Country Park. Use areas around the Country Park, e.g. the chalk grassland adjacent to concrete track for engagement where a “buzzing” meadow could be created near to where visitors enter the site.</p>	<p>Develop opportunities for staying visitors to actively participate in biodiversity and cultural heritage learning opportunities. Work with the South Downs Trust to develop opportunities for the visitor giving scheme to be included in holiday accommodation payment (ring fencing funds back into biodiversity & landscape management projects)</p>
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a visitor hub at Exceat with improved and accessible (including changing places) toilets, refreshment and visitor facilities • Introduced temporary seating and deckchairs in the visitor courtyard to encourage dwell time and engagement • Stock ranges in the Visitor Centre and Grab & Go includes a high percentage of South Downs / locally sourced produce to support the local economy and sense of place • Waymarked and promoted a 5-mile country park trail around SSCP • First phase SDNP and climate change interpretation in the Visitor Centre • Developing an annual programme of in house and private hire events to encourage seasonal visits, community engagement and income generation supporting landscape, history and visitor engagement themes • Promoting Pump Barn & Turkey Barn as spaces for hire to encourage community, education and events patronage • Promoting SSCP as a location for short breaks as car free, immersive South Downs experience with own accommodation offer • Reopening the Shepherd Hut in 2024 as a visitor engagement tool to link the asset to managing the landscape 			

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Access	<p>To ensure safe, inspiring, and sustainable access to and around the site, linking to the wider Heritage Coast and surrounding landscapes, following the principle of least restrictive access.</p> <p>To ensure access is provided with minimal disturbance to wildlife and to minimise detrimental effects on conservation.</p>	<p>Formalise and rationalise the existing access provisions</p> <p>Develop a travel plan for the SSCP and assess the best main routes around the site to avoid sensitive areas e.g. the vegetative shingle.</p> <p>Develop a plan to ensure any site used to access water causes as little damage and disturbance as possible.</p> <p>Work to create a safer crossing of the A259</p> <p>To create at least one ‘access for all’ route.</p>	<p>Create new circular routes to give visitors a different experience of the Country Park.</p> <p>Increase the access offer at SSCP to broaden the appeal to a wider variety of user groups, especially underrepresented groups, families, and groups with physical and mental impairments.</p> <p>Plan viewing points and routes through sensitive habitats to guide movement of visitors.</p>	<p>To encourage as many people as possible to arrive by means other than private cars as part of the aim to achieve a carbon neutral position for the Country Park</p> <p>To reduce pressure on sensitive areas and allow people to walk where they want safely and without causing damage</p> <p>To ensure that people of all abilities can access at least part of the site, such as mobility scooter access.</p>

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
<p>Program of Works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainable transport methods via website and social media channels to reduce car use. • SDNPA partially funded the ‘Arts Shuttle’ bus partnership between Towner and Charleston, stopping at SSCP during 2023 – 2025 • Provided a bike maintenance station (tools and pump) at Exceat • Provision of 6 seater buggy to facilitate group trips to Foxhole • 2 x bookable off road mobility scooters to encourage access to the countryside for visitors with impaired mobility – free, but suggested donation for each use • Installed new benches, including those with arms, along the concrete path to provide frequent rest stops whilst accessing the park • Stile replaced with a gate on the Country Park Trail and internal fences removed to increase accessibility across open access land. • New pedestrian gates and fencing at Haven Brow along the South Downs Way to support access and also support seasonal grazing. • Replacement of further pedestrian gates to improve access across the park proposed in 2024/5 subject to funding availability • Programme of updating gates and stiles to improve access in partnerships with SDNPA and SDW officers • Miles without stiles accessible route along the concrete path available to download from website and visitor centre • Work with SDNPA Education team to support outreach activities with groups providing access to the countryside for underrepresented groups / communities • Waymarked and promoted a 5-mile circular country park trail around SSCP • From April 2024, provide an affordable camping option to attract schools, Duke of Edinburgh and outreach education groups to provide overnight educational countryside experiences for hard-to-reach young people, facilitating litter picks / rangers talks as required • Work with SDNPA and partners to host access activities for underrepresented groups eg Active Inclusion: Muslim Hiker groups • Funded onsite partners Cuckmere Cycle Company and Buzz Active to provide accessible cycle and watersports equipment to encourage access for visitors with mental or physical barriers • Cuckmere Audio Trail and Miles without Stiles walk available for visitors unable to access all the park (also available on Youtube) • Changing Places Toilet and level access to public spaces, buildings and facilities where possible • Four accessible picnic benches to be installed during 2024/25 at Foxhole dew pond and by the river in the south car park 			
<p>Ecosystem Services- Natural Capital</p>	<p>Demonstrate how taking an ecosystem-based approach can deliver greater environmental, social and economic value</p>	<p>Develop a natural capital account of the site as the baseline working with a university.</p> <p>Identify the best carbon storage options for the SSCP that provide the widest range of ecosystem service benefits.</p> <p>Enhance the capacity for carbon storage and sequestration at landscape scale.</p>	<p>Develop a way of interpreting this to the public.</p> <p>Build on the plan to increase ecosystem services and develop it further to include a wider range of services.</p> <p>Improve ecosystem Services function using SSCP as a catalyst.</p>	<p>To use the Natural Capital account along with social and economic capital to show the benefit of management-</p> <p>Become a demonstrator for the public and science</p>

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
	<p>for the site working at a landscape and catchment scale. Deliver environmental outcomes, allow for climate change adaptation and improve ecosystem service benefits Target project funding and environmental grant funding towards measures that increase resilience to a changing climate, support biodiversity and provide wider ecosystem service benefits.</p>	<p>To establish a plan to increase the ecosystem services.</p>		

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An objective area to be progressed with wider SDNPA Climate Action colleagues, now site initial site investment has been completed and the Countryside Stewardship Agreement agreed. • Working with Climate Action & Nature Recovery colleagues to ensure SSCP Nature Recovery highlights are included in quarterly report. 			
Climate Change	To establish SSCP as an exemplar for climate change adaptation and resilience and demonstrate how nature-based solutions can help develop resilience to climate change and achieve net zero at landscape scale	<p>Develop a research agenda and links with national level research bodies to increase our understanding of climate change and its impacts on priority habitats and species in the SSCP.</p> <p>In partnership develop the narrative and interpretation around climate change and its impact on the Sussex Heritage Coast and wider South Downs landscape and communities.</p> <p>Better communicate how changes in land use as a result of climate changes might affect the landscape character/visual appearance of SSCP and the wider landscape</p>	Develop a plan of action with partners including academia	Demonstrate good practice in adapting to climate change and interpret that to the Public.

SSCP Objectives	Overarching Objective	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Program of Works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An objective area to be further progressed with wider SDNPA Climate Action colleagues, now site initial site investment has been completed and the Countryside Stewardship Agreement agreed. • Outcomes from Countryside Stewardship programme and wider nature recovery actions will inform this area of work. • Ranger organised and led 4 x 'Climate Action Cuckmere' tours in 2023, to increase awareness around the impact of climate change on this landscape and the wider environment. • SSCP is proposed to be part of the emerging Natural England proposal for the Super National Nature Reserve (SNNR) which will include all Heritage Coastal partners 			