

## **Appendix 2.**

### **South London Downs NNR - Further Background**

The Chalk Downlands of the proposed NNR is a combination of SSSI and non SSSI land, owned and managed by the City of London Corporation and the London Borough of Croydon. The proposed NNR (pNNR) area includes the following SSSI's:

- Riddlesdown (Calcareous Grassland, Vascular Plant assemblage and Scrub)
- Farthing Downs and Happy Valley (Lowland Grassland, Calcareous Grassland, Greater Yellow Rattle & Woodland)

The pNNR also includes non-designated land:

- Coulsdon Common
- Kenley Common
- Hawkhurst
- New Hill
- Sanderstead to Whyteleafe countryside area (SWCA)

Croydon has the largest population of all the London Boroughs, its urban location emphasises the importance of the areas access to nature and open space is very important for this population. The pNNR would be the third in London and with its location on the urban perimeter, it could connect a large population with the natural landscape. The extensive area semi-natural Downland habitats, is the largest remaining in greater London. The pNNR will contain two SSSI's with the land outside of equally important habitat, mostly managed within agri-environment schemes. The pNNR area offers huge recreational opportunity and access to nature for some of the 363,378 (2011) (384,837 - 2017 estimate population) people living in Croydon and populations beyond.

The pNNR would cover an area of 417ha, with a huge variety of habitats and species, including: Calcareous Grassland, Scrub Mosaic, Broadleaved Woodland, Mixed Woodland, Yew Woodland, Neutral Grassland. Key species - Greater Yellow Rattle, Orchid Sp., Speckled Wood Butterfly, Sliver-wash fritillary, Dogs Mercury, Rampion, Small Blue Butterfly, White Mullein, Kidney Vetch

The pNNR's current boundary is owned and managed by The City of London Corporation and the London Borough of Croydon. Both organisations have a track record of conservation across these sites others in their ownership. The City of London Corporation are already an approved body, managing Ashtead Common NNR in Surrey and Burnham Beeches in Buckinghamshire.

NE's involvement in the area is primarily through the protected sites and the management of the agri-environment schemes held by both land owners.

NNR opportunity – The new strategy delivered in 2017 opened up an opportunity to improve our national network of NNR's. This pNNR embodies the 4 key elements of the new strategy, contributing to conservation, environmental research, access for people and

building on partnerships. There are plenty of future opportunities in and around the pNNR for health, wellbeing, education and nature conservation.

The pNNR is a chance to strengthen engagement beyond the existing 'audience'. It will reconnect local people and those visiting from further afield. This includes physical connection, mental connection, interdependence between nature and people and the reliance on the services nature provides (clean air/water /soil/ flood protection etc.).

There could be potential for future collaboration with other adjacent landowners to improve the chalk downlands and connect with other adjoining boroughs.