

Report to	<b>Scrutiny Committee for Economy, Transport and Environment</b>
Date	<b>6 June 2011</b>
Report By	<b>Director of Economy, Transport and Environment</b>
Title of Report	<b>Environment Strategy for East Sussex</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To invite Scrutiny Committee to provide further comments on the amended Environment Strategy for East Sussex.</b>

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Scrutiny Committee is asked (1) to note the actions taken to amend the Environment Strategy for East Sussex following consultation and; and (2) invited to provide further comments on the current draft strategy

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## **1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 East Sussex County Council is one of a number of partners who have developed the Environment Strategy for East Sussex. Where the County Council is identified as the lead agency to co-ordinate actions to implement the strategy, or as a delivery partner, this can be met from within existing resources. In most cases these actions form part of existing service plan commitments. Some actions which are being led by other organisations will require external funding, but there are no other financial implications for the County Council arising from implementation of the strategy.

## **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 The current draft of the Environment Strategy for East Sussex is provided at appendix 2 to this report.

## **3. Purpose of an Environment Strategy for East Sussex**

3.1 The environment is central to decisions about development in East Sussex and therefore inextricably linked to the future economic prosperity of the county. The Environment Strategy for East Sussex has been developed to identify shared priorities for the parts of our environment that are of the greatest strategic importance to the county, such as those which support the green economy or help deliver our green infrastructure needs. However, it also reflects the fact that there are elements of our environment where, particularly in difficult economic times, we need to take a more pragmatic approach to environmental protection. This has been achieved by developing an approach which combines the county's environmental assets and strategic priorities into an over-arching strategy that reflects our joint environmental goals and challenges, rather than creating an environmental wish-list.

3.2 The development of an environment strategy has been a long-standing commitment of the County Council. It was one of the key performance measures in the Council Plan 2010/11 (Policy Steer 6.9) and assists in the delivery of the following key policy steers in the 2011/12 Council Plan:

- Achieve a fair balance between economic growth and the protection of our urban, rural and coastal environment
- Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.

3.3 The starting point for the strategy has been the strategic priority and key tasks for the environment and climate change in *Pride of Place*. The *Pride of Place* Countywide Action Plan encourages partners to work together to promote, protect and enhance the natural and built environment and develop a countywide

partnership environment strategy leading to cleaner and greener communities and improved access to open spaces. With these drivers in mind, the County Council initiated the development of a draft strategy involving a range of organisations and individuals. The aims and objectives of the strategy are set out in more detail in Appendix 1.

#### **4 Feedback from consultation**

4.1 A public consultation was held on the strategy during the winter of 2010/11 and an informal workshop held with the Scrutiny Committee in March 2011. A smaller than expected number of consultation responses were received, partly explained by the fact that many organisations took part in the production of the draft strategy, and did not therefore comment on it. However, 93 detailed comments were received and a large majority of respondents felt the strategy had correctly identified the environmental priorities for East Sussex and that the desired outcomes and actions to help deliver them were the right ones.

4.2 At the same time a survey of the views of children and young people on the proposed priorities set out in the draft strategy was conducted by the East Sussex Youth Cabinet. In total almost 2,000 responses were received from the Youth Cabinet survey. The most important environmental issues for children and young people were improving habitats to prevent the loss of plant and animal species, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and becoming more adaptive to climate change, and reducing air pollution and noise.

4.3 The key suggested improvements which have been made to the strategy were to make it clearer that the strategy:

- builds on existing local, detailed environmental plans which have already brought about significant environmental improvements
- is being developed in a difficult financial climate and that, although we do not expect the full 15 years covered by the strategy to be as tough, resourcing some elements of it will require external funding
- will not result in duplication of effort and will help improve efficiency and effectiveness
- will need to involve community groups (including parish councils) and individuals much more as action plans are developed and implemented.

#### **5. Environmental Issues**

5.1 The Environment Strategy for East Sussex aims to deliver the strategic priority and key tasks for the environment and climate change in *Pride of Place*.

#### **6. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

6.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the actions taken to amend the Environment Strategy for East Sussex following consultation and invited to provide further comments on the current draft strategy.

RUPERT CLUBB  
Director of Economy, Transport and Environment  
26 May 2011

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Local Member: All

#### Background Documents

None

## Aims and objectives of the strategy

- 1.1 There is clear evidence that people value the environment and think more should be done to safeguard it. In the recently published 2011 Defra survey of public attitudes and behaviours towards the environment 92 per cent of respondents said it was fairly or very important for them to have public gardens, parks, commons or other green spaces nearby. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents agreed that they “worry about changes to the countryside in the UK and loss of native animals and plants”. In the ‘Your Community’ East Sussex Residents’ Panel Survey of November 2010 to January 2011 environmental issues such as county parks and footpaths, clean streets, and recycling sites and waste disposal were all ranked as important issues for residents. The environment was also one of the top two most voted for issues that young people were concerned about in the East Sussex Youth Cabinet Big Vote ’09.
- 1.2 Our local environment is crucial to those that live and work in East Sussex. It provides essential services: clean air and drinking water, the soil on which we grow our food, healthy seas which support marine life and sustainable fisheries, the open spaces that enable us to be physically and mentally active, and a distinctive and in some cases iconic landscape which supports our tourism industry. Our health, quality of life and economic prosperity depend on keeping our environment in good condition.
- 1.3 A lot of excellent work on the environment is already being done in East Sussex, for example through local action and management plans, local development frameworks and the Local Transport Plan. These have driven environmental improvements and will continue to do so. However, what has been missing until now has been one shared, long-term strategic environmental framework for the county, which brings together the high level environmental aims and objectives of those with environmental interests in the county and which helps us map out everything that is going on in the environmental arena. Without this complete picture and shared agenda we risk failing to:
- achieve the right balance between economic growth and the protection of our environment
  - maximise the potential of our environmental assets
  - identify shared environmental priorities which ensure we target resources where there is the greatest need
  - avoid duplicating effort and wasting money by not working together or in co-ordination with partners
  - identify areas where we have no plans in place to deal with current or anticipated environmental problems
  - embed environmental priorities in other strategies and plans to ensure they play their role in protecting and enhancing the environment and ensuring we reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.
- 1.4 The outcomes of the county-wide environment strategy by 2026 are for partners to have:
- created a better quality environment in East Sussex which has made people healthier
  - made people more aware of how important the environment is to our prosperity and created ‘low carbon’ and environmental jobs
  - made East Sussex a place which is more self-sufficient, that uses energy and resources better
  - conserved and enhanced the landscape, built and historic environment of East Sussex so that it retains its unique character
  - conserved areas of high nature conservation quality and reversed the loss of plant and animal species
  - put East Sussex firmly on track to becoming a ‘low carbon’ county and made it more adaptive to climate change
  - enabled people to become ‘greener’ in the way they live their lives
  - ensure the environment is given appropriate consideration in other strategies and plans for East Sussex

The financial climate in which this strategy has been produced is extremely tough and this strategy is designed to reduce financial burdens at a time of diminishing resources by identifying the key environmental priorities of partners and working together better. An example of this is how, through joint work on developing the strategy, the Sussex Wildlife Trust is supporting Wealden District Council to produce a 'best practice' green infrastructure plan, which could be used by the other local planning authorities in East Sussex.



# Draft Environment Strategy for East Sussex

20 May 2011

The Environment Strategy for East Sussex was developed for the East Sussex Strategic Partnership by a network of organisations and individuals, who have decided to work together to help deliver the environmental vision for the county set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, *Pride of Place*. They include:

Action in Rural Sussex

Bradford's Farm

Eastbourne Borough Council

East Sussex County Council

English Heritage

Environment Agency

Friends of the Earth Lewes

Hastings Borough Council

High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Lewes District Council

National Trust

Natural England

NHS East Sussex Downs & Weald

NHS Hastings & Rother

Plumpton Village Action Plan

Rother District Council

SpeakUp

RSPB

Sea Space



South Downs Joint Committee

Sussex Air Quality Partnership

Sussex Archaeological Society

Sussex Sea Fisheries District Committee

Sussex Wildlife Trust

Transition Town Lewes

Wealden District Council

This strategy was also developed with input from the East Sussex Youth Cabinet and the views of around 2,000 children and young people in the county.



# Proposed Foreword from the East Sussex Strategic Partnership

(to be discussed with and approved by ESSP)

*Pride of Place*, the Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex, was developed by the six local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships in the county and sets out a strategic priority for East Sussex for 2026 “to protect and enhance our natural and built environment for current and future generations, and enable individuals and organisations to tackle and adapt to climate change”. The *Pride of Place* Countywide Action Plan encourages partners to work together to develop a partnership environment strategy to achieve it and a wide range of organisations and individuals have worked together in response to this.

This Environment Strategy for East Sussex identifies the environmental priorities that are of the greatest strategic importance to the county, such as those which support the economy, prepare us better for climate change, and minimise the amount of waste we send to landfill or landraise. In these difficult economic times, we have taken a more pragmatic approach to environmental management because we are constrained by limited resources. This strategy is not, therefore, an environmental wish-list. We have brought together an over-arching document of the real environmental priorities that a range of partners share, which we can deliver better by working together.

Our local environment is part of our life support system. It provides essential services: clean air and drinking water, the soil on which we grow our food, healthy seas for diverse marine life and sustainable fisheries, the open spaces that enable us to be physically and mentally active, and a distinctive and in some cases iconic landscape which supports our tourism industry.

Of course, a lot of excellent work on the environment is already being done in East Sussex through the local development frameworks, local environmental strategies, management plans and action plans. This strategy doesn't replace, duplicate or make them invalid. There will always be an important role for local action to address local issues as well as implementing global, national and county-wide environmental priorities locally.

It is precisely because there is so much detailed environmental work going on in the county that we need this complete picture, together with a jointly agreed road map of how to deliver the *Pride of Place* vision for East Sussex. Although the financial climate in which this strategy has been produced is extremely tough, without it we risk failing to target the limited resources we do have on the environmental issues of most urgent need, or where there are the greatest opportunities. We risk duplicating effort and wasting money by not working in a co-ordinated way together and failing to identify areas where we have no plans in place to deal with current or anticipated environmental problems. In short, we risk greater damage to our environment and health and harm to the local economy.

Environmental action taken on the right issues in the right way makes sound financial sense and helps keep us healthier – think of businesses cutting down on energy use and raw materials, growing your own food at home, or taking a walk instead of the car when you have the choice.

This is a 15 year strategy. Although the financial position is very difficult at present, we do not expect to be in the same situation throughout the whole lifetime of the strategy. It is therefore right that we remain realistic about what is deliverable in the short term, while maintaining a focus on the right ambitions for the longer-term. A funding plan has been developed for the strategy which shows that many of the actions identified can be undertaken at little or no cost using existing resources and through joint working, some of which should cost less in future. A few of the actions depend upon additional funding being identified and partners will need to work together to secure that funding if we are to deliver all of our goals in this strategy.

This Environment Strategy for East Sussex is aimed primarily at agreeing a joint agenda for action and is founded around 10 principles that will guide us towards reaching our goal. The East Sussex Strategic Partnership encourages all partners, businesses and other organisations to adopt these principles and develop new strategies, services, and business plans in line with them. More broadly, the strategy is designed to be accessible to everyone. During 2011 partners will be organising events at which communities and individuals can get involved by sharing expertise, knowledge and ideas. We also want to understand what further support you need to play the role you wish to have in delivering the strategy.

The East Sussex Strategic Partnership welcomes the work that partners have done to bring the strategy together and is pleased to adopt it as the county-wide Environment Strategy for East Sussex. We hope it will inspire you too.

## **East Sussex Strategic Partnership July 2011**

East Sussex Strategic Partnership (ESSP) brings together different parts of our local community - public services, local businesses, community groups and voluntary sector organisations. It was set up in 2000 to help organisations work together in a co-ordinated way to plan local services, tackle the issues that matter to local people and improve quality of life in East Sussex. Find out more about how we will deliver this vision and our long-term aims through [Pride of Place](#), the Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex.



# A vision for the Environment of East Sussex: 2026

This Environment Strategy for East Sussex sets out to deliver the strategic priority for the environment and climate change in *Pride of Place* (the Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex), which is to *protect and enhance our natural and built environment for current and future generations, and enable individuals and organisations to tackle and adapt to climate change.*

We set out below what East Sussex will look like in 2026 if we succeed in delivering the strategy.

## By 2026 East Sussex will be a place where:

- there is a better quality environment which has made people healthier
- people are more aware of how important the environment is to our prosperity and where there are more 'low carbon' and environmental jobs
- we are more self-sufficient and use energy and resources better
- the landscape and built and historic environment has been conserved and enhanced so that it retains its unique character
- areas of high nature conservation quality have been conserved and the loss of plant and animal species has been reversed
- we are firmly on track to becoming a 'low carbon' county and are more adaptive to climate change
- people have become 'greener' in the way they live their lives
- the environment lies at the heart of other strategies and plans for the county and where we have worked together better to implement them

To realise this vision by 2026, this Environment Strategy for East Sussex establishes 10 environmental principles, which are the ways that we think we all need to do things in future. It also identifies three key short/medium term actions, showing how we will start to make the strategy happen and who will be responsible for that.



## Ten environmental principles for East Sussex

1. Promote the economic value of the environment and opportunities for growth in jobs and prosperity that it presents
2. Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, become more adaptive to climate change and help individuals and communities to do the same
3. Protect and enhance the diverse inland, coastal and marine habitats of the county and the wildlife they support, making them more resilient to climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and help create healthy seas and sustainable fisheries
4. Respect and care for the built heritage of East Sussex, develop high quality environments in our towns and villages and protect and enhance the distinctive character of the landscape of the county
5. Promote the use of open spaces as part of healthier and more active lifestyles
6. Minimise the amount of waste created in East Sussex and reuse and recycle more household and business waste
7. Reduce the impact of travel on the environment and improve sustainable travel choices to access services and facilities within and between communities in the county
8. Improve the quality of the environment and our health by reducing air and noise pollution
9. Reduce the environmental impacts of food production and distribution, improve health through better diets and support the agricultural and food economy of the county
10. Increase our understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the environment of East Sussex

The Environment Strategy for East Sussex aims to make a real, practical difference on the ground. The things that we have agreed to do together include:

- undertaking an assessment of the economic value of the environment of the county and making it available to all decision makers to ensure we factor in its true value (e.g. in infrastructure schemes and planning)
- providing local people with more access to large natural greenspaces for better health and wellbeing
- carrying out a study to see if we can create compost or energy from food waste
- providing more support for local food producers and retailers and finding people more places to grow their own food and the knowledge/skills to do so through a Sustainable and Healthy Food Action Plan
- providing support for local waste prevention plans and community waste management projects

Each year ESSP will publish a progress report showing how far we have got in making the strategy happen.

## Getting it right

During the winter of 2010/11 public consultation was undertaken on the draft strategy. A large majority of respondents felt the strategy had correctly identified the environmental priorities for East Sussex and that the desired outcomes and actions to help deliver them were the right ones.

At the same time a survey of the views of children and young people on the proposed priorities set out in the draft strategy was conducted by the East Sussex Youth Cabinet. In total almost 2,000 responses were received from the Youth Cabinet survey. The most important environmental issues for children and young people were improving habitats to prevent the loss of plant and animal species, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and becoming more adaptive to climate change, and reducing air pollution and noise.

Although you told us that the Environment Strategy for East Sussex was heading in the right direction, you suggested improvements which have been made to the strategy. This included not just setting out future challenges but also reflecting more of what has already been achieved for the environment of the county, especially at the local level. You also said that the strategy needed to acknowledge the difficult financial climate in which we find ourselves and will need to involve community groups (including parish councils) and individuals much more as action plans are developed and implemented. This type of feedback is enormously valuable and we have built it into the strategy and our plans to implement it.



As far as possible we have tried to avoid the use of jargon and technical language, but sometimes it is easier to use a term like 'low carbon' or 'green infrastructure' than use a long sentence that spells out exactly what this means every time it is referred to in the strategy. At the back of this strategy is a glossary of some of the technical language used.

## Environmental principle 1:

*Promote the economic value of the environment and opportunities for growth in jobs and prosperity that it presents*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

It is estimated that tourists bring £1 billion into the local economy of East Sussex every year

This visitor spend is thought to support around 16,600 jobs, as well as facilities and services for local people

It is estimated that the woodland and grasslands alone in East Sussex provided services to us worth £4.6 million each year

The Government estimates that, globally, the degradation of our planet's ecosystems is costing us over £40 billion each year – a figure that could rise to the equivalent of 7% of global GDP by 2050

Action to prevent degradation can have a benefit to cost ratio of as much as 100:1 according to Defra

### What needs to happen:

1. Promote sustainable consumption and production and encourage and support the transition to a low carbon economy in the county
2. Ensure that the economic value of the environment is fully taken into account in decision making by businesses, organisations and the community
3. Further support the development of sustainable tourism in East Sussex through organisations such as Visit Sussex

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. There is a limited understanding of the economic value of the environment in decision making so that it is frequently undervalued or ignored
2. Opportunities exist to create jobs and economic growth in areas which bring about environmental improvement, such as renewable energy and low carbon industries, and there are opportunities to stimulate markets for sustainable locally branded products such as timber, biomass, High Weald and South Downs lamb and venison, wine and MSC certified fisheries
3. Sustainable tourism in East Sussex brings economic benefits but it is dependent on the distinctive, high quality landscapes, wildlife and habitats and heritage assets of the county



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will include measures to encourage and support the transition to a low carbon economy in a new Economic Development Strategy for the county by December 2011	Lead: East Sussex County Council
We will develop tools to assess the services and benefits that the environment provides to East Sussex by March 2013	Lead: Natural England Partners: Borough and District Councils, East Sussex County Council
We will sign up 20 more businesses across the South Downs to the Green Tourism Business Scheme by June 2012	Lead: South Downs National Park Authority

## Environmental principle 2:

*Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, become more adaptive to climate change and help individuals and communities to do the same*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

With climate change we are expected to have more extreme weather such more heat waves, storms and flash flooding

Flooding in Lewes, Uckfield and Robertsbridge in October 2000 caused around £130 million of damage

The 10 day heatwave in August 2003 caused an estimated 30 premature deaths in East Sussex

By 2026 we can expect sea levels along our coastline to be over 11 centimetres higher than they were in 1990 and by 2050 we could have over a quarter less summer rainfall than we have now

In East Sussex we each create 13 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, including the emissions created from the goods and services we buy – our sustainable world fair share will be only two tonnes per person by 2050

### What needs to happen:

1. Reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> in East Sussex at least in line with national targets and support the development of appropriate local sources of renewable energy
2. Prepare for the effects of climate change and ensure that organisations and communities in East Sussex develop and implement plans to adapt to climate change
3. Effectively manage flood risk and coastal erosion, ensuring that new developments are appropriately located and that people and property are better prepared and protected

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. The impacts of predicted increases in severe types of weather: heat waves, droughts, storms, flooding and coastal erosion, and the additional demand for water
2. Development on floodplains and how this affects our ability to adapt to the predicted impacts of climate change
3. The need to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, and source more of the county's energy from our local renewable sources



## What we will do

What we will do	Who will be responsible
We will develop climate change adaptation plans by March 2012, in order to implement measures in all priority areas	Lead: Environment Agency Partners: Climate Change Partnership for East Sussex
We will work with partners and the community to implement the first phase of measures in Shoreline Management Plans and prepare a draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for the county by December 2012	Lead: (Shoreline Management Plans) South East Coastal Group Lead: (Local Flood Risk Management Strategy) East Sussex County Council); Partners: Borough and District Councils, Environment Agency
We will set a target for reducing CO <sub>2</sub> emissions and begin to implement priority measures by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Climate Change Partnership for East Sussex

## Environmental principle 3:

*Protect and enhance the diverse inland, coastal and marine habitats of the county and the wildlife they support, making them more resilient to climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and help create healthy seas and sustainable fisheries*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Sussex as a whole is home to 472 species which are either globally threatened or in rapid decline

Half of the county's farmland is under an environmental stewardship scheme

East Sussex has 7 internationally important habitat sites, 9 National Nature Reserves, 64 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 286 local Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

All of the beaches in East Sussex met EU mandatory bathing water quality standards in 2009

East Sussex has the only designated Marine Site of Nature Conservation Importance in the UK

### What needs to happen:

1. Protect and enhance key biodiversity sites, halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity, and further develop and restore large scale habitats
2. Improve the quality of rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater and estuaries
3. Create a coherent network of well-managed marine conservation zones, to protect important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and archaeological remains, support healthy seas and sustainable fisheries

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. Threats to habitats and biodiversity from climate change, including the impacts on coastal habitats & species and rivers and streams, and the need to manage habitats to improve their adaptability to support biodiversity
2. The health of our rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater and estuaries is under pressure from how we use the land and from climate change – there are opportunities to protect and improve the ecology of our waterbodies through river basin management
3. The need to protect and enhance the marine and coastal environment and support sustainable fisheries



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will develop co-ordinated implementation and management plans for 10 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and local, national and internationally important biodiversity and geodiversity sites by March 2013	Lead: Sussex Wildlife Trust Partners: Sussex Biodiversity Partnership
We will complete investigations into all water bodies by March 2012 and publish an action plan by 2015 of detailed measures aiming to bring rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater and estuaries up to EU environmental standards	Lead: Environment Agency Partners: South East River Basin Liaison Panel
We will work with industry, leisure users and other stakeholders to identify and make recommendations to government for securing the designation of Marine Conservation Zones off the East Sussex Coast by March 2012	Lead: Balanced Seas Project Team

## Environmental principle 4:

*Respect and care for the built heritage of East Sussex, develop high quality environments in our towns and villages and protect and enhance the distinctive character of the landscape of the county*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

51% of East Sussex is part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 14% is part of the South Downs National Park

Ashdown Forest is the largest area of heathland vegetation and largest public access site in South East England

English Heritage identified 33 heritage assets at risk in East Sussex in 2010

The historic environment of East Sussex includes archaeological sites stretching over 250,000 years, Iron Age hillforts, Roman villas, Saxon burial grounds, medieval castles and ship wrecks

The population of the county is estimated to increase by 23,400 between 2010 and 2026

### What needs to happen:

1. Conserve the landscape and built heritage of East Sussex in a manner appropriate to its significance and protect the distinctive character of towns, villages and wider landscape of the county
2. Develop high quality environments in our towns and villages and improve streets and other public open spaces so that people feel safer in them
3. Reduce the environmental impact of new and existing developments and create well planned environmental and green infrastructure that supports the landscape, habitats and wildlife

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. The deterioration, fragmentation and loss of the distinctive character of the East Sussex landscape and the habitats it supports, through creeping suburbanisation in rural areas, loss of significant landscape features, trees and hedgerows, decline in quality and fragmentation of woodlands, and heritage assets at risk
2. The need to regenerate urban areas, and reduce environmental crime, anti-social behaviour and the dominance of vehicles
3. The need to manage the impacts of new development and infrastructure on the local identity of our built environment, landscape and habitats



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will develop a countywide approach to green infrastructure that supports the management and restoration of the county's landscape and the habitats its supports by March 2013	Lead: Sussex Wildlife Trust Partners: South Downs National Park Authority; High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee; Borough and District Councils
We will develop Area Action Plans, Master Plans and other plans which improve towns and villages across East Sussex and strengthen their local character by March 2013	Lead: Borough and District Councils Partners: East Sussex County Council
We will ensure that the appropriate environmental infrastructure associated with new development is planned for and that environmental objectives are represented in Local Development Frameworks by March 2012	Lead: Borough and District Councils Partners: East Sussex County Council

## Environmental principle 5:

*Promote the use of open and green spaces as part of healthier and more active lifestyles*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Only 13% of people in East Sussex are meeting current recommendations for weekly physical activity

Physical activity reduces the risk of developing major chronic diseases like coronary heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes by up to 50%, and the risk of premature death by about 20-30%

Physical inactivity is estimated to be costing the NHS in East Sussex over £10.5 million per year

Evidence from the Natural England/Department of Health Walking for Health scheme suggests that for every £1 invested in the scheme, £7 worth of health benefit is delivered

People who live within 500m of accessible green space are 24% more likely to take the recommend amount of physical activity

### What needs to happen:

1. Promote the use of open spaces, including the countryside, beach, parks and gardens among children and young people, and older people, as a means of enabling people to live healthy and active lives
2. Ensure that 90% of the population of the county has access to a natural greenspace within 5 minutes of their home, to provide the opportunity to be active outdoors on a daily basis
3. Promote everyday active travel with walking and cycling routes through green corridors

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. Opportunities exist to reduce health inequalities, improve physical and mental wellbeing and reduce the costs of healthcare by improving physical activity and participation in sports, active recreation, learning and play in open spaces
2. Our open spaces are under-valued as resources for the community and places where people can connect with and benefit from being in the natural environment
3. We need to provide better sustainable access to open spaces, in line with national and local standards



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will ensure a co-ordinated approach to opportunities for physical activity in green spaces particularly focussing on the needs of people who experience health inequalities or who are least likely to access physical activity opportunities by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex Public Health Department Partners: East Sussex County Council, District and Borough Councils, Natural England
We will begin to implement a Strategic Open Spaces Strategy for East Sussex to provide greater public access to open space by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council
We will complete the Pebsham Countryside Park Connect 2 coastal circuit between Hastings and Bexhill by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council

# Environmental principle 6:

*Reduce, reuse and recycle waste and use more unavoidable waste as a resource*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Each person in East Sussex created an average of 475kg of waste in 2009/10

64% of household waste in East Sussex was recycled, composted or used to create renewable electricity in 2009/10

36% of our household waste was landfilled

Waste analysis in East Sussex has shown that a third of what's left in the average dustbin is food waste, costing households around £420 every year

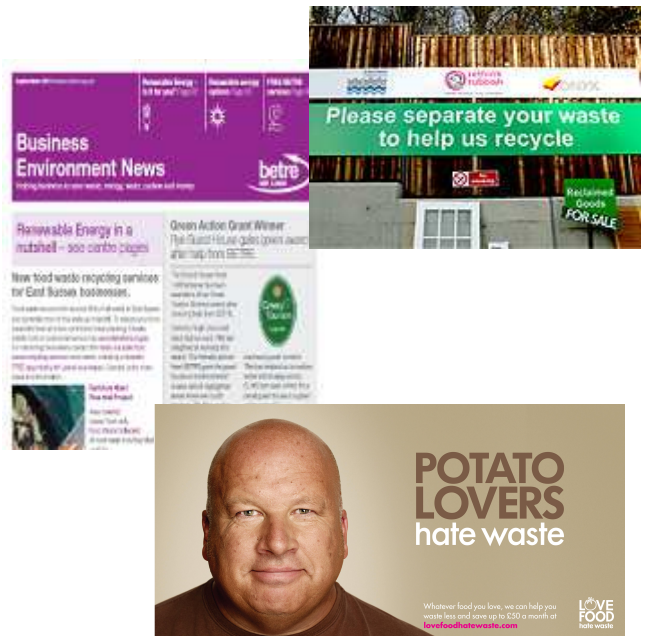
Around 80% of waste results from business activity and costs businesses around 4% of their turnover

### What needs to happen:

1. Reduce, reuse, and recycle more, and generate energy from the waste we do create using sustainable waste management technologies and facilities
2. Help the business community to become more resource efficient and create less waste, and to reuse, recycle and compost more of its waste
3. Reduce food and packaging waste and increase its recycling and composting (or anaerobic digestion), both from homes and catering establishments

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. Waste is still not widely regarded as a resource; too few discarded materials are reused, recycled or recovered to produce energy
2. We need to reduce the amount of household waste we create and landfill, and increase levels of reuse, recycling & composting, and energy generation from waste
3. There is a lack of data on commercial and industrial waste created in East Sussex, a need to reduce waste from this sector, and increase its reuse, recycling and composting



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will reduce the amount of household waste sent to landfill by 80% of 2009/10 levels and increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting to 40% by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Borough and District Councils
We will investigate the feasibility of composting or anaerobic digestion of food waste from homes and businesses in East Sussex by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Borough and District Councils
Following the government's waste policy review we will consider the need for a strategy for minimising commercial and industrial waste and increasing the amount of commercial and industrial waste that is reused, recycled and composted, or which is used for energy recovery by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Borough and District Councils



## Environmental principle 7:

*Reduce the impact of travel on the environment and improve sustainable travel choices to access services and facilities within and between communities in the county*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Transport accounts for around 30% of the county's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases

Traffic levels in the county grew by 3% between 2003 and 2009

Walking trips in the county increased by 23% and cycling trips rose by 14% between 2005/6 and 2009/10

The wider environmental costs of air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and noise from UK transport are estimated to be between £8.7bn and £19.3bn per year

There are 70km of off-road cycle routes and 1000km of bridleways and Rights of Way available to cyclists in East Sussex

### What needs to happen:

1. Increase sustainable travel choices through improvements to support public and community transport, walking, cycling and car-share and to promote the health benefits of walking and cycling
2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, local air pollution and noise from transport
3. Minimise the need to travel and improve access to jobs, education, health and other services through affordable and sustainable transport and technology-based solutions



### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. We need to improve sustainable and affordable travel choices such as walking, cycling, car sharing and car clubs, public and community transport, particularly where new housing and employment sites are developed and also in rural areas
2. Road traffic continues to have impacts on the environment and local communities through air pollution, noise, and the emission of greenhouse gases; this means that environmental and health costs (and the associated health inequalities) continue to affect the county
3. There is potential to reduce the need to travel by enabling people to access more services remotely and by encouraging working from home or from local centres through greater broadband coverage and faster connections



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will develop a full Local Transport Implementation Plan for 2011/12 – 2015/16 to include infrastructure and service measures to support sustainable modes of transport i.e. walking, cycling, public and community transport by 31 March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Bus operators - commercial and community, local cycle groups
We will take forward measures to increase the number of trips taken by walking and to promote walking as beneficial to health by March 2016	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: ESSP/East Sussex Public Health Department/NHS
We will take forward measures to increase the number of cycle trips including the development of a Eastbourne Cycle Strategy by March 2016	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: ESSP/East Sussex Public Health Department/NHS

## Environmental principle 8:

*Improve the quality of the environment and our health by reducing air and noise pollution*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Air pollution reduces the life expectancy of every person in the UK by an average of 6 months

The annual health costs of air pollution in the UK are between £4.5bn and £10bn, but there are no local estimates of health impacts

Concentrations of ground level ozone are some of the highest in the country

Government research shows tackling air pollution and climate change together could yield additional benefits of £24 billion by 2050

Persistent noise stress increases the risk of high blood pressure and heart disease

### What needs to happen:

1. Ensure that measures to tackle climate change achieve maximum benefits for local air quality
2. Meet national air quality objectives across the county and designate areas of tranquillity
3. Seek reductions in rural ozone levels through central Government and EU action on the emissions that lead to ozone formation



### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. Air pollution from traffic exceeds national air quality objectives in some busy and congested locations in the county and traffic noise levels exceed national noise indicators along parts of our major road network
2. There are opportunities to link up much better measures we take to reduce air pollution with those to tackle climate change in order to maximise the effectiveness of our actions
3. East Sussex has some of the highest levels of ozone in the country, which can damage our health, crops, and natural ecosystems



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will identify potential areas of tranquillity by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Borough and District Councils; CPRE
We will implement the Air Quality Action Plans for the A259 Bexhill Road, Hastings & Lewes town centre and develop a package of Low Emissions Strategy (LES) measures for East Sussex to reduce emissions of air pollution and CO2 by March 2012	Lead: Lewes District Council/Hastings Borough Council (Air Quality Action Plans); Sussex Air Quality Partnership (Low Emissions Strategy)
We will lobby central Government to further reduce emissions of pollutants at source which cause ground level ozone in East Sussex by March 2012	Lead: Sussex Air Quality Partnership

## Environmental principle 9:

*Reduce the environmental impacts of food production and distribution, improve health through better diets and support the agricultural and food economy of the county*

### Our environment in facts and figures:

Food accounts for at least a fifth of UK greenhouse gas emissions

The UK is only 60% self-sufficient in food production

The number of Britain's farmers and farm workers has declined by 26 per cent over the past twenty years and 60,000 new entrants are needed in the farming industry in the UK in the next decade

800 village shops close each year in the UK

Only 33% of adults in East Sussex eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day

23% of adults and around 20% of reception year children were overweight or obese in 2007/8 in East Sussex

### What needs to happen:

1. Support the transition to a low-carbon food production and distribution system, reduce carbon intensive fertilisers and animal feed from off-site, and make use of locally produced composts and digestate
2. Increase opportunities for people in East Sussex to buy local, seasonal food, including through shops and markets in towns and villages in the county and increase the proportion of locally produced food in the public and hospitality sectors
3. Increase the numbers of people and organisations growing food for their own consumption

### Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food production, distribution and wastage and make better use of natural resources
2. There is limited seasonal, local food in towns and villages and within the public sector (e.g. schools and across the county); increasing this could reduce the environmental impacts of distribution and shopping, support the local land-based economy, promote a better understanding of how food is grown, and support healthier eating
3. East Sussex, along with the rest of the UK, needs to become more self sufficient in the production of its own food – such as by meeting the increasing demand for people to grow their own food and protecting existing farmland from non-agricultural development



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will produce a Sustainable and Healthy Food Action Plan for East Sussex by July 2012	Lead: Lewes Food Market Team Partners: Transition Town Lewes
We will seek, in partnership with others, to increase the amount of local food available in town and village stores and markets in the county and increase the proportion of locally produced food in the public and hospitality sectors by March 2013	Lead: Lewes Food Market Team Partners: Transition Town Lewes; East Sussex Public Health Department; East Sussex County Council; Borough and District Councils
We will identify locations where people can grow more of their own food, for example in community allotments and through land-sharing by March 2013	Lead: Lewes Food Market Team Partners: Transition Town Lewes; East Sussex Public Health Department; East Sussex County Council; Borough and District Councils

# Environmental principle 10:

*Increase our understanding, appreciation and stewardship of the environment of East Sussex*

## Our environment in facts and figures:

Defra's 2009 survey of public attitudes and behaviours towards the environment found that the environment was the third most important priority for government behind the economy and unemployment

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers works with 628,000 volunteers a year

In the Big Vote 09 of issues of concern to young people in East Sussex, transport and the environment came first and second respectively and have become the 'campaign issues' for the Youth Cabinet 2009-2011

In East Sussex, just under half of all the people who volunteer are between 16 and 25

## Three key issues for East Sussex:

1. The need to empower individuals and communities to take ownership of their local environment and the challenges it faces, to reconnect people with their environment, promote better understanding, awareness and valuing of the environment, and inspire greener behaviours
2. Harnessing and increasing locally the social return on investment in volunteering – estimated to be at least a 4:1 return on investment
3. Increasing health and wellbeing and re-integrating marginalised people back into society through practical environmental volunteering and engagement

## What needs to happen:

1. Support and encourage volunteering, to allow people to get involved in their local open spaces, support conservation work, and develop new skills and experience
2. Encourage people to enjoy, understand and take action to safeguard our natural environment for future generations and reconnect young people with nature to stimulate and educate them to be advocates for the natural environment in the future
3. Support environmental networks and voluntary organisations to help create a shared understanding of environmental issues and jointly deliver environmental, social and financial benefits to the county, including through the provision of public services



## What we will do

Action	Who will be responsible
We will support communities across the county to develop and share practical solutions to climate change and exploit renewable energy by March 2012	Lead: Environment Agency Partners: Climate Change Partnership for East Sussex
We will support 20 schools to use the Sustainable Schools Toolkit via the Carbon Hub, to increase awareness about the environment among young people by March 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council
We will identify opportunities to support communities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to deliver more waste prevention plans and implement community waste management schemes by December 2012	Lead: East Sussex County Council Partners: Borough and District Councils

# Glossary

<b>Accessible Natural Greenspace</b>	Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate and that are available for the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions.
<b>Air Quality Action Plans</b>	Plans which local councils are legally required to prepare if they have areas where national air quality objectives are breached. The plans must contain measures that <i>work towards</i> meeting national air quality objectives, though there is no absolute legal duty on the council to meet the objectives.
<b>Anaerobic digestion</b>	A process for treating biodegradable waste (such as kitchen, garden and farm wastes) which produces methane that can be used as an energy source, as well as separate liquid and solid by products that can be used as fertilisers.
<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	A formally designated precious landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	A term commonly used to describe the variety of life on Earth. It encompasses the whole of the natural world and all living things with which we share the planet, including plants, animals, even invisible micro-organisms and bacteria. The term is often used as a measure of the health of the natural environment.
<b>Biodiversity Opportunity Areas</b>	A targeted landscape-scale approach to conserving biodiversity and identify the greatest opportunities for habitat creation and restoration.
<b>Buffering/buffer zones</b>	Areas created to enhance the protection of a conservation area or a similar environmentally sensitive place such as a water abstraction point, normally with some kind of restrictions or special management measures in place.
<b>Carbon Hub</b>	An interactive website designed to help schools across the county cut energy usage, reduce their carbon footprint and save money.
<b>Climate change adaptation</b>	A response to climate change designed to improve our resilience to future changes in climate (particularly extremes of weather) and develop in ways which maximise the opportunities that climate change is expected to bring.
<b>Climate change adaptation plans</b>	Plans by government, local councils and other organisations to review what they do and make themselves more resilient to the effects of climate change.
<b>Community allotment</b>	Shared allotments accessible to a group, normally within a given locality.
<b>East Sussex Youth Cabinet</b>	The Youth Cabinet is a group of young people who have been elected by their peers to represent the voice of young people in East Sussex.
<b>Economic value of the environment</b>	The monetary value that we derive from the environment but which we normally don't have to pay for, such as clean air. It can be calculated by measures like how much people are willing to pay to have a view of a landscape or the costs of treating diseases caused by air pollution, which would not be incurred if the air was cleaner.
<b>Ecosystem</b>	The environment and interaction between all the living organisms and the non-living environment such as air, soil, water and sunlight in a given area.
<b>Energy recovery</b>	The process of creating energy such as heat or electricity from waste.
<b>Environmental infrastructure</b>	Infrastructure that provides areas with facilities that protect human health and the environment, such as infrastructure for water supply, waste disposal, and pollution control services.
<b>Environmental stewardship</b>	An environment scheme that provides funding to farmers and other land managers in England to deliver effective environmental management on farmland. In more general terms environmental stewardship refers to caring for, or looking after the environment.

<b>Floodplain</b>	An area next to a river or stream that floods easily, or would do so if there were not man-made flood defences or engineering works in place.
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product - the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period.
<b>Green economy</b>	The parts of the economy that generate wealth through providing goods and services which protect or enhance the environment, particularly renewable energies and environmental technologies which help reduce carbon emissions. See also 'Low carbon industries/jobs'.
<b>Green infrastructure</b>	A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features, designed and managed as a multi-functional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.
<b>Green Tourism Business Scheme</b>	The national sustainable tourism certification scheme for the UK.
<b>Greenhouse gas</b>	Gases including carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour and nitrous oxide, which prevent heat from escaping back from the Earth and into space, therefore creating the 'greenhouse effect'. This process helps make the Earth warm enough to sustain life, but a significant increase in greenhouse gas concentrations since the industrial revolution is widely accepted by the scientific community as being the cause of man-made climate change.
<b>Health inequalities</b>	Differences in health status and life expectancy between different population groups. Some health inequalities are attributable to biological variations or free choice and others are attributable to the external environment and conditions mainly outside the control of the individuals concerned.
<b>Historic environment</b>	The physical legacy of thousands of years of human activity in the form of buildings, monuments, sites and landscapes.
<b>Land-share</b>	A scheme which brings together people who want to grow their own food with those who have land to share.
<b>Landscape</b>	The combination of a number of factors including natural influences (underlying geology, landform, soils, climate, habitats and biodiversity) and human influence (historical and current land uses, settlement patterns and human interventions), both past and present, which form the character of a place on a large scale.
<b>Local Flood Risk Management Strategy</b>	A strategy which, working in partnership with key stakeholders, the County Council has to develop under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). The strategy will define and document all of the flood risk management activities in the County in relation to surface water run-off, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.
<b>Local Strategic Partnerships</b>	LSP - a non-statutory body that brings together the different parts of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, working at a local level. The lead player in the LSP is the local council. Other players include the police and the health sector. The LSP aims to ensure the different organisations work together to deliver services more effectively.
<b>Local Transport Plan</b>	A County Council plan for delivering national and local government shared priorities for transport, including improving economic competitiveness and growth, tackling climate change, improving safety, health and security, providing sustainable transport opportunities to enhance social inclusion, and improving quality of life.
<b>Low carbon economy</b>	There is no formal definition of a low carbon economy. The UK Government has set legally binding targets of reducing carbon emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. Where this term is used in this strategy, it is intended to describe the economy of East Sussex with this 80% cut in carbon emissions.

<b>Low carbon industries/jobs</b>	Jobs in the Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector which includes traditional environmental activities, as well as activities in the renewable energy and emerging low carbon market. See also 'green economy'.
<b>Low emissions strategy</b>	A package of measures for mitigating air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions associated with road transport.
<b>Marine Conservation Zones</b>	MCZs - a new type of Marine Protected Area. MCZs will protect nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology in inshore and offshore waters.
<b>MSC</b>	Marine Stewardship Council – the MSC is the world's leading certification and ecolabelling program for sustainable seafood and fisheries.
<b>National air quality objectives</b>	Health-based targets set by Government. Local authorities are required to designate areas which do not meet the objectives as Air Quality Management Areas and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (see above) for each one.
<b>National Nature Reserves</b>	A selection of the most valued Sites of Special Scientific Interest (see below) which have strong legal protection. The majority also have European nature conservation designations.
<b>National Park</b>	National Parks are extensive areas, each with its own managing authority to conserve and enhance its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities to understand and enjoy its special qualities. The only National Park in East Sussex is the South Downs National Park
<b>Ozone</b>	An air pollutant which is highly irritant to the respiratory system and which also damages crops and other vegetation. It is formed by the action of sunlight and oxygen on other pollutants and typically occurs in highest concentrations in rural areas downwind of towns and cities. Because of this it is hard to control and can only really be managed by reducing at source the emissions which create it.
<b>Renewable energy</b>	Energy which comes from natural resources such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, and geothermal heat, which are renewable (naturally replenished).
<b>Resource efficiency</b>	Using natural resources in the most efficient way, as many times as possible, without harming the environment.
<b>Shoreline Management Plans</b>	A large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes, which helps reduce these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environments.
<b>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance</b>	Locally important sites of nature conservation adopted by local authorities for planning purposes and identified in the local development plan.
<b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)</b>	A conservation designation denoting a protected area in the UK. SSSIs are the basic building block of site-based nature conservation legislation and most other legal nature/geological conservation designations in Great Britain are based upon them.
<b>Strategic Open Spaces Strategy</b>	A County Council strategy for improving public access to large scale (over 20 hectares in size) natural greenspaces.
<b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b>	SCS - the long-term vision for the County, aimed at tackling local needs and improving well-being. The SCS is the 'plan of plans' in the area. It sits above all the other plans and sets out the key tasks required to deliver the vision.
<b>Sustainable tourism</b>	Tourism which aims to have a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate future employment for local people.
<b>Sustainable world fair share</b>	The concept of global fairness in the way we use resources and the impacts we have on the environment.

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