**Item 8**

##### AONB

**Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Board**

8 March 2023

**Surrey Hills National Landscape Forward Plan 2023 - 2024**

**Purpose of the report:**

To present the 2023 – 24 work plan priorities for the Surrey Hills Board

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that:

1. Members are asked to approve the work plan for 2023 - 24

**Introduction:**

1. Although the fundamental purpose of the Management Plan will be to encourage co-ordinated action by all organisations, agencies and individuals, the Surrey Hills AONB Board has established a Surrey Hills group of organisations (the Surrey Hills Family) to help support the delivery of the AONB Management Plan’s Vision:

*The Surrey Hills is recognised as a national asset in which its natural and cultural assets are managed in an attractive landscape mosaic of farmland, woodland, heaths, downs, and commons. It provides opportunities for sustainable business enterprise and for all to enjoy and appreciate its natural beauty for their health and well-being.*

This work plan priorities for 2023 – 24 priorities deliver the adopted Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan (2020 – 2025) pillars: Planning; Landscape Conservation and Enhancement; Access, Enjoyment and Understanding; Growing the Surrey Hills Economy; and Advocacy, Partnership and Coordination. It identifies quarterly targets Q1 (April – June), Q2 (July September), Q3 (October – December). Q4 (Jan – March),

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| **Pillar 1. PLANNING.** |
| Influence planning policy and decisions by advising on the preparation of Local Plans and developments affecting the Surrey Hills* Review protocol with Guildford and Waverley BC to reduce the number of requests for advice for proposals that have a minimal impact
* Dunsfold oil and gas proposal expected to be a high profile
* Provide pre-application advice on major schemes as requested.

Provide pre-application advice on major schemes.* An opportunity to generate income depending on capacity.

Support Natural England in the process of the AONB Boundary Review* Support NE’s Steering Groups and Comms Plan
* Take opportunities to promote the benefits of being included in the National Landscape
* Formulate the Board’s position on extension areas in response to consultation
 | Q1Q1 - 2OngoingOngoingQ1 - 2Q1 – 3Q2 |
| **Pillar 2. LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT** |
| Environmental Land Management Schemes to ensure more, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife,* Ensure the delivery of Farming in Protected Landscape (FIPL) projects, claims and payments.
* Develop and keep under review priorities with Panel
* Develop bid to Defra to extend FiPL
* Seek to extend number of collaborative schemes

Contribute to the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Local Nature Partnership* Ensure that Surrey Hills priorities are reflected in the LNRS and that Surrey Hills activities support the LNRS

Heathland Connections Nature Recovery Strategy in SW Surrey * Engage in strategy development.
* Support and grow farm cluster.
* Develop Heathland Connections website and promotional video on Surrey Hills web-platform

Big Chalk restoring calcareous (chalk and limestone) landscapes in southern England* Developing strategic bid to NHLF, coordinating local partners and aligning with LNRS

Support the development and extension of Farm Clusters across the Surrey Hills,* Develop terms of reference for farmer led Clusters for Greenscapes, Greensands and the North Downs Groups

Conservation Volunteer programme * Promote Conservation Volunteer Handbook on website
* Deliver programme of work with volunteers
* Secure future funding for Society’s Projects and Volunteer Coordinator develop project pipeline

Reduce the impact of overhead power lines in the Surrey Hills * develop a new scheme proposal for UK Power Networks
 | OngoingOngoingQ1OngoingOngoingQ1 - 2OngoingQ1 Q2 – 3Q2Q1OngoingQ1 - 3Q2 |
| **Pillar 3. ACCESS ENJOYMENT AND UNDERSTANDING** |
| **Promoting public understanding and enjoyment of the Surrey Hills National Landscape*** Develop and update surreyhills.org website
* Establish unified Surrey Hills database and e-bulletin schedule amalgamating all family databases.
* Develop My Surrey Hills video campaign, linking to Extension consultation My Surrey Hills – be part of the journey.

Develop and deliver project for Defra Access for All Fund* Ensure the delivery of projects, claims and payments.
* Develop bid to NHLF with Kent Downs AONB and the North Downs Way NT partnership.

Promoting sustainable countryside access to the Surrey Hills and volunteering opportunities * Promoted Routes Working Group - increase the number of promoted waymarked trails.

identifying hero trails and developing Conservation Volunteer role* Mountain Bike Working Group – develop management policy for unauthorised mountain bike trails
* Byways Working Group Management of Byways to reduce damage and enhance user experience.

Developing campaign to report and prosecute damage* Promote sustainable transport campaign with rail and bus operators

 Inspire and engage new audiences through the Surrey Hills Arts programme.* Develop NHLF bid for Wonder Dusk (formally Harvest) as a major community art celebration of nature and landscape at Box Hill
* Develop EoI for Habitat project to Arts Council England
* Support Surrey Hills as the regional Hub for National Significant project to Arts Council England
* Heathland Artwork exhibition at RSPB Farnham Heath

Inspire and engage new audiences for health and wellbeing.* Subject to funding, work with Surrey Heartland GSP pilot and develop proposal with Growing Health Together for Mental Health Improvement Fund and Into the Wild

Promote Dark Skies* Deliver a Surrey Hills programme of events celebrating Dark Skies in September, ending with Wonder Dusk at Box Hill
 | Q1Q1OngoingQ4Q1 – 2Q1 - 2Q1 - 2 Q1 - 2Q1 - 2Q1Q1 Q1 – 2Q2 Q1 - 2Q2 |
| **4. GROWING THE SURREY HILLS ECONOMY** |
| Support the development of Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC to increase its membership and contribution to Surrey Hills purpose.* Members provide the visitor experiences for the Surrey Hills featured on website
* Grow corporate membership and engagement to deliver environmental projects with the Surrey Hills Society
* Power of Place Conference for members

Deliver events program for the public and member businesses. * Pop up markets
* Spring Festival at Tilford Rural Life Museum
* Artisan Festival in May at Denbies Wine Estate
* Wood Fair at Cranleigh in September

 Develop relationships and influence policy to secure investment opportunities that support the Surrey Hills purpose. * Advise local authorities on Shared Prosperity Fund priorities and allocations.
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| **5. ADVOCACY , PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION** |
| Ensure sound governance, reporting and monitoring of the AONB Management Plan through quarterly meetings of the Surrey Hills AONB Board* Quarterly reporting to AONB Board
* Annual report to DEFRA and partners
* Revised Constitution

Develop the Surrey Hills Trust Fund with the Community Foundation for Surrey* Seeking new Panel Chair and dedicated support

Promote the work of the Surrey Hills family* Partnership Tour
* Surrey Hills Symposium

Keep under review the Management Plan and contribute to policy, strategy and evidence base.* Respond to National Association, Defra and NE requests.
* Support Steering Group on National Landscapes branding
 | OngoingQ4Q4Q1 - 2Q2Q3OngoingQ1 - 2 |

**Next steps:**

Members’ advice on the work plan will help to inform the delivery of the AONB Management Plan priorities for 2023 - 24.

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**Sources/background papers:**

* The Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan (2020 – 2025) https://www.surreyhills.org/board/our-management-plan/