

Report to	<b>South Downs National Park Governance Committee</b>
Date	<b>18 September 2014</b>
By	<b>Performance &amp; Project Manager</b>
Title of Report	<b>Project Evaluation Report</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To present evaluations of three projects for Members to consider</b>

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**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to**

- 1) Note the project evaluations**
  - 2) Agree if it wishes to make recommendations to officers as a result of the learning from the evaluations**
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report presents a number of project evaluations for consideration by the Governance Committee. The Committee is asked to consider the evaluation reports and identify any recommendations it may wish to make as a result of the learning points and themes highlighted.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 As part of the review of performance reporting, the Governance Committee now receives evaluation reports on completed projects. This process allows the opportunity to learn from the projects that have been carried out to date. It allows lessons learnt to be applied across the organisation, helps to improve the way we develop and manage projects in the future, as well as potentially informing policy and the future approach to similar or related areas of work.
- 2.2 There are three evaluations attached to this report. They are for Our South Downs, Rother Valley Schools and The Travel Grant Scheme. There will be a presentation by the lead officer for the Our South Downs Project.

**3. Project Evaluations**

- 3.1 The Our South Downs Project ran from 25 January 2012 to 31 March 2014 with a total budget of £228,520; total SDNPA funding was £ 177,367. The project was created by the SDNPA in partnership with Learning through Landscapes (LTL) to deliver an innovative approach to outdoor learning provision across the National Park. Key outcomes from the project were the establishment of Our South Downs as a successful brand for learning outside the classroom and the level of engagement achieved. The evaluation report is at **Appendix I**.
- 3.2 Rother Valley Forest Schools ran from March 2013 to March 2014 with a total budget of £35,750; total SDNPA funding was £20,750. The project was set up to consolidate the Forest Schools network developing across the Rother Valley Cluster by increasing the number of qualified teachers and support staff able to deliver this approach to outdoor learning in addition to cascading the learning through training the trainer. There are now 45 trained Forest Schools leaders and all 16 Head teachers in the Rother Valley Cluster now have Forest Schools in the improvement plans for their schools. 1,800 children now have

sustained access to learning experiences outside the classroom as part of the curriculum. The evaluation report is at **Appendix 2**.

- 3.3 The Travel Grant Scheme was launched in June 2013; it was aimed specifically at schools within the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas nationally. The South Downs National Park Schools Travel Grant Scheme provides a subsidy for the cost of travel by coach or hired minibus from these schools to the outdoor education providers participating in the Our South Downs project. The total project cost was £20,000, which was funded in full by SDNPA. The project enabled 3,492 students in 58 groups, who may not otherwise have had the opportunity, to visit 28 different learning outside the classroom providers during the year. The evaluation report is at **Appendix 3**.

#### **4. Key learning points**

- 4.1 The key learning points identified from the projects are ascribed to 5 main themes; communication, resources, development, project governance and sustainability. Effective and targeted communication, using a variety of methods, to the intended audience is key to the success of getting the appropriate level of 'buy-in' from the right partners at the right time, in addition to ensuring the sustainability of the activities after the initial funding.
- 4.2 Best practice highlights the importance of the need to fully consider the resource implications of a project as an integral element of the project planning phase; the detail of which must be accurately recorded in the Project Initiation Document (PID). Furthermore it is crucial that the relevant personnel across the organisation are fully consulted at this time. Efficient and effective allocation of resources will contribute to the smooth running of the project.
- 4.3 Building in a scoping exercise as part of the development of the Expression of Interest (EOI) document will lead to a better informed PID making sure that activities meet the need identified and have the desired impact; thereby avoiding the need for alterations to key outputs/outcomes during the life cycle of the project and inefficient use of resource. Any ongoing requirements for funding after the end of a project should be identified as the project is developed.
- 4.4 Establishing robust project governance arrangements at the outset of any major project will provide a management framework for the project where roles, responsibilities and decision-making capabilities are clearly defined and understood. A robust project board will effectively monitor project performance. It will have the authority to make timely decisions, informed by data analysis and feedback from target audiences, to mitigate risk and ensure the smooth running of the project. It is however that not all projects will be of a sufficient size to warrant a discrete project board.
- 4.5 The practice of cascading knowledge and skills through-out the professional and community networks will ensure the sustainability of project activities after the initial funding. This can be achieved by the establishment of peer support networks and the commitment of 'training the trainers.'
- 4.6 The Performance and Project Team will work collaboratively with relevant staff to embed the learning from closed projects into future projects. Various mechanisms for doing this are being considered. Learning will be fed through into guidance and tools to help project leads in future. Learning will also be fed into discussions that Performance and Project Team staff have with project leads when they are developing their projects.
- 4.7 In addition, an internal group is being set up to promote learning and improvement. The inaugural meeting of the SDNPA Performance, Learning and Improvement Group is on the 15 October 2014. The overarching purpose of the group is to facilitate collaboration across directorates to generate and assimilate best practice and learning to ensure the Authority is performing well. The group will facilitate the 'reflect/understand' and 'learning' elements of the performance system as detailed in the Performance Management Framework. Other mechanisms such as internal workshops will be considered and developed to support learning and improvement.

## **5. Resources**

- 5.1 There are no direct implications as a result of this report but it is possible that where learning or improvement is recommended, that some resources might be needed to implement those recommendations. Following completion of the projects further ongoing funding may be required to enable the impact to be fully realised. This may give rise to budget proposals coming forward in future years. Where possible such sustainability issues will be more fully addressed in the development stages of the projects.

## **6. Risk management**

- 6.1 The risks for the individual projects were monitored using a risk register for each one. The risks of not learning are that the SDNPA does not make the best use of its resources or repeats mistakes in future which could have been avoided.

## **7. Human Rights, Equalities, Health and Safety**

- 7.1 There are no implications arising from this report

## **8. Sustainability**

- 8.1 Learning from projects contributes to Sustainability Principle 2, Ensuring a Strong Healthy and Just Society – considering social cohesion and wellbeing; Principle 3 Achieving a Sustainable Economy – considering impacts on or contribution to a sustainable economy; and Principle 4 Promoting Good Governance – considering how to encourage active participation.
- 8.2 Other sustainability issues relate to the impacts of the projects themselves. The Our South Downs Project has highlighted the ongoing staff resource required to support this work going forward. The Rother Valley Schools project will be self sustaining after the project to initiate it has been completed. The Travel Grant scheme may potentially be the subject of a budget bid for 2015-16 as the initial pilot has proved successful.

## **9. External Consultees**

- 9.1 None.

### **ANNE REHILL**

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Appendices  
1 – Evaluation report for Our South Downs  
2 – Evaluation report for Rother Valley Schools  
3 – Evaluation report for Travel Grant Scheme

SDNPA Consultees  
Head of Finance BHCC, Internal Audit Manager, Monitoring Officer, Legal Services, Chief Executive Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Director of Planning, Director of Operations.

## Evaluation Report of Our South Downs project

### What were the project successes?

One of the important successes of this project was the establishment of Our South Downs as a 'learning outside the classroom' brand. Tony Thomas, Chief Executive of the Field Studies Council, cited the project as the "best outdoor learning project in any national park" and indeed this approach has been unique amongst national parks. The Our South Downs approach has also influenced the development of the national initiative, Natural Connections, which modeled its engagement map on the Our South Downs learning map.

#### Approach:

A key success was the flexible and adaptive approach taken to developing initiatives within the project framework. This was based on audit evidence and ongoing project evaluations and rooted in evidence from the target audiences. This flexible approach meant that we were able to adapt and target specific areas as they became topical for schools within the project, e.g. the launch of the new Primary Curriculum and associated focus on learning outcomes.

#### Engagement:

The landscape scale approach to Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) adopted in this project ensured that there were cross curricula engagement opportunities for a huge number of schools within the project area.

A key measure of success is that 48% of schools inside the National Park boundary are now actively engaged with the SDNP. Within 5km of the boundary this figure is 31% and within 10km it is 9%. This equates to a total of over 280 schools out of the 843 in the project area, many of which have engaged in several ways throughout the project period.

#### Communication:

This was an essential part of the success of the project and the specific activities that were developed to do this are listed below:

- Annual Our South Downs conference was held in March 2013 and 2014. This was very well supported by providers and teachers with an attendance of over 100 in 2013 and 120 in 2014 including teachers, student teachers and outdoor learning providers. There was very positive feedback from both events with a call for this to become an annual event.
- Nine case-studies of excellent LOtC by project schools and providers were produced and hosted on the Learning Zone to share best practice with other schools and to motivate and inspire them to follow suit.
- Provider and teacher specific newsletters were produced and circulated termly to communicate specific aspects of the project and to share project partners' opportunities and work as appropriate.
- LOtC network group meetings held for two consecutive years: 3 meetings were held in autumn 2012 and autumn 2013. These meetings were well attended with 42 outdoor learning providers attending in 2012 and 53 in 2013.

#### South Downs Curriculum:

With the new Primary Curriculum coming into force in September 2014 the establishment of the South Downs Curriculum was timely and well received. This document takes the statutory framework of the National Curriculum and includes links and tags to learning opportunities, resources, schemes of work and activities within the South Downs National Park. This completely cross-curricular approach covers all subject areas and provides the locally, real-life learning that

brings the curriculum to life and develops students understanding about what makes the SDNP special.

Creating a well received web-platform for hosting project resources:

1. Learning Zone: Hosted on the main National Park website the Learning Zone is a portal for accessing all learning materials and resources about the South Downs National Park. It is an interactive site with links and widgets to bring it alive. The Learning Zone is populated by SDNPA, outdoor learning providers and schools. There are currently 72 live pages on a range of themes and topic areas and the site has received over 10,700 unique visits since its launch in June 2013.
2. Interactive Learning Map: This resource provides a direct link for LOtC providers operating within the SDNP to connect with potential audiences. It has been extremely well received by the providers on the Our South Downs (OSD) network and currently has 79 live sites. Users are able to filter visit options according to their group and topic requirements and can select options with specific accessibility and facilities. There have been 772 unique visits since the map was launched in September 2013.

#### Specific themed projects:

The two separate sub-projects within Our South Downs that looked to actively engage schools with clear end points were particularly successful. This approach ensured schools interest was maintained and allowed for deeper engagement within these topic areas:

1. Our South Downs Schools Art Exhibition: engaged 45 schools across East Sussex, West Sussex and Hampshire in using inspirational pieces of artwork as a stimulus to create their own pieces of art reflecting their perception of the South Downs. The schools received teacher training (attended by 52 schools) and over 2,500 students took part in this exhibition which was hosted at the Towner Gallery, Eastbourne from 2nd May to 8th June 2014.
2. Saxons in the Meon Valley project: 7 schools across the Meon valley were involved in this project to develop school curriculum resources based on the findings of the Saxons in the Meon valley project. This work connected the South Downs Curriculum with the Hampshire Inspector and Advisory Service (HIA/S) for History and RE and is producing resources that will be widely shared and used by schools seeking innovative ways to deliver the new History curriculum in September 2014. A new page has been created on the Learning Zone to showcase these resources.

#### **What factors helped in the achievement of this success?**

- Partnership with Learning through Landscapes with their expertise and track record in connecting with schools on outdoor learning projects. They provided complementary skills in experience of engaging with outdoor sectors, organising events and running educational focused projects
- Engaging with the right level of partners to deliver specific aspects of the project e.g. working with Towner Gallery with their existing school connections and structures to enable the our South Downs Art Exhibition to be such a success
- Staff time allocated to working on the project as a priority for delivery throughout the project period
- Regular and effective communication with schools and providers
- Buy-in from County Outdoor Education Advisors assisted in communicating with relevant teachers in schools e.g. through the Education Visits Coordinator route that they administer
- Surprisingly high levels of commitment from LOtC providers and ongoing desire to be actively engaged in the project
- Steering group that directed focus and helped to make strategic decisions in light of growing evidence from project
- Funding to develop the project infrastructure that allowed the cascading approach to be so successful

### **Were there any unintended outcomes, desirable or undesirable?**

The two thematic projects were opportunistic results of the networking and coordination of LOtC clusters. This enabled us to target specific curriculum areas and to work with other partner organisations to capitalise on the messages being disseminated through Our South Downs. At the start of the project we had not anticipated the importance and value that these LOtC clusters would bring.

The cross-curricular focus came out after the start of the project, following the audit results. This initial audit steered the evolution of the project and led to more learning focused resources and activities as a result.

### **Were there any variations from the activities/processes that were initially proposed? If so, why were these variations implemented?**

Focus changed from looking at students' biodiversity identification skills and biodiversity in school grounds to be a more holistic approach to embedding outdoor learning across curriculum areas in line with emerging national policy and programmes.

The web-based audit tool therefore changed to be a 'portal' of Learning for the National Park in the form of the Learning Zone and interactive Learning Map.

We ran a repeat of the 2012 conference in 2013 as a direct result of feedback and praise from the first conference. This had not been planned originally.

### **What factors hindered the achievement of the outcomes?**

Ensuring the communication got through to the right person in schools remains a considerable challenge. This is being tackled through the specific project communication via a newsletter that can be subscribed to.

### **How could you have improved the project?**

More time at the start of the project understanding the needs of the school audiences. The audit was completed as one of the first activities but this could have been done as a piece of pre-project research to guide the development of the original PID.

The project would also have benefited from continuing for an additional year to embed the resources created through the project and continue to link schools to these. The funded period finished as the infrastructure was completed enabling us to take over the maintenance of this within our existing team. In hindsight we should have allowed more time for 'bedding-in' once the establishment was complete using the additional staff resources to increase and maintain pick up by school audiences, i.e. spend longer on the consolidation phase.

This work will now be undertaken in house but without any significant budget to accompany the officer time involved in doing this.

### **What lessons have been learned from this project and how might these be of assistance to other projects?**

- Have desk space available in-house to ensure closer working with project partners. This worked effectively for the second half of the project but we could have initiated this from the start.
- Be bold in changing project direction as a result of feedback from target audiences.
- Allow more time for scoping stage before finalising PID to make sure you achieve what the audience wants.

## Annex I: Our South Downs project evaluation by PID targets

Outcome target	Achieved
75,000 children will have an improved understanding of the South Downs and be able to describe why it is special	<p>Multiplier of teachers engaged with by primary and secondary numbers = <b>59,010</b> (150 secondary x 90 students + 1,517 primary x 30 students)</p> <p><b>2,500</b> directly through school art exhibition</p> <p><b>6,390</b> directly through Travel Grant</p> <p><b>5,000</b> directly through Connect events</p> <p><b>1,000</b> directly through Big Bang events</p> <p><b>Total = 73,900</b></p>
<del>Up to 30,000 children will have developed new data collection skills and learnt about species identification methods relevant to species in their locality</del>	Removed target as priority changed from biodiversity investigation to a more holistic approach to learning outdoors
1,500 teachers will report improved confidence in teaching using the Special Qualities of the Park and outdoors and will have embedded it in their teaching practice	<p>205 Teachers attended OSD conferences in 2013 and 2014, cascading to departments = <b>820</b></p> <p><b>100</b> teachers completed audit on special qualities</p> <p>52 schools attending twilight training session through Schools Art Exhibition – multiplier by school participation and department work = <b>208</b> teachers</p> <p>7 Meon Valley schools = <b>28</b> teachers</p> <p>Specific curriculum sessions with school staff at 23 schools = <b>166</b> teachers</p> <p>Rother Valley Schools = <b>45</b> teachers</p> <p>Connect events = <b>40</b> teachers</p> <p>Big Bang events = <b>20</b> teachers</p> <p>SEGFL South Downs curriculum input to 60 teachers – cascading to science departments = <b>240</b> teachers</p> <p><b>Total = 1,667</b></p>
<del>300 schools will report increased levels of biodiversity in their school grounds</del>	Removed target as priority changed from biodiversity investigation to a more holistic approach through learning outdoors. However, <b>280</b> schools have been actively engaged in the project since its launch.
25 providers of outdoor education and activities will be able to make strong and sustainable links between their provision and the Special Qualities of the park to support schools and learners	Over <b>65</b> providers now on line on the interactive learning map. Cluster group meetings in 2013 were attended by 53 delegates from 42 outdoor learning providers.
At least 250 new learning experiences will be arranged between schools and local LOtC providers	<p>Travel Grant has enabled 6,390 students from <b>95</b> groups to visit outdoor learning providers within the South Downs National Park</p> <p>Partnership sessions developed with Sussex Wildlife Trust at Seven Sisters Country Park, Arundel WWT and Walking Tours, and Gilbert White Study Centre = <b>10</b> sessions</p> <p><b>40</b> new learning experiences through art exhibition</p> <p>Learning map booking conversion rate not available but 772 unique visits since the map was launched in September 2013.</p> <p><b>Total = 145</b> known, plus learning map bookings</p>

**Annex 2: Allocation of spend over the 2.5 year project period. These costs include staff time and capital expenditure.**

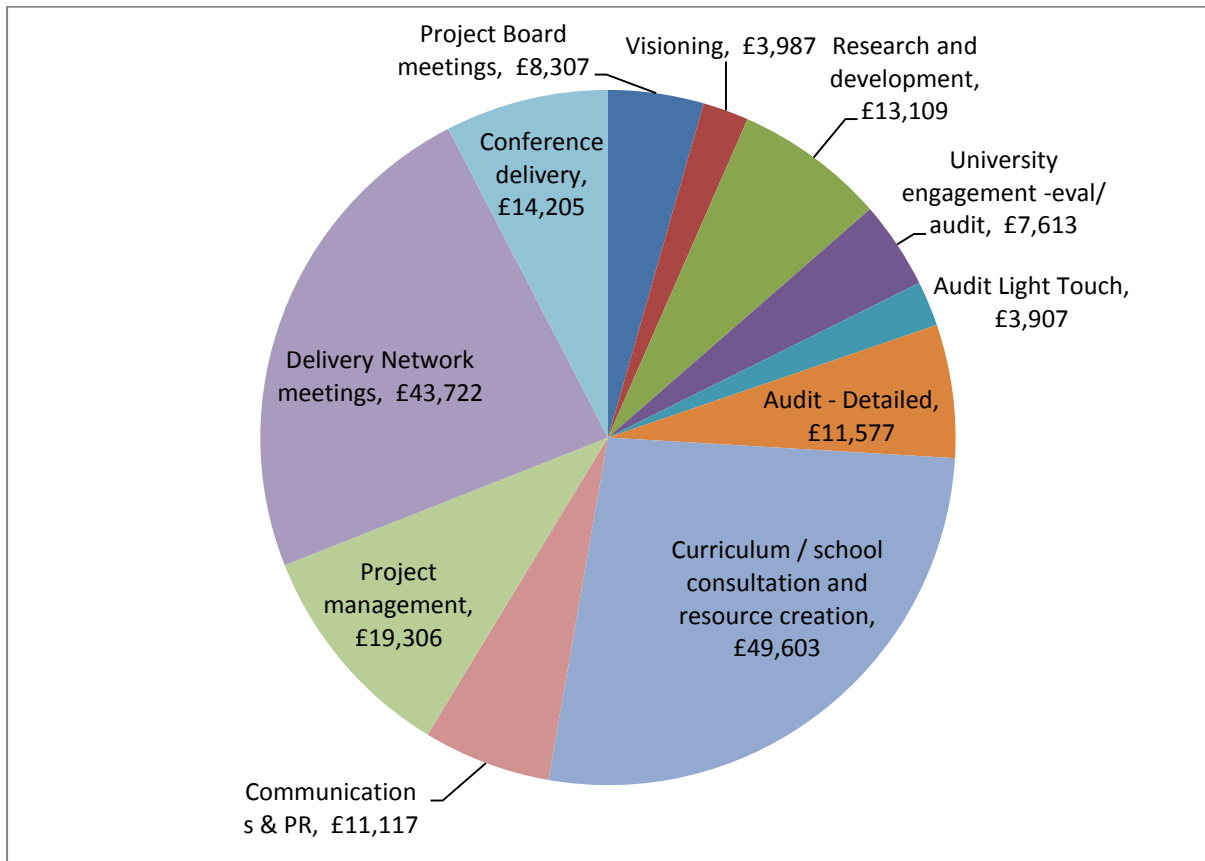
Total project cost: **£228,520.93**

Total SDNPA grant claimed: **£186,453** - £177,353 + £9,100 additional time from RS-R

Total in-kind contributions: **£42,067.93**

Final SDNPA % contribution: **81.59%**

**Total spend in pie-chart: £186,931**





## **Evaluation Report of Rother Valley Forest Schools project**

### **What were the project successes?**

There are now 45 trained Forest School leaders working across the 16 primary schools in the Rother Valley. This equates to 1,800 children having access to sustained outdoor learning experiences as an integrated part of their school curriculum.

All 16 Headteachers from the 16 primary Rother Valley Schools have Forest School as a major part of their School Improvement Plans on an annual basis. They are working particularly to ensure that provision is inclusive and supports all children from every background, academic ability and culture.

All 16 schools run Forest Schools on a weekly basis, most within their school grounds and some within local pieces of woodland with the landowners' permission.

In total 16 support staff have been trained in Level 1 and Level 2 which means they can support the Forest School leaders to a higher standard as their skills involve fire and tool use.

Schools are now valuing this training to the extent that they are making financial contributions for additional staff within the schools to achieve Level 1 or 3 training to support the existing funded cohorts.

### **What factors helped in the achievement of this success?**

- The enthusiasm and drive of one Headteacher within the cluster, Helen Martin of Graffham and Duncton School, who was able, through her Headteacher contacts, to inspire other heads to participate and see the value of this approach
- The substantial evidence base that demonstrates the value of Forest School programmes in pupils social, emotional and academic development – powerful tool to convince Headteachers to adopt this approach
- Cluster wide involvement, adding resilience to the model and creating a breadth of support for individual leaders

### **Were there any unintended outcomes, desirable or undesirable?**

The Headteacher of Graffham and Duncton schools has given a lecture at the Geographical Association National Geography conference in 2013 to showcase the Rother Valley approach and to demonstrate the benefits of incorporating Forest schools into the curriculum. This has placed the Rother Valley model in a national stage and has actively promotes the great work taking place in this cluster. Petworth area schools now hold an annual summer Forest Schools day for Year 5 and 6 to bring together children from across the locality, boosting the sense of community that this project has created across the Rother Valley.

### **Were there any variations from the activities/processes that were initially proposed? If so, why were these variations implemented?**

Six additional CPD days were held throughout the year which did not feature in the original project plan. This was a result of demand from the schools and their willingness to pay for this training once they had seen the value of this approach. A Rother Valley Forest Schools online network has been established with leaders across the locality sharing information and tips amongst themselves.

There has been considerable interest from schools outside the locality and staff from these schools are charged full price to take part in the training making this financially possible. Schools who had taken part in the first cohort of training were charged subsidised amounts to put additional staff through ensuring that all schools had fair access to training and those that wanted additional staff trained met the additional costs of this making it viable and promoting sustainability within the schools.

**What factors hindered the achievement of the outcomes?**

There were no issues identified in delivering this project thanks to the support and commitment of all 16 Headteachers across the Rother Valley.

**How could you have improved the project?**

This project went exactly to plan and the outcomes were met as hoped. I would suggest we could improve it by rolling it out to other localities to cascade the learning further. This is already underway with teachers from outside the Rother Valley participating in the training and growing network of Forest Schools across the SDNP.

**What lessons have been learned from this project and how might these be of assistance to other projects?**

- The importance of getting the buy-in of Headteachers within the target schools and to ensure activities are highlighted within each School Improvement Plan to maintain momentum after initial funding
- Skilling up staff from within the locality to become Train the Trainers has allowed for more cost-effective training and sustainability in the future
- The value of establishing a peer support network that maintains professional development after the funding end
- The effectiveness of this model is currently being shared with the Hampshire and Sussex Wildlife Trusts, both of which run extensive Forest schools programmes. The plan is to use the school focused approach and lessons learned to direct their contacts with schools in future Forest School training.

**Annex 1: Rother Valley Forest Schools project evaluation by PID targets**

PID Milestone description	Timescale	Evaluation
Feb 2013 The modular training of the <b>Cohort 2 Level 3</b> Forest School Leaders course will be initiated. This will take place near Duncton, West Sussex. During this time, the trainees will be completing essays to A level standard to improve their knowledge of woodland, forest school principals and sustainability. This will include a Wilderness First Aid qualification.	This training continues for 2 days a month until July 2013; a total of 10 days training.	14 members of staff from the Rother Valley Schools were trained. This included 3 new schools who had not started Forest Schools before that time
June /July 2013- <b>Cohort 1 Level 3</b> will complete CPD training to raise their skills, through training with Jon Cree and Helen Martin. These improved skills will be used straight away in their forest school sessions.	July 2013	Cohort 1 level 3 successfully passed their course and are now experienced members of the Forest Schools team. They regularly attend CPD days planned in the locality
Summer term 2013- <b>Cohort 1 Level 1</b> training will commence for 2 days. This is a basic qualification which will lead to these members of staff being able to support the Leader more ably in the forest. They have to complete 3 essays to gain the Level 1 qualification.	July 2013	16 parent helpers and teaching assistants passed their level 1 training enabling all schools in the locality to have an experienced member of support staff in the forest
Autumn term 2013- the <b>Cohort 2 Level 3</b> leaders will start their forest school practice. They will take a group of 15-20 children from each school out to their local woodland. (This will be new for 3 schools). They will be assessed by Helen or Jon at the end of their 6 week block. After this time, if they pass their Delivery Assessment Module, they are able to continue to take their forest school groups out regularly.	November 2013	All staff passed the assessment and are now taking children out on a weekly basis
Autumn term 2013- <b>Cohort 2 Level 1</b> training will commence for 2 days. This is a basic qualification which will lead to these members of staff being able to support the Leader more ably in the forest. They have to complete 3 essays to gain the Level 1 qualification.	November 2013	This was not deemed necessary by the schools so was changed to be a Level 2 course which was held in April 2014
December 2013- <b>Cohort 2 Level 3</b> will complete their training and on successful completion of their Forest School Handbook and essays, will be qualified to take Forest School groups.	The assignments/ essays will be moderated in Feb 2014 and the trainees notified as to their success on the qualification.	All staff passed the assessment and are now taking children out on a weekly basis
All Cohorts will be in regular communication with Helen Martin, will meet informally and be in e mail contact. Regular support meetings will take place to support all trainees from each cohort and level. They are able to e mail any concerns at any time.	Ongoing	Training days are now regularly scheduled so that all forest school leaders are keeping their skills updated. Forest School online network established to aid communication and sharing of ideas and information

## **Evaluation Report of the Travel Grant Scheme**

### **What were the project successes?**

In June 2013 we launched a new grant scheme for the SDNPA aimed specifically at schools within the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas nationally. The South Downs National Park Schools Travel Grant Scheme provides a subsidy for the cost of travel by coach or hired minibus from these schools to the outdoor education providers participating in the Our South Downs project.

Evidence gathered through the State of the Park Report and the Schools Audit conducted through the Our South Downs project has identified that the key barrier to schools accessing outdoor learning opportunities within the National Park is the cost of travel to sites (62% of all teachers surveyed cited this as the key barrier preventing visits).

This scheme worked to reduce this barrier and encourage more young people to have access to the fantastic opportunities for outdoor learning provided within the South Downs National Park, and to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the developing South Downs Curriculum.

The scheme has two aims:

1. To encourage groups of children and young people to access outdoor learning opportunities within the South Downs National Park that otherwise may not be able to do so; and
2. To support outdoor teaching providers within the Our South Downs project to broaden their client base and attract new audiences, especially during the shoulder and low season.

There are currently 231 eligible schools and over 65 eligible learning providers.

### **2013 – 2014 – budget of £20,000**

This enabled 3,492 students from 58 groups to visit 28 different Learning Outside the Classroom providers over the course of the grant year who otherwise may not have had the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the SDNP. Annex 1 breaks down the visits by Provider destination and age of students. Annex 2 maps the take up of the grant by geographical area.

Quotes from schools that took advantage of the Grant:

*Bevendean Primary School*

“The Travel Grant Scheme made an enormous difference as the trip would not have gone ahead without it.”

*White House Primary School*

“Without the grant we would not have been able to run this trip. Many of our families are on benefits and would not have been able to afford the extra £10 to cover the coach cost.”

### **What factors helped in the achievement of this success?**

- Direct communication with target schools using both email and telephone calls to promote and launch the grant.
- Establishing a specific Travel Grant page on the website with all the information, application forms and evaluations needed to apply for a grant. This page was updated regularly to notify schools of grant uptake and has provided a really good location to signpost eligible schools to.
- Working with the Outdoor Education Advisors in Hampshire and East and West Sussex who all actively supported this scheme, advertising it directly with their school contacts and circulating information in their newsletters and websites.
- Targeting Brighton and Hove schools directly by working with Brighton and Hove Environmental Education (BHEE) who deliver Environmental Education to all Brighton and Hove

schools through a contract awarded to the Sussex Wildlife Trust. BHEE used their newsletters and active calls to schools to promote this grant.

**Were there any unintended outcomes, desirable or undesirable?**

No.

**Were there any variations from the activities/processes that were initially proposed? If so, why were these variations implemented?**

Some Travel Grant money was allocated to support the schools participating in the Our South Downs Art Exhibition to enable schools from slightly outside the original grant area to participate in the outreach elements of the project. This widened participation on this art exhibition work and engaged schools that otherwise would not have had the opportunity or incentive to visit the SDNP.

**What factors hindered the achievement of the outcomes?**

The fact that the Travel Grant runs on a financial year basis and schools operate on an academic year basis. This means we are not able to confirm funding for the grant until after April when schools are already planning, or have already planned, their curriculum content for the summer term. This grant would be more effective, more user-friendly and much easier to administer if funding was agreed over a longer period so applications could be taken on a rolling basis.

**How could you have improved the project?**

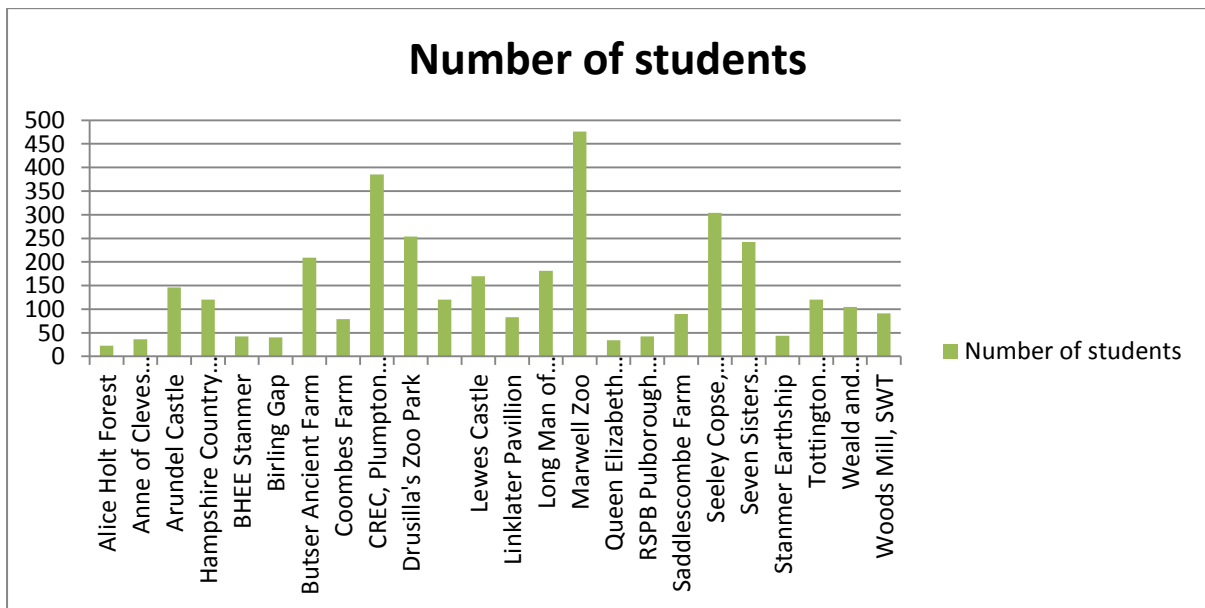
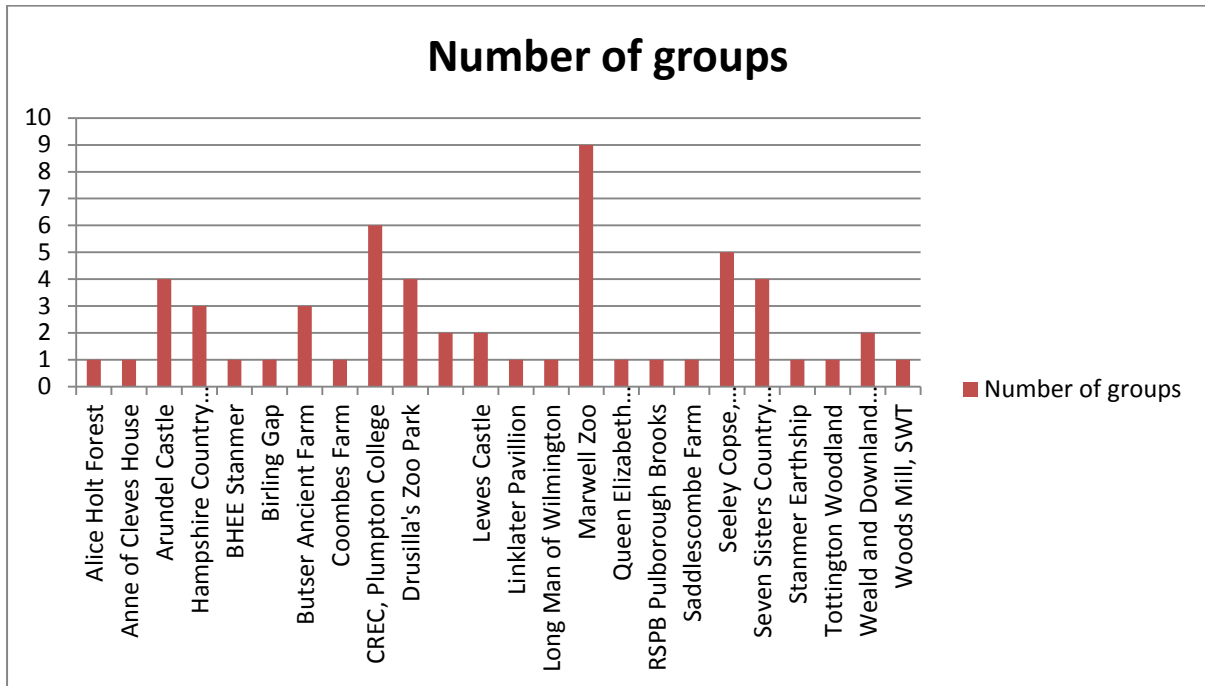
It would have been improved with earlier notice of viability of the grant through confirmation of funding as described above.

We are also looking into refining the eligibility criteria to include other key urban areas such as Horsham and Crawley, and to update the eligibility scores based on new GIS data that is now available.

**What lessons have been learned from this project and how might these be of assistance to other projects?**

- Effective and targeted communication to the intended audience is key
- Planning admin requirements in advance and establishing tight systems to administer the grant
- Creating an email alias to enable multiple officers to monitor the grant inbox and structuring a system to ensure officers are aware of the status of all applications
- Careful recording and monitoring of the grant
- The need to establish transparent and clear criteria for eligibility that stands up to scrutiny – we used quantitative data through GIS records of Indices of Multiple Deprivation by school catchment area to ensure the grant was targeted to those most in need

**Annex I Travel Grant Scheme 2013-14 analysis by provider destination**



## Annex 2 Map of Participating Schools

