



## **GUIDANCE TO HELP SUSSEX LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS INCORPORATE THE ENVIRONMENT INTO THEIR PLANS AND STRATEGIES**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

To develop a healthy, rich and diverse environment based on sustainable principles for everyone in Sussex.

#### **WHAT IS SEP?**

The Sussex Environment Partnership (SEP) is a partnership of the primary environmental organisations, or organisations with environmental responsibilities in Sussex. This guidance has been produced by SEP to help Local Authorities and other organisations develop the environmental aspirations of their areas so as to contribute to the aim of sustainability.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY LINKS**

Our aspirations for improved economic, social and environmental wellbeing are all inter-linked and inter-dependent and no one element should take precedence over the other. Nevertheless environmental wellbeing/health may be seen as an essential pre-requisite to both social and economic wellbeing.

Environmental health is essential to human health and ultimately to our very existence. Recent studies have provided indications of the value of this. For example, patients in hospital wards overlooking green leafy landscapes recover more quickly than those overlooking urban areas.

Also walks in green space or natural areas produce measurable reductions in people's stress levels. Conversely, environmental degradation leads to alienation, social problems and economic emigration. Overall there is a clear uplifting experience in having a high quality environment, which is so vital to our quality of life.

Environmental health is also fundamental to a viable economic system. Numerous high level documents and economic strategies talk of the quality of the environment when trying to encourage inward investment – the attractive countryside, the draw of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks and high quality townscapes are often listed as assets. Some of these benefits are clear and measurable. In a small part of Norfolk, for example, visitors to nature reserves are estimated to bring in £21 million to the local economy and support some 600 jobs. In the southwest the input of the environmental sector into the economy is measured in billions!

Whilst many of our environmental problems may seem global in magnitude, many of the actions that contribute to their solution can be local. The actions and projects involved in forwarding an environmental agenda and hence improving the environmental wellbeing can be many and diverse. These can however, also support the aspirations within, for example, Local Authorities' Community Strategies, to improve the social and economic wellbeing of an area.

## **PROMOTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA**

Overall the structure of the environmental agenda is quite simple. The environment is the basic resource on which we all rely and from which we gain all the services we need for life. However, our activities do have an impact on the environment and as such we must all be aware of these and how they may be managed. Attached is a checklist to assist organisations in promoting environmental wellbeing. Also included are tables outlining the initiatives which, as part of an environmental agenda, can be taken forward by organisations to help meet their requirement to improve the environmental, social and economic wellbeing, together with suggested lists of indicators. The environmental agenda has been included within six broad categories.

### ***1 The Services We Gain from the Environment***

Most aspects of life are only there as a result of services provided by a healthy functioning environment. At the most basic level this includes the earth's life support systems. At the local level aspects like health, a sense of well-being, the 'liveability' of urban areas, the provision of resources like water and food and our economic system itself are services gained from the environment.

### ***2 The Impact We Have on the Environment***

In our day-to-day life we have an impact on the environment. This includes development, waste disposal, pollution, climate change, food production and distribution and so on. Locally both the urban and rural landscapes are the result of centuries of interaction between nature and human activity. For example, the existing landscape of the eastern South Downs is a result of the clearance of woodland for agricultural purposes about 5000 years ago. Our impacts are not however inevitably damaging if managed effectively, having regard to the opportunities for mitigation, compensation and enhancement.

**3 *The Environment Itself***

Underpinning everything is the environment itself. This includes air, water, land, soil, geology, plants and animals and the interaction between all these. It also includes the landscape, our historic heritage and the built environment as well as qualities such as tranquillity.

**4 *Education and Environmental Awareness***

A knowledge and understanding of the environment and the services it provides are vital in order to reduce or reverse the negative impacts we may have. Only through such information can we fully evaluate and address the impacts of our actions on the environment.

**5. *Key Cross-cutting Issues for the Environment***

There are opportunities to integrate and promote environmental initiatives in objectives which, to date, may have been considered purely social or economic.

**6. *What Everyone can do to Help Protect their Environment***

Some suggestions on how the public can play their part in protecting the environment.

***Appendices available***

***(i) Environmental Indicators***

A table of environmental indicators recommended for monitoring a variety of plans and projects can be obtained on request.

**PLANS AND STRATEGIES - CHECKLIST FOR PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING**

**1. Recognition of the support that environmental protection gives to economic and social matters and health**

**Does the Plan or Strategy:**

- Explicitly mention the need to protect and enhance the natural environment for its direct benefits to residents and for the sake of the economy and health?
- Incorporate cross-cutting issues to highlight the links between the environment, social and economic wellbeing of the area?
- Encourage appropriate recreation and enjoyment of the environment?
- Promote and utilise the positive links between health and the environment?
- Promote and utilise the positive links between a healthy environment and a strong economy?

- Promote and utilise the positive links between a healthy environment and social inclusion?

## 2. Environmental performance monitoring

### Does the Plan or Strategy:

- Identify and prioritise local environmental issues, concerns and opportunities for enhancement?
- Set environmental targets for the Plan or Strategy to achieve?
- Establish performance indicators for the environmental achievements of the Plan or Strategy?
- Establish a monitoring process for the environmental achievements of the Plan or Strategy?

## 3.4. Maintenance and enhancement of our environmental assets.

### Does the Plan or Strategy:

- Forward opportunities to enhance the landscape and townscape?
- Improve access to tranquillity for all people in Sussex by identifying and protecting tranquil areas?
- Identify biodiversity assets, appropriate designations for protection and plans to deliver progress towards biodiversity targets?
- Improve or promote engagement of people in the environment (e.g. valuing the environment/reconnecting)

## 5. Sustainable use of natural resources.

### Does the Plan or Strategy:

- Promote the waste hierarchy - plans for reducing, reusing and recycling materials?



- Promote best use of available environmental technologies, including energy efficiency, efficient use of water, efficient uses of resources in productivity etc.?
- Promote product substitution such that renewable resources (e.g. wood) are preferred to non-renewable resources (e.g. plastics)?

**6. Reducing our impact on the environment.**

**Does the Plan or Strategy:**

- Use best available systems to reduce pollution to land, air and water?
- Reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift from cars and energy inefficient forms to public transport, walking and cycling?
- Promote local food economy?
- Incorporate environmental priorities within other themes and policy areas?
- Minimise impacts of new development through promoting:
  - appropriate use of brownfield sites?
  - use of high density/high quality/sustainable build ?
  - opportunities for environmental gain within new development proposals?
- Reduce our impact on global warming through efficient energy use and by changes to CO<sup>2</sup> neutral forms such as wood burning?
- Encourage effective environmental management by businesses and organisations?
- Encourage environmentally responsible actions through awareness raising?  
(e.g. reconnecting the consumer with the countryside, focusing on reconnection with the food system)
- Promote local sourcing

**THE SERVICES WE GET FROM THE ENVIRONMENT:** This includes all aspects of life that rely on a healthy environment, from our own health and sense of well-being to resource provision and wealth creation.

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE	Reduction in crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Create high quality urban and rural environments.</li> <li>◆ Maintain a clean and accessible environment to encourage a greater sense of belonging, identity and pride of place, including through the provision of accessible natural greenspace.</li> <li>◆ Speedy removal of graffiti.</li> </ul>
	Reduction in environmental crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Encourage reporting of offenders/sites e.g. fly-tipping, illegal fish practices and pollution.</li> <li>◆ Ensure that the ‘Polluter Pays’</li> </ul>
A HEALTHY PLACE TO LIVE	Improvements to Health specifically associated with Air and Water Quality and Noise Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Decrease emissions to air e.g. vehicle emissions.</li> <li>◆ Continue improvements in bathing and river water quality.</li> <li>◆ Reduce nuisance and disturbance caused by noise.</li> <li>◆ Reduce pollution of air, land and water.</li> <li>◆ Promote social inclusion and healthy living by encouraging participation in local environmental schemes and projects.</li> <li>◆ Use walking and cycling as alternative forms of travel.</li> <li>◆ Increase recreational activities.</li> <li>◆ Food growing</li> <li>◆ Promote organic farming</li> </ul>
	Access to tranquillity for all people in Sussex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Restrict development so that tranquil areas are not reduced or compromised.</li> <li>◆ Seek ways to enhance tranquil areas.</li> <li>◆ Take action to reduce disturbance caused by noise.</li> <li>◆ Improve sustainable public transport links to tranquil areas within Sussex.</li> </ul>

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
A PLACE TO ENJOY LIFE AND HAVE A SENSE OF WELLBEING	Access to affordable Recreational facilities An inspirational environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Promote quiet recreation in Sussex.</li> <li>◆ Engender an understanding of the vulnerability of the environment to pressures from leisure and tourism and promote only sustainable tourism.</li> <li>◆ Ensure where practicable and sustainable, access by public transport, cycling, walking and disabled to recreational areas e.g. inland and coastal waters, country parks.</li> <li>◆ Target schools and deprived areas to promote opportunities for angling and other leisure pursuits.</li> <li>◆ Implement strategies for sustainable tourism.</li> <li>◆ Provide and maintain accessible green spaces for all.</li> <li>◆ Allotments</li> </ul>
PROVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES	Sustainable, long-term use of land and resources such as food, fuel and minerals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Make best use of brownfield sites.</li> <li>◆ Minimise energy and resource use for new buildings by maximising solar gain and designing buildings for long life.</li> <li>◆ Enhance the built environment and preserve local heritage.</li> <li>◆ Achieve appropriate infrastructure and community services and take opportunities for environmental enhancements with all new developments.</li> <li>◆ Ensure that mineral plans achieve greater recycling and lower primary material use.</li> <li>◆ Support farming practices that deliver the most sustainable use of land.</li> <li>◆ Promote understanding of the services and resources provided by a healthy environment and the need to conserve them for future, possibly unpredictable benefits, such as medicinal products.</li> <li>◆ Reduce consumption of energy in distribution and packaging of food</li> </ul>
PROSPERITY AND A VIABLE ECONOMY	Sustainable economic well-being, delivered in a way that also achieves environmental gain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Encourage local businesses to increase their competitiveness through environmental management.</li> <li>◆ Encourage ISO 14001 accreditation in businesses.</li> <li>◆ Promote diversification of the economy and creation of new start-up businesses in the environmental sector.</li> <li>◆ Create employment through carrying out projects to achieve biodiversity objectives.</li> <li>◆ Support development of skills and knowledge in the local food system</li> </ul>

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Support food producers and processors, sourcing, selling and adding value to locally sourced food</li> <li>◆ Increase use of local produce in public and private sector catering</li> </ul>

**IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT:** Everything we do impacts on the environment, though some effects could be benign or even positive. Sustainable, long-term solutions rely on being able to reduce our negative impacts to levels that are acceptable both to human values and to the natural systems on which we rely.

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT	Reduction in the number of people and properties affected by Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Implement a programme of integrated flood plain management.</li> <li>◆ Improve protection provided to properties and lives against flooding.</li> <li>◆ Develop flood prediction, warning and risk zoning systems and implement sustainable flood defence schemes.</li> <li>◆ Encourage communities to highlight drainage and flooding problems within their area.</li> <li>◆ Promote and implement Sustainable Drainage Systems that also provide natural habitats and / or public amenity open space.</li> </ul>
WASTE	Sustainable Management of Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Implement the Producer Responsibility Obligations.</li> <li>◆ Raise awareness of the importance of reducing unnecessary packaging.</li> <li>◆ Increase liaison with business and farmers and progress local campaigns to promote sustainable environmental management.</li> </ul>
TRANSPORT	Reduce the impact of travel infrastructure and waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Cut harmful emissions from vehicles by taking measures to reduce travel and by promoting public transport, walking and cycling.</li> <li>◆ Promote understanding of the link between vehicle (including aircraft) emissions and climate change.</li> <li>◆ Promote ‘carbon footprint’ calculations and reduction / promotion of</li> </ul>

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
		carbon sequestration projects. ♦ Promote local sourcing / support local sourcing ♦ Reduce food miles
RESOURCE DEPLETION	Sustainable management of natural resources.	♦ Encourage the wise use and management of natural resources for the sake of future generations.
WATER ABSTRACTION	Sustainable Management of Water Resources	♦ Minimise additional water abstraction and ensure protection of groundwater ♦ Consider availability of water resources in locating development ♦ Review licences for water abstractions, which may impact on conservation areas.
ENERGY USE AND POLLUTION FROM ENERGY USE	Efficient and careful use of Energy (especially carbon based fuels)	♦ Influence/lobby Government's long-term energy policy to progress and promote energy efficiency measures using renewable sources e.g. solar-power, wind power, biomass etc. in appropriate places. ♦ Promote local energy solutions at a sustainable scale - neighbourhood level energy / waste/ recycling etc.. ♦ Pilot local initiatives using renewable energy. ♦ Support partnerships to promote domestic and commercial energy efficiency.
CLIMATE CHANGE	Reduce the causes of climate change	♦ Promote and/or help to fund research and development into the effects of and adaptation to climate change.
	Build a robust environment able to cope with climate change.	♦ Implement the actions in biodiversity action plans, specifically those related to promoting inter-connectivity between and expansion of habitats.
LAND-TAKE FOR DEVELOPMENT	Minimal loss of land to development	♦ Implement effective development strategies to ensure the maintenance and enhancement of current environmental assets.

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
	Appropriate integration between the demand for development and the conservation of the environmental assets for the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Maximise use of brownfield sites subject to protection of protected species / adequate greenspace provision.</li> <li>◆ Promote / implement sustainable infrastructure and community services within new developments.</li> <li>◆ Forward opportunities for environmental mitigation / enhancement through planning obligations.</li> <li>◆ Maintain river and other natural corridors.</li> <li>◆ Promote / implement sustainable construction methods in new development.</li> <li>◆ Prevent inappropriate development in floodplains</li> </ul>

**THE ENVIRONMENT ITSELF:** This comprises all the basic resources that make up the environment itself, so includes air, land, water, plants and animals and all the ecological processes that link these – the basis of the earth’s life support systems. It also includes the qualities of the environment that we value such as tranquillity, landscape and heritage.

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS	Protection and Enhancement of Habitats and Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plan species’ and habitats through restoration and improvement of habitats e.g. wetlands, salt-marshes</li> </ul>
	Maintenance and enhancement of the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Identify the attributes that make up a valued landscape through appropriate landscape assessments</li> <li>◆ Implement strategies to maintain and enhance landscape quality</li> </ul>
	Sustainable Management of the Rural Landscape and Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Minimise harmful effects of chemicals and farm waste.</li> <li>◆ Promote / implement practices which avoid structural damage and erosion of soils.</li> <li>◆ Support agri-environment schemes.</li> </ul>

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
	Improvement of the Built Environment and Appearance of Towns and Neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Create or enhance places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look well e.g. green spaces, green networks and parks.</li> <li>◆ Maintain clean streets, highways and public places.</li> <li>◆ Remove graffiti as quickly as possible through local action plans.</li> </ul>

**EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS:** A knowledge and understanding of the environment can inform valuing systems and choices made by individual people, organisations, businesses and authorities.

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT	Increase public and business participation in waste, water and energy efficiency schemes and progress opportunities for environmental education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Increase liaison with business and farmers and progress local campaigns to promote sustainable environmental management and ‘greening business’ initiatives e.g. EMS ISO14001, Nutrient and Farm Management Plans.</li> <li>◆ Promote the Producer Responsibility Obligations and the importance of reducing unnecessary packaging.</li> <li>◆ Encourage everyone to cycle, walk, use public transport and car share for commuting or other journeys. Encourage LPAs to use Green Travel Plans as conditions / legal obligations attached to planning permissions for developments that generate a large number of trips.</li> <li>◆ Encourage everyone to reduce, re-use and recycle their household waste.</li> <li>◆ Encourage everyone to reduce their domestic water use and use water saving devices.</li> <li>◆ Use and promote products with approved environmentally sustainable accreditation.</li> <li>◆ Promote and use locally produced goods wherever possible.</li> <li>◆ Encourage more efficient use of resources by increasing everyone’s</li> </ul>

ELEMENT	PRIMARY OUTCOME	ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME
		knowledge of waste, water and energy efficiency schemes. ♦ Inform the public on the causes and effects of climate change. ♦ Promote understanding of the local food system and associated benefits for social/economic/health and environment
	Appreciation for nature as a resource for community development	♦ Provide opportunities for social and community development through conservation volunteering, ecological surveys, skills for work etc.. ♦ Progress opportunities for environmental education. ♦ Provide accessible natural greenspace. ♦ Promote community food growing projects

KEY CROSS CUTTING ISSUES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	
Education, learning and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more efficient use of resources by increasing everyone’s knowledge of ‘ecological footprint’ and waste, water and energy efficiency schemes.</li> <li>• Progress opportunities for environmental education.</li> <li>• Inform the public on the causes and effects of climate change and ways in which we can help reduce / mitigate impacts and adapt to these.</li> <li>• Reconnect consumers with the food system</li> </ul>
Health and social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve public health by taking measures to reduce pollution of air, land and water.</li> <li>• Promote social inclusion and healthy living by encouraging participation in local environmental schemes and projects.</li> <li>• Reduce fuel poverty through improved energy efficiency</li> <li>• Promote a healthy environment as fundamental to a healthy population</li> </ul>

Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make best use of brownfield sites.</li> <li>• Minimise energy and resource use for new buildings by maximising solar gain and designing buildings for long life.</li> <li>• Promote the use of sustainable drainage systems.</li> <li>• Enhance the built environment and preserve local heritage.</li> <li>• Achieve appropriate infrastructure and community services and take opportunities for environmental enhancements with all new developments.</li> </ul>
Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and maintain accessible green spaces for all.</li> <li>• Promote an understanding of the vulnerability of the environment to pressures from leisure and tourism.</li> <li>• Promote sustainable active and passive recreational activities.</li> </ul>
Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage local businesses to increase their competitiveness through environmental management.</li> <li>• Create employment through carrying out projects to achieve biodiversity objectives.</li> <li>• Promote businesses within the ‘environmental’ sector.</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve protection of people and property from flooding by improving flood warning and developing sustainable flood management measures.</li> <li>• Prevent inappropriate development in flood risk areas.</li> <li>• Help to reduce crime by maintaining a clean and accessible environment to encourage a greater sense of belonging, identity and pride of place, including through the provision of accessible natural greenspace.</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut harmful emissions from vehicles by promoting public transport, walking and cycling.</li> </ul>

### **WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP SAVE ENERGY AND WATER AND PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT**

- ◆ Enjoy and value our natural environment and demand measures to maintain or enhance its quality.
- ◆ Travel less (e.g. shopping online and multi-purpose trips), Cycle, walk, use public transport and car share.
- ◆ Buy less, re-use or recycle waste. Buy products made from recycled materials.
- ◆ Compost household waste.
- ◆ Reduce water use in homes or businesses and fit water-saving devices.
- ◆ Use products with approved environmentally sustainable accreditation e.g. washing machines, fridges, wood products from Forestry Stewardship Council ‘badged’ sources.
- ◆ Use locally produced goods wherever possible.
- ◆ Insulate our homes.

- ◆ Fit energy-saving devices.
- ◆ Report any pollution and flytipping 0800 80 70 60.
- ◆ Report any flooding on Floodline 0845 988 1188.

### **The Sussex Environment Partnership (SEP)**

SEP comprises representatives from the main environmental bodies and certain Local Authorities in Sussex. Links with other local environmental groups and those Local Authorities not directly represented are made through the SEP members. The Environment Agency currently chairs the Group.

### **The Sussex Environment Partnership includes environmental specialists from the following organisations:**

Environment Agency  
Sussex Wildlife Trust  
English Nature  
English Heritage  
South Downs Joint Committee  
Sussex Air Quality Steering Group  
Brighton and Hove City Council  
East Sussex County Council  
West Sussex County Council  
County and District Local Strategic Partnerships

Should you have any enquiries relating to this document or the role of SEP, please address them to:

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