

**SDNP Climate Change Strategy**

**Overall Context**

**1. National Policy and Local Policy**

- 1.1 There has been increased levels of public concern around the impacts of Climate Change and the existential threat it poses. In recognition of this the UK Government declared a climate emergency in May 2019. It has committed the UK to becoming a 'Net Zero' economy by 2050.
- 1.2 The Climate Change Committee (CCC) advises the UK Government. It reports to Parliament on the state of progress bi-annually. Its latest report indicates that the UK is currently failing to maintain the necessary trajectory to meet this target.
- 1.3 The CCC consider the target to be achievable, with technologies and approaches we have available. But it will need rapid action to meet this ambitious target. It will require a transformation in our economy and our approach to land use.
- 1.4 The CCCs report 'Land Use – Policies for Net Zero in Land Use' (2019) recognizes the role that land use, agriculture and forestry could play in reducing emissions. It estimated these sectors accounted for 12% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.5 With the right support farmers and land-managers can play a significant role in reducing these emissions and locking up carbon. To this end, new Agricultural and Environmental Bills are progressing through Parliament.

**2. UK Clean Growth Strategy**

- 2.1 We should also recognised that the rapid transition to 'Net-zero' presents opportunities for the wider UK economy. To meet the national carbon budgets for the periods 2023 to 2027, and 2028 to 2032 requires a rapid acceleration in the shift to a low-carbon economy.
- 2.2 The UKs Clean Growth Strategy was published in April 2018. It sets out the Government's ambition to grow the economy while cutting Green House Gas emissions. The strategy promotes technological innovation, creation of high value jobs and industry and the development of low-carbon expertise and technology.

**3. The 25 Year Environment Plan – Responding to Climate Change at a Landscape Scale.**

- 3.1 The Governments 25 Year Environment Plan (25 YEP) was published on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The important role that National Parks play as delivery bodies is frequently referenced.
- 3.2 The NPAs purposes of 'conserving and enhancing' the natural environment is also strongly emphasised. The plan sets out a number of mechanisms that could help to drive or fund this work. These include:-
  - The need for NPAs and their partners to work at a Landscape Scale to deliver climate change Mitigation and Adaptation.
  - Establishing the principle of Biodiversity 'net gain' within the planning System.

- Design and delivery of a new Environmental Land Management System – where the principle aim is environmental enhancement.
- The co-design and delivery of 14 natural capital plans – with Local Nature Partnerships.
- Establishment of 25 new catchment/landscape scale ‘nature recovery’ areas.
- Expanding the use of natural flood management solutions.
- Work with landowners and farmers to identify and target areas that would most benefit from woodland creation.
- The need to link up protected sites and landscapes as a means to deliver a ‘Nature Recovery Network’.

#### **4. The SDNPA Policy Framework**

4.1 The South Downs NPA has a key role in delivering this broad agenda. We have our existing Management Plan and Local Plan policies. We have a range of tools and approaches at our disposal in terms of advocacy, influence and direct delivery. This is especially the case in terms of our strategic planning and policy making role.

#### **5. The Climate Change Adaptation Plan**

5.1 We currently report on our adaptation planning on a five year rolling programme. Our current Adaptation Plan seeks to:-

- Assess the current and predicted impacts of climate change on our purposes and statutory functions;
- Considered the impact upon key assets of the National Park, and on sectors such as farming, forestry and other land-use;
- Set out proposals and policy responses to adapt adequately to these risks.

5.2 The Adaptation Plan sets out some of the adaptive actions that are needed over the short, medium and long-term. It looks ahead over multiple Management Plan review cycles. It also informs the UK Governments own Adaptation Strategy.

5.3 The Plan provides us with a comprehensive assessment of the risks and opportunities, and a good basis for taking positive action. A link to the on-line version of this report is included here:-

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/SDNPA-Climate-Change-Adaptation-Plan-Final-On-line-version.pdf>

5.4 Inevitably this document focusses more on adaptation responses. The UK wide response to the ‘climate emergency’ also needs to focus on mitigation (reducing carbon emissions).

### **Scope, partnerships and delivery**

#### **6. Scope of our Action Plan**

6.1 We need to co-ordinate our work on both climate change adaptation and mitigation. Some of the proposed actions have the potential to deliver both.

**Climate Change Mitigation** – Actions that limit the magnitude or rate of climate change and its related effects by cutting emissions.

**Climate Change Adaptation** – The process of adjustment to the actual or expected changes in climate and its related effects. This is generally focussed on developing resilience to climate change impacts at a landscape scale.

- 6.2 Our actions must consider the potential to cut other Green House Gas emissions (such as Methane) not just Carbon Dioxide.
- 6.3 The Climate Change agenda is very broad, and the SDNPA has limited resources. The Action Plan is focussed on the areas where we can have the greatest impact and influence.

**7. How we propose to deliver the Action Plan**

- 7.1 The SDNPA needs to be influential and effective at a national level. It also needs to deliver at a strategic, park-wide scale and help support local, community based action. In order to achieve this, we propose to deliver the Actions Plan through a broad range of partnerships.
- 7.2 This may include delivery through new groups of partners. A summary of our approach is included in Appendices 2 and 3.

**8. National Level - Working with the other Protected Landscapes**

- 8.1 National Parks England (NPE) have recently refreshed its Climate Change & Energy Group. The intention being to improve co-ordination and joint-action across the UK National Park family.
- 8.2 The group are currently working on a new 5 year delivery plan. The intent is to achieve a 'step up' in terms of delivery. The main aim is for the NPAs to lead in efforts to tackle climate emergency, and to:-
- Demonstrate how rapid transition to low-carbon living can be achieved.
  - Work collectively towards becoming 'Net zero' National Parks by 2040.
  - Achieve 'Net zero' as National Park Authorities by 2030.
  - Promote the principle of achieving 'Net Zero with Nature'
  - Work with our constituent communities and enable them to contribute to this shift.

8.3 In terms of delivering the ambitions of the Lawton Review we also intend to work collaboratively with the wider Protected Landscape family – including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) within the region.

8.4 To achieve this we will co-ordinate our efforts with the South East & East Protected Landscapes (SEEPL) forum. This brings together 14 designated landscapes across the South East and East of England.

**9. Working with our constituent Local Authorities**

9.1 Delivery of the Action Plan will require greater collaboration with our constituent Local Authorities and a wider range of delivery partners.

- 9.2 Many of our constituent Local Authorities have declared climate emergencies, and are developing 'Net Zero' action plans. There is great potential for us to work closely with them. We are having initial discussions to scope areas for greater collaboration and how the NPA can best add value.
- 9.3 A summary of the current situation for our constituent Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) is included in Appendix 4. In addition the South East Climate Action group (SECA) have set up a Database. This summarises where Local Authorities are in terms of developing targets and action plans for their area. A link to the database is below:-  
<http://bit.ly/SECAclimateactionsurvey>
- 9.4 The SDNPA will need to do further work to align us with our constituent LPAs. This will include joint work on establishing common metrics and targets.
- 9.5 The LPAs rely on national data-sets compiled by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to set and monitor their targets. At present this data is not cut to National Park areas. So there is a risk of effectively 'double counting' any contribution the National Park makes to national targets. This is a common problem for all of the NPAs and we are seeking to address it quickly.
- 9.6 Along with the New Forest NPA, we have requested that BEIS produce a cut of the data to National Park boundaries. We should receive this by April 2020. This will put us on an equal footing with our constituent LPAs overcome the risk of double-counting.

## **10. Communications & Engagement**

- 10.1 There is a significant role for the SDNPA in communicating challenges around Climate Change and to encourage behaviour change. We will develop an effective communications strategy and make Climate Change a priority for our public affairs strategy.

## **11. Internal governance to deliver the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan**

- 11.1 Senior Management Team will co-ordinate this work as a 'cross-cutting' issue through our Programme Delivery Boards.
- 11.2 It will need sufficient resourcing across teams to support its delivery. This will require sufficient staff resources to deliver on the action plan presented in Appendix 5. The Operational Management Team (OMT) will assist with resource planning and the links through to team plans.
- 11.3 The Policies & Resources Committee to maintain oversight on the delivery of the Action Plan as it is progressed.

## **12. Baseline & Trajectory**

- 12.1 We need a consistent approach to data and metrics that can work at these differing scales. This includes a baseline for current emissions, and establishing the best trajectory towards a Net-Zero target. We also need to be able to monitor our progress.
- 12.2 There are two ways of considering carbon emissions, and for setting targets.

- Consumption Based – Emission calculations are based on the consumption of all goods and services by UK Households. It also takes into account the effects of trade and imports.
  - Production Based – Emission calculations are based on fossil fuel usage and other relevant processes such as industry and agriculture
- 12.3 Several methodologies exist, and they vary greatly in terms of complexity. There are also risks in adopting an approach purely based on either a production or a consumption basis.
- 12.4 The SDNPA previously contracted Small World Consultancy to develop a consumption based assessment for the National Park. The work provided a useful insight into the sources of emissions for the Park.
- 12.5 Though helpful, the work was completed in 2014, and is now dated. It also presents less detail on the contribution from key sectors such as agriculture. We are currently commissioning follow up work in collaboration with the other NPAs. This will give us the common approach to data and metrics that we require.
- 12.6 This new study will be a blended approach, with elements of both consumption and production based modelling. It will also present us with different scenarios that could apply in terms of achieving Net Zero for the National Park area.
- 12.7 This contract is currently being let. As a result we should have updated emissions figures sometime during 2020. The contract will also consider the need for annual updates. As a joint piece of work, we will achieve a cost-benefit. The work should cost us around £6-7K per annum to monitor progress.

## **Net Zero for the SDNPA**

### **13. Meeting a 2030 'Net-Zero' target for the National Park Authority**

- 13.1 The National Park Authority should lead by example. How it operates, its working practices and how it manages its Estate can make a significant contribution to achieving this target.
- 13.2 The NPA should do all it can to minimise its carbon footprint and achieve high levels of sustainability. Through our Corporate Plan, internal governance and resource planning we need to ensure that we imbed Climate Change action across the Authority.
- 13.3 Achieving a 'Net-Zero' target for the NPA will be very challenging. It has implications for how we manage our estate, purchase supplies and equipment and our working practices. Work is underway to baseline the carbon footprint for the Authority. We propose to use a common approach that has been used by other NPAs so we have comparative data.
- 13.4 The acquisition of Seven Sisters Country Park also presents an opportunity to develop the sites as an exemplar in terms of Climate Change adaptation and a low-carbon future,

### **14. The Sustainable Solutions Group (SSG)**

- 14.1 The NPA has a clear role in sharing best practice and demonstrating how an organisation can progress towards achieving a 'Net-Zero' target. The SSG has been established as part of our corporate response to the challenges of Climate Change. Its purpose is to provide leadership

on our organisational response and promote best practice in terms of sustainability. The groups is working on the following outcomes:-

- Improve our performance and become carbon neutral as an organisation;
- Set targets for carbon reduction and monitor progress;
- Develop a strategy for sustainability for the SDNPA;
- Produce an annual action plan to address issues of highest priority.

14.2 As an early set of actions the group has committed the NPA to:-

- Identify 'quick wins and opportunities' through a staff survey;
- Undertake a carbon audit in line with other UK NPA by June 2020;
- Undertake a full sustainability audit by September 2020.

## **Net Zero for the National Park**

### **15. Meeting a 'Net-Zero' Carbon target for the National Park**

15.1 There are even greater challenges to meeting a 'Net-Zero' target for the National Park. We need to use a partnership based approach, much like the Management Plan. It may require us to work with new groupings of partners.

15.2 There is an opportunity for the NPA to collaborate widely and be an exemplar both in terms of public awareness and actively driving change. Using our convening role is where the National Park Authority potentially adds the most value.

### **16. 'Net Zero with Nature'**

16.1 As a National Park, our statutory purposes are about protecting and enhancing nature. We can promote actions to the climate emergency are nature-based. Any response to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change can also help with nature recovery.

16.2 We cannot achieve one without the other. Where we are seeking to restore and create habitats, and improve their connectivity – we should also seek to maximise opportunities to sequester and store carbon. The principle that guides our approach should be that we seek to deliver '**Net Zero with Nature**'.

16.3 Some change may be inevitable. The ability of natural systems to be resilient or adapt to change is hugely variable. Our understanding of environmental limits may at times be insufficient. In this case the SDNPA must adopt the precautionary approach<sup>1</sup>.

16.4 There is also a strong push for Net-Zero from within the farming sector. The NFU and CLAs have been doing extensive work on carbon monitoring at farm level and developing targets to reduce emissions.

16.5 There is potential through the New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS) to deliver sustainable land management, improve soils and increase opportunities for carbon

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<sup>1</sup> 'Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures that prevent environmental degradation' (United Nations General Assembly, 1992'.

sequestration. The SDNPA can add further value through our involvement in the national 'test and trials' programme.

- 16.6 Through our involvement with the Farm Clusters, and our work on Whole Estate Plans, we have an excellent platform. We can help support the rapid transition to a low-carbon economy for the land-based sectors.
- 16.7 There is a clear link with activity to deliver the Nature Recovery Network. We are already seeing projects that help demonstrate how Nature Recovery might be financed through the use of carbon or nitrate off-setting schemes. The SDNPA has a role in helping to find suitable recipient sites.

## **17. Potential for trees and woodland**

- 17.1 There are also opportunities for new woodland planting within the South Downs National Park. The UK Climate Change Committee has set a national target of 19% woodland cover. The same target has been adopted by the Woodland Trust in terms of their Climate Change Action Plan. The South Downs (with 23% woodland cover) currently exceeds the UK target. But there is still scope to see some significant enhancement in woodland cover.
- 17.2 Some trees are naturally less resilient to the direct impacts of Climate Change. We will see declines in some species. We will work with the Woodland Partnership Group to deliver effective successional planting within the landscape.
- 17.3 We need to balance the push for increased tree planting with the need to protect other priority habitats and avoid unintended consequences. The grasslands and pastoral systems of the South Downs also have potential to draw-down and store carbon.
- 17.4 We must not lose our biodiversity rich grasslands to poorly planned or conceived planting schemes. It is equally about nature recovery, not just about blanket tree planting. The National Parks guidance on 'right tree, right place' is helpful here – and should develop good schemes that enhance the landscape as well as capturing carbon.

## **Planning & Land-use**

### **18. Using the Planning System**

- 18.1 It is essential that the SDNPA use its existing planning policies for best effect. We can also look to develop the potential around net-gain and other delivery mechanisms such as CIL.
- 18.2 There are a number of proposals that are currently being progressed that can help to achieve this. We will need to implement a method to assess the carbon implications of all decisions that are made, including within the planning process.

### **19. Biodiversity Net Gain**

- 19.1 The current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 included provisions for Net gain for Biodiversity. This is intended to ensure that planning and development make a positive contribution to enhancing habitats and biodiversity.

- 19.2 This is also now a requirement of Strategic Policy SD9 in the adopted South Downs Local Plan. It is set to be a mandatory condition of planning permission in the emerging Environment Bill. The proposed level is for a 10% gain, as measured using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric.
- 19.3 This requirement presents a significant opportunity to deliver wider environmental benefits. It could support actions such as tree planting, carbon sequestration and work on climate change resilience.

**20. Call for sites – Carbon Sequestration**

- 20.1 This would work in a similar way as a call for housing and employment sites. In this case we would look for sites that could provide opportunities for carbon off-setting. Recipient sites would be assessed in terms of their capacity to lock up carbon – or their potential to form a part of a Nature Recovery Network.
- 20.2 This could apply for sites already managed for nature or support the shift to more sustainable land management. It could identify areas suitable tree planting, protect important carbon sinks and create or link priority habitats.
- 20.3 It would enable the SDNPA to consider sites strategically across the National Park. It could be done quickly, and on a less formal basis, than the housing allocation process. We could also effectively screen the sites for any unacceptable impact on landscape, priority habitats or the historic environment.

**21. Potential to use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 21.1 The allocation of CIL funds to projects is determined by Planning Committee for each funding year. At present we do not use CIL funding for projects specifically related to climate change. This could be achieved through two mechanisms.
- 21.2 One is a ‘quick-win’, and presents an opportunity to lead by example.
- Use CIL to directly fund projects that address Climate Change mitigation or adaptation.
- 21.3 The other is also possible – but would require additional work to put in place.
- Explore the potential to use CIL as an incentive within the Planning System.
- 21.4 In the latter case, the SDNPA could offer a CIL discount to homes. This would be on conditional on them being built to a recognised ‘carbon standard’. In this way we could provide an incentive to developers and raise the bar in terms of sustainable building and design.
- 21.5 This could be based on a 50% discount on any properties built to meet the recognised ‘Passive house’ standard. This would represent a potential saving of around £10k for a 3 or 4 bedroom home.
- 21.6 As yet, this mechanism is untried – but it has great potential. The NPA are currently seeking legal advice on whether this is possible under the CIL Regulations.



**22. Sustainable Construction – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

- 22.1 As a Local Planning Authority we have some degree of influence and control over new development within the National Park area. The application of planning policies is clearly an area where we could seek to mitigate climate change and reduce emissions. We can also ensure that buildings are well designed to adapt to the predicted impacts of climate change.
- 22.2 The SPD builds on Local Plan policies to reduce CO2 emissions - through energy efficiency measures and on site low/zero carbon energy production. At present, Government policy prevents us going beyond current building regulations for energy efficiency. But this may be reviewed in future. For now the SPD pushed things as far as it is possible to do.
- 22.3 The draft document was approved by Planning Committee in January 2020. It is out for public consultation until 23 March 2020. Subject to any comments we receive, it will return to Committee for approval in June.
- 22.4 If the opportunity arises to strengthen our approach in the next 2 years, we will revisit the SPD again. We may also seek to add to our Local Plan when it comes up for review in the future. It is possible we could look to strengthen policies around design and sustainability at that stage.

**23. Carbon offsetting through the Development Management Process**

- 23.1 The SPD seeks to deliver measures to reduce CO2 emissions on site. There may be some cases where this is not practicable. There may be potential to require developers to pay a fee to offset the carbon generated by the development where it couldn't be achieved on site. This money would be used for energy efficiency measures elsewhere (e.g. retrofitting schools or other community buildings).
- 23.2 We cannot incorporate at this stage, but could be covered by an updated SPD in future. Again this is something the SDNPA could seek to include in our next Local Plan review.

**24. Renewable Energy**

- 24.1 Achieving Net-zero targets by 2050 will drive the transition to renewable energy. Some of this may be community level schemes that support rapid transition away from oil and gas fired systems. It could also see an increase in district level schemes were partner authorities are looking for economies of scale.
- 24.2 Within the National Park this could see an increase in applications for Solar PV and a renewed focus on off-shore and on-shore wind generation. We will need to work with our constituent authorities to ensure that schemes are developed that support the special qualities of the National Park.

**25. Retro-fitting existing building and housing stock**

- 25.1 One of the biggest challenges is improving the energy efficiency and thermal performance of existing buildings and housing stock. The SDNPA will need to work closely with our District and Borough Planning Authorities to support this work within the National Park area.

## **Local Communities.**

### **26. Working with Parishes and local communities**

- 26.1 There are 176 town and parish councils across the National Park and a multitude of community based groups. This represents a huge resource in terms of people, time and potential funding to deliver Climate Change action at a local level.
- 26.2 Parishes and community groups could make a huge contribution to reducing carbon emissions and delivering local projects.
- 26.3 They are also an important as a means to encourage action and activity that supports delivery of wider Climate Change targets. The SDNPA needs to effectively engage and 'add value' to local level action involving communities within and adjoining the National Park.
- 26.4 There is an important role for the SDNPA in harnessing this resource, there are a number of areas of work where the Authority to focus its efforts, these are broadly set out below.
- 26.5 We are starting to develop links with relevant Groups to engage with at this level including the Worthing Climate Action Network, South East Climate Alliance, Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC), Petersfield Climate Action Network, Greater Brighton Energy Group, Community Land Trusts and Transition Town Groups.

### **27. Neighbourhood Planning – encouraging action at a local level**

- 27.1 To date, the SDNPA has developed a lot of experience around working with Neighbourhood Plan groups. Previously this has primarily been based on housing allocations and identifying sites for development.
- 27.2 Many of these plans will shortly come up for review. There is potential for the plans to support delivery for Climate Change adaptation and mitigation. We should be ready to support Parish and Town Councils, community groups and other 'partnerships of the willing' to take action at a local level.
- 27.3 Since the 1st April 2017 the SDNPA has given **£267,919** in Parish CIL funds. This is a new funding stream for many of our local communities. We should support local communities in using this resource effectively to deliver on a range of community benefits. This could include actions to tackle the effects of climate change. This could be through:-
- Encouraging appropriate land allocations and designations which can tackle climate change, this could include tree planting on local green spaces, community facilities and renewable energy schemes.
  - Support town and parish councils to provide basic planning advice to local communities.
  - Planning advice to demonstrate how small scale improvements could be such as sustainable urban drainage, rain gardens, habitat creation and enhancements.
  - Supporting Town and Parish Councils to become central point for sharing best practice / advice with local residents on making a positive contribution to climate change action.
- 27.4 We also have our existing grant-in-aid schemes, such as the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) that could be used to help support Climate Change action.

**28. Opportunity to use 'Net Zero' carbon targets at a Parish and local community level.**

- 28.1 Winchester Action of Climate Change (WinACC) are a local group working to encourage positive action on Climate Change. They have developed an approach that produces a cut of national emissions data for rural Parishes within Winchester City Council's area.
- 28.2 The intention is to provide them with a consistent, and comparative, baseline and highlight areas where they can reduce emissions.
- 28.3 This is potentially a very useful approach, and one that the SDNPA could try to adopt for Parishes across the National Park. This would allow them to understand their current carbon footprint and seek ways to improve their performance. Providing this information would also provide a clear basis on which to measure success.
- 28.4 We are in discussions on the potential to roll out this approach more widely across the National Park. This would provide further opportunity to tailor funding streams, advice and support to local communities.
- 28.5 A number of other areas where the SDNPA might be able to support local communities are also considered in the action plan, including:-
- Sharing information and best practice;
  - Convening events to raise awareness and improve understanding;
  - Working with sector partners to deliver local training and support;
  - Regular articles in parish magazines promoting local action, projects and opportunities for funding.

**29. Climate Action Fund Bid – Ouse Valley CARES project**

- 29.1 The SDNPA, along with the South Downs Trust and community groups have submitted a bid to the National Lottery Communities 'Climate Action' Fund. The bid focuses on the communities of the Ouse Valley in East Sussex.
- 29.2 If successful it will bring together over 100 community projects and organisations to take climate action, over five years, with a focus on those people who are least engaged at present. It will support those community groups and organisations to:-
- Take practical action now;
  - Maintain and increase ecological resilience;
  - Accommodate change - Integrate across all sectors;
  - Develop knowledge and plan strategically.
- 29.3 The project area follows the river downstream from Barcombe, through Lewes and the lower Ouse Valley, to the large coastal communities ("the Havens").
- 29.4 The learning from this project will inform our community engagement efforts across other areas of the National Park. Details of the fund are presented in Appendix 6.

**30. Community Energy schemes within the National Park.**

- 30.1 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020, the SDNPA convened a meeting with organisations that are involved with supporting and developing community based energy schemes.
- 30.2 This brought together local delivery partners including OVESCO and Community Energy Sussex who are an industry leader in the sector. The intention was discuss the sorts of projects that had the greatest potential in the context of the National Park.
- 30.3 A number of ideas from that meeting are being progressed as part of the Climate Change Action Plan. These include:-
- Development a network of Climate Change ‘Champions’ to promote best practice and deliver local training and support.
  - Establish a Community Energy programme and encourage local action via the allocation of CIL money.
  - Focus on communities that are ready to move fast – and keen to make rapid transition to a low-carbon future i.e./ in terms of shifting away from oil fired heating to local scale renewable.
  - Re-energise neighbourhood plan groups during the review cycle and focus on ‘zero-carbon’ plans, community energy and other priorities rather than just planning and housing allocations.
  - Develop this approach within a couple of pilot areas, either clusters of Parishes or community groups who are keen to deliver an exemplar scheme. A number of parishes are forming local community based action groups – so we could develop a partnership based on these.
  - Look to build on the successful bid to the HLF Climate Fund bid, along with active local community groups, to drive these opportunities along.

**Infrastructure, rural business and other key sectors**

**31. Transport and Sustainable Access**

- 31.1 Many of our constituent Local Authorities are working on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). These encourage modal shift by providing improved facilities for walking and cycling in towns. They use an evidence based approach to target investment where it can have the greatest impact.
- 31.2 The authorities are also looking to create sustainable travel connections between settlements to reduce emissions by taking motorised traffic off the road. The SDNPA is working alongside local authorities in the development of these plans to promote best options for connecting into the National Park.
- 31.3 The Local Highways Authorities are developing their Local Transport Plans (LTPs). These plans potentially form part of the action on Climate Change. They can encourage use of sustainable modes of transport and to support greener forms of public transport. An example being the Ultra-low emission bus scheme being developed by Brighton and Hove City Council.
- 31.4 The SDNPA Cycling and Walking Strategy 2017-2024 seeks to enable greater use of more sustainable modes of travel through the creation and improvement of a network traffic free access routes enabling a wider range of people to walk and cycle for both recreational and

utility journeys. In creating and improving routes we should consider the carbon footprint of the construction of the schemes, and any opportunities to sequester and store carbon.

31.5 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) such as major road or transport schemes are not required to deliver net gain. However, when negotiating with the promoters of such projects will seek to achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity.

31.6 Specific areas where the SDNPA can add value include:-

- Working with our sector partners to encourage provision of facilities, opportunities and incentives to allow for reduced carbon travel.
- Working with partners to identify clear carbon budgets and actions and timescale needed to get to net zero in line with government deadline.
- Change attitudes to transport and support the shift to low-carbon travel, support and encourage people to go 'car free' during their visit to the National Parks.
- Build and promote off road cycle infrastructure and electric public transport networks.

## **32. Rural Economy & Tourism**

32.1 The SDNPA will seeks to nurture businesses at a time of significant economic shift. We will support rural businesses to adapt their business operations, improve their sustainability, and boost their contribution to the SDNP local economy. The shift to a low-carbon economy will generate new opportunities to train and employ local people, source local products and support other local businesses. To support this transition the SDNPA will:-

- Create an enterprise network as the vehicle to allow communication between SDNPA and the NP businesses. The network will facilitate the delivery of our climate change aspirations.
- Deliver a business engagement strategy that helps businesses to decrease their carbon footprint, and improve their operational sustainability.
- Help to promote the SDNPA as a 'Low carbon' destination and work with businesses who can help us deliver on this.
- Work with the Responsible Travel partnership to promote places to stay which can demonstrate their environmental sustainability.
- Broaden the membership of Green Tourism and other accreditation schemes.

## **33. Historic environment and heritage assets.**

33.1 There is a need for improved data and evidence on the climate change impacts upon designated heritage assets across the National Park. We need to better understand the implications and adaptations required to preserve the historic environment, this will help to develop solutions that enhance their resilience and help protect them for the future. We can achieve this through supporting historic environment research into climate change impacts.

33.2 In some cases archaeology and heritage assets may be lost, from accelerated coastal erosion for example. There is an opportunity for the SDNPA to work with sector leaders around how we communicate the engage around “curated loss” and open a public debate around the loss of heritage assets as a result if climate change.

33.3 Engagement around the arts has potential to engage and communicate with the public on issue around climate change, adaptation responses and the need for individual action. This is a key component of encouraging behaviour change.

**34.0 Engagement and Outreach**

34.1 The SDNP Learning Network have identified climate change education as a key area that they would like to see collaboration on across this sector. In particular the network have identified that schools are ahead of learning providers in delivering education on climate change.

34.2 There is also recognition that the way that we frame our communication with young audiences needs to be sensitive to minimise the potential for eco-anxieties of young people.

34.3 Three events are planned or are being delivered this year:

- Hopeful Earth Conference - Ditcham Park School.
- Earth Protectors Conference for teachers - The Sustainability Centre.
- Climate Change Teachers Twilight - Brighton and Hove Environmental Education (BHEE).

34.4 The SDNP Learning Network has asked for a workshop for learning providers in supporting learning about climate change and the SDNPA will look to convene a workshop for this network in summer 2020.

34.5 The SDNPA is also looking to develop a ‘climate action’ fund which would be able to give small grants to schools to fund climate change related action.