

# South Downs Land Managers

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## Autumn 2014 Newsletter

Welcome back to our latest newsletter. By now harvest is all done and dusted and autumn crops most probably in the ground. Whilst you have been busy, we have been keeping track of things going on in the National Park. Below is a synopsis along with notice of some upcoming events. If you have any issues or queries that you would like raised with the South Downs National Park Authority please contact your Liaison Officer Alison Tingley on [sdlm@southdownsland.com](mailto:sdlm@southdownsland.com), who can help you get in touch with the right person.

### Dates for your diaries

**Saturday 8th November SDNPA - Secrets of the High Woods Open Day** (see below) Capron House Midhurst [www.southdowns.gov.uk/highwoods](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/highwoods)

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE) Cover Crops Trial**, Cowdray Park, Midhurst, West Sussex, 8.30am-12.30pm, tel Tim Clarke on 07713 333196, email: [southeast@cfeonline.org.uk](mailto:southeast@cfeonline.org.uk)

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November SDLMG Meeting** – Talk by Dr John Godfrey entitled “**Landscapes of War and Peace: Sussex, the South Downs and the Western Front 1914-18**”. The talk will take place at the White Horse in Ditchling starting at 7.00pm. Drinks will be available from 6.30pm and afterwards. Email [sdlm@southdownsland.com](mailto:sdlm@southdownsland.com) to book a place.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December CFE Cover Crops Trial**, Northbrook Farm, Micheldever, Hants, 8.30am—12.30pm, tel: Tim Clarke on 07713 333196, email: [southeast@cfeonline.org.uk](mailto:southeast@cfeonline.org.uk)

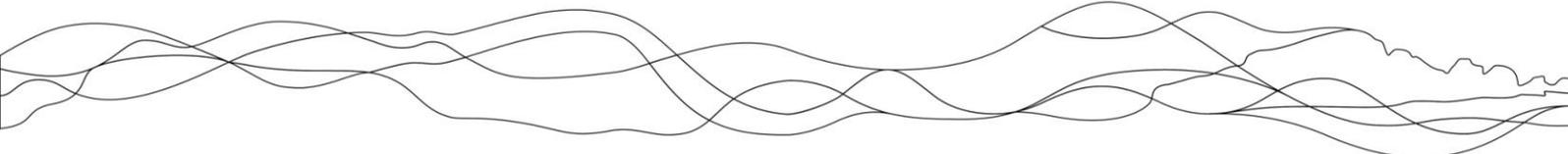
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## SDNPA News in brief

- Four new Assistant Rangers started work at the area offices.
- Himalayan Balsam was cleared on around 4.5km of the upper River Rother, including 3 new infestations and a further 3km of river previously un-recorded was surveyed by volunteers and contractors.
- Practical work has continued on several chalk grassland sites including new water supply installed at Barns Farm and Sullington Hill as part of the SDNPA Nature Improvement Area (NIA) work. Butterfly and grassland surveys took place over the summer at two sites.
- 20 hectares of ragwort was removed from Chapel Common by volunteers using a tractor and forage harvester.
- Five hectares of ragwort removed on Chanctonbury Ring.
- Shared identity approved by SDNPA at June meeting of NPA. (See bottom of page)

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## Meeting updates

### SDLM - SDNPA Liaison Meeting

Members of the SDLM Executive Committee met with senior staff and the Chairman of the NPA in early September. The main item was a presentation by Tom Warder from Action in rural Sussex on Community Land Trusts. For minutes of the meeting go to <http://www.southdownsland.com/meetings.php>

### ERDF Water Seminar

Landowners joined other interested parties at a meeting in Midhurst hosted by the SDNPA on how to maximize water supplies and improve efficiency of irrigation. They were also updated on planned changes to irrigation licencing regulations.

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## Project updates

### Secrets of the High Wood

The high resolution (0.25m) lidar survey was acquired in March this year for an area of 305 sq km covering the wooded downs from the A3 in the west to the River Arun in the east and marked the start of the work that needs to be done to investigate the hidden landscape of the South Downs. This autumn / winter the Secrets of the High Woods project will be entering its delivery phase. Over the next year specialist consultants will transcribe and interpret the data; work that will form the basis of our understanding of human interaction with the landscape from the first farmer's to WW11 and beyond. At the same time, the project is recruiting and training community volunteers to help the team with ground verification, archive and oral history surveys, adding unprecedented detail to the sites identified from the lidar survey itself. If you missed the landowner/forester breakfast meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July and would like to know more an Open Day is being run on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November at Capron House in Midhurst. For more information see the project webpages at [www.southdowns.gov.uk/highwoods](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/highwoods), Centre or drop the team a line on [highwoods@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:highwoods@southdowns.gov.uk)

### Food & Drink Portal

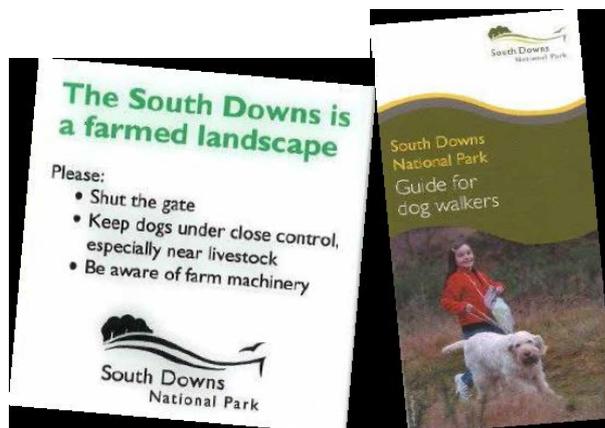
Following the workshop at the SDLM Summer meeting in June, Paula Seager and Hilary Knight of Natural Partnerships CIC have continued to develop the Food & Drink Portal. Work has included: clarification of the exact data needed to provide a fully searchable database from both the consumer and trade users perspective; 'Criteria for Inclusion' have been agreed and will form the basis for the selection of businesses from each sector; web developers have been appointed to develop the online forms needed to capture the data required from producers and retailers. Watch out for Business cluster meetings which are to be set up on a county basis next spring.

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## Work on the ground

### Responsible Visitors

New plaques are available from SDNPA for farmers to raise awareness that visitors are in a farmed landscape and reminding them of their responsibilities. Leaflets on responsible dog walking are also available from the SDNPA. Contact: Area Teams



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## Dew Pond Restoration

Restoration of a dew pond has finally gone ahead on the Sompting Estate after they successfully obtained grant funding from the SDNPA Sustainable Communities Fund. If you are interested in carrying out similar projects contact your area team in the first instance.



*Newly restored dew pond at Lychpole Bottom*

## Undergrounding power lines



1.4 miles of power lines, poles and equipment at the Rathfinny Wine Estate have recently been undergrounded by UK Power Networks, which delivers electricity supplies in the South East.

Electricity suppliers have a special allowance from the industry regulator, Ofgem, to remove power lines in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The projects are chosen by a regional steering group of environment experts, including the South Downs National Park, chaired by Natural England.

If you have low voltage lines that you think would benefit the NP landscape by being placed underground contact: [pete.currell@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:pete.currell@southdowns.gov.uk)

## NIA benefits Duke of Burgundy butterflies

As part of the South Downs Way Ahead Nature Improvement Area the South Downs National Park Authority, in partnership with the Wiston Estate and Butterfly Conservation, are attempting to attract back Duke of Burgundy Butterflies. Targeting land between Chantry Hill and Chanctonbury Ring, building on existing and past distribution records, the aim is to provide suitable habitat for the Duke of Burgundy butterfly.



Major tree and scrub removal was carried out at Chanctonbury to increase and connect areas of chalk downland, and ultimately the area of scrubby edge habitat that provides the conditions needed for cowslips and primroses, the Duke of Burgundy's food plant. Originally a woodland butterfly, lack of traditional coppice management has made them more reliant areas of downland scrub. As with any large scrub/tree removal project there is an element of follow up work required, fortunately this had also been written into the SITA bid. In the two years following the clearance the NPA were able to pay for a specialist to keep down any regrowth that occurred through a combination of spraying and cutting.

This work was paid for as part of the SITA landfill credits bid, and supported by the National Park through Ranger time and advice. The Estate, through their HLS agreement, had water infrastructure and a new fence line installed, no easy feat on such a steep site, and yes a steep site supplement was needed for this to be even remotely viable!

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Going forward the management of the site will be done through a combination of cattle grazing, through the Estates grazier, and intermittent mechanical/chemical work by the NPA, with a view to relying solely on grazing animals in the next two-three years. For more information contact [tom.parry@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:tom.parry@southdowns.gov.uk)

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## Planning update

**Local Plan** SDNPA have carried out Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Employment Land review as part of the evidence being gathered for the Local Plan.

Arun District Council Local Plan consultation will run from 30<sup>th</sup> October to 11<sup>th</sup> December  
[www.arun.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.arun.gov.uk/localplan).

**CIL:** There are currently over 140 projects on the emerging CIL Infrastructure Development Plan with a total value of £60M across the park. Projects vary from v small to very large and cover many issues including education, transport, greenspace, and community facilities. SDLM have been invited to put forward any infrastructure projects. The list is always open and more projects are needed particularly in West Sussex. SDNP contact [Gareth.giles@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.giles@southdowns.gov.uk)

## Other news

### Leader

Three Local Development Strategies, for next round of LEADER funding (Rural Development Programme), to support businesses and communities in rural areas, were submitted to Defra. The strategies are: 'Fieldfare' (East Hants and Winchester areas); Sussex Downs and Coastal Plain; and Horsham, Lewes and Mid-Sussex. The total LEADER investment sought is about £5.2 million, over six years – a decision from DEFRA is expected in November.

Contacts: Fieldfare – [kbrown@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:kbrown@winchester.gov.uk)

Sussex Downs & Coastal Plain and Horsham, Lewes & Mid Sussex - [RDPELEADER@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:RDPELEADER@westsussex.gov.uk)

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