



22 July 2026

To Nick Adams-King, Sarah Bogle, Ruth Adams

Dear Nick, Sarah and Ruth,

Thank you for joining us and representing the Hampshire and Solent Combined County Authority at *Future-proofing our Economy: Nature, Growth and Resilience* earlier this month.

We hope you found the film, discussion and briefing paper useful and thought-provoking. The event brought together leaders from business, local government, academia, the environmental sector and civil society at a pivotal moment for Hampshire and the Solent. As the Combined Authority begins to shape its priorities and ways of working, your participation helped ensure the conversation was timely, relevant and constructive.

One of the strongest themes to emerge was that nature, climate resilience and economic prosperity are not separate agendas. The landscapes, rivers, coastlines and green spaces that make Hampshire, the Solent and the Isle of Wight such a distinctive place are not a scenic backdrop to the economy. They are part of the critical infrastructure that enables it to function and flourish.

Yet there was also a clear recognition that we cannot take these assets for granted. Behind the region's remarkable natural strengths lies a more challenging reality: flooding, drought, water scarcity, declining river health, coastal erosion, biodiversity loss and overheating urban areas are already affecting communities, businesses and public services. Without action, these pressures will increase costs and deepen economic and social inequalities across the region.

At the same time, we heard a strong sense of optimism, ambition and practical capability. We have received a great deal of positive feedback from attendees since the event, with a recurring message about the opportunity that devolution presents. Many participants felt this is a rare moment to think differently about growth, prosperity,

investment, infrastructure and place. There is a genuine appetite to act decisively and develop a compelling vision and identity for Hampshire and the Solent, one that is known not only for economic success, but also for resilience, quality of life and leadership in nature-positive growth.

The event was never intended to be a one-off conversation. It was designed to begin a practical dialogue about how we can work together to create a more prosperous, resilient and future-ready region. As organisations with expertise spanning nature-based solutions, place-making, new enterprise and climate action that also supports disadvantaged communities, health and wellbeing – we would welcome the opportunity to support the development of the Combined Authority’s priorities and strategies. We can bring evidence, convene partners and contribute practical insight as this work takes shape.

We are already planning a programme of follow-on engagement, including themed roundtables and discussions with representatives from business, education, health, local government and civil society, to help inform emerging regional priorities. We hope you will want to be involved.

We would also welcome your view on whether further screenings of the film would be helpful for other members, officers and partner organisations involved in relevant committees and planning groups. The film is a powerful catalyst for discussion and could help create a shared understanding of both the risks facing the region and the opportunities to build a more resilient future.

We would welcome a follow-up meeting over the coming weeks to discuss how the themes raised at the event can best support the Combined Authority’s emerging priorities, and how we can work together to develop a long-term vision for a thriving, resilient and nature-positive Hampshire and Solent.

Thank you again for your participation and leadership. We look forward to continuing this important work with you.

Yours sincerely,

*Event co-hosts:*

*Debbie Tann MBE  
Chief Executive,  
Hampshire & Isle of Wight  
Wildlife Trust*

*Vanessa Rowlands  
Chair, South Downs  
National Park*

*Victoria Mander  
Chair, New Forest National  
Park*

*Graham Horton,  
Deputy Director, Natural  
England*

*Ian Boyd  
Isle of Wight Biosphere/  
The Common Space*

*Christine Holloway  
Chair, Voice for Climate  
and Nature*