

Report to	South Downs Policy & Resources Committee
Date	26 June 2025
By	Countryside and Policy Manager (Eastern Downs); Strategy Lead Nature Recovery and Strategy Lead Climate Change and Net Zero
Title of Report	Partnership Management Plan Delivery 2025-26: South Downs National Park Authority Nature Recovery Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan

Note

Recommendation: Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the priorities for Nature Recovery and Climate Change for 2025-26

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee has terms of reference which include *to monitor and review the performance ... of the Authority in the context of its business delivery, and the management and maintenance of the Authority's assets in accordance with the ... Corporate Plan.*
- 1.2 The Corporate Plan was agreed by the National Park Authority at its meeting on 27 March 2025. This year, 2025/26, represents a bridge year whilst the Partnership Management Plan is reviewed. This report takes a forward look at the programmes of work for 2025/26 associated with the agreed Corporate Plan high level targets for Nature Recovery and Climate Change. It complements the Annual Review, which looks at delivery undertaken in 2024/25. A similar report was presented to the committee in June 2024.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan sets out how the South Downs National Park Authority will deliver the outcomes in the Partnership Management Plan for 2020-25. The long-term ambitions of the Partnership Management Plan (PMP) and the Local Plan are very broad, the Corporate Plan focuses on those areas where we know we can make the most impact against the priorities in the PMP. Both the Nature Recovery Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan bridge the transition from the current Corporate Plan and incorporate the emerging themes from the Partnership Management Plan review.
- 2.2 Both of the Action Plans have also taken into consideration the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework which sets out standardised targets for all Protected Landscapes and will shape our reporting going forward.

3. Issues for consideration

Nature Recovery

- 3.1 The Nature Recovery Action Plan 2025-26 sets out the focus of the Authority's delivery in the bridge year programme of delivery under Corporate Plan HLT 1: To secure an additional 13,000ha, or 33% of land managed for nature by 2030 from a baseline of 25%, HLT 2: Work to maintain, enhance and/or restore 30% of existing Core Nature sites and support key species recovery within the SDNP by 2030, and HLT 3: To prepare for and implement Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for the year ahead. It has been developed collaboratively across all Directorates through the Nature Recovery Working Group.
- 3.2 The programme is set out under key work strands which draw together work from across Authority's functions: National strategy and coordination, Parkwide plans and strategy, supporting farmers and landowners delivering nature recovery, Developing largescale and thematic nature recovery projects, Funding nature recovery, Delivering nature recovery through the planning system, Promoting engagement with nature recovery, Monitoring and reporting on nature recovery.
- 3.3 The Nature Recovery Action Plan can be found in **Appendix I**.

Climate Action

- 3.4 The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2025-26 sets out the programme of delivery under HLT 4 South Downs National Park Authority to reduce its carbon footprint by 150 tonnes per annum in line with the 2030 net zero target and HLT 5 5% reduction per annum in the overall carbon footprint of the South Downs National Park from the baseline reported in 2019. It has been developed collaboratively across all Directorates through the Climate Change Working Group. It builds on the original Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan approved by the SDNPA in March 2020, which affirmed the Authority's commitment to addressing the climate and nature emergency by:
- Setting a target for the South Downs National Park Authority to become a 'Net-Zero' Organisation by 2030;
 - Agreeing to work with our constituent Local Authorities and other partners, in particular local communities and landowners, to deliver actions that respond effectively to the climate and nature emergency;
 - Working towards the South Downs National Park becoming 'Net-Zero with Nature' by 2040.
- 3.5 The Action Plan sets out 12 programmes of delivery which draw together work from across Authority's functions: Joint advocacy with the UK National Parks, Working with our constituent Local Authorities, Meeting a 2030 'Net-Zero' target for the SDNPA, Delivering climate action through the planning system, Working with local communities to deliver climate action, Climate Action Fund project, Delivering 'Net-Zero with Nature' - responding to the challenge of climate change with nature-based solutions, Supporting the land-based sectors, Transport and sustainable access, Rural economy and tourism, Engagement and outreach, and Historic environment and cultural heritage sector.
- 3.6 The Climate Change Action Plan can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Options & cost implications

- 4.1 Delivery is funded through the core budget (revenue and capital) and resource setting process and supplemented by significant additional income raised by the South Downs Trust and through green finance initiatives. Some delivery is through funded projects, such as Innovate UK and National Heritage Lottery Fund. Other projects are in the pipeline subject to funding in year. As priorities and project ideas are developed they are added to the project pipeline to inform the annual budget setting cycle. The Strategic Fund is available to

support SDNPA led initiatives particularly with feasibility work and as a means to draw in external funding opportunities.

- 4.2 Existing delivery is funded through the budget and resource setting process and supplemented by significant additional income raised by the South Downs Trust. Some delivery is through funded projects, such as Innovate UK and National Heritage Lottery Fund. Other projects are in the pipeline subject to funding in year. As priorities are developed the budget is also developed during the annual budget setting cycle. The Strategic Fund is available to support SDNPA led initiatives.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Teams will continue to deliver the priorities during the rest of the year. Performance is reported twice a year and examples and case studies are available in the quarterly bulletin.

6. Other implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	The resources required to deliver the programmes are developed during the annual budget setting process.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Core funding is subject to scrutiny by Members and rigorous criteria are applied to projects and procurement. External funding opportunities have and will continue to the sort. SDNPA resource is often used as leverage for other funding sources and/or signposting partners and stakeholders to funding opportunities (eg agri-environment schemes)
Which PMP Outcomes/ Corporate plan objectives does this deliver against	The programmes deliver against all of the outcomes in the current Partnership Management Plan 2020-25.
Links to other projects or partner organisations	We work in partnership with a range of organisations to deliver our priorities. Farmers, land managers and owners are particularly key for nature recovery and nature-based solutions.
How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives	The climate action plan delivery contributes directly to the Authority's Climate Change objectives.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	None
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Yes. All projects are subject to an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion assessment. As are all new major pieces of work.

Implication	Yes*/No
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	The Authority has Health and Safety policies and procedures which are observed by staff when delivering programmes of work.
Are there any Data Protection implications?	None, directly relevant to the paper however, staff adhere to organisational policies when delivering work or projects.

7. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

- 7.1 The UK Parliament declared a climate change emergency in May 2019. This was in recognition of the existential threat climate change presents. The SDNPA produced a Climate Change Risk Assessment as part of its Adaptation Planning and Reporting role. The SDNPA Climate Change Action Plan sets out a range of actions we are able to take to mitigate and adapt to the worst of these risks.

CLAIRE KERR

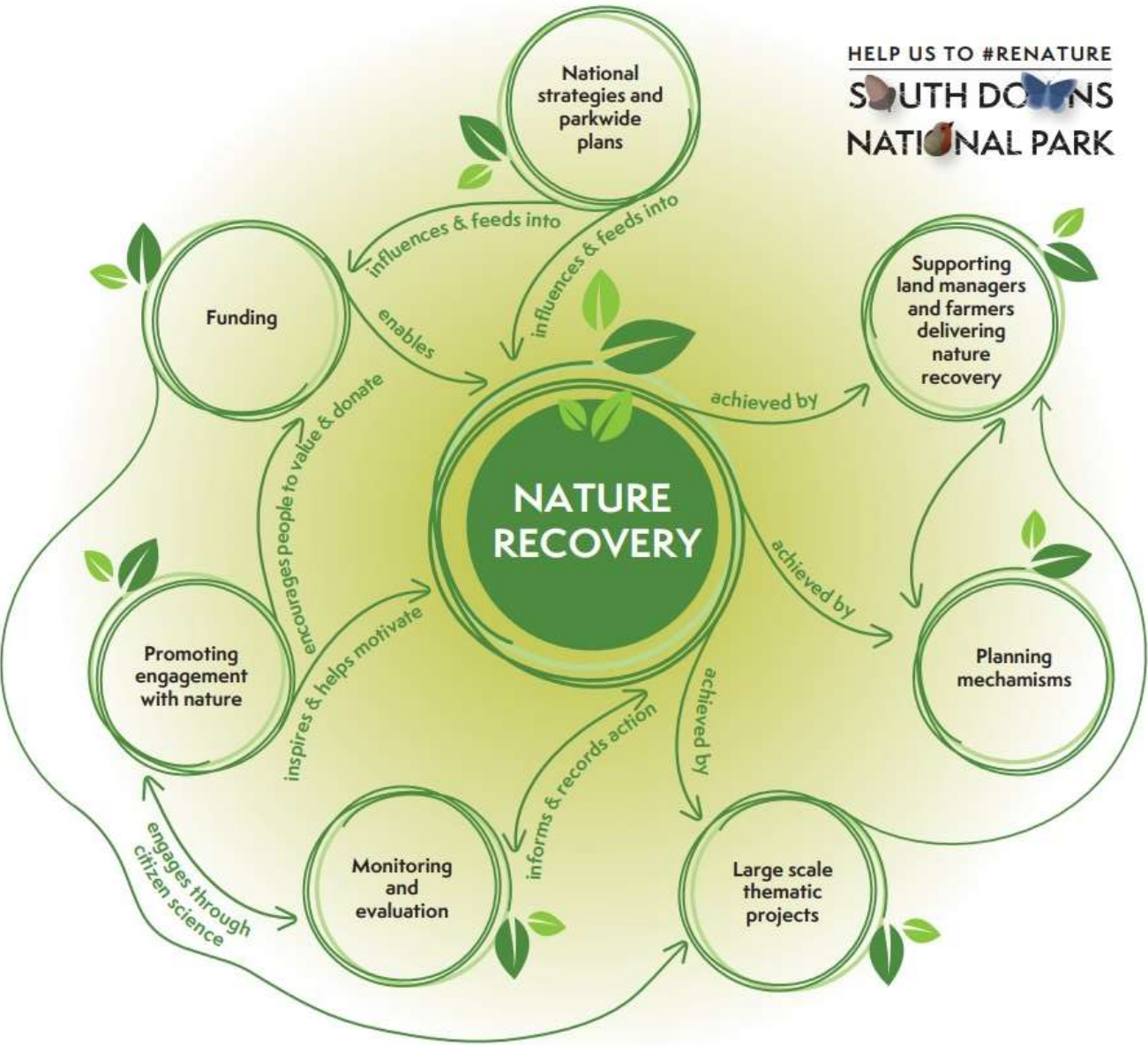
Countryside & Policy Manager

South Downs National Park Authority

Contact Officer:	Cath Jackson – Strategy Lead (Nature Recovery) and Chris Fairbrother – Strategy Lead (Climate Change and Net Zero)
Email:	Claire.Kerr@southdowns.gov.uk , Cath.Jackson@southdowns.gov.uk , Chris.Fairbrother@southdowns.gov.uk
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature Recovery Action Plan 2025/26 2. Climate Change Action Plan 2025/26 3. Infographic Summary of Delivery 2024/25
SDNPA Consultees	Senior Leadership Team; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services
External Consultees	None
Background Documents	Corporate Plan 2020–2025 (southdowns.gov.uk) Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK

SDNPA Nature Recovery Action Plan – 2025-26

This infographic summarises how different parts of the following plan fits together.



I. NATIONAL STRATEGY and COORDINATION

Objective	Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
<p>National strategy development, consultation and action.</p> <p>Work with the Protected Landscapes family to have a consistent and coordinated approach to nature recovery to demonstrate Landscapes significant contributions to national targets.</p>	<p>See NPUK Team nature action plan</p> <p>Coordinate/ contribute towards response to national consultations.</p> <p>Ensure Nature Recovery is adequately represented during Local Authority reorganisations and Devolution discussions.</p> <p>Ensure Nature Recovery is adequately considered during CRoW mapping review and potential changes to land category definitions.</p>	Claire Kerr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent SDNP the national nature recovery group. Lead on developing a nationally consistent monitoring programme for National Parks. SDNPA to actively participate/ contribute to NPUK Team Nature and the delivery of the Action Plan (5 Goals) CK specific involvement with Goal 3: Develop and act on better Evidence Framework for Nature Recovery (our Offer) SDNPA contribute to Defra/ other national consultations as appropriate. Support NPE coordination of responses. Represent National Trails on PLP Governance Board Work closely with Natural England's national Access team to highlight the effect of changing access land definitions on land management and nature recovery.

2. PARKWIDE PLANS AND STRATEGY

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Influencing significant park-wide external strategies	Contribute to the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	Claire Kerr (supported by Katharine Stuart/Lynsey Robinson and Cath Jackson where necessary).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support to the steering groups of Sussex and Hampshire. Respond to the Supporting Authority pre-consultation and pre-publication requirement.
Embed Nature Recovery in the Partnership Management Plan	<p>Develop a nature recovery aim and objective for the Partnership Management Plan for 2025-2030 using consultation feedback.</p> <p>Consider a revision of the existing nature recovery plan PMP review process. (Note that the publication of LNRS may make this unnecessary).</p>	Cath Jackson and Claire Kerr and ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a potential aim(s)/objective(s) by end of April. Review the existing nature recovery plan. PR_2021July15-Agenda-Item-8.pdf against the LNRS and consider whether a Park specific plan is required over and above the Partnership Management Plan.
Ensure compliance with Biodiversity Duty	Develop a Biodiversity Duty Report.	Cath Jackson, Claire Kerr Katharine Stuart & Lynsey Robinson	Develop a format for the Biodiversity Duty Report which aligns with the monitoring and evaluation developed for the forthcoming Partnership Management Plan.
Embed Nature Recovery in the SDW Management Plan	Review the 2025 – 2030 SDW National Trail Management Plan	Andy Gattiker	Review the current SDW Management Plan, including actions to deliver Nature Recovery and submit to the Trail partnership and Natural England for sign-off

3. SUPPORTING LAND MANAGERS AND FARMERS DELIVERING NATURE RECOVERY

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Encouraging and supporting landowners/farmers delivering nature recovery	Working with landowners, farmer and community groups to develop a deliverable pipeline of nature recovery/climate/access/historical/landscape and diversification projects	Ranger teams. Farming team, Thrive team, Nature & Climate Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how a formal or informal system can be used to track all SDNPA contact across teams so that landowners are provided with consistent advice which reflects all of the Park's priorities. Identify nature recovery projects suggested by individuals, farmer groups and communities and supporting them so that they can be delivered. Putting them on the pipeline and prioritisation to ensure appropriate staff support.
	Developing a regen agriculture initiative with farmers to support financially resilient farms achieving nature recovery/climate goals	Farming team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage facilitations to support individual and cross holding nature recovery work by farmers. Develop two peer-to-peer learning accelerator programmes – for arable and for mixed farming.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with farm advisors and farmers to develop a landscape-appropriate package of SFI/CS options for arable, pasture and key habitats. Ensure that all SDNPA staff can act as advocates of the packages. Integrating Nature-Recovery-and-the-Historic-Environment_2023_External-Final.pdf
	Supporting the diverse farm advice community in the Park so that it provides coherent and coordinated advice	Farming team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene or encourage regular farm advisor meetings to share initiatives and identify how advisors can best work together.
	Identifying support required by land-based businesses seeking to diversify	Chris Hannon with Planning team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what support different land-based businesses most need to support diversification
	Provide sector specific and appropriate nature recovery information	Communications team and ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards an update of the nature recovery hub to relaunch with the updated nature recovery plan in 2026 Promote this in a variety of ways including through 2025 farmer breakfasts if appropriate
	Demonstrating exemplary land management at Seven Sisters	Seven Sisters ranger team, Claire Onslow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the agri-environment scheme and management plan effectively. Establishing and maintaining a monitoring programme.

4. DEVELOPING LARGESCALE AND THEMATIC NATURE RECOVERY PROJECTS

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Developing, supporting and/or delivering a range of landscape appropriate large-scale projects/initiatives	Working with partners, individuals and groups to develop a pipeline of potential projects for development.	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates and additions of the pipeline (which is reviewed quarterly by fundraising) Signposting relevant South Downs Trust funding streams. Identifying leads in partner organisations (where action best led by others)
	Delivering, or supporting, existing nature recovery projects where we have an active delivery role		
	Seven Sisters Super NNR	Claire Kerr with SSCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and actively contribute to the sNNR partnership Support and progress the process of NNR declaration. Declaration expected in autumn 2025. Support and actively contribute to the development of the sNNR "Management Framework"
	Changing Chalk (Eastern Downs) HLF led by National Trust, Year 3	Cath Jackson/Jan Knowlson and Eastern Rangers Claire Kerr	Final year of delivery of the grazing and dew pond project. Case studies to be created as part of the lessons learned. Developing the project Legacy
	Downs to the Sea NLHF led by SDNPA, Year 1	Natacha Bricks-Yonow	Start up phase of the delivery of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan capital work (wetlands improvements, ponds restoration and creation); planning applications, environmental consents (FRAP, OWC...), discharge of conditions, surveys, tenders, confirmation of landowners interest etc.. Recruitment of Downs to the Sea Ranger to support ponds creation and restoration delivery Recruitment, training and delivery of year 1 of River Guardian / Himalayan Balsam volunteers
	Ouse Valley Climate Action	Stephanie Summers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete year 3 delivery actions and transition to legacy year from October 2025. Legacy project to include progressing up to 3 local nature recovery projects with partners. Further 2 rounds of Community Pitch small grants for nature recovery & climate action.
	Rother project – 2 year funded project funded by SW, CDC and SDNPA	Angela Ward and Steering group	Continue to guide the project towards building a pipeline of projects through the steering group Direct delivery of INNS (mink and balsam) through volunteers.
	Meon Valley Project (sub catchment group)	Western Ranger team	Continue to support the project group by providing secretariat. Delivery habitat enhancement through projects and volunteers. Undertake monitoring (river fly) and mink control.
	National Grid LEI Scheme	Emma Allen/Michael Edmonds	Deliver current National Grid LEI schemes and work with partners to secure support for two further projects (Butser, Rother) over the 25/26 windows.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
	Big Chalk	Chris Fairbrother, Cath Jackson, Jan Knowlson, James Winkworth	Support Big Chalk to secure a sub £250k NHLF grant to support the network Work up a Big Chalk South Downs or SEPL project portfolio
	Coastal Wild Belt	Andy Gattiker	Input into the developing national Coastal Wild Belt project and support funding bids lead by NTUK.
Addressing systemic barriers to nature recovery	Explore the potential for a protected sites strategy across the Park with Nature England	Cath J, Claire K	Contact the local NE team to discuss the potential for a Park-wide strategy.
	Woodland management: deer control. Learn from and build on the work already undertaken	Anooshka R, Chris H	Continuing Fair Game: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scoping SDNPA involvement in potential AHRC venison commercialisation bid ➤ Launch South Downs venison web platform to signpost to suppliers and promotional materials. ➤ Continue to explore options for research into dietary composition re vegetation impacts and cross loss
	Undergrazing – tackle the reduction in cattle across the Park which is impacting the management of priority habitats specifically species rich grasslands and heathland.	Farming Team, supported by Cath J	Support the work of Selbourne and South Downs Clusters who are developing a grazing project Pasture and Profit – Pasture for Life continue to work with farmers and land managers across the SDNP (currently 48), through Changing Chalk., Continue to develop and seek funding for the next phase of Pasture and Profit (with a cohort of 20 farmers signed up to a 24 month project to share knowledge and ideas on sustainable grazing practices to improve soil health and increase climate resilience)
	Water - Commission a cross catchment review to identify issues and barriers to action, build an action plan to address these alongside partners and deliver it over the next management plan cycle.	Cath Jackson initially.	Actions to come out of March 25 meeting. Ensure strong cross functional working across all teams about water related work.
Developing, supporting and/or delivering a range of species and habitat themed projects (Water and soil are separated out below)	Identify and address issues that are preventing the delivery of management, restoration and expansion of key habitats and the species groups they support.		
	Hedges (wildlife rich habitat) – assessing the extent and condition and encouraging appropriate management, restoration and planting.	Hedge team (meets monthly) Comms	Hedgerow plan commissioned due for delivery by April. Trial with ranger teams and investigate funding for plan. Species list for South Downs. Baseline and historic layers being developed – need
	Ponds (wildlife rich habitat) managing and restoring existing ponds and creating new ones.	Rangers, Planning, comms and fundraising.	Baseline and historic layers being developed. How-to case studies to be developed. Planning approaches being designed to support
	Woodlands – managing existing woodlands (26% of the Park) and creating new woodlands in the right place.	TBC	Woodlands management (outside of deer control): needs development
	Bat landscape-scale approach in the central section of the Park which has the most diverse bat community in the UK.	TBC	Investigating the potential for a landscape-scale project. Potential link to the bat planning protocol (see planning)
	Farmland birds – a species feature of the Park (30% of which is arable)	Farming team	See monitoring and working with landowners
	Pollinators – another species feature of the Park as above.	Farming team, Jan and Fundraising	See monitoring and working with landowners

5. FUNDING NATURE RECOVERY

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Working towards coherent (and complementary), easy to access, equitable funding streams for nature recovery	Use agri -environment effectively (which is estimated as contributing 80% of the funding required for nature recovery)	Farming team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convening regular farm advisor meetings to share initiatives and identify how advisors can best work together. Liaise with NE to support their delivery of CSHT Delivery supporting farm resilience and other key priorities.
	Using FIPL to support resilient farm businesses	Farming team	
	Developing green finance funding streams to support nature recovery delivery	Mark Alden, Nick Heasman, Kelly Porter	Developing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nitrate schemes Woodland carbon code BNG brokering Voluntary Biodiversity Credits Conservation covenants
	Use National Trail funding where appropriate to facilitate nature recovery, access to nature and engagement with nature along National Trail corridors.	Ben Bessant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Hedgelaying along the SDW at Heyshott Down. Supporting Dew Pond restoration along SDW
	Identifying and securing funding for nature recovery projects on the pipeline.	Fundraising and South Downs Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of pipeline
	Use DEFRA Access in Protected Landscape funding to increase provision of access to nature	Andy Gattiker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve projects to increase opportunities for access to nature for completion by March 26.
	Work with the South Downs Trust to both secure and prioritise funded projects to secure the maximum ROI	Miriam Swan, Cath Jackson, Jan and James Winkworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Pond Map Historic Hedgerows Data Support grant making panels and prioritised project development.
	Using community infrastructure levy funding effectively	Fundraising, Planning, ranger teams and Cath and Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging parishes and councils to use CIL for nature recovery delivery in the first instance, or as match funding. Working with planning to facilitate funding for nature

6. DELIVERING NATURE RECOVERY THROUGH THE PLANNING SYSTEM.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain	Rolling out delivery of statutory BNG.	Katharine Stuart and Lynsey Robinson and Planning Directorate & Planning Tech Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise (after Reg 18 consultation) the BNG policy with associated evidence (viability) within the Local Plan ready for the pre-submission (Reg 19) Local Plan Consultation in 2026. Continue to build BNG capacity within the planning team. Ensure alignment of BNG with LNRS as these strategies are finalised in 2025. Prepare any further technical advice that may be required to support the implementation of BNG (with support from DM colleagues Stella New and Kelly Porter). Develop approach to BNG reporting.
	Develop and operate a brokerage role for BNG and nutrient offsetting schemes.	Mark Alden and Nick Heasman	Continue to develop a pipeline for potential BNG environment banks. Ensure robust monitoring and advice to support the existing banks..
Ensuring nature recovery is embedded in local plan policy.	Through the Local Plan Review, update planning policies to set requirements for development proposals to contribute to nature recovery. To ensure Planning is a mechanism to deliver nature recovery objectives/outcomes.	Katharine Stuart and Lynsey Robinson	The first consultation of the Local Plan Review (Reg 18) took place in January-March 2025. Actions for the year ahead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review feedback from the Regulation 18 consultation Amend policies to ensure they appropriately embed nature recovery. Undertake any further evidence required to support this (currently expected: ecology review of sites (LR), take into account emerging LNRS's, Landscape Assessment of sites, EcoServ work, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Integrated Impact Assessment of the next iteration of the Plan. Consult with Natural England on the bat protocol.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with key stakeholder in the further development of policies both internally (e.g. via the Nature Recovery Working Group) and externally (e.g. Natural England) as appropriate.
Ensuring nature recovery is delivered appropriately within planning rules	Ensuring that nature recovery projects can be delivered in a timely and cost effective way which is compliant with planning regulations and policy.	Kelly Porter	Minimizing the barriers of the planning system on nature recovery projects, such as exploring the use of a local development order projects across the National Park and / or other measures to support such projects.
Delivery of nature recovery through national infrastructure (and major projects such as Chyngton Brooks???)	Linking Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects with existing nature recovery strategies and ongoing projects (such as Weald to Waves or the Super National Nature Reserve) to deliver recovery on a strategic level. Encourage environmental net gain, in accordance with National Policy Statements and provide guidance and advice on how this can be achieved within the Park and its setting.	Vicki Colwell	Continue to work with applicants and partners to fund projects for biodiversity net gain within SDNP.
	Ensure significant access infrastructure and improvement projects incorporate Nature Recovery and / or access to nature benefits.	Andy Gattiker	Work with NT to ensure access to nature is improved during the design and planning stages of Chyngton Brooks project.

7. PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT WITH NATURE RECOVERY

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Encourage people to enjoy and engage with nature and, in some cases, take action by taking part in citizen science, volunteering and direct action through things like wildlife gardening	Large-scale events encouraging public engagement and enjoyment of nature	Comms team supported by Cath/Jan and the Ranger teams	Re nature festival in June 2025 Dark Skies Festival development for Sept 2025 and 2026
	Encouraging citizen science participation to support engagement and enjoyment and improve the nature recovery monitoring	Comms team supported by Jan	City Nature Challenge 2025
		Learning, Outreach and Volunteer team and ranger teams	South Downs Youth Action programme
		Ranger teams, Comms and Cath and Jan, central Volunteering Team	Encourage volunteers to become <ul style="list-style-type: none"> River guardians – Mink control and river fly monitoring (Angela and Elaina) Dragon fly ambassadors (Jake and Sophie) Support national monitoring programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bat surveys (Jake B and Kim G) INNS mapper (Angela and Comms) Barn Owl monitoring - training ringing volunteers (Angela and Yvette) Dormouse monitoring (Chloe, Sophie and Phillippa) Butterfly monitoring TBC
		Farming team	Continue to support the South Downs Farmland Bird Initiative which Sussex Ornithological Society and GWCT support.
Valuing and supporting the contribution of diverse communities to nature recovery.	Develop a funded project, Species Stories, to support creative responses to priority species from underrepresented groups – young people and Black and ethnically diverse backgrounds.	Anooshka Rawden supported by Jan Knowlson and Cath Jackson	Project has been designed and resources sought from the Foyle Foundation. Project is presently in start up. Finance being finalised.
Sharing good practice about how nature recovery can be practically delivered	Continue to develop a library of nature recovery case studies	Jan Knowlson and ALL	Develop up to 5 case studies during the year. Assess whether the current template is fit for purpose and revise if necessary.
	Share and promote outputs and case studies from the National Trails UK Nature Recovery Special Interest Group	Andy Gattiker	Disseminate the National Trails Nature Recovery tool kit.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Supporting schools to engage with nature and take positive action in their school grounds	School reNature grant scheme School and youth group engagement sessions within the SDNP School engagement sessions in school grounds Deliver Nights Under the Stars for schools and youth groups	Amanda Elmes, Emma Bruce, ranger teams, SSCP team	Work with the SDNP Trust to facilitate and market the reNature Grant for schools to encourage schools to increase nature within their school grounds through a range of practical actions Deliver sessions for schools at sites across the SDNP to inspire and engage young people with the nature and biodiversity of the SDNP and deliver learning sessions that promote positive action for nature Collaborate with partners to deliver youth engagement sessions in nature including with Action for Conservation, Make Good Trouble, NatureBytes, Kings Trust Deliver Night Under the Stars programmes for schools to experience the SDNP at night-time including a focus on nocturnal wildlife and caring for the National Parks dark night skies

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING ON NATURE RECOVERY

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer	Year 2025-26 Activities
Develop a baseline independent of national datasets using a repeatable methodology against which nature recovery progress can be measured.	Either working alone or alongside other national parks commission machine learning aerial photography interpretation of habitats (ideally over two time series, 2020 and 2010)	Pauline Stanway supported by Cath Jackson	To be confirmed when NPUK funding is finalised,
Reporting on the contribution of Biodiversity Net Gain	Ensure necessary required reporting reflects the contribution BNG makes	Katherine Stuart, Lynsey Robinson	BNG report due in Jan 2026
Develop datasets for specific habitats from the present and from historical maps which could be used to analyse/compare against the present	Continue to develop the hedgerow baseline layer. Develop a pond layer using existing datasets and analysis of mapping layers such as mastermap. Work with Lancaster University/Alan Turing to analyse hedges and ponds	Anooshka Rawden, Ruth Childs, Pauline Stanway and Cath Jackson	Commission pond layer. Commission update of hedgerow layer. Work with Peak District and Lancaster to develop 1940-1970 hedge layer to complement the AI Arch 1850 – 1900 layer. Commission analysis of both of these against the present hedgerow layer. Commission analysis of historical pond and present pond layer.
Using the nationally agreed standards, begin to develop a condition assessment programme for habitats outside of protected areas so that progress against the nature recovery plan can be measured.	Continue to undertake chalk grassland monitoring across non designated Continue to support the assessment of condition in local wildlife sites	Jan Knowlson and Ranger teams Pauline Stanway and Jan Knowlson	Undertake 20 condition assessment across non-designated chalk grassland sites. Create a summary report for data gathered over the last three years. Analyse the condition data over the previous years and determine what further work needs to be undertaken (working in partnership with the Records Centres). Butterfly monitoring undertaken by N Hulme now funded through a central budget.
Identify and address where connectivity of people, habitats and species is preventing nature recovery	Design and deliver a connectivity modelling project to identify where habitats creation could be used to the best effect as well as identifying where green bridges could reunite people and other species with the Park	Cath Jackson and Pauline Stanway leading	Commission green bridges study Work with Weald to Waves to design connectivity modelling.
Increase species monitoring within the Park in order to measure progress against the Nature Recovery Plan	Identify monitoring programmes which could be undertaken by SDNPA Park staff Identify monitoring programmes which could be undertaken by partners Citizen science	Ranger teams and Jan Knowlson Cath Jackson SEE ENGAGEMENT SECTION ABOVE	Additional static bat detectors to be purchased and deployed on the basis of a report and advice from a bat expert (which will be delivered by end of March). Investigate methods for determining species, particularly invertebrate, abundance across the Park including sound detection (Sussex Uni) alongside other methods. SEE ENGAGEMENT SECTION ABOVE

Working document

SDNP Climate Change Action Plan – 2025-26

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME I – JOINT ADVOCACY AND DELIVERY WITH THE UK NATIONAL PARKS

Objective	Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Joint Advocacy and delivery with the UK National Park and National Landscape family.	<p>To include :-</p> <p>National Delivery Plan (Update)</p> <p>Comms</p> <p>Scope 3 work</p> <p>CC Action Plan template</p> <p>Spatial Targeting work</p>	<p>CHRIS FAIRBROTHER</p> <p>Defra, DESNZ, National Parks England, Protected Landscapes Partnership, National Landscapes Association, National Trails UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK National Parks to promote their leadership role on climate change as part of the UN 'Race to Zero' programme. Deliver a communications campaign to highlight the success of the joint application to the UN Ambassadors programme. Demonstrate the value of investing in the UK Parks to deliver climate action with case study examples for Defra and other key external audiences. Work with the wider Protected Landscapes family to establish a model for integrating adaptation planning and risk management into the statutory Management Plan review process from 2025 onwards. Update CC Risk Assessment and adaptation plan for the SDNP area. Ensure the high-level risks are addressed through our PMP and Local Plan policies and delivery. Review feedback from first round of the reporting and the guidance on 'Aiming for A'. Develop this as a common framework for reporting through the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). Develop an CC Action Plan template with interim (2030) targets – ensure this is CDP compliant and in line with latest Defra PMP guidance. Complete CDP reporting for 2024/25 (July-September reporting window). Put in place data support for NPAs to complete the questionnaire to the required standard.
Research, Evidence & Monitoring	<p>Develop better data on carbon storage by land use or habitat type, to make informed choices on land use change.</p> <p>Develop a greater understanding of how to maximise carbon storage through biodiversity projects. Develop case studies of nature based and adaptation solutions.</p> <p>Research and monitor climate change impacts and trends.</p> <p>Develop research agenda and links with national level research bodies.</p>	<p>RESEARCH & EVIDENCE</p> <p>National Parks England, UK National Parks and protected landscapes network.</p> <p>National Research Bodies: LWEC, NERC and CEH. Research Hub and Universities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more in-depth analysis of the action needed to decarbonise sector by sector (land cover, energy, transport, food and drink etc.) and detailed implementation plans for specific sectors and/or land-use change scenarios. Develop climate risk/vulnerability mapping for landscape features, habitats, species and local communities across the SDNPA Update the SDNPA risk assessment in line with the latest UK Government guidance on Climate Change Adaptation reporting (ARP4)

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 2 – WORKING OUR CONSTITUENT LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Work with our Local Authority (LA) partners on Climate Change actions. Support and add value to their work through the delivery of our Climate Change Action Plan.	<p>Deliver the Innovate UK funded 'Pathfinder Parks project as part of the 'Future Ready' programme through to July 2025.</p> <p>Work with our constituent local authorities to address barriers to delivery and accelerate progress towards Net Zero.</p> <p>Work to establish common metrics and targets that make a clear contribution to delivering national and locally based targets.</p>	<p>CHRIS FAIRBROTHER/SARA OSMAN</p> <p>OnePlanet, Climate Change Leads in Local Planning Authorities, Sector Partners such as South-East Climate Action (SECA), Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the OnePlanet platform to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Support work to embed climate action in new strategic authority plans, which are evolving through the new local government reorganisation and devolution. ➢ Create an 'Ecosystem' plan for the SDNP with shared priorities and trackable sustainability measures. ➢ Coordinate activity on climate change and nature recovery between the SDNPA, Local Authority, sector partners and stakeholders. ➢ Work with the local authorities, sector partners and community groups to support more joined-up delivery and collaborative working. ➢ Develop an area-based Climate Strategy/Net Zero plan for the SDNPA that bridges gaps and connects activity at local, district and National Park level. ➢ Identify additional opportunities for external funding bids to support climate actions.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 3 – MEETING A 2030 'NET ZERO' TARGET FOR THE SDNPA

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Improving the SDNPA's sustainable performance - becoming Net Zero as an organisation by 2030.	<p>Deliver effective carbon emission reductions for the SDNPA and monitor progress towards the organisations 2030 target.</p> <p>Develop a localised offsetting option for the SDNPA with key partners, where our GHG emissions cannot be reduced.</p> <p>Oversee the application of the SDNPAs sustainability policy – through its operations, estate and procurement activities.</p> <p>Support SDNPA staff and members to be carbon literate and to understand our collective role in carbon emission reductions.</p> <p>Note : These actions and activities specifically relate to the Net Zero target for the National Park Authority as an organisation – in terms of its operations and estate.</p>	CORPORATE SERVICES (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the SDNPAs carbon performance against its emission reduction targets. Continue to report on this as a Corporate Plan priority. • Continue to work through SDNPA Sustainability Action Plan, making progress on outcomes towards 2030 target. • Develop an internal programme of carbon literacy training for SDNPA staff and members. Include the development of bespoke training package for staff on sector-based carbon where this is required. • Introduction of new benefit for staff - Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice and Heat Scheme (a non-taxable benefit that will advise staff on how to reduce their home heating bills, provide a more comfortable home environment whilst also reducing carbon emissions) in May 2025 • Re-promotion of Cycle to Work Salary Sacrifice Scheme when new benefits above are launched. • Develop an offsetting scheme with the Cowdray Estate, Forestry Commission and Woodland Trust via a Woodland Carbon Code accredited scheme. Investigate the potential for the SDNPA to become carbon positive in advance of the 2030 target.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 4 – DELIVERING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH THE PLANNING SYSTEM.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Working with our constituent Local Planning Authorities through the duty to co-operate.	Deliver climate action, adaptation and sustainability through the planning system	PLANNING SERVICES (with support from CPM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work closely with our neighbouring Local Planning Authorities, under the 'Duty to Cooperate', to develop joint working on strategic and/or cross boundary themes. Through our Local Plan Review, this will include the 'mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.' This will include working cooperatively on developing a shared-evidence base and metrics and targets. Emergency planning - Scope what climate change resilience work is underway with LA partners and how will this be dealt with in the context of devolution and Local Government review.
Tackling climate change through the role of the SDNPA's Planning Function	<p>Embed the principle of both Biodiversity Net Gain within the planning system through SDNP Local Plan strategic policies.</p> <p>Use existing Local Plan policies to influence positive impact on landscape character and ecosystem function.</p> <p>Promote green corridors, high quality green spaces and street trees within the urban environment to improve capacity for regulating air quality, and managing climate change impacts at a local level.</p>	<p>PSMT</p> <p>Local Authority Partners, Natural England, Environment Agency, Developers and Planning Agents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Review of the South Downs Local Plan.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start the assessment of evidence requirements for the review. Start/commission evidence work. Prepare LPR 2024-25 and run Regulation 18/19 consultation. Adopt LPR 2025-26. Develop clear guidance/ signposting to information to help homeowners and developers know what retrofit measures can be done under permitted development and when planning advice/ permission should be sought.
Sustainable Construction – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	<p>Promote energy efficiency and sustainable building standards in terms of building design, materials and site layout.</p> <p>Implementation and monitor the delivery of our policy and SPD to understand their contribution to our emission reduction targets.</p> <p>Identify strategic/local sites for BNG and for community-based renewables.</p>	<p>MARK WALLER-GUTIERREZ</p> <p>MHCLG, Local Authority Partners, Natural England, Environment Agency, Developers and Planning Agents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work (including collating evidence and responding to consultees) to carry over Regulation 18 Consultation Local Plan Review Climate Change and Sustainable Construction policy changes to Regulation 19 stage, and onwards to adoption: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum space heating targets Maximum building energy use targets Net zero (operational) buildings (renewable energy to match energy demand on site) Ban on fossil fuel energy generation in new buildings Maximum targets for 'up front' (pre-construction and construction stages) embodied carbon emissions for major developments Reduced maximum mains water consumption Strengthened sustainable drainage and green infrastructure requirements Post Occupancy Evaluation of major schemes to assess actual performance. Draft Revision of Sustainable Construction SPD to support and interpret revised policies. Run a series of 'Future Energy Landscape' workshops to explore opportunities for SDNP communities to consider the benefits of community-based renewables and to develop local solutions. Embodied carbon in planning and development – Work to understand the carbon impact of planning decisions and development proposals within the National Park area. Develop a way that this can be tracked and accounted for as part of the National Parks Net-Zero targets.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 5 – WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO DELIVER CLIMATE ACTION.

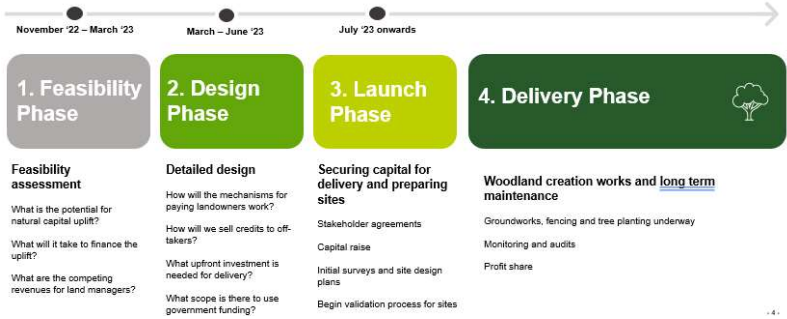
Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Helping to develop resilient communities.	<p>Support Town and Parish Councils to become a central point for sharing best practice/advice with local residents on making a positive contribution to climate change action.</p> <p>Encourage local action within parishes and other community groups that supports the delivery of wider climate change targets.</p> <p>Work with a small number of pilot communities to establish the carbon emissions of their own operations. Establish action plans to improve energy performance.</p> <p>Encourage communities to use their CIL receipt and other sources of funding to improve their own environmental performance and contribute to their wider parish carbon reductions.</p>	<p>SARA OSMAN Community Energy South, Petersfield Climate Action Network, Worthing Climate Action Network, South East Climate Alliance, Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC), Greater Brighton Energy Group, Community Land Trusts and Transition Town Groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help build the capacity of communities to develop projects that reduce carbon emissions, generate renewable energy and protect nature. Support the climate action networks to help make local parishes and communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Develop the Knowledge Hub to support the exchange of learning and best practice from current Climate Action projects to other SDNPA communities. Scope the potential for developing a 'climate pledge' for parishes and community groups who would want to support delivery and help achieve SDNPA climate actions and Net Zero targets. Deliver an in-person climate event for local parish and community climate action groups. Identify further training opportunities for community groups. Develop a Climate Change Communications Plan and campaign
Developing community energy schemes within the South Downs National Park.	<p>Develop a network of Climate Change 'Champions' to promote best practice and deliver local training and support.</p> <p>Focus on communities that are keen to make rapid transition to a low-carbon future. Use these communities as exemplars for others to learn from and follow.</p> <p>Ensure local communities and businesses can access benefits from delivering carbon storage, renewable energy generation and other low carbon activity.</p> <p>Encourage uptake of micro-generation and community based renewable projects that minimises the impact on the South Downs landscape.</p>	<p>SARA OSMAN Community Energy groups, Local Authority Partners, Renewable Energy Companies, Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC), Greater Brighton Energy Group, Transition Town Groups, Parish Councils and Landowners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support for communities in the early stages of considering community energy schemes by responding to enquiries, providing project and group development support and support for funding applications. Provide mentoring and advice to early adopters and for local communities considering renewable and retrofit projects – through to the submission of external funding bids. Continue to support best practice and advice to Parishes and local communities across the NPA – through working with our community energy groups. Encourage Parishes and Community Groups to use CIL to fund Climate Action such as new greenspace, woodland planting or community-based renewable energy projects.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 6 – CLIMATE ACTION FUND PROJECT

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Community Lottery - Climate Action Fund Bid (Ouse Valley Climate Action Project)	<p>Bring together community groups and organisations, over a 3 year delivery period, focussing on those least engaged and underserved communities. Support them to take community-led action around 3 core themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature Recovery and Climate Resilience - People's Knowledge and Skills - Greener Energy and Travel <p>Collaborate with specialists in monitoring and evaluation, behaviour change and carbon accounting to create a legacy of knowledge, tools and transferable solutions.</p> <p>Apply learning from the project to inform community-based climate action efforts across SDNPA.</p>	<p>STEPHANIE MILLS & OVCA PROJECT TEAM</p> <p>South Downs National Park Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Lewes District Council, Sussex Community Development Association, Ovesco, Community Energy South, 3VA, Seaford Community Partnership, Transition Town Lewes, Railway Land Wildlife Trust.</p>	<p>Year 2024/2025 Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue programme of community-based nature recovery and interventions. ➤ Continue programme of public sustainability and information sessions – building capacity and facilitating behaviour change/positive action. ➤ Provision of training programme for community groups and individuals - enhancing knowledge and skills around climate action and nature recovery. ➤ Focus on youth involvement and youth voice (forest school provision at primary level, youth forum/network at secondary level, active travel) ➤ Working with community groups to achieve impactful and measurable outcomes around behaviour change and carbon accounting. ➤ Further stakeholder mapping to ensure outreach to underserved communities. ➤ Expansion of energy team's 'Climate and Energy Champions' via match funding. ➤ Collaboration with key partners, organisations and aligned projects/activities - knowledge sharing, key learning, identifying opportunities to work together to maximise funding and resources. ➤ Creating legacy plan for community groups/future funding. ➤ Review and apply lessons learned from the project across the SDNPA.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 7 – DELIVERING 'NET ZERO WITH NATURE' – RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Developing a Nature Recovery Network (NRN)	<p>Increase habitat connectivity and the permeability of the landscape to wildlife.</p> <p>Demonstrate how nature-based solutions can help develop resilience to climate change at a landscape scale.</p> <p>Increase the quality and habitat diversity of wildlife sites. Deliver large-scale habitat creation where opportunities exist, create buffer zones for vulnerable or fragmented habitats.</p> <p>Increase the understanding of climate change and its impacts on the priority habitat and species within the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>Encourage naturally functioning floodplains and sustainable urban drainage schemes that help deliver natural flood management and adapt to the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>CLAIRE KERR</p> <p>Natural England, Environment Agency, Wildlife & Woodland Trusts, Local Nature Partnerships, SE Nature Partnership, Farmers and Landowners, Local Planning Authorities, SEEPL./</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent Nature Recovery Network for the National Park, in collaboration with LNPs/ LNRS development with the relevant authorities and other partner bodies. • Develop habitat carbon monitoring to track the contribution of the Nature Recovery programme. • Ensure the High-level targets align so we understand the contribution nature recovery projects will make to our overall carbon reductions and Net-Zero targets. • Adaptive Management work – Review of Climate Risks and Vulnerability of habitats, landscape features and protected sites. Develop of long-term adaptive management strategies for sites based on RAD principle4s (Resist, Adapt, Direct). • Green finance - develop projects that can trial new funding mechanisms to support nature recovery and Nature based Solutions to Climate Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Palladium/Revere Partnership - pilot projects ➤ Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) pilot - local/strategic sites ➤ Conservation Covenant Agreements ➤ ELMS (Landscape Recovery pilot, Local Nature Recovery tier)
Tackling climate change through new woodland planting	<p>Identify the best carbon storage options for the South Downs National Park that provide the widest range of ecosystem service benefits. Enhance the capacity for carbon storage and sequestration at a landscape scale.</p>	<p>Natural England, Wildlife & Woodland Trusts, Local Nature Partnerships, Farmers and Landowners, SD Forestry Champions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream the woodland opportunity mapping and identify areas with the best potential for new woodland planting across the National Park. • Carry out more detailed site assessments to identify the best opportunities, and to screen out unsuitable sites.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
	Produce guidance on the 'right tree in the right place' to help inform the design of good planting schemes that meet carbon targets and enhance the landscape quality of the South Downs National Park.	Partnership, Local Planning Authorities, Forestry Commission, Forestry England and Forest Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop carbon mapping for other habitats and land cover across the National Park to identify the best nature-based carbon storage and sequestration options park-wide.
South Downs Woodland Carbon Platform	<p>Design a mechanism that enables both land managers and tenant farmers of all landholding sizes that are interested in planting trees to access competitive, long-term payments for woodland creation with minimum bureaucracy.</p> <p>The platform will be able to sell carbon credits from the new South Downs woodland to high-integrity buyers, while providing diversified revenues for the land managers and delivering nature enhancement in the south of England.</p>	NICK HEASMAN/ MARK ALDEN/ PALLADIUM	 <p>1. Feasibility Phase November '22 – March '23</p> <p>Feasibility assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the potential for natural capital uplift? What will it take to finance the uplift? What are the competing revenues for land managers? <p>2. Design Phase March – June '23</p> <p>Detailed design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the mechanisms for paying landowners work? How will we sell credits to off-takers? What upfront investment is needed for delivery? What scope is there to use government funding? <p>3. Launch Phase July '23 onwards</p> <p>Securing capital for delivery and preparing sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder agreements Capital raise Initial surveys and site design plans Begin validation process for sites <p>4. Delivery Phase</p> <p>Woodland creation works and long term maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundworks, fencing and tree planting underway Monitoring and audits Profit share <p>Key outcomes from the delivery phase of the project :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully secure funding from investors Sign up 3-5 landowners committed to woodland planting in Tranche 1 to be planted within 25/26 financial year. Commence trading of woodland carbon to voluntary buyers including SME's, traditional partners, large corporates. Work with Sussex Local Authorities to establish a co-operative approach to pooling funds to purchase carbon credits on an 'up-front' basis.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 8 – SUPPORTING THE LAND-BASED SECTORS.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Support the transition to a low-carbon economy for the land-based sectors.	<p>Work closely with sector partners who have also declared net zero ambitions, particularly the NFU (2040), National Trust (2030) and Environment Agency (2030).</p> <p>Promote uptake of high precision or low-input farming techniques so that the application of nitrate fertilisers does not result in excess nutrients passing into the aquifers at key times of recharge (Autumn/Winter).</p> <p>Encourage sustainable land management that protects the environmental assets and ecosystem services of the South Downs National Park while maintaining the profitability of farming.</p> <p>Encourage land management practices that maintain the structural and microbial condition of soils and maximise its ability to store water and nutrients - especially in areas that are prone to erosion or more susceptible to drought conditions.</p> <p>Encourage land management practices that support pollinators and the use of natural pest controls or pest resistant crop species to reduce the need for pesticide use.</p>	<p>NIGEL JAMES</p> <p>NFU, CLA, Farm Clusters and FC Facilitators, Research Bodies (NERC, CEH), Statutory Agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the potential to support regional and local area sector resilience plans where objectives and actions align with our own Adaptation Plan. Maximise the potential of projects funded through FiPL to help to contribute towards climate change/net-zero targets. The Aquifer Partnership (TAP) - Promote to farmers and land managers new guide to Natural Flood Management measures (produced with EA and Sussex Flow initiative). Continue to promote nitrate reduction and trial additional measures. Ensure that the Local nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Tiers of the Environmental Land Management (ELM) deliver projects and outcomes that contribute towards climate change/net zero targets in the future. Pasture and Profit – Pasture for Life continue to work with farmers and land managers across the SDNP (currently 48), through the FiPL funded Pasture and Profit project, to share knowledge and ideas on sustainable grazing practices to improve soil health and increase climate resilience. Use the 'Bee-lines' funding to support projects that benefit wild pollinators at field, farm and landscape scale.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 9 – TRANSPORT & SUSTAINABLE ACCESS

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Work alongside Local Highway Authorities to develop sustainable travel schemes and deliver the best 'low-carbon' options for connecting into the South Downs National Park.	<p>Work with sector partners to encourage provision of facilities, opportunities and incentives to allow for reduced carbon travel.</p> <p>Support the shift to low-carbon travel. Support and encourage people to go 'car free' during their visit to the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>Build, promote <u>and enhance</u> off-road cycling & walking infrastructure (see current infrastructure projects to the right)</p>	<p>ALEX PRINGLE</p> <p>Local Highway Authorities, Highways England, Public Transport Providers, Tourism Businesses, Access and Amenity Groups, Local Access Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egrets Way Phase VI – Complete final construction of 3km of a new shared-use path between Lewes and Rodmell. Centurion Way – Detailed specification, path construction works (West Dean to Singleton), stabilisation / repair works (Singleton Station site) and A286 Footway improvements. Develop feasibility and designs (in partnership) for Active Travel projects including Rother Valley Way, Midhurst Green Way & SDW links. Review 2017 Cycling and Walking strategy to produce a SD wide Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 10 – RURAL ECONOMY & TOURISM

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Support rural businesses to adapt their business operations, improve their sustainability, and boost their contribution to the SDNP local economy.	<p>As part of the 2024/25 plan, Energy Audits were carried out for 5 Cultural and Heritage Organisations identifying 60 tCO₂e emission reduction potential per year across the sites. For 25/26 monitor the implementation of any recommendations, Create a case study document of audit learnings that may be applicable to other organisations and publicise.</p> <p>Expand the reach of the Green South Downs Sustainability Certification by working with partner organisations to adopt and potentially subsidise organisations through the scheme , including capturing carbon baseline data.</p> <p>Facilitate the transaction of high integrity local carbon from local planting schemes to the SDNP Rural Economy (SMEs) utilising OSD and targeting our priority sectors.</p> <p>Create a clear way for Residents and Businesses to align themselves with SDNP Net Zero Targets through a pledging system working with Comms.</p> <p>Identify potential partners in the Manufacturing sector within the SDNP (responsible for 40% of Industry emissions) for bespoke Carbon intervention and support</p>	<p>CHRIS HANNON</p> <p>PeCAN, Chichester District Council, WSCC, SVEIG, NPP, Green Tourism, Hampshire Green Innovation Steering Group, West Sussex Nature and Enviro working group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish partnerships with CIC, local authorities and charities to adopt and expand the reach of Green South Downs, increasing the number of rural businesses actively baselining. Establish tracking and monitoring with Green Tourism on carbon emissions. When local woodland carbon is available - Encourage adoption and commercial viability of woodland carbon by connecting local organisations within the Our South Downs network, partner local authorities, carbon calculation schemes and other stakeholders with the new local carbon market. Energy Audits: share best practice and common advice from 24/25 energy audits. Carry out and provide a case study for a Church for 25/26 plan to support EcoChurches. Create a clear way for Residents and Businesses to align themselves with SDNP Net Zero Targets through a pledging system, working with Comms. Identify potential partners in the Manufacturing sector within the SDNP (responsible for 40% of Industry emissions) for bespoke Carbon intervention and support. Identify the main industries and businesses that are high-level GHG emission sources in and around the National Park. Work with them to develop and implement plans to achieve emission reductions and wider measures that support them to become more sustainable.'
	<p>Seek to apply learning from the Fair Game Project. Work with project partners to develop collective funding bids linking academia, NGOs, NPAs and rural businesses. Address the impacts of deer numbers on nature recovery and climate action, with a particular focus on creating supply chain opportunities for local venison supply.</p>	<p>CHRIS HANNON & ANOOSHKA RAWDEN</p> <p>Natural England, University of Exeter, British Deer Society, National Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue potential funding avenues via AHRC for commercialisation investment that offer routes between deer managers and suppliers/consumers, to further the Virtuous Venison message. Pursue potential funding avenues via AHRC and BDS for research into deer impacts on vegetation and habitat, to understand implications for nature recovery and climate action.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 11 – ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Raise awareness of SDNPA climate change strategy to the South Downs Volunteer and Learning Network members.	<p>Extend the scope of volunteer capacity within parishes and local groups to enhance community resilience to potential climate change impacts.</p> <p>Continued use of SDNP volunteers, including South Downs Youth Action (SDYA) programme, to support the work of rangers to achieve climate action targets.</p> <p>Focus on climate change as a key area for collaboration across the education sector.</p> <p>Continue to develop new ways to frame the SDNPA's communication with young audiences, minimise the potential for eco-anxiety in young people and to promote positive action.</p>	<p>AMANDA ELMES</p> <p>Learning Network, Schools and Education sector partners, EYE Network, SDYA network, SDNP Volunteers, wider Volunteer Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with the SDNP Trust on three key grant schemes to promote positive action for the nature and climate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Conservation Fund: Promotes volunteer activity in support of the SDNP priorities including habitat and biodiversity enhancements. Youth Action Fund: Promoting youth social and environmental action with a focus on taking positive action for nature and climate change initiatives. School ReNature Grants: New grant scheme that provides funding to schools for positive action for nature and climate on their school estate. Deliver a regular programme of volunteer tasks in support of Ranger Teams Area objectives, nature recovery and climate action targets. Work in partnership with members of the SDNP Learning Network with a focus on climate change education to deliver workshops for the wider network and/or schools.

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
	Support learning providers in delivering learning about climate change.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a programme of South Downs Youth Action providing social and environmental action tasks for young people aged 16-25 years in support of renature and climate change priorities. • Reduce carbon emissions associated with school visits in the SDNP through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Promoting in-school visits and online teacher training to bring the SDNP into the school curricula. ➢ Promoting sustainable transport options for Outdoor Learning Grants with 10% of grant budget ringfenced for sustainable and active travel options.

CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME 12 – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT & CULTURAL HERITAGE SECTOR

Objective	Proposed Actions	SDNPA Lead Officer / Partners	Year 2025-26 Activities
Communicating the impacts of climate change and supporting behaviour change and greater resilience for local communities.	<p>Collaborate with sector partners to explore the establishment of a grant programme to support communities with sustainable and carbon reducing actions.</p> <p>Developing more effective and engaging ways to communicate around the challenges of climate change and adaptation to the public through the creative and cultural sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ How can we open up 'climate conversations' within the SDNP? ➢ How can we ensure a diversity of voices in those conversations? 	SARA OSMAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops to activate ideas and thinking within Parish Councils and local community collectives – inspiring people to think about how play and creativity to help thinking and action around the climate crisis. This audience would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Youth groups; ➢ Local community collectives/ grassroots organisations can embrace creativity in communicating climate action and supporting behavioural change (i.e. working with WeCAN and PeCan, and through Ouse Valley Climate Action); ➢ Parish Councils: how they can develop climate resilience and support local action. • Develop inter-disciplinary groups to include young people and the science/cultural sector to develop public projects to inspire public discourse and encourage climate action.
Communicating the impacts of climate change and supporting behaviour change and greater resilience for local communities.	Support activities that create case studies for the creative and cultural sectors to pursue Net Zero initiatives that secure carbon reduction, energy independence and reduced operational costs and utilise to influence, support and foster Net Zero approaches to operational delivery cross-sector.	<p>CHRIS HANNON & ANOOSHKA RAWDEN</p> <p>ANOOSHKA RAWDEN SDNPA Planning, SDNPA Cultural Heritage Lead, SDNPA Comms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Energy Audits with Sussex Archaeological Society (Lewes Castle and Museum, and Anne of Cleves House), National Trust (Monks House), Gilbert Whites House and Gardens and Petersfield Museum to support pursuit of carbon reduction/green energy solutions, including production of associated case studies for wider dissemination. • Exploration of the application of the above approach with a wider range of heritage assets (i.e. churches) to ensure a broad range of case studies are available. • Ensure information on interest to homeowners and in the context of planning re pre-1919 building stock and energy/Net Zero improvements are available on the SDNPA website and promoted on a rolling basis on SDNPA digital and social platforms, • Promote best practice and ensure residents can access relevant information relating to historic buildings and sensitive adaptation. To note, this action also links to Programme 4 as a complimentary approach. • Explore opportunities to increase monitoring and recording activities for Scheduled Monuments in partnership with other NPAs and the National Trust, utilising citizen science approaches.

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Climate Change & South Downs National Park 2025



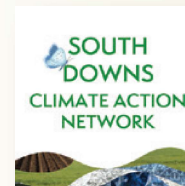
94

... local authority and community climate action plans mapped on **OnePlanet**



200

...people participated in Future Energy Landscape workshops across **10** Hampshire parishes.



78

...members make up the Knowledge Hub Network for Community Climate Action, with **484 visits** and **219 contributions** in its first 6 months.



WeCAN

17

...communities and parish councils supported by WeCAN to **tackle climate change** in Winchester district



420

...businesses signed up to Our South Downs sustainability platform and **30 businesses** certified with the Green South Downs Sustainability Award Scheme



24

...community-led climate action projects being delivered by **22 organisations** in Lewes and Newhaven supported by OVCA



28

...community climate action and environment groups added to the **Climate Action Map**



4^k

...children + from **16 schools** learnt about climate change through PeCAN's climate conference workshops



46%

...increase in use of rapid EV charger in the South Downs Centre car park



5

...energy audits produced for museums and heritage sites show potential saving of **60tCO₂e/year**



