



# Wilder Horsham District

## **Wilder Horsham District**

End of Year Report April 2022 – March 2023

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### COVER IMAGE

Honeybee, Lydia Petch

Wilder Horsham District is a five-year partnership between Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) and Horsham District Council (HDC) working to deliver a Nature Recovery Network for Horsham District.

The project officially commenced in September 2020 when project staff came into post and has since been working closely with local communities and landowners to help reverse the decline in species and habitats and enrich the natural environment for all residents and visitors. This report summarises Wilder Horsham District’s achievements for the financial year dated 1 April 2022 – 31st March 2023.



# Achievements Summary

## LANDSCAPE RESILIENCE

### Highlights

- With additional funding from Horsham District Council, the project recruited an additional Landowner Advisor post to increase the project's delivery and ability to offer landowner advice.
- 56 site visits were made during the course of the year. Almost half of these were revisits as the project builds relationships.
- The Project contributed to a successful bid to the governments Landscape Recover Fund. The Adur River Recovery Project started at the beginning of 2023.
- We continued to work with key stakeholders on the Arun including the Norfolk Estate and the South Downs National Park. Although a Landscape recovery bid for the Arun was just missed out on being funded, we will be supporting a repeat bid in 2023.
- Our dedicated volunteer force now numbers 53 conservation volunteers, and 25 survey volunteers. We completed 19 work parties across a range of tasks including leaky dam building, scrub management, hedgerow laying and invasive species removal, with our volunteers offering an incredible 730 hours to the project in this year alone.
- The Nature Recovery Award ran an additional four rounds and some of the recipients from previous rounds completed or advanced their projects.
- Presentation to the Local NFU to raise awareness of the project in the farming community.

	2022-23	Project Lifespan
<b>Sites and Partnerships</b>		
New landowner sites visited	30	80
Landowner site revisits	26	42
Horsham District Council sites	3	9
Partnerships/projects involved with	13	20
Organisations engaged with	16	22
Area of sites advised on (hectares)	5338.18	7696.65
<b>Nature Recovery Award</b>		
Total Applications	11	32
Successful Applications	7	14
Funding Value Awarded	£13,164.00	£41,505.24
<b>Work Party Volunteers</b>		
Number of work parties	19	27
Total volunteer hours	730	886
Total non-project staff volunteer hours	26	47
Total volunteer in-kind contribution	£14,600	£17,720

# Achievements Summary Continued

Practical Works		
Hedgerow planted or improved (m squared)	<b>140 metres</b>	<b>270 metres</b>
Leaky dams created	<b>32</b>	<b>56</b>
Ponds created	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
Trees planted	<b>12</b>	<b>104</b>
Invasive species removal measure	<b>7 sites</b>	<b>7 sites</b>
Bird/bat boxes/bug hotels	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

### Highlights

- We organised and hosted two successful Parish Council workshops, supported and led by 15 expert facilitators from Sussex Wildlife Trust, Horsham District Council and other organisations and community groups in Horsham District. The aim was to inspire and show Parish Councils what and how they can take action for nature in their Parish, starting or helping them continue to make these projects a reality.
- The project has engaged all the major and a high percentage of the smaller environmental community groups in Horsham District and continues to maintain relationships and support projects with these groups.
- We have supported community groups with site visits, habitat management advice, grant funding, resources, and linking contacts.
- Our communications and media presence continued to grow using social media, blogs, print and radio interview. We also updated and refreshed our project webpage, including an improved landowner contact form, and created new project posters and a printed banner to take to events.
- The Sussex Wildlife Trust Communities and Wildlife team continue to contribute greatly appreciated time and resource towards supporting the project through landowner/community group visits, communication materials and wildlife talks and walks.

	2022-23	Project Lifespan
Community Links		
New community groups engaged with	<b>5</b>	<b>30</b>
Parish/neighbourhood councils we've had bespoke contact with (%)	<b>43%</b>	<b>80%</b>
Parish/neighbourhood council and community group talks and events	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>
Communications		
Blogs posted	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>

Facebook followers' growth 22/23	<b>18.5%</b>	
Twitter followers' growth 22/23	<b>10.6%</b>	
Instagram followers' growth 22/23	<b>35%</b>	
Webpage views 22/23	<b>2,151</b>	<b>16,819</b>

## Organisational Resilience

### Highlights

- Horsham District Council's Parks and Countryside department have been reviewing management of their sites and exploring opportunities with adjacent landowners to contribute to the Nature Recovery Network. This has resulted in changes to some management regimes.
- The Parks and Countryside team has also reviewed its cutting regimes and trialled various No Mow May and annual meadow areas in some of our open spaces and will be looking to expand these in 2024.
- As well as the Parish Council workshops, there have been regular presentations to the Horsham Association of Local Councils on climate actions and biodiversity.
- Councillors were taken on a visit to Great Barn Farm, which is site that received Nature Recovery Award funding. They learnt more about Wilder Horsham District, with an emphasis on the practical projects that are being implemented.
- Engagement with the National Farmers Union was increased, with a presentation to members of this organisation.
- A workshop session was held with officers from the consultant that provided ecological advice to explain the NRN for the Horsham District, and this links to their work on providing advice on planning applications. Officers from Strategic Planning and Development Management also attended.
- Officers in Strategic Planning and Parks and Countryside participated in sessions on Biodiversity Net gain, as well as the emerging advice on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- A continued programme of staff talks ran throughout the year, with topics including 'Nature on Your Doorstep' and Sussex Wildlife Trust's 'Help our Kelp' project.

### Project Lifespan

### Time Spent

PDAGS, staff and member talks (number, hours)	<b>11 talks, 36 hours</b>
Training/CPD for staff and members at HDC (hours)	<b>44.5</b>

# Project Progress Comments on 2022-23

## Landowner Engagement Highlights

Once again, we have been bowled over this year by the high interest in and support for the project. Indeed, at times, it has been difficult to keep up with the demand and we are grateful to HDC for providing some additional funding which means that we go into the next year with an additional staff member.

Our engagement this year has been a mix of, for us, new sites and follow-ups to sites previously visited. This year the Senior Land Advisor made 56 site visits including 30 new sites and 26 follow-ups to sites previously visited, representing 5338.18 hectares within the district. These sites have been spread District-wide, north and south, urban and rural, small and large sites and covering almost the whole range of habitats in the district.

Highlights included protecting Lapwing nests and helping to design suitable breeding habitat at New Wharf Farm at the Adur, designing Natural Flood management measures at Mayes Park near Warnham and Danefold Farm near Partridge Green, hedge-laying at Dyke Farm near

Pulborough and contributing to the Wiston Estate Plan.

We are also working with local farmers to establish more naturalistic grazing in the District in particular promoting mob grazing, which has been shown to improve soil health, plant diversity and livestock health.

SWT Director of Conservation Policy and Evidence, Henri Brocklebank, attended the West Grinstead Ploughing match on behalf of SWT and WHD, raising the profile of the project and making additional connections. Perhaps ironically the project promotes a move away from ploughing in favour of direct drilling and no till, which has benefits for both soil health and crop yield.

We also delivered a talk on the project to NFU members at the Fountain Inn, Ashurst, to raise awareness of the project within the farming community.

Again, much of our engagement with land managers and community groups has been reactive, responding to those that contacted the project directly. However, during the year we developed a strategic prioritisation plan with the



(From left to right) James Clapshaw (landowner, Mayes Park), Fran Southgate (Wilder Landscapes Advisor, Sussex Wildlife Trust), David Bridges (Wild About Warnham) and Jake Everitt (Countryside and Ecology Manager, Horsham District Council) on a site visit discussing ways to improve Mayes Park for wildlife.



**Richard Black (left, Senior Landowner Advisor. Wilder Horsham District) with new project staff member Steve Tillman (right, Landowner Advisor.)**

intention of being more proactive and focussing on building habitat links within the Weald to Waves Corridor. This is an ambitious 100-mile nature corridor across Sussex which passes right through Horsham District. It includes stretches of both the Arun and Adur River systems.

We were part of a partnership of landowners and organisations, including Horsham District that successfully applied to be one of the Government’s ELMS Landscape Recovery pilots. The collaborative “Adur River Recovery Project” aims to revitalise the River Adur as a connected corridor of riparian life. This funding is for a two-year development phase exploring nature recovery and habitat creation in a farmed environment. A range of interventions will be considered including re-meandering, re-naturalisation of floodplains, new habitat creation, and improvement of soil health. If successful, this will result in a bespoke agreement for 20 or more years.

This kind of partnership working continues to be a vital part of the project and we have continued to work in partnership with HDC Parks and Countryside, especially around their own sites, notably Warnham Nature Reserve, Chesworth Farm and Meadowside in Storrington.

Other key partners this year have included the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust (OART) and the Knepp wildlands Foundation both of whom are involved in the “Adur River Recovery Project” among others. We have combined forces with OART on a number of site visits. We have also been working with the South Downs National Park both on joint site visits and on more strategic work including the “Arun Valley Wader Project” and the “Lapwings and Landscapes Project”, a submission to the Landscape Recovery pilot that just missed out on funding but which will be resubmitted for the next round.

A new Land Advisor was recruited for the project – Steve Tillman started on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023. This will give us increased capacity for land advice and practical delivery. Steve brings a wealth of experience as a from his previous role as a Site Manager in SWT’s Land Management Team. Steve will lead many of our volunteer work parties and on liaising with Nature Recovery Award applicants prior to submission.

Achieving practical, on-the-ground change for nature’s recovery is only possible with the support of the landowners and community groups we work with, and our wonderful volunteers. We would like to extend a big thank you to all who have been involved in Wilder Horsham District so far as we roll into our fourth year – it is your support that is making this project such a success, and we are very excited to see what we will achieve together in the coming year.



**Wilder Horsham District on a joint site visit in Shermanbury with the Ouse and Adur Rivers trust (OART).**

## Nature Recovery Award

The Nature Recovery Award is our grant fund that aims to support landowners and community groups wishing to implement practical schemes to expand and improve networks for wildlife across the Horsham District landscape. Funding of up to £5,000 is available per project, helping to ensure landowners and community groups wishing to support nature's recovery are well supported and not limited by access to funds.

Across the 4 rounds run in 2022/23, we are thrilled to be funding 5 successful applicants for a total value of £13,164. As detailed in the table below, we have been delighted at the range of projects ideas, varying greatly in scale, location with the district and habitat and species impact, but all contributing towards the creation of a Nature Recovery Network in Horsham District.

Projects funded in previous years are also well underway and making exciting progress in aiding nature's recovery. You can learn more about all our past grant recipients and their projects on our webpage.



After installing a deer fence at Rackham Cottages to prevent over-grazing (above), the heathland, one of the UK's rarest habitats, is already showing signs of recovery (below).



The Lakeside Conservation Volunteers hard at work improving Ayshe Court Lakes for wildlife, with the whole community chipping in.



A Swift box being installed in the eaves of Warnham Village Stores, just one of 23 being installed across the village.



A digger arrives on site at Benlands Nature Reserve to dig a new pond and create a new habitat on the land.



# Comments on 2022-23 Continued

Applicant	Value Awarded	Project Details
<b>Successful Applicants 2022/23</b>		
<b>Ingrams Farm</b>	£5,000	To part-fund a herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle to introduce conservation grazing on the farm through mob-grazing techniques. Mob grazing involves short duration, high density grazing with a longer than usual grass recovery period. This will particularly benefit the low-lying wetland areas, improving habitat for breeding waders (particularly lapwing).
<b>Horsham Unitarian Church</b>	£500	To provide and maintain, within a dedicated area of the church grounds, an area managed for the protection of existing rare species (e.g., Stag beetles) and development of more biodiversity.
<b>Storrington and Arun Valley Sussex Wildlife Trust Regional Group</b>	£2,414	To purchase and install Swift nest boxes in identified village locations in Storrington and Sullington, Pulborough, Amberley and Billingshurst, and to use this investment to raise the profile and understanding of related environmental issues and conservation priorities.
<b>Lakeside Conservation Volunteers</b>	£250	To purchase a second-hand small boat to enable the group of volunteers to reach all areas of Ayshe Court Lakes to undertake conservation management works.
<b>Steyping Parish Council</b>	£5000	To improve Chandlers Way playpark for wildlife by planting native trees and hedgerows, increasing the habitat availability to provide food, shelter and wildlife corridors.



A Tawny Owl captured making one of several new owl nesting boxes funded by the Nature Recovery Award at Raylands Country Park its home.



Out on a winter work party in the snow tackling the invasive Rhododendron to help restore an area of woodland, with a small proportion of the removed invasive in a pile behind the volunteers ready to be burned.

## Wilder Horsham District Volunteers

We would like to take the opportunity to say a **huge thank you** to all our volunteers for all your incredible support and time given to the project, and for always bringing a smile (and often homemade brownies!) to our volunteer days, no matter the weather.

You are all an integral and valued part of the project team, supporting the development of the Nature Recovery Network and enabling us to hugely increase the scale and impact of our on the ground delivery for nature recovery in Horsham District.

### Survey Volunteers

Our 25 survey volunteers will help us survey various sites around Horsham for particular taxonomic groups, principally plants, butterflies (and other invertebrates), and birds. This will help generate a baseline for sites that are trying to improve for wildlife and help inform management changes to those sites. This year, we provided survey technique and ID training to our volunteers ready for surveys to commence in spring/summer 2023.

### Work Party Volunteers

Our 60 work party volunteers help us carry out vital conservation tasks on privately or publicly owned land holdings within Horsham District, with the aim of improving land for wildlife to help nature's recovery.

This year, we had our most comprehensive work party programme of the project to date, completing 19 work parties throughout the seasons. Our volunteers gave us an incredible 730 hours of their time, for a staggering in-kind contribution of £14,600 to the project, helping us exponentially increase our conservation impact.

### Highlights from this year's program include:

- With the help of skilled volunteer Tony Cook we learnt a new skill when our volunteers set about laying a hedge at Dyke Farm, in the South of England style naturally. This will make the hedge thicker and healthier and create better wildlife habitat.



Volunteers learning how to lay a hedge.

- Helping to clear 5 separate sites of the invasive Himalayan Balsam, a fast growing and prolific spreader along our waterways that invades and takes over wet habitat at the expense of all native flora.
- Our invasive species removal programme has also extended to Bamboo pulling, and Rhododendron removal.
- Over 8 work parties at 5 different sites, we assumed the ecological niche of a beaver, building 32 leaky dams. These are a brilliant way to slow and store

water in the landscape, helping to both reduce flooding in times of higher rainfall and ensuring water remains in flow channels and ponds in the warmer, drier months to continue to support species dependent on the habitat it provides.

- We put our hedge laying skills to use again laying a Blackthorn hedge at Woods Mill Nature Reserve with the aim of improving it as habitat for Nightingales. We were delighted when a Nightingale started singing in that hedge this spring.



The result of our leaky dam building – it worked!



Pretending to be beavers and building leaky dams.



Improving the hedgerows at Woods Mill for Nightingales.



Deep in a 'jungle' of invasive Himalayan Balsam at Warnham Nature Reserve.



Horsham District Council Members visit Dr Greg Valerio at Great Barn Farm, who used the project's Nature Recovery Award funding to restore a large pond on the South Downs (Photo Credit – Graham Franks Photography)

## Organisation Engagement Highlights

The Council is continuing to embed the principles of Wilder Horsham District across the organisation. Councillors receive regular updates through the Cabinet Members Policy Development Advisory Group. They also attended a site visit to one of the successful Nature Recovery Award recipients at Great Barn Farm which has restored a large pond, as part of a creating a mosaic of habitats across the site which includes mixed grazing, woodland and wildflower meadows.

In terms of staff there were presentations on a range of biodiversity related topics, including one on winter in wildlife, and explaining local sites that have biodiversity value. There is an ongoing dialogue with officers in the Planning Department and Parks and Countryside. These are two important Departments for delivering the aims and objectives of Wilder Horsham District. There was a



Ringing a Goldcrest during biological surveys.

presentation to a whole Planning Department meeting and staff from Strategic Planning and Development Management, as well as the consultant that provides ecological advice to the Planning Department attended a workshop. This was to explain the concept of Nature Recovery Networks and how these relate to the planning system. Staff in these Departments also attend Continuous Professional Development events to keep up to date with emerging guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Networks.

Work has been completed to understand how the Council's land holdings can contribute to the development of the Nature Recovery Network. This is helping to guide changes to existing management regimes and identify where to make links to adjoining landowners to help develop nature recovery networks, at a local scale.

The Council has close links with the Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, and through this has encouraged actions on climate change and biodiversity. As well as the workshops mentioned elsewhere in this document, there are regular presentations at Parish and Neighbourhood Council meetings, and the Horsham Association of Local Councils. The latter is an umbrella organisation for the Parish and Neighbourhood Councils in the Horsham District.

## Horsham District Council Parks and Countryside Department

This Department manages several key sites for wildlife across the District, such as Monkmead Woods (SSSI), Warnham Local Nature Reserve and Chesworth Farm, Chennellsbrook Castle, Sandgate Park, Denne Road Cemetery, Southwater Country Park and Owlbeech and

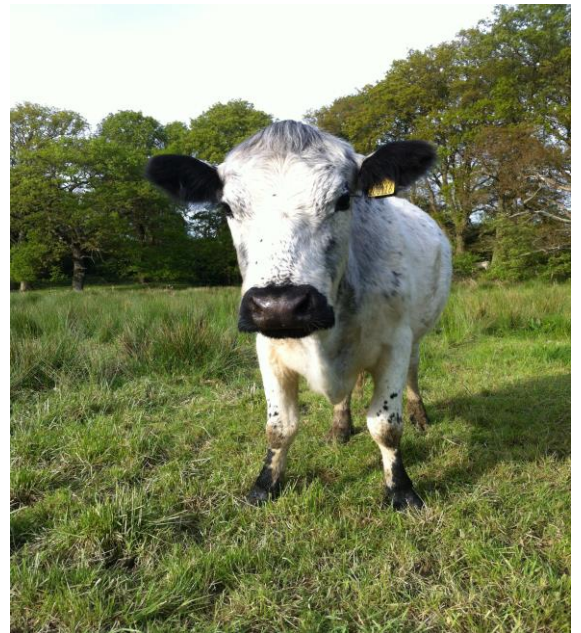
Leechpool Woods, which are all Local Wildlife Sites as well as open spaces such as Horsham Park and Fletchers Croft in Steyning.

The HDC sites are important core sites within the NRN, especially around Horsham town and we have been considering how these connect to the wider landscape.

- Works have included installation of a purpose built 5m bat hibernaculum, restoration of an area of grassland home to the rare Wasp spider.
- Our cattle grazed on 6 of our sites creating a more diverse and naturalistic grassland and heath.
- The site management is supported by 25 volunteer groups who contributed nearly 19,000 hours of time across all of our sites, including tasks such as reedbed maintenance, invasive species control and tree planting.
- Over a 1 km of traditional hedge-laying has regenerated overgrown hedgerows at Chesworth Farm, Southwater Country Park and Warnham LNR
- Significant biological surveys take place including bird ringing, breeding bird surveys, small mammal trapping and moth trapping with over 22,000 individual wildlife records have been submitted to

the Biological Record Centre from these sites, highlighting the species richness to be found on the HDC sites.

- We reviewed our cutting regimes and trialled various No Mow May and annual meadow areas in some of our open spaces and will be looking to expand these in 2024.
- We have been working with Horsham Greenspaces Forum to develop urban greening initiatives including their 'Get Horsham buzzing'.



Horsham District Council's cattle are used to graze selected sites to create a more diverse and naturalistic grassland and heath.



The rare Wasp Spider.



Horsham District Council volunteers out on site.

# Comments on 2022-23 Continued

## Community Engagement Highlights

### Parish Council Workshops

We hosted two full day Parish Council workshops in February, with an exceptional turnout from 50 attendees representing 28 of the 35 Parish/Neighbourhood Councils. Supported and led by 15 expert facilitators from Sussex Wildlife Trust, Horsham District Council, West Sussex County Council, Wild About Warnham, the Knepp Rewilding Project and Adur River Restoration Project, it represented an incredible investment of time and the sharing of the highest quality advice and knowledge.

The aim was to inspire and show local Parish Councils what and how they can take action for nature in their Parish through a series of talks and breakout discussion groups, enabling and empowering Parish Councils to either create or further develop existing projects supporting nature's recovery in their District. We are now developing a suite of resources to continue to support Parish Councils post-event and are delighted to hear of all the project's Parish Councils are already developing in the Parishes.



(From left to right) Chloe Harrison (Project Support Officer, Wilder Horsham District), David Bridges (Wild About Warnham) and Jake Everitt (Countryside and Ecology Manager, Horsham District Council) discussing the Warnham Pollinator Highway.

### Community Groups

We have now engaged with 25 community groups, constituting most of all active groups in the district. Horsham District is fortunate to have a very active set of community groups working for wildlife and nature's recovery, and as a project we look to support each individual group in the way(s) that best support their needs. This has included site visits to offer management advice, hosting wildlife events like bat and butterfly walks, giving talks on the project at events, and funding community projects through our Nature Recovery Award.

Highlights of the year include working with Wild about Warnham to progress the Warnham Pollinator Highway by meeting with key landowners along the route and agreeing habitat management to meet the objectives of the corridor. This wildlife corridor has the potential to link to others, including Weald to Waves.

Another highlight has been engaging with the Storrington and Arun Valley Sussex Wildlife Trust Regional Group, which has led to many successes including funding their exciting project to install swift boxes across Storrington and Sullington, Pulborough, Amberley and Billingshurst through the Nature Recovery Award, and developing a plan of action (with several other actors too) to map and tackle key 'headwaters' of the invasive Himalayan Balsam across the District.



A breakout group at the Parish Council workshops discussing community engagement project ideas.

# Project Progress Proposed Deliverables

Task No.	Deliverable	Responsible party	Date of completion	Progress to Date
1	Map a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) for the Horsham District which ultimately achieves better, more, bigger and joined up sites for biodiversity. The map should be kept up to date in accordance with evolving best practice.	SWT	End May 2025	The first version of a NRN map for the Horsham District was published in August 2021 and is now being used to inform priority engagement areas. The map will be updated as new data and landowners are added and habitats connected by the by the project and partners. Developing work on NRNs by the LNP, SWT and others will be incorporated.
2	The NRN should ultimately aim to cover 30% of Horsham District and seek to achieve a 20% increase in the number of designated sites in positive management.	SWT	End May 2025	The areas identified by the NRN map cover a total of 29483 hectares (including the areas of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald AONB within the District). Horsham District is 53096.21 hectares in size, so the area identified by the map covers 55.53% of the district. However, this stage is only identifying land with potential to be included in the NRN and, obviously, we do not expect to achieve change on all this land. To achieve a functioning NRN covering 30% of the district it is necessary to target considerably more. Up to the end of March 2023, the project has advised on 14.51% of Horsham District's 53026 hectares.
3	Identify priority areas within the NRN as a basis for focusing the work of the project.	SWT/HDC	Annually	A prioritisation exercise was undertaken in early 2022 which identified the priority areas of the (then proposed and still forming) Weald to Waves corridor, including stretches of both the Arun and Adur River systems. This guided our landowner engagement in 2022/23 and was also responsible for our involvement in the successful ELMS bid for the Adur River Restoration project.
4	Link the Wilder Horsham District NRN to the evolving Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the work of the Sussex Local Nature Partnership.	SWT	April 2022	We have maintained contact with the Sussex LNP and Julie Middleton gave one of the presentations at our Parish Council Workshop. Wayforward, who do work both for the LNP and the Adur River recover Project also attended the workshop and we have continued to work with them. Government guidance on the LNRS is being worked into the Horsham District NRN.
5	Link the developing NRN to existing landscape and catchment initiatives within the Horsham District to increase wildlife benefit.	SWT	End May 2025	We have engaged with 27 existing initiatives. The Weald to Waves project is particularly important as crosses the District and maps, not by coincidence, onto part of our own NRN. Other important initiatives include the Arun to Adur Farm Cluster, the Upper Adur Farm Cluster the Adur and Ouse Catchment Partnership and the Arun Valley Wader Project,

Task No.	Deliverable	Responsible party	Date of completion	Progress to Date
6	Provide bespoke advice to a minimum of 60% of Parish/Neighbourhood Councils, 80 community groups and 120 landowners. For this advice & support to reflect the geographical spread of the project's annual priorities	SWT	End of May 2025	Following hosting the Parish Council Workshops, have provided bespoke contact to 80% of Parish/Neighbourhood Councils. We have interacted with 30 community groups, which constitutes all major and the vast majority of the minor groups operating in the Horsham District. We have made advisory visits to 80 different landholdings spread right across the district. The project has also made 42 site revisits (not including work party visits) to build relationships. Part of the projects aim is to build relationships with key landowners and we have made 42 revisits with this aim in mind.
7	Operate and promote the Nature Recovery Award. Report on the number of awards given, a description of the projects, including the type, total hectarage and distances of new or improved habitats.	SWT	Annually	12 applications were submitted to the Nature Recovery Award over 4 funding rounds. A total of £13,164 was awarded to 5 applications. A further 3 were advised to resubmit with changes. Award outcomes are stated in report cards issued at quarterly Steering Group meetings.
8	Report to the project board including a financial update, number of contacts and events for landowners, individuals, groups and organisations and projects that have received support/advice. Data should include hectarage & distances of new or improved habitat, as well as the contribution to Natural Capital Services, where possible.	SWT	Quarterly (papers to be distributed a week before the Steering Group meeting)	Held quarterly Steering Group meetings, with a consistent agenda of sharing project progress through report cards, a financial update, risk register reporting, and other varied topics relevant to specific Steering Groups. The report cards highlight the key achievements in the last quarter across the three strands of the project – organisational, landscape and community resilience.
9	Produce an annual report summarising the progress and achievements of the project, using suitable mapping and metrics.	SWT	Annually (a maximum of 2 months after the end of the financial year)	Annual report produced and shared in a newly created project-specific visual format. This report includes a greater number and variety of reporting metrics and description than its processor as the project develops its on-the-ground presence and impact. This will continue to grow across each annual report.
10	Establish links with key organisations, such as West Sussex County Council and neighbouring Councils, to develop joint projects/working that will help deliver the NRN.	HDC	End May 2025	Weald to Waves and the Adur Landscape Recovery project is driving partnership working with other Councils particular Adur and Worthing Council and West Sussex County Council.



# Proposed Deliverables Continued

Task No.	Deliverable	Responsible party	Date of completion	Progress to Date
11	Establish a volunteer taskforce to undertake practical tasks to support the establishment of the NRN and where possible to complete habitat surveys and ongoing monitoring of sites, with landowner's agreement.	SWT	End September 2021	The Wilder Horsham District volunteer taskforce was created in summer 2021, with the opportunity to be either a work party or survey volunteer. Our first work party was in November 2021, and there have since been 26 additional work parties. Our survey volunteers received training in spring 2022 and will begin active surveys in 2023.
12	Hold three events (or equivalent) during the project to engage with the projects target audience, as well as an event to celebrate the successes & achievements of the project.	SWT	End May 2025	The project held two identical Parish Council Workshops for the north and south of the district, providing inspiration, pre-packaged ideas and expert advice and support for Parishes wishing to contribute to the Nature Recovery Network. In 2023/24 the project will offer follow-up support and guidance to maintain momentum post-event.
13	Hold the equivalent of 3 days of training/CPD for staff and members at HDC per annum.	SWT	Annually	We have provided 20 hours of training/CPD for staff and members at HDC this year, with a total of 36 hours given to PDAGs, staff and member talks, and 44.5 hours to training/CPD for staff and members at HDC over the project lifespan. This year's contribution has included presentations to the Environmental and Rural Affairs PDAG, talks to staff on topics such as 'Winter Wildlife', presenting the project to HDC's planning department, and hosting members at the site of one of our Nature Recovery Award recipients to showcase the project and its impact.
14	Integrate NRN principles (incorporating biodiversity net gain) into Council planning processes, including the Local Plan & its supporting documents.	HDC	End December 2022	Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan was delayed in January 2023; partly because of the requirement for development to be water neutral. Policy development is taking account of the BNG requirements as more information becomes available. A study on whether BNG in the Horsham District could exceed the mandatory 10% requirement was completed. The Green Infrastructure Strategy is being updated to reflect this.

Task No.	Deliverable	Responsible party	Date of completion	Progress to Date
15	Identify biodiversity offset areas within the NRN to link with potential monies generated by biodiversity net gain.	SWT	End December 2022	This has not been progressed yet. This aspect needs to be developed when there is more understanding of BNG and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for West Sussex. This is part of the role of the latter document.
16	Review key HDC plans and policies to align them with the aims and objectives of the project.	HDC	End June 2023	Policies in the Local Plan Review are being developed to reflect the objectives of the project, within the constraints of the planning system. The draft Climate Action Strategy also reflects these principles. Other policies and plans need to be identified
17	Develop a strategic approach to the management of Council land; including opportunities from development proposals and land acquisitions, to support the delivery of the NRN.	HDC	End December 2021	A review has been completed of Council land ownership and where this is located within the NRN. This has provided a high-level idea of opportunities for linking land, and potential land
18	Review and implement appropriate land management practices on Council owned land to contribute to the development of the NRN.	HDC	Review – end March 2022 May 2025.	The process of reviewing and updating management plans has commenced. We reviewed our cutting regimes and trialed alternative approaches.
19	Review and update the Communications Plan. Report on the outcomes of this to the Steering Group; including relevant monitoring data.	SWT/HDC	Quarterly	Project communications are included in the Steering Group every quarter. The project continues to develop social media and blog content, which remain our most popular communication pieces.
20	Incorporate an online resource on the project's website, for groups/organisations to share experience and best practice.	SWT	End March 2022	Following the recent re-design of the Sussex Wildlife Trust website, a multi-departmental effort is underway at SWT to update and create a hub of resources for landowners and community groups.



A handful of the landowners and conservation staff involved in the pioneering Adur River Recovery project.

**Richard Black (Senior Land Advisor)**

**Steve Tillman (Land Advisor)**

**Chloe Harrison (Project Support Officer)**

*With thanks to our counterparts at Horsham District Council -*

*Helen Peacock (Environmental Coordination Manager),*

*Jacob Everitt (Senior Countryside Warden)*

*Pete Crawford (Parks and Countryside Manager),*

**Wilder Horsham District**

**April 2023**



**Sussex**  
Wildlife Trust



Horsham  
District  
Council

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