

**Thames Basin Heaths ISDP Consultation Event  
17 January 2008, Innovation Centre Reading**

**Summary of Workshop**

This note is a summary of the workshop outputs. Not every comment may be picked up in this summary but all have been recorded and will be fed into the ISDP consultation. A full list of comments raised is available. A list of delegates is included at **Annex I**.

**I. Workstations Exercise**

- I.1 Delegates were invited to post comments on a number of key ISDP principles and other issues. The workstations covered:
- Principle of SANG sites to mitigate development pressures, and SANG standards
  - SANG sites jointly designated in a strategic pool
  - Provision of access management support team and resources.
  - Simple tariff structure, standard across whole area
  - Money from development tariff pooled/allocated by joint body
  - Partnership working
  - Making this work
  - Different / better options
  - Evidence Base
  - Anything Else – burning issues, ‘don’t forget’ etc...
- I.2 Key themes that emerged from the workstations were:
- Clarification about the evidence base for visitor pressure, some of the SANG standards, and the success of SANGs
  - The need for further detail about sensitive areas and assessing capacity and discounting
  - The need for large accessible attractor SANGs
  - General support for a strategic resource for access management, but concern that this should be in the form of funding for existing landowners/management projects rather than a separate team
  - Concern over the definition of in perpetuity as 80 years
  - Questions over the fairness and viability of a standard pooled tariff
  - Questions over the size of development to which tariffs /SANGs should be applied
  - The fact that the Board would need greater powers to deliver the ISDP and suggestion that stakeholders should have voting rights
  - The need for monitoring
  - Some support for joint working and a strategic approach, but some views that joint working and a strategic approach was not appropriate
  - The need for local flexibility.
- I.3 Some things that could stop the ISDP working were identified as the legality of proposals (of the ISDP itself, of the principle of a strategic SANG network

and a standard pooled tariff, and of proposals for a Joint Strategic Partnership Board with greater powers), a lack of funding, and a lack of joint working. To make the ISDP work, suggestions included the need to build ISDP into development plan, the need for local variation within a strategic approach and further clarity in certain areas.

- 1.4 Some different / better options identified were the use of 'harder' access management measures, the use of developer funds for mitigation on the SPA rather than for SANG provision, and the use of new green space rather than existing public recreation land.

## 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Following the workstations exercise and presentation by Ian Phillips (available on the Regional Assembly website ([www.southeast-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk)), delegates were asked to identify 2 or 3 things that were key issues for them. In summary, these covered:

- A need to incorporate the ISDP into the Development Plan (RSS/LDDs)
- A need for local flexibility within a clear, simple strategic framework
- Further work needed on tariff details and delivery mechanisms to ensure fairness and adequate funds and contingency
- The legality of the ISDP and possible need for an appropriate assessment
- Access management resourcing and need to work up further detail about AM with landowners
- A need for further work looking at SANG capacity, and identifying SANG network
- How to define 'in perpetuity'
- A need for community involvement
- The legality and powers of the Joint Strategic Partnership Board.

## 3. Electronic Voting

- 3.1 An electronic voting exercise was undertaken to get a feel for the group's views on particular aspects of the ISDP. The results are included as **Annex 2**.

## 4. Group work and recommendations

- 4.1 From the workstations and key issues exercise delegates were asked to identify an issue, a key message and a next step. These are summarised below.

Issue: Is a standard tariff appropriate? How does the tariff relate to larger development that brings own SANGs? Is the ISDP / strategic approach legally robust? Is there a need for an appropriate assessment of the ISDP?

Key message: Money must be ring fenced.

Next step: Take legal advice on proposals.

Issue: How should 'in perpetuity' be defined? In the draft ISDP a replacement dwelling in 80 years time does not require a further tariff.

Key message: 80 years is not long enough.

- Next step: Start with a calculation of costs involved in long-term payments.
- Issue: SANGs must be relevant to the SPA they mitigate. Is there a legal need for the tariff to be spent on SANGs close to development?
- Key message: Data is currently poor.
- Next step: Collect better data on bird numbers and visitors; allow developer contributions on habitat improvement/management.
- Issue: Does new housing mean a gross increase in population? Does it mean an increase in SPA use? Is the reliance on SANGs, especially existing public open space, appropriate?
- Key message: Disproportionate reliance on SANGs.
- Next step: Consider a more flexible, pragmatic approach in ISDP.
- Issue: Access management principles need reworking. Resource should augment existing staff structures.
- Key message: This will not preclude partnership/cross border working. The Dorset model cannot be replicated across the TBH SPA.
- Next step: Consider mechanisms for funding/resourcing existing structures and programmes/partnerships.
- Issue: Alternative vision for Joint Strategic Board.
- Key message: To include SANG deficit / shortfall, access and education support team, monitoring and review. Money to JSB – to deliver strategic measures – collected as a top slice added to LA tariff (ie delivering SANGs within local authorities).
- Next step: Cost up filling SANGs gaps, cost up access / education support team (building on existing partnerships), cost up monitoring work needed.

## 5. 'What struck me' and key messages

- 5.1 To round up the event, those present were asked to highlight the one thing that had most struck them throughout the event, and one key message that they would like considered.

### What struck me ....

- 5.2 Many people were struck that there still seemed to be a long way to go, and a do to work up ideas fully. Comments were also made about the complexity of the issue and difficulty in resolving it, the number of different models that need to be looked at and the need for a long-term plan.
- 5.3 Some people were struck by the differences of opinion expressed, but others noted that there was common ground between different interest groups. Similarly some felt other people were being obstructive and negative or were struck by the apparent resistance to joint working and strategic thinking by local authorities, whereas others felt that there was a positive attitude or an overall willingness to take action and make the ISDP work.

- 5.4 A number of people highlighted particular technical points – for example the links between population, housing and pressure on the SPA, the role of access management, the timeframe for and costs of SANGs.

#### Key messages

- 5.5 A wide variety of key messages were recorded. Some of these related to proposals within the ISDP, others to the principle, and delivery, of the ISDP:

5.6 Policy principles:

Access management: The need to recognise and/or build on existing structures and talk to landowners and managers; the need to revisit AM proposals and evolve resources to the local level.

SANGS: The need for additional SANGS to reduce current visitor pressure; the need for SANGS to be genuinely new public access land; the need to look at links between housing numbers and population.

In-perpetuity: 80 years is too long; the need to explore the costs beyond 80 years.

5.7 Principle of ISDP and delivery

Simplicity/robustness: The need for simplicity (although also the need for further detail); the need for strategic solutions to strategic issues; the need for robustness and for hard evidence; the need to ensure that the outcome will be legally sound.

ISDP ownership: The need to clarify legal responsibilities; the need for SPDs to support ISDP.

Stakeholders: The need for wider representation from development industry and building industry; the need for greater consideration of the needs of developers.

Urgency: The need for urgency in delivering SANGs, and in monitoring; impractical ideas will delay a solution.

Implementation: The need for the strategy to be implementable; the need for joint working and consistency between LPAs; the need for flexibility and the need to find common ground; the need for a carrot and stick approach including more central govt involvement.

## **6. Further details**

- 6.1 A full transcript of workstations, key issues exercise, group work and recommendations and ‘what struck me’ and key messages is available from the Regional Assembly on request.

- 6.2 The outcomes of the workshop will be fed into the analysis of ISDP consultation responses received by 15 February 2008 and reported to the Joint Strategic Partnership Board on 27 March 2008.

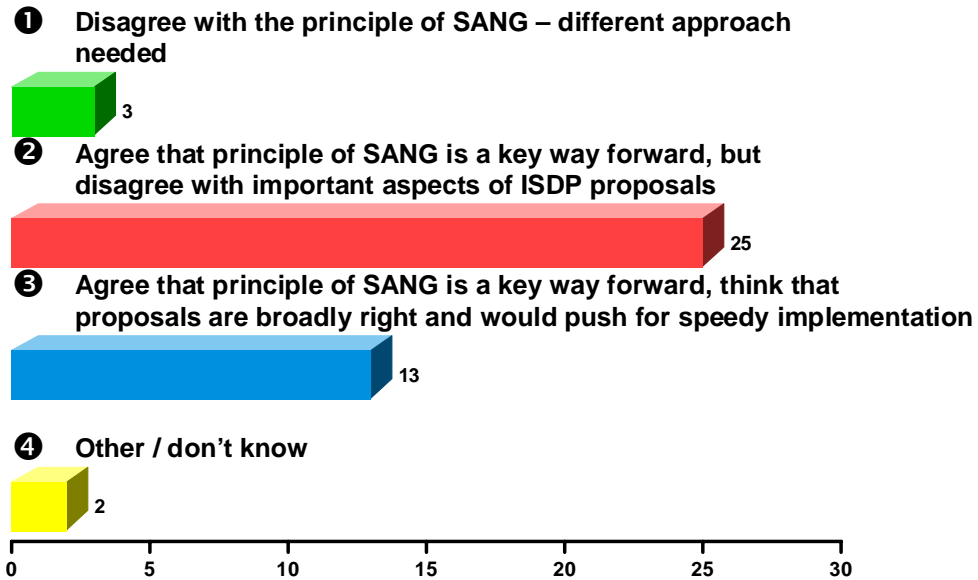
- 6.3 Please contact Cath Rose at [catherinerose@southeast-ra.gov.uk](mailto:catherinerose@southeast-ra.gov.uk) or on 01483 555235 for more information.

**Delegates**

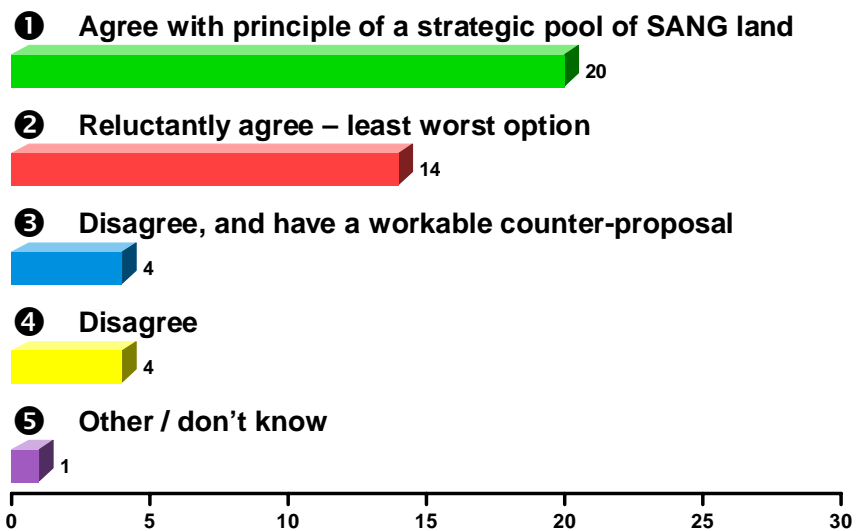
<b>Name</b>	<b>Organsiation</b>
Matt Jackson	Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust
Steve Bailey	Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership
Allison Hulbert	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Ian Phillips	Consultant
Alan Read	Country Watch
Harold Mansfield	Countrywatch
Stuart Otway	Defence Estates
Jonathan Gasson	Defence Estates
Karen Colebourn	Ecological Planning and Research
Alison Williamson	Edp
Dorinda Hooper	Elmbridge Borough Council
Ron Fullard	Federation of Master Builders
Stan Abbott	Forestry Enterprise
Nick Hazlitt	Forestry Enterprise
Martin Clegg	Friends of Farnham Park
Lesley Waddell	Guildford Borough Council
Debbie Tann	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Phil Allen	Hampshire CC
Rosalind Rutt	Hampshire County Council
Bob Milton	Hampshire/Surrey British Horse Society
Terry Beaumont	Heathland Conservation Society
Pete Errington	Home Builders Federation
Roger Hutton	Howard Hutton & Associates
Eric Denton	Mattingley Parish Council
Kristoffer Hewitt	Natural England
Mark Chessell	Natural England
Kate Ashbrook	Open Spaces Society
Fiona Davidson	Premier Properties
Martin Tugwell	Regional Assembly
Cllr Moira Gibson	Regional Assembly
Cath Rose	Regional Assembly
Carrie Temple	RSPB
James Dawkins	RSPB
Karen Merredew	Runnymede Borough Council
Nicola Simms	Rushmoor Borough Council
Peter Standley	Society for the Preservation of Ascot and its Environs
Peter Stubblefield	Society for the Preservation of Ascot and its Environs
David Sanger	Surrey Heath Borough Council
Rob McGibbon	Surrey Heathland Project
Simon Newell	Surrey Wildlife Trust
Derick Stickler	The Crown Estate
Jane Bowden	Waverley Borough Council
Ian Hepburn	Wildlife Trusts in the South East
Nick Griffin	Woking Borough Council
Graham Ritchie	Wokingham Borough Council
Andy Glencross	Wokingham Borough Council
Douglas Bond	Woolf Bond Planning

Electronic Voting Results

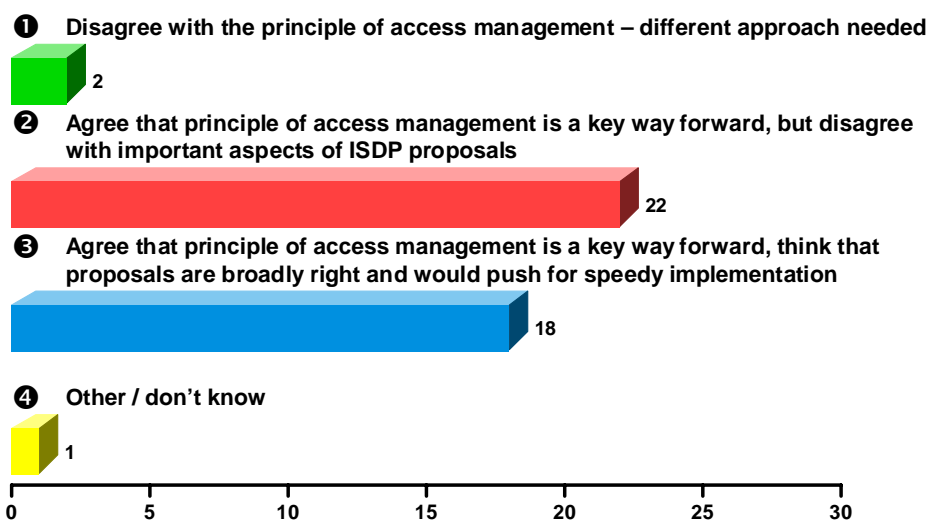
**1. The principle of creating or developing alternative greenspace to mitigate development – as one part of a three prong approach - is the right way forward**



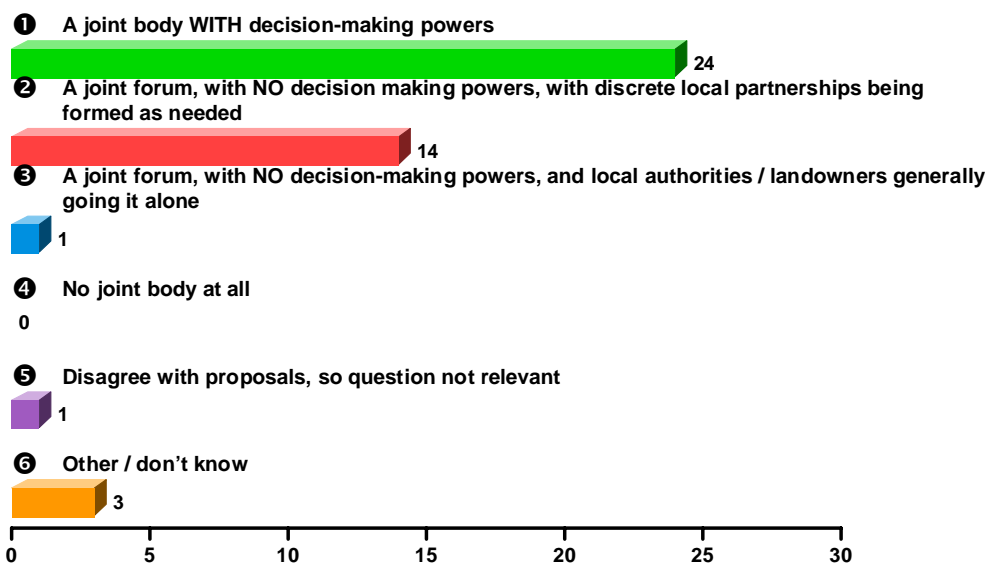
**2. A strategic pool of SANG land should be jointly designated**



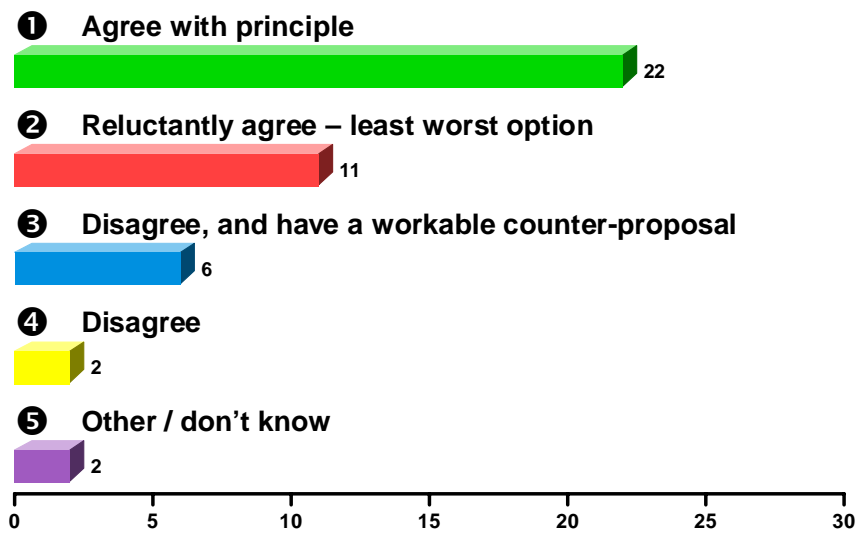
### 3. The principle of managing access to the heaths through wardening and education – as one part of a three prong approach – is the right way forward



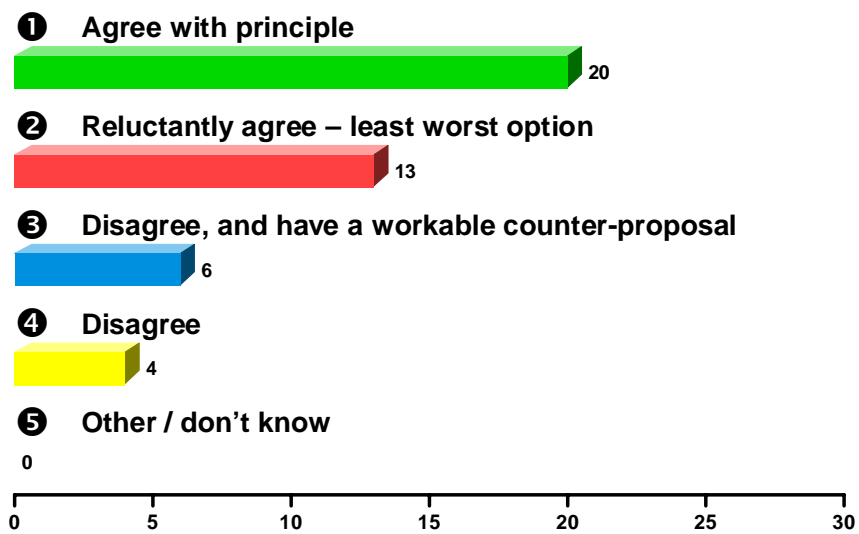
### 4. To make these proposals happen, we need . . . (select the one which most closely represents your views)



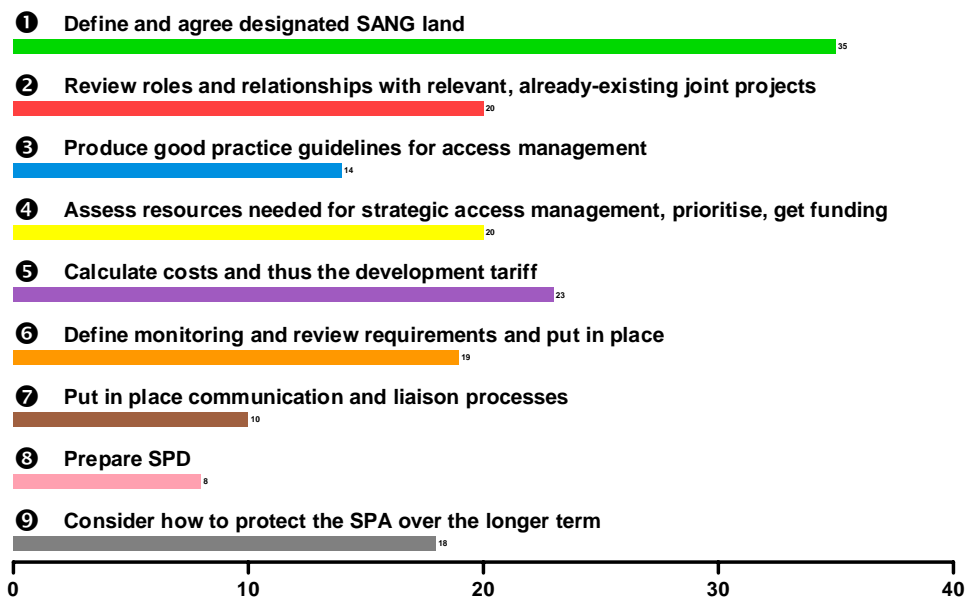
**5. There should be a standard development tariff for the whole area**



**6. Money from a development tariff should be pooled and distributed by a joint body or forum**



**7. What are the delivery priorities? (Assume that an appropriate regional body has been set up) (choose four, equally weighted)**



**8. In general, how far down the road are we towards a viable vision for the way forward? (where 1 is 'Nowhere. Need to start again' and 10 is 'Vision fine. Just needs implementation')**

