



Surrey Hills
National
Landscape

Item 9

Surrey Hills National Landscape Board

5 March 2025

Management Plan Monitoring Report

Purpose of the report:

To report on the Surrey Hills Management Plan (2020 – 2025) monitoring report.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to note the work plan and offer support and advice, as appropriate.



1. **Introduction:**

2.1 Although the fundamental purpose of the Management Plan will be to encourage co-ordinated action by all organisations, agencies and individuals, the Surrey Hills Board 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.

2.2 This work plan reported on activity in 2024 and highlights priorities for 2025 which deliver the adopted Surrey Hills Management Plan (2020 – 2025) pillars:

Planning

Landscape Conservation and Enhancement; Access,

Enjoyment and Understanding

Growing the Surrey Hills Economy and

Advocacy, Partnership and Coordination.

2.3 The following Forward Plan identifies quarterly targets Q1 (April – June), Q2 (July September), Q3 (October – December), Q4 (Jan – March). The abbreviations are referenced in the Management Plan.



Pillar 1. PLANNING		Lead	Partners
Influence planning policy and decisions by advising on the preparation of Local Plans and developments affecting the Surrey Hills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise local authorities on development proposals • Keep under review consultation protocol • Liaise with National Landscape colleagues to share and learn 	Ongoing	National Landscape Team	SCC, B&Ds
Support and promote opportunities to develop definition and understanding of the new Levelling Up Duty to further the purpose of the designation. Waiting for updated guidance to be published	Ongoing	National Landscapes Team	National Landscapes Assoc, Defra
Boundary Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Advisory Group and Communications Plan 	Ongoing	Natural England	National Landscape Team, SCC, B&Ds
Pillar 2. LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT			
Environmental Land Management Schemes to ensure more, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awaiting confirmation from Defra of an extension to the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme for 2025/26. - The Surrey Hills FiPL budget in 24/25 from Defra was £560k for projects and £200k for administration and advice and guidance. A Panel advises on projects over £10k and the Director has delegation to approve projects under £10k. 	Ongoing	National Landscape Team	FiPL Panel (CLA, NFU, NE, SCC, CPRE, SWT)



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a £5m FiPL Historic Building Restoration Grant for 24/25. This was a national fund held by Defra to which PLs could bid for specific projects which meet the criteria. £178k was spent on the National Trust’s Emley Farm which has now been entered for the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust Heritage Award. The decision will be made in March. - FiPL has contributed to the funding of the Surrey Hills Society Projects & Volunteer Coordinator post. The role has been invaluable to helping deliver FiPL projects with farmers and landowners and has resulted in high levels of volunteer involvement in the programme - There are opportunities for FiPL to contribute to wider projects in the Surrey Hills in 25/26, including Heathland Connections, Dorking Stage 2 Natural Flood Management programme Deer Management Strategy. Big Chalk, <p>2. Ran two ‘Equiculture’ events in partnership with Surrey Wildlife Trust to offer free advice to horse owners about grass management and nutrition. There is a growing interest in this area of land management and the team will continue to work with Surrey Wildlife Trust on this.</p> <p>3. Also contributed to the Surrey Hills Society Care Farm Coordinator post, bringing invaluable on-farm experiences to some of the most vulnerable in Surrey</p>	Q1	National Landscape Team, SWT	
<p>Support the development and extension of Farm Clusters across the Surrey Hills,</p> <p>4. Need to consider future of land manager and farmer-led Cluster groups</p>	Ongoing	National Landscape Team	CLA, NFU, SCC, B&Ds, SWT, SHS



<p>5. Support Heathland Connections and Big Chalk landscape recovery programmes</p> <p>6. Issue quarterly Newsletters</p>			
<p>Contribute to the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Local Nature Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Align the LNRS and the new Surrey Hills Management Plan - Ensure that Surrey Hills priorities are reflected in the LNRS and that Surrey Hills activities support the LNRS - Collaborated on Nature Day with SHNL supporting the film. 	Ongoing	Surrey CC	Surrey LNP, B&Ds
<p>Heathland Connections Nature Recovery Strategy in SW Surrey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage in strategy development. - Support and grow farm collaboration, with NE funding Surrey Wildlife Trust. - Develop Heathland Connections website and promotional materials on Surrey Hills web-platform - Support development of Super NNR partnership and consider governance structure alongside Surrey Hills National Landscape - Support the development of a Heathland Hub at the Rural Life Centre as part of a One Heathland NHLF bid, in Partnership with SWT and Natural England. 	Ongoing	Natural England	Project Partners,
<p>Big Chalk restoring calcareous (chalk and limestone) landscapes in southern England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported 3-day conference in Winchester in September - Developing strategic bid to NHLF, coordinating project bids from local partners and aligning with LNRS 	Ongoing Q3	National Landscapes Association	Local and regional partners



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<p>Dorking Natural Flood Management (NFM) Stage 2 programme to slow waters to reduce flooding and deliver environmental benefits. Projects at Manor Farm supported through FiPL and SCC Flood & Climate Resilience team partnership</p> <p>Continue joint project with SCC Flood & Climate Resilience team for estate wide water management at West Horsley Place</p>	Ongoing	Surrey CC, National Landscape	SE Rivers Trust. EA, FC, SWT, farmers and landowners
<p>Deer Management Strategy. Develop a coordinated approach to the management of deer populations by increasing culling to reduce deer pressure particularly on Ancient Semi Natural Woodland.</p> <p>Consortium stalking happening in February and Task Group meeting on 13th March to review and explore opportunities to develop venison markets as high protein, high welfare super food to help deliver better health outcomes in Surrey</p>	Q1 - Q4	FC, National Landscape,	SCC, SWT, NT, farmers and landowners
<p>Surrey Hills Conservation Volunteers.</p> <p>Continuing to develop Conservation Volunteering programme. Continuing to develop partnerships with schools, corporates and community groups and offer a range of conservation activities.</p> <p>Developing strategic partnership with the Probation Service.</p>	Ongoing	Surrey Hills Society	FiPL, SWT, NT, Enterprises
<p>Surrey Hills Highways and Signage</p> <p>With additional Defra capital funding, design and install new gateway signs with National Landscapes rebranding, some of which will replace missing signs and old signs in poor condition, working with SCC Youth Opps Down to Earth Team. These were profiled at the Symposium with installation planned in the New Year. Signs being commission with SCC Highways colleagues, and sites being assessed. Installation will need to be in 2025/26.</p>	Q3 - 4	National Landscape Team, SCC Highways and Youth Offer Team	B&Ds, parish councils



Pillar 3. ACCESS ENJOYMENT AND UNDERSTANDING			
Promoting public understanding and enjoyment of the Surrey Hills as a National Landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Implement National Landscapes re-branding- Develop and update surreyhills.org website- Develop My Surrey Hills video campaign	Ongoing	National Landscapes Team	Surrey Hills Family
Increase social media reach across a range on following platforms. This will be supported by a new Social Media Marketing Assistant from August 2024 in partnership with Surrey Hills Enterprises. This post finished end of Jan. SCC undertaken major accessibility overall and refreshed site to be launched in February.	Ongoing	National Landscape	Enterprises Society Surrey Hills Arts
Surrey Hills Friends e-news provides a monthly update on Surrey Hills activity and to promote the work of the Surrey Hills family This now has an audience of over 12,600 people.	Monthly	National Landscape Enterprises	Surrey Hills Family
Google Over 15k review, rating 4.7/5. 6 th highest review of 44 National Parks and National Landscapes Explore the potential to develop the platform and use of site statistics in profiling awareness and use of the National Landscape	Ongoing Q3	National Landscape	National Association
Defra Access for All Fund Following successful delivery of the Access Fund in 22/23 and 23/24, the budget for 24/25 was £235k.	Q1 - Q4	National Landscape	Project partners, National Trust, Skills Mills



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Sam Jones appointed as Access Lead to help promote and coordinate activity on SCC Bank Staff and now moved within the Society on an initial 6 month contract.

The programme includes:

Projects include continuing the partnership with Surrey Coalition for Disabled People to co-design improvement projects gateway sites including:

- National Trust Leith Hill Place
- Pierrepont Farm
- Farnham Heath
- Frensham Great Pond
- Denbies

Additional projects included

- improvements for visitors at the YHA at Holmbury (under new management),
- support for volunteer battery tools for SCC Partnerships,
- cycling facilities at Hampton
- a children's book and related materials based on the ancient Yew trees at Newlands Corner with Surrey Hills Society
- Signing and improvement of Promoted Routes including Cycle Surrey Hills, Rail to Ramble and equestrian routes
- Improvements to Gateway sites including RSPB Farnham Heath, Frensham Great Pond, Pierrepont Farm and Denbies

Also contributed to the Surrey Hills Society Care Farm Coordinator post, bringing invaluable on-farm experiences to some of the most vulnerable in Surrey



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<p>Commissioned a study by the University of Surrey to look at issues surrounding dogs and dog walking in the SH and offer advice about land management, with focus on farmland pasture, commons & heaths and estates and woodland.</p>			
<p>Growing Together – Inclusion and Conservation in the Surrey Hills</p> <p>Surrey Hills Society has secured National Lottery Heritage Funding to work in partnership with SMEF, Surrey Choices, and Surrey Coalition of Disabled People to diversify our visitor and volunteer profile and build confidence and skills and improve wellbeing in groups that may face barriers to accessing the countryside Project launched by NLHF Trustee Julian Glover at Denbies and India Davies appointed as Project Officer</p> <p>20 events have been achieved. This has included birding, fungi, flower ID, community garden sessions at Denbies, filming and storytelling workshops.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Society</p>	<p>NL Team, SMEF, Coalition, Surrey Choices, SWT,</p>
<p>Generation Green - `Night Under the Stars`</p> <p>As part of a national programme, the Surrey Hills National Landscape has secured circa £65k for 400 residentials and 200 farm or days visits for disadvantaged and challenged young people to experience the Surrey Hills. Over 80% of these visits have been delivered to date</p>	<p>Q 3- - 4</p>	<p>Surrey Hills National Landscape</p>	<p>SOLD, Surrey Youth Opps, Active Surrey, YHA, Holmbury Hostel, Surrey Hills and Rivers</p>
<p>Surrey Hills Care Farm Project</p> <p>Katie Daw is the Surrey Hills 'Care Farm' Coordinator, undertaking the East Surrey Care Farm pilot, with funding from the Mental Health Investment Fund to provide</p>	<p>Q1 – Q3</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Society</p>	<p>Growing Health Together, SCC, Surrey Heartlands,</p>



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<p>farm-based activities and research the impact to identify priority groups which can get the greatest health benefits.</p> <p>Project extended until August with Access/FiPL funding. 60 visits have been achieved with a target of 100.</p>			<p>National Landscape, SH Arts</p>
<p>Promoting sustainable countryside access to the Surrey Hills and volunteering opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoted Routes Working Group - increase the number of promoted waymarked trails for Cycle Surrey Hills, Greenways, Equestrian and Rail to Ramble, developing Conservation Volunteer role to promote and maintain - Promote sustainable transport campaign with rail and bus operators - Mountain Biking – working with landowners on identifying issues and develop policy and best practice for unauthorised (wild) mountain bike trails. Engage the mountain bike community through comms and enabling practical projects to manage trails in line with emerging policy. - Byways - to reduce damage and enhance user experience developing campaign to report and prosecute damage, as appropriate. Practical project at The Drove Road, Ranmore to deter antisocial and damaging activity. - Equestrian Working Group. To be reestablished and chaired by Marisa Heath on behalf of the Board. Organising Horseman’s Sunday 27th April at St Martha’s. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>National Landscape</p>	<p>Society, Community Rail, SCC, B&Ds, SCAF, Skill Mill and access groups</p>
<p>Support the development and promotion of the North Downs Way National Trail</p> <p>Contribute to Partnership meetings and business planning</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>North Downs Way NT Partnership</p>	<p>National Landscape, Society, Visit Surrey and</p>



<p>Support the Growing Routes NHLF project and promotion of NDW Ambassador scheme, seeking alignment with Growing Together.</p> <p>Organised a Lived Experience accessibility training event for Surrey countryside access staff.</p> <p>Promote active travel and sustainable tourism campaigns</p>			Kent, Kent Downs
<p>Inspire and engage new audiences through the Surrey Hills Arts programme.</p> <p>Nature Calling The Surrey Hills is part of a national community art celebration of nature and landscape funded by Arts Council England. The Surrey Hills is a regional hub with a focus on engaging LB Croydon, specifically the New Addington community. This has includes:</p> <p>Still Shady, Mobo-Award winning artist, commissioned to write Nature Anthem, which was previewed at the Surrey Hills Symposium and now recorded with a film at Box Hill.</p> <p>Blandy and Locke will be creating art around environmental science, collaborating with communities and directly addressing climate change, their work includes the graphic novel, Out of Nothing, published by Nobrow; the role play games Lone Eons and The World After.</p> <p>The Nature Calling event will be at Box Hill on 18th July.</p> <p>Habitat Project</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q3 - 4</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Arts</p> <p>Surrey Hills Arts</p> <p>Surrey Hills Arts</p> <p>Surrey Hills Arts</p>	<p>NL Assoc, LB Croydon</p> <p>SCC Placemaking</p>



<p>Develop Arts Council England bid with SCC Placemaking Team and bid to Arts Council England outside libraries in town centre locations (Staines and Redhill).</p> <p>Heathland Artworks</p> <p>A trail of temporary site-responsive artworks at Farnham Heath. Delivered in partnership with RSPB and the University for Creative Arts (UCA) targeting emerging artists in the delivery and new audiences in the experience.</p> <p>Inspiring Views</p> <p>Develop, maintain and promote access to Inspiring Views. New leaflet published</p>	<p>Q2</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Team, B&Ds, ACE</p> <p>RSPB, Uni of Creative Arts, NE</p> <p>NDW, Various landowners</p>
<p>Promote Dark Skies</p> <p>Organised moon event at Newlands Corner and star gazing event on 23rd February. Considering nighttime photo competition</p> <p>Another event set to take place on 29 March for partial solar eclipse.</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>National Landscape, Guildford Astronomical Soc</p>	<p>SCC, Surrey Hills Society, SurreyUni, Guildford Astro Society</p>
<p>4. GROWING THE SURREY HILLS ECONOMY</p>			
<p>Support the development of Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC to increase its membership and contribution to Surrey Hills purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 - Mentoring and training programmes 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Enterprises</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Family</p>



<p>Deliver events programme for the public and member businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish and distribute The Guide to the Surrey Hills - Spring Festival in April at the Rural Life Living Museum - Country Fair in July with Merrist Wood - Wood Fair at Cranleigh in September - Christmas and artisan festivals, including West Horsley Place 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q4</p> <p>Q1 2025</p> <p>Q2 2025</p> <p>Q2 2025</p> <p>Q3 2025</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Enterprises</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>Rural Life Museum</p> <p>Merrist Wood</p> <p>Agric Society</p>
<p>Develop relationships and influence policy to secure investment opportunities that support the Surrey Hills purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise local authorities on Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund priorities and allocations, contributing to the Panel - Seek opportunities to align investment with FiPL, Historic Buildings and Access funding 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>National Landscape</p>	<p>SCC, B&Ds, SH Enterprises</p>
<p>5. ADVOCACY, PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION</p>			
<p>Ensure sound governance, reporting and monitoring of the Management Plan through quarterly meetings of the Surrey Hills Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly reporting to Board - Annual report to DEFRA and partners 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Board</p>	
<p>Revised Constitution as part of Management Plan Review.</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>Defra, NE</p>	<p>Steering Group, National</p>



<p>Developed brief for reviewing Surrey Hills governance as a National Landscape Resources for Change commissioned and reporting to Surrey Hills Board on 5th March.</p> <p>Adopt new governance September</p>	<p>Q4</p> <p>Q3 2025</p>		<p>Landscape Association</p>
<p>Business planning workshop planned for 10th April 2025</p>	<p>Q1 2025</p>	<p>Board</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Family</p>
<p>Develop a Surrey Hills Foundation in relation to the Surrey Hills Trust Fund with the Community Foundation for Surrey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish steering group and consider as part of governance arrangements - Review purpose and structure, potentially as an ESG Environment Fund 	<p>Q1, 2</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Family</p>	<p>Community Foundation for Surrey</p>
<p>Promote the work of the Surrey Hills family with a focus on the Management Plan and celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the 1949 National Park and Access to the Countryside Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celebration event at Denbies - Partnership Tour - Surrey Hills Symposium - Annual Report 	<p>Q1</p> <p>Q2</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>Q3</p>	<p>National Landscape</p>	<p>Surrey Hills Family, Surrey Hills Partnership</p>
<p>Contribute to national policy, strategy and evidence base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond to National Association, Defra and NE requests. - Active engagement in the National Association <p>Co-hosting and organising 2 Field Trips (9th July) for National Landscapes Conference (July 8th – 10th) at Winchester</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>July</p>	<p>National Landscape</p>	



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Management Plan.			
Keep under review the Management Plan with quarterly progress reports for National Landscape Board.	Ongoing	Surrey Hills Board	Local authorities
Prepare new Management Plan. Consultation draft to be agreed by Board on 5 th March	Q4		
Consultation over March to May	Q1 2025		
Local authority adoption in July	Q2 2025		
Launch, along with new governance, in September	Q3 2025		