



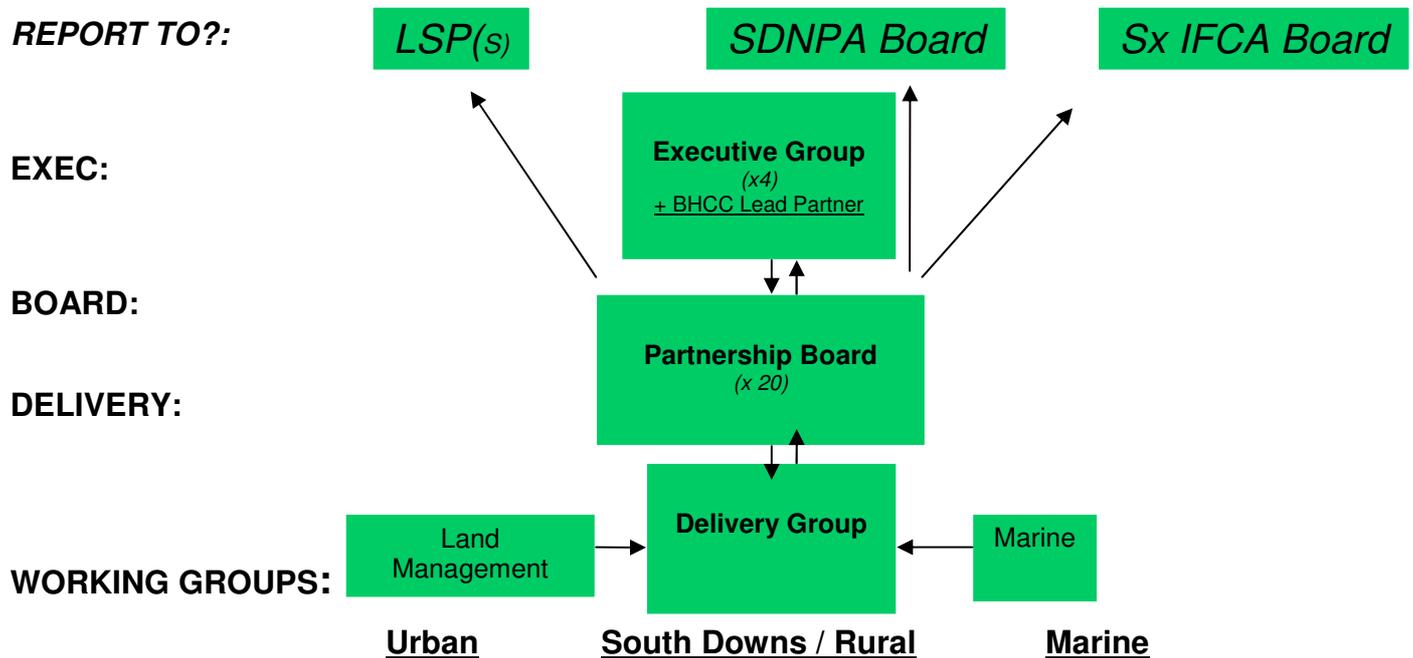
FOR OUR BIOSPHERE'S NATURAL COMMUNITY

Brighton & Hove and Lewes Downs Biosphere Project Progress Update – November 2012

We promote international Biosphere status as a unified approach to town, country and sea which adds value, improves policy and practice, supports healthy ecosystem services, and better connects people to their environment.

The Biosphere Project was publicly launched on 24th May 2012, International Biodiversity Day, working with the national UNESCO body UK MAB. Through the summer a large-scale public engagement programme has been carried out by BHCC (CityParks rangers) and other Biosphere partners. Together we have run stands at a total of some 85 events, and were the main focus of the Sussex Festival of Nature at Stanmer Park for example. Through these we have reached out to an estimated 10,000 people (including distributing 6,000 'Here Here' project campaign leaflets). This has resulted in 1,300 people who have signed up as 'Friends of the Biosphere' to show their support and receive email communications from us.

The Biosphere Partnership has now formally adopted a Terms of Reference for its governance (see diagram below), and has expanded to 18 organisations (see logos below) representing a range of different areas and sectors in the Partnership Board. As part of this we have set up a new Executive Group, consisting of a Chair (Chris Todd, CVSF) and 3 Vice Chairs namely Jeremy Burgess (SDNPA), Rob Clark (Sussex IFCA) and Sean Ashworth (EA). An independent banking partner (Sussex Wildlife Trust) has started to manage project finances, with funding pledges amounting to in excess of £25K having been received from different partners.



The proposed Biosphere area has similarly expanded as a result of the local councils within Lewes District of Lewes town, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe opting to be part of our initiative and thus join with the urban focus of Brighton & Hove. An equivalent extension of the proposed marine area along the coast (out to 2 nautical miles distance) has also been made. Our proposed Biosphere Reserve of countryside, coast and urban areas now covers an area of 340 square kilometres between the River Adur (Shoreham) and the River Ouse (Newhaven), being home to a third of a million people and visited by over 10 million people annually.

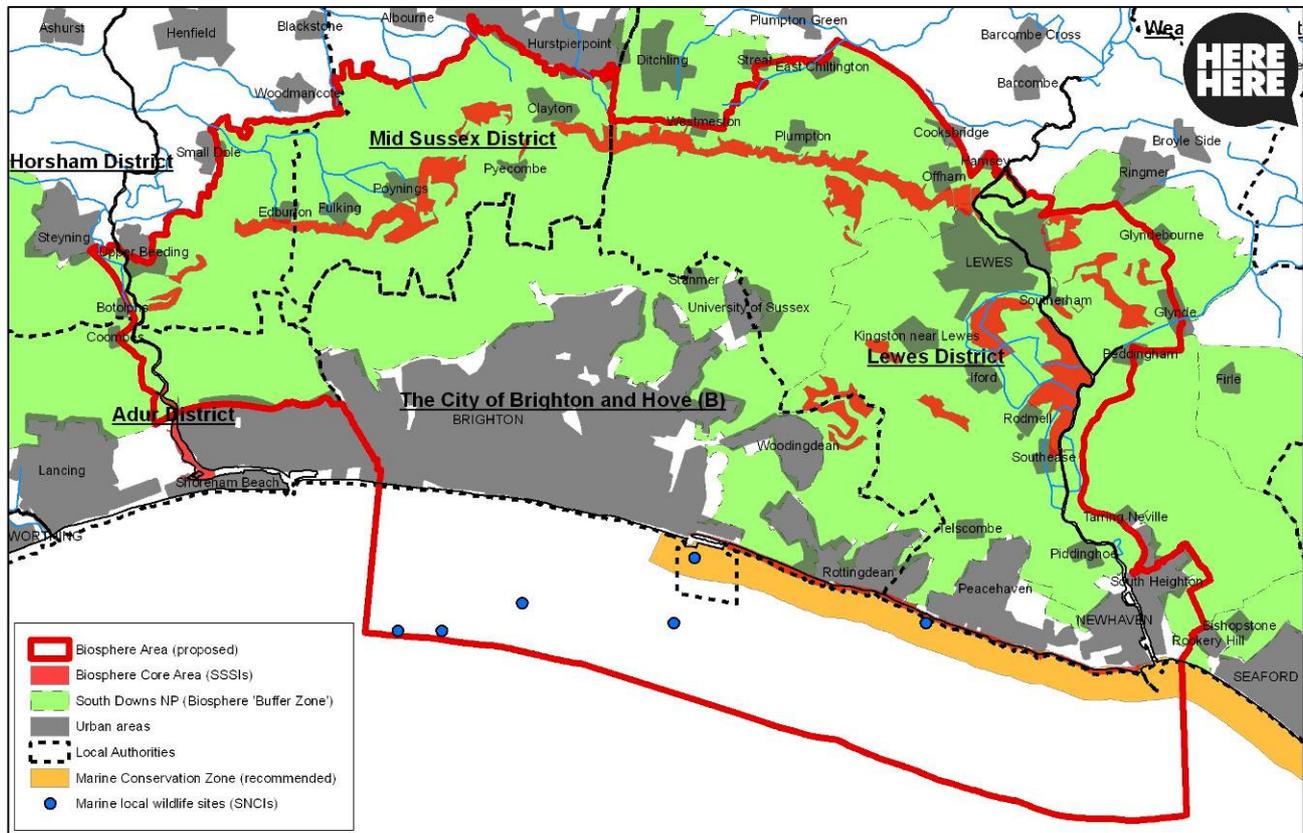
THE BIOSPHERE PARTNERSHIP IS A SHARED INITIATIVE OF THE FOLLOWING BODIES:





FOR OUR BIOSPHERE'S NATURAL COMMUNITY

Brighton & Hove and Lewes Downs Biosphere Project - Proposed Area (November 2012)



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We are preparing a draft version of our management strategy, consisting of six chapters that cover the three different environments, their linkages, knowledge needs and a summary overview. In these we set out what is currently happening on nature conservation (including Local Biodiversity Action Plans) and sustainable socio-economic development (including One Planet in Brighton & Hove) policy and practice in the area. We seek to identify how distinct elements can be further improved in the future. This includes the ways in which the Biosphere Project can add value to our area and collective work, as an umbrella framework which helps to link and integrate environmental action and policy under one shared label. We hope that this accolade will enable other stakeholders beyond the present partnership to 'badge' their work and communications with a world-class status which local people recognise and support. We anticipate that potential funders will be more disposed to contribute to this high-profile initiative, enabling us to establish a central funding resource which supports the sustainability and longevity of local improvements.

We plan to invite early inputs from key local stakeholders for a limited three-week pre-consultation period from 19th November, prior to a full public consultation for 12 weeks from 14th January 2013 which will include a series of events, meetings and an exhibition for different communities and sectors across the area. This will then lead to the final pre-submission stage, to finalise the management strategy and UNESCO application package, before we formally apply to UNESCO for Biosphere Reserve status in September 2013.

Rich Howorth – Biosphere Project Officer

www.biospherehere.org.uk

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