THE PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

3.64   Potential actions for the strategic principles which emerged during the evaluation of the evidence.

1. MAKE STRONG CONNECTIONS

The need for better connections crosses many themes – biodiversity networks and sustainable transport, as well as planning and delivering green infrastructure across boundaries and across sectors.

CONNECTED NATURE

3.65   Improve ecological connectivity of habitats in all of the key areas already highlighted by applying the ecological connectivity modelling; and in particular develop a strategic solutions approach in providing landscape-scale green infrastructure to help maintain the interests of Bat SACs:

- The chalk grassland ridge of the South Downs;
- All of the river valleys;
- The area of heathland and woodland complexes to the north of East Hampshire and into Surrey;
- The heathland and river corridor of the River Rother;

- The important networks for bats around Ebernoe, The Mens and Singleton and Cocking Tunnels (SAC) where land management improvements could further enhance connectivity.

3.66   Extend ecological network mapping specifically to river corridors to inform integrated approaches to naturalising water courses and natural solutions to water resource issues.

3.67   Co-ordinate approaches to ecological connectivity modelling to reduce duplication, maximise resources and enable results to be shared.

3.68   Embed ecological connectivity more fully into green infrastructure planning and delivery at both the local and strategic scale.

CONNECTED TOWNS AND COUNTRYSIDE

3.69   Enhance the blue-green river corridors which link the urban areas to the countryside. The larger scale corridors are highlighted as priority areas under 'Natural Capital Investment Areas' (next section) but the concept extends to smaller water courses.

3.70   Enhance the multiple benefits of the urban fringe: ecological connectivity, landscape character, urban intrusion and amenity and potential as link to the wider countryside.

CONNECTED ACCESS NETWORKS

3.71   'Green Roads' – develop a strategically planned approach to upgrade roads to provide safer, attractive routes for walkers, cyclists and equestrians, with benefits to health; improving air quality and reducing noise impact.

3.72   As a priority area, plan and develop a co-ordinated green travel network through joint working between all coastal towns from Littlehampton to Brighton and Hove, to enable east-west movement, ease congestion, support economic development and improve levels of greenspace deficit.

3.73   'Leap of Discovery' – develop a major programme of breaking through the barriers to access, to include green bridges and crossings over roads, railways and rivers to give walkers and cyclists dedicated routes.

3.74   Plan town-scale access networks and join these links to neighbouring authorities.

3.75   Develop programmes to tackle strategic or significant access issues that help unlock wider access and add value to existing programmes:

- 'Down to the Sea' – routes that link the National Park to the coast;
- 'Down Town' – routes that link the National Park to the towns within and outside the Park;
- 'Town Links'; commuter links between towns.

3.76 New major housing developments to include plans for green, traffic-free access routes that provide connections between homes and schools, shops and the public transport network, with plans extending beyond the development 'red line'.

3.77 Smaller new development to contribute to a planned green travel network to increase sustainable travel.

3.78 Develop an access network hierarchy across the Network which extends beyond the National Park and County Council boundaries that:

- Identifies local, linking and strategic routes;
- Addresses key gaps in the network;
- Provides link routes for local amenities, public transport and visitor attractions;
- Supports the development of sustainable tourism and develops circular routes around settlements and hubs, consistent with and supporting the Sustainable Tourism Strategy;
- Provides inter-urban routes between towns and conurbations;
- Links to greenspaces.

RECREATION RESPECTING NATURE

3.79 Target areas of high visitor pressure to upgrade facilities and identify alternative sites to spread the visitor load, particularly those areas either side of the National Park boundary where there is heavy recreation pressure; including feasibility for new sites; e.g. The Devils Dyke, Ditchling Beacon, Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Selborne Common.

3.80 Take an integrated approach to understanding and managing recreational pressure on potentially sensitive biodiversity sites through:

- Understanding the relative value and sensitivity of biodiversity sites within the open space network;
- Identifying sites which serve a high population for which there is limited other open space;
- Building the evidence base to understand better both visitors and impacts;
- Collaborative working between owners/managers of accessible land.

2. A NATURAL AND CULTURAL CANVAS

The well-being of the area fundamentally relies on the quality of the landscape, its ecosystems and the services they provide. The natural landscape and cultural heritage should be strengthened and celebrated, providing distinctive settings for towns and villages and underpinning the future prosperity of the area.

NEW LIVES NEW LANDSCAPES

3.81 Develop landscape networks

- As the setting for all new major developments;
- To strengthen landscapes undergoing change e.g. the wetland landscape of the Pevensey Levels; and areas within view of designated landscapes;
- For the urban fringe – including the coastal urban fringe – to provide open spaces with positive uses and a network of woodlands and hedgerows to form green corridors and buffers around the urban fringe.

WOODLANDS THAT WORK

3.82 Extend woodland management initiatives to the area between High Weald AONB and South Downs National Park.

3.83 Run ecological connectivity model to determine potential for new woodland in the Burgess Hill/Haywards Heath NCIA area between

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the High Weald AONB and the South Downs to link the two protected landscapes; to provide a setting for development and a recreation facility close to centres of population and to connect these two areas.

3.84 A landscape-scale, planned approach to the management of existing and creation of new woodlands to:

- Provide woodland buffer areas around ancient woodlands and heaths to protect from development and other pressures;
- Provide recreational opportunities, to screen development and filter noise and visual intrusion in urban areas;
- Maintain woodland cover to protect from the effects of climate change e.g. rapid water run-off and soil erosion;
- Target the linking up of fragmented woodlands in key landscapes;
- Developing new wooded landscapes as the setting for major development areas; to provide multi-functional landscapes that offer recreation facilities and screening of development;
- Provide carbon storage.

3.85 Explore increasing recreational and access provision in woodlands, especially in areas of greenspace deficit and to protect more sensitive biodiversity sites.

3.86 Where appropriate to the landscape character, expand and create woodlands around transport corridors to improve landscape, help limit noise and filter pollution.

UNDERSTANDING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

3.87 Extend ecosystem service modelling and incorporate into green infrastructure planning.

3.88 Use the existing ecosystem information, for example on noise and local climate regulation and pollination services in green infrastructure planning.

A SENSE OF SPACE

3.89 A better understanding of the landscape through:

- Extending dark skies mapping to the wider Network area to help reveal where dark skies are being lost;
- Examining where there are areas of tranquillity – and perceived tranquillity – to develop a strategy for retaining and developing quiet areas of the landscape.

3.90 A programme to identify the key views across the Network area. To include historic and inspiring long views from and into the Network area; identify, record, celebrate and maintain! This can build upon the Viewshed analysis undertaken by the South Downs National Park Authority (**External Link to Viewshed**).

A CULTURAL CANVAS

3.91 Incorporate heritage into green infrastructure planning:

- Identify unregistered historic/designed landscapes and features and incorporate them into green infrastructure planning;
- Target key historic parkland sites for enhancements to access, interpretation and visitor facilities;
- Restore characteristic features in the landscape including hammer ponds, historic bridges and water meadow systems;
- Interpret and celebrate heritage;
- Celebrate cultural heritage through the development of local walks and promotion, involving local communities and businesses, to encourage sustainable approach to exploration of local heritage features and bringing benefits to local businesses.

3. SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The health and well-being of people living in the Network area is linked to the quality of their environment. People need access to nature and the benefits of a green environment. New development must build communities, not just housing. This is vital for the health of the towns and villages and contributes to the economic prosperity of the area.

GREENING THE GREY

3.92 Greenspace for nature – incorporate more biodiversity into urban parks and greenspaces to increase multiple benefits and improve access to nature for urban residents.

3.93 Re-naturalise and connect urban water courses, also implementing amenity improvements and providing access to watercourses in a programme of 'blue-green' towns and villages. Start with pilot settlements.

3.94 Extend principles of urban ecological connectivity piloted in the Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere to rest of coastal towns.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

3.95 Build on existing work by Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) engaging with health professionals and together make a stronger case that greenspace is needed for healthy and sustainable communities.

3.96 Improve spatial understanding of greenspace provision and health and deprivation needs – and secure this in policy. Strategically plan to target areas of poor health and deprivation to retain, increase and enhance local areas of greenspace.

3.97 Ensure that all new development proposals include a plan for on-site green infrastructure and links into the wider network, or make a contribution to greenspace provision, at a scale appropriate to the development.

3.98 Work across boundaries to tackle those areas where existing deficiencies in open space and/or access network coincide with planned housing where there is the potential for increased recreational demand and potential for enhancement from more than one planned major housing development.

3.99 Target the coastal towns and Winchester, Alton, Hailsham, Crawley and Eastbourne for green infrastructure enhancements to improve provision in areas of poor health.

- Identify and develop new areas of local greenspace;
- 'Green Facelift' programme to upgrade and enhance existing spaces; removing graffiti and litter, improving visibility and safety, adding facilities and developing community links to support the management of the sites;
- 'Green Hit Squads' to be based in the local community to target incidences of graffiti and rubbish and social problems in green spaces;
- Access links from local greenspace to link with local residential areas, shops, schools and public transport.

3.100 Develop community-based interventions that 'make it easy to be active' based around green spaces and access. e.g. Extension of East Sussex Community 21 and Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) health and wellbeing initiative.

3.101 Promote the concepts of Active Transport (walking or biking as a means of transportation and not purely as a form of recreation) and Active Living (a way of life in which exercise is fully integrated into daily activities).

3.102 Develop plans for a Children's Play Space Programme; where there is low ANG and low play space provision to maximise multifunctional benefits to include pilot 'natural area' site e.g. Worthing.

CLEANER AIR – GREENER STREETS

3.103 Develop 'Green Zones' – Large-scale tree-planting and greening programmes for urban areas.

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3.104 Target areas of noise pollution next to busy roads and implement noise regulation, potentially using EcoServ-GIS modelling.

3.105 Develop 'Green Roads' – Landscape-scale programmes to upgrade green infrastructure along major roads and provide safer, more attractive routes for walkers and cyclists; introducing a human-scale network to reduce the scale and dominance of the roads and improve the landscape, connectivity and accessibility.

4. BECOME FIT FOR THE FUTURE

The Network area needs to build resilience to help it adapt to change. Housing growth and transport will continue to make demands on the landscape. Climate change will create pressures and challenges which will require adaptation. Economic forces will test farming and forestry.

Greater demands will be placed on water resources, which will need to be in good condition and well-managed for future generations. The management of this complex list of challenges requires forward planning to view the medium and long term horizons.

PLAN AHEAD

3.106 A programme of activities to prepare the landscape for climate change, including:

- research (e.g. into appropriate species mixes for resilient woodlands and a new agricultural landscape);
- restoration of features in the landscape (e.g. to impede cross-land water flows (e.g. hedgerows and shaws);
- planting in key areas to reduce soil erosion;
- developing wood-fuel (planting and markets) and other biomass.

STAY COOL

- Implement tree planting in schools, streets and public places in areas of high need of urban cooling. EcoServ-GIS indicated large areas of the coastal towns and some areas of the larger towns in the Network area that need urban cooling, e.g. Horsham, Chichester and Winchester.
- Ensure requirements for tree-planting and other methods of reducing solar heat on building surfaces are incorporated into the design of new commercial developments.

3.107 Use information on air quality to target local improvements to tackle urban pollution, which exacerbates the negative impact of urban heat.

3.108 Incorporate noise regulation modelling at the local scale to deliver improvements in urban heat, noise and air pollution regulation in urban areas.

SECURE WATER RESOURCES

3.109 Increase provision of SuDS schemes and green roofs, considering a pilot area and supporting local authorities in securing these from new development, to conserve water resource quantity and quality.

3.110 Promote reduction in water resource demand – championing low water input parks, gardens and golf courses.

3.111 Identify and target pollutant sources posing greatest risk of polluting surface and groundwaters, for example drainage from industrial and commercial and roads and instigate green infrastructure improvements. Begin with a pilot scheme in high need area.

NATURAL RIVERS – NATURAL SOLUTIONS

3.112 Target green infrastructure solutions to flooding issues, particularly upstream of settlements of Lewes, Uckfield, around Eastbourne and Hailsham, the Arun north of Arundel, the Rother and the Adur north of the South Downs, for example through new wetlands or woodland planting.

3.113 Tackle localised flooding through re-naturalising water courses and smaller scale wetlands.

5. BETTER WORKING TOGETHER

Partnership working, shared objectives, pooling knowledge, securing resources and advocacy will be the keys to success for the Network and its ambitions.

3.114   Use the co-ordinated influence of the Network partnership to position the area as a 'Blue-Green' area with the aim of significantly improving the implementation of water quantity and quality improvement measures and strengthening the impact and effectiveness of existing Catchment Partnerships.

3.115   Consider the strategic resourcing of new greenspace and access links in areas of identified deficiencies where development funding is not feasible.

3.116   Find ways of working across sectors to prioritise and join up the strategic planning of new access routes and open spaces to create a network that meets future needs.

3.117   Take a cross-boundary approach to planning and funding access sports and recreation space.

3.118   Promote the use of green infrastructure to planners:

- Provide green infrastructure workshop sessions for planners;
- Develop a toolkit for planners and developers.

- Find ways of working across sectors to prioritise and join up the strategic planning of the landscape
- Take a cross-boundary approach to planning and funding;
- Ensure landscape evidence and guidance is comprehensive, up to date and to a high standard across all the local authorities;
- Target broad landscape areas for intervention where change is planned.

3.119   Consider cross-boundary green infrastructure, especially provision of larger sites, in areas where there is a low amount of accessible natural greenspace.

3.120   Work with recreation and tourism sectors to increase understanding and develop approaches to promotion.