



Sustainable Organic Resources Partnership

The Partnership's vision is that the use of organic resources on land will be widely valued by all because it is safe, sustainable, trusted and welcome.

CORPORATE STRATEGY 2005/6 – 2009/10

AND

BUSINESS PLAN 2005/6

Executive Summary

- S1** Safe recycling organic resources is beneficial to the economy and the environment.
- S2** Each year large quantities of organic resources are applied to land, benefiting soil at a cost less than for alternative uses or disposal. The quantity is increasing but environmental legislation is limiting both application rates and specifying the types of material that can be recycled and the subsequent land use practices. At the same time the public and the wider stakeholder community are unsure of the benefits of such recycling.
- S3** The UK and EU waste management policies support the sustainable use of organic resources and are therefore predicated on the continuing use of organic materials on land but these policies are very vulnerable unless their use on land is valued and trusted by the wider stakeholder community. Until now there has been no concerted effort to achieve buy-in from the wide community that has potential interest in the practice.
- S4** The Sustainable Organic Resources Partnership (SORP) was established to remedy that omission. The Partnership's Vision is that the use of organic resources on land will be widely welcomed by all because it is sustainable and trusted.
- S5** In order to achieve this, the Partnership intends to become a unique, independent and authoritative source of information and best practice in the promotion and use

of organic resources on land for the public benefit. The Partnership intends to build trust between stakeholders, and to create and share knowledge of the benefits of recycling using practices that are sustainable and welcomed.

- S6** The Partnership is comprised of individual and corporate members paying modest annual subscriptions. The income is not enough to meet their aspirations and those of the wider community. A robust Strategy is needed to move the Partnership forward. Success for the Partnership will bring benefits to the Nation, will aid Government policy and the work of regulators. It will help farmers and landmanagers, who are organic resource producers as well as users. It will help water companies and waste management companies and local authorities. It will help food producers and retailers who take the food grown on land fertilised by organic resources, but who are often organic resource producers themselves as well. All are interested stakeholders.
- S7** The Partnership's Vision and Mission will be delivered by implementing strategic objectives, major strategies and project specific objectives in Business Plans.
- S8** This Corporate Strategy defines the objectives to:
- establish the Partnership as the principal source of knowledge and best practice in the sustainable use of all organic resources; and
 - secure a strong resource base from which to achieve its objectives.

The Partnership will:

- create and maintain a position of influence.
 - set up an independent and financially sound Partnership.
 - establish a centre of excellence for organic resources pooling expertise from all sectors to support all stakeholders and interested parties.
 - advocate and secure the land routes for all organic resources.
 - raise awareness and educate through a structured communication strategy.
 - advocate the use organic resources to reduce the impact of and mitigate against climate change.
- S9** The Strategy defines the processes by which defined goals will be attained by March 2010. A Business Plan is appended to include the year 2005/6 in which the Strategy has been defined but with an operational focus for the three years 2006/7 – 2008/9.
- S10** This Plan focuses on five main targets. The principal one is to establish a stable properly resourced organisation. An offer has been received from ADAS to provide a contracted partnering support service. Total cost up to March 2009 will be £165000. The intention is to seek that funding from large bodies with a direct interest in maintaining safe, sustainable and welcome operations and from independent funding bodies interested in promoting the greater good of the wider community.

Corporate Strategy 2005/2006 – 2009/2010

Vision Statement

The Partnership's vision is that the use of organic resources on land will be widely valued by all because it is safe, sustainable, trusted and welcome.

Mission Statement

The Partnership's Mission is to become a unique and authoritative source of information and best practice in the advocacy and use of organic resources on land for the public benefit.

The partnership

What is it?

- 1 The Sustainable Organic Resources Partnership (SORP) was formed in 2003 and has been constituted as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee without share capital. It is an independent partnership of organisations and individuals open to all who are interested in the use of organic resources on land. These include supermarkets and food processors, water companies and waste treatment businesses, as well as farmers. It is committed to championing the sustainable use of organic resources through advocacy, protocols, sharing of best practice and dissemination of information. The Partnership provides a unique forum for sharing knowledge and expertise on all organic resources drawing on membership across all sectors and society.
- 2 The Council of Management has executive responsibility for the direction and sound operation of the Partnership. It will be assisted by an Advisory Committee comprised of people invited by the Council for their expertise and appreciation of the interests of the different sectors of the food chain and their support for the Partnership. Task Groups will undertake the detailed technical work. Participation in these groups will be voluntary and they will be supported by the Partnership's officers. There is already established an Annual General Meeting and annual workshop. The workshop will review progress and contribute to the generation of new work and policies.
- 3 Success for the Partnership will bring benefits to the Nation, will aid Government policy and the work of regulators. It will help farmers and landmanagers, who are organic resource producers as well as users. It will help water companies and waste management companies and local authorities. It will help food producers and retailers who take the food grown on land fertilised by organic resources, but who are often organic resource producers themselves as well. All are interested stakeholders
- 4 It is financed currently by individual (31) and corporate membership (23) giving an income of about £8000 per year (see Table for the fees structure). This is not enough to create the income stream necessary to provide the service that members want.

Category	Minimum Annual subscription
Individual member	£50
Corporate non-SME	£500
Corporate SME	£250
Government & Agencies	£500
Local Authorities	£150
Trade Associations	£150
Professional Institutions	£150
Academic Institutions	£150
Charities & NGOs	£150

In order to obtain that income purely from membership subscriptions would require the recruitment of many more members and that is an impractical target to be working to - the plain truth is that the enormous effort needed by Partnership to recruit new members would detract from the effort needed to develop the services needed by Members. So substantial seed money is needed.

The Need for the Partnership

- 5 The successful pursuit of a healthy, happy Society will always produce organic matter as a by-product. When there is an open choice on how this should be managed, common sense and European and UK policies give preference to recycling that matter so as to enrich the natural process in soil management. Of course it is recognised that it may not be possible, or practical, in all circumstances and it will be necessary then to landfill or incinerate.
- 6 The context of land and soil management is changing rapidly. Agriculture is undergoing transformation, one aspect of which is greater regulation. The regulation of waste management is extending, the opportunity for landfill is rightly diminishing and the successful promotion of new incinerating plan is getting more difficult. The recycling of organic waste to land, carried out to best practice standards, provides an opportunity to both benefit agriculture and promote sustainable soil management. The objective of the partnership is to promote and champion a scientifically sound consensus about the ways in which the recycling of organic matter can meet the challenges and needs of both waste management and agriculture at the same time.
- 7 It is quite wrong to think of recycling just as a cheap and convenient way of dealing with waste. Recycling of organic matter is part of the natural cycle of production of biomass and soil enrichment. But organic matter produced in man's activities needs help to be effectively recycled. So effective waste management must be sustainable. Not only must it benefit the environment but it must consume the least financial resources and it must be acceptable, indeed welcome, to Society. Sustainable use of organic matter on land must fit into sustainable uses of land such as agriculture, horticulture, forestry, land restoration and so on and sustainable management of soils.

- 8 Large quantities of organic resources are already applied to land, benefiting soil at a cost less than for alternative uses or disposal. The quantity is increasing and environmental legislation is limiting both application rates and specifying the types of material that can be recycled and the subsequent land use practices. At the same time sectors of the public and some stakeholder communities are unsure of the benefits of such recycling and tend to focus unduly on the risks.
- 9 The UK and EU waste management policies support the sustainable use of organic resources and are therefore predicated on the continuing use of organic materials on land to derive the benefits within a legislative framework. However these policies are vulnerable unless the use of organic resources on land is valued, trusted and welcomed by the wider stakeholder community. Until now there has been no concerted effort to achieve buy-in from the wide community that has potential interest in the practice.
- 10 The Sustainable Organic Resources Partnership aims to remedy that omission. The Partnership's vision is that the use of organic resources on land will be widely valued by all because it is sustainable, trusted and welcome.
- 11 The challenges relating to organic materials to land can be generic and the Partnership provides a forum for sharing knowledge and best practice across all sectors and society.
- 12 If Government policies that encourage re-use and recycling to land are to be successful and sustainable, there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to the promotion of best environmental practice in the use of organic materials on land. The UK needs a secure and sustainable landbank for recycling organic materials, which will provide the following benefits:
 - A cost-effective re-use route, which is widely regarded as the 'Best Practicable Environmental Option'. For some organic materials (e.g. biosolids) the only other viable options are landfill (which Government must reduce) and incineration (which is costly and may have planning difficulties). For example the costs of incinerating UK sewage sludge production have been estimated at in excess of £858 million in capital investment and £41 million per annum in increased operating costs.
 - A sustainable supply of valuable plant available nutrients – reducing the need to import fertilisers (and improving the economics of crop production).
 - A valuable source of organic matter, which is a key component of soil quality, particularly in UK arable soils.
 - Recycling organic materials to land will reduce greenhouse gas (i.e. carbon dioxide) emissions, compared with land filling or incineration, and will therefore make a contribution to UK climate change policies.

Corporate strategy

13. The strategy set out here defines where the Partnership wants to be in 2010 and the principal means by which it will be attained. It includes a Business Plan for the years 2005/06 to 2008/09 which defines immediate targets.

Purpose

- 14 To deliver the Vision and Mission, this Strategy
- identifies strategic objectives with priorities;
 - processes needed to deliver the objectives;
 - criteria against which success will be measured; and
 - specific projects plans described in a Business Plan covering the current year and three following years.

Audience

- 15 The communication objectives for the Strategy are to
- Inform and satisfy current members on the direction of travel of the Partnership
 - Explain to , and excite, stakeholder beneficiaries as to how they will benefit from the work of the Partnership
 - Satisfy external funders that investment in a stable and valued Partnership will be worthwhile.

Strategic Objectives

- 16 The Partnership's Vision and Mission will be delivered by implementing strategic objectives, major strategies and project specific objectives.
- 17 The strategic (key) objectives of the Partnership are to:
- establish the Partnership as the principal source of knowledge and best practice in the sustainable use of all organic resources; and
 - secure a strong resource base from which to achieve its objectives.

The Partnership will:

- create and maintain a position of influence;
- set up an independent and financially sound Partnership;
- establish a centre of excellence for organic resources pooling expertise from all sectors to support all stakeholders and interested parties;
- advocate and secure the land routes for all organic resources;
- raise awareness and educate through a structured communication strategy;
- ensure that the positive contribution of organic resources to reducing the impact of climate change is recognised;
- contribute to sustainable development

Delivery Processes

- 18 The objectives and major strategies will be delivered during the period of the Strategy by the following activities, designed to achieve the most effective progress within the resources available. The proposed activities are:
- 19 **Build and maintain a position of influence**

- Establish a high level and respected Partner group - building on the existing network of Partners including the business sector, governments, regulators, policy makers, operators, academia and individuals-
- Appoint a small team of VIP Patrons representative of target sectors or sector groups;
- Work with other bodies that share the aims and objectives of the Partnership
- Raise the profile and public awareness of the Partnership as part of the overall communication strategy.

20 Set up an independent and financially sound Partnership

- Establish a small professional secretariat and supporting infrastructure (in the first instance) comprising a Chief Executive Officer and part-time administrative support.
- Grow the membership rapidly to achieve a minimum of 300 by implementing a membership recruitment and retention action plan; but without reliance on any income from individual members to run the basic functions of the organisation.
- Establish and implement a fundraising strategy that seeks sustainable sources of funding from Partner bodies, external funding agencies, charitable trusts, commercial sponsorship, governments and the Partnerships own portfolio of activities.
- Raise income from member subscriptions, external supporters and sponsors, events and conferences and projects.
- Continue in establishing a stable and self sustaining Partnership.
- Demonstrate independence.

21 Establish a Central Focus of Excellence for Organic Resources

- Set up an Expert Advisory Group with the best available talent for all sectors and all types of organic resources
- Set up specialist tasks and working groups to lead on specific areas
- Establish a portfolio of 'Practice Protocols' and other publications that promote better practice, innovations, raise awareness and are widely referred to as a model of best environmental practice,

22 Establish and Implement a Communication Strategy

- Set up a Communication Network using communication teams of partners that will lead and advice on communication and public relations
- Prepare a structured stakeholder engagement and communication strategy for the partnership with relevant circles of influence clearly established.
- The communication strategy will aim at establishing the use of organic resources on land as a safe, sustainable, trusted and welcome practice.
- Prepare and collate materials and tools necessary for implementing the strategy from partners and stakeholder sources
- Identify and implement prioritised outcomes agreed by Council and members
- The strategy will include raising profile the partnership by arranging an attractive and relevant portfolio of annual conferences, seminars and training events that: meet professional needs and informs the public, promote key

messages about SORP and give visibility, attract media interest and generate income;

- Create an attractive and inter-active website that will enable regular and improved communication with internal and external stakeholders and members.
- Collate public and stakeholder attitude surveys and initiate further research where necessary and in collaboration with other stakeholders/partners.
- Develop systems for the regular monitoring of public and stakeholder attitude to the use of organic resources to inform the Partnership's objectives and activities.

23 Advocate and secure routes for all organic materials to land

- Review benefits and risks of all organics materials to land.
- Identify threats to routes and identify measures for managing the threats to remove or reduce the risks.
- Understand what will take public attitudes from just accepting the use of organic resources to trusting and welcoming such practices in local communities and then to share that understanding with stakeholders.
- Recommend and initiate any research necessary, in collaboration with members and partners, to inform future steps and measures.
- Establish and implement additional communication and engagement strategy in collaboration with members and partners as necessary.

24 Promote the Positive Contribution of Organic Resources in Reducing Impact of Climate Change

- Advocate the use of organic materials as carbon sinks
- Advocate the use of organic materials in applications such as forestry, the cultivation of biomass for use as fuel, land reclamation and land treatment to reduce erosion.

Assessing Performance

- 25 The Council will be responsible for delivering the vision, mission strategies and objectives and outputs of the plan. To this end it will set relevant targets and regularly review its performance in achieving them, and take appropriate action where needed.

Business Plan for 2005/2006 - 2008/2009

- 26 At present, service support is provided pro-tem by the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management.

- 27 However ADAS have made an offer to provide a permanent support function through a negotiated agreement. An offer is appended. This has been accepted as an indicative figure by the Partnership Council as a basis for planning but can only proceed providing funds are available and that the Council are satisfied that the business relationship with ADAS or any other provider/partner does not compromise the independence of the Partnership.

- 28 In addition it is estimated that the work of the Partnership will probably need about 70 journeys per year for volunteers for the execution of the work programme at an average cost of £50 - giving a total other cost of £10000. It is also considered prudent to allocate £8000 as a contingency over the three years.
- 29 We can only proceed with our strategy if there are sufficient funds. Sufficient funds will only be provided if the sponsors consider that there is a stable focussed body. So funding and a stable support function go hand in hand. Until these dual outcomes can be achieved, CIWEM and ADAS will continue to assist in transforming the organisation for which we are very grateful but this cannot last.
- 30 We will be seeking that funding from, Government, Commercial Corporate and Charitable Organisations.
- 31 Then with the commitment of funds, ADAS will take over the running of the support services.

Targets

- 32 The first target is to have the principal funds and to enable ADAS take over the running of the support for SORP by March 2006 . We will be seeking a total of £165 000 (exclusive of VAT) for the three years 2006/7 – 2008/9 of the Business Plan.
- 33 The second target is to create the technical confidence needed in the Partnership services by March 2007 measured by the involvement of the Partnership in official decision making . In particular:-
 - Have the technical network operating by December 2005
 - Establish a Forum for Recycling MSW by Jan 2006
 - Create a plan for the production of Technical Memoranda by Feb 2006 with the first published no later than July 2006
- 34 The third target is to improve communications by Dec 2005, agree a strategy by the AGM 2006 and to provide a website and other communication according to the ADAS proposal.
- 35 The fourth target is to determine the role and contribution of individual members by the 2006 AGM.
- 36 The fifth target is determine support and funding for any further services in future years by September 2008.

Appendix 1
List of SORP Directors

Name	Affiliation
Richard Burnett-Hall	Bioconvertors plc
Robert Caudwell	National Farmers Union
Norman Lowe	Enviro Consulting
Peter Matthews	Environment Agency
Nick Reeves	CIWEM
Andrew Skinner	Consultant
Pamela Taylor	Water UK

ADAS Submission

Knowledge transfer proposal to support

Objective

To create the relationship necessary for the successful establishment of the Sustainable Organic Resources Partnership (SORP) as the leading independent UK authority for promoting best environmental practice in the use of organic materials on land.

Introduction

Around 100 million tonnes (fresh weight) of organic materials (farm manures, biosolids, industrial 'wastes' and municipal green-waste compost etc.) are currently applied annually to agricultural land in the UK. These organic materials provide a valuable source of nutrients for crop growth and organic matter that can maintain and enhance soil physical conditions, which is a key component of the management of soils to sustain Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition. In future, as a result of the need to meet UK recycling targets and the EU Landfill Directive, local authorities and waste management companies are being driven to investigate alternative recycling routes and waste treatment methods for the organic materials that they handle. In particular, it is expected that green waste and source segregated Municipal Solid Waste composting operations will expand. Also, that organic materials from animal by-product treatment processes, increasing volumes of biosolids, water treatment sludges, industrial wastes from recycling paper, food processing, tannery and textile industry wastes will increasingly be recycled to land. As there is a limited retail market for these materials, agriculture and land restoration/reclamation potentially provide the most sustainable re-use and recycling routes.

If Government policies which encourage re-use and recycling to land are to be successful and sustainable, there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to the promotion of best environmental practice in the use of organic materials on land. The UK needs a secure and sustainable landbank for recycling organic materials, which will provide the following benefits:

- A cost-effective re-use route, which is widely regarded as the 'Best Practicable Environmental Option'. For some organic materials (e.g. biosolids) the only other viable options are landfill (which Government wishes to reduce) and incineration (which is costly and has planning difficulties). The costs of incinerating UK sewage sludge production have been estimated at in excess of £858 million in capital investment and £41 million per annum in increased operating costs.
- A sustainable supply of valuable plant available nutrients – reducing the need to import fertilisers (particularly phosphate) and improving the economics of crop production.
- A valuable source of organic matter, which is a key component of soil quality, particularly in UK arable soils.
- Recycling organic materials to land will reduce greenhouse gas (i.e. carbon dioxide) emissions, compared with landfilling or incineration, and will therefore make a contribution to UK climate change policies.

Background to SORP

ADAS is very sympathetic to the original impulses to set up SORP. It needs to become the authoritative source of information and best practice advice on the re-use of organic materials on land. In particular, SORP needs to build trust between stakeholders and to create and share knowledge on the benefits of recycling organic materials to land.

To achieve its primary objective, SORP will need to: i) promote best practice in the re-use of organic materials on land; ii) inform public attitudes and influence opinion formers; iii) create a network of opportunities for discussion, debate and dissemination of information and; iv) promote the contribution that the recycling of organic materials to land can make to the environment, eco-systems, agriculture and the food chain.

Future vision for SORP

In order for SORP to develop as the leading independent UK authority on the re-use of organic materials on land, and to secure a sustainable landbank that is valued by all stakeholders, SORP needs to establish itself as *the* credible and influential voice on the recycling of organic materials to land. To achieve these aims ADAS will support SORP by providing the following services.

- Professional Secretariat and Administrative support to SORP. These office facilities will be based at ADAS Gleadthorpe and will provide the following services:
 - A permanent postal address.
 - A single point of contact for technical enquires and signposting services to recognised experts in the field (contact point Dr Paul Gibbs). Administrative services will be coordinated by Lisa Rowell at ADAS Gleadthorpe.
 - Production of Newsletters for email distribution to members.
 - Maintenance of membership database (membership will be free to individuals who register on the website, to ensure that SORP is seen as an open and inclusive organisation).
 - Management of SORP accounts etc.
 - Arrangement of venue for quarterly Council of Members meetings, AGM, support to co-sponsored conferences etc (meeting minutes to continue to be taken by Norman Lowe).
- Continue to develop the 'SORP brand' by raising public and media awareness of SORP and its objectives. A key aspect of the brand development will be establishment of a website, along with the production of an updated flier, a poster to promote SORP at conferences/meetings etc. and a bespoke PowerPoint presentation for use at promotional meetings/conferences. Additionally, a quarterly Newsletter will be provided to update SORP members on new technical developments, issues, activities etc. We will aim to promote SORP at conferences/meetings by linking with other scientific/learned bodies to co-sponsor events/activities.

- Enhance and maintain the existing SORP website (www.sorp.org) to provide a readily accessible route to key documents on the re-use of organic materials on land, for example:
 - Safe Sludge Matrix.
 - EA Waste Management Licensing Regulations.
 - Codes of Practices – Defra Water, Air and Soil Codes, Sludge Use in Agriculture etc.
 - Managing Livestock Manures booklets.
 - Defra Manure Management Plan.
 - MANNER.
 - PLANET.
 - R+D Reports.
 - EA Netregs weblinks
 - News updates etc.

The website should aspire to be the authoritative source of information on organic material use on land, which will be useful and hence used by interested stakeholders.

The specific details of ADAS's support services to SORP would be managed through the stewardship of the Council of Members.