

## Memorandum of Understanding

### Sussex Local Nature Partnership Vision

***The purpose of the Sussex Local Nature Partnership is to work across sectors and organisations to secure the healthiest ecological system possible thereby protecting and enhancing the natural environment and all that it gives us.***

The vision will be the key guiding principle behind the work of the LNP, both in terms of direct delivery and in terms of any advice, statements and positions.

Natural capital is the stock of our natural assets and is comprised of ecosystems (a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment acting as a functional unit). The benefits that flow from this stock are often described as ecosystem services. Natural resources (such as food, timber and water) and functioning natural systems (such as healthy, fertile soils; clean water and air; and a regulated climate) are vital support services for our well-being and security, and are themselves sustained by biodiversity (NEWP, page 7).

**Growth of natural capital and improving the provision of ecosystem services therefore form the basis of the two overriding objectives of the Sussex LNP.**

### Sussex Local Nature Partnership Objectives

Consistent with this vision, the LNP has set two high-level objectives to determine the nature and trajectory of the LNP's activities. These are:

**1. Conserve, enhance and expand Sussex's Natural Capital.**

Growth in Natural Capital is the fundamental pre-requisite for enhancing the services provided by ecosystems and so underpins the economic and social well-being of Sussex. The LNP will promote the greening of the economy including the need to invest in nature because of the many benefits and essential services it provides.

**2. Ensure that Sussex residents share in the benefits provided by healthy, well-functioning ecosystems.**

The LNP will aim to improve the connection between people, their environment and the benefits they get from the environment. This will cover a broad spectrum of activities including health, well-being, social and economic areas.

In order to deliver growth in natural capital and share in the benefits of healthy ecosystems, the LNP will ensure that the evidence is collated to promote concepts, projects and initiatives that support the positive development of ecosystem services in Sussex. This will be shared across all sectors and audiences.



## The LNP Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee is a non-constituted partnership of organisation representatives covering the spectrum of ecosystem services.
- The Executive Committee as a body is committed to the Vision and Objectives as the guiding principles of the LNP.
- The Executive Committee will encourage the formation of task-and-finish groups, form linkages with as many other groups as is reasonable (linked groups) and build links with other strategic networks (eg LEPs, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Climate Change Boards etc).

The Executive Committee's constituent organisations may change over time, and representatives may also change although continuity will be encouraged. The initial organisations represented are:

Sector	Organisations	Key ecosystem service links
Farmers & Land Managers	National Farmers Union, Country Landowners Association	Provisioning Support
Local Authority	West Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council	Regulating Support
Government body / Agency	Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	Regulating, Provisioning, Support,
Protected landscapes	South Downs National Park Authority, High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit	Support
Business	Southern Water	Provisioning
NGO	National Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, Action in Rural Sussex, Sussex Community Development Association, Arun and Rother Rivers Trust.	Support Cultural
Research	Kew at Wakehurst, Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre	(Underpinning knowledge-base)
<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>Approximately 25 individuals</b>	



## Ways of working

The Executive Committee is formed in such a way as to encourage conversations and interactions to promote the emergence of ideas, thoughts and interactions which will then lead to actions. The strategy is therefore based on ground-up emergence rather than top-down governance. As a consequence the Executive Committee will be a large group consisting of individuals working at a high strategic level, who are committed to the LNP vision and aim to generate fruitful interaction.

The LNP Executive Committee has a wide membership to enable fruitful discussion between people interested in a broad spectrum of ecosystem services. As representatives of various organisations, it is to be expected that members will have a diversity of views. The LNP, however, will need to function and offer clear advice against the background of individuals representing organisations with objectives that are different to those of the LNP. With the following “rules of engagement” the LNP should be able to achieve some measure of consensus whilst recognising any organisational differences:

1. The LNP Vision and Objectives form the guiding principles behind LNP actions, advice and statements. Executive Committee members own and adopt these. Those who are uncomfortable about agreeing to this principle but still wish to engage with the LNP may feel it more appropriate to form part of the strategic network.
2. Executive Committee members may consider that whilst agreeing the Vision and Objectives, their organisation may not agree with all the detailed repercussions of such agreement. It is hoped that the member, and their organisation, will support the main thrust of the LNP whilst accepting minor differences.
3. To partially address point 2, the LNP will aim to interact at a high strategic level offering advice and guidance on points of principle rather than points of detail. It may ask questions rather than make judgements (for example it may ask how a particular proposal delivers growth in natural capital rather than oppose it in the belief that it does not).
4. There may be unusual situations where, even within the Aims and Objectives, there is no clear consensus between Executive Committee members on an issue. In these situations it may be appropriate to represent the spectrum of opinions within the LNP. Whilst this could be valuable in some circumstances, if this happened too frequently then it would indicate lack of clarity from the environmental sector. This approach should therefore be kept to an absolute minimum.

