**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT BIOSPHERE STEERING GROUP**

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We are now at a crossroads where we must choose between a future that brings together our human and natural worlds, or one which pulls them further apart. The Isle of Wight Biosphere Steering Group recognizes the critical importance of protecting biological and cultural heritage for the generations to come and, by affirming the establishment of the Isle of Wight UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, we are acknowledging the urgent need for action against the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and health and wellbeing inequality. Together we can make the Island a beacon of positive change, in the management and care of the landscapes we share and the ecosystems we rely upon. In doing so we will use the Biosphere designation and principles to shape a better place, where our communities can prosper.

**Article 1: Purpose** The Biosphere Reserve is a vision for the Island where we ensure that people can live, work and visit, successfully, equitably and sustainably by combining and protecting the integrity of the natural world and the authenticity of place. It is a vision in which people are conscious of their common future and their interactions with the planet, acting collectively and responsibly to build thriving societies in harmony within their shared environment. We want to explore new ways to deliver this change and share the challenge as widely as possible, communicating evidence, experience and lessons learned.

**Article 2: Management** The Biosphere Reserve is composed of different geographical zones which are managed in different ways. Some areas will be more protected by policy and law than others, but our goal is to ensure that they all reach levels of ecological health and cultural wellbeing commensurate with the Biosphere standard. We will work together to influence those who make decisions affecting the Island’s land and sea. We will lead on selected projects and support other practitioners in their work for the Biosphere. We will help people to respect and care for their local spaces and understand the part they play in the successful management of the Biosphere.

**Article 3: Cooperation and Solidarity** We need to work together to take care of the Biosphere Reserve. We will support a stronger role for communities and neighbourhoods in developing and deciding local actions. We recognize the equal importance of the private, public and voluntary sectors, together with accountable and resilient institutions, in the achievement of these goals, and we will work with all partners, multinationals and small businesses, mutual aid networks and social enterprises, financial corporations and local authorities, charities, parishes and individuals.

**Article 4: Scientific Research and Monitoring** We will learn more about the natural and human environments of the Biosphere Reserve, and understand better how to take care of them, by commissioning new research and keeping track of changes. We will seek bold solutions to both persistent problems and new challenges, exploring and testing policies, technologies and innovations for the sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources, the mitigation of climate change, and the better integration of built and natural places and the lives of humans and wildlife in the ecosystems we share.

**Article 5: Education and Training** We want to make sure that everyone knows about the Biosphere Reserve and how to take care of it, it is a common good and serves everyone on the Island. We will support projects that develop education and training in Biosphere principles, and which connect the Island to local, regional, national and global issues of conservation, community wellbeing and to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The Constitution of the Isle of Wight Biosphere Steering Group is informed by The Lima Declaration on the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and The Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

