



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE SOUTH EAST

PRESS RELEASE

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South Hampshire's environment will gain from agreement

An important agreement, signed today by Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and the Government Office for the South East, will seek to maximise the opportunities for improving the environment in the South Hampshire area.

The four parties will work together, with partners, to deliver a shared environmental vision as part of implementing the South Hampshire sub-regional strategy. They have agreed to:

- A set of principles governing joint working, including the opportunities for a flexible approach in the interests of overall environmental benefit;
- Common environmental outcomes and targets based on sound evidence; and
- An action plan to deliver the outcomes of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

In signing the MoU, Alan Law, Natural England regional director for the South East, said: "We have a long history of positive engagement in South Hampshire, partly because of the New Forest National Park and the extent of European designated sites in the area. This MoU demonstrates our commitment to working together with our partners to find radical solutions to ensure that environmental quality is retained and enhanced through the delivery of housing and economic growth in this part of Hampshire."

Councillor Seán Woodward, Chairman of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, said: "PUSH is a voluntary partnership of eleven local authorities dedicated to sustainable, economic-led growth, and improving prosperity and quality of life for everyone who lives, works and spends their leisure time in South Hampshire. This agreement is an important part of how we will deliver greater value for the area. The key objectives for PUSH are promoting economic success, providing homes for sustainable communities, enhancing community cohesion and reducing inequalities, investing in infrastructure and sustainable solutions, promoting a better quality of life and tackling climate change."

Dougal Driver, Head of Climate Change and the Natural Environment at the Government Office for the South East, said: "This MoU commits all parties to exceptional agreements which break the mould and provide radical solutions which set a benchmark. It sets an important example for joint working between local authorities and the government agencies which does not compromise our legal standards or responsibilities and/or our statutory duties."

James Humphrys, Environment Agency Area Manager, said: "South Hampshire is a wonderful place in which to live and work! And we want to keep it that way! It is so important to the future economic success of the area that new development must compliment and enhance the environment. We all recognise that working together to achieve common outcomes is the best way to combine expertise and resources.

This MoU acknowledges the imperative need for the parties involved to work together to achieve the sub-regional strategy, and at the same time improve the quality of the environment for people and wildlife. The role of the natural environment in achieving national climate change policy is also fundamental."

Our vision is that growth in the South Hampshire sub-region is of an environmentally exceptionally high standard and is supported by timely infrastructure.

All parties are committed to working together to deliver the following environmental outcomes:

- To ensure that new development is located and designed to prevent the risk of flooding and coastal erosion and to reduce overall flood risk
- To ensure that flood and coastal risk management infrastructure is provided to an appropriate standard and that funding is secured for effective flood risk management to support sustainable development and protect existing communities
- To use natural resources wisely, minimising waste and ensuring the maximum reuse of materials in new development
- To achieve zero waste to landfill in South Hampshire by 2016
- To ensure a sustainable supply of water and sewage treatment to meet the needs of the Sub Region and secure an overall reduction in water use and abstraction
- To achieve the highest standards of environmental sustainability in new homes and new commercial buildings
- To enable communities and the natural environment to mitigate and adapt to climate change
- To implement an agreed Green Infrastructure Strategy as an integral element of all development and growth
- To achieve Biodiversity Action Plans and other land management targets and secure development that is consistent with European Directives
- To improve connectivity between people and the natural environment as a contribution to achieving health, education and other social and community targets

Ends

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Notes to editors:

1. The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire is a group of eleven local authorities in South Hampshire working together, dedicated to sustainable, economic- led growth, and improving prosperity and quality of life for everyone who lives, works and spends their leisure time in South Hampshire. The governing body for PUSH is a Joint Committee of the local authorities whose areas lie wholly or partly within the PUSH area.
2. The Government Office South East (GOSE) represents 12 government departments in the South East, including the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Transport and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). For more information see www.gose.gov.uk
3. We are the Environment Agency. It's our job to look after your environment and make it a better place - for present and for future generations. The environment is the air that we breathe, the water we drink and the ground we walk on. Working with business, Government and society as a whole, we are making the environment cleaner and healthier. www.environment-agency.gov.uk
4. Natural England is the government's independent advisor on the natural environment. Established in 2006 our work is focused on enhancing England's wildlife and landscapes and maximising the benefits they bring to the public. We run England's Environmental Stewardship green farming schemes which deliver over £400 million a year to farmers and landowners. We increase

opportunities to make the natural environment an enriching part of people's everyday lives, and improve its long-term security by contributing to the sustainable management of our natural resources. For more information see www.naturalengland.org.uk

5. South Hampshire is of national, regional and local, social, economic and environmental importance. The extent of social deprivation and the level of housing need, are issues that require the levels of growth and investment identified in the South East Plan. These issues demand an integrated and planned approach to environmental infrastructure delivery. South Hampshire is an area rich in environmental assets, which is one of the main factors in its economic success. High standards are needed to maintain these environments for people and wildlife.
6. 2010 has been declared the International Year of Biodiversity by the United Nations – the year that celebrates the diversity of life on Earth, including every plant, animal and micro-organism. In the UK, IYB has over 200 partners ranging from universities and museums to theatre companies. The International Year of Biodiversity is encouraging everyone to take action to reduce the loss of biodiversity. Natural England is leading on work to halt and reverse the loss of wildlife species. See <http://www.biodiversityislife.net/> for more.