

Report to	Policy & Resources Committee
Date	22 November 2018
By	Countryside & Policy Manager Eastern Team
Title of Report (Note)	Green Infrastructure Update

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to note the work carried out to date on the Green Infrastructure Framework and the forward plan for developing the Authority's Green Infrastructure activity approach.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to update members on the development of the Green Infrastructure Framework (GIF).
- 1.2 Green Infrastructure is defined as 'A network of multi-functional green and blue space, urban and rural which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.' (*National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 20 point d*)¹
- 1.3 Development of the South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework commenced in 2014. It was conceived as a planning framework for ecosystem services and green infrastructure across the framework area (see map of Framework area in **appendix 1**) which includes Local Authority areas beyond the boundary of the South Downs National Park (SDNP). Members will recall the workshop in February 2017 when the GIF was discussed and members considered the study.
- 1.4 The GIF was not subsequently adopted or launched by SDNPA due to the varying degrees of support for the approach in the SDNPA partner planning authorities. Despite this, the evidence included in the GIF has been regularly used internally to inform a range of planning responses by SDNPA and project development proposals with partners. The green Infrastructure approach has also continued to be developed within the SDNP Local Plan and the Partnership Management Plan.
- 1.5 In addition SDNPA officers have continued to develop the approach towards green infrastructure and consider how assessments of natural capital and ecosystem services collectively contribute to planning for nature using the following simple premises:
 - Natural capital is a valuation of the natural assets,
 - Ecosystem services is an assessment of the natural services that those assets provide, and
 - Green infrastructure planning is the tool by which these assets and natural processes can be enhanced, extended, connected into a network and incorporated with human activity.

2. Policy Context.

- 2.1 The GIF is highly regarded as ground breaking work for the South East and it performs

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

against many of the current approaches set out in both the Defra 25 yr Plan (2018)² and the revised NPPF. The relevance of the GIF range for examples from providing solutions to Health and Well Being issues to identifying measures to address climate change adaptation to planning for Defra's Nature Recovery Network³

- 2.2 The SDNP Local Plan takes an ecosystem services approach which is readily delivered through GI planning and for which the framework document was conceived. Delivery of the ecosystem services interventions by planning applicants are examples of green infrastructure measures and the approach is set out in the SDNPA Local plan technical guidance documents.⁴
- 2.3 Green Infrastructure is included in the corporate plan 2018/19 as delivering a key priority for Purpose 1 - 'Developing a Natural Capital Approach for the SDNP' through agreeing '*an integrated work programme for ecosystem services, natural capital and green infrastructure delivery*'
- 2.4 Green Infrastructure is referenced in both the existing SD Partnership Management Plan (pages 1, 25, 76 & 95) and the emerging PMP for 2019-2024 where it is one of the draft priority programmes for Outcome 1 (Landscape Character and Natural Beauty) '*Undertake green and blue infrastructure planning that supports the delivery and understanding of multifunctional landscape networks both within settlements and the wider countryside*'

3. Key messages of the GIF

- 3.1 The GIF Looks at the National Park within a *regional setting* and identifies the high level GI issues across the framework area.
- 3.2 *The Outcomes* of the study approach are;
 - A series of themed strategic principles based around maintaining and creating biodiversity networks, addressing climate change, access to nature for all, factoring Natural capital into the local economy, and sustainable lifestyles & access and;
 - 12 Green Infrastructure hotspots – Investment areas where development, land use and ecosystem services (Nature) are in conflict. (Map included in **appendix 2**)
- 3.3 The GIF Seeks to coordinate partners to ensure that;
 - The SDNP and its setting are well planned to create an integrated network of green and blue infrastructure;
 - The SDNP does not become the GI resource provision for the region in response to pressures for development beyond its boundaries;
 - To encourage doorstep provision of multi-functional green space and retrofitting of GI.

4. Looking ahead

- 4.1 There are 5 main work areas in the forward plan for Green Infrastructure Planning which seek to reposition the project during 2018/19 & over the period of the new Partnership Management Plan 2019-2024;

Complete during 2018/19

- i. Banking the work to date on the GIF and making it available on the website with some editing to ensure the references and context are current – eg Defra 25 yr plan & SDNPA Local Plan.

Start during 2018/19

- ii. Create a communications approach for the project going forward with a simple GI brand, which will help identify and engage wider audiences, develop the dialogue and work towards a GI market place (example of New Forest 'Halo' brand included in

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

³ <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/nature-recovery-network>

⁴ <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Core-06-Ecosystem-Services-Technical-Advice-Note-householder.pdf>

appendix 3). Internal communications and engagement will be part of this process to ensure a joined up approach to GI delivery across the organisation.

Develop going forwards from 2019

- iii. Continue to build on and use the existing GIF evidence for example on Neighbourhood planning, neighbouring authority planning consultations, developing a GI typology for the area, working with LAs as appropriate. Disseminate guidance on GI and ecosystem services to partners, stakeholders and communities.
- iv. Delivery of GI throughout the framework area through the identification and prioritisation of projects, delivery of pilot strategies which develop the spatial targets and refinement of the detail and content in each of the identified targeted areas. Likely to be triggered by other pressures – eg infrastructure development but GI will provide multi-functional benefits beyond including and beyond the remit of the planning system.
- v. Looking at the wider south east region to link with work by the other protected landscapes, including the Nature recovery network and the new Green Infrastructure national metrics to be developed by Natural England which are identified in the Defra 25 yr Plan, and developing evidence to provide high level advice in the future to other infrastructure planning groups – eg South East Regional Transport Board.

5. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	The GIF covers such a wide area of work that it is not possible to timetable what the possible decision making will look like. It is intended that a progress report will be carried out at the end of Q2 2019/20 as the next update for P&R committee
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	Staff time to complete GIF update Budget for consultant to develop GI brand and marketing strategy of £15k from 2018/19 budget. Staff resources to coordinate and manage the brand contract, Staff resources to develop the approach and project structure as it evolves.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	This work plan will take forward the original investment made by SDNPA in the preparation of the GIF
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	There are no Social Value implications associated with this paper. If future project work requires procurement then there may be implications at that time.
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	The project has due regard to the SDNPA's equality duty and addresses the provision of Green Infrastructure and access to nature as social equality issues. No implications arising from this report.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	The GIF network advocates, as part of its remit, the provision of safe, secure and accessible greenspace within towns and cities with passive surveillance and active streets to discourage crime and antisocial behaviour
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Data Protection implications?	None

Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy:	Five principles are: Living within environmental limits, Ensuring a strong healthy and just society, Achieving a sustainable economy, Promoting good governance , Using sound science responsibly. The GIF is compliant with all of these issues.
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CLAIRE KERR

Countryside and Policy Manager Eastern Downs South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer: Claire Kerr/ Veronica Craddock

Tel: 01730 819 239

email: Claire.kerr@southdowns.gov.uk,
veronica.craddock@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices

1. [Map of South Downs GI Framework Area](#)
2. [Map of Green Infrastructure investment areas](#)
3. [Example GI 'brand' - New Forest Halo](#)

SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management;
Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal
Services, Business Service Manager

External Consultees Natural England

Background Documents [Draft South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework Summary](#)
[Draft South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework Evidence Report](#)