

Title:	Brighton & Hove and Lewes Downs Biosphere Project Update
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Purpose/ Key Messages:	<p>To update BHSP on the progress and plans of the Biosphere Project partnership initiative</p> <p>Key messages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Biosphere Project was formally launched to the public and press on 22nd May 2012 through a programme of Fringe events and street art under our new identity of the 'Here Here' campaign to secure and sustain UNESCO international Biosphere status.2. We have developed a partnership of 16 organisations to date, including all 4 district councils covering the South Downs surrounding Brighton & Hove as well as public and charitable environmental and educational bodies, to propose that the outline Biosphere area extends from the River Adur to the River Ouse and includes a marine element also.3. We have run workshops, meetings and events for varied environment sector stakeholders in Brighton & Hove and beyond, including close working with the national UNESCO body 'UK MAB' who actively support our Biosphere proposal and are advising on our approach to the UN.
Significance to BHSP	<p>Biosphere status offers B&H an internationally recognised accolade and framework to better integrate nature and people, helping to bring together varied initiatives under a common banner, raise our profile, attract new grant funding, develop the green economy (especially eco-tourism), stimulate local peoples' awareness and understanding of the importance of their local environment to them, and join and learn from/inform an international network of other 'areas of excellence'.</p>

**What is BHSP
being asked to
do?**

- To note the progress made to date, now that a dedicated projected officer is in post at BHCC, since the presentation given to BHSP one year previously.
- For members to become more informed and involved in the Biosphere partnership, to contribute to the development of our Biosphere management strategy, especially sectors and major organisations not presently engaged e.g. health, tourism, University of Sussex, Southern Water.

**Next Steps and
report back
mechanism**

An intensive programme of stakeholder engagement is continuing through to the end of 2012, to inform people about the Biosphere project and seek their inputs on what they value in their environment and how it could be further improved. A formal consultation will run during early 2013 on our draft Biosphere management strategy, which will be the key document to accompany our formal application to UNESCO in September 2013. A decision on our proposed status is then expected from them in July 2014.