

SOUTH DOWNS

NATIONAL PARK TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



WELCOME



WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK TRUST

At the beginning of 2020 none of us could have foreseen that much of this year would be spent in lockdowns and socially distanced from each other. Whilst presenting challenges, this has not prevented us, nor our partners, from delivering our work.

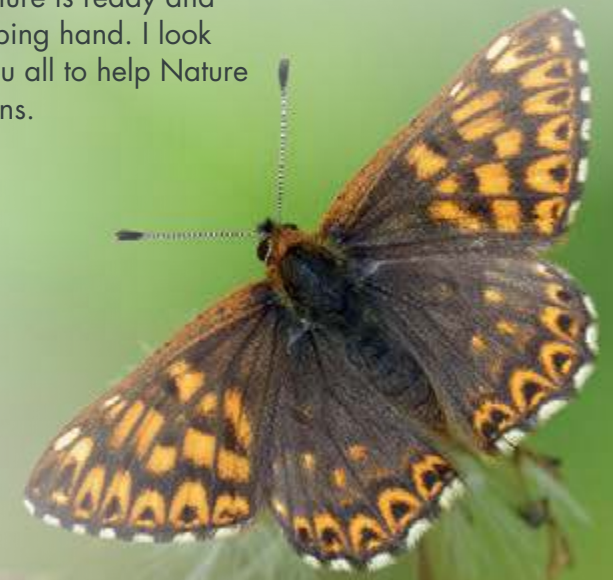
It has meant turning gardens into storage yards, delivering thousands of trees in the back of a hatchback and organising virtual site visits with funders. Given this work and our continued growth, I am exceptionally pleased with what the Trust has achieved and must note my thanks to our Trustees, staff and partners for driving forward under difficult circumstances.

In addition, whilst we might have suspected philanthropy to drop in the wake of uncertainty, it seems the opposite has been true. Our supporters and communities have been more generous and determined to support the conservation and enhancement of the South Downs National Park, for which we remain hugely grateful.

This support has enabled us to plant thousands of trees, to smash our fundraising target for Beelines, enhancing our ability to deliver for pollinators, to increase the number and quality of walking and cycling routes in the National Park and to enable thousands of children to get back outside after an extended period of remote learning.

However, we are clear that this is not enough. We have all become aware of both the increasing importance of nature but also its fragility and given this, we seriously want to 'up our game'. This is why, alongside the South Downs National Park Authority, we are launching ReNature, a £100 million campaign to take the land prioritised for nature in the South Downs from 25% to 33% over the next 10 years. Nature is ready and willing, all it needs is a helping hand. I look forward to working with you all to help Nature ReNature in the South Downs.

**Julie Fawcett,
Chair of South Downs
National Park Trust**



WHAT WE DO

We are the official charity of the South Downs National Park.

We want to see more land managed for wildlife, more rare habitats protected, more local communities thriving and more people able to access and enjoy their National Park.

This requires more investment and we want to secure and direct the substantial goodwill that exists for the South Downs to places where it can make a real difference.



ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2018

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK TRUST



Over **£1.6 million**

raised for projects in the National Park



enabled

6,245

children to visit the National Park



14

youth led projects supported



£94k

funds allocated to community projects

4,061

metres of path restored



50ha

across 8 sites supported to restore habitat for pollinators



£420k

Community Endowment established (24% increase on 2020)



2

new cycle routes funded

318

sign-ups for John Muir Award e-newsletters

**JOHN
MUIR
AWARD**



31 families and 4 individuals awarded



20km
of new hedgerow funded



1

NEW heritage walking app



5

apprentice rangers employed



36

stiles replaced with swing gates

10,990

trees planted

18,000 more planned

OUR PRIORITIES

INCREASE OUTSIDE LEARNING TIME IN THE NATIONAL PARK

Children today spend half as much time playing outside as their parents did. We want to change that, increasing the time spent learning outdoors in the National Park.



© SDNPA

CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

We want to help conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.



© SDNPA/Nick Heasman

IMPROVING WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

We want to increase the network of family-friendly walking and cycling routes and encourage more people to visit, who may live near the Park but rarely experience the many benefits it has to offer.



© SDNPA/Mischa Haller

HELP FOR COMMUNITIES VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT THEIR NATIONAL PARK

We support the grassroots groups already working to care for the National Park. We work with a number of supportive partners and donors to fund their work.

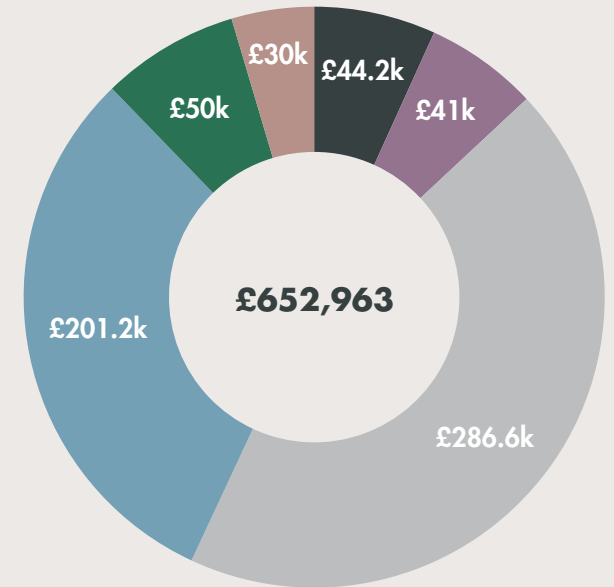


© SDNPA

FUNDING ALLOCATION

We are very grateful to the South Downs National Park Authority who have committed to fund our core operating costs (salaries and overheads) until 2023. This commitment allows us to focus on maximising funds to deliver projects within the South Downs National Park.

Despite a challenging year, the Trust has increased investment in the South Downs National Park for the third year running raising over £652,963 across the following areas:



- Available funds
- Increasing learning time outside
- Improving our woodland, heathland, grassland, rivers and coast habitats
- Improving and increasing walking and cycling routes
- Supporting Volunteering
- Arts and Culture



STAFF AND TRUSTEES

TRUSTEES

Our work is bolstered by a strong experienced staff and board of trustees



Julie Fawcett, Chair of Trustees – Trotton, West Sussex. Julie is an Operating Partner at Bridges Fund Management.



Josephine Carr, Trustee – Alfriston, East Sussex. Jo farms 160 acres at her family farm in Jevington.



Dan Montagnani, Trustee – Lyminster, West Sussex. Dan is a Fellow of the Royal Geological Society and Managing Director of Groundsure, an environmental land use data due diligence business.



Greg Mahon, Treasurer – East Dean, West Sussex. Greg is branch Principle of the Raymond James officer in Chichester.



Janet Duncton, Trustee – Petworth, West Sussex. Janet is Chair of West Sussex County Council and her family are farmers of the Leconsfield Estate.



Dean Orgill, Trustee – Horsham, West Sussex. Dean Orgill is Chairman of Mayo, Wynne and Baxter.



Vance Russell, Trustee
 – New Forest National Park. Vance Russell is a Wildlands and Climate Change Adaptation Consultant having previously been the California Director of programs for the National Forest Foundation.



Toni Shaw, Trustee – Basingstoke, Hampshire. Toni is a consultant to the Third Sector having previously spent 10 years as the CEO at the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation.



Richard Waring, Lewes – East Sussex. Richard has recently retired from teaching to return to his previous profession as an actor and writer. He is also a Volunteer Ranger for the SDNP, has an honours degree in Zoology and is an award winning children’s book writer.

STAFF



James Winkworth, Head of Charity – starting out in commercial sponsorship, James has worked in the charitable sector for over 10 years, at charities including Amnesty International and Samaritans. James has lived in Hampshire for over 30 years.



Miriam Swan, Grants Manager – Having lived in the Lewes district and Winchester, Miriam settled in West Sussex. She has experience of managing grants for historic building repairs and non-profit heritage organisations.






Sophie Ritson, Fundraising Development Manager – Sophie who lives in Emsworth has over 20 years fundraising experience with national charities such as the PDSA, Campaign for National Parks and regional causes such as St Wilfrid’s.



PROJECTS



IMPROVE WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

	£201k	raised for projects
	36	stiles replaced with swing gates
	2	Funding secured for 2 major cycle routes

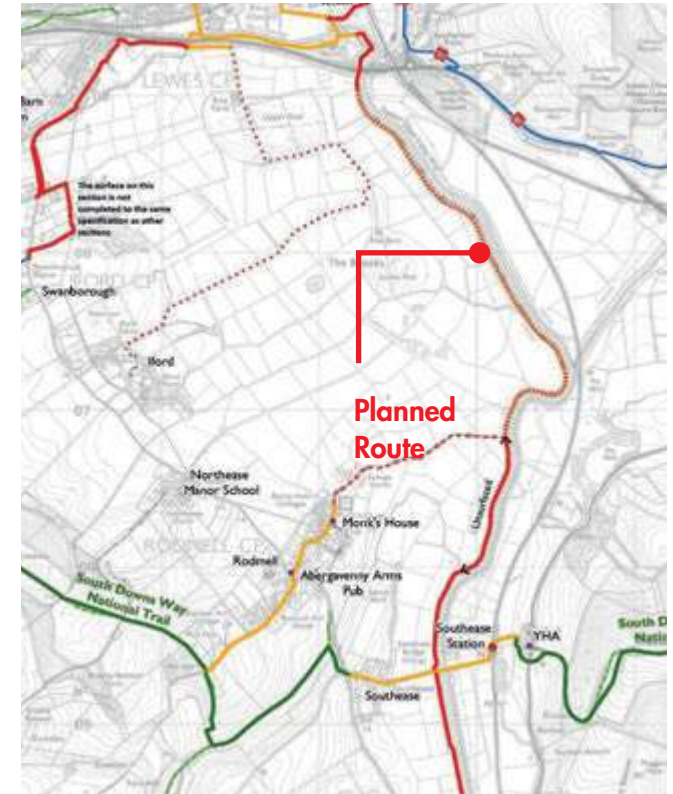
South Downs Way – Funding for a South Downs Way Western Officer resulted in improvements to the National Trail at Whitewool Farm; Cheesefoot Head; Harting Down and St Catherine’s Hill. Funding was also secured from the National Grid to help improve a 1km section leading up to Old Winchester Hill.



Drainage and surface repairs
© Jack Davidson/SDNPA

Centurion Way – £120,000 was secured for the next phase of Centurion Way. This funding will go towards a new section, taking it from West Dean up to Singleton.





Egrets Way – The final phase of this riverside trail requires £930,000. £805,000 has now been secured for the route, with £130,000 of this coming directly from the Trust. We are now seeking the remainder of the funding with an expectation that works will begin by the end of this year.



Stiles for Swing Gates – In partnership with the Friends of the South Downs and South Downs National Park Authority we replaced 36 stiles for swing gates, improving accessibility across the South Downs.



CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

	£287k	raised for improving habitats
	£30k	raised for arts and culture
	10,990	trees planted across 20 sites
	10	sites supported to restore habitat for pollinators

Trees for the Downs – With more woodland than any other National Park in England or Wales, trees form a vital part of our precious South Downs landscape. After a tremendous response to our initial 2019 appeal, Trees for the Downs will now look to plant 100,000 trees over the next five years, in community spaces, along roads and popular walking routes. We have raised £175,000 of approximately £260,000 necessary and will continue to raise the remaining amounts over the next five years. In 2020 we planted over 10,000 trees across 20 sites.



Beelines – Launched in 2019, we have exceeded our target of £75,000 and are now working with Plantlife to support 10 projects across the South Downs to extend our pollinator corridors. We have worked with Plantlife to develop implementation and management plans, with projects taking place this autumn, helping to increase connectivity in the corridors promoted by Buglife.

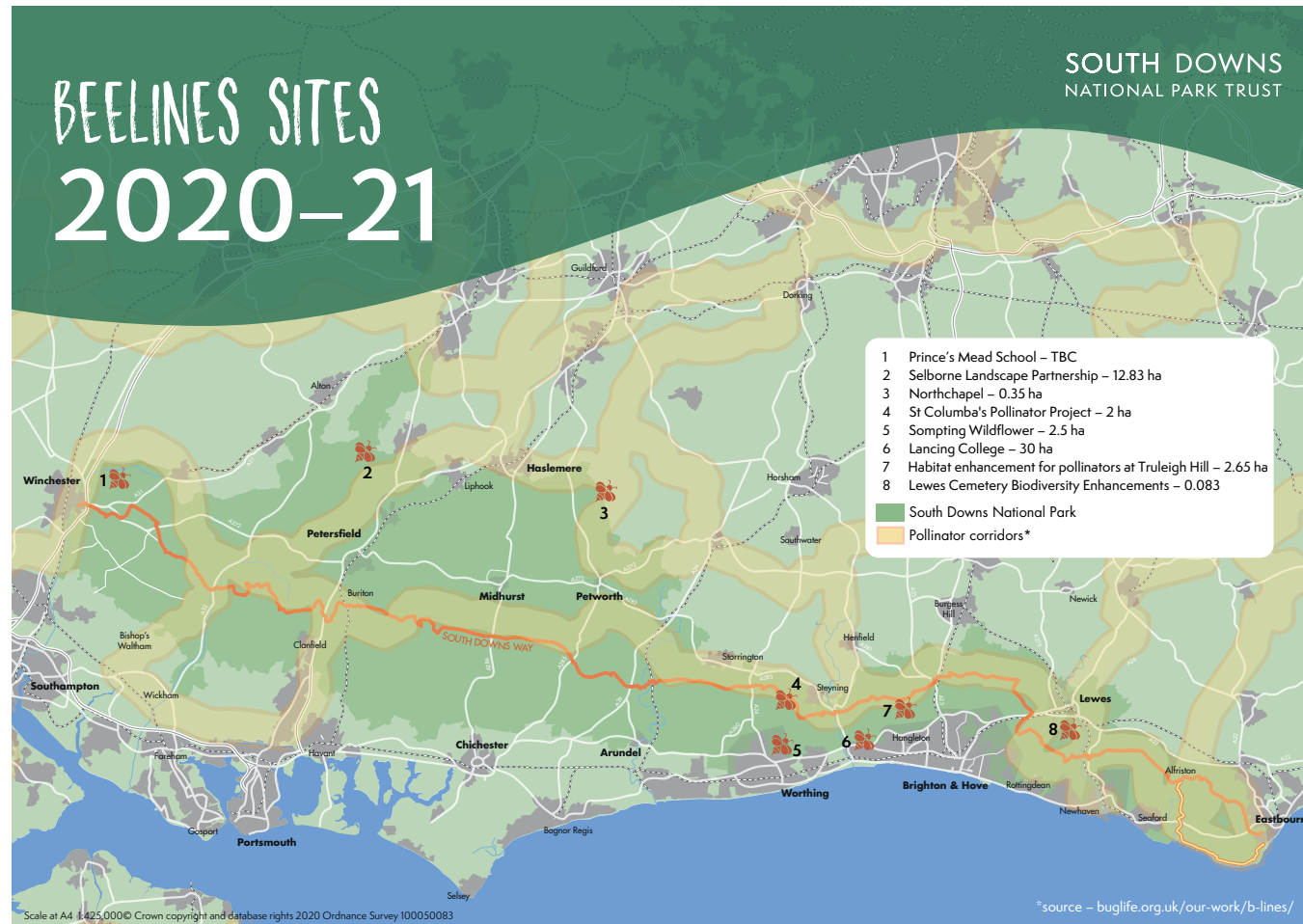


ACTING AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Ouse Valley Cares – This year the Trust was one of only 23 organisations nationally (from 650 applications) to have secured £150,000 development funding to produce a £2.5 million lottery funded project to develop an ambitious vision for the Ouse Valley, becoming a national pioneer in tackling climate change and increasing sustainability. The Ouse Valley was chosen due to the demonstrable risk to the communities from climate change, including flooding from both river and sea.

The proposed programme of work combines projects conceived and directed by local community groups with strategic support, working to deliver three key objectives:

- To create green corridors across and between communities and connections to the wider countryside and National Park.
- To enhance wellbeing, knowledge and skills needed in order to combat climate change.
- Reducing emissions and increasing sustainable energy and transport.





Ouse Valley Cares Project Area

PROTECTING OUR LOCAL HERITAGE

Fernhurst Furnace – Fernhurst Furnace is the site and remains of an early iron furnace which operated from c1550 until c1785 using local raw materials of charcoal, stone and iron ore. The site is the best-preserved Wealden Blast Furnace in the South East of England. The monument is on the Historic England At Risk Register and is considered highly vulnerable to water damage and the continuing deterioration of the Furnace Pond Dam. With support from the Headley Trust and in partnership with Natural England and Historic England, we have been able to assist in important works to help protect this site for the future.



Model of the ironworks made for the Fernhurst Furnace Preservation Group

Seven Sisters and Beachy Head – Working with the National Park Authority and Eastbourne County Council the South Downs National Park Trust is now the official charity of these two gateway attractions within the South Downs. As part of these works we will be fundraising to improve both the environment and visitor experience and have this year secured a £25,000 grant towards a substantial project to create a vibrant and sustainable new, year-round, visitor offer.



Seven Sisters and Beachy Head © SDNPA

INCREASE OUTDOOR LEARNING TIME IN THE NATIONAL PARK



£41k

raised for projects



3,000

Outdoor education for over 3,000 children



ONE

One online teacher training programme provided to improve outdoor learning



31 + 4

John Muir Award – awarded to 31 families and 4 individuals

Families Outreach Programme – Due to lockdown and social distancing guidelines our original plan for delivering the Family John Muir Award in spring and early summer 2020 was no longer possible. So, in June 2020 we launched a Family John Muir Award that would support families remotely. These secured nearly 100 participants in the spring, with a relaunched autumn programme receiving almost triple that.

Apprentices – New applicants paused due to COVID. However, of the five apprentices that finished the scheme in 2020, two have gone on to become apprentice rangers. Pleasingly, in January, one of the apprentices secured a new role as the Nature Reserve Manager at Kingley Vale.

Youth Volunteering – These activities were delayed in 2020. We are now planning to run them in 2021 when we will be able to promote them alongside a dedicated £30,000 'iWill for Nature' Fund



Families Outreach Programme © SDNPA

HELP FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS WHICH CARE FOR THEIR NATIONAL PARK



£331k

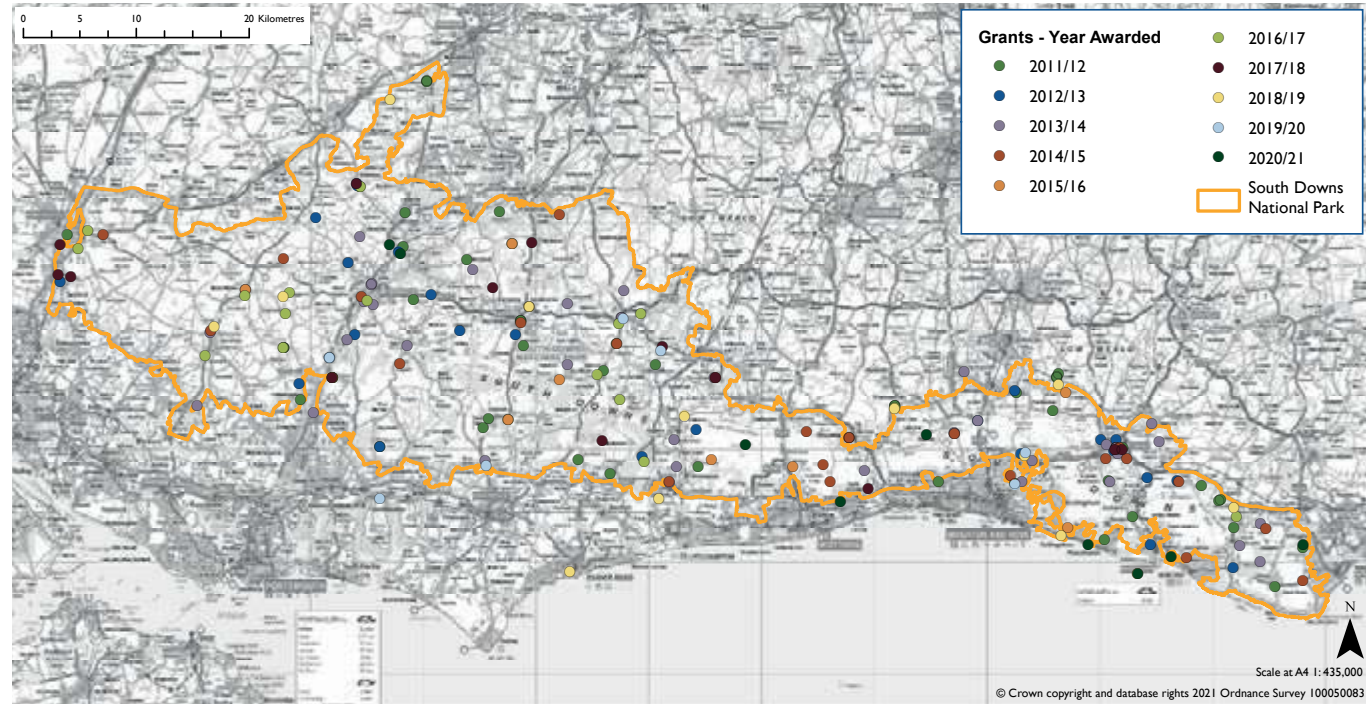
endowment established



5

5 grant funds for community projects

In January 2020, following a successful fundraising campaign to set up a sustainable, endowed fund for community projects, the SDNP Trust invested £331,390 with Quilters Cheviot. In 2021 the SDNP Trust invested a further £40,000 in the endowment, from their unrestricted funds. This, alongside the return achieved by the fund, has resulted in a current value of £412,938.



Despite our Grant Funds being paused earlier this year they have now re-opened, with projects supported including:

- Butts Brow, Eastbourne (£1,800),
- Dark Night Skies Schools Project (£2,000),
- Fulking Ram Pump Education project (£1,039),
- Habitat restoration in Brooklands Park (£7,500),
- Liss Men's Shed base and workshop (£5,000).

Other Funds – In addition to our Sustainable Communities Fund and Volunteer Conservation Fund we have established the aforementioned iWill for Nature fund (£30,000) to support Youth Led Projects, a fund to support the activities of volunteer litter pickers (£10,000) and a fund to support habitat creation in Schools (£7,000). These funds will be opening up over the next year.

EXAMPLE PROJECT

The Living Coast Undersea Experience – Awarded an additional £2,000 to a previous grant of £7,000 from two years ago.

The group requested funding to refine and develop their marine virtual reality education and outreach program, which had been piloted successfully in communities and schools to teach young people about Beachy Head West Marine Conservation Zone.



Community learning about the nearby marine environment using virtual reality
© SDNPA

EXAMPLE PROJECT

Bees and Seas – A grant of £7,500 was awarded to Bees and Seas which will connect and support pollinators, parks, people and partners to enhance the ecological network between the sea and the South Downs through re-visioning an abandoned industrial storage area as parkland in Worthing.



Abandoned park area to be re-visioned
© SDNPA

The project will:

- Renovate a degraded industrial area of parkland, turning it into a volunteer, nature and education hub.
- Create new areas of chalk grassland, vegetated shingle, pollinator habitat, medicinal herb garden and orchard trees.
- Engage in creative and arts based activities with local people to re-vision the Brooklands site
- A series of vocational, educational and fun events to engage local communities from all backgrounds in their local environment.



THANK YOU

PRESIDENTS AND PATRONS



The Duke of Richmond and Gordon
Chairman of the Development Board



Mrs Susan Pyper,
Lord-Lieutenant of West Sussex
President of the South Downs
National Park Trust



Mr Tom Floyd,
Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire
Vice President of South Downs
National Park Trust



Mr Michael Rudman,
Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex
Patron of South Downs National Park
Trust



Hugh Bonneville
Ambassador of South Downs
National Park Trust

CORE FUNDER

A BIG thank you to the South Downs National Park Authority. Their core support means that 100% of public donations go towards vital projects in the South Downs.



FOUNDING PATRONS

We are sincerely grateful to our founding patrons who have provided us with necessary and long term support, which has helped to establish the Trust and our programmes.

Oliver and Mala Haarmann
Simon and Harriett Patterson
Franck R Petitgas
Charles and Jans Rolls
Gordon and Jennifer Singer
James Tuttiett Charitable Trust

DONORS

The Basil Shippam and Alsford Trust
The Carpenter Box Charitable Foundation
Chalk Cliff Trust
The F Glenister Woodger Trust
Forest Holidays
Friends of the South Downs
Gareth Naeme OBE
The Gerald Micklem Charitable Trust
The Golden Bottle Trust
Gordon Rushmer
The Headley Trust
The Henocq Law Trust
The Ivo Trust
Jo Holden Charitable Trust
The John Coates Charitable Trust
Jude's – a carbon negative B Corp
Maureen Chowen DL
Michael Chowen CBE, DL
MJ Camp Foundation
Nadim Khattar & Andrea Kowalski
National Grid
National Lottery Community Fund

DONORS (cont.)

The Rampion Fund at Sussex Community Foundation
Rountree Tyron Galleries
South East Water
The Spencer Wills Trust
Supporters of the South Downs Lottery
Sussex Community Foundation
Swire Charitable Trust
Syder Foundation
Tory Trust

VISITOR GIVING PARTNERS

Best of Brighton
Deans Place
Fizz on Foot
Hydro Hotel
The Village Inn Buriton

PARTNERS

Bug Life
Butterfly Conservation Sussex
Egrets Way
Friends of the Centurion Way
Friends of the South Downs
National Trust
Plantlife
South Downs National Park Authority
South Down Farm Clusters
Sussex Green Living
South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Help Nature to ReNature



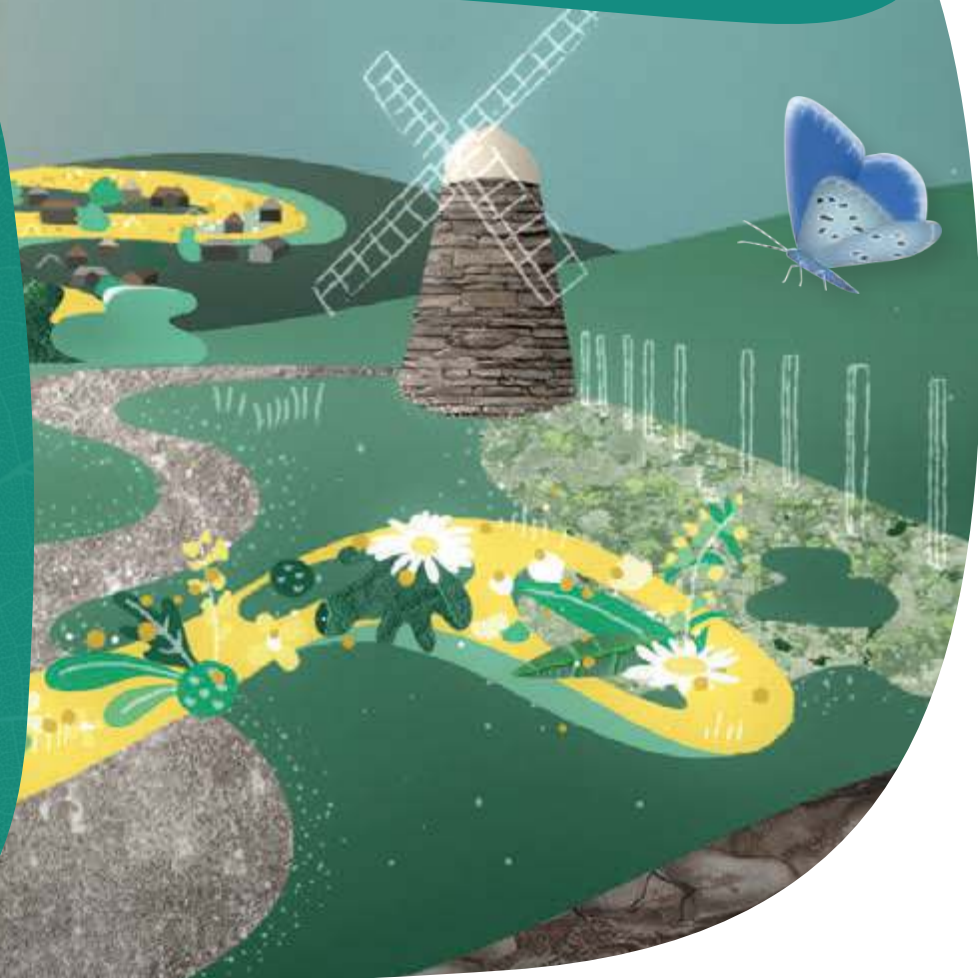
SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK



At the moment 25% of the South Downs National Park is managed for nature. Our goal is to increase that to 33% by 2030.

Join us to help nature
#ReNature

[www.southdowns.gov.uk/
renature/](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/renature/)



SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK TRUST

Registered Charity 1174975

CONTACT US

We are based at the South Downs Centre, Midhurst

South Downs Centre
North Street
Midhurst
West Sussex
GU29 9DH

01730 814810

info@southdownstrust.org.uk

Cover image: Sun setting over Beachy Head and Belle Tout lighthouse
© SDNPA / Will Tompsett

