

# SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK



## REVIEW OF THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN - ANNEX

APRIL 2025

## CONTENTS

<b><i>Appendix 1 - Online Stakeholder and Public Survey Questions</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 2 - Hindsight Review</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 3 - Stakeholder and Public Survey Report</i></b>	<b><i>39</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 4 - Members workshops</i></b>	<b><i>80</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 5 - Hopes and Fears from all events</i></b>	<b><i>86</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 6 - Stakeholder Workshops and Events Report</i></b>	<b><i>88</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 7 - Youngwilders Events Report</i></b>	<b><i>109</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 8 - Diversity Resource International (DRI) Events Report</i></b>	<b><i>114</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 9 - Public Events Report</i></b>	<b><i>122</i></b>
<b><i>Appendix 10 - Second Phase workshops and events</i></b>	<b><i>126</i></b>

## APPENDIX 1 - ONLINE STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC SURVEY QUESTIONS

An online survey was circulated to inform the development of a new Partnership Management Plan for the South Downs National Park for the period 2026 to 2031.

The questions in the survey are shown below:

1. **How do you know the South Downs** (tick all that apply)
  - a. Live there
  - b. Work there
  - c. Visit regularly
  - d. Visit occasionally
  - e. Know about it through social media, reading, TV and movies
  - f. Other
2. **What do you like most about the South Downs?** Please rate the below options, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score.
  - a. Accessibility by public transport
  - a. Historic towns, villages and cultural sites
  - b. Landscape and views
  - c. Nature and wildlife
  - d. Access to green space for health, wellbeing and recreation
  - e. Peaceful and tranquil
  - Other (please state)
3. **What are you worried about the South Downs?** Please rate the below options, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score.
  - a. Biodiversity or nature loss
  - b. Climate change
  - c. Development
  - d. Lack of access
  - e. Impact of visitors
  - f. Pollution
  - g. Traffic
  - Other (please state)
4. **Why are you hopeful about the South Downs?** Please rate the below options, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score.
  - a. Legal protection
  - b. Nature's resilience
  - c. Organisations working there
  - d. People's passion for the South Downs
  - e. Energy from young people
  - Other (please state)
5. **What change, if any, have you noticed in the South Downs in the last five years?** (open response)
6. **If you had to choose, which of these areas would be the highest priority for you? Please order them according to priority, with 1 being the highest and 6 being the lowest.**
  - a. Nature and Biodiversity
  - b. Climate Action

- c. Vibrant and resilient communities
  - d. Improve access and enjoyment
7. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the South Downs now or in the future?**  
(open response)

Please give a little information about you:

**8. Please tell us your age**

- a. Under 18
- b. 18-24
- c. 25-34
- d. 35-44
- e. 45-54
- f. 55-64
- g. 65+
- h. Prefer not to say

**9. Please tell us your gender**

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Non-binary
- d. Prefer not to say

**10. Please tell us the first five digits of your post code (we cannot identify your address from this)**

Thank you for taking part in the survey. For further information about the South Downs National Park visit our Things to Do and Caring for the Park pages on our website [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk).

## APPENDIX 2 - HINDSIGHT REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

The full document set out as an annexe to this report considers progress towards the [South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2020-25](#).

The aim of the hindsight review was to assess the progress towards the SDNP Partnership Management Plan (PMP) 2020-25, since 2020, in terms of:

- Celebrating success, through identifying examples of good practice, enabling the National Park to share these more widely.
- Identifying what the challenges have been, understand barriers and identify how these can be overcome.
- Providing learning that could inform the development of the new PMP.

It also gives an opportunity to reassure residents, decision-makers and partners about the effectiveness of publicly funded delivery in the National Park.

This document reports on feedback from structured discussions with six partners, feedback from 7 key partners through an online survey, reported progress and challenges from the recently published State of the Park report and online desk research, including the SDNPA Annual Reviews, SDNPA and partner websites. This is a summary review that tells a story of the past five years based on available information, rather than a formal evaluation.

The review highlights many excellent projects and initiatives by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and partners, that have helped demonstrate significant progress towards the PMP outcomes.

However, there are evaluation process limitations:

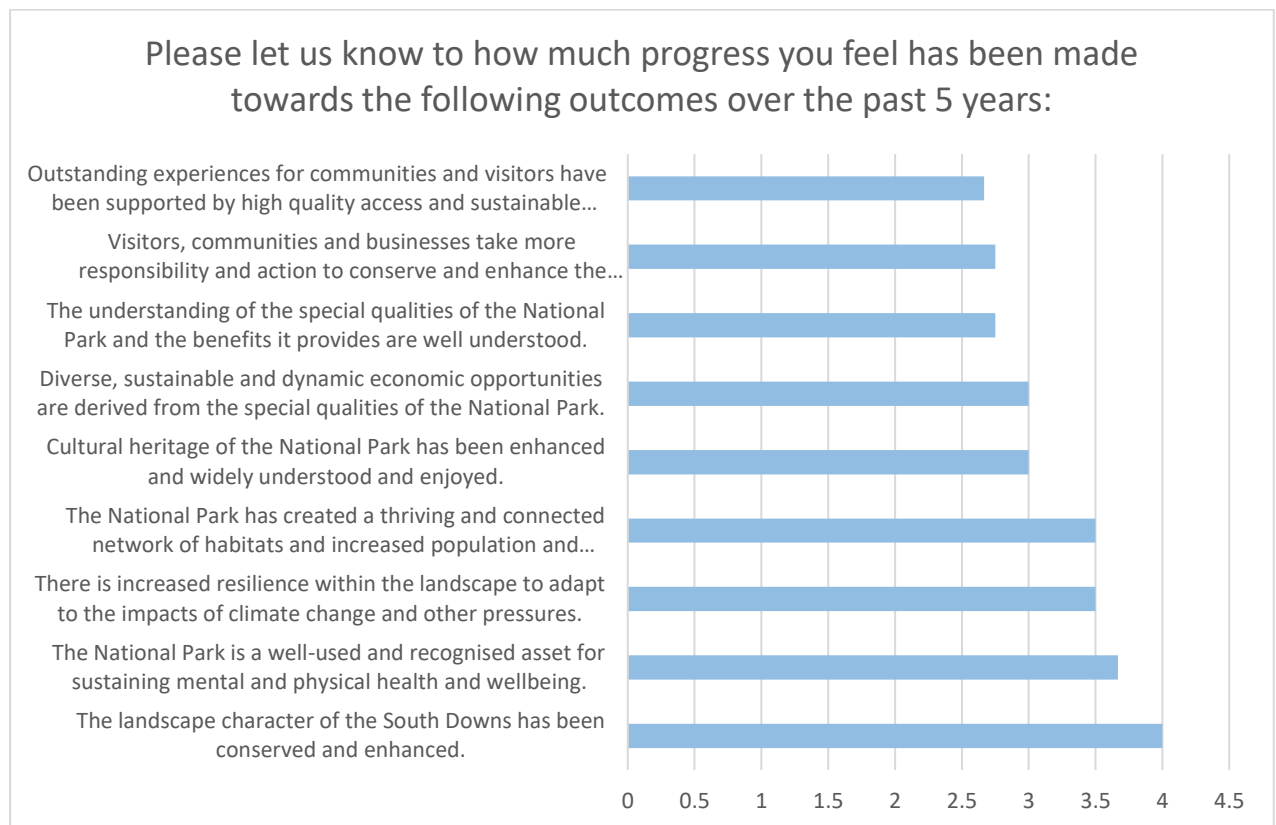
- Data - There have been challenges in securing trend data due to several reasons including changes to methodologies and baselines and the introduction of the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) and the cessation of the Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in National Parks and National Landscapes (MEOPL). This means there was no consistent quantitative data to evaluate.
- Partner engagement - an online evaluation survey for partners was only completed by five partners, and only three of these left any comments. An invitation for 1 to 1 structured discussions was only taken up by six partners. This demonstrates a much lower level of engagement that would usually be expected for this type of work, and could lead to feedback biased towards those who chose to be involved.
- Public survey - the online public survey was only completed by 126 people. As there are 112,000 people living within the National Park and over 2 million living with 5 km of the boundary, this is a very small percentage of those with the potential to benefit from or be impacted by the SDNP. The survey results cannot, therefore, be seen as fully representative of the population.
- SDNPA Annual Reviews and websites - the Annual Reviews and website pages are published to celebrate achievements, rather than as evaluation documents, and whilst they demonstrate many excellent initiatives by the SDNPA and partners, they do not highlight gaps or where work has been less successful. Changes to the format within the past five years, has meant that it has not been possible to amalgamate data across the Annual Reviews.

Findings have been summarised in this report by the outcomes and priorities that were the aspirations of the SDNP Partnership Management Plan 2020-25, with a section on more general insights that sit across more than one outcome. For each of these, it is presented in the following way:

- Celebrating success - from structured interviews with partners, published information online, including the State of the Park report, and SDNPA Annual Reviews.
- Challenges and barriers to success - from structured interviews with partners, published information online, including the State of the Park report and SDNPA Annual Reviews.
- Learning to inform the development of the new PMP - from analysis of the findings above.

## PARTNER SURVEY

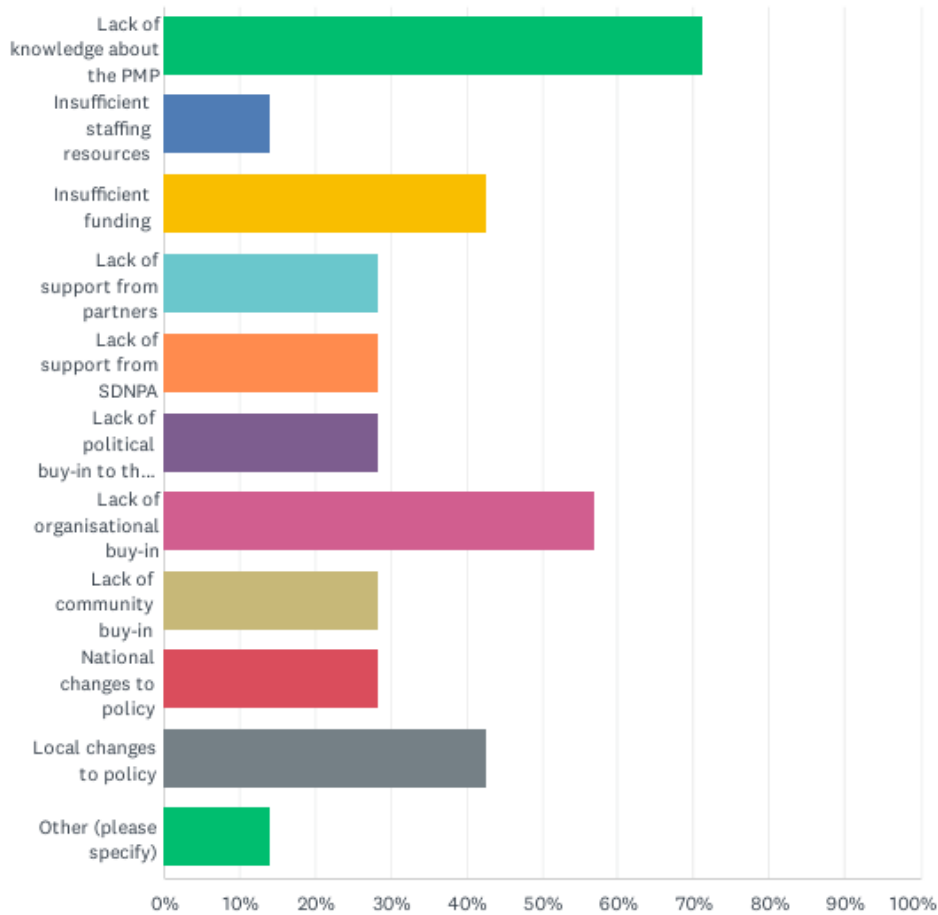
The partner survey only received responses from 7 partners on progress of the existing PMP, and is therefore not statistically relevant. However, progress towards the outcomes is shown below (Scale 1-5 not achieved to fully achieved).



The barriers to the successful delivery of the PMP are interesting and align with findings from elsewhere, with lack of knowledge of the PMP and lack of organisational buy-in ranked top:

### Q31 7. What have been the key barriers to successful delivery of the PMP? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 7 Skipped: 2



## OUTCOME 1 - LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

**Aim:** The landscape character of the South Downs, its special qualities, natural beauty and local distinctiveness have been conserved and enhanced by avoiding or mitigating the negative impacts of development and cumulative change.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>1.1 Protect Landscape Character</b> - To protect and enhance the natural beauty and character of the National Park and seek environmental net-gain from any infrastructure projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase evidence and understanding.</li> <li>• Infrastructure providers follow mitigation hierarchy.</li> <li>• Defra environmental metrics used to achieve environmental net gain for new development.</li> </ul>	<p>Carbon monitoring dashboard and tracker is being developed with other National Parks funded by Defra and piloted in the SDNP, which will measure annual progress on carbon emissions towards net zero. Publication online of the <a href="#">Viewshed Study</a> on iconic and important views.</p> <p>The <a href="#">South Downs Integrated Character Assessment</a> was updated in 2020 and then again in 2023 to include guidance on nature recovery action by landscape recovery type.</p> <p>Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites (RIGGs) were surveyed in 2013, which found that 20% of the managed sites were in better condition.</p> <p>2024 data from Natural England shows that 61% of the geological SSSIs were in favourable condition.</p> <p><a href="#">SDNP Design Awards</a> were held in 2024 to celebrate projects that contributed to landscape character.</p> <p>Oil and gas sites decreased from 5 sites in 2012 to 4 in 2024.</p> <p>Dark skies and tranquillity are being maintained through the application of policies in the Local Plan.</p> <p><a href="#">Buy ReNature Credits</a> - Over the past 24 months, 550 hectares of land has been secured for nature recovery through legal agreements whilst also creating new income streams for landowners. Nature markets in the region include compliance markets like Nutrient Neutrality and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and voluntary markets like Woodland Carbon and Voluntary Biodiversity Credits (VBC). In 2023, 31 estates, farms or partner sites were working to secure lands for nature through green finance. Examples of success; <a href="#">King</a> purchasing 167 credits- 3mx3m land parcels managed for environmental gain for 30 years, complying with Defra's BNG metric, <a href="#">Southern Co-op</a> funding several projects for nature recovery.</p> <p>Partners are interested in how the ReNature Credit mechanism and staff expertise could be shared more widely, particularly with other Protected Landscapes in the region. There is also interest in better partnership working with those working with landowners to act as brokers.</p> <p><a href="#">The Iford Biodiversity Project</a> - 1200ha nature restoration vision. Successfully driving private finance into the business through the sale of BNG and VBC from high integrity nature restoration projects. To date</p>



	two separate parcels of land devoted to nature have been secured, totalling just under 50 ha.
<p><b>1.2 Create Green Infrastructure</b> - To improve green and blue infrastructure to deliver nature recovery networks and connect people to nature within and around the National Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Create People and Nature Network’.</li> <li>• Common principles for planning, delivery and management.</li> <li>• Pilot projects.</li> </ul>	<p>The <a href="#">People and Nature Network (PANN)</a> was developed with key local partners in 2020.</p> <p>According to the <a href="#">2014 Accessible Natural Greenspace (ANG) Study</a>, 90% of households within the National Park boundary were located within 2km of a 20ha site of accessible greenspace.</p> <p>There is a planned 5km extension of the 11km <a href="#">Centurion Way</a> cycling and walking path, the first section of which will be completed in late spring 2025.</p> <p><a href="#">King Charles III England Coast Path</a> - new 33-mile route from Shoreham to Eastbourne opened in summer 2022.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Way National Trail</a> - ongoing improvements, for example 29 gates were repaired and 3 replaced in 2023/24.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Way Chilcomb link</a> - 750m off-road route for cyclists, equestrians and walkers as western gateway from Winchester to SDNP.</p> <p><a href="#">Egrets Way</a> - 9 km of the Egrets Way has now been delivered. This is a largely off-road network of walking and cycling paths linking the towns of Lewes and Newhaven with the villages in between. Phases 4, 5 and 6 have now been completed. Work on the final stage is ongoing.</p>
<p><b>1.3 Target New Payments</b> - To maximise environmental, cultural and economic benefits of agri-environment and forestry schemes across the National Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot NELMS.</li> <li>• Collaborative approach with landowners, water companies, Defra and Natural England.</li> </ul>	<p>The SDNPA Consultancy Team offer services to support landowners with stewardship, nature restoration design, management and maintenance advice, and is working with local government to maximise the potential of BNG to deliver nature recovery.</p> <p>There are six <a href="#">farmer clusters</a> - land managers and local partners work together across the landscape to improve and enhance the environment, covering 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the SDNP area.</p> <p>36% of the SDNP is currently managed under agri-environmental schemes.</p> <p>10 <a href="#">Whole Estate Plans</a> (WEPs) have been endorsed, with four more in the pipeline, covering over 12% of the South Downs National Park.</p> <p><a href="#">Farming in Protected Landscapes</a> (FiPL) programme funded 37 projects in 2023-24 (£602k).</p> <p>The Conservation Partnership brings partners together to improve the sustainable management of ancient woodland, restore ecological value of PAWS and the recording and protection of veteran trees.</p> <p>Catchment Partnerships bring together a wide range of organisations including water companies and the Environment Agency and are seen as making a real difference on the ground.</p> <p>Countryside Stewardship scheme for Seven Sisters Country Park is in place.</p>

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and gaps
<b>1.1 Protect Landscape Character</b> - To protect and enhance the natural beauty and character of the National Park and seek environmental net-gain from any infrastructure projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase evidence and understanding.</li> <li>• Infrastructure providers follow mitigation hierarchy.</li> <li>• Defra environmental metrics used to achieve environmental net gain for new development.</li> </ul>	<p>The landscape character of the South Downs National Park experiences pressures from changing land use, agriculture and the impact of human settlement and infrastructure such as new roads, pipelines or cable routes. There does not appear to be a summary of the development/ decline in landscape character over time and no consistent data that can be analysed over the 5 years of the PMP.</p> <p>Whilst Local Plan policies are in place to preserve the character of the SDNP, there is a risk that gradual, incremental changes can accumulate over time, potentially resulting in a significant loss of local distinctiveness and sense of place.</p> <p>Open downland is vulnerable to pressures from urban expansion bordering the SDNP and there is a threat from road infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>There has been an increase in brick clay and chalk extraction within the SDNP.</p> <p>Analysis to understand the increase in hard surfaces due to urban extension has been inconclusive.</p> <p>Low lying coastal areas are at risk from flooding.</p> <p>Threat of light pollution is becoming more widespread and severe.</p>
<b>1.2 Create Green Infrastructure</b> - To improve green and blue infrastructure to deliver nature recovery networks and connect people to nature within and around the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Create People and Nature Network'.</li> <li>• Common principles for planning, delivery and management.</li> <li>• Pilot projects.</li> </ul>	<p>Of 34 urban settlements analysed, 24 indicated a slight reduction in urban greenness and 10 a slight increase.</p> <p>Perception of little new green infrastructure created.</p>
<b>1.3 Target New Payments</b> - To maximise environmental, cultural and economic benefits of agri-environment and forestry schemes across the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot NELMS.</li> <li>• Collaborative approach with</li> </ul>	<p>21.6% to 32.9% of arable lands remained bare over winter, which increases the risk of soil erosion.</p> <p>There is a perception from partners that landowners feel that the SDNPA are not supporting them, probably due to the SDNPA being the planning authority and having to implement relevant policies. Reputation as the Planning Authority restricts their ambitions and willingness of landowners to work with them.</p> <p>A wider landscape-scale approach could be achieved if Catchment Partnerships were to develop joint approaches.</p>

landowners, water companies, Defra and Natural England.	
---	--

---

#### LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

##### Learning and ideas for the future

Protection of landscape character, compared to outside the National Park, is seen as successful. Farmer clusters, whole estate plans and SDNPA support with agri-environment schemes demonstrate a strong relationship with landowners, and should ensure much of the privately-owned land in the SDNP is managed sympathetically.

Catchment Partnerships are working well and making a difference on the ground, including with water company management planning. Collaboration between Catchment Partnerships could lead to landscape-scale water management improvements and a stronger voice with policy makers.

ReNature Credits is leading the way in terms of encouraging green investment and ensuring there is a local mechanism to secure BNG within the SDNP. Sharing this mechanism more widely across the region could lead to more effective use of resources and expertise, and make it more viable.

Planning policy should be maximising residential areas and providing better access to nature. Regional approaches to green infrastructure master planning and investing in public transport and active travel, working with partners outside SDNP, could help address some of the issues raised.

Investigation into alternatives to developer led green space management, could result in better quality greenspace for people and wildlife e.g. Hampshire fund for heathland management.

## OUTCOME 2 - INCREASING RESILIENCE

Aim - There is increased resilience within the landscape for its natural resources, habitats and species to adapt to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>2.1 Improve soil and water</b> - To improve soil and water by reducing soil erosion, improving carbon capture and filtration and reconnecting wetland habitats. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil improvements.</li> <li>• Flood alleviation.</li> </ul>	<p>Catchment Partnerships are working strategically and influencing management plans, focusing on the SDNP and surrounds. They are strategically aligned to the PMP priorities. Facilitation by SDNPA staff has enabled better partnership working.</p> <p><a href="#">Downs to the Sea</a> - £1.7m project to restore and create wetland habitats and conserve associated species.</p> <p>The Aquifer Partnership and Channel Payments for Ecosystem Services projects trailed new approaches to land management, such as regenerative farming, enabling benefits such as reduction in nitrates and pesticides and increased carbon storage in soils.</p> <p>Cockshut stream restoration partnership project has restored a more natural course for the chalk stream and reconnected it to a series of wetland habitats.</p> <p>The Leconfield Estate has facilitated the improvement of wetland habitats along the Western Rother to reconnect the floodplain to the river.</p> <p>West Burton Stream - removal of a dam and restoration of the stream for nature improvement, including providing spawning habitats for brown trout.</p> <p><a href="#">Pounds for Ponds</a> - seeking to invest around £1m to create and restore 100 ponds over the next decade. Partnership between SDNP Trust and Froglife. More than 20 new ponds have been created so far.</p> <p>A guide to Natural Flood Management has been published that offers advice to land managers to benefit communities and create more natural wetlands systems.</p> <p>ENHANCE farm carbon project has worked with 18 farms to improve soil quality and carbon budgets.</p>
<b>2.2 Improve trees and woodland</b> - To improve the resilience, quality and quantity of trees and woodlands in the National Park and ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland improvements.</li> <li>• Tree planting.</li> </ul>	<p>70% of the woodland in the SDNP is under sustainable management. Overall, 74km of hedgerows were restored or created, and 22,285 trees were planted over 69 ha of land in 2023/24.</p> <p>Hedgerow density analysis was undertaken in 2024, which will enable the Ranger Team to give better advice and support on hedgerow management and creation.</p> <p><a href="#">Woodland Opportunity Mapping</a> - The Sussex Nature Partnership, Woodland Trust and SDNPA have mapped opportunities for woodland creation, and published guidance for land managers.</p> <p>The Hampshire Hedgerows Project helped restore and create nearly 24km of well-managed, connected hedgerows, which will benefit many species including the brown hairstreak butterfly.</p>

	<p>As part of the <a href="#">ReNature in the South Downs</a> initiative, the <a href="#">Trees for the Downs</a> project has planted over 75,000 trees on 130 sites since 2019. Trialling various disease-resistant Elm tree cultivars and monitoring them for signs of disease. 12,000 trees were planted at 30 sites dedicated to the Queen for the Jubilee.</p> <p>Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) have been visited and accessed. 28 landowners, covering 1,100 ha of woodland were involved in 2020/21.</p>
<p><b>Climate Action</b> - not a priority of the PMP in 2020, but the need to help mitigate climate change has since been seen as a key priority, with the aspiration of 'Net-Zero with Nature' by 2040.</p>	<p><a href="#">SD Climate Action Knowledge Hub</a> - space for stakeholders to share information and ideas for taking climate action in their community.</p> <p><a href="#">Climate Change Action Plan</a> projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ouse Valley Climate Action- £2m project</li> <li>• The Community Energy Pathway - <a href="#">Energise South Downs</a></li> <li>• Carbon baseline for SDNP area</li> <li>• Parish level carbon budget.</li> </ul> <p>The energy efficiency of the South Downs Centre in Midhurst has been improved through external insulation and render, replacement LED lighting and installation of new PV panels. Five hybrid pool cars have been introduced and all but one of the electricity supply contracts are with Ecotricity, a 100% renewable supplier.</p> <p>WeCAN and PeCAN projects support and develop community-based Net-Zero plans, aided by the adoption of the IMPACT carbon assessment tool. Partnerships with the SDNPA have resulted in a holistic approach, influencing policy and community delivery.</p> <p>Delivery of the Community Energy Pathway project that supports local communities to develop energy projects, such as renewables or retrofit.</p> <p>Whilst the extension of Gatwick Airport will have a detrimental impact on carbon emissions, the resultant compensation scheme could help deliver benefits in the future.</p>

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<p><b>2.1 Improve soil and water</b> - To improve soil and water by reducing soil erosion, improving carbon capture and filtration and reconnecting wetland habitats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil improvements.</li> <li>• Flood alleviation.</li> </ul>	<p>In SDNP, 17% of waterbodies achieve "high" or "good" status, 33% achieve "moderate" status, 47% are considered "poor" or "bad" and 3% have not been assessed.</p> <p>Coastal erosion, accelerated by climate change means that the coastal section of the National Park is likely to change dramatically in the coming years, with unpredictable cliff fall occurring more often.</p> <p>Water quality data is not sufficient to fully understand trends, especially in the short-term.</p> <p>Planning consent needed for wildlife ponds and scrapes, which leads to new wetlands not being created.</p> <p>Deregulation of planning and reliance on BNG could mean that investment is focused on water companies/ sewage, rather than wider natural solutions across catchments.</p>

	Pharmaceuticals and forever chemicals are an increasing problem. Limited progress on soil improvements.
<b>2.2 Improve trees and woodland</b> - To improve the resilience, quality and quantity of trees and woodlands in the National Park and ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland improvements.</li> <li>• Tree planting.</li> </ul>	Challenges identified include deer browsing hindering woodland regeneration, and water availability and quality. Woodland challenged by tree diseases, such as ash dieback, and impacts of deer grazing and climate change.
<b>Climate Action.</b>	The Gatwick Airport extension will result in more flights and traffic within and around SDNP, impacting a wide area. Compensation should be negotiated to ensure there are some benefits within and beyond the SDNP, including for carbon-offsetting. Action on climate change was not included as a priority in the current PMP, although it has been recognised since as a key priority. The Knowledge Hub is not linking sufficiently to other SDNP initiatives/ learning.

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

There have been several partnership projects focused on improving water management, with pond and wetland creation a key priority.

Tree planting and hedgerow creation/ management schemes have been introduced.

The Climate Change Action Plan and projects are helping address climate change.

Better monitoring and understanding of data on water quality is needed.

Future focus is needed on natural flood management, soil improvement and stabilisation to prevent run-off.

Solution needed for planning consent requirements for wildlife ponds and scrapes.

Focus needed on control of pharmaceuticals and forever chemical pollution in watercourses.

Partners have suggested working in partnership with National Landscapes and across Catchment Partnership to share resources, information and expertise. There could be a role for SDNPA to lead on natural flood management expertise, for example, with partnership agreements to enable better local delivery.

The Climate Action Knowledge Hub works well but information should be shared more widely and link to other initiatives.

Within the PMP period, climate change mitigation and adaptation has become more pressing, and initiatives have been introduced to help address this. There are strong community-led climate action organisations, which should be welcomed and supported as the local, trusted voice. Partnership approaches with these should continue, with SDNPA leading on influencing policy, and community groups, such as Winchester Action on Climate Change, working with communities. Devolution means that the working boundaries of these groups could change to cover a wider geography.

The extension of Gatwick Airport could be an opportunity for carbon-offsetting, with a joint fund to help conserve and enhance Protected Landscapes impacted by increased flights, traffic and visitors.

## OUTCOME 3 - HABITATS AND SPECIES

A thriving and connected network of habitats and increased population and distribution of priority species now exist in the National Park.

### FINDINGS:

### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>3.1 Join up habitats</b> - To create, restore and improve areas of priority habitat to be more, bigger, better, and joined up at a landscape scale. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature Recovery Network.</li> <li>Data.</li> <li>Collaborative working with conservation organisations.</li> </ul>	<p>96% of the SSSIs in the National Park were either in favourable condition or are being managed so that they reach favourable condition in 2020. 6% of those sites had achieved favourable condition since 2012.</p> <p>Early indications suggest that the extent of priority habitat in SDNP is slowly increasing. Since 2022, a total of 6,082 additional hectares of land have been secured or newly managed for nature.</p> <p>Understanding of landscape-scale conservation is growing.</p> <p><a href="#">ReNature</a> Nature Recovery Programme is in place. Includes a vision for Nature Recovery, assessing scope by Landscape Character Assessment, developing the Biological Monitoring Framework, delivery mechanisms and campaign. By 2023, 10 CIL/ S106 funded initiatives has delivered a 35% average BNG on the largest scale development sites.</p> <p>Since 2022, 42 sites, covering 555 hectares, have been has rapid condition assessments, which will allow for better advice for landowners on grazing regimes.</p> <p>SDNPA Ranger Teams work with landowners to survey Local Wildlife Sites and improve habitat management.</p> <p>Bat populations have increased in line with national trends.</p> <p>The Seven Sisters National Nature Reserve aspiration to include 12,000 has from Seaford to Eastbourne to connect, conserve and enhance the landscape, including creating and restoring a mosaic of habitats and boost populations of rare species.</p> <p>New South Downs <a href="#">Integrated Landscape Character Assessment</a> platform went live after a review in 2020, with a summary of Ecosystem Service and a further update in 2023 to introduce guidance on nature recovery.</p> <p><a href="#">Biodiversity Monitoring Framework</a> - with species monitoring programmes.</p> <p>There are many examples of projects helping to achieve this outcome, some of which are shown below. A more comprehensive list of case studies can be found on the <a href="#">website</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Changing Chalk Partnership</a> has been working with local farmers to improve grazing of chalk grassland, led by the National Trust, was a 4-year £2.23m National Lottery funded programme of 18 projects, involving 10 partners.</p> <p><a href="#">Weald to Waves</a> is a partnership project aiming to create a nationally significant wildlife corridor of 100 km, with over 20,000 ha of largely contiguous natural habitat.</p>



	<p>Grandfathers Bottom, Butser Hill delivering biodiversity and habitat improvements to protect 1.6ha chalk heath and restore 7ha chalk grassland.</p> <p>Lullington Heath National Nature Reserve - Natural England. A four year project involved clearance of scrub on the only substantial chalk heath left in the South Downs.</p> <p><a href="#">Heathlands Reunited</a> is a £2m project involving 11 organisations, led by SDNPA to recreate, reconnect and restore the existing 1% of heathland left in the National Park.</p> <p><a href="#">Wealden Heath Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)</a> is a project aims to promote bigger, better, joined up heathland and inform, engage and involve communities.</p> <p>Renaturing of <a href="#">Cissbury Fields</a> - Worthing Borough Council, SDNPA and National Trust. Working to restore a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats through the introduction of livestock, create walking routes and an on-site car park.</p> <p>Seminar with 18 Golf Clubs in 2023 to link golf course management to biodiversity gains.</p>
<p><b>3.2 Manage priority and invasive species</b> - To increase the genetic diversity and resilience of target species and implement a landscape scale strategy for tackling invasive species, pests and diseases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase populations of key species.</li> <li>• Wildlife introduction.</li> <li>• Control of invasive species.</li> </ul>	<p>Beaver reintroduction - a pair of beavers have been introduced to a rare chalk stream near Petersfield to help restore the waterway and surrounding habitats.</p> <p><a href="#">Water voles</a> - 2,800 water voles have been reintroduced since 2013.</p> <p><a href="#">Lodsworth Bat Roost</a> - a Sustainable Communities Fund grant was awarded to Sussex Bat Group and Vincent Wildlife Trust to renovate and maintain a barn that is a vital haven for greater horseshoe bats.</p> <p><a href="#">Bee Lines project</a> - creating new networks of wildflowers to help pollinators move through the landscape, managed by the South Downs Trust and supported by Howdens kitchen suppliers. 100ha of wildflower meadows have been created so far.</p> <p>The Rangers teams and volunteers are working to map and remove invasive, non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam and Parrot's Feather.</p> <p><a href="#">Fair Game</a> (2023-24) a partnership project, led by the University of Exeter and involving the National Trust, SBNPA, Natural England and the Sussex Archaeological Society, has furthered cross-sector conversations around deer management and nature recovery. Collaborative work with the Sussex Woods Project has seen 10t venison distributed through food charities. The project was a finalist in the Sustainability category of the Archaeological Achievement Awards.</p>

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<p><b>3.1 Join up habitats</b> - To create, restore and improve areas of priority habitat to be more, bigger, better, and</p>	<p>Relatively low proportion of nationally and internationally protected sites and the number and area of local wildlife sites in SDNP.</p> <p>Challenges identified included, grazing and scrub encroachment on grassland and heathland.</p>



<p>joined up at a landscape scale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature Recovery Network.</li> <li>• Data.</li> <li>• Collaborative working with conservation organisations</li> </ul>	<p>As of 2024, there are 417 features across 85 SSSIs in the SDNP and 53% of those are in favourable or recovering condition.</p> <p>Trends in butterfly populations are not significantly different to the rest of the SE.</p> <p>Farmland bird populations largely mirror national trends.</p>
<p><b>3.2 Manage priority and invasive species</b> - To increase the genetic diversity and resilience of target species and implement a landscape scale strategy for tackling invasive species, pests and diseases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase populations of key species.</li> <li>• Wildlife introduction.</li> <li>• Control of invasive species.</li> </ul>	<p>Little activity on invasive species.</p>

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

There has been a lot of activity to improve habitats and species recovery, with some significant landscape-scale partnership initiatives and reintroduction projects.

The ReNature Nature Recovery Programme appears extensive, integrated into monitoring of landscape character and biodiversity, and to be delivering significant impact on the ground.

More action needed on invasive species control.

Mechanisms to increase the numbers of nationally and internationally protected sites should be investigated.

There should be more focus on improving habitats for species that should be seen in higher populations within the National Park.

## OUTCOME 4 - ARTS AND HERITAGE

Aim- Cultural heritage of the National Park is enhanced and widely understood and enjoyed.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>4.1 Conserve heritage</b> - To increase conservation, awareness, access to and understanding of South Downs cultural heritage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and conserve.</li> <li>• Increase access and understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>'At risk' heritage assets in the SDNP decreased from 2.5% in 2014 to 0.6% in 2024.</p> <p><a href="#">Scheduled Monuments Monitoring Project</a> has developing a sustainable delivery model for monitoring and recording Scheduled Monuments, including training for volunteers, resources and interpretation. In partnership with the National Trust and Historic England, the project outlines step-by-step actions to monitor and record the conditions of Scheduled Monuments. This approach was adopted by the Changing Chalk project, which has ensured the condition of 89 monuments (15% of those within the SDNP) has been assessed.</p>
<b>4.2 Promote contemporary arts and crafts</b> - To promote creativity and understanding of the landscape and traditions of the South Downs through contemporary arts and crafts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop strategic partnership with ACE.</li> <li>• Promote festivals.</li> <li>• Participatory events with artists/ practitioners.</li> <li>• Support artists to respond creatively to SDNP.</li> <li>• Encourage use of traditional skills and crafts.</li> </ul>	<p>Several <a href="#">cultural heritage projects</a> have been completed. Case studies for these can be found on the SDNPA website. These have included artists in residence, archaeology, dance, reminiscence and storytelling, and creative sessions for children.</p> <p><a href="#">We Hear You Now</a> - 13 audio trails, that provide inspiring and thought-provoking walking experiences that encourages visitors to discover new stories and reflections on Sussex's iconic Heritage Coast, covering fiction, poetry and new mythologies. Associated events and activities.</p> <p><a href="#">In Their Footsteps</a> app - an immersive, audio-visual walking experience that tells the unique stories of the people who lived and worked in the South Downs.</p> <p><a href="#">Echoes from the Earth</a> - Chris Pavla and the Stopgap Dance Company. A performance that showcased the creative talents of diverse artists and which focuses on providing a magical and inclusive experience for SEND families and young people and local communities.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs: A celebration</a> - Collaboration between composer Ed Hughes and videographer Sam Moore to celebrate 10 years of the SDNP.</p> <p><a href="#">Writing Our Legacy</a> - An arts and heritage organisation for Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people to tell their story through writing and the creative arts. Established in 2012 and now a National Portfolio Organisation. Network of 300 creatives, with workshops, events and training. 15 bursaries were awarded by SDNPA in 2021/22.</p> <p>2020/21, <a href="#">Towner Eastbourne</a> gallery - SDNPA funded creative kit bags for families which provide households most impacted by the pandemic access to high quality creative experiences and opportunities to engage with the natural environment.</p>

	<p>In 2022/23, ReNature and Dark Skies hybrid festivals reached 700,000 people, with over 5,000 attending in-person. Over 600 ReNature packs were sent to community groups.</p> <p>In 2021/22, culture and heritage projects and activities supported by SDNPA reached 35,196 participants, delivered through 30 partner organisations, and benefitted from input by over 50 freelance creatives. In addition, new digital assets including podcasts (such as The Full Harvest with Applause Rural Touring), digital interpretation (10 new short films at Cissbury Ring, developed in partnership with the National Trust and Worthing Museum) and Augmented Reality experiences (through seven AR experiences from LYT Productions) at Tide Mills.</p> <p>The Heritage Crafts and Skills Pilot (2024) provided 27 young people with hands-on training and placements in heritage.</p> <p>Besom broom making course - 9 students attended workshop.</p>
--	--

### CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<b>4.1 Conserve heritage -</b> To increase conservation, awareness, access to and understanding of South Downs cultural heritage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and conserve.</li> <li>• Increase access and understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>41% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments were identified as vulnerable in 2021.</p> <p>Climate change poses risks to heritage sites, with some moving onto the Heritage at Risk (HAR) Register due to coastal erosion.</p>
<b>4.2 Promote contemporary arts and crafts -</b> To promote creativity and understanding of the landscape and traditions of the South Downs through contemporary arts and crafts.	<p>The sector faces ongoing challenges due to the cost-of-living crisis, challenges facing local and central government spending, and energy costs.</p> <p>Lack of joint initiatives for apprenticeships and mentoring.</p> <p>Encouraging use of traditional skills and crafts.</p> <p>Publicising evaluations of projects, to better understand what has been achieved.</p>

### LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

Learning and ideas for the future
<p>There have been many inspiring and interesting arts and heritage activities and projects that actively involve those from under-represented groups.</p> <p>More focus could be considered on joint initiatives for apprenticeships and mentoring, and encouraging the use of traditional skills and crafts.</p> <p>There is a lot of information on websites when projects are launched but little about what they have achieved. Ensure these projects are evaluated and publicising the results of this online would make it easier for people to understand what has been achieved.</p>

## OUTCOME 5 - OUTSTANDING EXPERIENCES

Aim- Outstanding experiences for communities and visitors are supported by high quality access and sustainable transport networks.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>5.1 National Park for all</b> - To enable everyone to experience the National Park and widen participation for under-represented groups through targeted activities and promotion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce barriers to visiting the SDNP- physical, economic, cultural and social.</li> </ul>	<p>Over the last 5 years, SDNPA have worked with partners to improve the accessibility of the Rights of Way network through the replacement of step stiles with more accessible gates, including 33 new gates installed in partnership with Friends of the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>In 2018 and 2021, 98% of respondents rated their enjoyment of the National Park 'high' or 'very high'. Whilst this is an excellent result, this is a slight decrease from the 2015 survey (99%)</p> <p>96% of people surveyed in the 2021 Visitor Survey noted that at least one of the South Downs National Park's seven special qualities was a contributing factor to their enjoyment. This compares to 96.5% in 2018 and 95% in 2015. The next visitor survey is due to take place in 2026.</p> <p>In 2023, Defra "Access for All" grants funded accessible equipment including: Inclusive paddleboard and kayaking equipment, a disability hoist and inclusive bikes, trikes, scooters and trampers. The equipment was distributed to the South Downs National Park and 5 of its partners. In 2023-24, 1,140 visits were facilitated by the equipment. The equipment has supported visits from schools, youth organisations and private individuals including elderly individuals benefiting from a stable craft to explore the water with confidence. One partner has established a regular weekly session with a SEN school and provides access to the equipment for 32 students weekly.</p> <p><a href="#">Seven Sisters Country Park</a> - With the transfer of ownership of Seven Sisters Country Park to the South Downs National Park Authority, a new Section 16 CRoW Access land dedication has added over 130 ha of Access Land to the National Park. The 4.8-mile Country Park Trail opened in spring 2023, this is an easy access trail, with free mobility scooters for hire for blue badge holders. Audio trails. Work included accessible toilets and parking, signage, litter bins and supporting responsible dog ownership and travel by public transport. Also included multiple accessible benches, a chair lift and accessible canoes to provide access to the meanders and a selection of accessible bikes. There is good public transport access from Brighton, Seaford and Eastbourne. including the Sussex Art Shuttle from Lewes and Cuckmere Valley Rambler service April to October from Seaford.</p> <p><a href="#">Community Wanderings</a> - four inclusive, intergenerational walks, with six participants each, enabled new visitors from London to access the</p>

	<p>SDNP and have a guided walking experience, using storytelling to connect people with the landscape.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Miles without Stiles</a> project has developed seven new routes that are suitable for people with limited mobility, funded by Gatwick Airport.</p> <p><a href="#">Take the lead</a> - comprehensive information and advice to dog owners to encourage more responsible behaviour.</p> <p>As part of the <a href="#">Downs to the Sea</a> project, there will be creative opportunities for those who may not have had access to wetlands before. Led by Writing Our Legacy, this will involve working with artists from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse audiences and will explore and respond to the Arun Valley and its wider landscape and heritage.</p>
<p><b>5.2 Improve accessibility</b> - To improve accessibility through a network of high-quality routes connecting communities with the landscape, heritage, attractions and transport hubs and gateways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of high-quality routes.</li> <li>• Connecting between communities, transport hubs, landscapes, heritage and attractions.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2019/20 The South Downs Society surveyed a 5% sample of PRoW within the South Downs National Park. The 93% figure is an increase on 2018/19 where we reported 79% of PRoW were 'easy to use' or 'in good condition'.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Way National Trail</a> - Over the last five years more than 7 kilometres of the South Downs Way has been resurfaced to improve accessibility and over 100km of vegetation clearance has been done to keep the route open and accessible. Over 150 gates, signposts and waymark posts have been repaired or replaced along the Trail over the last 5 years.</p> <p><a href="#">The Serpent Trail</a>, a 106km trail through the Heathlands of the South Downs National Park was relaunched in 2021. As part of the relaunch the SDNPA rangers replaced several stiles on the Serpent Trail making the trail more accessible. As well as a new guidebook launched in April 2021, other work such as the Iping Common boardwalk has contributed to accessibility improvements.</p> <p>Create of new routes are shown in Outcome 1 above.</p>
<p><b>5.3 Encourage sustainable transport</b> - To encourage sustainable access into and around the National Park, encouraging the retention and expansion of rural transport services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the rural transport network.</li> <li>• Pilot new projects</li> <li>• Improve information on public transport.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Public transport</a> and <a href="#">accessible travel</a> pages on the SDNPA website encourages access to the SDNP without a car.</p> <p>The <a href="#">South Downs Discovery Ticket</a> offers unlimited travel across the SDNP and beyond by bus.</p> <p>Three <a href="#">suggested itineraries</a> encourage days out using public transport: 'Summits and sea', 'foodie day out' and 'woodland exploration'.</p> <p>The <a href="#">South Downs Centre</a> acts as a visitor centre and can help visitors plan their stay.</p>

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<p><b>5.1 National Park for all</b> - To enable everyone to experience the National Park and widen participation for under-represented groups through targeted activities and promotion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce barriers to visiting the SDNP - physical, economic, cultural and social.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2021, the SDNPA Visitor Survey reported 8% of visitors used public transport to visit the National Park. This is a reduction from 15% reported in 2018 and is possibly due to the impact of Covid-19. Open Access to the landscape remains a challenge and the impact of recreation can degrade habitats. Inequalities in access remain, with certain individuals and groups less likely to engage with the National Park due to physical, economic, cultural and social barriers.</p>
<p><b>5.2 Improve accessibility</b> - To improve accessibility through a network of high-quality routes connecting communities with the landscape, heritage, attractions and transport hubs and gateways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of high-quality routes.</li> <li>• Connecting between communities, transport hubs, landscapes, heritage and attractions.</li> </ul>	<p>Decreasing amounts of path maintenance as local authority budgets are cut. Staff cutbacks in the SDNPA access team, including the community link person, working with Town and Parish Councils, has caused an issue. There is a perception that community groups are left to their own devices, with new groups not easy to set up. Not clear how much contribution is made by the community or levels of engagement. SDNPA and partners responsible for PROW are seen as delivering projects but not tackling the broader issues. It is difficult to assess progress on any PMP outcomes in the period 2020-2025 as no indicators appear to have been specified in the PMP and hence monitoring and evaluation is not easy. Climate change, with warmer wetter weather, is contributing to reduced accessibility of PROW. Even popular routes are no longer easy to navigate and this will discourage visitors. A particular problem in Hampshire is use of Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) by motorbikes and 4x4s play ground. Few Traffic Restriction Orders (TROs) in place. This deters horse riders and surfaces are made more difficult to walk on. Issues have also been reported in Petersfield.</p>
<p><b>5.3 Encourage sustainable transport</b> - To encourage sustainable access into and around the National Park, encouraging the retention and expansion of rural transport services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the rural transport network.</li> <li>• Pilot new projects</li> <li>• Improve information on public transport.</li> </ul>	<p>Access is increasingly difficult in many parts of the National Park because of a lack of public transport. Threats to bus services in Hampshire would reduce the ability of visitors to complete long-distance routes and for those without private transport to access the SDNP. Bus companies don't seem to be included in the process. No co-ordination group for public transport.</p>

---

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

93% of PROW are 'easy to use', which is remarkable given the reduction in local government funding. There has been considerable progress in improving access for all routes, with free mobility scooters available.

Several new and connecting routes have been created in the past five years.

The South Downs Local Access Forum is proposing to do a survey to benchmark accessibility of the PROW network before devolution.

Visitor satisfaction, as of 2021, was extremely high.

Focusing on activities for young people and those that encourage culturally diverse audiences and ensuring information is available and circulated through appropriate young people and culturally diverse groups, would help broaden the appeal of SDNP.

The SDNPA could work with the local authorities and other partners to increase funding for access and public transport projects.

It is recognised by all stakeholders that sustainable access to the National Park is an issue, which needs to be prioritised.

Formation of a public transport partnership, including transport operators, could help improve co-ordinated access to the SDNP and focus on areas not currently accessible by public transport.

Learning from other National Parks, e.g. the Mountain Goat service in the Lake District, could help develop more commercial public transport routes.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects and the quality and accessibility of routes should be publicly available.

Motorised use of BOATs and other PROW in East Hampshire and Petersfield needs further action.



## OUTCOME 6 - LIFELONG LEARNING

Aim- There is widespread understanding of the special qualities of the National Park and the benefits it provides.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>6.1 Provide outdoor learning for young people -</b> To provide high-quality outdoor learning opportunities as part of a locally relevant curriculum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher training.</li> <li>• Programme of study for head teachers.</li> <li>• Increase high quality outdoor learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Supporting infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>In 2022, 57% of schools within a 10km radius of the boundary reported using the South Downs National Park for learning outside of the classroom experiences at least once a year. This is 17% below the 69% reported in 2017. This is likely due to the reduction in school trips during the Covid-19 period of restrictions and it is likely that this figure will increase in the next survey due to take place in 2027.</p> <p>In 2024, over 6,000 school children have been able to enjoy fun, nature-based trips after their schools were awarded an Outdoor Learning Grant.</p> <p>Since 2021, over 21,000 children have enjoyed all kinds of activities including exploring the landscape at Seven Sisters Country Park, a visit to a working South Downs farm, hands-on conservation tasks, a visit to the Sustainability Centre, searching for “mini-beasts” at Woods Mill, and stepping back in time at Butser Ancient Farm.</p> <p>In 2020/21, due to the pandemic, the focus was on virtual training sessions for teachers. Over 1,000 teachers were involved with 29 sessions.</p> <p>The <a href="#">South Downs Learning Zone</a> offers a wealth of information and resources to help children and young people learn more about the SDNP.</p> <p><a href="#">Our South Downs Learning Network</a> - designing locally relevant programmes of study with head teachers and curriculum planners, delivering teacher training and INSET day sessions with school staff, working with universities to up-skill trainee teachers, targeting learning through initiatives that support health and wellbeing and providing supporting infrastructure through the Learning Zone, Learning Map and Outdoor Learning Grant.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Outdoor Learning Grant</a>, managed by the SDNP Trust, has benefited over 10,000 children to date.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Ambassador School Scheme</a> - Schools that offer high-quality learning experiences and resources that link to the special qualities of the National Park. Currently, Bury CE Primary School, Doxford Junior School and Mouslecoomb Primary School.</p> <p><a href="#">Residential trips</a> - In June 2024, the Garden Classroom returned to the South Downs bringing two residential groups to stay in the newly refurbished camping barn at Seven Sisters Country Park, funded through the SDNP Trust. This follows a successful pilot with a London school in 2021. There are plans to repeat this every year.</p> <p><a href="#">Discover the Downs</a> - initiative started in 2024 to offer Discovery Days, residential stays and farm visits for school children, building on <a href="#">Generation Green</a>.</p>



	<p><a href="#">South Downs Generations</a> - The Friends of the South Downs and West Sussex Primary Schools, working together to record oral histories of the Downs from older residents. Included oral history training for teachers, researching archives and digitising existing oral history recordings.</p> <p><a href="#">Schools' newsletter</a> - offers schools regular updates on the progress of Ambassador schools, grant news, offers and learning opportunities across the National Park.</p> <p><a href="#">Downs to the Sea</a> - Schools will receive assembly presentations and resource packs, supporting the National Curriculum Rivers topic with local information and ideas on how they can help their water environment.</p> <p>Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) were awarded a grant of £19,116 towards the provision of Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme (CEVAS) training for 12 farmers in the South Downs National Park and follow-up advice and assistance from LEAF to assist farmers with planning and running their first educational visit.</p>
Skill and career development.	<a href="#">Apprenticeship bursary programme</a> for Countryside management and forestry skills development managed by SDNP Trust.

### CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<p><b>6.1 Provide outdoor learning for young people -</b></p> <p>To provide high-quality outdoor learning opportunities as part of a locally relevant curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher training.</li> <li>• Programme of study for head teachers.</li> <li>• Increase high quality outdoor learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Supporting infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>Growing deficit in green skills and traditional crafts.</p> <p>Insufficient engagement with local schools and universities.</p> <p>Lack of career advice for countryside managements and associated skills, skills-based learning, training and internships.</p> <p>Not enough education or access. Barriers appear to be transport and funding.</p>

### LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

Learning and ideas for the future
<p>There has been considerable focus on schools and young people, with high levels of engagement and the development of extensive information about the SDNP, linked to the curriculum and schemes to help with the costs of transport. The Ambassador School scheme has been well recieved.</p> <p>However, lifelong learning should be for all ages. There is an opportunity to provide more for older people, especially those from disadvantaged or culturally diverse groups.</p> <p>Young people have called for better engagement with local universities.</p> <p><b>There may be opportuniities with some of the private schools in the area.</b></p> <p>There is a need to focus on encouraging careers in nature conservation, heritage and green finance, including skills-based events, training and internships, buisling on the bursary programme from the SDNP Trust.</p>

## OUTCOME 7 - HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Aim- The South Downs National Park is a well-used and recognised asset for sustaining mental and physical health and wellbeing.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>7.1 Improve health and wellbeing</b> - To develop initiatives which enable local communities and individuals to improve health and wellbeing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve built environment and green infrastructure.</li> <li>• Develop initiatives.</li> <li>• Partnership with health bodies and networks.</li> </ul>	<p>31% of visitors reported using the National Park for the improvement of their health and wellbeing in the SDNPA visitor survey (2021).</p> <p>The SDNPA promotes health and wellbeing by offering accessible walks, creative activities, and conservation tasks to help people connect with nature. Priorities include supporting those facing physical and mental health challenges, loneliness and isolation. Partnerships with organisations like MIND, community mental health teams, and groups supporting carers, families and asylum seekers help expand these opportunities.</p> <p><a href="#">Cultural Heritage Health and Wellbeing Mapping</a> - SDNPA acting as a broker to strengthen health and wellbeing delivery in museums, galleries, libraries and archives, and build on social prescribing.</p> <p>SDNP <a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Strategy</a> published in 2020/21.</p> <p><a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Hubs</a> - There are five Health and Wellbeing Hubs across the SDNP, where there are facilities and people can connect with nature.</p> <p><a href="#">Five ways to nature connectedness</a> offers a pathway for improved mental health by connecting with nature.</p> <p><a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Travel Grants</a> - funding to enable health and wellbeing outcomes by helping relevant organisations pay for travel to the SDNP.</p> <p>Supported 11 partners to deliver health and wellbeing projects through the COVID Recovery Fund in 2020/21.</p> <p>Connecting In Nature programme - Moulsecoomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project, MIND in Brighton and Hove and SDNPA ran 6-week eco therapy courses for small groups focusing on personal resilience, physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p><a href="#">Timescape</a> - an initiative that engaged people facing loneliness and isolation through a creative arts programme based on local landscape and cultural heritage. Partnership between Artscape, SDNPA, Butser Ancient Farm and the Weald and Downland Living Museum.</p> <p><a href="#">Downs to the Sea</a> - working with Primary Care Trust staff, social prescribers, mental health support coordinators and health &amp; wellbeing coaches and delivering a range of activities, including social prescribing,</p>

	to help people experiencing loneliness, anxiety and depression. Working with local organisations there will be opportunities to get involved in nature-based activities, including at RSPB Pulborough Brooks.
--	---

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<b>7.1 Improve health and wellbeing</b> - To develop initiatives which enable local communities and individuals to improve health and wellbeing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve built environment and green infrastructure.</li> <li>• Develop initiatives.</li> <li>• Partnership with health bodies and networks.</li> </ul>	Health inequalities have worsened since Covid-19, particularly for more deprived communities. Rising poor mental health and social isolation further highlight the need for greater inclusion and support. At the same time, funding challenges for voluntary and community sector organisations are increasing due to cuts in public funding. The climate crisis also poses a significant threat, not only to the environment but to people's mental wellbeing.

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

There are some good examples of one-off projects to aid health and wellbeing. However, there is a mental health crisis that Protected Landscapes, partnering with the Primary Care Trust, Health Boards, national charities and community health and wellbeing groups could help address. Partnership working with health and wellbeing organisations is the most effective way of engaging those in most need, and ensure the landscape works better for a more diverse population. Devolution may offer better opportunities to do this, with fewer partners working over larger areas.

A regional approach, working with other Protected Landscapes and with universities, to share resources and evidence of the benefits of nature-based therapy, with clear outcomes and measures could be considered. A shared prospectus with opportunities for nature-based health outcomes has been suggested.

Consideration of quality greenspace and other green infrastructure close to where people live is also critical, and delivery of this through Local Plan policies should be prioritised, adopting a master planning approach where relevant.

Forest bathing is becoming increasingly popular and sites could be promoted to practitioners that are suitable for this.

## OUTCOME 8 - CREATING CUSTODIANS

Aim- More responsibility and action are taken by visitors, communities and businesses to conserve and enhance the special qualities and use resources more wisely.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>8.1 Increase volunteering -</b> To increase and diversify volunteering opportunities that support the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New opportunities for volunteering.</li> <li>• Targeting young people, socially disadvantaged and those with disabilities.</li> <li>• Learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Generation Green was a 16-month funded project (January 2022 – April 2022) that connected young people to nature and promoted pathways to green careers. The project recruited and trained six new South Downs National Park Youth Ambassadors and launched South Downs Youth Action days for youth groups from urban communities. Outdoor Learning Providers collaborated to create online teacher training resources, while new self-led materials were developed for schools to explore the park's special qualities. Hundreds of children from disadvantaged communities participated in nature-based activities through day visits and residential experiences.</p> <p>In 2016, a survey of volunteering organisations reported 95,120 volunteer days relating to the SDNPA special qualities. This is an increase on 91,000 as calculated from the first Volunteering Audit in 2011. A Volunteer Network Survey is currently underway which will provide an updated figure for 2025.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Youth Action</a> - organise volunteering 'action day' sessions for young people aged 16-25, run by the SDNPA. Activities are led by ranger teams and project staff who have a wealth of experience and knowledge in areas such as wildlife conservation, land management, cultural heritage, access to the countryside and environmental campaigning. In 2023-24 21 Youth Action Days engaged 131 young people in positive environmental action.</p> <p><a href="#">#iwill Fund</a> - offers grants to partner organisations to fund youth volunteering opportunities that can be included in the Youth Action programme. Partnership with Clarion Futures Communities South.</p> <p>Exploring Truleigh Hill - In 2022 a group of 16-17 year-old refugees and asylum seekers from Asphaleia visited the SDNP for the first time to go walking and learn about the countryside.</p> <p><a href="#">Micro-volunteering</a> programme - for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With iNaturalist LookWild project - One-off volunteer days took place during 2022 to give people aged 16-25 the opportunity to try volunteering and meet professional rangers for a day, using iNaturalist to add sightings to the NPUK LookWild project.</li> <li>• Environmental monitoring through the iRecord app.</li> <li>• Scheduled Monument monitoring.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">SDNP Volunteers</a> - over 350 volunteers delivering conservation, events and access roles.</p>

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<b>8.1 Increase volunteering -</b> To increase and diversify volunteering opportunities that support the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New opportunities for volunteering.</li> <li>• Targeting young people, socially disadvantaged and those with disabilities.</li> <li>• Learning.</li> </ul>	Insufficient outreach for young people and hard to reach groups. Lack of opportunities for volunteering/ work experience/ placements for under 18's. Lack of inclusivity. A lot of wildlife groups are isolated. Feels like people care less and less about young people. Less reliance on volunteer labour, but also make volunteering opportunities more accessible (transport, timing, beginner friendly, inclusive etc.). Need more research opportunities, including for students and postgrads.

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

Learning and ideas for the future
There is tremendous dedication to volunteering by local people within and around the SDNP. Whilst there is a welcome focus on young people, more could be done to encourage diversity and those from disadvantaged groups. Custodianship is not just about volunteering and more emphasis could be put on working with young people to link more with career progression, and include working with tertiary education to encourage more people to consider countryside, heritage and green finance careers.

## OUTCOME 9 - GREAT PLACES TO LIVE

Aim- Communities in the National Park are more sustainable with an appropriate provision of housing to address local needs and improved access to essential services and facilities.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>9.1 Increase affordable housing</b> - To increase affordable housing stock in the National Park, with focus on exemplary design and using local sustainable materials.	<p>Under the South Downs Local Plan Policy SD28, developments of 11 or more homes must allocate at least 50% of the total as affordable housing. Additionally, developments with 4 or more homes are required to include a proportion of affordable housing onsite. In total, 372 affordable homes have been built since 2014. There are also 536 (2024) outstanding planning permissions for affordable homes yet to be built.</p> <p><a href="#">SDNP Local Plan Review</a> to decide how and where development takes place, and addressing nature recovery, climate change and affordable housing - consultation completed March 2025.</p> <p>33% of homes awarded planning permission in 2023/24 will be affordable. This is up from 16% in the previous two years, and 22% in 2020/21.</p> <p>The Pheonix Project at Lewes – nearly 700 homes, employment and community facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pells School, Lewes – 32 modular affordable homes</li> <li>• Black Robin Farm, Eastbourne – new art gallery and visitor centre</li> <li>• Buckmore Farm, Petersfield – 4730sqm of employment floorspace</li> <li>• Harrier Way, Petersfield – 97-unit retirement community</li> </ul>
<b>9.2 Support vibrant communities</b> - To support community-led initiatives which enhance the towns, villages and landscapes of the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood planning.</li> <li>• Community-led planning.</li> </ul>	<p>There are 62 designated neighbourhood areas in the South Downs National Park of which 71% (45) have created Neighbourhood Development Plans. This is an increase on the 54% of communities that were preparing or had a complete community led plan in 2012.</p> <p>44 Neighbourhood Plans in place and support for 40 Parish Priorities Statements to inform the Local Plan Review.</p> <p><a href="#">SDNPA's Community Infrastructure Levy</a> (CIL) raised nearly £2m in 2023-24. £200k was given to Town and Parish Councils to spend on their own projects and over £1m to groups for specific projects. Projects included access, recreation area and play improvements, village halls, car parks and habitat improvements.</p>
<b>9.3 Improve digital infrastructure</b> - To support improvement in digital infrastructure, speed and coverage throughout the South Downs National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase digital infrastructure, speed and coverage.</li> </ul>	<p>From 2019 to 2024, the percentage of premises unable to receive 2mb/s internet dropped from 1.3% to 0.75%, while those with superfast broadband increased from 81.5% to 89.8%. Connectivity and speeds in the park are slightly above the rural England average but below the UK average.</p> <p>'Growing Sussex 5G Innovation Region' project works with soft fruit and salad growers in Barnham, together with Brinsbury and Plumpton colleges, to deploy advanced wireless connectivity and co-develop technology 'use cases' with telecoms and technology partners, education centres and commercial producers. The use cases will test</p>

	<p>how digital technology and applications using devices such as sensors, monitors, drones and cameras can develop future farming and growing practices that increase sustainable food, drink and plant productivity.</p> <p><a href="#">Digital infrastructure</a> - In 2021, there was approval for five new masts, with improved 4G coverage, along with improved internet coverage on South Western trains.</p>
--	---

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<b>9.1 Increase affordable housing</b> - To increase affordable housing stock in the National Park, with focus on exemplary design and using local sustainable materials.	<p>The abundance of larger properties and the high cost of housing creates challenges for many local communities, especially young people and families. Access to affordable homes is limited, potentially leading residents to travel further for suitable housing and employment.</p>
<b>9.2 Support vibrant communities</b> - To support community-led initiatives which enhance the towns, villages and landscapes of the National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood planning.</li> <li>• Community-led planning.</li> </ul>	<p>Communities are classed as the 176 parishes with at least 33% of their boundary in the National Park. Key facilities are classed as cashpoint, GP, primary school, pub, supermarket and post office. In 2024, of the 176 parishes in the National Park, 99 have access to at least one of the above-mentioned key facilities (55.9%). This is down from 100 Parishes in 2020/21.</p> <p>Additional challenges include maintaining local facilities and services such as shops, pubs and primary schools, and addressing the impacts of an ageing population on health and social care facilities.</p>
<b>9.3 Improve digital infrastructure</b> - To support improvement in digital infrastructure, speed and coverage throughout the South Downs National Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase digital.</li> <li>• infrastructure, speed and coverage.</li> </ul>	<p>Concerns have been raised by the Friends of the South Downs and the wider community about 5G masts. Whilst accepting that 5G was important to businesses, other mechanisms, such as undergrounding were suggested.</p>

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

Learning and ideas for the future
<p>According to the <a href="#">Office for National Statistics</a>, the average percentage of affordable housing in the South East in 2024 was 8.1%. If the SDNPA can achieve 33%, this will be a significant achievement. The growth of Neighbourhood Planning is impressive and demonstrates active involvement with those communities.</p> <p>The SDNP covers a large area, and engaging communities across this is a challenge. To make the SDNP feel more relevant, activities and events that encourage communities of interest from across the area may help strengthen relationships.</p> <p>Linking local services with visitors can help make them more accessible to local people.</p> <p>Engaging with internet infrastructure providers to negotiate less intrusive structures for 5G connectivity would help protect the landscape character of the SDNP.</p>



## OUTCOME 10 - GREAT PLACES TO WORK

Aim- A diverse, sustainable, dynamic economy which is positively linked to the special qualities of the National Park.

### FINDINGS:

#### CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Priority	Examples of achievements
<b>10.1 Strengthen enterprise -</b> To strengthen and support sustainably managed land-based industries and local enterprise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase business support.</li> <li>• Develop employment space.</li> </ul>	<p>The agricultural workforce saw an increase, particularly in full-time roles, suggesting a trend towards more stable employment in the sector.</p> <p>Nature markets are emerging, allowing landowners to sell ecosystem services as a diversified income stream.</p> <p>A business survey in 2023 found that 33% of respondents agreed the SDNP had a positive impact on the rural economy whilst 7% reported a negative impact.</p> <p>SDNPA commissioned a Viticulture Growth Impact Survey in 2021. Predicted 50% growth, which will have a variety of impacts, such as on food production, resource pressure, more employment, increased GVA to the local economy, including tourism and visual landscape impact. There are examples of how the negative impacts can be addressed e.g. Ridgeview Wine Estate became the first English sparkling wine estate to achieve B Corp status in 2022.</p> <p>Market towns within the South Downs National Park perform better than regional averages.</p> <p>The SDNPA launched Green South Downs, <a href="#">Our South Downs</a> Business Network - helps micro and small businesses connect with each other, and share and develop skills, learnings and resources around their common values. This had grown to over 400 members in 2024.</p> <p>87% of all products stocked in Seven Sisters Visitor Centre in 2022, came from within or close to the National Park with a focus on sustainability and minimising plastic waste.</p>
<b>10.2 Increase destination awareness -</b> To increase awareness and desirability of the South Downs as a special place to visit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve national and international profile.</li> <li>• Create unique experiences.</li> <li>• Increase awareness and championing of the SDNP.</li> </ul>	<p>There are an estimated 19 million visitors to the SDNP each year (STEAM report 2016-2023). Visitor numbers have returned to pre-Covid levels and are expected to rise. The economic impact generated by visitors totalled £554 million in 2023, representing an increase of 17% on the previous year. 75% of visitors say they want to travel more sustainably in the next 12 months.</p> <p>Visit Britain has a section dedicated to the <a href="#">South Downs</a> on its website, which will help raise the profile of the area.</p> <p><a href="#">Tripadvisor</a> ranks the SDNP as 4.7/5 and promotes paid for experiences from neighbouring urban centres.</p> <p><a href="#">South Downs Experiences</a> is a curated collection that brings the stories of England's National Parks to life. Part of a <a href="#">national programme</a>, each experience offers an authentic insight into the landscape and special qualities of a National Park. A proportion of the booking fee is reinvested into sustainable tourism initiatives in UK National Parks.</p>



<p><b>10.3 Promote sustainable tourism</b> - To establish the South Downs as an exemplar in sustainable tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative working.</li> <li>• Manage visitor pressures.</li> <li>• Increase international visits.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Green South Downs</a> - A Sustainability Certification scheme that awards enterprises for taking steps towards helping the environment and local community was launched in 2023. This is a partnership between Green Tourism and SDNPA. The scheme makes it easy for travellers to choose sustainable organisations. 30 businesses had been awarded Green South Downs Certification by end 2024.</p> <p><a href="#">Plan your visit to the South Downs</a> - web pages highlight responsible travel, accessing by public transport, and active travel experiences. The extension of Gatwick Airport could be an opportunity to engage more international visitors, especially if co-ordinated regionally.</p>
--	--

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Priorities	Challenges and barriers
<p><b>10.1 Strengthen enterprise</b> - To strengthen and support sustainably managed land-based industries and local enterprise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase business support.</li> <li>• Develop employment space.</li> </ul>	<p>More consistent High-Street data is needed to understand the health of the market towns in the SDNP.</p> <p>The land-based sector in the SDNP faces significant challenges due to the reduction of direct support from the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), recent tax changes, and extreme climatic events like droughts and floods, making farming increasingly difficult.</p> <p>In 2023, over 90% of businesses had not calculated their carbon footprint.</p> <p>The National Park is open for business. There is a need to balance conservation efforts with commercial development. The strict regulations associated with the National Park sometimes hinder diversification opportunities for landowners, limiting potential income-generating activities and job creation. Having more local jobs within the National Park can help retain local people and reduce travel times. Economic development and environmental protection can coexist and enhance each other and works best when this is the case. This can be described as ‘pride of ownership’, where an enhanced business leads to enhanced conservation/ landscape benefits.</p> <p>There needs to be a more nuanced approach, with the National Park designation not being used as an excuse to say ‘no’ before fully exploring opportunities. Better design may be the best way to ensure commercial development is also conserving and enhancing nature and landscape.</p>
<p><b>10.2 Increase destination awareness</b> - To increase awareness and desirability of the South Downs as a special place to visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve national and international profile.</li> <li>• Create unique experiences.</li> <li>• Increase awareness and championing of the SDNP.</li> </ul>	<p>Whilst awareness of the SDNP is high, this is seen as having a detrimental impact on habitats, wildlife and local people, as mentioned below.</p>

<p><b>10.3 Promote sustainable tourism</b> - To establish the South Downs as an exemplar in sustainable tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative working</li> <li>• Manage visitor pressures.</li> <li>• Increase international visits.</li> </ul>	<p>With the SDNP being so close to major cities, and increased urbansiation around the boundaries, there is considerable concern from communities of the impact of increasing visitor numbers, including traffic, noise, litter, path erosion and parking. Better signage was requested to help ensure reponsible parking and to signpost visitors away from key hotspots.</p> <p>Lack of public transport to some areas of the National Park is seen to impact sustainable tourism, as is the lack of active travel infrastructure. The extension to Gatwick Airport will bring more international visitors to the area, which could add to visitor pressures if not managed sustainably.</p>
---	--

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

The ‘Our South Downs’ and Green Tourism schemes are welcomed as they should help engage businesses in more sustainable practices and encourage visitors to have greater environmental responsibility.

However, more consideration should be given to ensure services and infrastructure are available to encourage visitors to enjoy the SDNP sustainably, such as encouraging the use and availability of public transport and active travel. Consideration is needed of the impact on visitors on market towns and businesses, with support for business to maximise beneficial impacts.

Economic development and environmental protection can coexist and enhance each other optimally when this balance is achieved. This concept is known as ‘pride of ownership,’ where improved business leads to enhanced conservation and landscape benefits. A more nuanced approach is required, avoiding the use of the National Park designation as a reason to reject proposals before thoroughly exploring all opportunities. Effective design may be the most suitable method to ensure that commercial development conserves and enhances nature and the landscape.

Working with other National Parks could be extended to National Landscapes, especially in the South East or around London, sharing resources to help promotion, especially to international visitors. The extension of Gatwick Airport could offer a unique opportunity to promote sustainable tourism and the food and drink offer, alongside a shared business case for compensation based on the special qualities of the respective Protected Landscapes.

## OVERSIGHT ACROSS PMP

### PERCEIVED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Topic	Strengths	Weaknesses
The South Downs National Park	<p>The SDNP is recognised as a place that is inter-connected, feeds creativity, aids conservation, promotes education and raises awareness of environmental sustainability.</p> <p>It is valued as a place to connect with nature and promote physical and mental wellbeing, and is generally felt to be inclusive and welcoming.</p>	<p>Improvements for nature are not being achieved at the speed and scale that's needed.</p> <p>National Park purpose is to 'conserve and enhance'. Needs to be stronger 'restore and create'.</p>
The South Downs National Park Authority	<p>Relationships between SDPNA and some partners are extremely good, and collaborative approaches on the ground work well. This is especially true for those involved with water management and climate change mitigation.</p> <p>Financial support from the SDNPA has been welcomed and has enabled some important projects. SDNPA understand funding opportunities and co-ordinate bids.</p> <p>Surrey Hills Trust Fund is seen as a major success. SDNPA congratulated on having the foresight to invest in staff resources to enable fundraising. Support for other Protected Landscapes thinking about adopting this approach has been good.</p> <p>Some partners found the SDNPA inspiring and looked to them for inspiration and advice, which enables partners to mirror thought processes on procedures.</p>	<p>SDNPA has lost credibility.</p> <p>Management and make-up of Board should be more inclusive and representative, with more elected Councillors involved.</p> <p>Perception that policy priorities have changed from restoration of chalk grassland and increased biodiversity to tree planting, housing and employment. Ineffective management and strategies - have not delivered. Lack of focus.</p> <p>Would welcome SDNPA being seen as the 'glue', bringing together partners to 'do'.</p> <p>Reviewing the Local Plan and PMP at the same time is not helpful.</p> <p>Lack of joined up thinking around planning.</p> <p>Theres a lot of activity but can still feel 'siloed'.</p> <p>Lack of consultation, community engagement and communication between landowners and public bodies.</p>

The SDNP Partnership Management Plan	<p>PMP is a useful document for funding bids as it gives a clear structure for SDNP priorities and demonstrates how projects align.</p>	<p>PMP not seen as a partnership document but as a strategy for the SDNPA. Partners felt that participating in this process was helping the SDNPA. The PMP is designed and branded as SDNPA. Needs to include partner logos if partners have agreed to help deliver.</p> <p>Doesn't feel like key partners, such as water companies, forestry, Environment Agency are working to the PMP or making significantly more impact within the SDNP boundary.</p> <p>Disappointment at the level of partner engagement in the new PMP. Online meetings not helpful. River Trusts could have helped send out community invitations.</p> <p>Next PMP needs to clearly show who is delivering.</p> <p>Encourage longer-term thinking to understand the long-term vision, e.g. in 75 years' time what is the aspiration for the level of urban development land cover?</p> <p>Not sure it needs to be an 80-page document.</p> <p>Not clear whether the PMP is for the community or partners.</p> <p>Would welcome better guidance from Defra nationally on Management Plan development for all Protected Landscapes, which would make it easier for main partners to engage e.g. National Trust, CLA etc. and measure impact. Management Plans tend to be inward looking, and all Protected Landscapes are different but joint working and partnership relationships would be enhanced by common standards. Defra settlement doesn't encourage collaborative working out of area.</p> <p>Cost of living crisis and impact on nature-disconnection. How do we make it relevant?</p> <p>What difference does it make to other public bodies to further the purpose of the National Park?</p>
Devolution		<p>Sussex, Brighton and Hampshire and the Solent are in the first phase to fast-track Mayoral Authorities. This will impact planning and delegation of development control. The existing, more complex LA structures meant that NP has bigger voice, acting to bring the</p>

	<p>LAs together over a wider area. This role will be challenged by Mayoral Authorities.</p> <p>Funding will need to be negotiated. This could be a huge distraction.</p>
Data	<p>Little or no data, monitoring or evaluation. No chapter in the PMP on targets (although there was in the PMP 2014-19). Not clear on how successfully the outcomes have been achieved or who has been achieving what. Does not seem to be much promotion of this. It is not clear what impact partners have had and how this is measured. What's the progress towards the long-term vision?</p>
Resources	<p>Government funding strategies - In the past there was some rural proofing of major grants such as the LEADER programme, then SDF, plus Rural SDF. Funding is now going to LA for economic investment but not focused on rural.</p> <p>Lack of staff and funding an issue across the board.</p> <p>Issues with staff time and resources mean there are more opportunities than can be addressed. Need to improve training and engagement with Local Authorities e.g. on SUDs.</p>

## LEARNING TO INFORM DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW PMP

### Learning and ideas for the future

Targets, monitoring and a culture of evaluating progress should be integrated into the new PMP, with the results published on the website. Project pages should be updated on a regular basis to demonstrate the impact of projects, and enable people to understand the benefits of these investments.

Whilst partnership working with the SDNPA can be excellent, as demonstrated by the range of partnership initiatives above, this does not seem to be true across the board. It is felt by some that the partnership approach needs to change.

Partners see SDNPA's role as the strategic facilitator with partners doing more delivery. The SDNPA should be enabling, encouraging, signposting and inspiring others to get better results.

Community partners are well placed to engage at grass-roots as the local, trusted voice. Partnership approaches that help enable this, with the SDNPA taking the strategic lead and influencing policy, is seen as more productive.

The PMP should be a shorter document, with more focus, which includes priorities led by partners. A long-term (75-year) vision, with targets based on scenario planning, would help focus activity and set targets.

The introduction of a SDNP induction scheme for partners has been suggested, and more opportunities for learning generally.

The PMP/ SDNPA should be key enabling mechanisms for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to ensure this is delivered within the SDNP.

SDNPA could share expertise and knowledge in BNG and blended finance opportunities for Environmental Markets, and the shopfront for available BNG projects, with other organisations and consider the role of partners who are working with landowners e.g. as brokers.

Pressure on nature means that all involved need to move fast. SDNPA should be demonstrating exemplars of good practice. The National Landscapes can appear to be more innovative.

A Regional Protected Landscapes Partnership could share knowledge and good practice, add value, enable a collective voice that is more influential with policy makers, and co-commission work.

Examples of where this could be prioritised include, Farming in Protected Landscape and Access for All programmes, green investment schemes, water management, Gatwick Airport compensation scheme and sustainable tourism promotion, regional approach to green infrastructure master planning and investment in public transport, health and wellbeing initiatives, and deer and squirrel management.

## APPENDIX 3 - STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC SURVEY REPORT

An online survey was provided to the PMP distribution list of approximately 700 partner contacts, shared through some sector stakeholder and partner newsletters and networks, and with the public in attendance at the PMP engagement events, including the Dark Shies events. The survey was a mechanism to capture info from stakeholders who were part of the co-creation of the draft PMP, who couldn't attend a workshop or wanted to add additional information.

Broader public feedback will be encouraged through the public consultation on the draft PMP later.

### OVERVIEW

South Downs National Park Authority ran an online survey titled 'South Downs National Park: Working in Partnership' to which it received 126 responses.

The questions within the survey were:

1. How do you know the South Downs?
2. What do you like most about the South Downs?
3. Why are you worried about the South Downs?
4. Why are you hopeful about the South Downs?
5. What change, if any, have you noticed in the South Downs over the last five years?
6. If you had to choose, which of these areas would be the highest priority for you?
7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the South Downs now or in the future?

Questions 8, 9 and 10 asked questions about the Respondent, namely their age, gender and the start of their postcode.

Questions 1, 5 and 7 were open ended questions, allowing the respondent to comment in free text.

Questions 2, 3 and 4 asked the respondent to position a slider according to how they felt related to the question. These questions also offered the respondent the opportunity to add further comments after they had moved all of the sliders.

Question 6 asked the respondent to rank six options in their priority order. Following this, the respondent was given the chance to explain why they had selected the rankings they had.

We have been asked to analyse the responses according to the respondents Age, their gender and their location to pick out any common threads or anomalies in the respondents selections for the sliders and rankings.

---

### AGE, GENDER AND LOCATION ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Within the 'About You' section of the survey the Respondents were asked to confirm which age range bracket they fell into. Their responses were grouped:

Bracket	Responses
<b>Under 18</b>	5
<b>18 - 24</b>	1
<b>25 - 34</b>	6
<b>35 - 44</b>	11
<b>45 - 54</b>	16

<b>55 - 64</b>	23
<b>65 +</b>	55
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	9

Those who 'preferred not to say' were discounted from the analysis related to age.

To provide us with a meaningful sample sizes, we have grouped the brackets for the analysis as shown below:

Bracket	Responses
<b>Under 35</b>	12
<b>35 - 64</b>	50
<b>65 +</b>	55

Giving a total of 117 responses analysed by age.

To produce the analysis, we have looked at each response and the position on the slider the respondent selected, added these up for the age group the respondent falls within and divided that by the total number of responses for that age group to produce a percentage across the age group. For example, looking at responses from those aged 65 + to Question 3, sub topic, Biodiversity or nature loss:

<b>Q3.1. Biodiversity or nature loss</b>		
<b>Selector position</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1</b>	6	11.321%
<b>2</b>	0	0.000%
<b>3</b>	6	11.321%
<b>4</b>	9	16.981%
<b>5</b>	32	60.377%

There were 52 responses from the East area, six of which selected position 1 on the slider. The percentage total of the respondents who selected position 1 is then calculated by dividing 6 by 53 and multiplying by 100 (giving 11.321%). The same calculation is used for those from the Under 35 and 35 – 64 age brackets, to provide us with comparable stats for the response to this question.

This same method was used for all questions and sub topics in questions 2, 3 and 4.

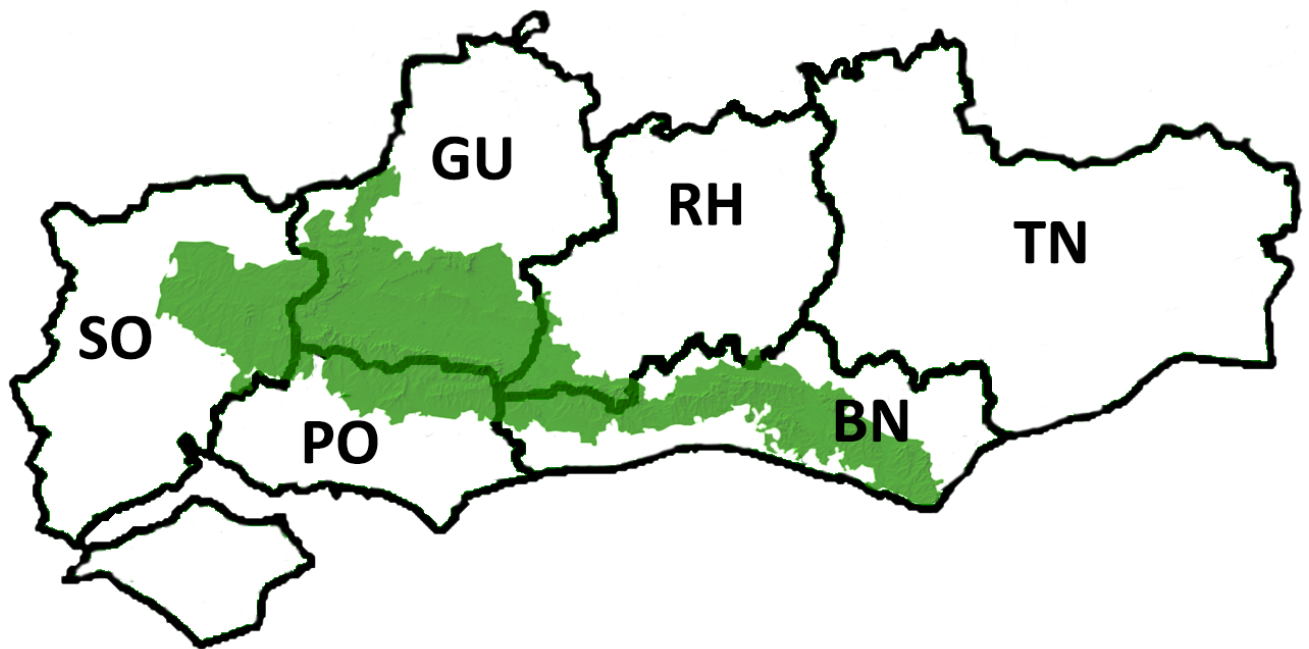
The respondents were also asked to confirm their gender. The responses were grouped:

Option	Responses
<b>Female</b>	57
<b>Male</b>	60
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	8
<b>Non-binary</b>	1

Those who 'preferred not to say' were discounted from the analysis as well as the 'Non-binary' as this did not provide a meaningful quantity to allow analysis. Giving a total of 117 responses analysed by gender.

The respondents were also asked to confirm where they lived by providing the first part of their postcode.





This map shows how the Postcode areas relate to the South Downs National Park. The Park is shown in green above.

The responses were grouped:

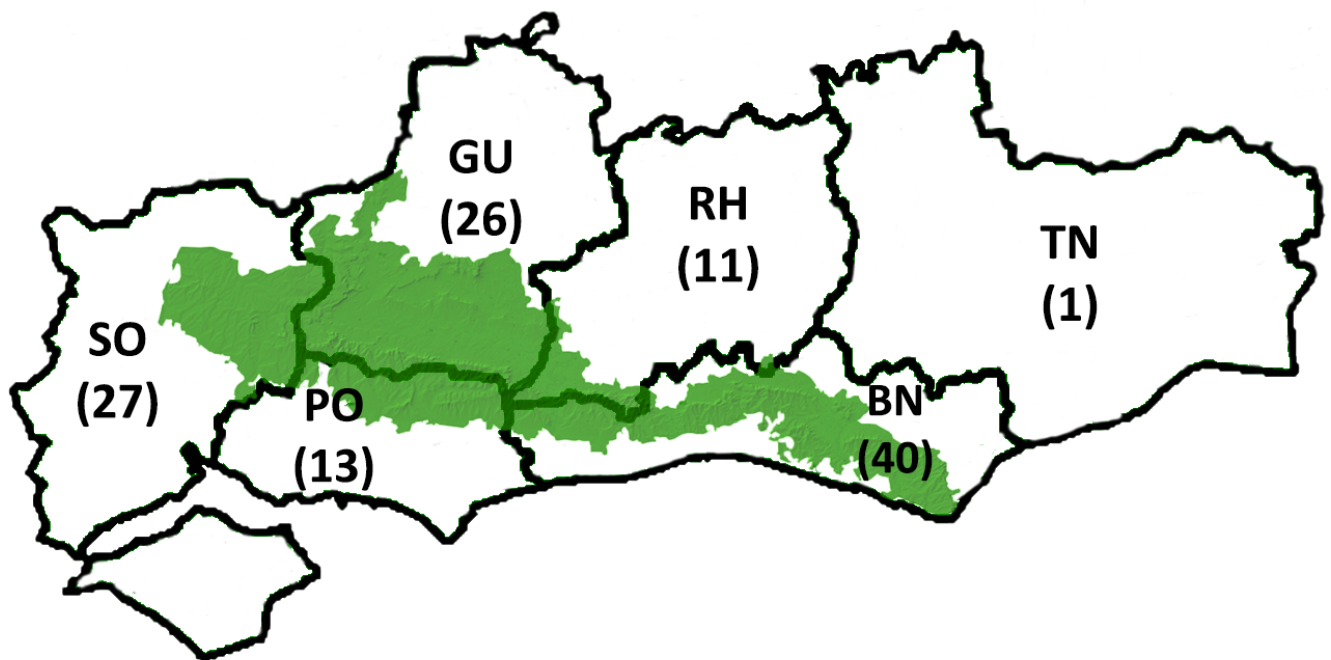
Postcode Area	Responses
BN	40
GU	26
PO	13
RG	2
RH	11
SE	1
SO	27
TN	1
Not given	5

Those who did not give a postcode have been discounted from the analysis. Four responses were received from the RG, SE and TN postcode areas, these too have been discounted.

The remaining postcode areas have been grouped as follows:

Grouping	Postcode Area	Responses
East	BN	40
North	GU and RH	37
West	PO and SO	40

Giving a total number of 117 responses analysed by area.



This map shows how many responses were received in each Postcode area.

Question 6 asked the respondents to rank six topics in order of their priority to the respondent, number 1 being the highest priority and number 6 being the lowest priority for the respondent. To produce a set of comparable statistics we have assigned each ranking with a weighting, rank 1 would score 6 points, rank 2 would score 5 points and so on until rank 6 would score 1 point, then assign these points to the quantity of responses according to that rank and compare the scores.

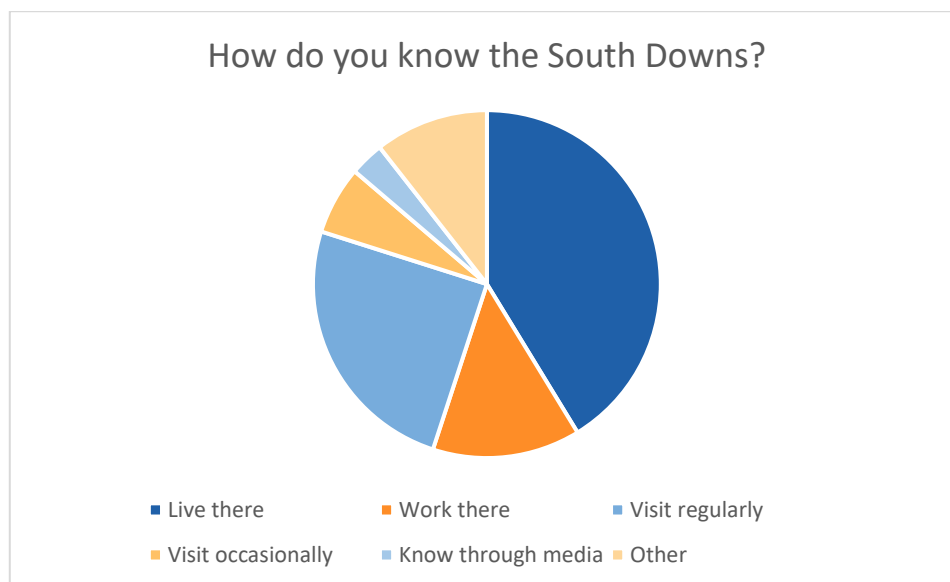
The table below shows the Ranking those aged between 35 and 64 selected as their priorities. For example, 11 respondents selected 'Climate action' as their highest priority:

Rank	Q6.1. Culture, arts and heritage	Q6.2. Climate Action	Q6.3. Vibrant and resilient communities	Q6.4. Strong local economy	Q6.5. Improve access and enjoyment	Q6.6. Nature and Biodiversity
1	2	11	0	2	5	30
2	3	20	9	5	2	11
3	11	6	16	9	6	2
4	7	7	11	11	11	3
5	18	4	10	8	9	1
6	9	2	4	15	17	3
Score	137	221	166	137	132	257

This produces a score for each priority, the highest score being the groups highest priority, in this case, 'Nature and Biodiversity' is the highest priority (scoring 257) of those aged between 35 and 64 and 'Improve access and enjoyment' is the lowest priority (scoring 132).

## RESULTS

### QUESTION 1 - HOW DO YOU KNOW THE SOUTH DOWNS?



Live there	78
Work there	26
Visit regularly	47
Visit occasionally	12
Know through media	6
Other	20

### QUESTION 2 - WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE SOUTH DOWNS?

#### OVERVIEW

The Respondents were asked to consider a series of questions related to what they liked most about the South Downs. These questions were:

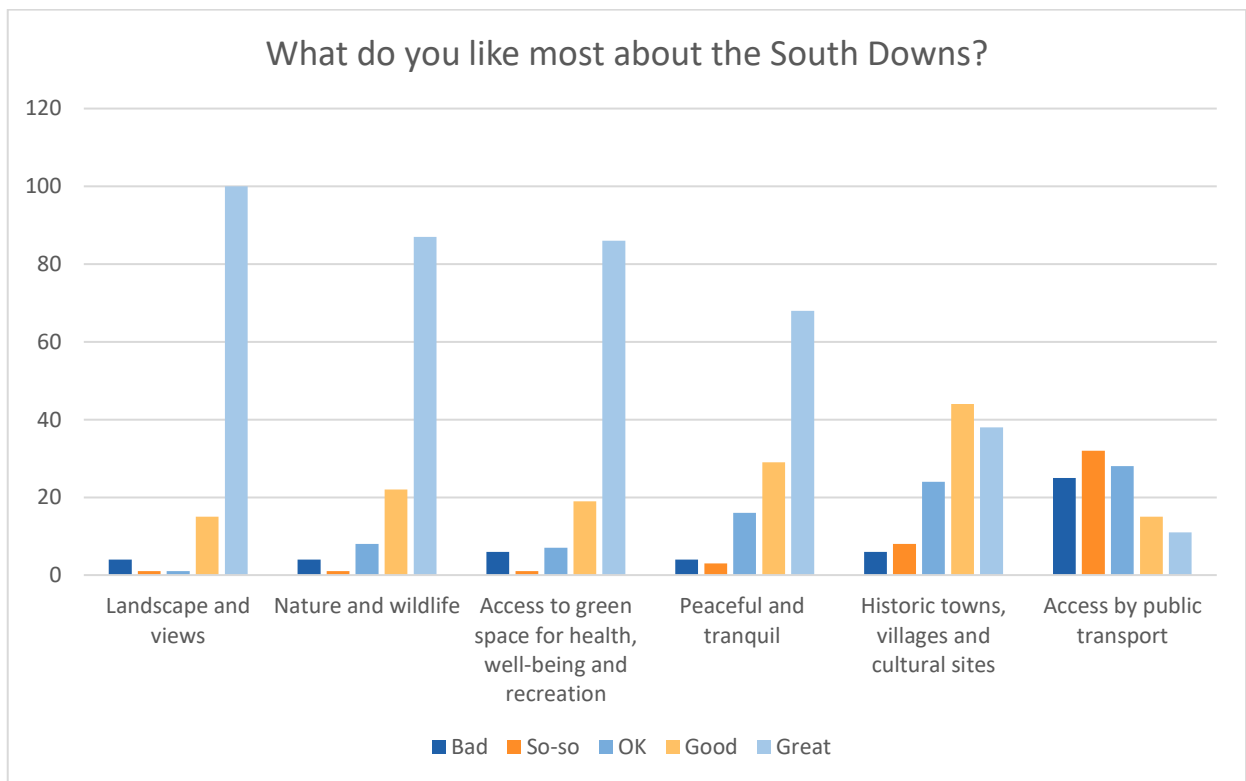
- Access by public transport
- Historic towns, villages and cultural sites
- Landscape and views
- Nature and wildlife
- Access to green space for health, wellbeing and recreation
- Peaceful and tranquil

The respondents were asked to show how they felt about aspects to do with the South Downs National Park, (SDNP) according to the areas listed above, by moving a slider to the appropriate point on a scale. The scale went from 1 to 5, with one being the lowest point on the slider (bad) to five being the highest

point on the slider (great). For the purpose of this question we have named the points of the slider as follows:

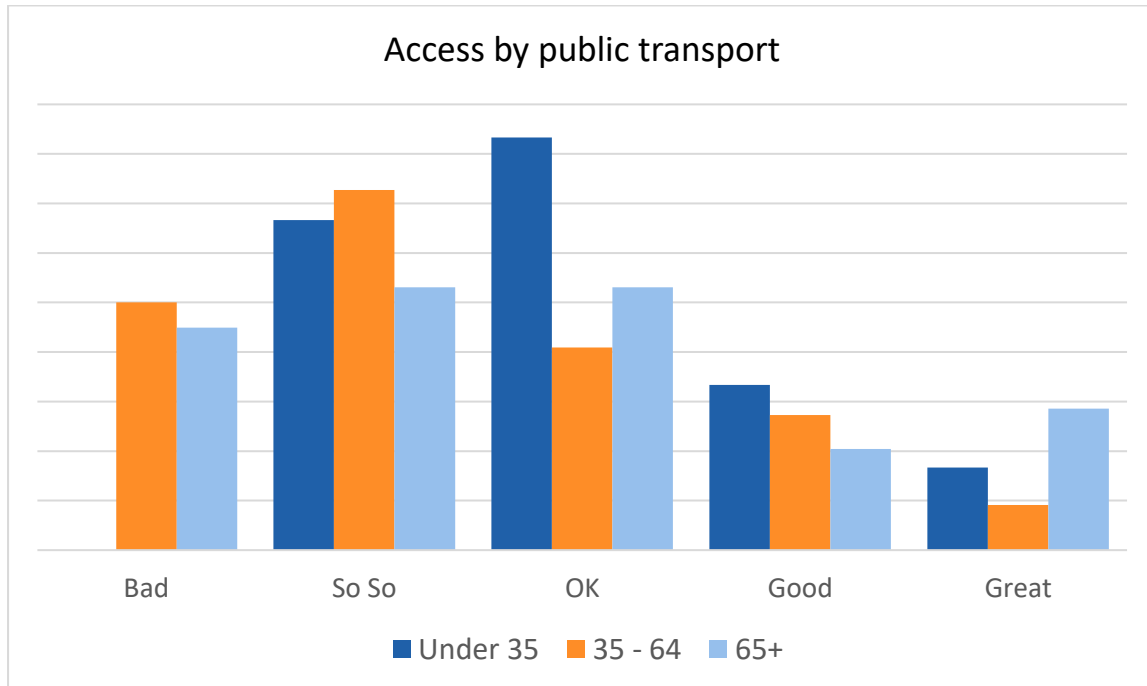
- 1 – Bad
- 2 – So So
- 3 – OK
- 4 – Good
- 5 – Great

## OVERALL RESULTS



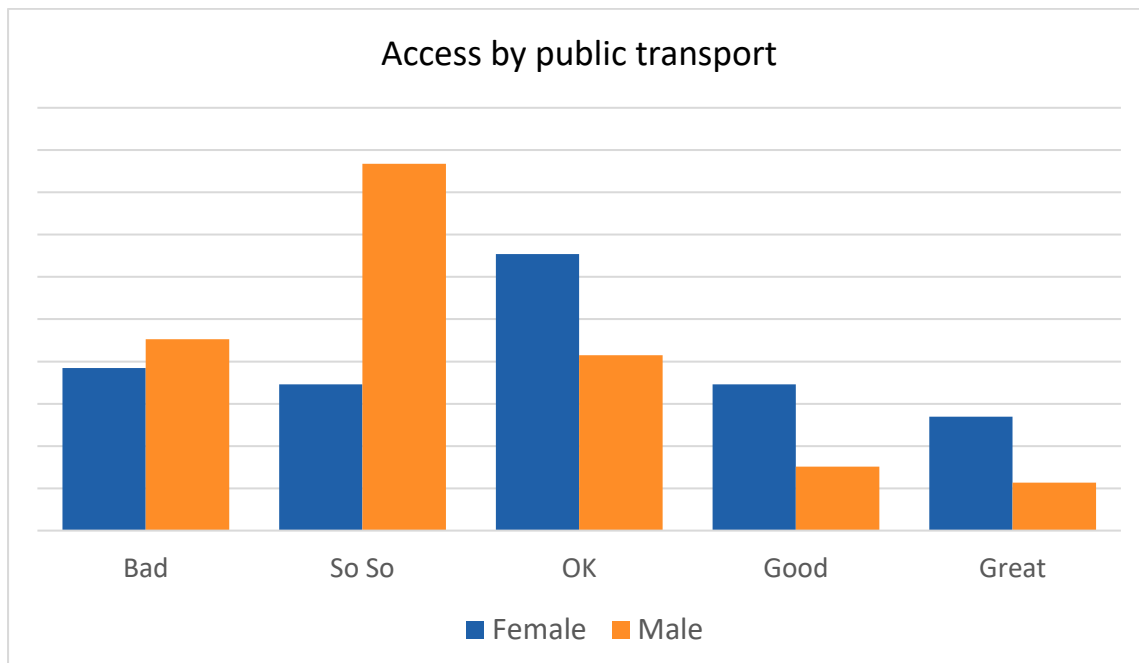
## ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



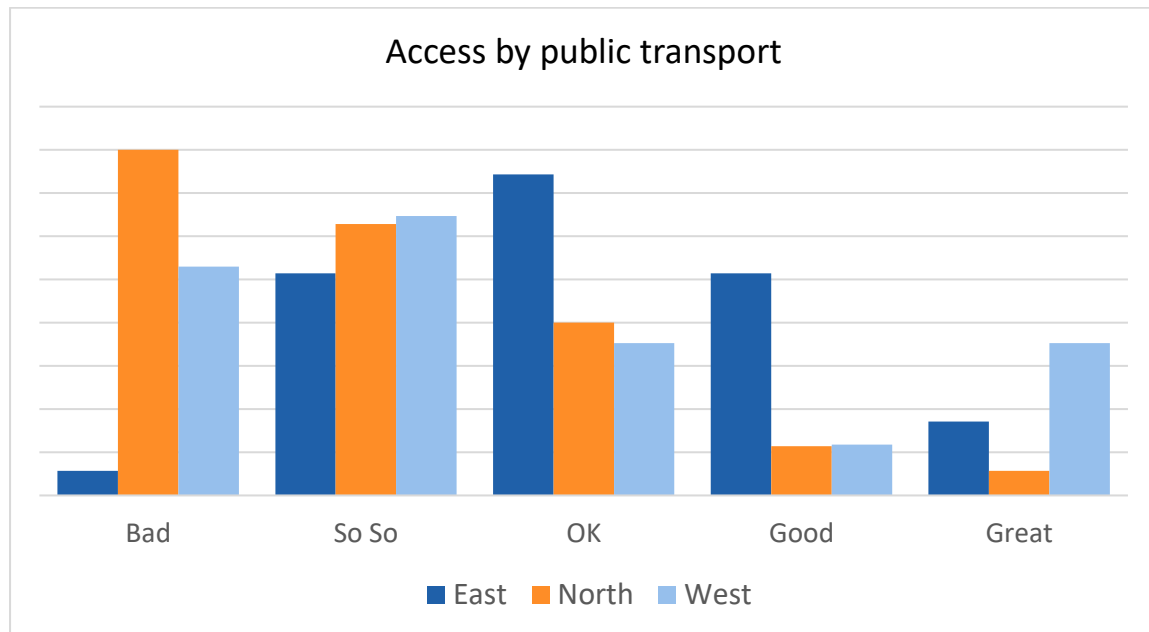
From this chart we can see that none of the Under 35's felt that the access by public transport was bad, however, the majority of the Under 35's did consider access by public transport to SDNP was only So So or OK. There was a similar response from the other age groups, with comparatively few selecting Good and very few selecting Great.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



From this chart we can see that Males liked the access by public transport to the SDNP less than Females, with the majority of males considering access to the park as OK or below, while the majority of Females considered it OK or above.

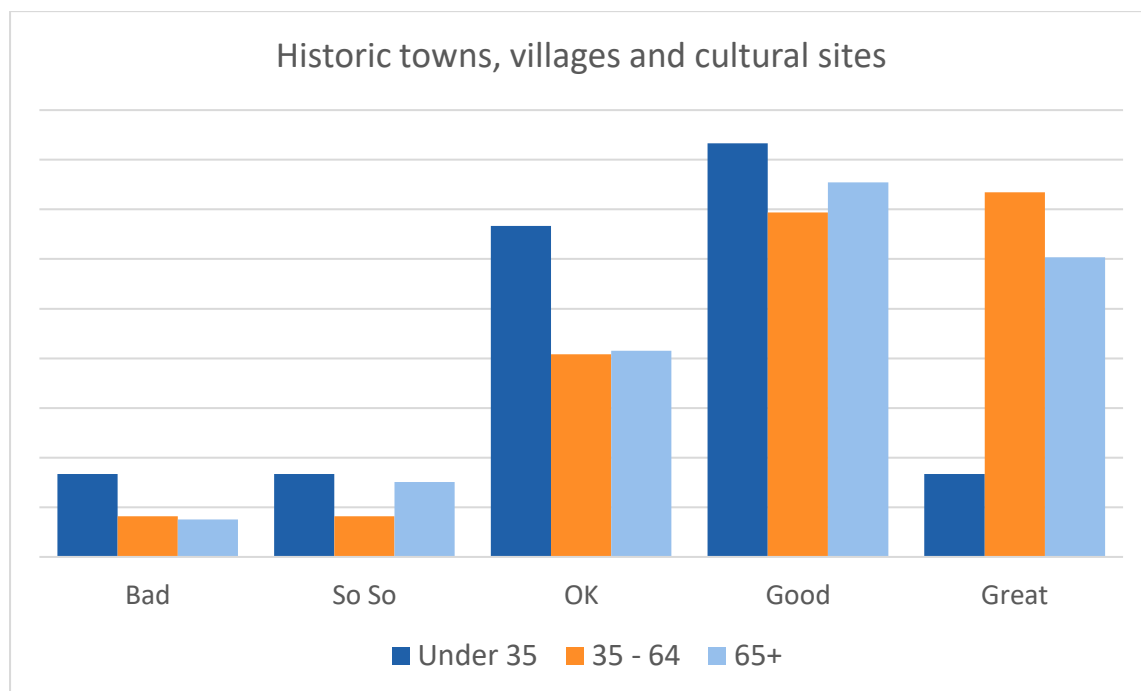
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



This shows that those in the East liked access to the SDNP more than those in the North or West, with the majority of those in the east feeling that access to the SDNP by public transport was So So to Good while the majority of those in the North or West felt that access to the SDNP by public transport was Bad to OK

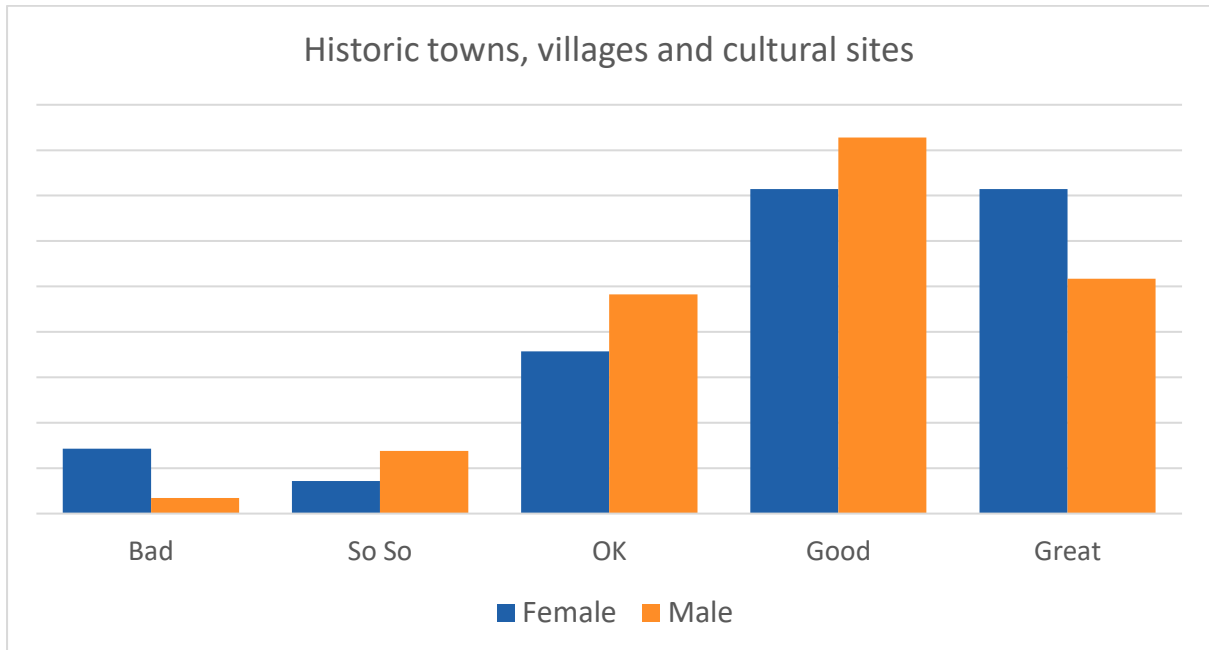
#### HISTORIC TOWNS, VILLAGES AND CULTURAL SITES

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



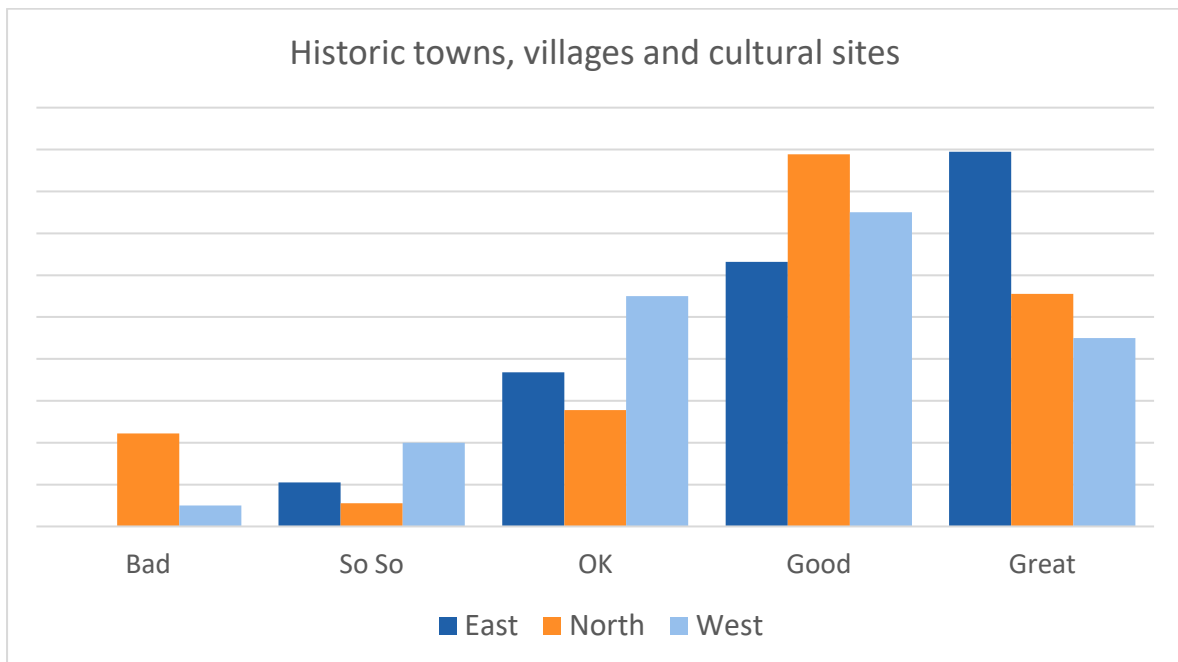
The majority of all age groups felt they were happy with the historic towns, villages and cultural sites within the SDNP. Those aged Under 35 felt a little less happy, with less feeling they were Great than the other age groups.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This appears to show that gender makes very little difference to how happy respondents feel about the historic towns, villages and cultural sites within the SDNP.

When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:

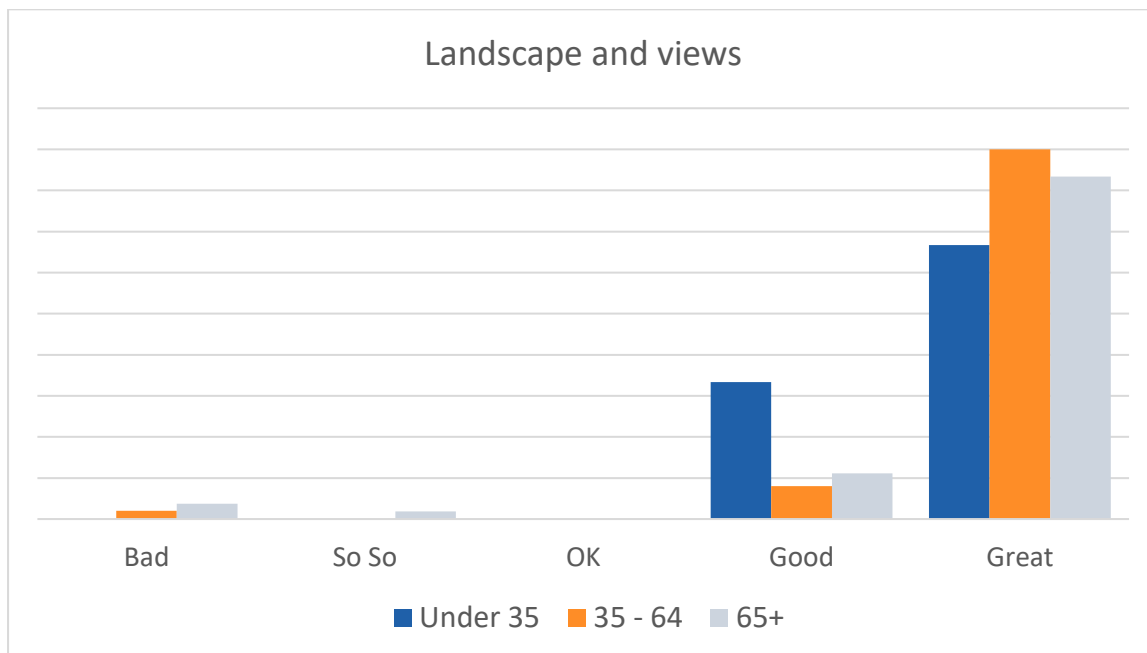


Whilst the majority of respondents from all locations showed they were happy with the historic towns, villages and cultural sites, those in the East appear to be happier than those in the West.



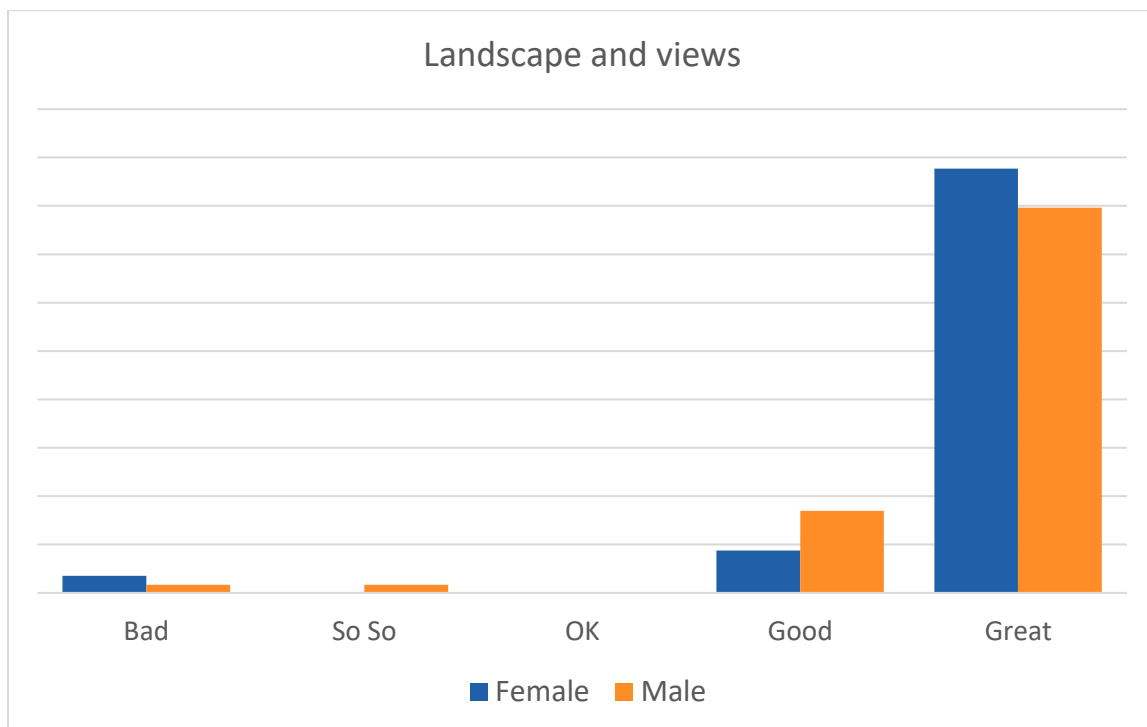
## LANDSCAPE AND VIEWS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



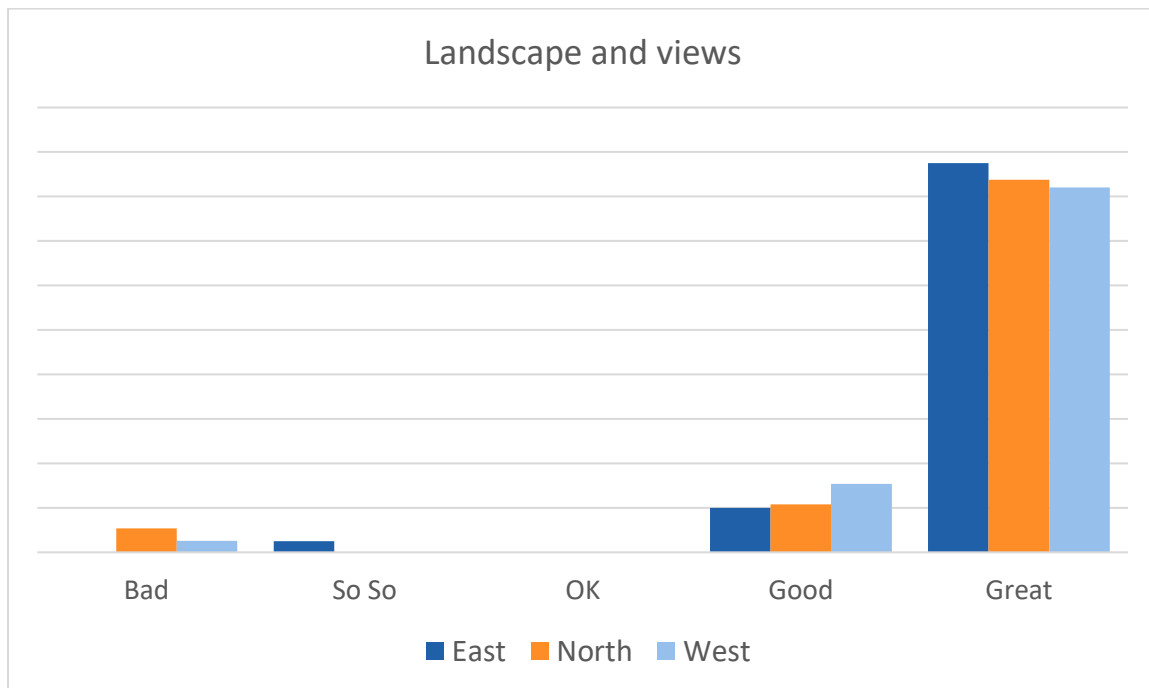
The majority of all age groups responded that they were happy with the landscape and views within the SDNP. Those Under 35 showed slightly less enthusiasm, but only marginally.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



The majority of both Male and Female respondents felt that the landscape and views were great.

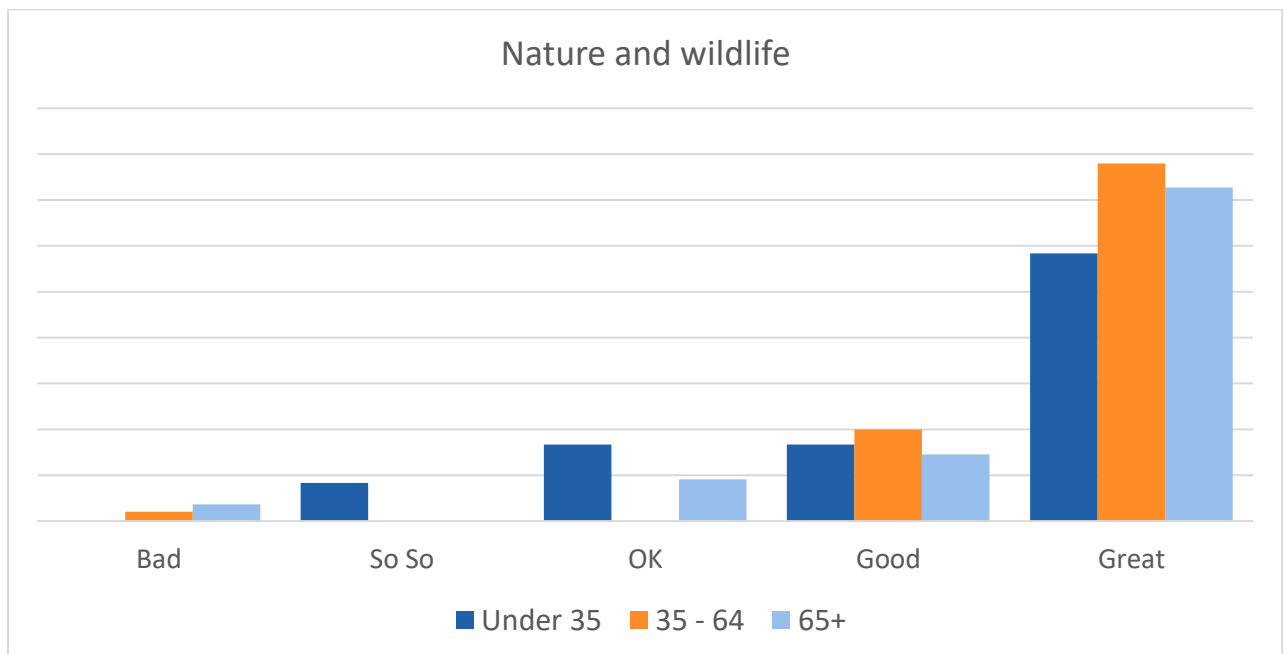
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



It did not appear to matter which location around the park responses were received from, the majority all felt that the landscape and views were great.

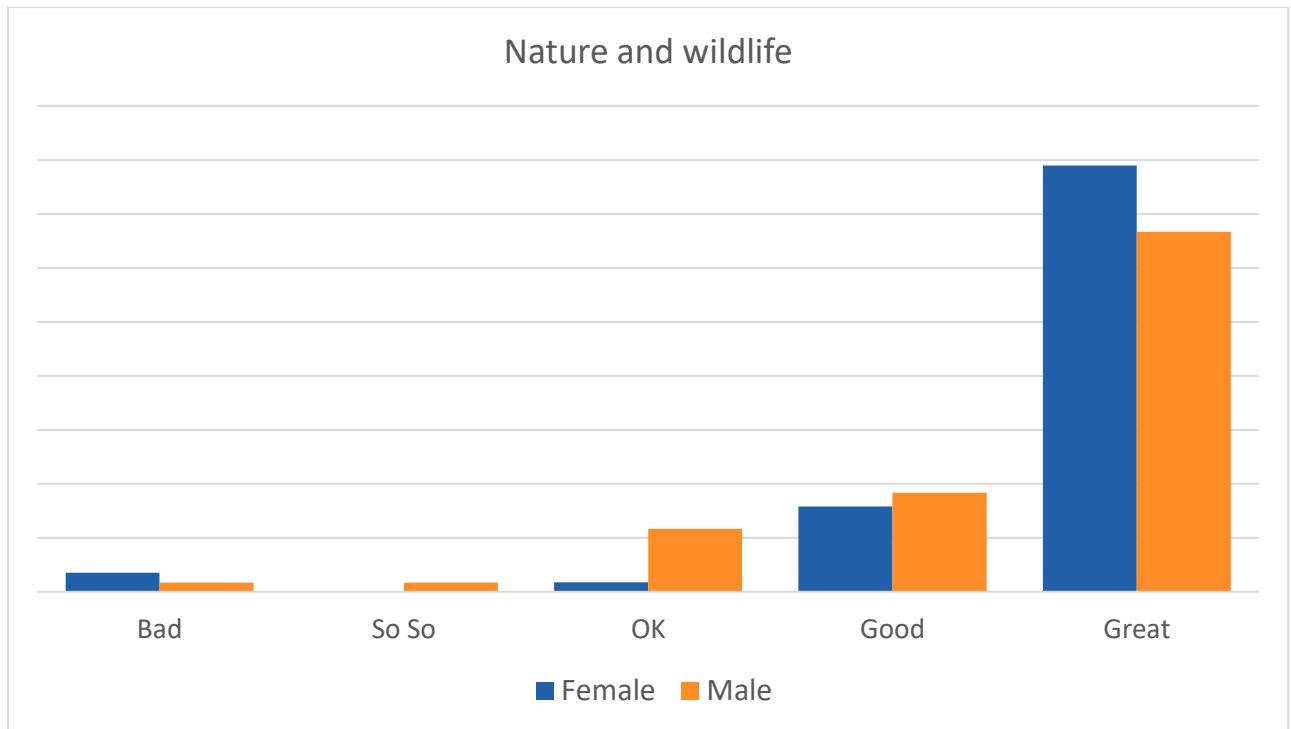
#### NATURE AND WILDLIFE

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



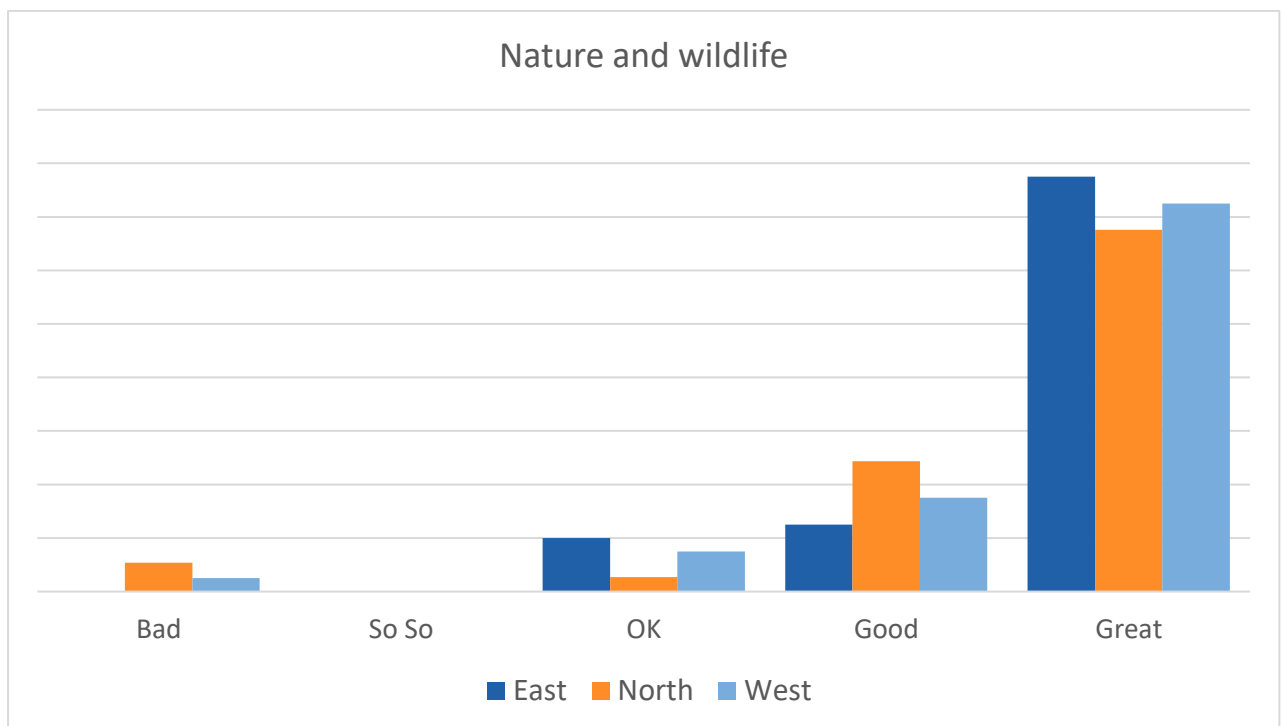
The majority of all age groups felt that nature and wildlife was Good or Great within the SDNP. Again, those Under 35 showed slightly less enthusiasm, but only marginally.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This appears to show that gender makes very little difference to how happy respondents feel about the nature and wildlife within the SDNP.

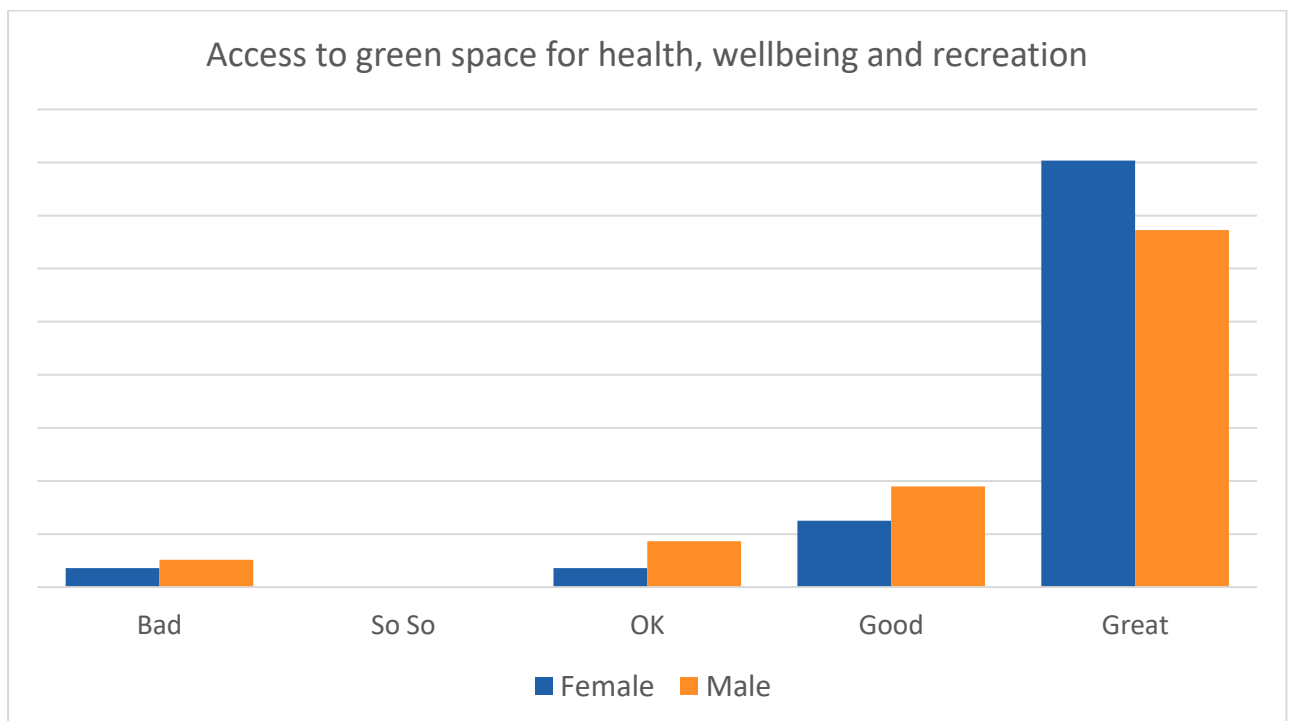
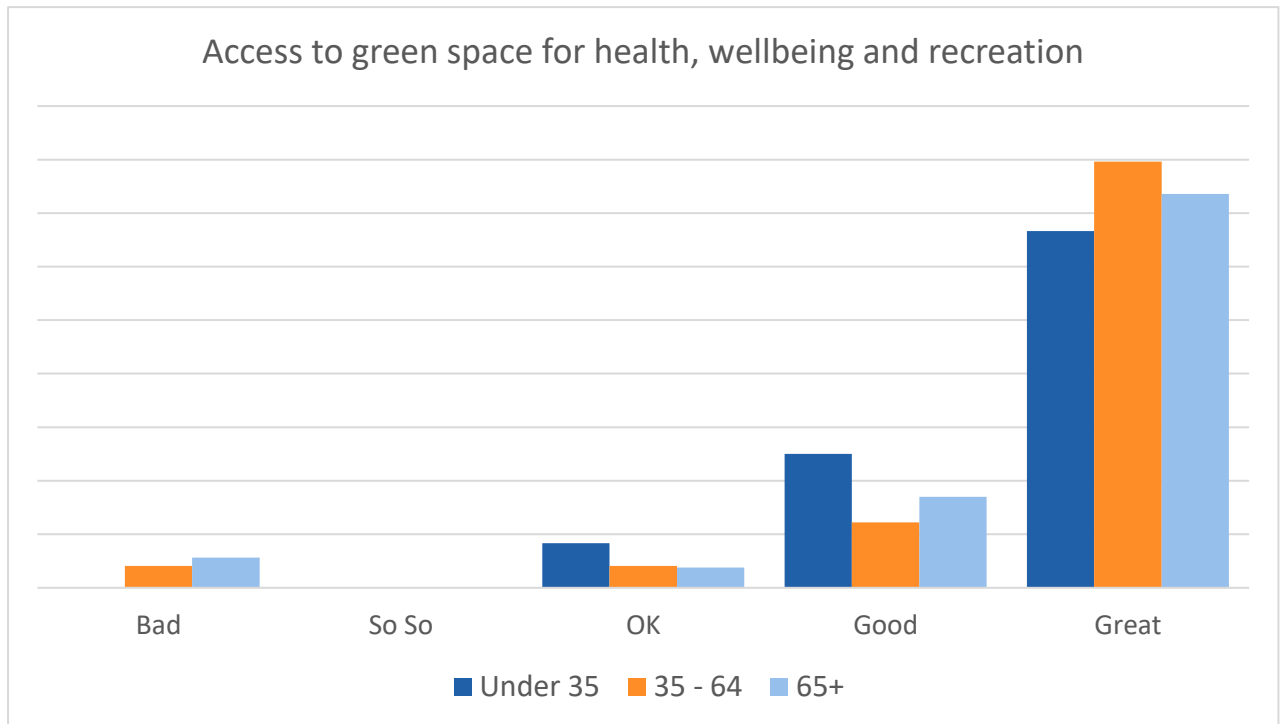
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:

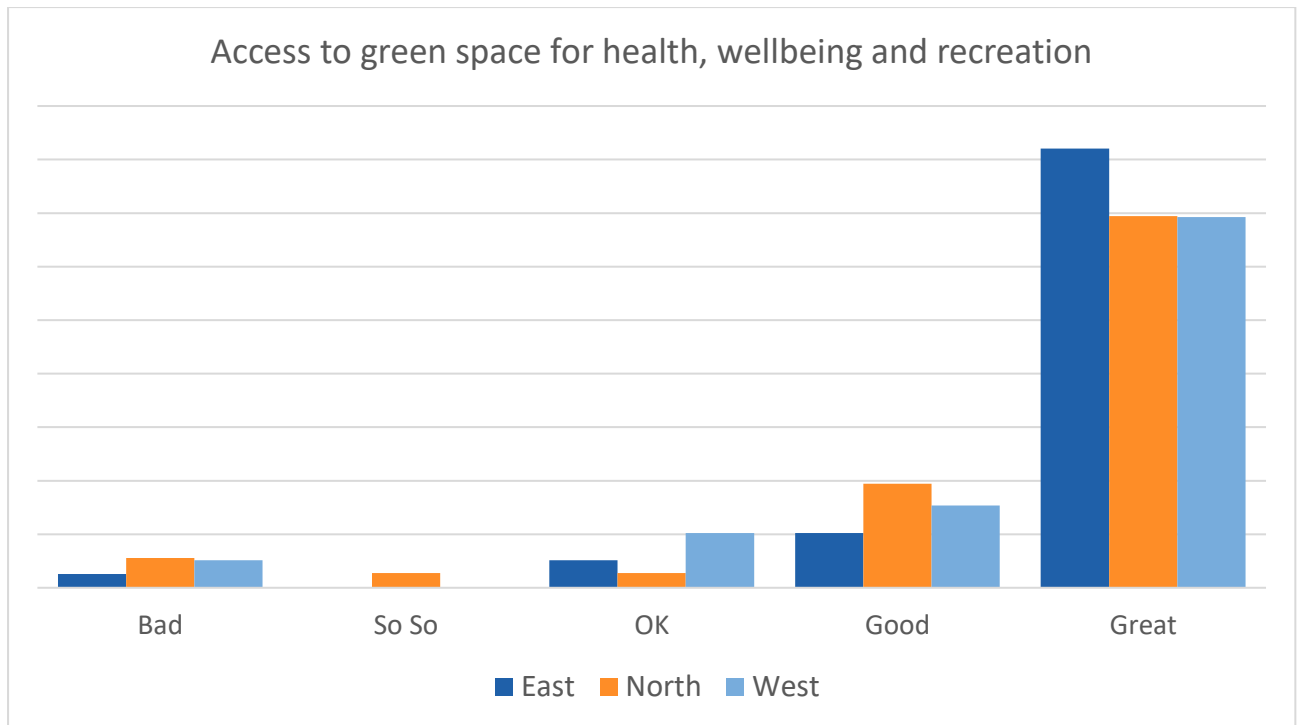


This appears to show that location does very little to affect how happy respondents feel about nature and wildlife within the SDNP.

## ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE FOR HEALTH, WELLBEING AND RECREATION

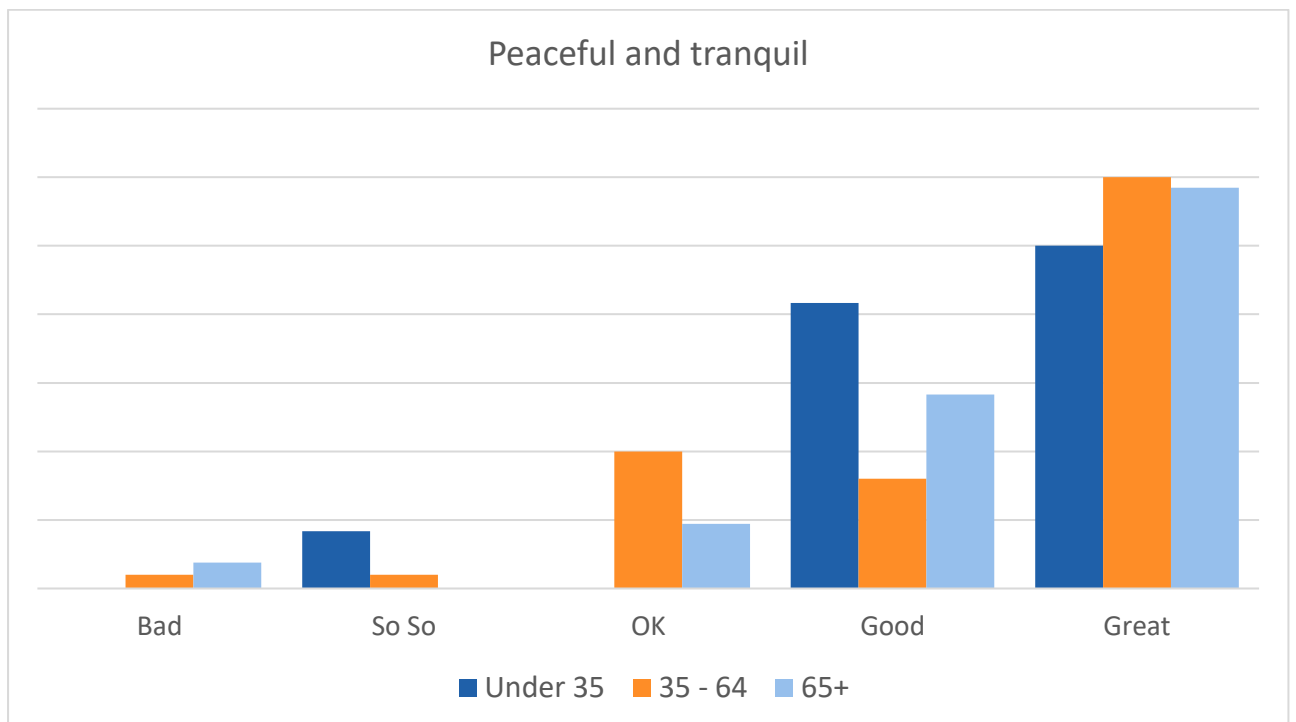
When respondents answers to how happy they are in relation to Access to green spaces for health, wellbeing and recreation are analysed it is apparent that Age Gender nor location show much difference in responses. The majority of all responses being either Good or Great:





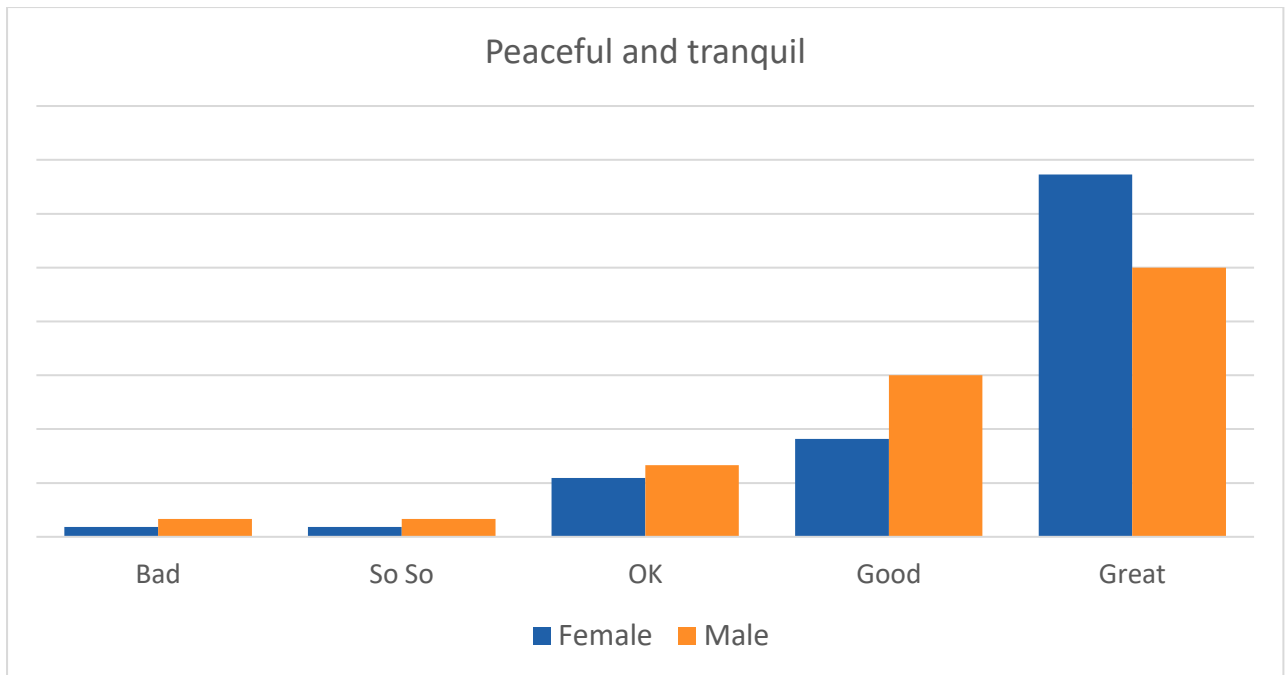
#### PEACEFUL AND TRANQUIL

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



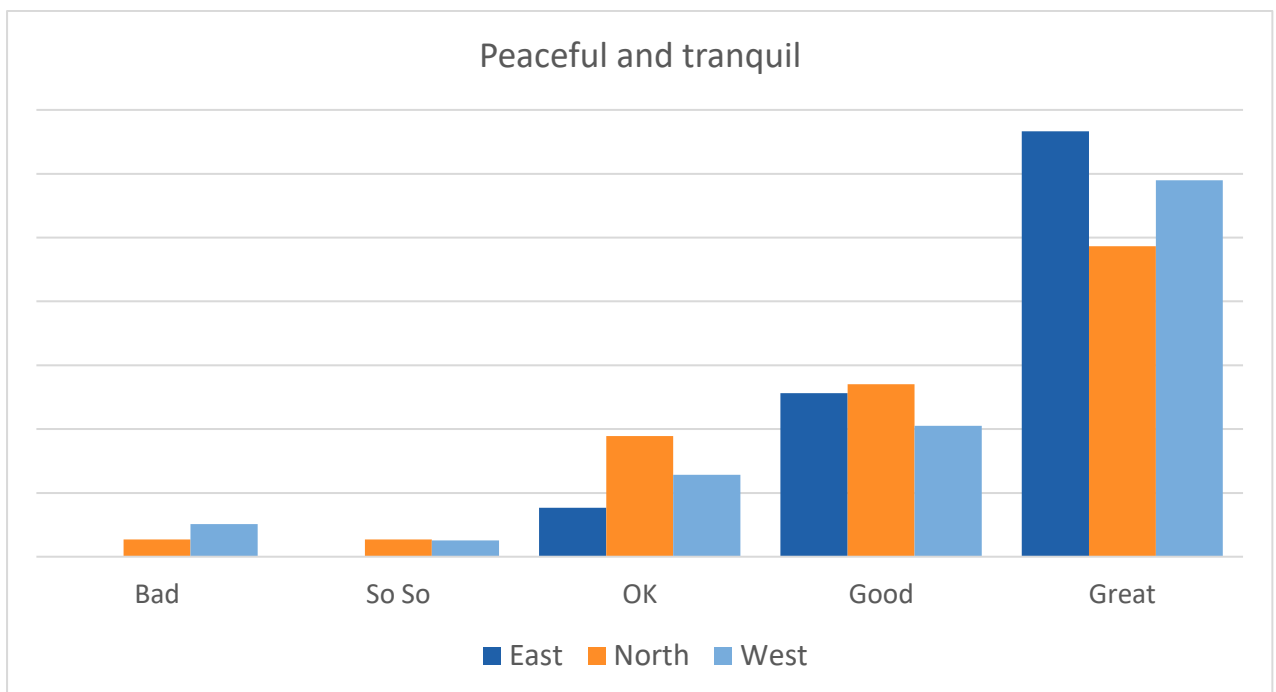
These responses appear to show that, immaterial of age, the majority of respondents feel that the levels of peace and tranquillity within SDNP are OK to Great, those under 35 are slightly more enthusiastic.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This appears to show that whilst the majority of both female and male respondents feel that the levels of peace and tranquillity within SDNP are OK to Great, female respondents felt slightly more enthusiastic.

When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



This appears to show that whilst the majority of respondents, no matter which area of the SDNP they came from feel that the levels of peace and tranquillity are OK to Great, those from the North of the SDNP felt slightly less enthusiastic than those from the East or West.

## QUESTION 3 - WHY ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THE SOUTH DOWNS?

### OVERVIEW

The Respondents were asked to consider a series of questions related to why they may be worried about the South Downs. These questions were:

- Biodiversity or nature loss
- Climate change
- Development
- Lack of access
- Impact of visitors
- Pollution
- Traffic

The respondents were asked to show how worried they felt about these aspects to do with the South Downs National Park, (SDNP) according to the areas listed above, by moving a slider to the appropriate point on a scale. The scale went from 1 to 5, with one being the lowest point on the slider (not worried) to five being the highest point on the slider (very worried). For the purpose of this questions we have named the points of the slider as follows:

1 – Not worried

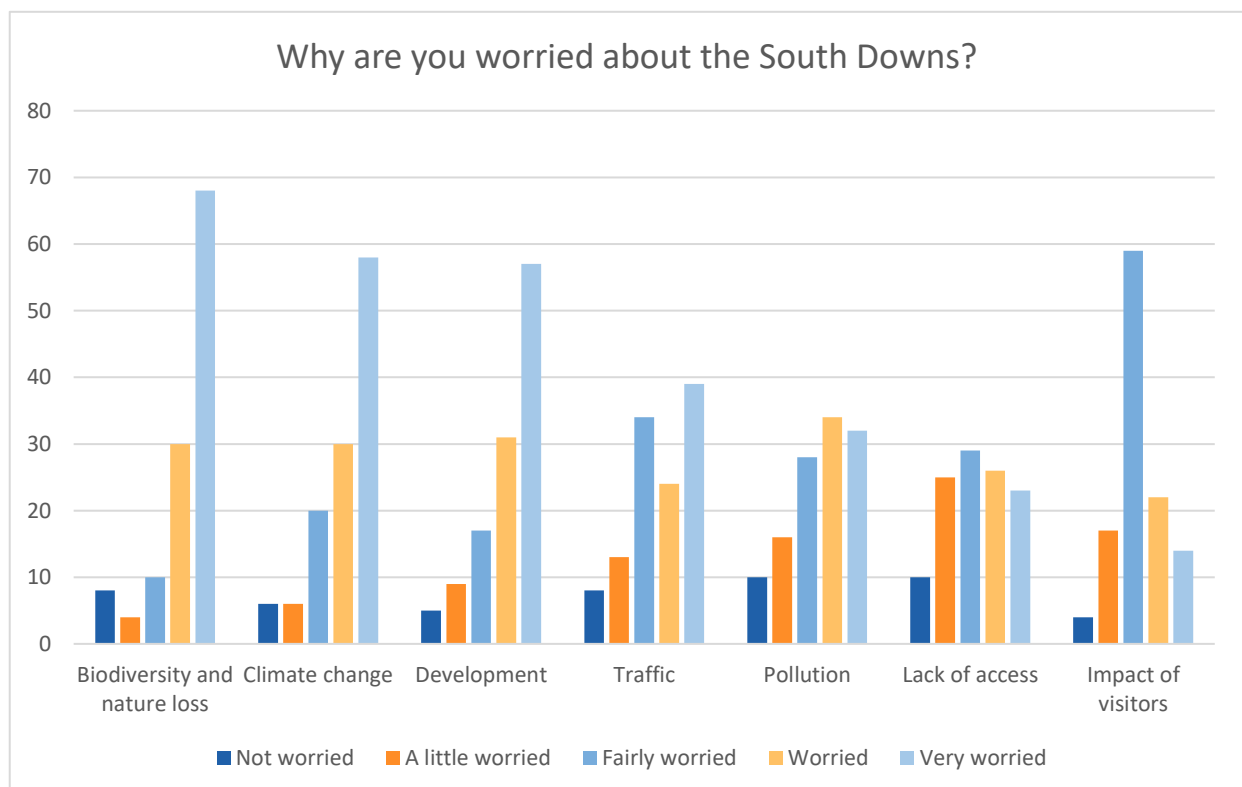
2 – A little worried

3 – Fairly worried

4 – Worried

5 – Very worried

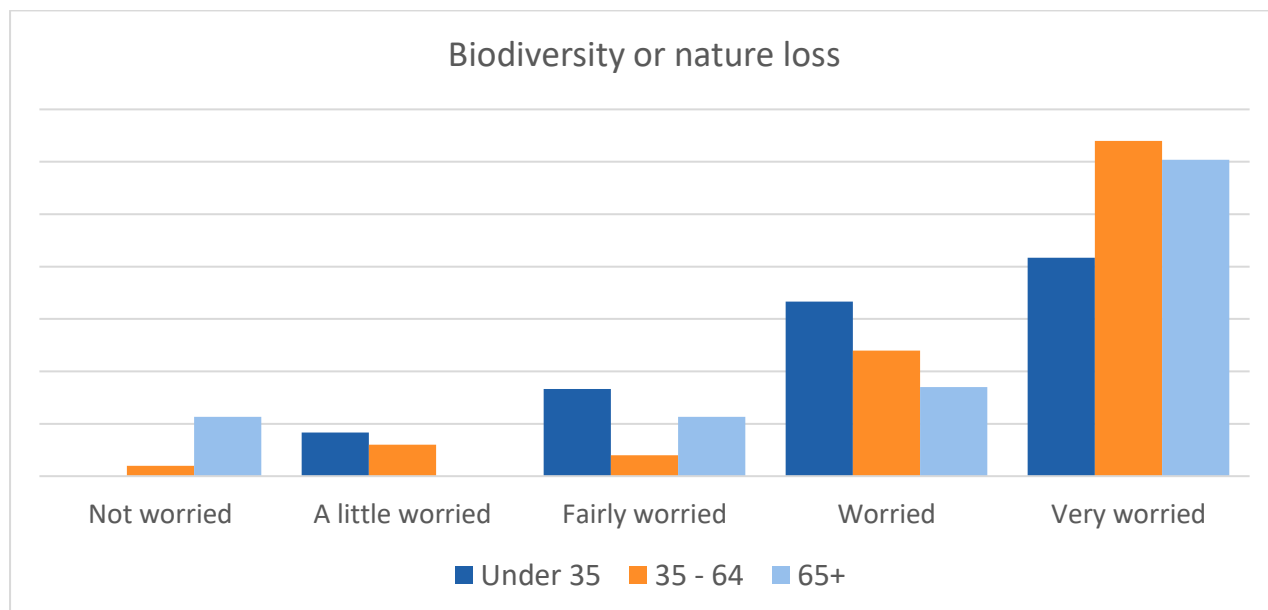
### OVERALL RESULTS





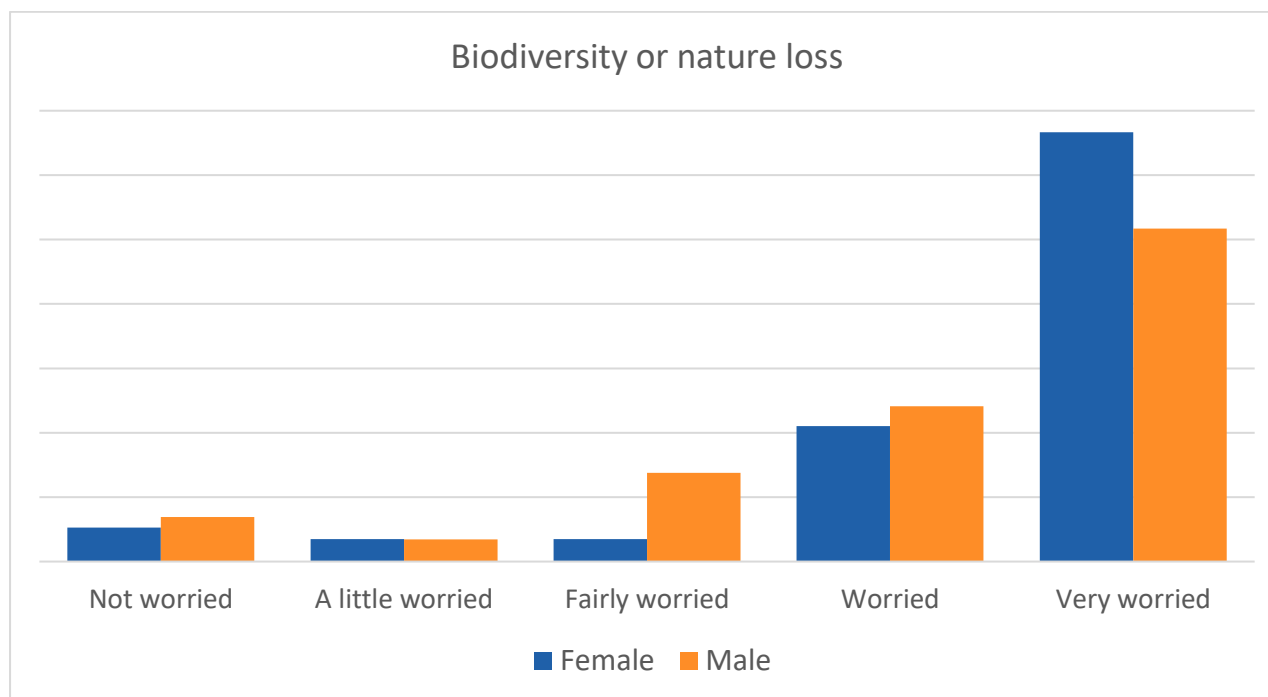
## BIODIVERSITY OR NATURE LOSS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



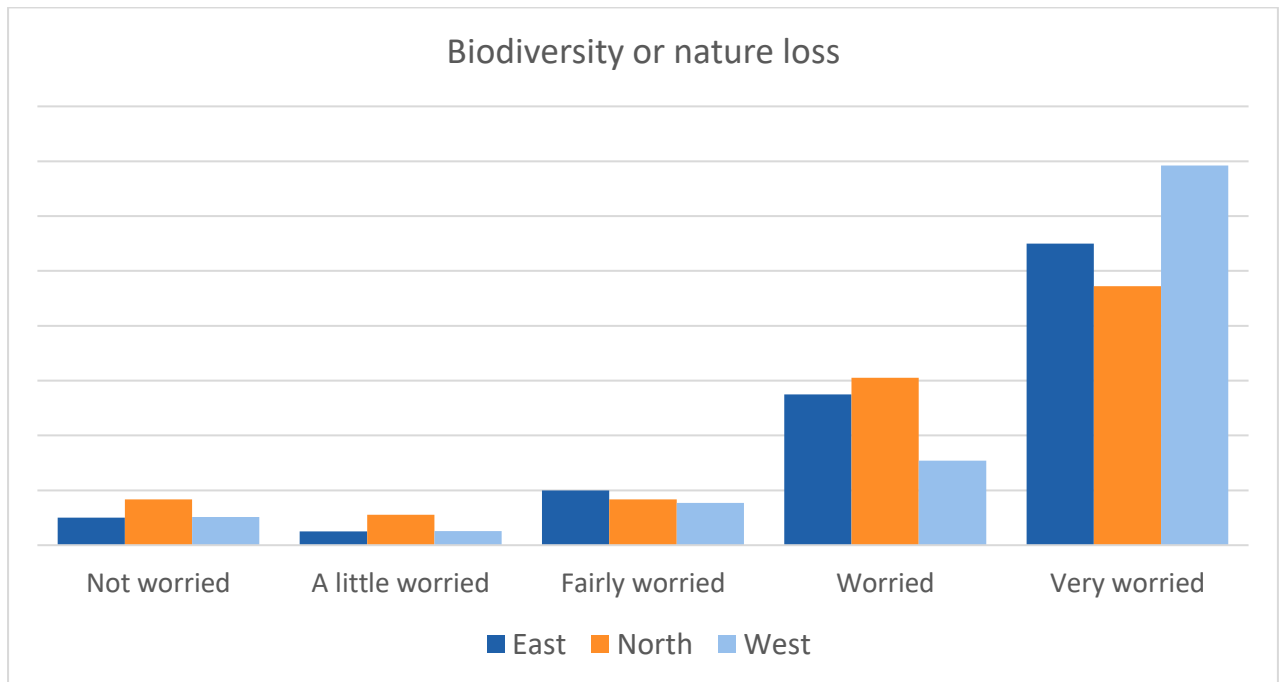
Whilst the majority of all age groups were Worried or Very worried about biodiversity or nature loss, those aged 35 and above appeared more worried than those below 35.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This appears to show that whilst the majority of respondents are Worried or Very worried about biodiversity or nature loss, females are slightly more concerned than males.

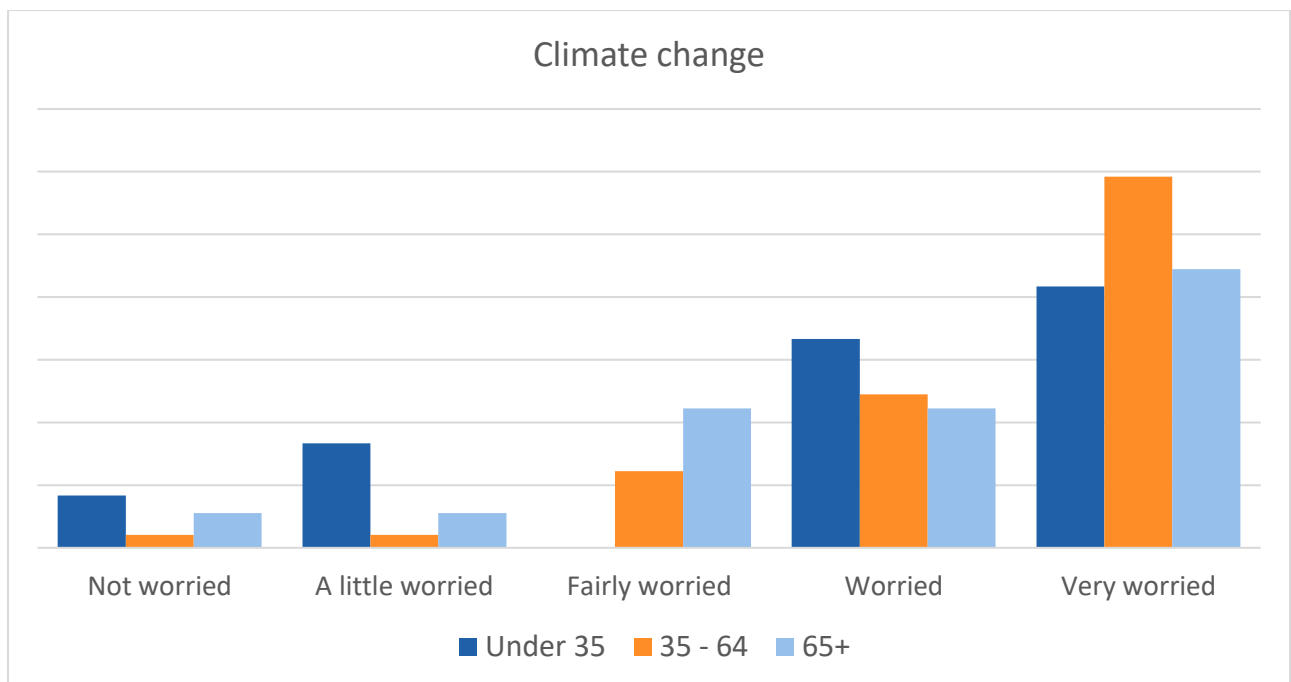
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



This appears to show that there are more respondents who are Very worried in the West than the North or East of the SDNP.

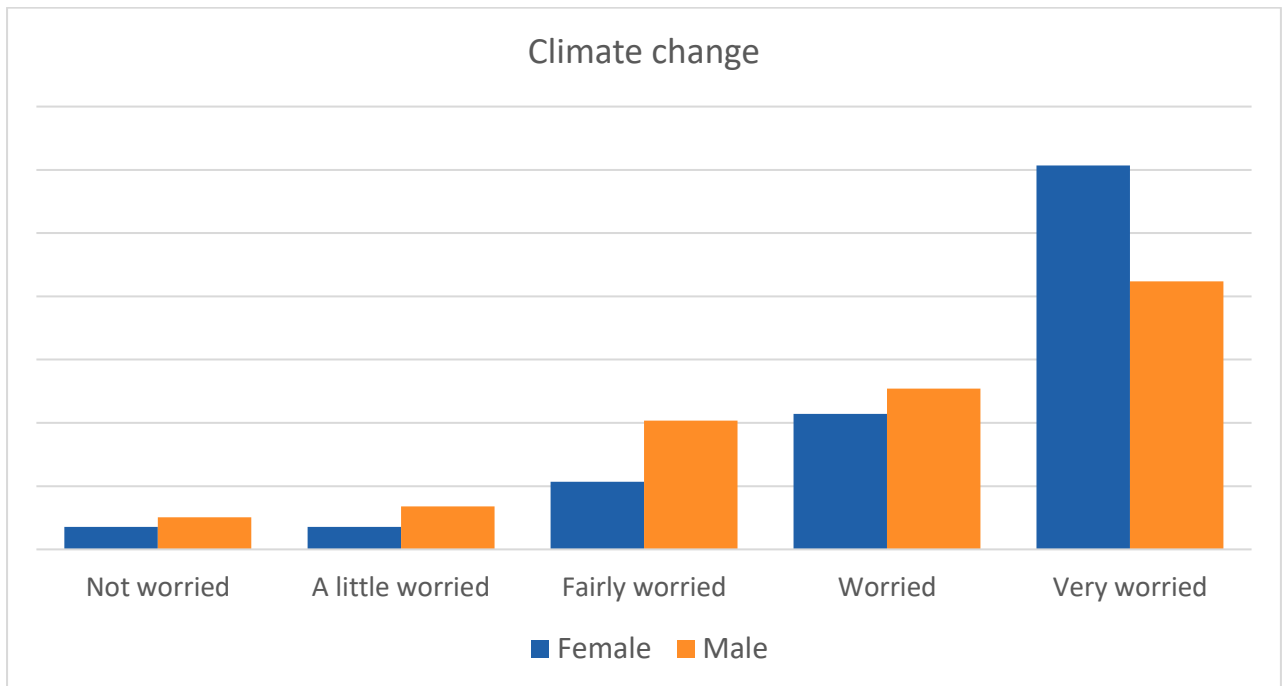
## CLIMATE CHANGE

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



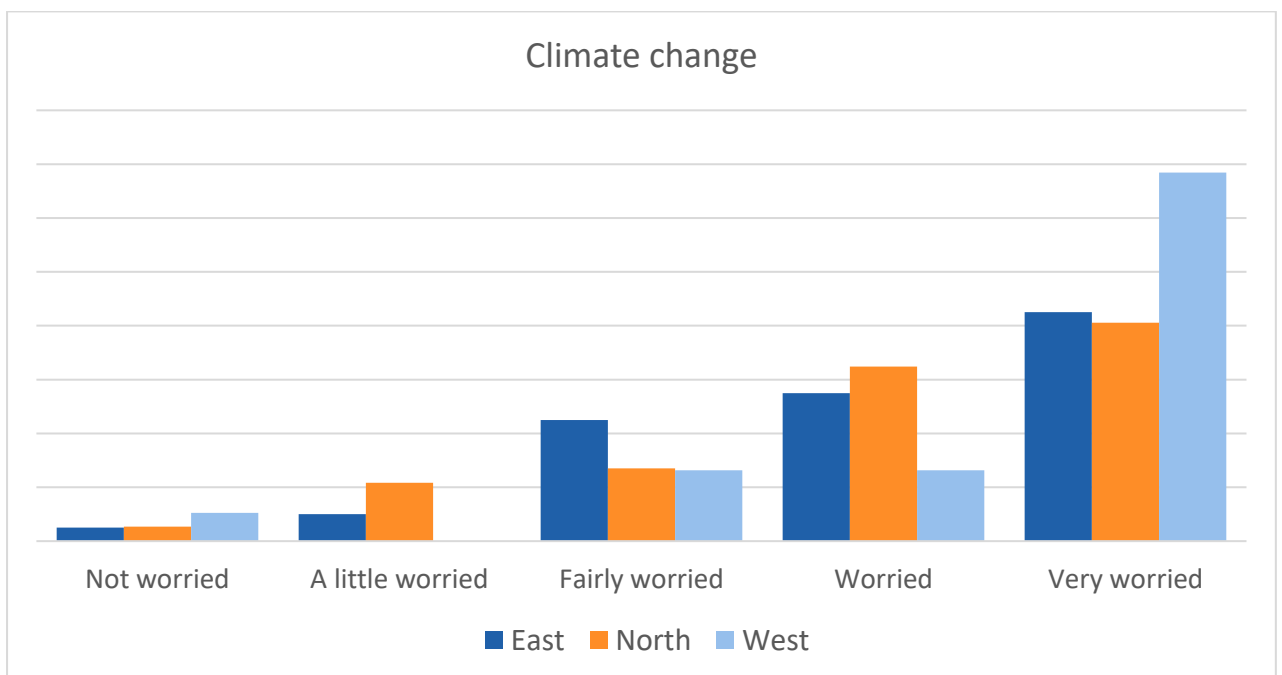
The majority of respondents, no matter their age, are either Worried or Very worried about climate change, but respondents aged 35 – 64 appear to be slightly more concerned than the other age groups.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This shows that there were more female respondents who were Very worried about climate change than males.

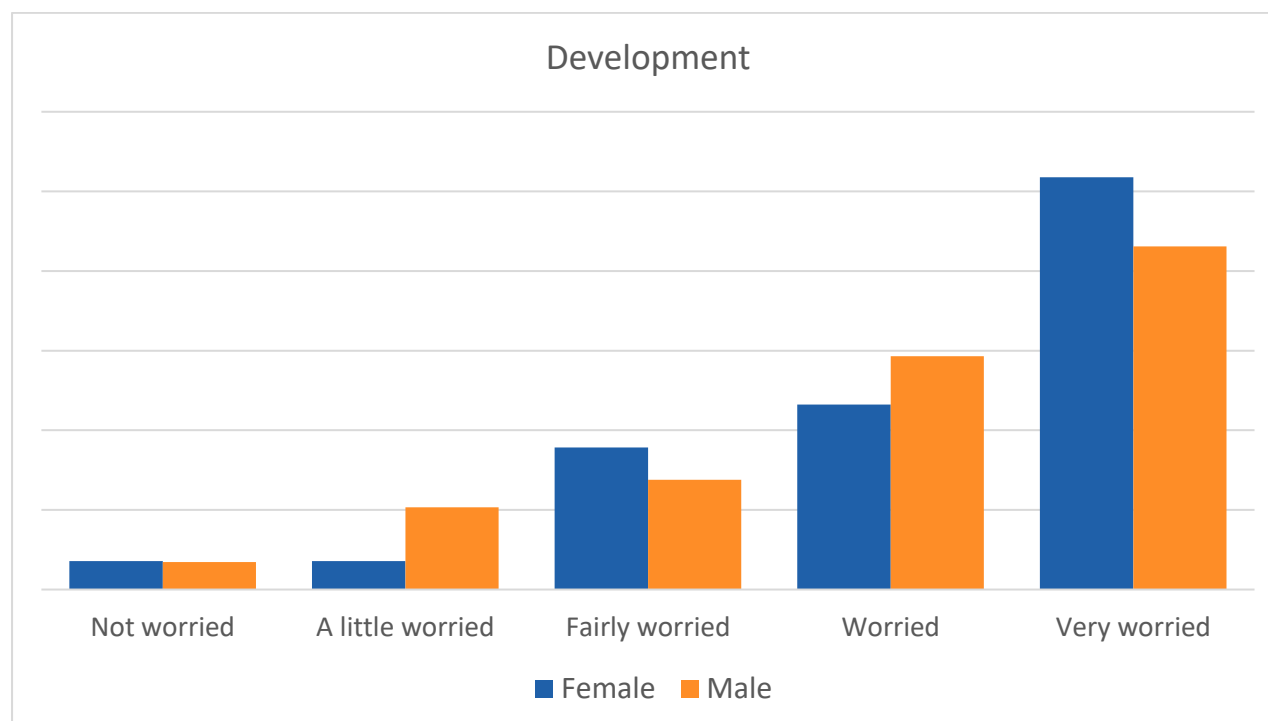
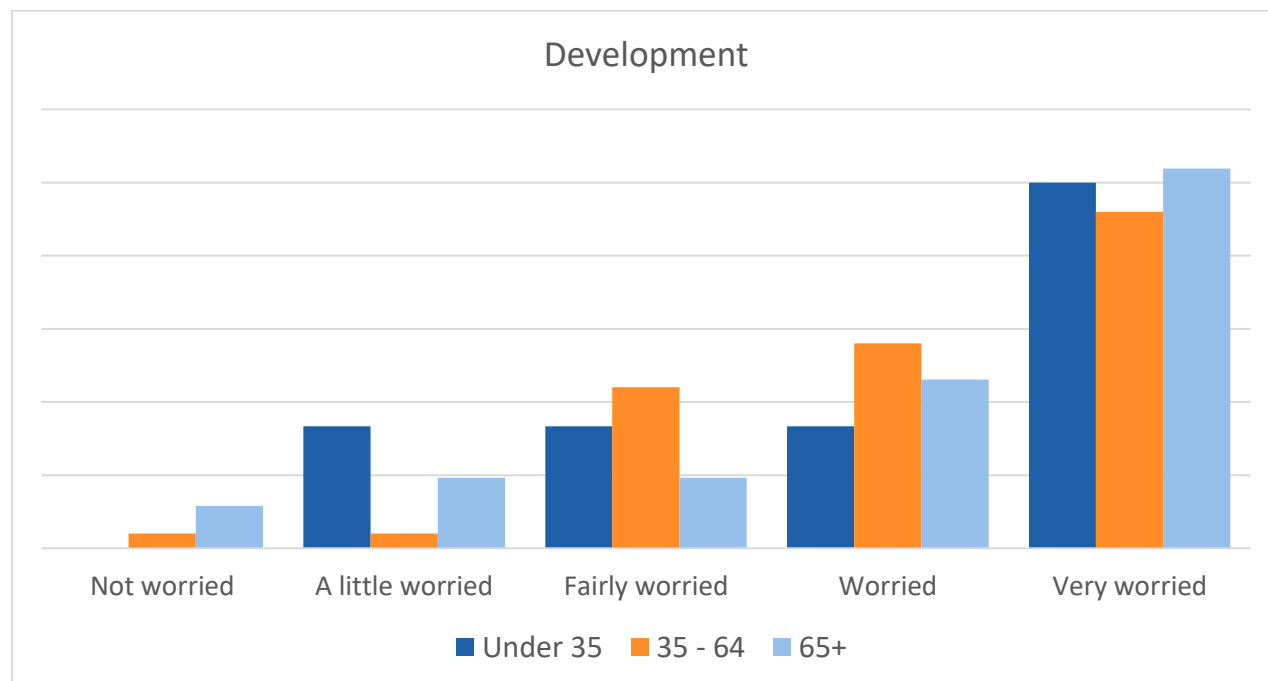
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



There appear to be significantly more respondents from the West of the SDNP who are Very worried about climate change than those in the East or North of the SDNP.

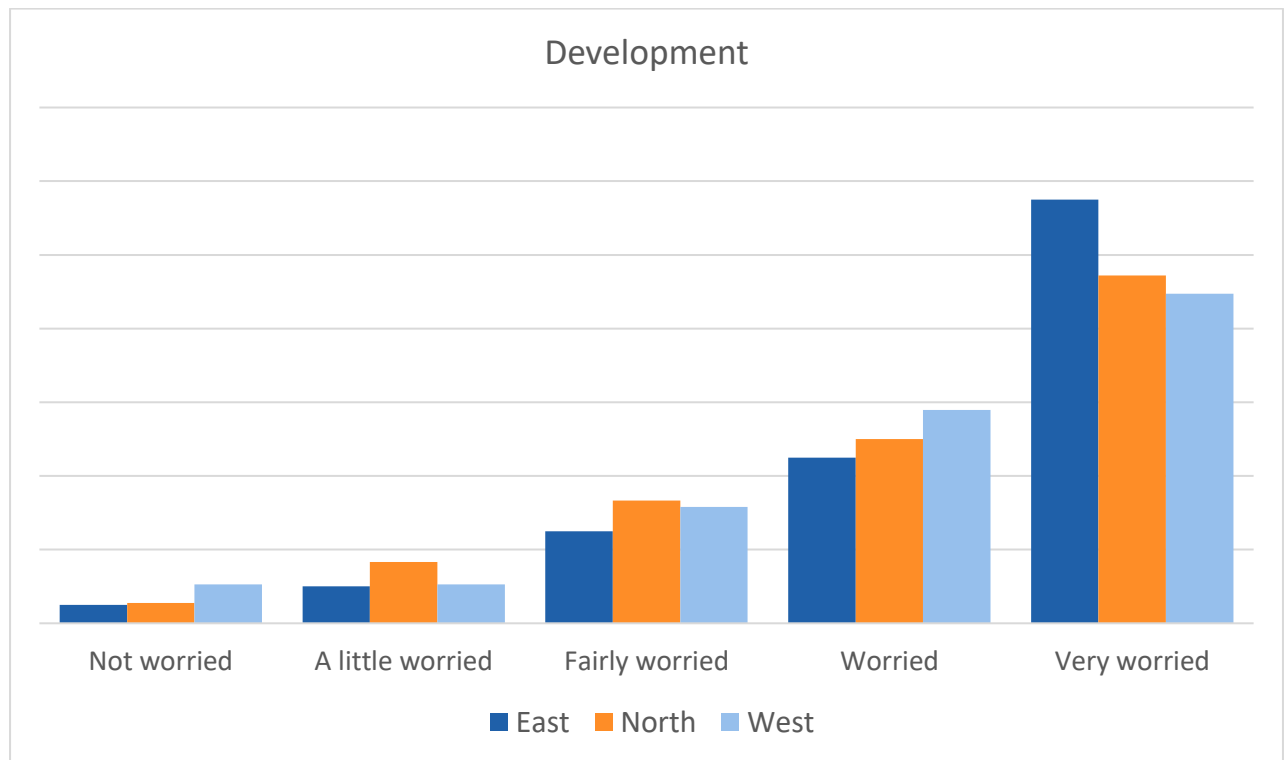
## DEVELOPMENT

When the responses are analysed by age and gender groupings we can see the following:



The majority of respondents, no matter their age or gender, are Fairly worried to Very worried about Development within the SDNP.

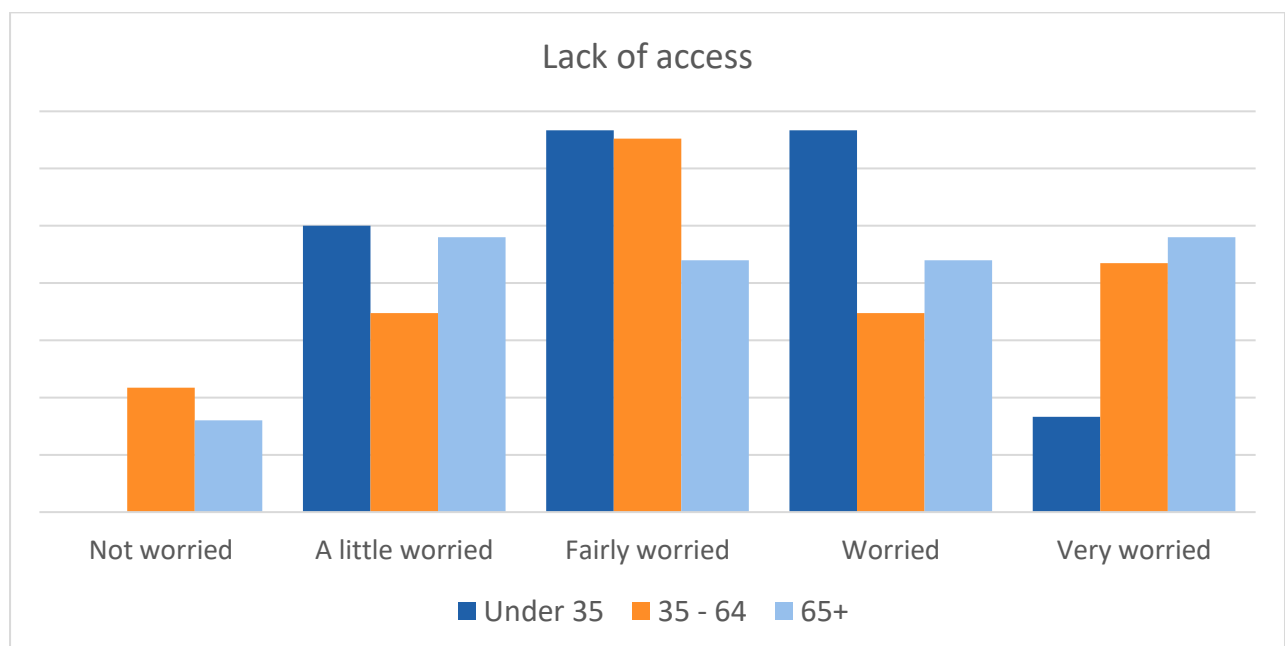
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



There appear to be slightly more respondents from the East of the SDNP who are Very worried about Development within the SDNP than those in the West or North of the SDNP.

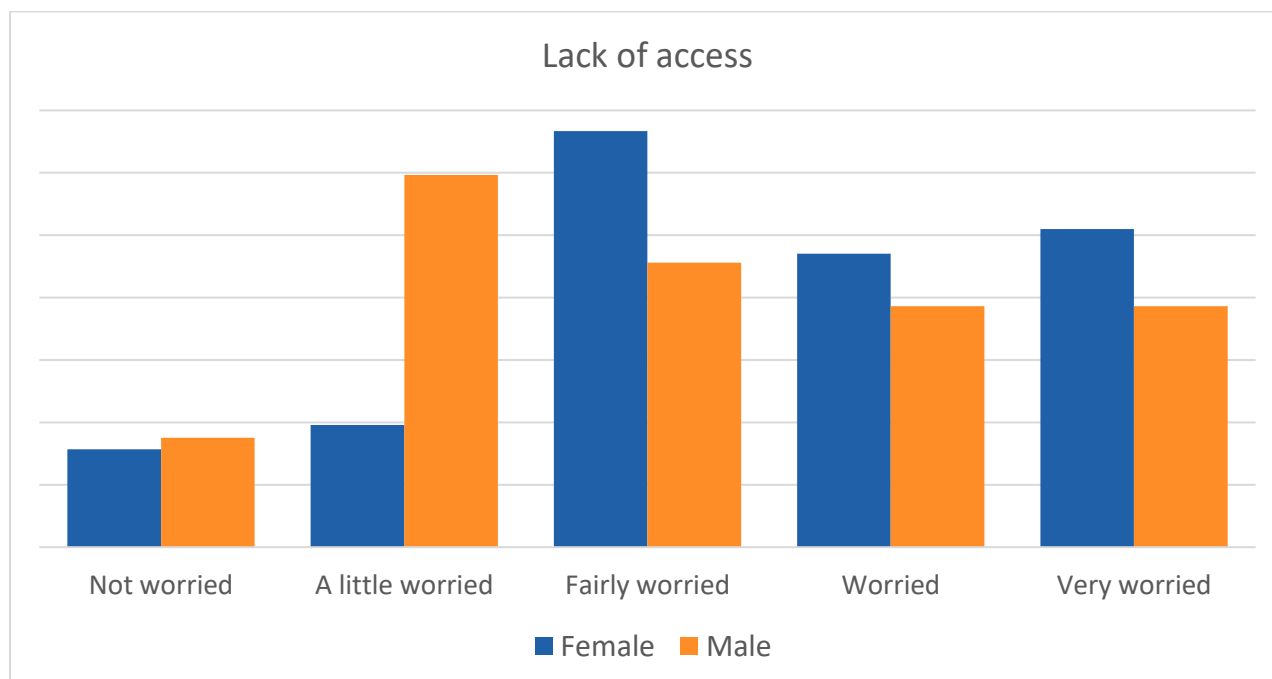
#### LACK OF ACCESS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



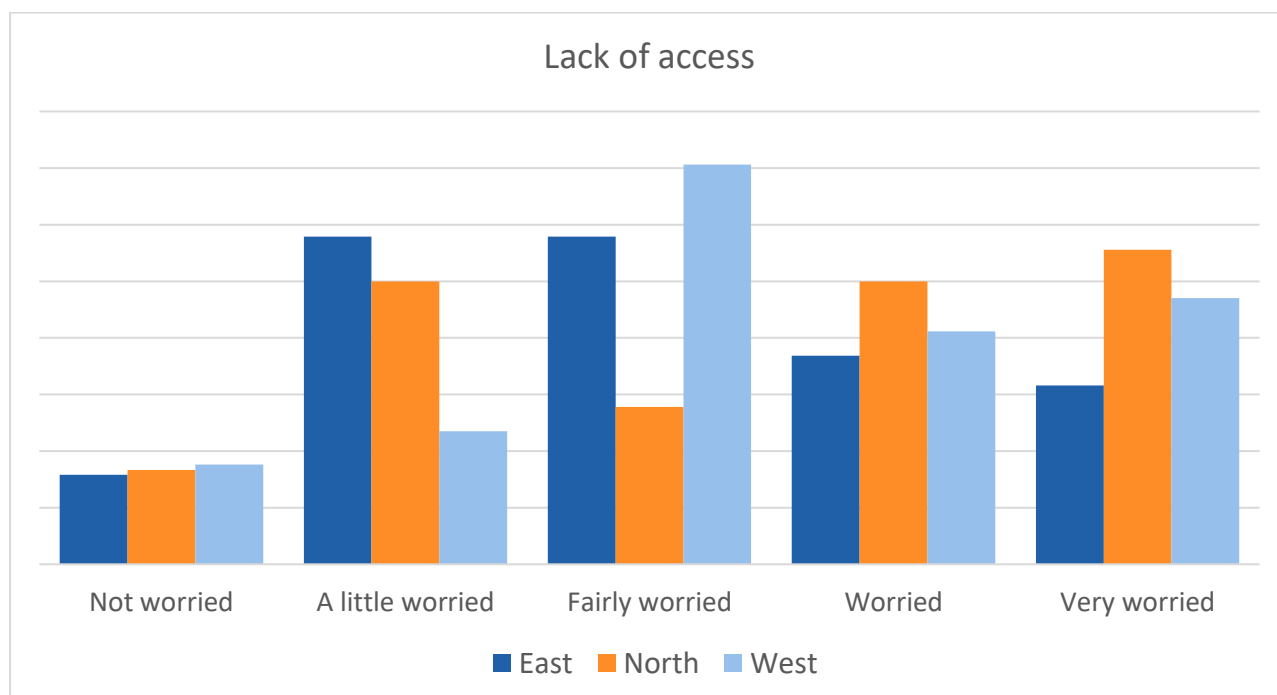
While the majority of responses hover around the A little worried to Worried range, under 35's appear to be slightly less worried than those over 35 about a possible lack of access to the SDNP.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



While the majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly worried to Very worried, Female respondents appear to be slightly more worried than their Male counterparts about a possible lack of access to the SDNP.

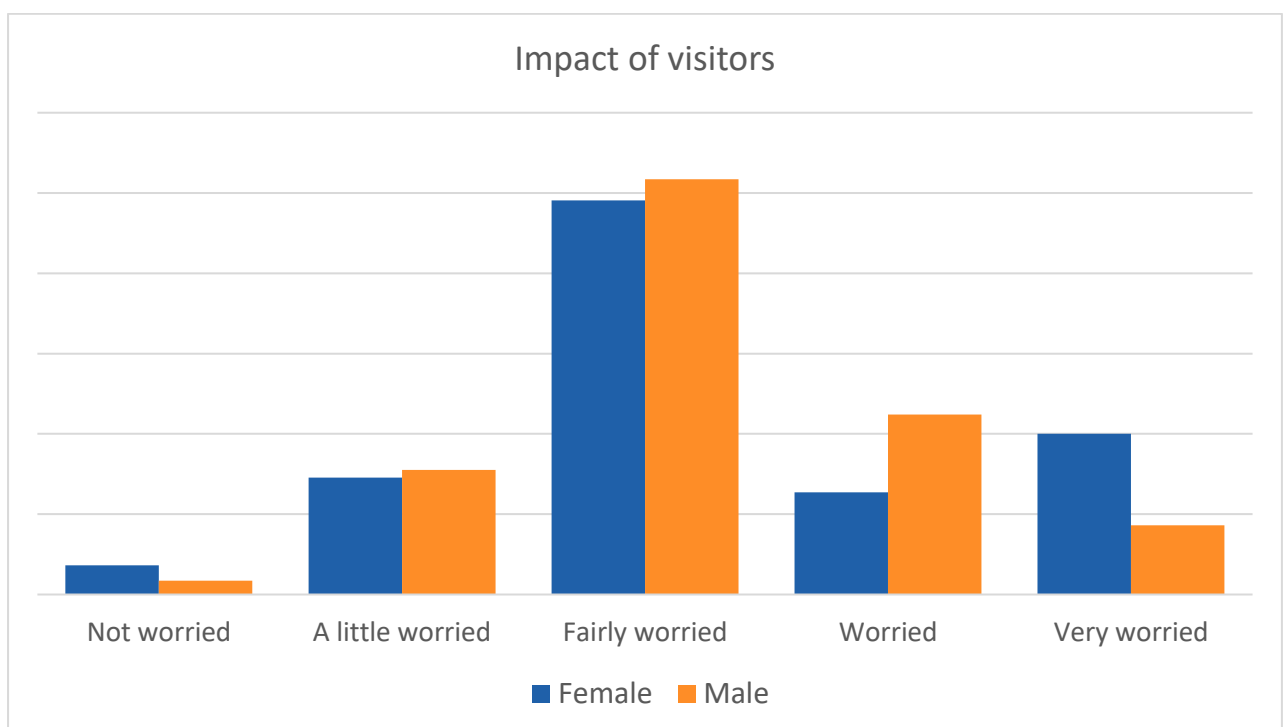
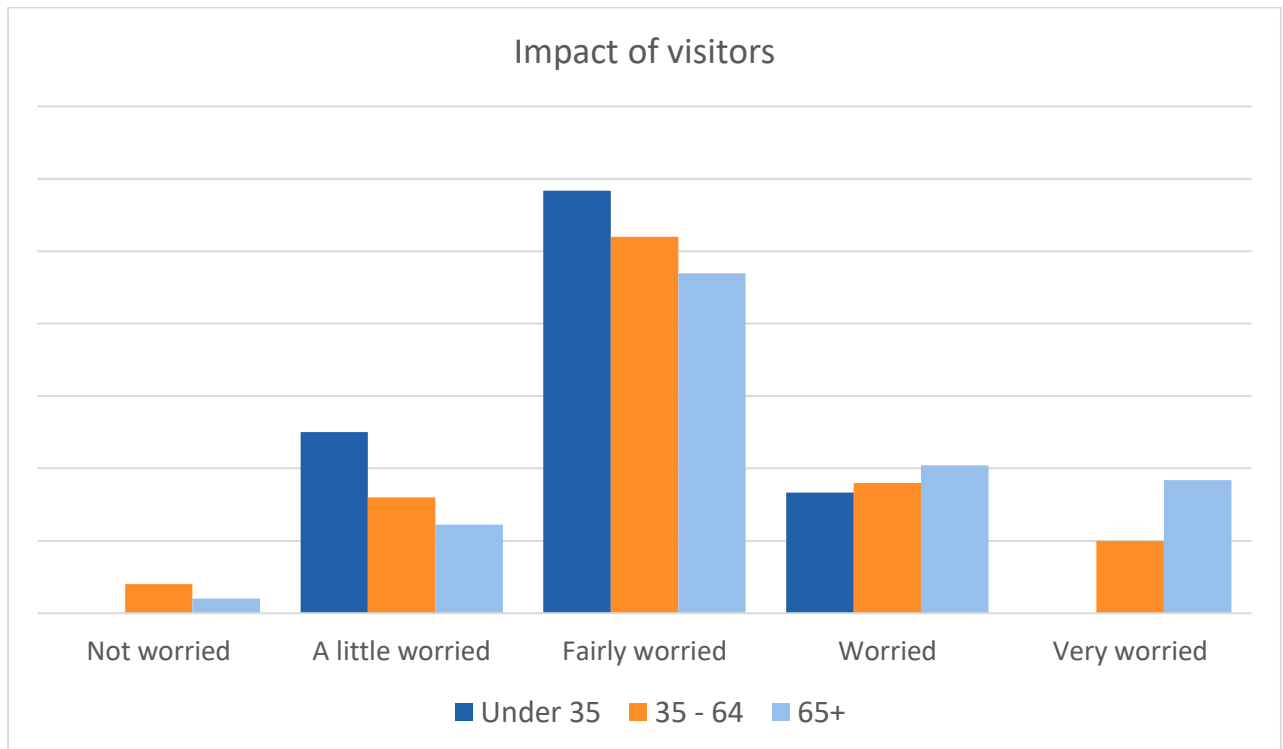
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



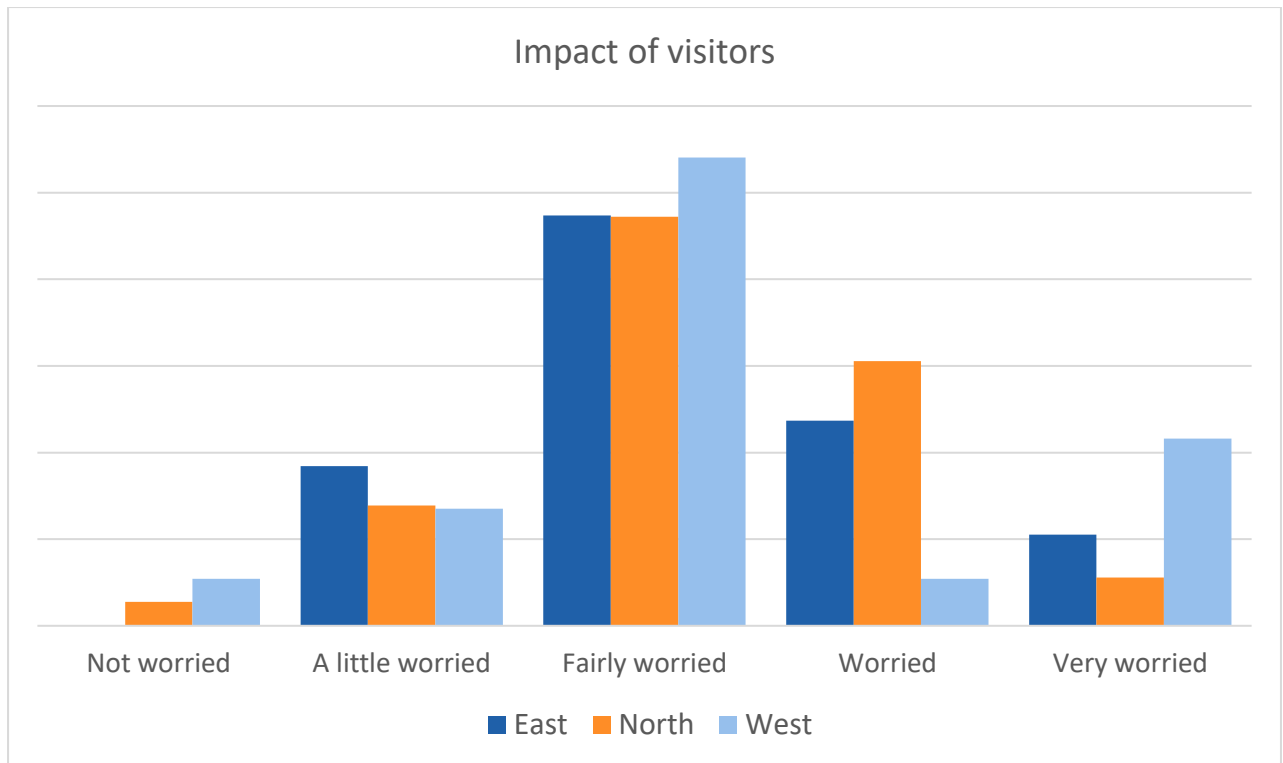
Respondents from all areas appear to show a degree of worry about a possible lack of access to the SDNP, but those in the East may be slightly more worried than those in the West.

## IMPACT OF VISITORS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings, gender and location we can see the following:



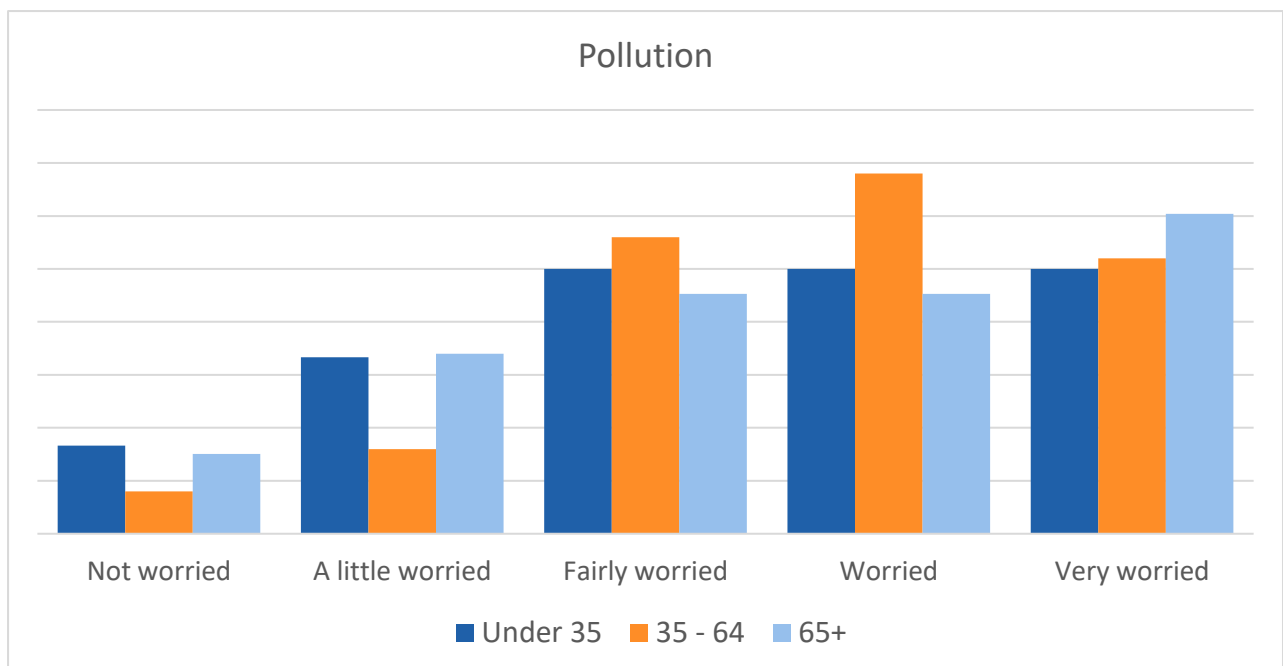




The majority of responses across all age groups, gender and location of respondent are within the A little worried to Worried categories. There are no categories which stand out compared to the others, all appear to be similarly worried.

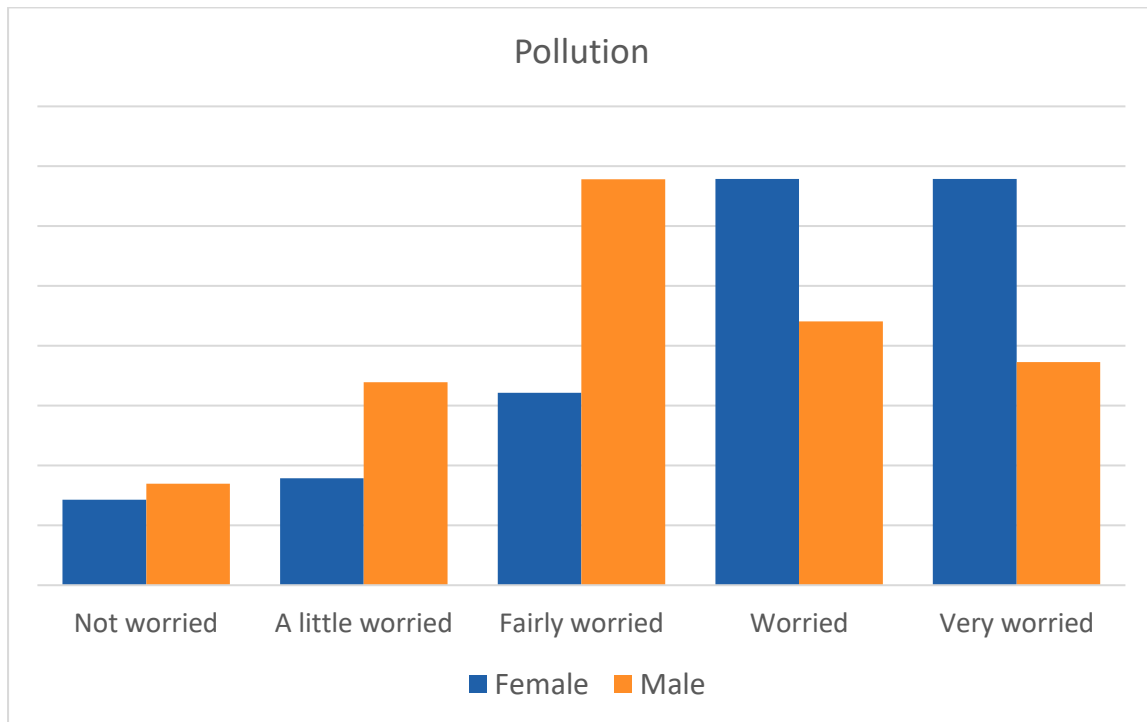
## POLLUTION

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



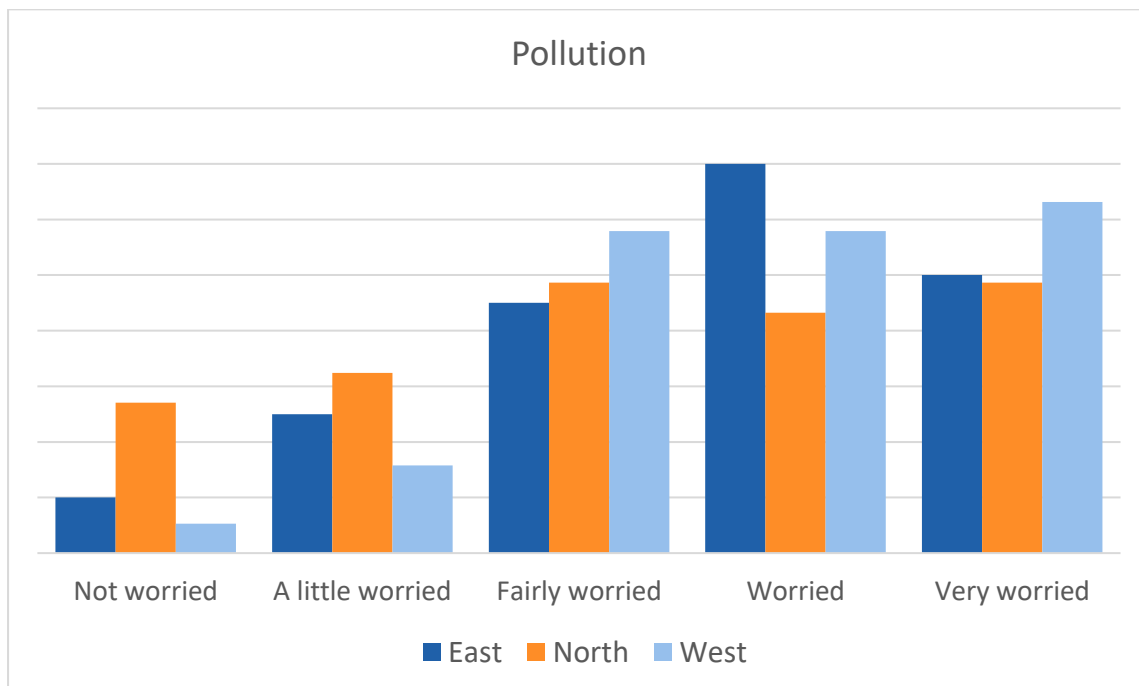
The majority of respondents appear to be Fairly worried to Very worried, but it should be noted that those aged between 35 and 64 appear to be slightly more worried than the other age groups.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



This shows, that, once again, the majority of respondents are Fairly worried to Very worried, Females are more worried than Males in relation to Pollution in the SDNP.

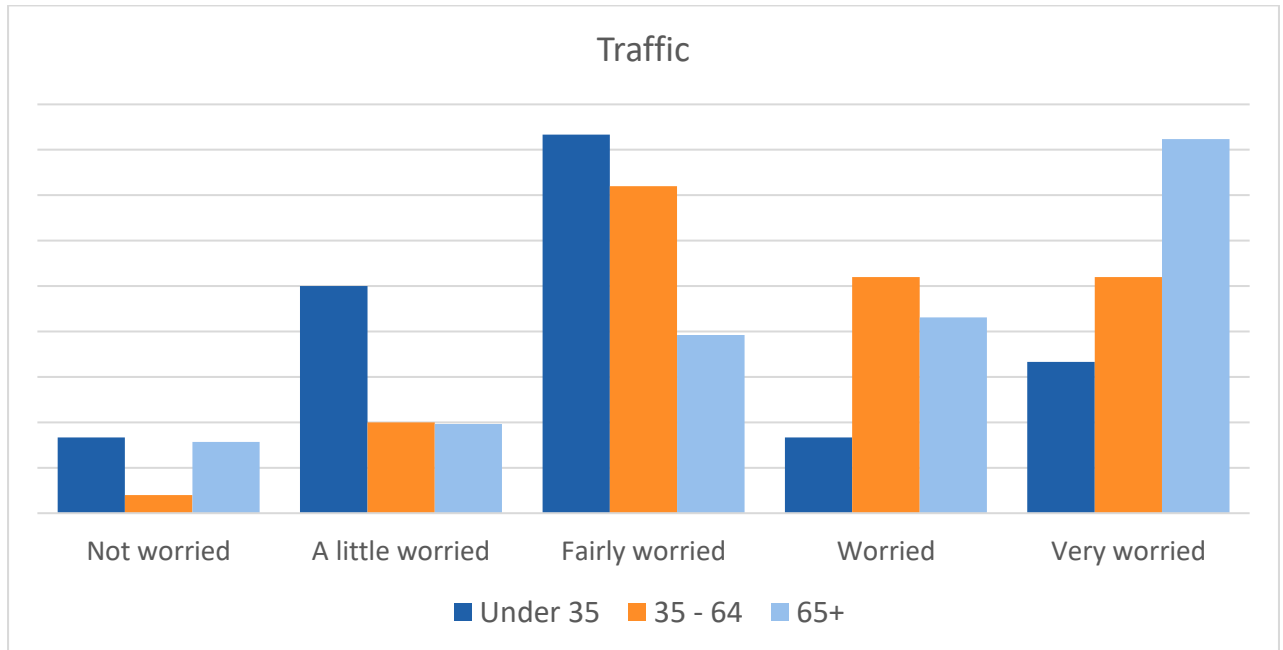
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



This shows, that whilst the majority of respondents are Fairly worried to Very worried, respondents living in the West of the SDNP are slightly more worried than those living in the other areas.

## TRAFFIC

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



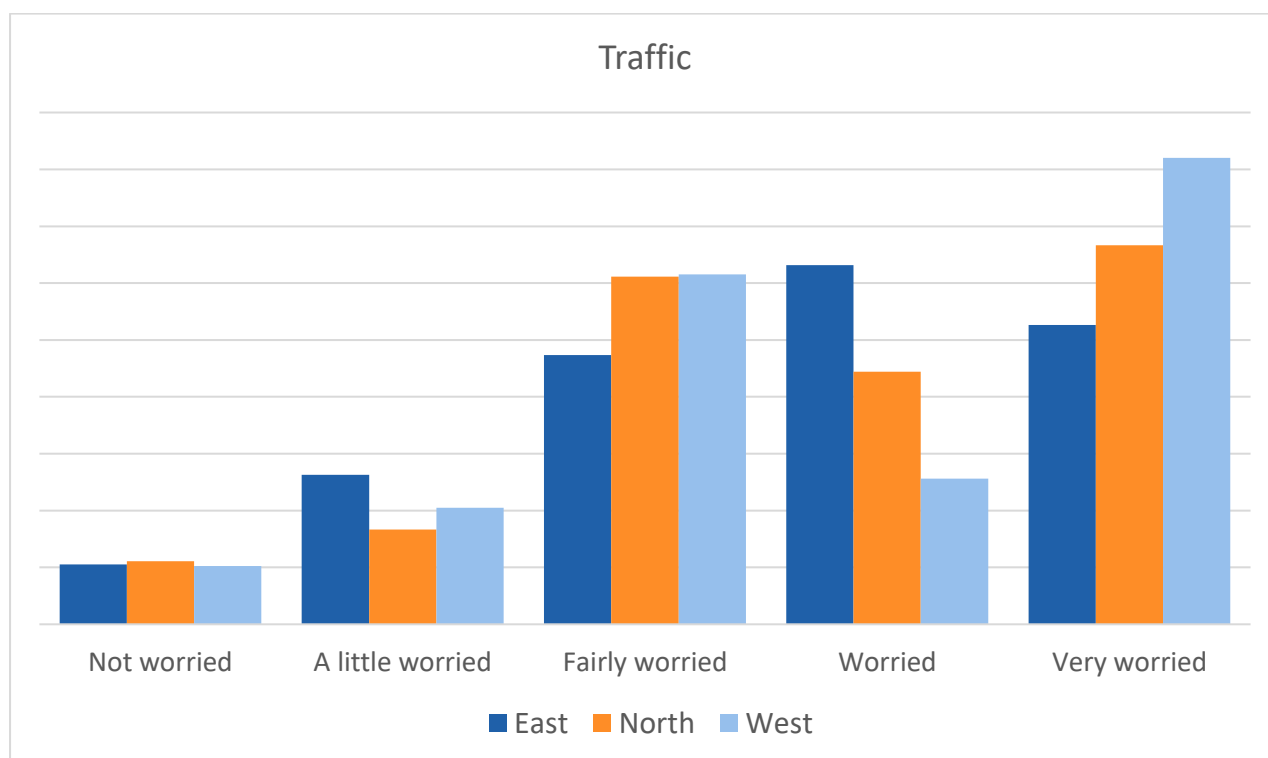
The responses appear to show that those aged Under 35 are considerably less worried about traffic within the SDNP than those older than them, with those aged 65 and over being at the other end of the scale and responding that they are far more concerned about traffic within the SDNP than the other age groups.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



The majority of respondents felt they were Fairly worried to Very worried about traffic within the SDNP, but Females expressed slightly more concern than Males.

When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



The majority of respondents felt they were Fairly worried to Very worried about traffic within the SDNP, those who responded from the West appear to be slightly more concerned than the other areas.

#### QUESTION 4 - WHY ARE YOU HOPEFUL ABOUT THE SOUTH DOWNS?

##### OVERVIEW

The Respondents were asked to consider a series of questions related to why they may be hopeful about the South Downs. These questions were:

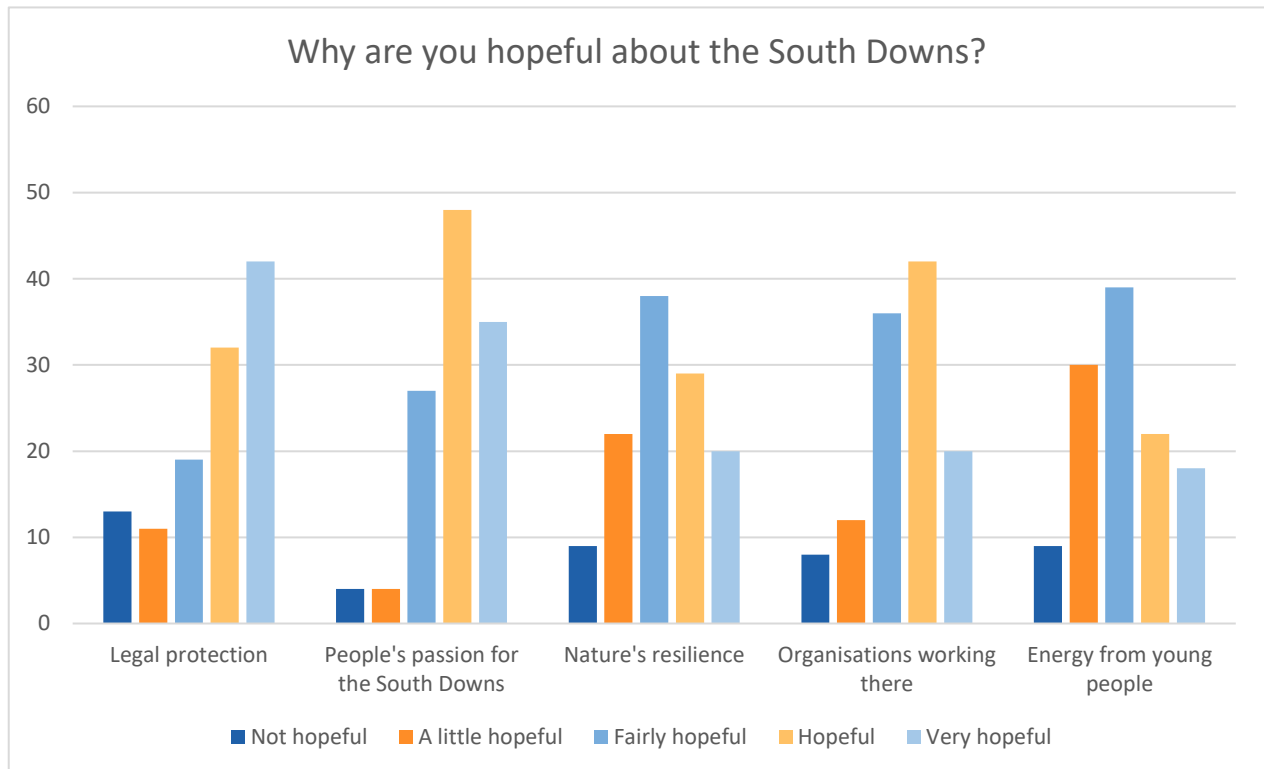
- Legal protection
- Nature's resilience
- Organisations working there
- People's passion for the South Downs
- Energy from young people

The respondents were asked to show how hopeful they felt about these aspects to do with the South Downs National Park, (SDNP) according to the areas listed above, by moving a slider to the appropriate point on a scale. The scale went from 1 to 5, with one being the lowest point on the slider (not hopeful) to five being the highest point on the slider (very hopeful). For the purpose of this questions we have named the points of the slider as follows:

- 1 – Not hopeful
- 2 – A little hopeful
- 3 – Fairly hopeful
- 4 – Hopeful

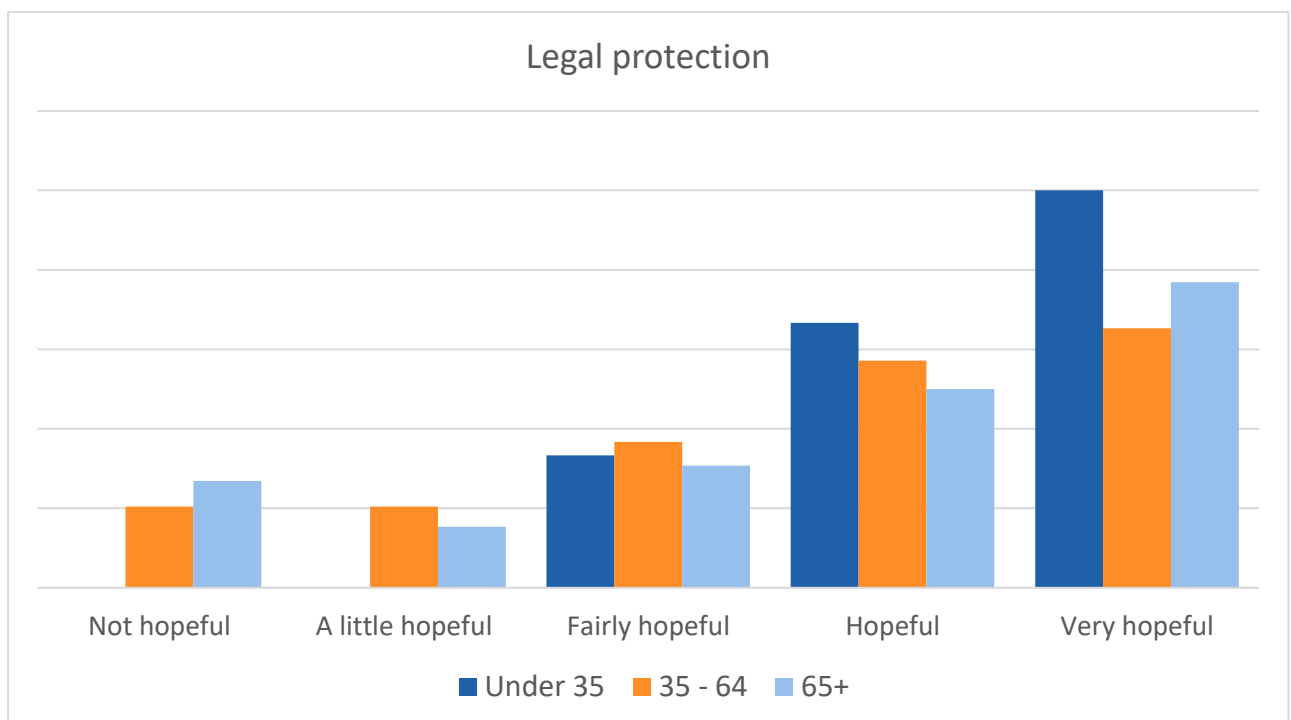
## 5 – Very hopeful

### OVERALL RESULTS



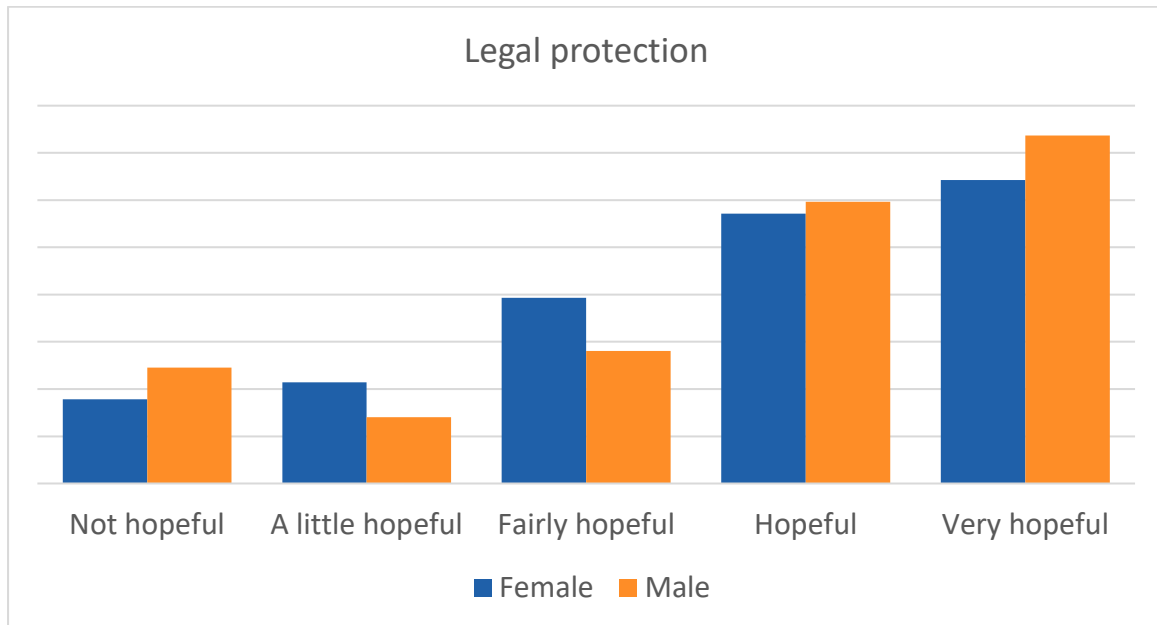
### LEGAL PROTECTION

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



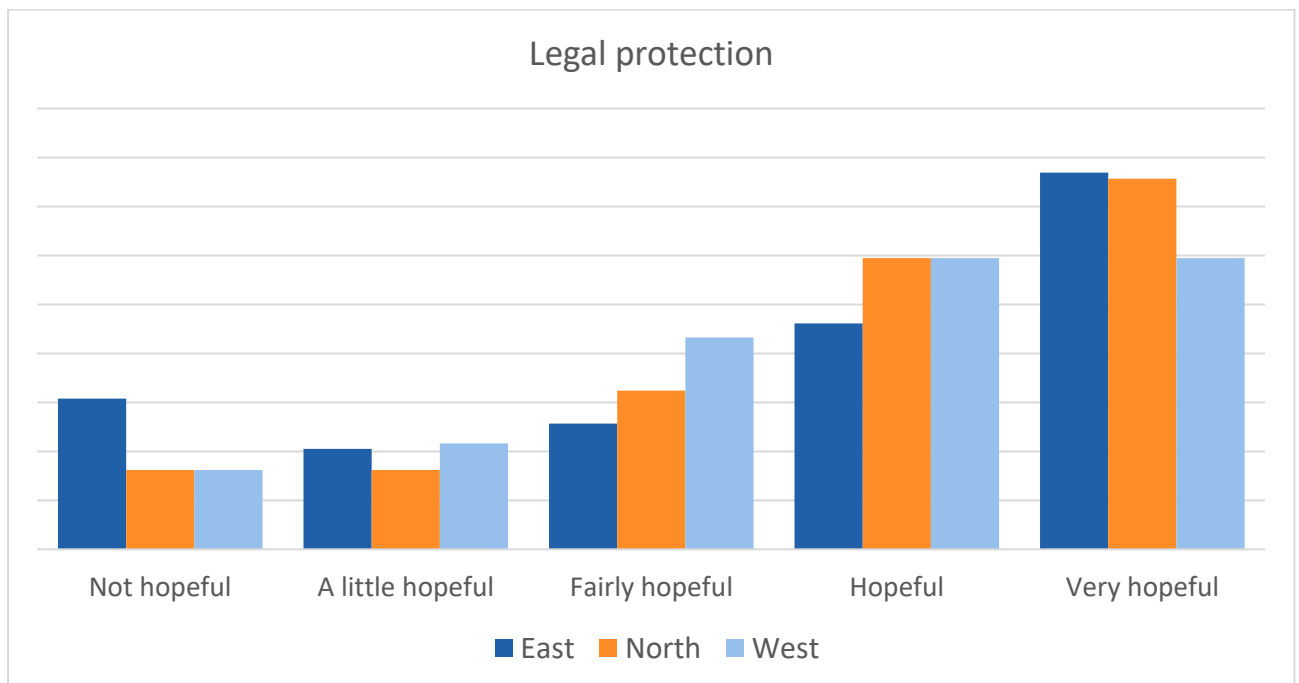
This analysis shows that the majority of the respondents felt Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the legal protection of the SDNP, with those aged Under 35 being the most hopeful about the legal protection the SDNP may have.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



Along the same lines, the majority of both Female and Male respondents felt Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the legal protection of the SDNP.

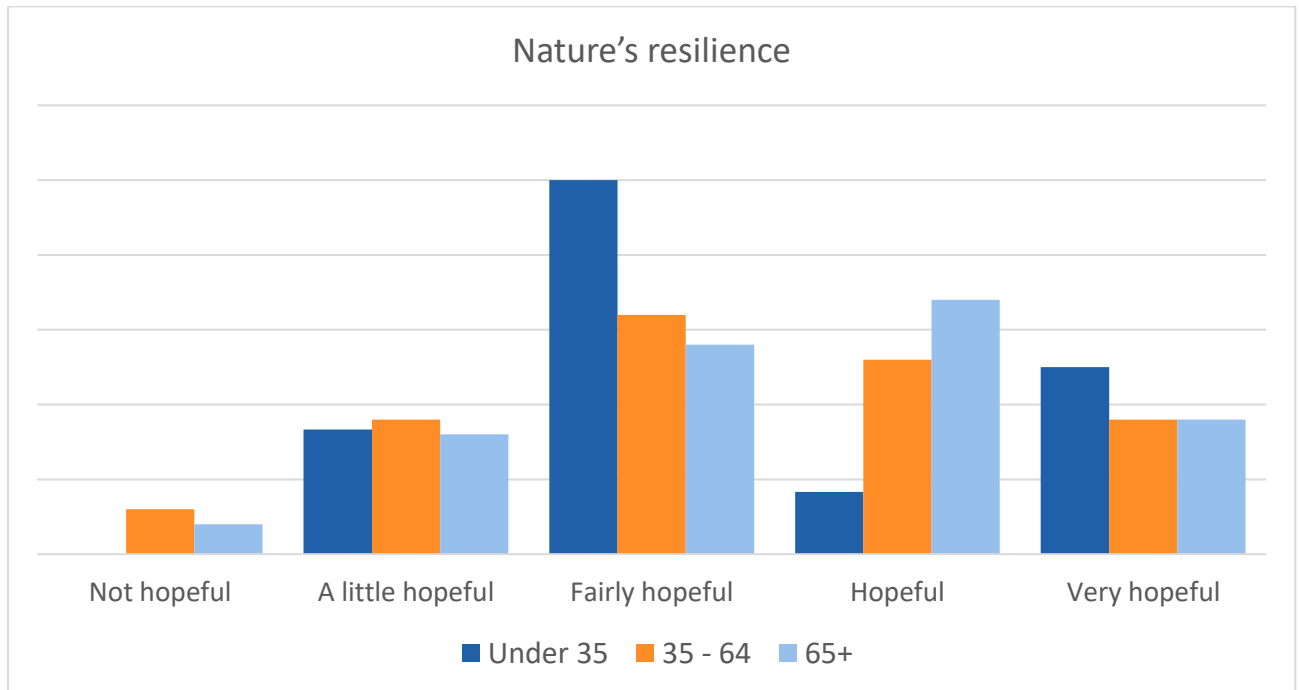
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



Similarly, the majority of respondents across the SDNP area felt Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the legal protection of the SDNP, with no one area standing out from the others.

### NATURE'S RESILIENCE

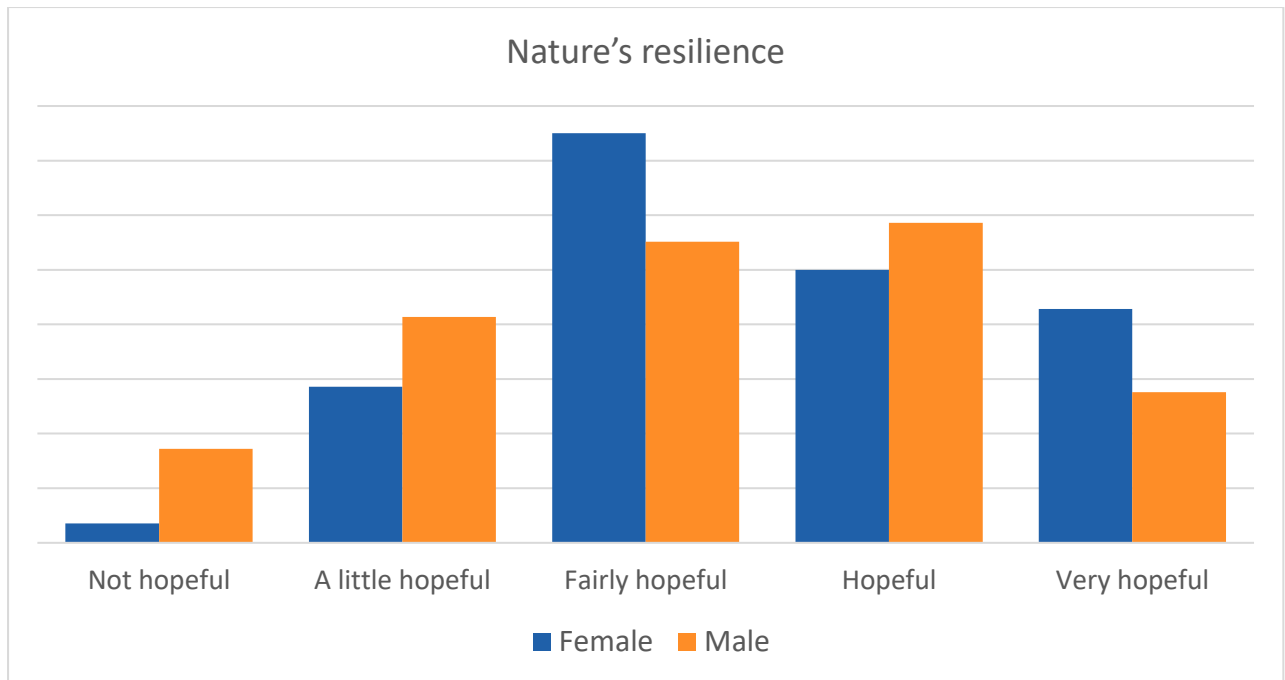
When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



Whilst the majority of respondents felt Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about Nature's resilience within the SDNP, those Under 35 appear to be slightly less hopeful compared to the other age groups.

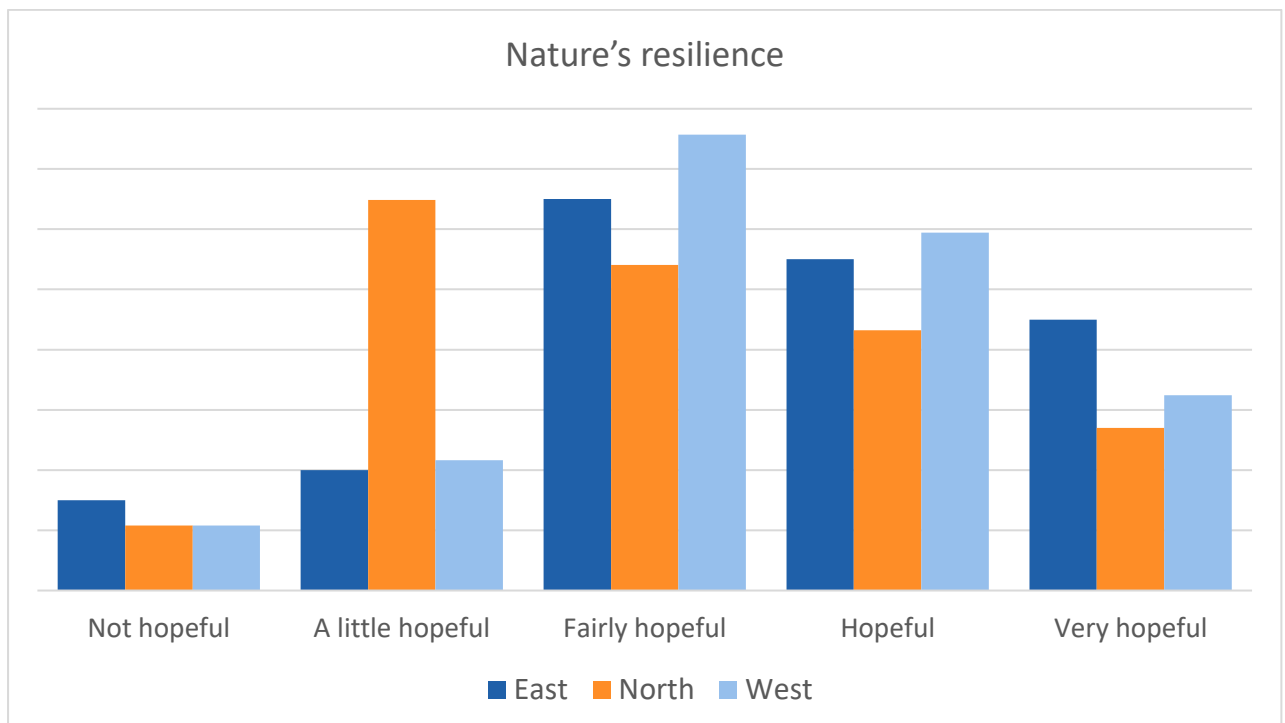
When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:





Again, the majority of respondents, no matter which gender, felt Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about Nature's resilience within the SDNP.

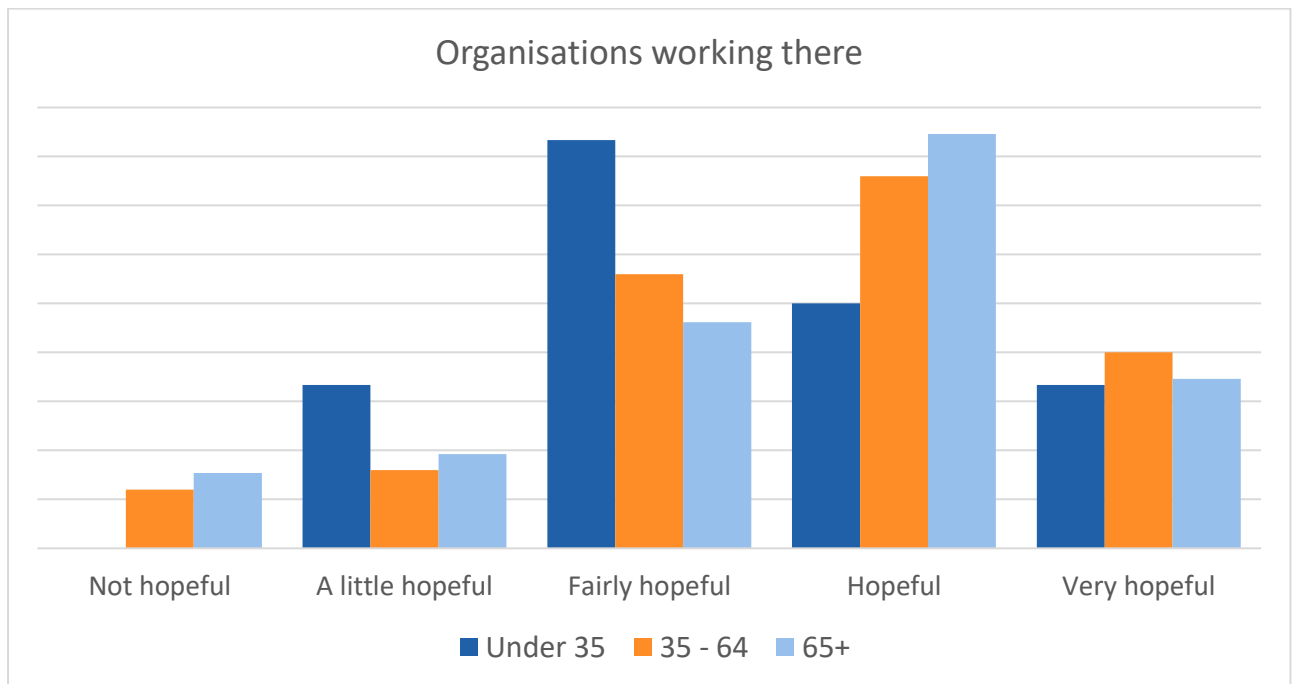
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



The responses appear to show that those from the North of the area are less hopeful about Nature's resilience within the SDNP and those in the West are more hopeful.

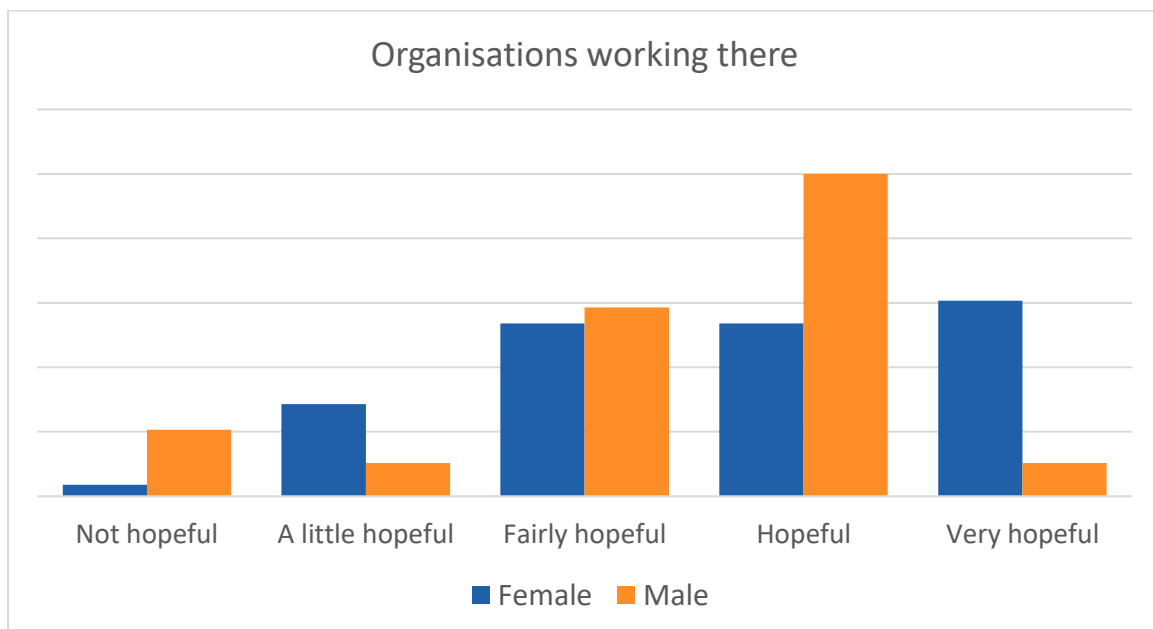
#### ORGANISATIONS WORKING THERE

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



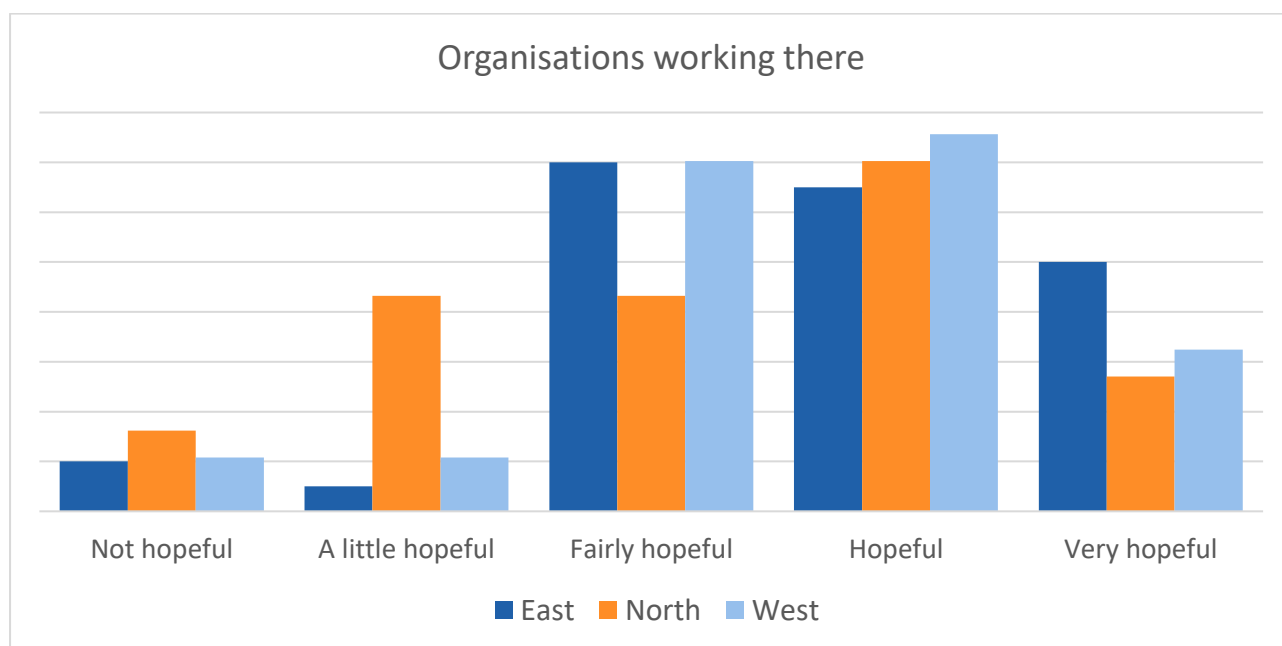
The majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the Organisations working there, however, those aged Under 35 appear to be slightly less hopeful than the other age groups.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



The majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the Organisations working there, however, Males are slightly less hopeful than Females and very few Males are Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the Organisations working there.

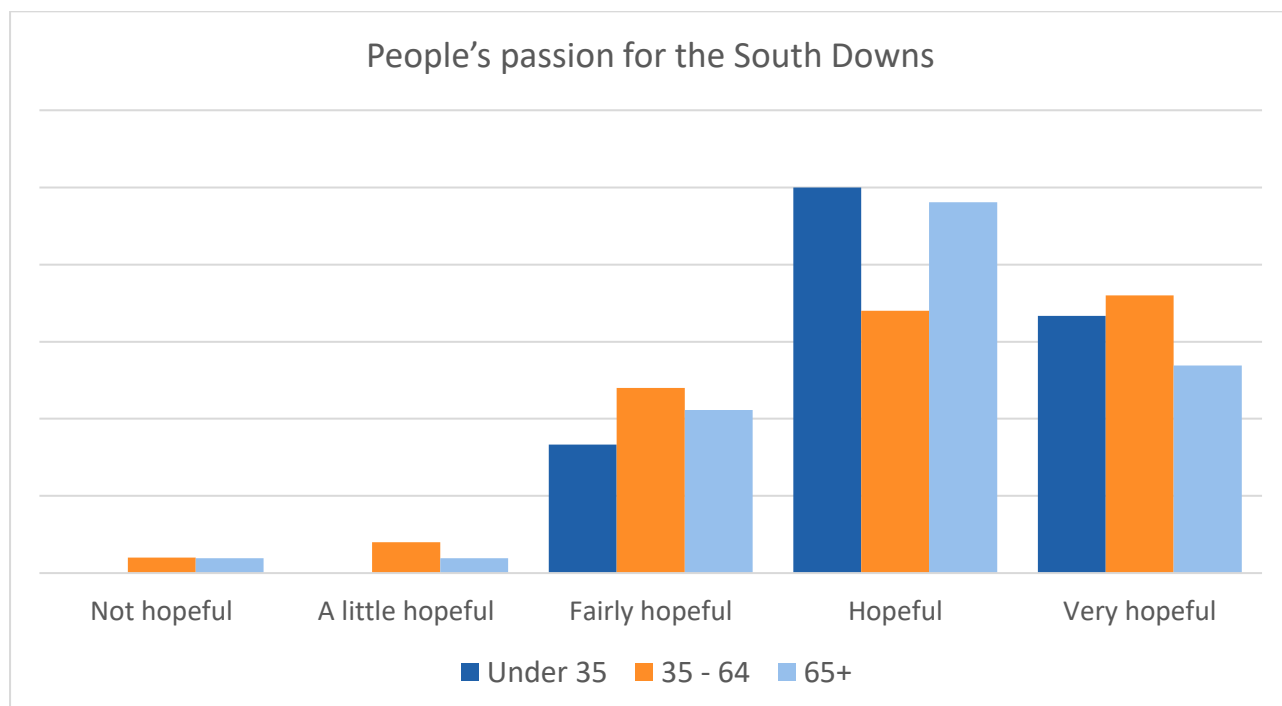
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



The responses appear to show that those from the North of the area are less hopeful about the SDNP due to the Organisations working there and those in the East and West.

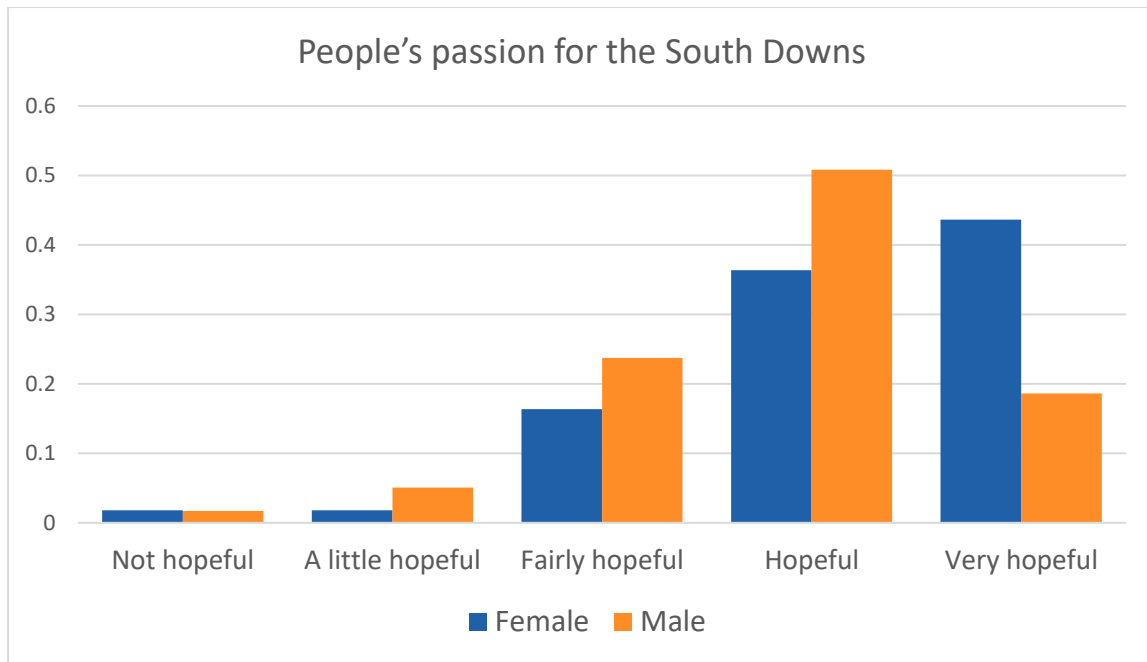
#### PEOPLE'S PASSION FOR THE SOUTH DOWNS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



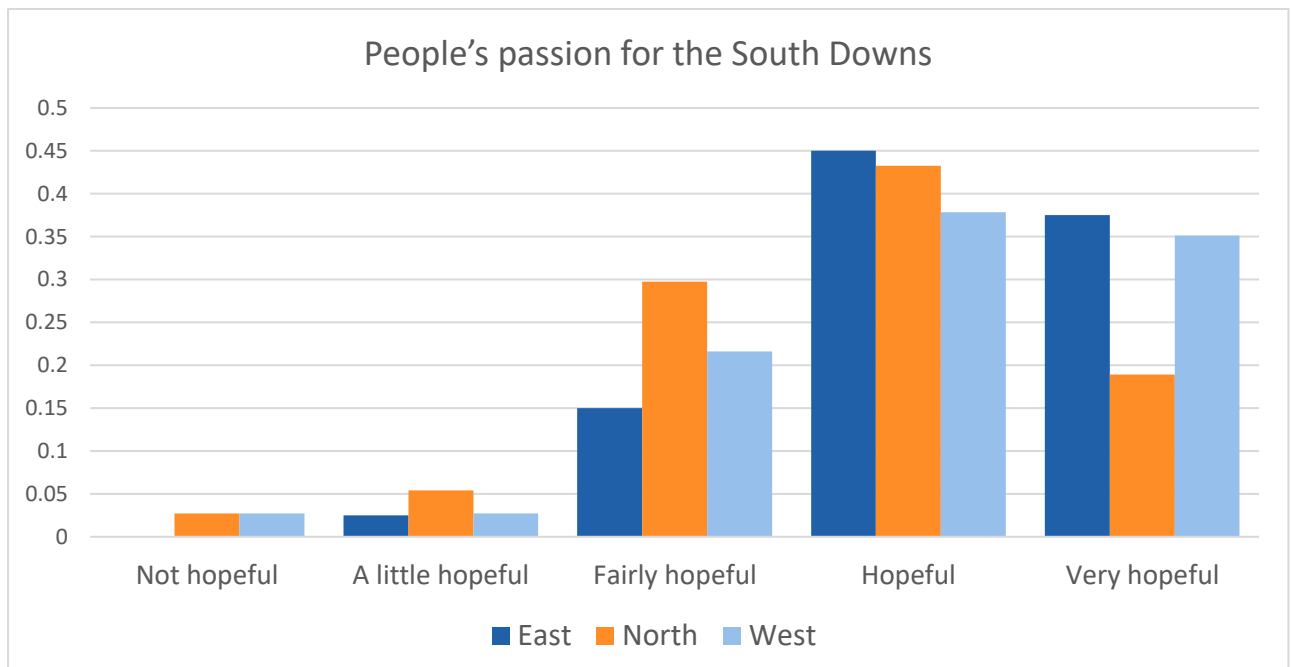
The majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the people's passion for the South Downs.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



The majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the people's passion for the South Downs. There are slightly more Females who are Very hopeful than males, but the opposite is true within the Hopeful selection.

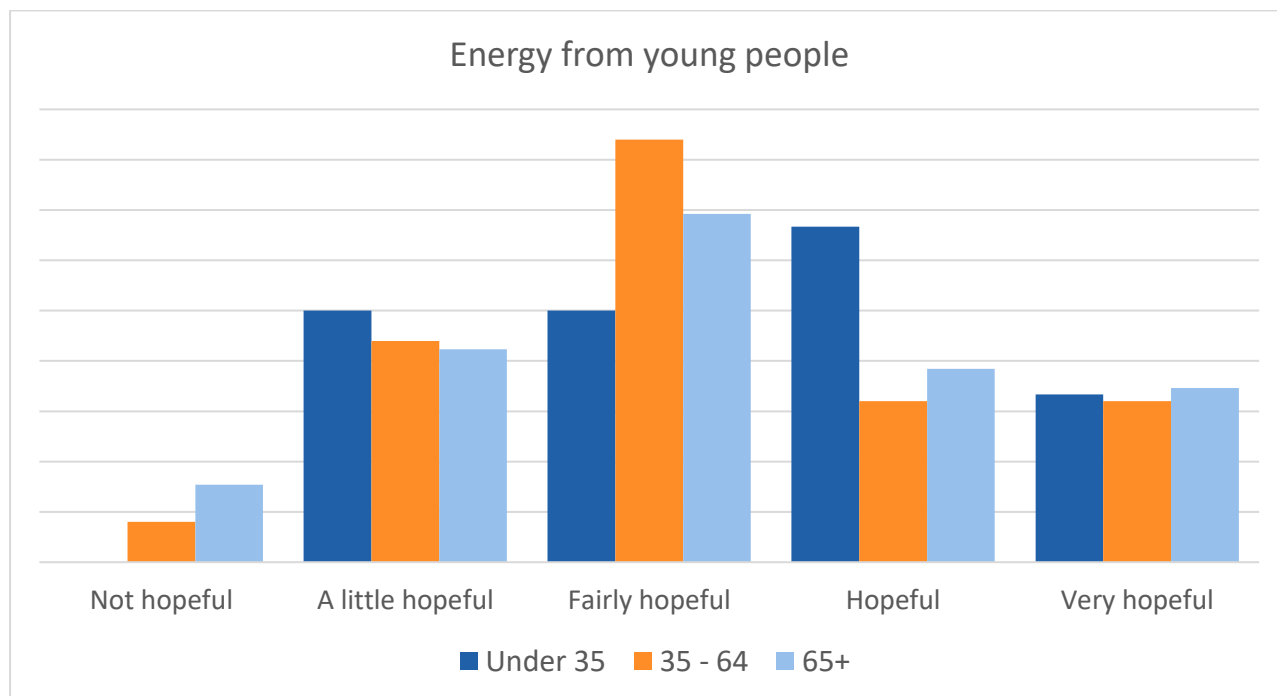
When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



Again, the majority of responses appear to show that the respondents are Fairly hopeful to Very hopeful about the SDNP due to the people's passion for the South Downs. However, those in the North appear to be slightly less hopeful than those in the East or West.

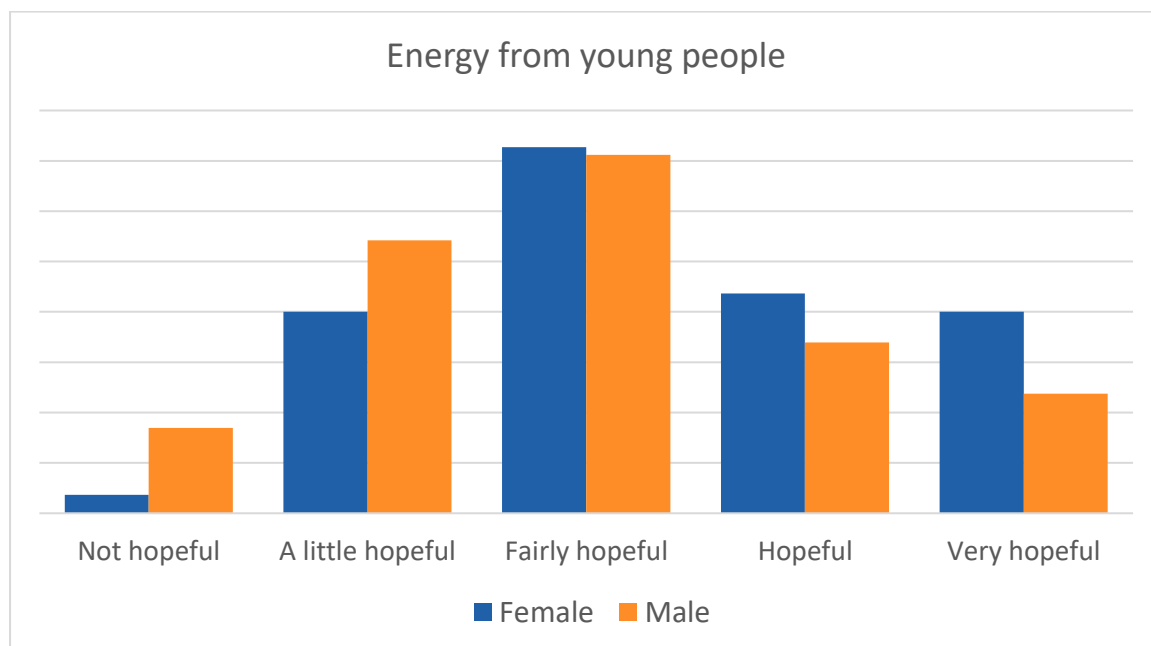
## PEOPLE'S PASSION FOR THE SOUTH DOWNS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the following:



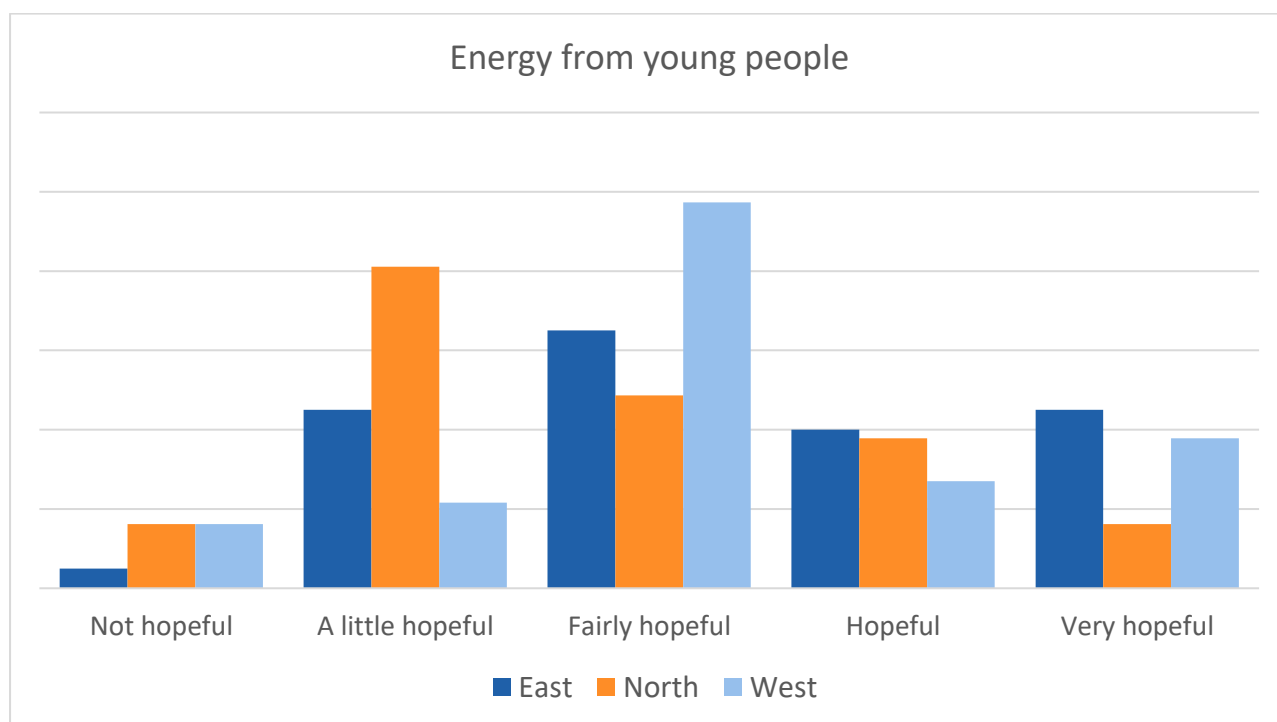
The majority of responses fall into the A little hopeful to Hopeful ranges, however, those aged between 35 to 64 appear to be slightly less hopeful about the SDNP due to the energy from young people, with those Under 35 being slightly more hopeful.

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the following:



Again, the majority of responses fall into the A little hopeful to Hopeful ranges, with Females appearing to be slightly more hopeful about the SDNP due to the energy from young people.

When the responses are analysed by the location of the respondent, we can see the following:



The respondents from the North of the Park appear to be a little less hopeful about the SDNP due to the energy of young people, while those in the West appear to be slightly more hopeful.

## QUESTION 6 – IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE, WHICH OF THESE AREAS WOULD BE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR YOU?

### OVERVIEW

The Respondents were asked to rank a series of questions or points against each other, deciding which was the most important to them, or their highest priority, through to those which were the least important to them, or their lowest priority. The categories were:

- Culture, arts and heritage
- Climate Action
- Vibrant and resilient communities
- Strong local economy
- Improve access and enjoyment
- Nature and Biodiversity

The respondents were asked to rank these according to their personal priorities.

When all of the responses are considered. The respondents ranked their priorities as:

All Respondents	
Priority	
1	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy

To understand the difference in priorities between age groups, gender and location of the respondent We will compare the specific grouping with the control set of priorities from all of the respondents.

### UNDER 35'S

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the priorities of the Under 35's are:

Priority	Under 35	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Improve access and enjoyment	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Culture, arts and heritage	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Vibrant and resilient communities	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

It can be seen that whilst Nature and Biodiversity as well as Climate change remain the two top priorities, Under 35's consider different priorities for the next three ranks, Vibrant and resilient communities being a lower priority than Improving access and enjoyment and Culture, arts and heritage.

### 35 TO 64 YEAR OLDS

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the priorities of the 35 to 64 year olds are:

Priority	35 – 64 Year olds	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities	Vibrant and resilient communities
4 =	Culture, arts and heritage	Improve access and enjoyment
4 =	Strong local economy	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Improve access and enjoyment	Strong local economy

Whilst Nature and Biodiversity, Climate change and Vibrant and resilient communities remain the top three priorities for those aged between 35 and 64, it is interesting to note that Improved access has dropped to the bottom of the list of priorities for this age range. Also, Culture, arts and heritage is ranked with the same score as a Strong local economy.

### AGED 65 AND ABOVE

When the responses are analysed by age groupings we can see the priorities of the 35 to 64 year olds are:

Priority	65 +	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Improve access and enjoyment	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Culture, arts and heritage	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

The priorities of those aged 65 and above correlates to that of All respondents.

### FEMALE RESPONDENTS

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the priorities of the Female respondents are:

Priority	Female respondents	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Culture, arts and heritage	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Improve access and enjoyment	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

The majority of priorities of female respondents are the same as those of All respondents, Culture, arts and heritage moved above Improved access and enjoyment.

### MALE RESPONDENTS

When the responses are analysed by gender we can see the priorities of the Male respondents are:

Priority	Male respondents	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Improve access and enjoyment	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Vibrant and resilient communities	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Culture, arts and heritage	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

The majority of priorities of male respondents are the same as those of All respondents, the Male respondents consider Improved access and enjoyment to be a higher priority than Vibrant and resilient communities.

### RESPONDENTS LOCATED IN THE EAST



When the responses are analysed by location we can see the priorities of those respondents located in the East of the SDNP are:

Priority	Respondents located in the East	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Culture, arts and heritage	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Improve access and enjoyment	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

The majority of priorities of respondents located in the East of the SDNP are the same as those of All respondents, those in the East consider Culture, arts and heritage to be a higher priority than Improved access and enjoyment.

#### RESPONDENTS LOCATED IN THE NORTH

When the responses are analysed by location we can see the priorities of those respondents located in the North of the SDNP are:

Priority	Respondents located in the North	All Respondents
1	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
2	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Improve access and enjoyment	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Vibrant and resilient communities	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Culture, arts and heritage	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

The majority of priorities of respondents located in the North of the SDNP are the same as those of All respondents,.

#### RESPONDENTS LOCATED IN THE WEST

When the responses are analysed by location we can see the priorities of those respondents located in the West of the SDNP are:

Priority	Respondents located in the West	All Respondents
1 =	Nature and Biodiversity	Nature and Biodiversity
1 =	Climate Action	Climate Action
3	Vibrant and resilient communities	Vibrant and resilient communities
4	Culture, arts and heritage	Improve access and enjoyment
5	Improve access and enjoyment	Culture, arts and heritage
6	Strong local economy	Strong local economy

Those respondents located in the West of the SDNP have ranked Nature and biodiversity equal with Climate action, both jointly being their highest priority. Also, Culture, arts and heritage is more important to those in the West of the SDNP than Improve access and enjoyment.

## CONCLUSIONS

Almost everyone regardless of age, gender or where lived felt that the landscape and views were great, the nature and wildlife, and access were good or great. The majority of responses across all age groups, gender and locations are within the a little worried to worried about impact of visitors. For all age groups, nature and biodiversity and climate action were the most important.

Differences by age, gender and location are shown in the table below.

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Differences</b>
<i>Under 35's</i>	<p>Thought the SDNP was more peaceful and tranquil.</p> <p>Public transport was not as bad as other groups.</p> <p>Like historic towns, village and cultural sites slightly less.</p> <p>Slightly less worried about lack of access.</p> <p>More hopeful about the legal protection of the SDNP.</p> <p>Less hopeful about nature's resilience.</p> <p>Less hopeful due to organisation's working there.</p> <p>Slightly more hopeful due to energy from young people.</p> <p>Thought that improved access and enjoyment and culture, arts and heritage were more important than vibrant and resilient communities.</p>
<i>35-64</i>	<p>Slightly more concerned about climate change.</p> <p>Slightly less hopeful due to energy from young people.</p> <p>Improved access has dropped to the bottom of the list of priorities.</p> <p>Culture, arts and heritage is ranked with the same score as a Strong local economy.</p>
<i>Over 35's</i>	<p>More worried about biodiversity or nature loss that under 35's.</p>
<i>Female</i>	<p>Thought the SDNP was more peaceful and tranquil.</p> <p>Slightly more concerned about biodiversity and nature loss.</p> <p>More worried about climate change.</p> <p>Slightly more worried about lack of access.</p> <p>Slightly more concerned about traffic.</p> <p>Slightly more hopeful due to energy from young people.</p>
<i>Male</i>	<p>Liked public access less that females.</p> <p>Slightly less hopefully about organisations working there.</p> <p>Consider Improved access and enjoyment to be a higher priority than Vibrant and resilient communities.</p>

<i>North</i>	<p>Less hopeful due to people's passion for the South Downs.</p> <p>Consider Improved access and enjoyment to be a higher priority than Vibrant and resilient communities.</p>
<i>West</i>	<p>More respondents very worried about biodiversity and nature loss.</p> <p>Significantly more respondents very worried about climate change.</p> <p>Slightly more worried about pollution.</p> <p>Slightly more concerned about traffic.</p> <p>More hopeful about nature's resilience.</p> <p>Ranked Nature and biodiversity equal with Climate action, both jointly being their highest priority.</p> <p>Culture, arts and heritage is more important than Improve access and enjoyment.</p>
<i>East</i>	<p>Liked access to the SDNP more.</p> <p>Felt that access to the SDNP by public transport was better.</p> <p>Felt happier with historic towns, village and cultural sites.</p> <p>Slightly more respondents are Very worried about Development.</p> <p>Consider Culture, arts and heritage to be a higher priority than Improved access and enjoyment.</p>

## APPENDIX 4 - MEMBERS WORKSHOPS

Two workshops were held with elected Members, one also with staff, early in the process.

They were asked how best to engage Members in the PMP development process and completed a SWOT analysis, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the existing PMP, and the opportunities and threats for the new PMP in the first workshop, then looked at hopes and fears for the new PMP in the second one.

The results from this are shown below:

### HOW BEST TO ENGAGE MEMBERS IN THE PMP PROCESS

A thematic approach is preferred; this allows officers and members with expertise and specialisms to focus on theme-based knowledge. It is essential that themes have clear boundaries.

It is suggested to have thematic day workshops where members can choose which workshop to attend. However, there is a risk that allowing all voices to be heard may dilute input from those with expertise or experience. A two-tiered approach could be considered.

Geographic sessions could work effectively for sites of specific interest and importance, or areas with differing housing targets. An overview of all engagement events for members would be beneficial; members should be invited to listen in and support.

Member roles are primarily for listening, thus no additional member-only events are necessary. A roadshow could be organized for members to lead and invite participants.

The involvement of members in consultations local to them could be encouraged, although it is crucial they are not seen as advocating for their local patch. Utilizing the SDNPA events van could provide support.

Language used in engagement must be accessible, avoiding lengthy word fatigue. Consistency in the engagement approach is vital, and appropriate tools and toolkits are needed, such as:

- Infographics
- Videos
- Takeaway handouts for attendees
- Key slides covering important focus areas
- An explanation of why inclusion is necessary
- A knowledge hub for partners.

A combined thematic and geographic approach can map themes to local issues, leading with an emotive local hook. Members appointed by the Secretary of State could be linked to one of the five themes and utilized accordingly. It is essential to ensure that themes do not become silos or too diffuse.

There should be dedicated sessions for particular parts of the park through specific engagement with other stakeholders. Social media live events can be effective.

Members should inform the process and advocate for it, rather than running or leading events. Members appointed by the Secretary of State could take on more thematic roles and advocate on behalf of ASNPA, not as individuals with personal interests or areas.

Members could also be linked with consultants geographically, such as in Chichester or Eastbourne, and with officers to get interested parties more involved. Online meetings and engagements should complement in-person events.

Regulation 245 partners and duties need to be demonstrated clearly.

## SWOT ANALYSIS - SOUTH DOWNS PMP

### Strengths (of the current PMP)

#### PMP document

- Beautiful document (but long and costly) (3)
- Leaflet scale document (2)
- Pithy summaries
- Well preserved document
- Populated with material collated to date

#### Outcomes

- Downs to waves etc – Catalytic converter (bringing partners together – don't need to be leaders anymore - better partners, i.e. Changing Chalk and Fair Game) (5)
- Clear outcomes (4)
- Gives us direction and focus (3)
- Re-nature Campaign – call for sites (3)
- Big projects like Egret Way, Centurion Way and Lewes to Polegate (2)
- Ambitious in scope – park achievements, green finance, good relationships with larger estates, farm clusters, more diverse visitors, Seven Sisters as model, tourist attraction
- Lots of good demonstrable delivery in the last 5 years: OVCA, climate change action plan, SDYA/Generation Green, Fair Game, Health and wellbeing travel grant, platforming diverse voices (writer in residence), Hampshire hedgerows, FIPL, Changing Chalk, SSCP
- Flexible – provides hooks
- Setting up the Trust
- Measurable outcomes

#### Partnership

- Strong networks: e.g. climate and LAs, Learning network (2)
- Better understanding from SDNPA of deep, collegiate partnership working – we are thinking differently
- Clear about roles of NPA and partners
- FIPL – relationships with farmers

#### Measurement and reporting

- Continuously reviewed (3)

#### Process

- Suggested review process approach to EDI is good
- Opportunity to learn
- Useful starting point
- Coming to an end – opportunity for renewal

### Weaknesses

#### PMP Document

- PMP too big (2) Bitesize doc is valuable – is the size of the full PMP doc a barrier?
- Very long document that's only online – who reads it?
- Wording vague and some were 'token'
- Cost of producing document
- TLDR (5)

#### Outcomes

- Are the outcomes really achievable?
- Reduce number of outcomes/priorities
- Outcomes not clear enough. Too broad. (3)
- Outcomes vary in importance and specificity (e.g. contemporary art outcome)
- This is a 5-year plan – don't need to do everything, just areas we know need to focus on, want to prioritise and can make a difference to or make more resilient
- Water quality low priority

#### Partnership

- Not community or partner led (4)
- General lack of awareness of what other partners are prioritising/strategies and outcomes
- LAs are hostile to the NP, even on climate action – need togetherness and alignment
- No stakeholder commitment
- Lack of buy in from delivery partners
- The Task and Finish Group set up was not wide enough and there was little emphasis on partnership

#### Public engagement

- Lack of awareness across communities
- Lack of advocacy, understanding
- Lack of visibility – including of review
- Not obvious how it appeals to different audiences – clarity needed for each key audience

	<p><b>Measurement and reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clear measurements against outcomes</li> <li>• Not dynamic/static – progress not visible</li> <li>• No wider formal reporting on PMP currently</li> </ul> <p><b>Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping pace with ongoing change – needs to be a live document</li> <li>• The current PMP and associated process was too. Much about us (SDNPA), this made buy in difficult</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% reduction in value of DEFRA grant</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities (for the new PMP)</b></p> <p><b>Document</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be accessible and a process/doc that people want to engage with</li> <li>• Smaller document could be printed on demand in other languages</li> <li>• Different mediums for story telling like poem, song (2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities/ outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Government/priorities/missions</li> <li>• LNRS: Need to link with and support these and vice versa</li> <li>• More people-focussed and place shapers (4)</li> <li>• Chance to create a ‘user manual’ for SDNP (3)</li> <li>• ‘Kitchener response’ – get people taking action (3)</li> <li>• Make vision different – to monitor plan for 5 years (delivery group) (3)</li> <li>• Knowledge hub, legacy</li> <li>• Green jobs</li> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Nature-based solutions</li> <li>• Highlight systems issues (not sticking plaster approach) (3)</li> <li>• Push the boundaries</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame as a delivery plan for partners (2)</li> <li>• Should be a call to action for everyone</li> <li>• Show how partner/other strategies can link</li> <li>• Partner responsibilities</li> <li>• Lead other National Parks to be brave and to do things differently</li> <li>• Listen to experts and trust them (4)</li> <li>• Stakeholder commitment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p><b>External environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistance to change – both how things look and how we behave (4)</li> <li>• Could write PMP and be out of date if things change within 5 years</li> <li>• Political landscape (2)</li> <li>• Political uncertainty</li> <li>• Lack of government focus on countryside</li> <li>• Pressures on farming</li> <li>• Devolution</li> <li>• Changing priorities – zeitgeist event like Covid</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclear responsibilities for partners (2)</li> <li>• Development of new content with the Members</li> <li>• Silo working and between members</li> <li>• Motivating people to engage in the conversation</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massive damage to the environment since the last review</li> <li>• Got to break through a crowded strategy environment</li> <li>• Climate emergency</li> <li>• Nature decline</li> <li>• We commit to too many/broad areas and the plan lacks prioritised focus</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Duty – Section 245</li> <li>• Realigning delivery roles and responsibilities through identifying gaps</li> </ul>	
<b>Process</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new content with the Members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very different funding/resource environment than the last plan (including for SDNPA) (2)</li> <li>• Finance (2)</li> <li>• Funding to deliver</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> </ul>
<b>Measurement and reporting</b>	<b>Public engagement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark against other NPAs/PMPs</li> <li>• Demonstrating outcomes (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public perception and value (2)</li> <li>• Invisibility</li> </ul>
<b>Public engagement</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>	
<b>Funding</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pooling resources around shared outcomes (3)</li> <li>• Prioritise more as a result of reduced resources (5)</li> <li>• Align key funding streams behind shared ambition (2)</li> <li>• Bring together groups of funders as part of the PMP process</li> </ul>	

Numbers in brackets indicate how many times something was mentioned.

## HOPES AND FEARS - TO INFORM NEW PMP

### HOPES:

#### Everyone engagement

- Inspiring plan for everyone
- Genuine engagement of delivery partners
- Reaching out to all communities
- A meaningful plan that inspires people to connect to and support nature
- Greater engagement in the park from a wider variety of participants
- That within a very short time we can see positive changes that ALL people can benefit from, rather than niche groups.

#### Style

- Hope that the PMP is concise and relevant
- Effective and practicable
- Keep things simple.

#### Vision/Strategic

- Clear vision clearly communicated
- Strategic focus
- That the plan is ambitious enough
- That the resulting plan will be ambitious and achievable.

#### More than a plan

- To produce a PMP people use
- A plan which galvanises action
- It's a living document that people and organisations constantly refer to, not one that gets put in a drawer and never used.

### **Partners**

- A useful plan that engages partners that deliver
- Collaborative buy in
- We end up with a plan that our partners have sense of ownership about
- Clearly articulate a 'call to action' to collectively deliver the vision
- We deliver nature restoration that has the support and understanding of communities
- That the PMP has meaning to our partners
- That the NPA can exercise effective directional oversight of partnerships created.

### **Priorities**

- An opportunity to refine and prioritise our work – using landscape scale interventions and projects
- That we enthusiastically and unwaveringly support the conserving and enhancing of the built heritage of the National Park.

---

### **FEARS:**

#### **Process/Language**

- Deliverability and realistic
- A process which becomes process focussed
- It's in a language that is impenetrable
- That outcomes are unrealistic or not strategic.

#### **Complex/ Lacks focus**

- It ends up not being focussed enough
- That the plan becomes too big, lacks focus and fails to deliver
- That the plan ends up trying to be 'all things to all people' and lacks focus
- Use of resources taking away from delivery
- The plan becomes an un-?? Wish list with no party able to support effectively
- All things to all people
- Too inward looking – ourselves rather than the public
- Too complex/hard to comprehend
- That we aspire to do too much without taking account of the resources available and reality of the changes that are taking place
- We get bogged down in bureaucracy
- There is so much to consider. How do we keep it simple?

#### **Climate change**

- Greater/Faster pace of climate change overtakes our activity
- Funding challenges
- That our enthusiasm to combat climate change and in favour of rewilding leads to damage to the landscape we have to conserve.

#### **Government**

- That government policy will put barriers in the way of the plan.

#### **NP purpose**

- We forget the purposes of the National Park.

#### **Buy in/Engagement**

- Making sure we have sufficient buy in from delivery partners



- Hearing all the voices
- Ensuring PMP is bought into by broad range of stakeholders
- We don't get enough external engagement
- It's not relevant to people and organisations who live in/work in/visit the park
- That we fail to engage with residents during and after
- Seen as a plan for the Authority.

**Questions (1<sup>st</sup> session)**

1. Climate change representation?
2. Public health (H + WB)?
3. Role/Purpose of PMP vis a vis i.e. LP and Corporate Plan – overall strategic plan
4. Impact of county council elections on continuity/steering group – mainly officers
5. Who/How will transport be represented? Asst Dir Transport W Sussex
6. A large steering group – can they draft a plan? Officer leads will in effect write the plan – but handing over to a single authorial (editorial) voice
7. Gap Eastbourne and Wealden? ESCC? Sessions for LAs in consultation.

---

**DRIVERS FOR CHANGE (HIGHLIGHTS FROM):**

- Multifunctional landscapes
- Common themes – recurring on different drivers\Sense of place – proud to be in the park
- Output – the PMP – needs to be really short and simple. Needs to be nearer to the leaflet – ‘at a glance’
- What's missing? – we've added to it
- Need community buy-in – a movement – so that people think of nature. In a language people use
- A national effort – behaviour change
- Guidance for partners ‘What you could do’ – for water companies, PCs etc
- Don't call it a PMP. Something more inclusive i.e. Partnership Plan
- Listening to your ideas
- Vision – let the partners come up with it
- Be aware of how NRS are already rebranding. Also new and very important
- Who is responsible for what? For delivering?

At each of the events, participants were consistently asked:

1. Why do you love the countryside / South Downs?
2. Why are you worried about the countryside / South Downs?
3. Why are you hopeful about the countryside / South Downs?
4. What is the purpose of the South Downs (your personal view)?

The responses were automatically turned into Word Clouds using Mentimeter (with the exception of Moulsecoomb where Mentimeter went offline temporarily), with the largest words depicted, being the most frequent cited. The results for each of the events have now been combined.

Figure 1 suggests that the participants love the South Downs because of the landscape, nature, wildlife, sense of space, views and beauty. Also, they consider it their home, love its history and that it is accessible particularly for walking.

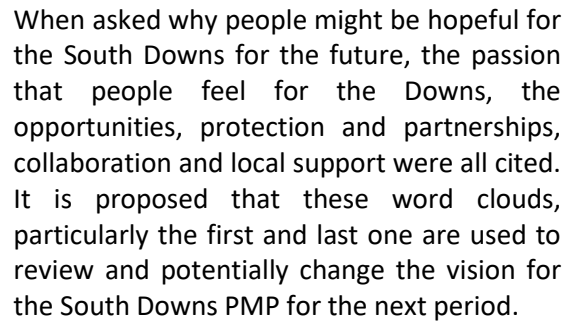


**Figure 1: Why do you love the South Downs?**



When they were asked why they are worried about the South Downs, climate and climate change were most frequently cited, followed by development, pollution, funding housing and traffic.

**Figure 2: Why are you worried about the South Downs?**



### Figure 3: Why are you hopeful about the South Downs?

## APPENDIX 6 - STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS REPORT

Resources for Change was commissioned to undertake a series of workshops with community stakeholders with a particular interest in the PMP. The findings from this section collate responses across workshops with the following audiences:

- SDNPA staff
- The Learning Network
- Farmers and the Farming and Rural Issues Group South East
- Wildlife, access, landscape and climate action groups
- Urban edge community groups.

At these workshops they asked participants about:

- What the Drivers for Change – what would be driving change – in the next five years
- Then to undertake a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) exercise for each of the following five themes:
  - Landscape and heritage
  - Climate change
  - Communities and the economy
  - Access
  - Nature and biodiversity
- To prioritise these.

Reports for each of these workshops have been sent to the participants and are available upon request from [jim@r4c.org.uk](mailto:jim@r4c.org.uk)

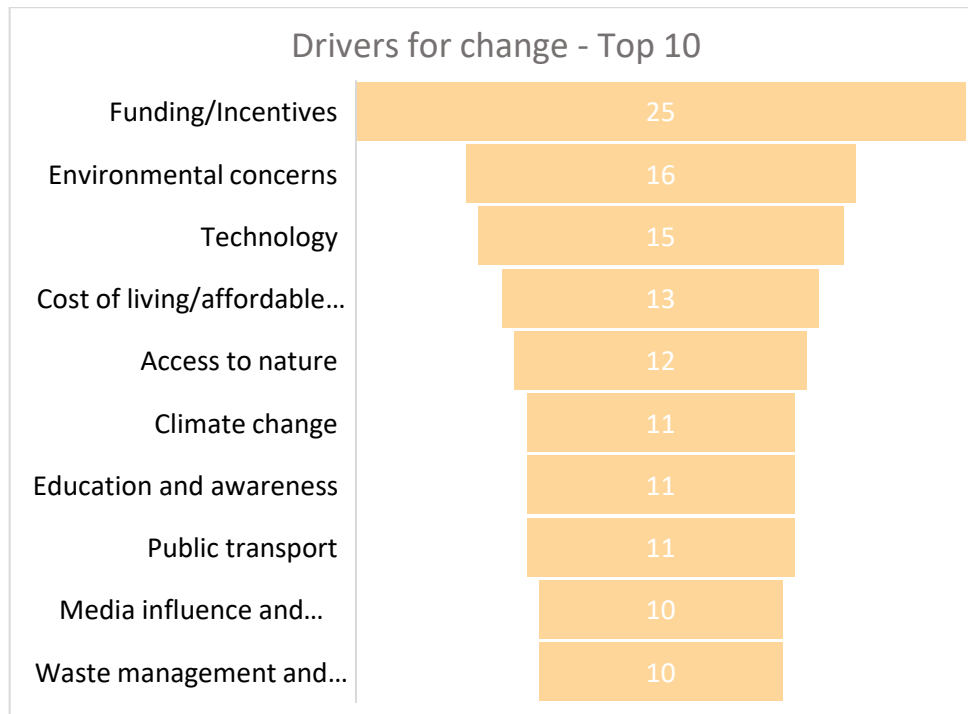
R4C and SDNPA staff also facilitated shorter sessions at other events such as the Learning Network, Farming and Rural Issues Group (FRIGSE), Parishes and Local Authority events, using online polling for the Drivers for Change and SWOT; or undertaking a SWOT for that particular group if, for example, at the Farmers' Breakfasts, time didn't allow for the full suite of themes to be explored.

The results across the four workshops and other events have been combined, sorted into common categories and then the most frequently identified categories listed here by their frequency. In this way, we have been able to identify the highest priority Drivers for Change, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The strengths and opportunities are perhaps the most pertinent aspects for feeding into the emerging PMP, on the basis that it is easier to build on strengths, and the opportunities tend to be action and future focussed.

---

### DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

At the stakeholder workshops participants were divided into pairs and asked to consider what's driving change / what are the Drivers for Change in the South Downs now and in the future. All these have now been put into a spreadsheet and categories that best describe these have been sorted. The results are the frequency / number of times a particular category was identified as a Driver for Change with the largest number being the most frequently mentioned:



Most commonly cited (25 by category) were funding and incentives. There were several comments that, currently there is an overall lack of funding for landowners and conservation organisations. Some people felt that funding is focused too much on short term projects and should instead be directed to longer term change.

Several (16) mentioned various environmental concerns. Some issues mentioned were: flooding, droughts, habitat loss, and visitors damaging the environment.

Technology was also often mentioned as a Driver for Change (15 comments). Comments talked about the ways developing technology could improve sustainability, help educate people, and make it easier for people to access nature. Some comments suggested the use of QR codes and apps to guide people through the National Park.

Other common Drivers for Change were:

- Cost of living/ affordable housing – some people lack disposable income for travel, making accessing nature difficult. The need for housing creates development pressure.
- Access to nature – Difficult to access nature from urban areas especially without a car, or with limited mobility.
- Climate change – there is a need for awareness and strategies put in place.
- Education and awareness – there is a lack of understanding and awareness about the environment.
- Public transport – Limited transport reduces accessibility.
- Media influence and public perceptions.
- Waste management and pollution – this particular driver features strongly in weaknesses, threats and opportunities.

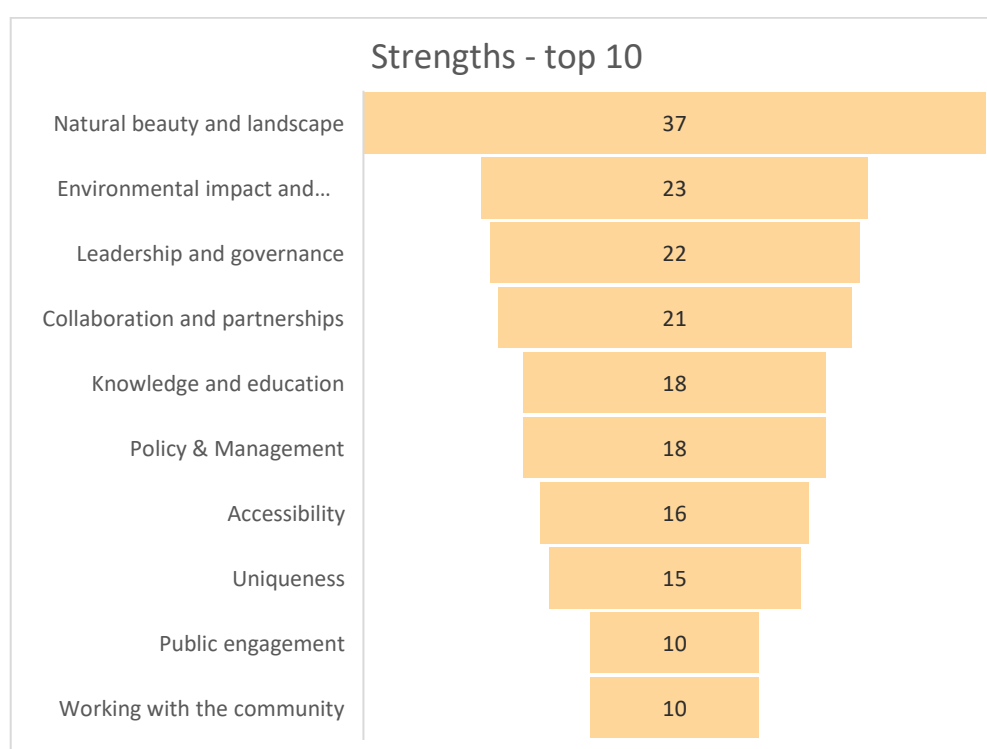
## STRENGTHS

The natural beauty and landscape of the South Downs is considered a significant strength. Most commonly cited by category (37) were the natural beauty and landscape. People commented about the chalk streams, dark skies, the coastline, and the landscape in general. The area was frequently described as “beautiful” and “tranquil”.

Next frequently cited (23) were the environmental impact and conservation work that goes on in the South Downs National Park (SDNP), improving biodiversity and protecting the environment.

Another key strength is the leadership and governance of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), cited 22 times. There were many comments about passionate and dedicated organisations and leaders that hold strong values to benefit the South Downs. Some comments mention the strong stable team at SDNPA, and SDNPA as a convenor or “catalyst”.

Next most frequently cited (21) were the collaboration and partnerships within the South Downs. Comments talked about collaboration between local organisations, councils, and communities.



Other key strengths include:

- Knowledge and education – forest schools and the Learning Network
- Policy and management – local planning and legal protection
- Accessibility of the national park – close to towns and communities, free access

More detail about strengths and weaknesses identified in the first phase workshops is shown in the table below.

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses
Nature recovery	Inspirational leadership by SDNPA wardens going the extra mile.	Depletion of nature and wildlife / biodiversity.

	<p>WSxRivers Trust, Knepp, Weald to Waves, SxWT, SECA, PeCAN, Chi Earth Cafe, Singleton Forest Watch, Weald Action Group (WAG), Transport Action Network (TAN), CPRE and other mainly voluntary led community groups.</p> <p>Projects like Weald to Waves and Land Use Plus.</p> <p>The amount of restoration of hedgerows and development of 'wild strips' around agricultural fields by some landowners.</p> <p>Changing Chalk project brought communities together.</p> <p>Motivated and knowledgeable organisations, groups and individuals.</p> <p>There are many funding opportunities - grants and schemes.</p> <p>Sussex Natural Sciences amalgamated with Booth Museum to collate the Sussex database of biological records.</p> <p>Protection of the historic Elm collection for Brighton and Hove.</p> <p>20 x badger routes under the A27.</p> <p>Weald to Waves.</p> <p>The Knepp - positive but controversial.</p>	<p>Loss of habitat for wildlife.</p> <p>Concern about impact of development and increased visitors on biodiversity.</p> <p>Increase in invasive species- rhododendron, laurel, American Skunk Cabbage, bamboo. Landowners are not controlling these, and it needs to be a higher priority.</p> <p>Resistance to include large animals such as bison or wild boar as ecosystem engineers.</p> <p>Wild fallow deer need culling.</p> <p>Impact of shooting- pheasants and partridge released impact biodiversity and disturbance to wildlife of shoots.</p> <p>South Downs are over managed.</p> <p>Still missing many species - polecats, water voles, apex predators etc.</p>
<i>Climate action</i>	<p>People are planning for change and future proofing.</p>	
<i>Culture and heritage</i>	<p>Moulsecoomb primary school - historic space.</p> <p>Monthly history/ geology walks.</p> <p>Whitehawk - history and education.</p> <p>Rocky Clump archaeological site.</p> <p>Landscape artists' dream - inspiration.</p>	<p>Hollingbury Hillfort under threat. Feels forgotten.</p> <p>The Keep needs more awareness.</p> <p>Museums have gone.</p>
<i>Access</i>	<p>Accessible to a large no. of people passionate about the National Park.</p> <p>Access to the National Park is easy from Brighton and Eastbourne.</p>	<p>Honey pot sites over visited and footfall is increasing.</p> <p>Lack of awareness/ social media.</p>



	<p>Good bus services in Brighton.</p> <p>Good road links and stations.</p> <p>Many PROW, generally in good condition.</p> <p>South Downs Way - runs like a 'backbone' through the landscape - easy to access.</p> <p>Centurion Way.</p> <p>Large network of quiet country lanes for cycling.</p> <p>Travel grant in partnership with Community transport Sussex.</p> <p>Brighton Breeze to Devil's Dyke to Eastbourne.</p>	<p>Poor access to nature, especially for those with disabilities.</p> <p>Isolating for those without a car.</p> <p>Urban/ rural links and signage are poor - people don't know what's on their doorsteps.</p> <p>Reliance on technology to get information - not everyone has a smart phone.</p> <p>Some people feel the countryside is not for them.</p> <p>Lack of infrastructure for active travel, with few places to lock up bikes.</p> <p>Bus services are under threat.</p> <p>There are not enough bus services - intermittent. Leads to a car culture.</p> <p>Trunk roads can be a barrier to access.</p> <p>Some PROW are in poor condition.</p> <p>Issues with motorbikes and 4x4s on ROW, especially in East Hampshire.</p> <p>Lack of non-slippery walking paths.</p> <p>Eroding chalk paths.</p> <p>Lack of 'Right to Roam'.</p>
<i>Education and skills</i>	<p>Learning Network run by SDNPA.</p> <p>Forest Schools.</p> <p>Common Ground education film (45min version).</p> <p>Organisations working hard to provide funded visits for young people.</p> <p>SDNPA funding school trips.</p> <p>Ambassador school at Mouslecoombe with investment from SDNPA enables children to investigate the Downs.</p>	<p>Lack of green career advice/ skills for young people.</p> <p>Schools not being aware of what's available, not having the right shoes/ image of the outdoors, time and resource poor, very busy with lots of different priorities.</p> <p>Paperwork for planning trips can be a barrier.</p> <p>Perceived pressures under the permissions systems and complications associated with restricting numbers to designated landscape.</p>
<i>Health and wellbeing</i>	<p>Green, fresh air.</p> <p>A peaceful escape.</p> <p>Lots of connected green space.</p>	

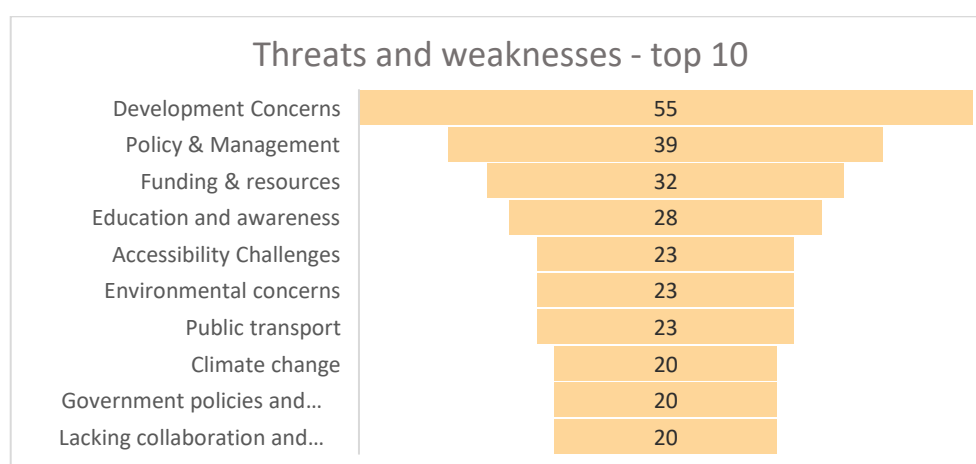


	<p>Social prescribing and health walks.</p> <p>Existing cycling and running events.</p> <p>National Park acts as a buffer between north and south for people to enjoy peace and tranquillity.</p> <p>Health and wellbeing trend - connection to nature.</p>	
<i>Volunteering</i>	<p>Trained staff help young people to do conservation tasks.</p> <p>South Downs Youth Action - 180 young people signed up - practical action for nature and climate.</p> <p>Affluent people have time to put into the National Park.</p> <p>Lots of passion for the National Park - brings people together to take care of it.</p> <p>Organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and community groups collaborating.</p> <p>Animal Management students from Plumpton helping at Drusillas Park.</p>	<p>Insufficient outreach for young people and hard to reach groups.</p> <p>Lack of opportunities for volunteering/ work experience/ placements for under 18's.</p> <p>Lack of inclusivity.</p> <p>A lot of wildlife groups are isolated.</p> <p>Feels like people care less and less about young people.</p>
<i>Community</i>		<p>Too little 'real' connection between Winchester and Eastbourne - feels like an artificial construct.</p> <p>Risk of losing connection with the land.</p> <p>Not listening to communities or working alongside them.</p>
<i>Economy and employment</i>	<p>Visitor pounds.</p> <p>Website is helpful - ideas of what to do.</p> <p>Well known.</p> <p>Productive landscape.</p>	<p>Food business infrastructure - only 1 abattoir in East Sussex.</p> <p>Where are the countryside jobs? Lack of entry-level countryside jobs.</p> <p>Not doing enough to tell people they are in this park and what it means. Better signage needed.</p> <p>Hotspots - over tourism. Too many visitors in some areas - lack of infrastructure for active travel.</p>

	<p>Traffic and parking for local businesses can be limited.</p> <p>Lack of public transport for key jobs.</p> <p>Village shops closing down.</p>
--	--

## THREATS AND WEAKNESSES

These were combined. In terms of weaknesses and threats facing the South Downs most commonly cited by category (55 times) were concerns relating to development. Many people made comments about development encroaching close to the boundary of the national park and increasing housing pressure from government targets. While there were many comments considering development in general as a weakness/threat, some people did specify that “unsympathetic” development is the issue.



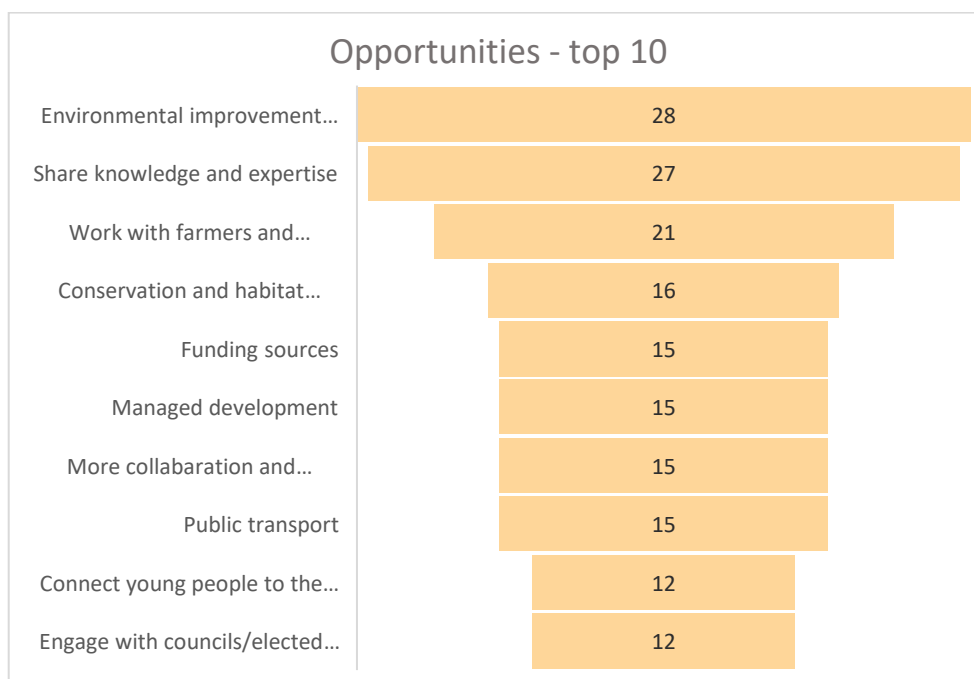
The next most frequently cited category (39 times) related to policy and management. In particular many people brought up planning, some considering it slow, and lacking enforcement. There were some comments about management strategies being ineffective, and a few comments about a need for more responsibility and accountability.

Next most frequently cited (32) were concerns about funding and resources, with the general sentiment being summarised as “lack of funding”.

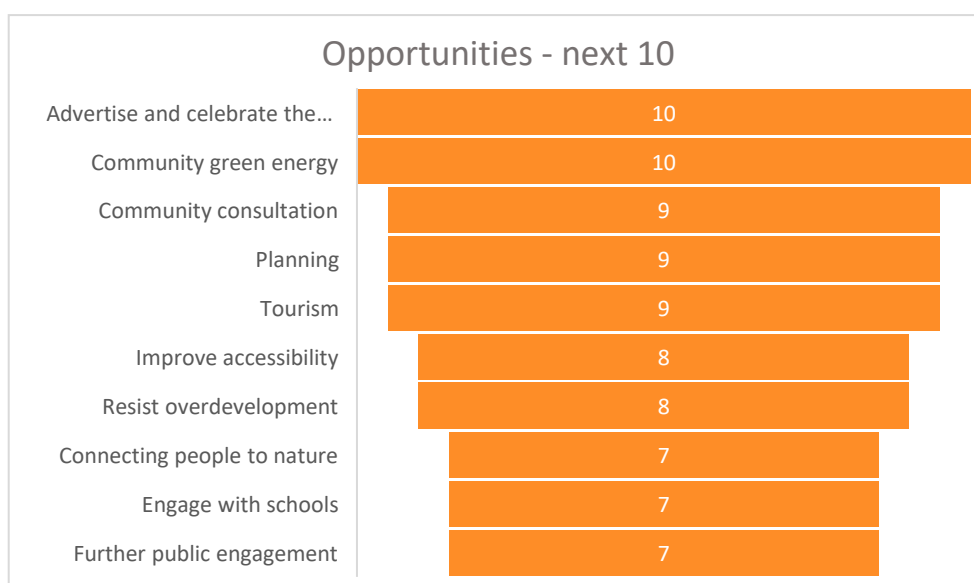
Other significant weakness and threats were:

- Education and awareness – lack of awareness about the national park, misunderstandings and misconceptions about the SDNPA, people lacking knowledge of the importance of the landscape.
- Accessibility challenges – poor public transport, lack of accessible gates and rights of way, poor disabled access.
- Environmental concerns – pollution, wildfires, water extraction, inadequate protections.
- Public transport – High cost, low quality, not enough connections.
- Climate change – flooding, balancing peoples living standards with carbon footprint.
- Lack of collaboration and cooperation – many organisations and authorities but poor cohesion, lacking coordination with local councils, “siloed” thinking and working.
- Government policies and regulation – Local government reorganisation, political and development pressures.

## OPPORTUNITIES



Consistent with the public events, environmental improvement and nature recovery (missing text from the above table) were seen as the highest priority for action. It is interesting that sharing knowledge and expertise was most frequently seen as the opportunity to bring about change followed by working with farmers and landowners.



Next most frequently cited (28) were opportunities for further environmental improvement and nature recovery in the South Downs. Some improvements suggested were further work to protect the chalk streams, planting trees for carbon sequestering and woodland diversification, and encouraging environmentally conscious planning.

Nearly as frequently cited (27) were opportunities for sharing knowledge and expertise. Several people made suggestions for sharing information and educating the public, such as information boards, QR codes and signage to guide people through the park. There were also comments about sharing learning and expertise between organisations and partners.

And again, frequently cited (21) were more opportunities for working with farmers and landowners. There were several suggestions to work with farmers to encourage and support regenerative farming. Working with landowners could provide opportunities to improve accessibility.

Other key opportunities include:

- Conservation and habitat protection – preserving green spaces and protecting wildlife habitats
- Sources of funding – Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), nature credits, rural grants
- Managed development – find for the right “character” of development, focused on building communities and biodiversity friendly measures
- More collaboration and partnerships – continue bringing people together, have conversations with organisations and partners, work with councils
- Public transport – encourage use and more connections to the national park

### EMERGING PMP PRIORITIES

At the workshops, where time permitted, participants were asked to share what they considered the highest priority opportunities and strengths to take forward into the next PMP. They were then given two to three sticky dots to indicate which for them were the highest priority. The results for each workshop where the prioritisation process took place are listed as follows:

#### FARMING AND RURAL ISSUES GROUP (FRIGSE)

Priorities	Rank
Help Land-Based Businesses Diversify	1
Harness diversity of being a National Park with a large population (residents and business) as an asset	2
Diverse Offer – The new border	3
Collaboration & Relationship with SDNPA	4
Progressive Policies	5
SDNPA Leadership (leading by example on key policy areas)	5
Being open for business	5
Focus on Engaging Large Populations	8

#### WILDLIFE, ACCESS, LANDSCAPE AND CLIMATE ACTION GROUPS, PULBOROUGH

Priorities	Score
1. Balancing conflict i.e. access vs tourism pounds	5
2. Collaboration – agencies – communities - landowners	4
3. Influence/influencing beyond boundaries	3=
4. Size [of habitats] and diversity	3=
5. Lifelong learning	2
6. Building community-based change	1
7. Shortening supply chains	

#### WILDLIFE, ACCESS, LANDSCAPE AND CLIMATE ACTION GROUPS, ONLINE

Priorities (not scored)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing the landscape led approach</li> <li>• People need to know about the funding opportunities (x2) – external and in partnership</li> </ul>

<b>Priorities (not scored)</b>
• Development as an opportunity for Biodiversity Net Gain, diversification of farming, sensitive development
• Collaboration and coordination x2
• People can put forward their sites for Biodiversity Net Gain or Credits
• Look at the whole – an integrated systems approach
• Supporting farms into clusters, and the clusters to reduce inputs and set aside land for nature
• Community engagement – internal and visitors
• Communication and messaging – vehicle to showcase what's going on
• Catchment scale work e.g. Rother Partnership – big joined up thinking
• Better communication with the Parish Councils in and around the Park
• Recreation – a chance to really improve how this works, make it more sustainable. Possible brand for this across all three counties?
• Funding from BNG - £21k per unit? Funding in general for work

### MOULSECOOMB

<b>Priorities (scored)</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. More sustainable farming (regenerative)	15
2. Chalk grassland (restoration and creation)	14
3. Recognising/embracing community groups	9
4. Protecting the urban fringe	9
5. Increasing awareness of the NP	6
6. Public transport – growing it into the park	5
7. Green bridges	5
8. Futureproofing woodlands	5
9. Signposting from urban areas to NP	4
10. Getting young people and schools more involved	3
11. Building better partnerships with farmers and local authorities	2
12. Small business green hubs	2
13. Greener housing and residential areas	1
14. Promoting the heritage including arts and music	0
15. Branding and promoting of local produce	0

### WINCHESTER

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Appropriate housing	14
2. Greater promotion of walking and cycling routes from towns – to and from station and pubs	11
3. Managing traffic, road speed and safety for walkers and cyclists	6
4. Encouraging sustainable land management	4
5. Young people engagement in local action	4
6. Better understanding of business requirements/opportunities	3
7. Supporting and promoting collaboration amongst community climate groups and taking advantage of funding opportunities	2
8. Town and Parish councils more engaged with/promoting NP	2
9. Heritage/countryside skills development/opportunities for diverse communities around the NP	2
10. Promote musical and literary heritage	

## SECTOR SPECIFIC LEARNING

Whilst the findings above collate information from all the Stakeholder Workshops and Events, some of these were sector specific and the findings from these have been drawn out in this section.

### LEARNING NETWORK

The Learning Network is a network of around 150 learning providers, particularly those set in the outdoors, who deliver a range of learning outside the classroom experiences relevant to the South Downs National Park and its special qualities.

There were two events focused on the Learning Network, and the findings from these workshops are collated below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Sense of belonging/connection pride and understanding</p> <p>Benefits to wellbeing and mental health</p> <p>Green social prescribing</p> <p>Partnerships/collaboration grants to support schools</p> <p>Strong networks</p> <p>Diversity of outdoor providers - breadth and wealth of provision</p> <p>Impact of funding</p> <p>SDNP funding for access - bus grant</p> <p>Previous government focus supported our work</p> <p>Knowledge - communities - space/land - motivators - habitats and wildlife</p> <p>adaptable models - working with all - promoting accessibility</p> <p>Alternative physical activities aka not necessarily sport</p> <p>Entry level job creation e.g young guides</p> <p>Involving business</p> <p>Educator skills</p> <p>Five pathways to nature connection</p> <p>Forest school network</p> <p>Greater understanding of importance/ awareness/ valuing</p> <p>High engagement with diverse/low income school groups</p> <p>SWW longevity is consistent and adaptable - don't rely on external funds.</p>	<p>Intergenerational opportunities</p> <p>Diversity in all areas</p> <p>Misconceptions of what organisations do/are</p> <p>The need to use technical terms/jargon</p> <p>Limits to funding and ongoing uncertainty</p> <p>Need time/resources to grow options</p> <p>School budgets and staffing are tight</p> <p>Livestock can be offputting and scary</p> <p>Public transport costs</p> <p>Younger people not getting involved in work/training</p> <p>Losing skilled people - resources</p> <p>Accessible sites e.g. forest schools</p> <p>Accessing teenagers can be challenging</p> <p>can be hard to reach schools</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Habitat management activities with young people e.g. leaky dams or meadow making</p> <p>rewilding children - creating opportunities at school and at home</p> <p>new GCSE to lead to developed understanding</p> <p>Nurturing connections to environment in school</p>	<p>Cost of living is high</p> <p>Career advice at schools</p> <p>Department for education expectations can be high</p> <p>SEND needs - overstretched schools / worries about taking children out</p> <p>Eco-apathy and fatigue</p>

<p>schools - greater understanding/awareness of nature and outdoor education</p> <p>schools will have sustainability lead and climate action plan</p> <p>Follow up activities e.g. open farm days</p> <p>embedding experiences</p> <p>Bounce/pandemic led to realisation of importance of physical and mental health</p> <p>Green prescriptions empowering people</p> <p>growing green careers</p> <p>Connectivity projects e.g. Weald to waves corridor, Downs to the sea</p> <p>Benefits of nature for everyone's mental health and sense of belonging</p> <p>Building on success (motivation = belonging and success)</p> <p>Sense of belonging for everyone</p> <p>supporting all children - esp neurodiverse</p> <p>Connecting islands of expertise</p> <p>Match making land owners with learning providers</p> <p>Networks like learning providers network</p> <p>Older people - opportunities for older people to share knowledge with younger people</p> <p>strong opportunity for learning providers to tell their story and sell it as an education package</p> <p>Wellie bank</p>	<p>lack of self awareness of our impact on climate change and nature</p> <p>Stereotypes of nature leading to people not seeing nature as for them - no public images of "them" in these areas</p> <p>Funding (internal and external)</p> <p>Reduction in funding in schools / SDNP</p> <p>Changing government focuses</p> <p>Feeling welcome / a sense of belonging is not equal for all</p> <p>Reaching the missing %</p> <p>Perception of what being in the SDNP means</p> <p>sense of "me" rather than us</p> <p>Lack of public transport access</p> <p>Lack of continuity of staff</p> <p>Teacher workload</p> <p>Teacher workload/capacity</p> <p>low resilience of children due to effects of covid</p>
--	---

## FARMING AND RURAL BUSINESSES

There were three events specifically for farmers, landowners and rural businesses, one with Farming and Rural Issues Group South East, and a farmers' breakfast and supper.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Proximity to large urban community</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Strong, stable team at SDNPA</p> <p>Dynamism from SDNPA</p> <p>Continued progressive policy planning</p> <p>Increasing population as an opportunity</p> <p>Strong relationships among key stakeholders</p> <p>Opportunities for landscape-scale restoration</p> <p>NP has a clear identity</p> <p>Strong stakeholders</p> <p>Opportunities for job creation in tourism</p> <p>Education in the rural economy</p> <p>Entrepreneurialism</p> <p>Dynamism in the SME sector</p> <p>Diversity in the population</p>	<p>Insecure funding</p> <p>Infrastructure needs</p> <p>Business purposes vs. nature recovery benefits</p> <p>Limited awareness of the National Park</p> <p>Loss of rural skills</p> <p>Poor quality accommodation</p> <p>Lack of affordable housing</p> <p>Focus on larger settlements</p> <p>Rural skill shortage vs. urban opportunities nearby</p> <p>Poor public transport accessibility</p> <p>Mismanaged footpath system</p> <p>Low park visibility</p> <p>Economic land management is unprofitable (farming, forestry, hospitality)</p>

<p>Collaboration opportunities</p> <p>Ancient woodland – use and tourism potential</p> <p>Landscape – views and access</p> <p>Green prescribing</p> <p>Space for recreation</p> <p>Natural and cultural capital</p> <p>Biodiversity</p> <p>Coherent vision</p> <p>Accessible from population centers</p> <p>Large scale – particularly East to West</p> <p>FIPL</p> <p>Open conversations</p> <p>Diversification, especially buildings and non-farm businesses</p> <p>Advanced farming methods</p> <p>Older assets provide greater security, such as succession rights</p>	<p>Limited funding</p> <p>Short-term stewardship thinking</p> <p>Government lacks transparency</p> <p>No open conversations in planning</p> <p>Inconsistent planning</p> <p>Poor understanding of planning</p> <p>Change of use from traditional buildings</p> <p>Difficulty in crop production</p> <p>Onerous building conservation for renovations</p> <p>High planning costs</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>Links to large population</p> <p>Landscape framework</p> <p>Green energy</p> <p>Climate changes</p> <p>Sussex Bay National Park</p> <p>Public transportation access</p> <p>Enhance brand for overseas visitors</p> <p>Festivals</p> <p>Community Land Trust model – nature and housing assets</p> <p>Diversification of land-based businesses</p> <p>Nature credits markets</p> <p>Tourism – wellness, nature, woodland</p> <p><u>SDNPA</u></p> <p>Landscape recovery</p> <p>Local landscape framework</p> <p>Nature recovery grants from Natural England</p> <p>BNG</p> <p>Wealthy tourism</p> <p>Education via park's image</p> <p>NHS collaboration – Green prescribing</p> <p>Streamlining and support for change of use.</p> <p>Recognition that individuals working on South Downs need to maintain viable businesses and generate profit.</p>	<p>Breakup of estates</p> <p>Population pressures</p> <p>National Park access under strain</p> <p>Unstable funding environment</p> <p>Precarious funding conditions</p> <p>Land-based skills and opportunities</p> <p>Increasing visitors due to new housing</p> <p>Growing suburbanization</p> <p>Farmer bankruptcies</p> <p>Weak planning system</p> <p>Climate change impacts</p> <p>Balancing landscape and development</p> <p>Lack of education</p> <p>Weather challenges</p> <p>Modern farm tenancies offer flexibility but less security, similar to a license.</p>



<p>Facilitation of discussions with the park authority regarding strategies for diversification.</p> <p>Rural grant schemes as alternative income sources.</p> <p>Recognition of alternative uses for redundant buildings.</p> <p>Additional Opportunities:</p> <p>Increased presence on the ground offers educational opportunities.</p> <p>Customized solutions to address specific issues.</p>	
---	--

### WHAT CAN WE COLLECTIVELY DO FOR.....

<b>Theme</b>	<b>What we can do</b>
<i>Nature</i>	<p>There is currently a big shift towards Nature Friendly Farming which needs to be encouraged and supported. “there is an immense amount we can do for nature”</p> <p>Take a regional approach - Bioregional Development – to address ecological, economic and social issues</p> <p>Funding needs to be targeted towards nature – is this an advocacy role for the SDNPA?</p> <p>Sort the broke economic land management model which is currently totally dependent on government funding</p> <p>More collaboration – we can lead others in and beyond the park</p> <p>More opportunities for landscape recovery.</p>
<i>Climate change</i>	<p>5 yrs to short but we can lay the foundations – a delivery model and structure</p> <p>Mitigation is not working fast enough.</p> <p>This plan needs to address adaptation</p> <p>Planning &amp; Development control needs to take climate change into account</p>
<i>People</i>	<p>Take a bioregional approach</p> <p>Focus on regenerating the rural economy</p> <p>Need a new model of Rural economic growth</p> <p>Strong focus on Health &amp; Wellbeing including allocating more land for recreation</p> <p>Create Health &amp; Wellbeing business models so land managers can benefit from this provision</p> <p>Concerns about traffic</p> <p>Need to address awareness and behaviour change if we are going to stop the South Downs being trashed</p> <p>Education key – need to help people understand the Park and treasure it</p> <p>Framing of the narrative is critical – need to make things tangible for people</p>
<i>Place</i>	<p>Bioregional</p> <p>Regeneration of place through regenerative practices (not just linked to farming)</p> <p>Need for funding</p> <p>Address rural crime – a massive problem</p> <p>Framing again important</p> <p>Concepts of ‘home’ and ‘love’ are powerful in this context</p>

## PRIORITIES

<b>Change of use for redundant farm buildings</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Planning around farming sustainably</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Continuation of FIPL type funding</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Able to have open and honest conversations with the park about diversification</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Bespoke approach</b>	<b>0</b>

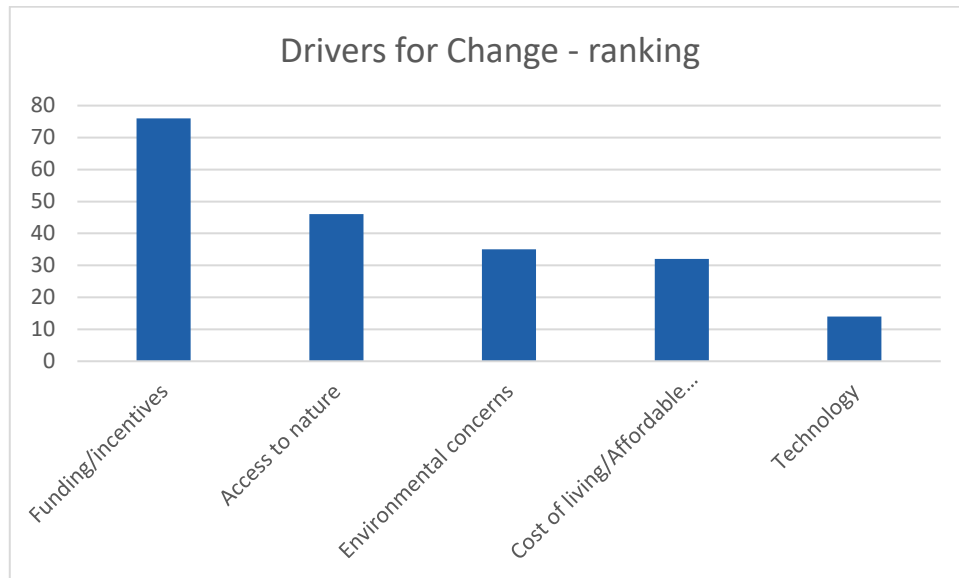
## DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

- Devolution – short term turbulence – longer term easier and more simple
- Weakness of DEFRA – finding routes to influence through other departments
- Lack of engagement from Government/Defra
- Glover Review – what happened to the outputs from that
- Greater food security
- Land use Framework
- Housing priorities/targets
- Political uncertainty – decisions are put off until there is more clarity
- 5 missions/milestones – how to reflect them
- Fiscal incentives to plant woodland
- BNG offsets
- Lack of representation of rural voices
- Local Government budget cuts
- Lack of resources in Defra arm's length bodies
- Grant support and infrastructure
- Global economic changes
- Prices and economic resilience – businesses in the SDNP are mostly SME
- Business support for smaller businesses
- Skills pipelines – local skills improvement partnerships
- Local needs – housing - business support – NPPF
- Homeworking/flexible working – impact on services
- Tourism – sustaining year-round visits
- Access to nature – responsible behaviour
- Retirement – demographic imbalance
- Green social prescribing
- 4G and 5G
- Infrastructure to support electric cars
- Energy Infrastructure/production does not support need
- Additional infrastructure for renewables & impact on Landscape
- Consistency of funding - longer term models needed
- Organisations being funding flexible.

## OUR SOUTH DOWNS BUSINESS MEETING

A second phase event with Our South Downs businesses was attended by 45 people. The findings from this meeting are shown below:

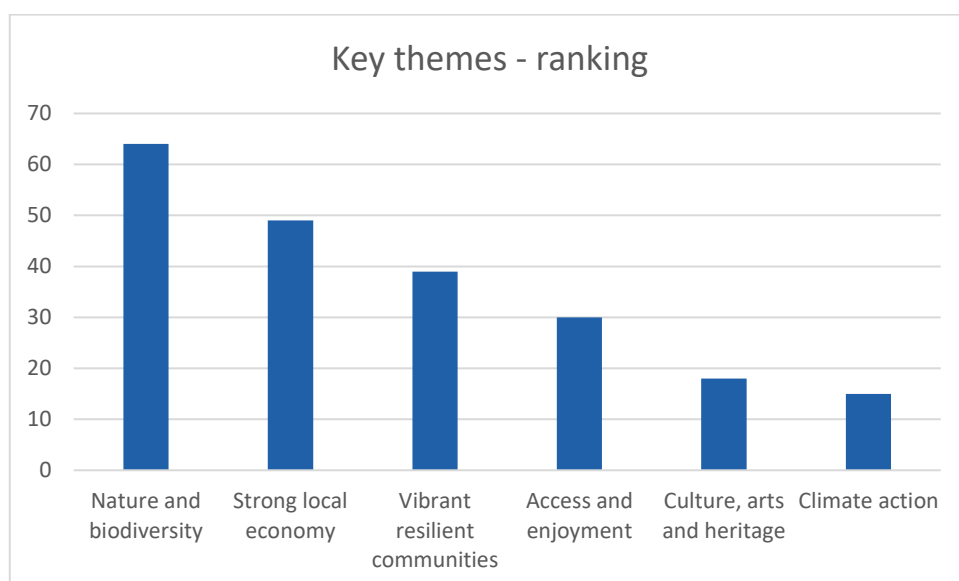
### DRIVERS FOR CHANGE



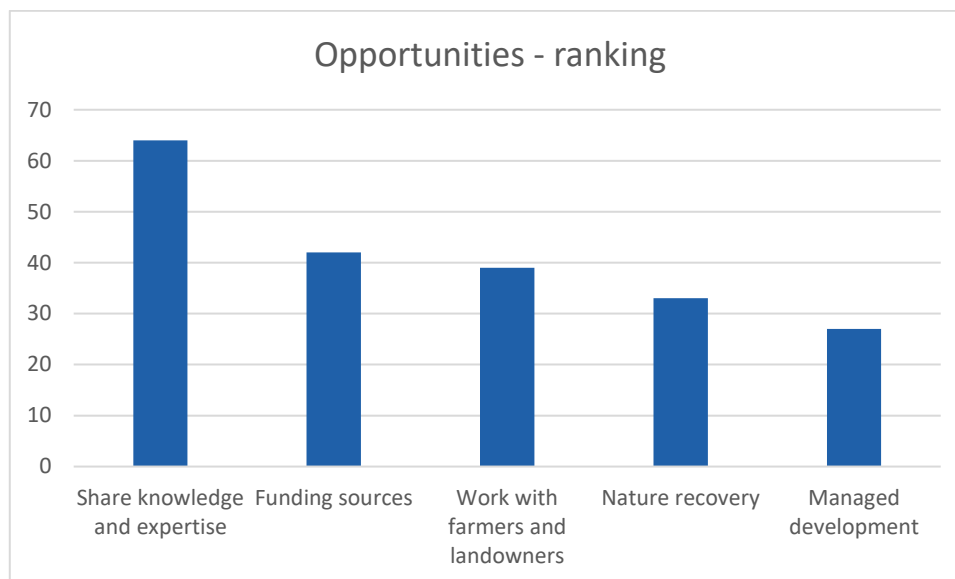
Businesses felt the following were missing from the current plan:

- Water scarcity
- Use of One Planet mapping.

### KEY THEMES



## OPPORTUNITIES



## REFLECTIONS AND PLEDGES

Reflections	Pledges
What about water - flow/scarcity/flooding	Sussex six development/making it easier
Access to S Downs specific business advice would be good	Sarah Susses Way Movement
Check East Sussex as they do not support businesses in the way the others do	Propeller net and local B Corp community (funding/volunteering/skills pro-bono)
Caution about rewilding and not losing important key habitats	Educate and enjoyment public on farming in the Meon Valley and sustainably Upper Parsonage Farm
There no people of colour in this room	Sam Zindel - generation restoration movement (collab op)
Evening economy transport <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Join together 130 orgs - South East Climate Alliance
Sherpa buses for walkers (like in Snowdonia)	Petersfield Museum and Art Gallery work closer with our communities to develop new partnerships
Sussex USP - eco-education and tourism	Run a B Corp webinar for SDNPA members
	Paul Coverdale - The Pollinators
	Involve schools and young people in nature
	With churches book I will give £1 for each full price sale to: Friends of Friendless Churches, Churches Conservation, SPAB, National Churches Trust (in a pot to share)

	Explore connections and organisations locally to discuss sustainable styling workshops, talks, team building sessions etc - Jess Ward Robes
	Work with community transport to reduce cars, parking
	With 100ha of commercial forest on Hants/Sussex border, I am happy to make it an educational resource - specifically for end users of wood (Bill Maynard)

## SDNPA STAFF EVENT

An all staff meeting with SDNPA staff members was held in January. The SWOT analysis from this is shown below:

### Strengths

#### Environmental Protection

- Looking after diverse landscapes and protecting natural environment
- Champion and protection of the natural environment
- Ecosystem services priority in planning
- Wildlife and habitat conservation
- Support habitats for endangered species
- Preserving nature and history
- Encourage biodiversity, proactive land management, preserving open spaces
- Rangers and volunteers maintaining and managing the landscape
- Existence of chalk streams, despite condition
- Conservation of dark skies
- Support for farm regeneration projects
- Technical Advice Notes guiding people in the SDNP

#### Climate Change

- Commitment to adapt to and mitigate climate change

#### Community and Collaboration

- Strong local communities focused on the area
- Partnership working with landowners
- Collaboration with local organisations and availability of funding for local projects
- Working together and communication
- Encouraging local communities to do better things for their environment
- Support of people
- Consultation and involvement of partners and stakeholders

### Weaknesses

#### Accessibility and Connectivity

- Need for better connectivity for active travel (walking and cycling) with adjacent authorities
- Poor public transport and last-mile access for villages
- Not enough public transport

#### Housing and Development

- Houses are too expensive
- Need to ensure affordable housing requirements are met
- Irresponsible land development
- Development enforcement issues
- Pressure from developers and housing needs
- Second homes and holiday lets driving up prices
- Overbuilding and overpopulation concerns
- Development impacts on the environment and local communities

#### Environmental Protection

- Condition of rivers
- Inadequate protections against environmental damage
- Flooding in certain areas
- Climate change threats
- Insufficient resources for environmental management
- Lack of focus on regenerative economic principles

#### Community Engagement and Governance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to landscape and community projects</li> <li>• Community engagement through listening, educating, and supporting</li> <li>• Support and encouragement from local SDNP rangers</li> <li>• Local interest from residents and farmers in enhancing our countryside</li> <li>• Partnerships with other bodies sharing similar aims</li> </ul> <p>Accessibility and Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility and leisure use</li> <li>• Promoting access and leisure use</li> <li>• Walking routes and footpaths</li> <li>• Accessible and well branded</li> <li>• Accessible by public transport</li> <li>• Providing opportunities for nature engagement</li> <li>• Encouraging sustainable travel</li> <li>• Educational initiatives</li> <li>• Range of community organisations doing stuff of merit</li> </ul> <p>Legal and Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong legal framework</li> <li>• Legal protection</li> <li>• SDNP planning department superior to local authorities</li> <li>• Strong purposes of the national park</li> <li>• Excellent local plan</li> <li>• Separate organisation for protection of the Park</li> <li>• Closeness to large urban population</li> <li>• Strong policy framework</li> <li>• Restricting over development</li> <li>• Protecting footpaths and access to countryside</li> <li>• Good local plan (although needs to be enforced)</li> </ul> <p>Landscape and Natural Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beautiful landscape and villages</li> <li>• Its landscape and protection provided by SDNP</li> <li>• Landscape diversity</li> <li>• Unique landscape, special geology including chalk and heathland, and history</li> <li>• Space for nature and communities</li> <li>• Dark skies</li> <li>• Chalk streams</li> <li>• Views can be spectacular</li> <li>• Interesting species can be seen</li> <li>• Coastline</li> <li>• Geology</li> <li>• Altitude and open views</li> <li>• Close to the sea so air replaced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor communication and engagement with local communities</li> <li>• Not listening to local concerns</li> <li>• Too bureaucratic and ineffective at making changes</li> <li>• Lack of democratic accountability</li> <li>• Challenges coordinating with various authorities and stakeholders</li> <li>• Over-reliance on outsourcing important decisions</li> </ul> <p>Tourism and Public Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many tourists causing damage and congestion</li> <li>• Traffic and parking issues</li> <li>• Lack of facilities like toilets for visitors</li> <li>• Need for better promotion of events and activities</li> </ul> <p>Planning and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak planning policies and leadership</li> <li>• Slow planning processes</li> <li>• Lack of resources for planning and enforcement</li> <li>• Confusion over planning authority and responsibilities</li> </ul>
---	--

<p><b>Culture and Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique landscapes, communities, and settlements</li> <li>• Culture, partnerships, and responses to climate and nature crisis</li> <li>• Inspires people to do better and live more sustainably</li> <li>• Existing landscape and economy that celebrates it</li> <li>• Area for tourism</li> <li>• Towns and villages are caring and compassionate places</li> <li>• Farming produces high-quality food</li> <li>• Uniqueness and preciousness of the area</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>
<p><b>Engagement and Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More engagement. Tighter Local Plan policies for new plan.</li> <li>• Lots of consultations, more regular consultations with the community.</li> <li>• To genuinely devolve decision-making by listening to residents and town and parish councils. Have Lewes representation on SDNPA planning.</li> <li>• Working and listening to local communities.</li> <li>• Proper engagement with democratically-elected bodies.</li> <li>• Work with UA and Future Mayor.</li> <li>• Collaboration with all.</li> <li>• Working together with all partners and new different partnerships.</li> <li>• Sharing the responsibility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing.</li> <li>• Put more effort into affordable housing.</li> <li>• Progressive plans on affordability.</li> <li>• Reduce over development, focus and promote the right types of social housing.</li> <li>• To be progressive in community-led housing planning centred on building communities.</li> <li>• Housing for young families with appropriate facilities for them.</li> <li>• Open space for all to use.</li> <li>• Employment opportunities to reduce car dependency.</li> </ul> <p><b>Nature and Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regenerative approaches.</li> <li>• More work on protecting wildlife habitats and rivers/streams.</li> </ul>	<p>Food security vs rewilding</p> <p>Overburdening skirting villages</p>

- Focus on biodiversity and nature recovery.
- Champion of move to off-site BNG.
- Nature recovery.
- To innovatively cope with environmental changes to enhance the park area.
- Lead on environment (park authority).
- Ecological or rewilding trailblazer.
- Call out greenwashing.
- Low impact tourism.
- Tapping the potential of eco-tourism.
- Encourage environmentally friendly farming.
- Protect agricultural land.
- Working with our research institutions and considering list growth models, support in NG cooperates and community ownership models to take hold.

#### Transportation

- Lead on model for effective public transport in rural areas and get people out of private vehicles.
- We urgently need effective public transport and a bus station.
- Free buses for school kids 5-18.
- Fund bus reliability programs.
- Be more proactive on road design for traffic management and reduction.
- Quiet lanes speed limit.
- Speed management - max speed setting.
- To do more with highways authorities to improve people-centred infrastructure.

#### Governance and Planning

- Regenerative approach.
- To reset the relationship between residents and developers and landowners to achieve a better balance.
- More openness by SDNPA with Parish Councils- by demonstrating that you are listening to planning feedback.
- Scrutiny arrangements.
- To preserve green space.
- Expand the park to include villages presently cut in half by the park.
- Moving the boundary to help split parishes.



The aim of the walks organised by Young Wilders working with SDNPA staff was to:

- All the events ran 10.30am to 3.15pm and ended with a hot drink and a snack.

- A full transcript of the results is available, but here is their response to the “like most” and “like least” questions as Word Clouds:



It is perhaps interesting that accessible and habitats were the most frequently stated “likes” by this group – albeit while they were on a walk – compared to those attending the workshops who prioritised landscape, views, nature and beauty.



When it came to what they didn't like, accessibility was again highlighted – perhaps also reflecting that they were on a walk but lack of info, intensive [farming] dogs, agriculture and transport were all highlighted.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The strengths and weaknesses identified by young people through these events have been summarised in the table below:

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses
Nature recovery	<p>The vast and enduring landscape as testament of the processual way of our world.</p> <p>The sloping landscapes and ocean backdrop #scenic.</p> <p>Green, fresh air, seaside, botanical biodiversity.</p> <p>Closest nature landscape with amazing views.</p> <p>Unique landscape features and heritage.</p>	<p>Intensive agriculture, lack of hedgerows, destructive farming practices (industrialised).</p> <p>Intensive, not nature friendly. Large areas not managed with wildlife in mind. Tenant farmers messing with the management plans. Not managing their grasslands effectively, removing the categories.</p> <p>Lots of green fields but not lots of diverse habitats (in the parts I have visited).</p>

	<p>The vastness of the valley.</p> <p>Nature.</p> <p>Iconic views. Legendary. Unique.</p> <p>Dew ponds.</p> <p>Chalk grassland and streams &amp; the unique/special plants/wildlife it supports.</p> <p>Variety of habitats - heathland, woodland, grassland...</p> <p>The connectivity it provides, wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>Intensive agriculture - poor environmental practice outside of areas managed for wildlife.</p> <p>Beautiful landscapes (and conservation efforts), spoiled by intensive agriculture.</p> <p>Better ecological management.</p> <p>Not even half land in favourable condition - only 20% in favourable.</p> <p>Golf courses should not be supported on downland..</p> <p>Lack of natural flood management.</p> <p>Eroding chalk paths.</p> <p>Need to introduce 30x30 target for National Park area.</p> <p>Quality of habitat 'unfavourable'.</p> <p>Poor management in places.</p>
<i>Climate action</i>		
<i>Culture and heritage</i>	<p>Connection to the past through history and cultural heritage.</p> <p>The light.</p> <p>Interesting cultural history.</p> <p>Rich human history and culture.</p>	
<i>Access</i>	<p>Free, accessible connecting with nature.</p> <p>Inspires me to explore more green spaces - and to get to know my local area better rather than seeking out faraway nature.</p> <p>How close/accessible it is.</p> <p>Accessible by public transport.</p> <p>Some great trails and information on the website - Serpent's Trail is my favourite and it's so well signposted so I never get lost &lt;3.</p>	<p>No toilets/welfare facilities.</p> <p>Not enough youth centred engagement and activities.</p> <p>Accessibility of events e.g. Dark Sky Festival not possible to attend by public transport.</p> <p>Lack of resting/ seating and birdwatching spots.</p> <p>Lack of awareness/ social media.</p> <p>Too many dogs and lack of responsible dog ownership. Too many dogs &amp; impacts of dogs and people on wildlife. Lack of info around this impact and modelling good behaviour re: dogs on leads. I don't want to be friends with everyone's dog sorry and lots of people are scared.</p> <p>Lack of signposting. Need better information about routes, trails and more information on interpretation boards.</p> <p>Public transport could be improved.</p> <p>Bus links to nature sites.</p>

		<p>Eroding chalk paths.</p> <p>Farmers are not walker and nature nerd friendly.</p> <p>Difficult accessibility by public transport.</p> <p>No camping spots except for paid campsites.</p> <p>Lack of accessibility</p>
<i>Education and skills</i>		<p>More engagement with local schools and universities.</p> <p>More education about careers in nature conservation.</p> <p>Need skills-based events, training and internships.</p>
<i>Health and wellbeing</i>	<p>Vast and open. Makes your problems seem small.</p> <p>Connecting to landscape and feeling mentally clearer.</p> <p>Awe-inspiring landscape takes your breath away.</p> <p>How it literally moves you gets people active.</p> <p>It has become my weekly escape - so easy to access from uni.</p> <p>Escapism from the city.</p>	<p>Lack of accessibility.</p>
<i>Volunteering</i>		<p>Less reliance on volunteer labour, but also make volunteering opportunities more accessible (transport, timing, beginner friendly, inclusive etc.)</p> <p>Need more research opportunities, including for students and postgrads.</p>
<i>Community</i>	<p>Beautiful views and friendly people, feels like home.</p>	<p>Not enough grants for minority ethnic groups, queer, disabled groups.</p>
<i>Economy and employment</i>	<p>Good breweries and local produce.</p>	<p>Lack of entry level jobs.</p> <p>Need volunteer days with local employers.</p>

## ENGAGE AND WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?

There was a specific “How should the South Downs engage and work with young people?” Here are a selection of their suggestions:

<b>Devil's Dyke</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I.D. walks led by young people.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to local fairs and collaborate with societies and 6th form colleges.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a wide range of events for young people e.g. moth trapping.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of events/ opportunities 'inside' stuff, boosting skills and chances to be involved even if you can't/don't want to 'get out'.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with youth groups e.g. peaks of colour</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run bioblitz's.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More paid and accessible opportunities and more outreach to young people who aren't already interested and engaged.</li> </ul>
<b>Seven Sisters / Cuckmere</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More events + partnerships like today's.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career days/events. Paid traineeships for job roles in green/nature/outdoor industry.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community led nature recovery.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School groups - schools always looking for free offerings &amp; youth volunteer led sessions.</li> </ul>
<b>QE 2 Country Park</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise through a range of places e.g. environmental jobs etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand youth education engagement.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have workshops that give useful conservation skills e.g. habitat management.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a monthly newsletter for upcoming events and easy routes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with 'influencers' especially young ones - they often will have an existing of young people.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media: Instagram and Tiktok are very useful to engage.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More collaboration with hike/run communities :)</li> </ul>

## WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY WOULD YOU MAKE?

<b>Devils Dyke</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More research opportunities, including for students and postgrads.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives to encourage dog owners to respect the land and wildlife, pick up after themselves and keep dogs on leads.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and encourage landowners to shift their practices to promote biodiversity and nature-based solutions to the climate crisis and let people on their land.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New ways to include the public (right to roam, wild camping &amp; bothys etc...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would create a centralised platform with all projects that are happening: volunteering opportunities, creative contributions, sports events, planned walking routes.</li> </ul>
<b>Seven Sisters</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Right to Roam &amp; Wild Camping - greater access to land allows opportunities to learn about and then respect/love their environment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase climate resilience of the landscape.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work and training opportunities for under 30s.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better road crossing / traffic calming.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote nature &amp; biodiversity.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REWILD!</li> </ul>
<b>QE Country Park</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work more with farmers for nature friendly and more traditional enviro-friendly methods.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to Roam (like Dartmoor), wild camping etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Volunteer rangers" such as educated dog walkers who can set an example to others and teach why leash training etc is important.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-policing system similar to how the fishing, angler communities work. They must already be local, recognisable, respected members of the community to have any effect.</li> </ul>



## APPENDIX 8 - DIVERSITY RESOURCE INTERNATIONAL (DRI) EVENTS REPORT

A slightly different but related approach to Young Wilders was undertaken by Diversity Resource International (DRI) working with groups primarily in East Sussex where they are based. The intention of their work was to engage with ethnically diverse or global majority communities living in and around the National Park.

They organised a range of events mainly with existing groups. Mostly they used a focus group approach but they also carried out surveys with three groups: the Women's Walking Group, a children's Mandarin Chinese language class and with the Chinese Association New Year's Gathering in Eastbourne. Some of the survey questions were open questions and the results are reported later for each event / group. Some were closed or yes / no questions and the results for these were as follows:

	Yes	Maybe / not sure	No
Have you heard of South Downs National Park before this survey?	18		9
Have you ever visited South Downs National Park?	17		9
Would you be interested in events that celebrate different cultural traditions in the park?	17	7	1
Have you ever seen information about South Downs National Park promoted in your community?	11		21
Would you be more likely to visit the park if there were partnerships with local community groups or organisations?	24	5	5

### EVENTS

#### 1ST FEBRUARY: ETHNICALLY DIVERSE WOMEN'S WALKING GROUP, SEVEN SISTERS COUNTRY PARK

Participants' ethnic background included: Indian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Polish, Chinese, German and Latin American. They were asked:

How could South Downs better represent and include diverse cultures and communities?

- South Downs to approach the community rather than waiting for the community to approach the South Downs
- Should be represented in the festivals or community hubs
- Multilanguage signs; status of people or poets from different culture
- Hold cultural events in the place
- Collaborate with local stakeholders, making an inclusive atmosphere, and opening a park for cultural events
- Providing information about how to get there in different languages. When you go to places like Scotland, there are leaflets everywhere with info about places to visit
- South Downs representatives to be actively meeting the ethnic & cultural groups

- Hold an event called Diversity Day. People can bring and share food, dance and music, etc.
- Perhaps promotion, events, and guided tours in various languages.
- I think the biggest challenge for people would be to plan their visit if they've never been to the park before.
- Not everyone may be entirely comfortable with local public transport routes - so having clear information that makes the journey sound easy and accessible would be good.

What would encourage you and your community to visit South Downs National Park more often?

- More such events and walking groups
- Educate, make people aware of what's in their doorstep
- Music events or festivals
- To engage with communities more actively
- Having a place to walk that's filled with greenery and is clean
- Being engaged with groups and community events, making events free
- Knowing that other people from my community will also be in attendance

---

#### 9TH FEBRUARY: CHINESE ASSOCIATION NEW YEAR GATHERING, EASTBOURNE

A survey with 25 people, largely but not exclusively from the Chinese community in and around Eastbourne. Six didn't know of the South Downs. In terms of what would encourage them to visit more they chose: family friendly events, educational workshops, guided walks, historic or cultural tours, community events or festivals. For improving inclusion they suggested: through social media, celebrate different cultural events / activities, signs in multiple languages, invite groups to centres. Other activities that might encourage inclusion were organised activities, trips or walks that include children, kite flying competitions, international music events/festivals, inviting music producers or film makers, activities for / of different cultures and ethnicities and services in more languages.

---

#### 23RD FEBRUARY: SURVEY WITH CHILDREN AT EASTBOURNE MANDARIN SCHOOL

A survey at the school with eight 8-14 year olds. Most liked walking and hiking and picnics and family time. When asked what made the National Park hard to visit, they responded – I don't know what to do there, I don't feel safe or confident going there, too far away or traffic. When asked is there something new you'd like to do, responses included: art activities, planting trees and flowers and litter picking.

---

#### 26TH FEBRUARY: INCLUSIVE WALK, LEWES (ETHNICALLY DIVERSE DISABLED AND ABLE PEOPLE AND PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES)

Nine adults – 8 female and 1 male took part from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including (non-exhaustive): China, Poland and Venezuela, 7 of which are carers. They lived in Uckfield, Eastbourne, Seaford, Lewes, Peacehaven.

They loved: The Seven Sisters Park, chalk cliffs, cycle lanes, sheep, canoeing, seagulls, exercise and walking, and the beautiful trees. They disliked: not enough parking, rubbish, muddy roads in winter, not enough public transport, large farm animals in fields with paths, beaches and other areas inaccessible to wheelchairs. When asked what would make it more accessible for people with a disability and their carers they listed: wheelchair accessible paths and additional support for disabled visitors.

---

#### 28TH FEBRUARY: WILDLIFE CORRIDOR PLANTING, DRI WITH DIVERSITY LEWES AT LEWES FOOTBALL CLUB

A mixed group of eight people including White and Black British, an indigenous Australian, young and old and disabled. They loved walks, views, chalky soil, wildflowers, the freedom, birds, bees and insects. The ability to "just pick up and go", fresh air, take your mind off daily routine, good for mental health / well-being for all ages, there's no pollution, where I can shout, sing and meditate.

They were worried about urban growth / development, litter, plastic, a lack of diversity and biodiversity, endangered species that need to be looked after, rubbish everywhere, not enough young people. “In Newhaven a lot of children have never been on the South Downs or to the beach. Barriers seem to be transport, money and funding – the South Downs aren’t being utilized.” “You usually see ramblers, but not many people know that you can just walk out on the South Downs, or where to park.” More information about how to access / showing people how to access. Put stuff online – not everyone can access a poster. “Some of the attitude of people towards global majority. Sometimes I feel like people think I don't belong there, and I also feel like there's things we need to do so that we can make it look much more conducive or welcoming.”

When asked about how the South Downs inspire or make people feel hopeful, they said:

- “Just the greatness of nature / hills – hopeful for the planet.
- I love it when it’s this beautiful.
- Partly because I’m Indigenous Australian, and I think it's really important that we care about Mother Earth, and we should put things back where they belong before we die. So, I think it's really important that we treat it as just another living organism that needs help and support, like all of us do.
- The knowledge we have is different than maybe what our parents and grandparents knew of nature and how it sort of functions and impacts on every day. So, I guess I'm hopeful that the current generation are passing on the information and knowledge of what could or what could not be if nature continues down the path its going.
- The idea that there is much more in life than big buildings. Nature brings you back to reality and think, ‘oh, this is where we come from’. It inspires me. That's why I say sometimes I go sing. A place to think.

---

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH: STOP AND STARE VISIT, ATTENBOROUGH CENTRE FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX, FALMER

A mixed group from global majority backgrounds including Germany, Liberia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Columbia, UAE, Japan, Kenya, Jamaica and Venezuela. Some were also disabled. They loved: the beauty, paths, picnickers, people coming together, 3 hour hikes, access to open space, walking in nature, breathtaking landscapes, escape from the city, reconnecting with nature / unwinding, history and natural beauty, relaxing and de-stressing. They disliked: not enough shelter, winter – wet, windy and cold, lack of accessible toilets, accessible paths (in winter), soil erosion, loss of biodiversity and pollution, poor access by public transport, feeling unsafe (lack of lighting and for women and people of colour).

When asked what would make it more accessible for people from the global majority they said: it was dependent on people’s attitudes, some attitudes were hardening, others were more open, but also that the burden shouldn’t always be on us. Seeing themselves more represented in information (about activities in the National Park) but also:

- **Installing signs in Braille** to assist blind and visually impaired visitors.
- **Providing sensory-friendly trails** designed for neurodivergent individuals who may be sensitive to noise and crowded spaces.
- **Offering multilingual resources** and guided tours to engage communities from diverse backgrounds.
- **Enhancing public transport links** to make the park more accessible to those without private vehicles.
- **Holding more events / walking groups** and joining with existing groups and their events with the South Downs activities.
- **Guided walks** about different plants and trees that are from different parts of the globe to help people understand the interconnection of people and places.
- **Helping people feel safe**, positive signing and visuals, artwork



- **Better lighting in key areas**, as some parts of the park can feel too dark and isolated, especially in the evening.
- **Clearer signage and maps** to help visitors navigate the trails and find emergency contact points.
- **More visible park rangers or volunteers** patrolling certain areas to provide assistance if needed.
- **Accessible emergency call stations** in remote locations for added security.
- **Dogs on leads** or awareness about keeping dogs close to their owners.

---

#### 7TH MARCH: SOUTH DOWNS – PHOTO WALK WITH BMECP, STANMER PARK

A mixed group of 17 people from global majority backgrounds. They loved: the natural beauty of the South Downs and spending time with nature, the sounds of nature, wind whirling and birds singing, the Downs providing a calming effect, fresh air, and ability to walk in the natural environment, providing feelings of happiness and improve mental wellbeing, a sense of tranquillity, spending time in fresh air and sunlight open space and the natural environment to explore and encourage physical activity such as walking, and discover different plants and species, opportunity to connect and engage with other people with similar interest, socialising in an open environment and exchanging stories. Loves the feeling of belonging and being part of the world.

They were inspired by Spending in nature improves happiness and reduce stress, the sights, sounds, and smells of nature invoke feeling of tranquility and peace such as the smell of fresh air, sun on your skin, the feeling of being present in the moment, sense of purpose, and meaning to life. The South Downs nature demonstrate the cycle of life with sea changing. Witnessing the strength of nature can inspire us to overcome our own challenges

They felt hopeful because developing an appreciation of nature leads to a greater sense of responsibility and motivation to take action to protect nature. Countryside have a sense of strong connection and neighbor spirit. It gives a breathtaking views, open feels and various scenery, simply watching the natural progression of life for example seeing new growth on plants, seeing animals interacting. For people living in the cities, the countryside is a welcome space from the concrete and artificial environment

When asked how the South Downs National Park can better engage with global majority, disabled, and neurodivergent communities living in or near the park, they said by:

- Promoting and encouraging cultural difference and how ethnically diverse people interact and engage with South Downs National Park
- Improvement of accessibility and inclusivity by making efforts to provide accessible information in multiple languages and formats
- South Downs to work closely and constantly with local community groups to build a strong relationship and represent diverse populations
- South Downs National Park to create collaborative projects, events and initiatives designed for specific needs and interests of different ethnic communities.
- Improvement of public transport options which can help overcome logistic barriers

---

#### SWOT ANALYSIS

Feedback from more diverse communities in terms of strenths and weaknesses are shown in the table below.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<i>Nature recovery</i>	<p>Walks, views, chalky soil, wildflowers.</p> <p>Flora and fauna.</p> <p>Beautiful, breathtaking landscapes.</p>	<p>Urban growth and development.</p> <p>Litter and plastic.</p> <p>Threat to biodiversity.</p>

<i>Climate action</i>		Impact of climate change and human activities on the park's ecosystems. Issues such as soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and pollution could threaten the natural balance of this beautiful area.
<i>Culture and heritage</i>	Listening guide with poetry (poetry trail) really good - features poets from different cultures - makes you feel represented.	Poetry trail should be promoted more.
<i>Access</i>	<p>Seven Sisters Country Park - A free, open space, open to all communities and age groups. Good space for a family break. Well-maintained facilities and toilets. Good food. Easy to get to by public transport. Accessible paths.</p> <p>Access to nature and outdoor spaces is really important.</p>	<p>Seven Sisters Country Park - dangerous crossing from the car park to the path. Meals expensive. Mobile network is poor. Muddy and slippery. More parking needed.</p> <p>Can feel very big. Avoid walking in the winter due to the weather. Shelters would help.</p> <p>More facilities e.g. toilets, in remote areas.</p> <p>Access to the park can be challenging for those relying on public transport, and at times, certain areas feel isolated and unsafe due to poor lighting.</p> <p>Concerns about over development/dogs not on leads/safety e.g. for women and people of colour.</p> <p>Lack of transport options.</p> <p>Too far from urban centers - need to travel too far.</p> <p>Lack of information, not sure what activities are available.</p> <p>Lack of shelters and facilities.</p> <p>Poor mobile signal.</p> <p>Not enough cafes.</p> <p>Concerned about difficult terrain.</p> <p>Can't tell if trespassing on private property.</p> <p>Not aware of information targeted at Chinese community.</p>

		Need to improve access and information. More community access.
<i>Education and skills</i>		Not enough education or access and a lot of the barriers seem to be transport, money and funding.
<i>Health and wellbeing</i>	<p>Paths meant for walking and running.</p> <p>Connecting people in greenspaces.</p> <p>A place where you can walk and chill.</p> <p>Can engage with different groups - flexible.</p> <p>Having access to open space, trees and pathways.</p> <p>Physical activity.</p> <p>A perfect escape from the city, allowing me to reconnect with nature and unwind.</p> <p>I can breathe and let my thoughts settle.</p> <p>Relax and de-stress.</p> <p>Seeing others enjoying themselves can give hope and bring joy.</p> <p>It gives me a space to be sad, let it out, cry, watch the sunset, be dramatic, and then just let it go. So, I can return to feeling more content, I can continue with my life.</p> <p>Little getaways are really grounding and inspiring, and they make you become a bit calmer about your life.</p> <p>Nature restores balance. It restores your head and all the business and very quickly, I come back to being myself.</p> <p>Spending time outdoors has significant benefits for mental health, including reducing anxiety and enhancing creativity.</p> <p>Nature also offers a space for reflection, physical activity, and a deeper connection to the natural world.</p> <p>Seven Sisters Country Park - spaces like this enable people to be more adventurous as they get older.</p>	
<i>Volunteering</i>		
<i>Community</i>		Not enough young people in the area.
<i>Economy and employment</i>		

Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>Increase awareness</b> seeing themselves more represented in information (about activities in the National Park). Educate, make people aware of what's in their doorstep. Promoting and encouraging cultural difference and how ethnically diverse people interact and engage with South Downs National Park.</p> <p><b>Installing signs in Braille</b> to assist blind and visually impaired visitors.</p> <p><b>Providing sensory-friendly trails</b> designed for neurodivergent individuals who may be sensitive to noise and crowded spaces.</p> <p><b>Offering multilingual resources</b> and guided tours to engage communities from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p><b>Enhancing public transport links</b> to make the park more accessible to those without private vehicles.</p> <p><b>Holding more events/ music/ festivals / walking groups</b> and joining with existing groups and their events with the South Downs activities. Make events free.</p> <p><b>Guided walks</b> about different plants and trees that are from different parts of the globe to help people understand the interconnection of people and places.</p> <p><b>Helping people feel safe</b>, positive signing and visuals, artwork</p> <p><b>Better lighting in key areas</b>, as some parts of the park can feel too dark and isolated, especially in the evening.</p> <p><b>Clearer signage and maps</b> to help visitors navigate the trails and find emergency contact points.</p> <p><b>More visible park rangers or volunteers</b> patrolling certain areas to provide assistance if needed.</p> <p><b>Accessible emergency call stations</b> in remote locations for added security.</p> <p><b>Dogs on leads</b> or awareness about keeping dogs close to their owners.</p> <p><b>Work closely and constantly with local community groups</b> to build a strong</p>	<p>The biggest challenge for people would be to plan their visit if they've never been to the park before.</p> <p>Not everyone may be entirely comfortable with local public transport routes-so having clear information that makes the journey sound easy and accessible would be good.</p>

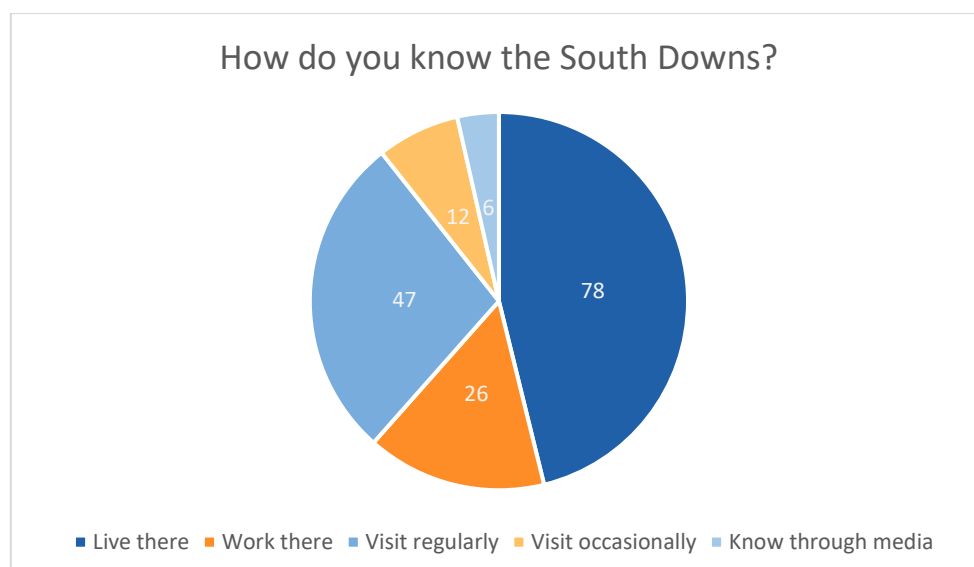
relationship and represent diverse populations. <b>Create collaborative projects</b> , events and initiatives designed for specific needs and interests of different ethnic communities.	
---	--

## APPENDIX 9 - PUBLIC EVENTS REPORT

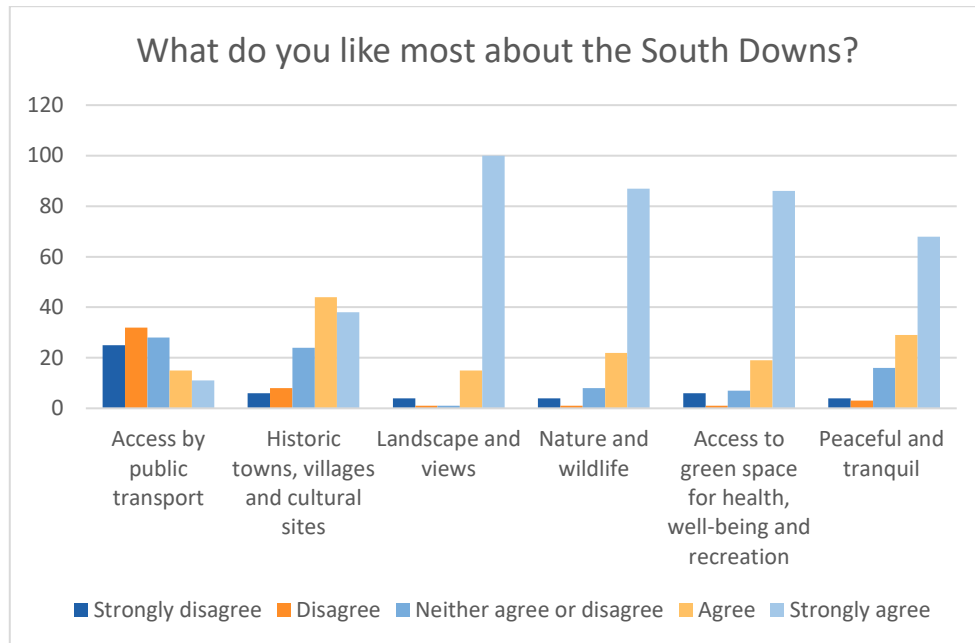
As well as workshops, described later, a series of indoor and outdoor events for the public were held. The indoor events were at the South Downs Centre, Midhurst, the Festival Hall, Petersfield and Lewes Town Hall. All these drop-in events for the public, followed an invitation event to district, parish and town councillors. The outdoor events were held as part of the South Downs annual Dark Skies festival at Seven Sister Country Park, Alice Holt Forest, the Queen Elizabeth Country Park and on Brighton seafront. As it was expected that people would only have a small amount of time for a survey, a 5-minute sticker / pin board activity was devised. The questions were linked to the other engagement activities and mirrored in an online survey. The following charts and tables set out the results:

Event	Participants
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> January: Parishes, Local Authorities and public event, South Downs Centre, Midhurst</b>	38
<b>29<sup>th</sup> January: Parishes, Local Authorities and public event, Festival Hall, Petersfield</b>	35
<b>5<sup>th</sup> February: Parishes, Local Authorities and public event, Lewes Town Hall</b>	37
<b>15<sup>th</sup> February: Dark Skies Festival public event, Seven Sisters Country Park</b>	26
<b>18<sup>th</sup> February: Dark Skies Festival public event, Alice Holt Forest</b>	45
<b>20<sup>th</sup> February: Queen Elizabeth Country Park</b>	25
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> February: Dark Skies Festival public event, Dark Skies Festival public event, Brighton seafront</b>	77
<b>Numbers participating</b>	283

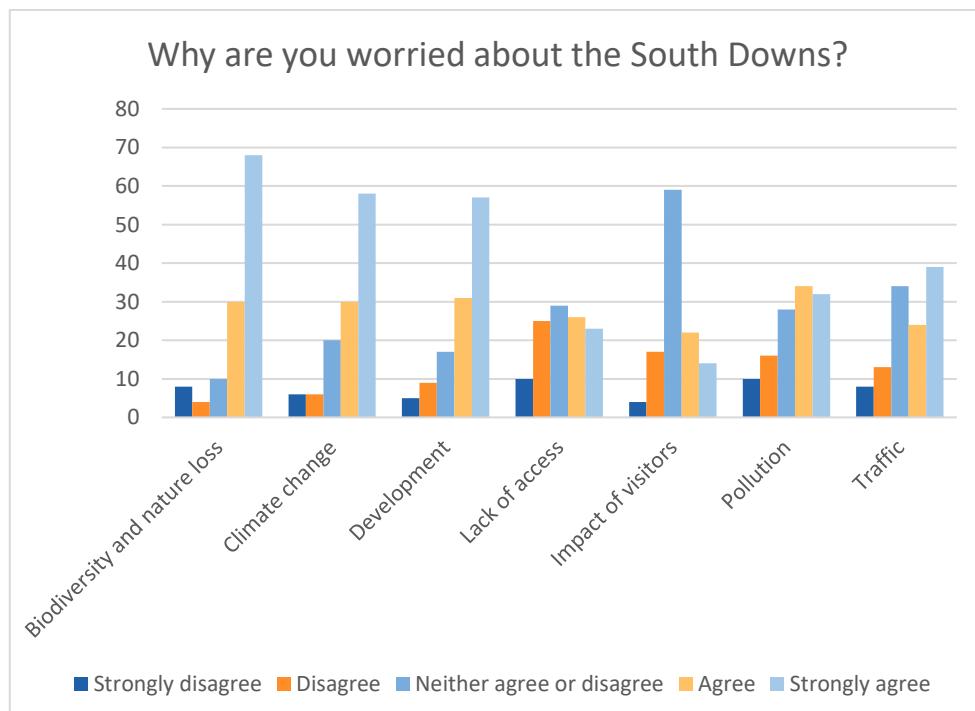
The questions were developed based on the results of the pre-Christmas stakeholder engagement events. The results have been combined:



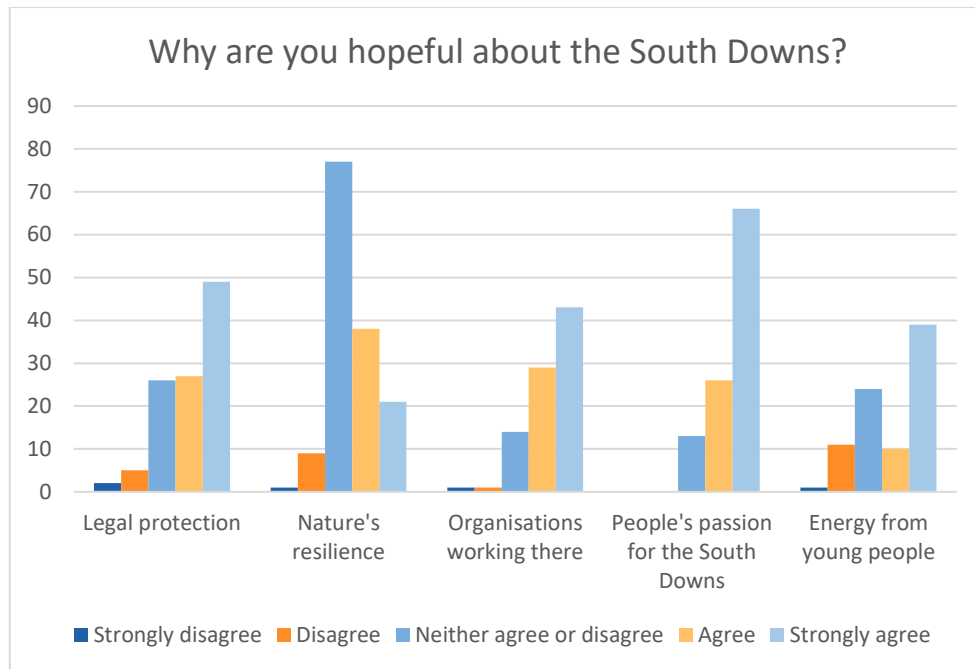
There was a good spread across people who live in the National Park (81 the largest group) and those who visit regularly (67) or occasionally (56).



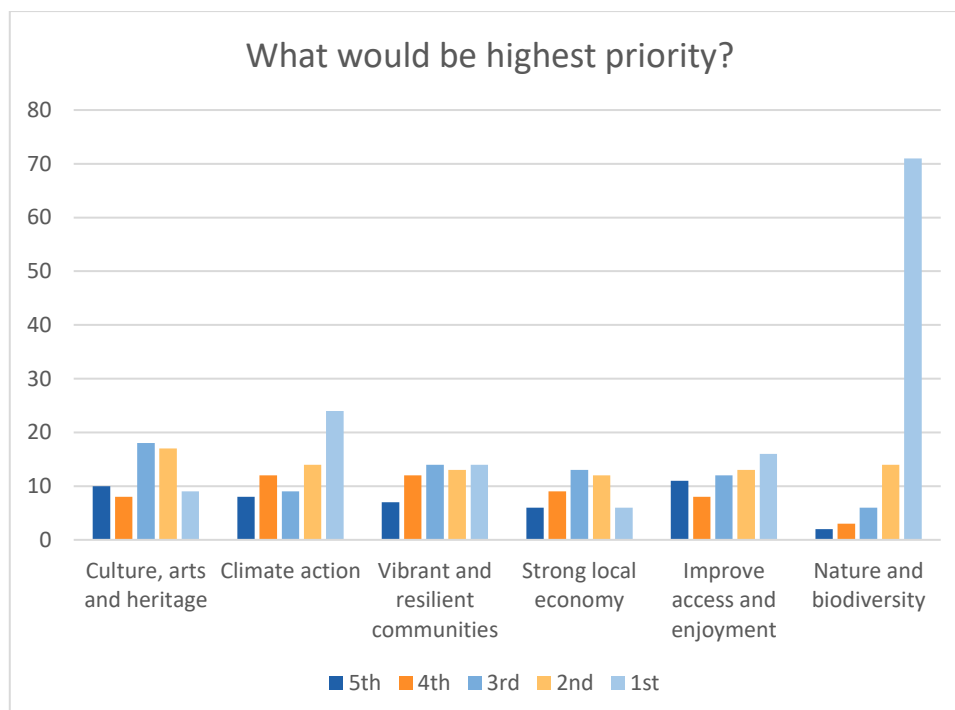
Landscape and views was highest scoring “likes” followed by nature and wildlife. Access by public transport scored lowest.



Biodiversity and nature loss was a worry for the significantly the largest group closely followed by climate change and development. Traffic was the next largest worry.



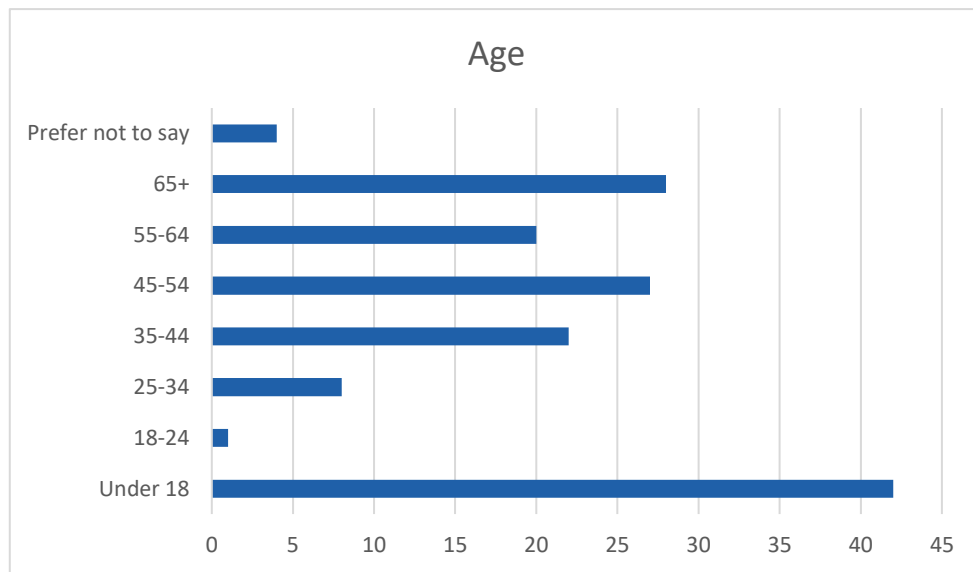
It is interesting that the largest group for this question neither agreed or disagreed that nature is resilient (82). People's passion for the downs (89 strongly hopeful) was the largest group followed by legal protection (although again a large group was on the fence) and then organisations working there. Anecdotally, there were mixed feelings about the "Energy of young people" with a perception that young people were spending too much time in the virtual rather than the physical environment. This view is challenged by the Youngwilder led sessions.



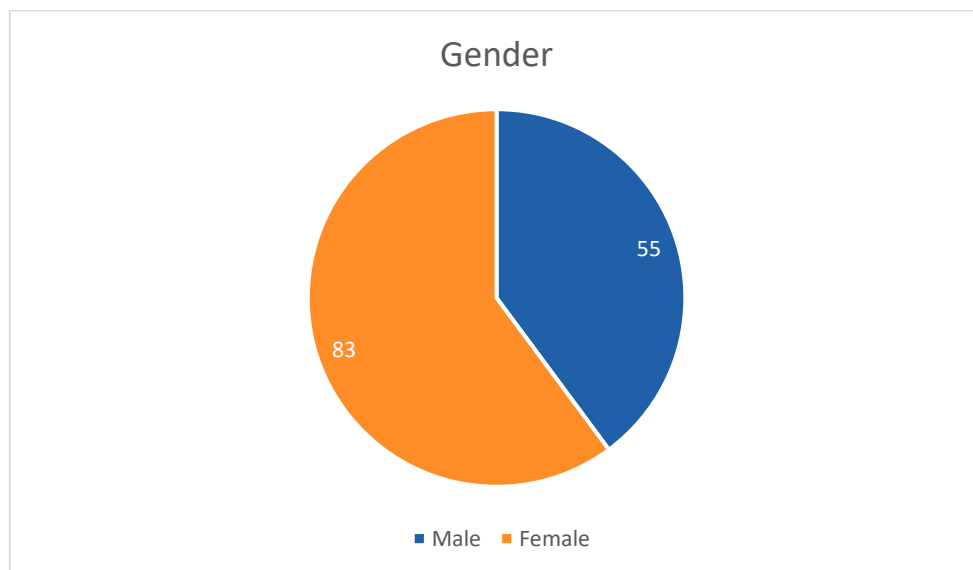
Reflecting the "worried about" question, Nature and Biodiversity was listed as people's highest priority by the large majority (1<sup>st</sup> by 109 people). The next nearest was Climate action with 40 rating this first and 32 second. Improve access and enjoyment had 25 rating this first and 23 second. And while Culture, arts and



heritage was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> by only 20, 25, ranked it 2<sup>nd</sup>, the second largest 2<sup>nd</sup> place (after Nature and Biodiversity) of any of the priorities.



It is interesting that the two largest age groups were the Under 18 and 45-54. This largely reflected the demographic of those attending the Dark Skies Festival events (younger) and public events in Midhurst, Petersfield and Lewes (older). It is a strong justification for the involvement of Youngwilders that the 18-24 year old age group was the smallest.



It is interesting that significantly more women and girls took part than men and boys. This may reflect that men and boys are either less likely to attend or are more reticent about giving their views when they do attend.

## APPENDIX 10 - SECOND PHASE WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Following on the first round of stakeholder and public engagement that took place from December through to the end of February, a second phase of events that focussed on further prioritisation, the development of measures or actions and pledges, followed in March both online and in person. These included:

1. South Downs National Park Authority Park all staff event, Midhurst 4<sup>th</sup> March
2. Stakeholder event, Pulborough Village Hall, 6<sup>th</sup> March
3. Online stakeholder events on the evenings of 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> March
4. Stakeholder event, Linklater Pavilion, Lewes, 14<sup>th</sup> March
5. Our South Downs Business Community Event, Tottington Manor Hotel, Henfield, 19<sup>th</sup> March
6. Youth Engagement Event, Mrs Fitzherbert's Pub, Brighton, 20<sup>th</sup> March

One of the online events and one of the in-person events were cancelled owing to low booking numbers (under ten). Although 17 people booked onto the Lewes event, only 5 attended. This low attendance may have been partly due to the close proximity of the first to second round events or that the second round didn't have the same amount of promotion. This means that while there is clarity over priorities, because of the level of engagement in the first round, there is less clarity around partnership pledges and these may need to be further promoted as the plan is developed.

The second phase events focussed on four priorities emerging from the first round of stakeholder events, as discussed and agreed with SDNPA:

1. Nature Recovery and Environmental Improvement
2. More collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and expertise
3. Working with farmers and landowners
4. Connecting young people to the environment

Then in small groups, each taking one of the emerging priorities in turn, the groups discussed what:

- Should continue
- Do differently (and better)
- New things

The findings from these events are shown below:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Should continue</b>	<b>Done differently</b>	<b>New things</b>
<i>Nature recovery and environmental improvement</i>	<p>Maintain existing policy without dilution.</p> <p>Effective engagement with larger landowners.</p> <p>Extension of Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) grants for another year.</p> <p>Collaborative efforts in landscape management.</p> <p>Support for neighbourhood plans and urban arboretum initiatives.</p> <p>Encourage regenerative farming and corporate volunteer days.</p> <p>Integration of green roofs and climate change agendas.</p> <p>Priority for woodland connectivity and wood pasture in the Weald.</p> <p>Renature large estates and restore natural processes.</p> <p>Support for grassroots funding and ranger teams.</p> <p>Benefits through planning conditions, flexible project funding, and nature recovery staff support.</p> <p>Providing funding for renature projects.</p> <p>Flexible funding that can adapt to change - Area budget.</p>	<p>Expand engagement with smaller traditional family farms and wider networks.</p> <p>National target aims to have 65% of land in regenerative agriculture.</p> <p>Better enforcement of PMP.</p> <p>Effective communication beyond buzzwords, especially to young people.</p> <p>Reduce barriers for landowners, e.g. planning permissions.</p> <p>Enhance urban nature recovery efforts and engage with emerging groups.</p> <p>Promote funding opportunities such as CIL.</p> <p>Strengthen links between terrestrial, coastal, and maritime landscapes.</p> <p>Pressure NE to prioritise condition monitoring of SSSIs.</p> <p>Implement novel grazing solutions.</p> <p>Utilise waste products for composting and recycling.</p> <p>Highlight nature guardians through media.</p> <p>Showcase how planning adds value. Accept and promote planning as a tool for positive change.</p> <p>Focus available funding on strategic projects.</p> <p>Enhance SDNPA cross-directorate awareness of</p>	<p>Get people involved- e.g. Citizen Science.</p> <p>Promote BNG and link to education.</p> <p>Align PMP with LNRS and other strategies.</p> <p>Data capture, monitoring- more and better information to help guide activities.</p> <p>Red Chairs- encourage people to visit and sit (Canadian NP idea).</p> <p>Matching service- young people who want to get involved in nature recovery with farmers have a need for data and practical support.</p> <p>Better engagement with, information for and management of activities in the countryside e.g. motor cross.</p> <p>More chalk grassland restoration.</p> <p>Promote Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and secure investments in ecological info.</p> <p>Recognise development sites' value for nature recovery and connect them to the National Park.</p> <p>Implement bespoke Agri-Environment Schemes for SDNP.</p> <p>Consider species reintroduction, including beavers and choughs.</p> <p>Invest in remote tech for biomonitoring and reintroduce red squirrels.</p> <p>Focus on high water quality, restore natural watercourses,</p>

		<p>project impacts and communication.</p> <p>Develop nature recovery fact sheets for garden centres.</p> <p>Integrate planning and nature recovery initiatives.</p> <p>Implement adaptive management strategies for landscapes.</p> <p>Improve opportunities for public education and interpretation.</p> <p>Continue making Seven Sisters an exemplary nature recovery site.</p> <p>Implement conservation grazing regimes.</p> <p>Focus on deer management interpretation and communication.</p> <p>Evaluate proportionality of BNG on brownfield developments.</p> <p>Simplify processes for small nature recovery projects.</p> <p>Secure funding for project feasibility and consents phases.</p> <p>Neighbourhood-focussed initiatives.</p>	<p>and support regenerative farming.</p> <p>Create nature-friendly trails and integrate planning into highway schemes.</p> <p>Encourage moon gardens and orchard restoration.</p> <p>Champion green bridges, road tunnels, and marine national parks.</p> <p>Make planning permission for ponds easier.</p> <p>Build more cycle paths.</p> <p>Lobby for dog walking bylaws.</p> <p>Promote nature connectedness.</p> <p>Address climate migrant species.</p> <p>Reconnect floodplains to rivers by removing river banks.</p> <p>Develop policies for better garden designs in new builds.</p> <p>Leverage Dark Skies for species engagement and nocturnal habitat recovery.</p>
<p><i>Collaboration and sharing of knowledge and expertise</i></p>	<p>SDNPA as a 'nature hub' linking with LAs</p> <p>FiPL- both prescriptive and collaborative.</p> <p>Volunteers and organisations have knowledge and expertise they can share. Make use of the passion!</p>	<p>Collect and share data that separate partners and orgs might have.</p> <p>Better coordination to implement strategic plans e.g. LNRS.</p> <p>Simplify information e.g. '5 things you can do for nature recovery', and a call to action.</p>	<p>Look for options that can help deliver 30x30 for mutual benefit with partners and businesses.</p> <p>Better sharing of information- Ecologist Working Group/ LNRS.</p> <p>Establish shared goals.</p> <p>Provide mentors.</p> <p>Adopt New Forest Code of Conduct.</p>

<p>SDNPA website.</p> <p>Engaging under 18s- schools/ outdoor learning group.</p> <p>Partnership projects.</p> <p>Catchment Partnerships.</p> <p>Transition Towns.</p> <p>Climate Hub.</p> <p>Community renewable energy schemes.</p> <p>Engagement events</p> <p>Working: landscape approach with neighbour partners and other larger teams.</p> <p>Supporting and facilitating key networks, e.g. learning and volunteering networks</p> <p>Access improvement - networking with user group. Identify access priorities and working collaboratively on delivery.</p> <p>In-person public engagement - connect, educate, and inspire - events, pop ups, workshops.</p> <p>Keep organising events to share knowledge</p> <p>Championing success and best practice.</p> <p>NPUK family staff groups.</p>	<p>Better partner collaboration- advice givers.</p> <p>Broaden the Local Access Forum, coordinate advice.</p> <p>BNG collaboration, pooling knowledge, shop window- landscape scale.</p> <p>Organisations could be better at collaborating - network of advice givers. Linking up groups in Winchester – Eastbourne.</p> <p>Bottom up listening and working/connecting. Convening.</p> <p>Celebrate partners' successes.</p> <p>Fewer acronyms.</p> <p>Invest in and improve collaboration at a national level across PLs/NPE/NPUK</p> <p>Learning specific events - host/organise subject matter/disciplinary focussed partnership, activities with partners e.g. all rangers in NP event, external partner forum.</p> <p>Work with partners better around data sharing and data capture. Better data sharing and centralised hubs for ecological data (external or in-house).</p> <p>Technology to help us collect data better and to display the data better to share. More awareness of systems that automate collaboration/ engagement.</p> <p>Engage with more diverse groups to reach further.</p>	<p>Parish level coordination of access.</p> <p>Consider East Winchester Landscape Conversation.</p> <p>Revive collaboration with rail franchise - way marks, shopfront at railway stations.</p> <p>Better intelligence understanding of the groups that are active and consulting them.</p> <p>Planning - SDNPA working better with host authorities.</p> <p>Shared systems and strategic planning process (PMP partners).</p> <p>Shared systems and processes (NPUK family).</p> <p>Centralised contact management system - stakeholder management. AI chatbot (closed but safe and transparent). Collaborative platforms</p> <p>Engage more diverse groups to spread our messaging.</p> <p>Raising profile in a variety of industries e.g. water, finance, education, transport, e.g. other professional conferences and publications.</p> <p>Link with other landowners to fill in the gaps. Link with other organisations e.g. other NPs/ National Landscapes.</p> <p>Targeting younger age groups - schools/colleges in developing planning strategy/policy.</p> <p>Stakeholder mapping- where are the gaps?</p>
---	---	---

	<p>Parish workshops, planning newsletter.</p> <p>Improve collaboration across Defra family.</p> <p>Inter-ranger areas dialogue, friendship and collaboration.</p> <p>Maintain national working groups to store knowledge/bad practice.</p> <p>Knowledge hubs on website.</p> <p>Secure and provide grass roots funding for small group delivering our work.</p> <p>Take the lead campaign.</p> <p>Continue community engagement: young people, diverse groups - to share our messaging.</p> <p>External info sharing/benchmarking</p>	<p>Sponsor more pioneering university research.</p> <p>Deliver more closely with partners i.e. secondments.</p> <p>Stakeholder management - centralised knowledge share.</p> <p>Better understanding of Rol/opportunity cost of what we do.</p> <p>More dynamic Dark Skies collaboration e.g. be thought of when organisations think about light pollution.</p> <p>Better collaboration opportunities across National Park family for all departments/specialisms.</p> <p>Different demographics/language- more mixed/dynamic media formats.</p> <p>Make the plan more relevant and accessible to all stakeholders. Helps to collaborate, needs to be useful. Channels of communication between partners. Interactive project map.</p>	<p>More knowledge hubs- e.g. Dark Skies community collaboration</p> <p>Cross-organisational ranger days.</p> <p>Planning and specialists work more closely with host authorities- collaborate.</p> <p>Stronger brand identity- brand/product collaborations.</p> <p>Youth members (youth parliament style).</p> <p>Other partnership group breakfasts e.g. Heritage Conservation, Landscape, Access.</p> <p>Devolution presents opportunity to take bigger role in local communications.</p>
<i>Working with farmers and landowners</i>	<p>Farmer clusters and support for landowners, with fundraising. Acting as a bridge between public and farmers i.e. coms support. Articulate to farmers that they are vital to our mission- building relationships.</p> <p>Free pre-app for agri-development/farm diversification.</p>	<p>Integrate farm clusters and farmers more effectively.</p> <p>Communicate the impact of work with landowners more clearly.</p> <p>Increase public dialogue to gain support.</p> <p>Promote the positive work being done with case studies.</p> <p>Focus estate plans more on public access.</p>	<p>Explore connections between parishes, town councils, and local landowners.</p> <p>Develop nature spaces and compensate for nature loss.</p> <p>Coordinate better between advisors and farmers.</p> <p>Instigate chalk grassland restoration projects.</p> <p>Promote wood products and local economy.</p>

<p>Advocate for financial support to govt (FiPL or similar) and helping farmers diversify income to include nature. Providing additional support to current schemes- adding value. Small grants. Help with licenses. CIL funding opportunities.</p> <p>Good engagement with larger landowners- Whole Estate Plans.</p> <p>Planning presence at Farmers' Breakfasts</p> <p>Meet the farmer/ Open Farm Sunday.</p> <p>ReNature credits and nature-based solutions portfolio.</p> <p>Promote existing good examples.</p> <p>More Access Officers.</p> <p>Tree planting.</p> <p>Community grazing projects and advice on grazing. Support for conservation grazing and rare breed herds.</p> <p>Ranger team offering support with habitat management - tasks on the ground.</p> <p>Engagement with vineyards and wineries, and golf courses.</p> <p>Buy fresh local produce- buy British.</p>	<p>Improve knowledge sharing on nature, markets, and biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Restore funding for a woodland officer.</p> <p>Support the farming economy and aid landowner engagement.</p> <p>Prepare for new public land due to devolution with a strategic approach.</p> <p>Reopen old railway routes and encourage more permissive cycle routes.</p> <p>Promote dark skies and anti-light pollution initiatives in conversations with landowners.</p> <p>Champion success stories and offer a cohesive support package to farmers and landowners.</p> <p>Align roles to the PMP priorities and support smaller-scale, cost-effective projects.</p> <p>Encourage peer networks to promote nature-friendly farming.</p> <p>Facilitate better planning support and diversification options and provide comprehensive support.</p> <p>Engage with sector resilience plans and adapt to LUF changes.</p> <p>Provide a clear understanding of acceptable application criteria.</p> <p>Focus on landowner and farmer education.</p>	<p>Establish farm clusters and catchment partnerships.</p> <p>Support tenant and smaller farmers.</p> <p>Engage young people through nature walks.</p> <p>Offer comprehensive landowner/ farmer advisory services.</p> <p>Support landowners in providing affordable community housing.</p> <p>Encourage access to agricultural careers and planning support.</p> <p>Develop micro WEPs for farms and track engagement with farmers.</p> <p>Promote mental health support for farmers.</p> <p>Enhance deer management and venison market.</p> <p>Acquire land for model farms and community greenspace.</p>
---	--	---



	<p>Share learning- what works e.g. Shelbourne cluster biodiversity-soil/carbon</p> <p>Access enhancement on PROW network- funding resource.</p> <p>Recognising the role of farming in shaping the landscape.</p>	<p>Consider affordable housing approaches for rural communities.</p> <p>Promote ambitious habitat restoration and management plans.</p>	
<i>Connecting young people to the environment</i>	<p>SDNPA work with schools and school visits, including those from inner cities.</p> <p>Youth action volunteering.</p> <p>Youth groups, Forest Schools. Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Scouts, Cadets, night hikes, adventure. Prince's Trust - expand offer, gets kids out to us so we only need to provide the activity</p> <p>Events/festivals e.g. Dark Skies, Boomtown, Salsa Salona. Family events, free events.</p> <p>Ambassador Schools.</p> <p>Apprentice Rangers SDNPA and partners. Conservation projects in school grounds by rangers.</p> <p>Partnership working, with bids led by larger organisations.</p> <p>CIL spending for young people.</p>	<p>Vision for the future - involve young people.</p> <p>Co-create projects with young people.</p> <p>Staff to go into schools to talk about what we do.</p> <p>Support the natural history GCSE more.</p> <p>More support for school visits.</p> <p>Volunteering- Youth Action standard - intergenerational - Green skills, history, tourism etc. Micro volunteering. Link up with youth groups in towns and villages. Recruit more regularly. D of E day volunteering and weekends for 14 yr +. Expand Junior Ranger programme.</p> <p>Flip Volunteer Ranger Service into a paid model to finance a junior VRS that is free to access and fully funded.</p> <p>Young Planners Network.</p> <p>Speak their language - less jargon. More good news-climate action impact.</p> <p>Younger people being involved in our social media and influencers, videos- Instagram,</p>	<p>Going to young people where they are, not expecting them to come to us. Finding a way to address transport costs.</p> <p>Young SDNP Forum. More youth representation on boards, including with Parishes. Inviting representation from urban fringe communities onto the committees/ membership who can speak for youth needs in their context.</p> <p>More work experience, apprenticeships and building awareness of green careers, including nature tourism. Location managers working with TV and film companies.</p> <p>Appeal to different demographics building on schools work- i.e. near urban community.</p> <p>Lobby Defra to do more to engage Young People in PLs.</p> <p>Engage with exam boards/Dept for Education around courses/qualifications.</p> <p>Visit relevant college courses and 'scout' future apprentices-environmentalists, planners-raises general awareness.</p>



<p>Free events with lots of lovely resources</p> <p>Social media - get Youth Action to do our social media.</p> <p>Youth action and careers fairs</p> <p>Generation Green - target underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Supporting career-minded volunteers.</p> <p>Green skills.</p> <p>Heritage skills.</p> <p>Travel grants – schools.</p> <p>Learning grants.</p>	<p>Tik Tok ranger engagement, Blogs from a young planner. Park brand recognition. Merch.</p> <p>Intergenerational- mentors, initiation, understand, developmental psychology.</p> <p>Meet the producer- where food comes from.</p> <p>Accessible/ alternative ways for visiting the downs.</p> <p>Improving safe active travel routes to encourage access to the park.</p> <p>Providing homes for young people.</p> <p>Target more areas outside the park (i.e. London).</p> <p>Expand the range of activities we are talking about- biking, horse riding.</p> <p>Engaging young mothers.</p> <p>Free overnight stays in the SDNP for young people- more bothies.</p> <p>Younger age groups in the wild.</p> <p>Engage secondary schools and colleges in nature recovery.</p> <p>Education efforts aimed at primary schools, Forest Schools, and nursery schools.</p>	<p>Proactively encourage and invite young people to join in with the day-to-day workings of SDNPA- less visible things.</p> <p>Corporate mentorship project.</p> <p>Diversifying opportunities for young people not in education, training or work- make sure they are accessible.</p> <p>Dedicated youth engagement officers/interns (voluntary role).</p> <p>Young offenders engagement.</p> <p>Better engagement with local attractions and appealing to family groups to recruit more young volunteers.</p> <p>Specific ideas- Link with Brighton Museum. Summer jobs based on Canadian NP initiatives. More youth engagement with larger estates e.g. Cowdray. Downs to the Sea- employing water champion with schools. Young farmers to give guided walks. Weald to Waves including school visits. Camping on larger estates as alternative to wild camping. River Schools. Dance, music, art (festival). More tailored walks for young people. Staff experiences- video blogs. Support more care farming. Featuring younger people on social media. Advice for young people on speaking at planning committee. AI - create a plant competition. Holiday support for young carers. Reintroduce geocaching coins. Minecraft 'hackathon' for kick to introduce them to planning. Ranger for hire- youth</p>
--	---	---

		<p>engagement and nature tour. Expand/bring back John Muir award. Mascot for SDNP- Southdown sheep? Cuddly toy for SDNPA key species- kid marketing. Pokémon Go SDNPA specific. Create opportunities for adventure playgrounds. Social media take over and lead tasks and ambassador in office. Volunteer social media platform. School holiday ranger club. Young person innovation prize, Youth Action Award recognition. Experience days so people can buy vouchers to do activities. Camping barn- wider package to include opportunities to engage, walk, experience.</p>
--	--	--

## ACTIONS AND PLEDGES

While it is acknowledged that the numbers attending these sessions were low, the approach appeared to work well and the following are some of the suggested actions and pledges which could be treated as worked examples:

## APPRENTICES AND ROUTES TO EMPLOYMENT IN NATURE AND LAND-BASED WORK

### ACTIONS

- Find awarding body
- Talk to people in NP managing awarding apprenticeships
- Identify what they can progress into – ie work, university degree
- Survey the sector to find out what's missing ie pond building
- Develop a replicable model. Adapt a similar scheme. One that is quantifiable
- Identify schools that will feed into this

### TARGETS

- Number of people achieving Level 2, Level 3
- People with practical river/water related skills
- A way of demonstrating/accrediting practical skills ie LANTRA

### PLEDGES

- Promote it to organisations willing to support this
- Linking with the other national parks and other protected landscapes
- West Sussex Rivers Trust (WSRT) – talk to NP apprentice coordinator and other rivers trusts in regional hub to learn more and brainstorm possibilities/pathway to make it happen

---

## RIVER SCHOOLS

---

### ACTIONS

- Pilot scheme
    - Within Downs to the Sea project
    - Arun and Western Sussex Rivers Trust catchment
    - Engage sympathetic landowners
    - Source funding
    - Develop activity framework
    - Link with SDNPA Health and Wellbeing aims and skills required to contribute towards park's broader aims
- 

### TARGETS

- Greater relevant engagement with 11-18 age group
  - More receptive to 18-24 group with renaturing/conservation
  - Potential to feed into apprenticeships
- 

### PLEDGES

- West Sussex Rivers Trust to make it happen
- 

## BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

As part of good landscape/ecological design that supports the SDNP

---

### ACTIONS

- Call for green sites better advertised
  - Define what good BNG looks like in SDNP management plan and local plans
  - Quality standards/accreditation
  - Selling the benefits – breaking it down
  - Identify ways to contribute to offsite BNG, in SDNP eg enhancing neglected woodland, agro-forestry eg assess opportunity areas in SDNP
  - Dedicated green space ie mitigation hierarchy
- 

### TARGETS

- Guidance/policy reviewed by stakeholders/experts
  - Species of priority (link with LNRS)
  - Tree canopy covers no net loss or gain
  - Habitat
  - Messaging/demystifying for stakeholders
  - Outreach to parishes on what means for them
- 

### PLEDGES

- Forestry Commission will give advice on this
  - NatureSpace will give advice on this
- 

## BRINGING PRACTITIONERS TOGETHER – ECOLOGISTS & VOLUNTEERS

---

### ACTIONS

Set up Ecologists Network (EN) for South Downs

- Why EN

- share ideas
- Promote best practice
- Peer support
- Work at landscape scale
- What EN
  - Joined up thinking
  - Better habitats
  - Better use of funding
  - Sharing priorities – LNRS

#### Recreate Volunteer Network (VN) – sharing tasks/opportunities

- Why VN
  - Encourage different people to volunteer
  - Offer different types of opportunities
  - Get more done
  - Creating good will
  - Creating champions
- What VN
  - Volunteer network set up
  - Set up database across NP
  - Increase number of people volunteering
  - Increase number of tasks
- Woodland network
  - Recreate network that exists/existed

---

#### TARGETS

- Ecologists network
  - Live forum by end of 2026 – first meeting
  - Coordinated volunteering opportunities
  - By end of 2030 measurable uplift in habitat condition
  - Use priority species for SD to measure
  - Agreed methodologies
  - Contributed to increasing habitat creation
  - Creation of a living record of what management has happened
  - Priority species
  - QR codes set up with meet the ecologist by 2030 showing what they have done
- Volunteer network
  - Network reestablished end 2026
  - 5% increase in number of volunteers from 2025 baseline
  - % of habitat managed by volunteers?
  - Increase in % of volunteers feeling health and wellbeing benefit from baseline of 2025/26

---

#### PLEDGES

- Help set up eco network
- Host first meeting

---

#### ACCESS

---

#### ACTIONS

- Distribute visitors over the park
- Wider awareness of the park
- Broaden the park 'offer'

- Make camping easier

---

#### TARGETS

- Get more visitors from London (by train)
- More visitor centres with more relevant information and facilities
- Attract more young people by catering to their interests

---

#### PLEDGES

- National Rail to market cheap weekend rail tickets
- More informative signage (by National Park Authority) (financed by SD Society)

