

Report To P&R Committee: SD People and Nature Network (APPENDIX 2)

Example Partnership working & developing the NCIA workstream;

East Winchester Landscape Conversation (NCIA - 1)

The SDNPA has been working with a range of stakeholders on the western fringe of the National Park at Winchester. This is a complex transitional landscape from urban, peri urban to rural, across the boundary and western extent of the SDNP. There are international designations for biodiversity and wildlife together with the M3 motorway, fragmented habitats and landscapes as a result and increasing pressure for development on the edge of the city and the M3.

This is a complex area and we have been working with consultants to develop an action plan for landscape/natural beauty restoration on a landscape scale. A good example is the western team are working with Hampshire and the IOW Wildlife Trust and Southern Water to look at restoration options for the north face of St Catherines Hill which has been heavily modified by a Victorian sewerage works. Restoration would involve addressing unknown contamination, restoring topography, chalk soils and land cover. The western team are also looking at new prowl/access connections between the St Catherines park and ride and the existing bridle bridge over the M3.

Surrey Heaths and Woodlands (NCIA - 2)

Andy Beattie (Wealden Heaths CPM) has been running a series of coordinating meetings with the local authorities within this NCIA, Surrey Hills AONB, Surrey WT and Natural England to look at how we can develop a joined up strategic approach to the heathlands, woodlands and wetlands (River Wey) of this NCIA. There are several local authority areas which converge here, together with several international sites for biodiversity. At the moment these SACs and SPAs are the focus of activity – ‘protecting the best - but not the rest’ - and this group is looking at how a more integrated network of access and biodiversity sites could be developed with the authorities working together.

Truliegh Hill Landscape Project – part of NCIA 12

This project is now nearing completion. A dedicated project officer has been developing links between the local community and residents of the surrounding urban areas to raise the profile and understanding of Truliegh Hill- its history and landscape and to develop through this work a landscape scale approach to restoration and protection of landscape character and biodiversity. This project was set up as a pilot to investigate ways of working in the NCIA's, focussed on community involvement and engagement and was funded by the Rampion I Section 106 fund.

Example NRN/Economy project

Road verge cut and collect project – with WSCC, SDNPA & SWT -

The Authority has been working with WSCC Highways Operations (Michele Hulme) and the Sussex Wildlife Trust to develop a project with WSCC verge cutting contractor to look at how a cut and collect process (rather than cut and leave) could benefit biodiversity on road verges and also cut costs through reducing fertility and slowing grass growth down.

The pilot project is looking at rural verges with a view to starting the new cutting techniques at the end of next summer (2021). A robust monitoring and survey process will measure the effects of the change in management technique on levels of biodiversity in the road verges and also the maintenance costs over a 3-4 year period.

The project would support the WSCC pollinator strategy, and has the potential to be a significant contribution to a Nature Recovery Network for West Sussex (Sussex LNP). It is hoped that the pilot will provide the expertise to WSCC to apply and develop these techniques across the county on both new and existing road verges. This presents a huge opportunity to create widespread improvements to wildlife habitats around the county and to achieve cost savings over a period of time as the techniques evolve and develop.

