



**South Downs**  
National Park Authority

**Agenda Item 18**  
**Report PRI2/19**

Report to	<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>
Date	<b>28 February 2019</b>
By	<b>Access and Recreation Strategy Lead</b>
Title of Report	<b>Project Evaluation Report – Active Access</b>
<b>NOTE</b>	

**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to note the mid project update and to note progress on the Active Access Project.**

## **1. Summary and Background**

- 1.1 As part of its remit this Committee receives mid-project reports for the larger projects the SDNPA has supported. This project is part of East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) *Active Access for Growth programme (AAfG)* and the SDNPA's involvement and commitment of match funding was approved at OMT and notified to the P & P Committee at its meeting on the 1st November 2016.

## **2. Active Access mid project review**

- 2.1 The *Active Access for Growth programme* is a three year Department for Transport (DfT) funded programme aimed at increasing active travel rates and levels of physical activity amongst target audiences in East Sussex. The SDNPA is delivering two elements of this programme: *Cycle the Downs* and *Walk the Downs*.
- 2.2 In 2016 the DfT launched its Access Fund: a revenue only programme supporting sustainable travel. As the SDNPA had previously worked with all four Highways Authorities on earlier DfT sustainable travel programmes, specifically Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and Cycle Ambition, there was considered to be sufficient merit in continuing to work with partners to promote active travel and encourage new audiences to visit and take part in physical outdoor activities in the National Park. The SDNPA was a named partner in two bids to the Access Fund. In early 2017, the DfT confirmed that ESCC bid had been successful.
- 2.3 The funding was awarded to ESCC for the period April 2017 to March 2020. However, due to delays in appointing a project team, it was Q3 in 2017 before activity with partners, including the SDNPA, began in earnest
- 2.4 The SDNPA is a delivery partner in the Healthy Communities work stream of AAfG which aims to introduce previously inactive people to physical activities. This project complements the SDNPA's emerging Health and Well-being Strategy. The objectives of the SDNPA's *Cycle the Downs* and *Walk the Downs* programmes are to:
- Introduce the South Downs National Park to a new audience.
  - Promote the National Park as an 'on your doorstep' destination for outdoor activity and health and well-being.

- 2.5 Project delivery is focused on target audiences in the Peacehaven, Newhaven and Seaford communities. Working with two key partners, Cycle Seahaven and Wave Leisure, a programme of rides and walks and other complementary activities has already been delivered with further activity planned for the final year of the project.
- 2.6 The financial status of the project is healthy. The 3 year budget comprises external funding from the ESCC's AAFG programme (£75k) and SDNPA Strategic Fund match (£15K). This funding covers SDNPA officer time (0.4 FTE of Cycle Projects Officer post) and the project delivery budget. The total Active Access budget over 3 years is £154,258 of which £79,258 is SDNPA funding. This further funding covers the remainder of the Cycle Projects Officer role which delivers core activity alongside other projects outlined in the SDNPA Cycling and Walking Strategy.
- 2.7 Progress against project deliverables is reported on a quarterly basis to the Programme Manager at the Lead Authority and also via SDNPA internal monitoring processes. The Mid Project Review at **Appendix I** provides detail on progress and challenges to date and highlights particular areas of concern.
- 2.8 The key area of concern has been the overall participation rates across the two programmes of activity. Although a full programme of rides and walks was offered during year 2, participation rates were considerably lower than expected raising concerns about the ability of the project to deliver against Key Performance Indicators. Action has already been taken to address these concerns including improved and more targeted marketing activity and closer working with partners in the health and community transport sectors to widen the reach of the programme. We are confident that the Year 3 programme of activities will attract additional participants. However, it is worth noting that the target audience for these programmes is people from hard-to-reach groups who have not previously engaged with either the National Park or outdoor physical activities.

### 3. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No additional requirements. The SDNPA agreed in 2016 to contribute £15,000 match funding from the Strategic Fund for the delivery of the SDNPA elements of ESCC Active Access for Growth programme.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	As SDNPA's match funding has secured £75,000 external contribution towards the delivery of activities this is considered good value for money.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	No
Has due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes The project offer is targeted at hard-to-reach groups currently under-represented in the National Park visitor profile.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	No

Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	No
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy?	The project contributes toward the goal of ensuring a strong healthy and just society.

#### 4. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

4.1 There are no decisions associated with this report.

#### **ALLISON THORPE**

#### **Access and Recreation Strategy Lead**

#### **South Downs National Park Authority**

Contact Officer: Allison Thorpe, Strategy Lead Access and Recreation

Tel: 01730 819243

email: [Allison.thorpe@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:Allison.thorpe@southdowns.gov.uk)

Appendices I. Appendix I – Active Access mid project review

SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Strategy & Partnerships; Director of Planning; Directory of Operations; Director of Corporate Services; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Governance and Support Services Manager

External Consultees None

Background Documents [P&P decision November 2016](#)

