

# Access and ELMS

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CUCKMERE AND PEVENSEY CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP ELMS TEST  
AND TRIAL

# Background to Pevensey and Cuckmere

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NOT in a national park or area of outstanding natural beauty.

Mainly private farmed land - No major land holdings by National Trust, Wildlife Trust or RSPB

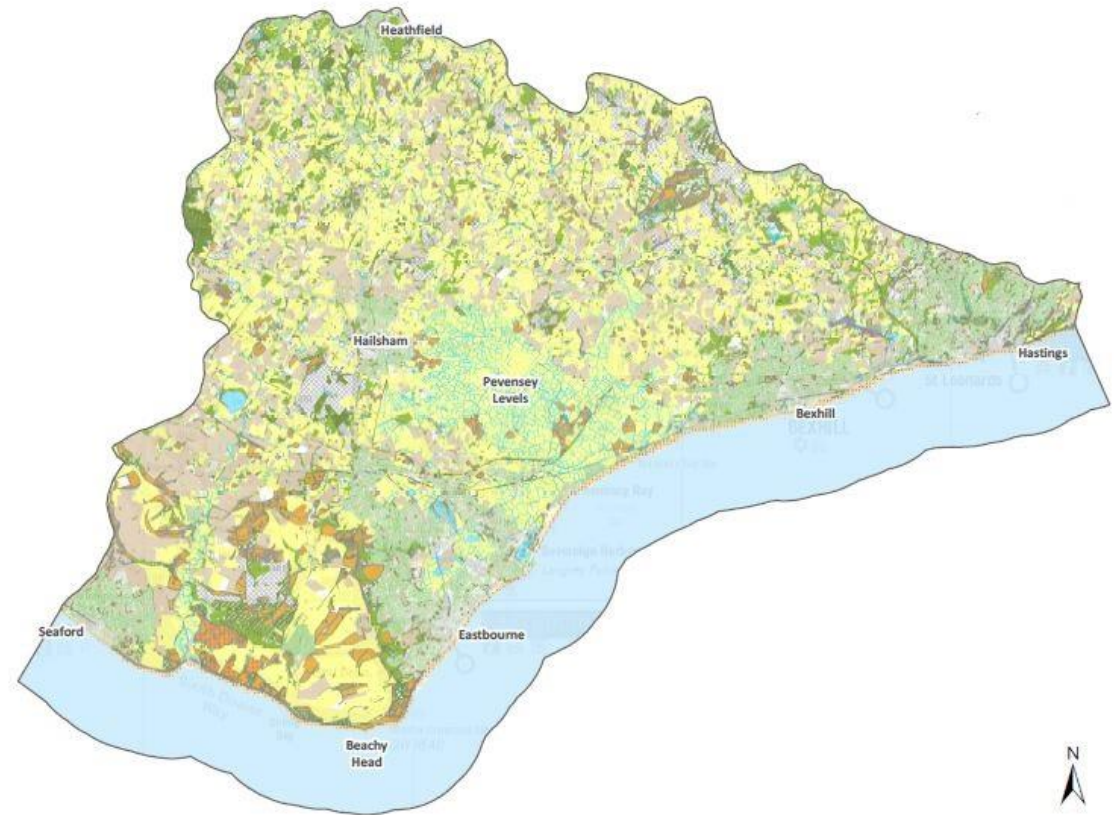
Target area for house building – 12,000 houses planned

Relatively rich in priority habitats and species.

Pockets of social and health deprivation

Water shortage area, area of flood risk and water quality issues.

Lack of accessible natural greenspace for current population.



# Evidence base: access

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- There is a legislative framework underpinning access in the UK; The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
- Features in Defra's 25 year plan and National planning policy framework paras 96 – 101.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

- Wellbeing benefits are well documented, for instance through Natural England's Monitor of Engagement of the Natural Environment

<https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=d5fe6191e3fe400189a3756ab3a4057c>

The impact of access on natural conservation sites is documented here

<https://www.footprint-ecology.co.uk/reports/Lowen%20et%20al.%20-%202008%20-%20Access%20and%20Nature%20Conservation%20Reconciliation%20sup.pdf>

# Accessible natural greenspace standards

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Provide a quantitative basis against which access provision can be measured.

ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometre of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus
- a minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

[https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605111422/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east\\_of\\_england/ourwork/gi/accessiblenaturalgreenspacestandardangst.aspx](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605111422/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_of_england/ourwork/gi/accessiblenaturalgreenspacestandardangst.aspx)

# Background: agri-environment

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Access has been featured in previous agri-environment schemes.

The early stages of Environmental Stewardship (2010- 2020) which included both linear footpath access (from 2010 – 2013) and educational access (through the scheme life).

- Permissive open access £41 per ha
- Permissive linear access £45-105 per ha
- Educational access for invited groups £500 per annum base payment and £100 per group.

See pages 62 – 65 of the HLS handbook for more details

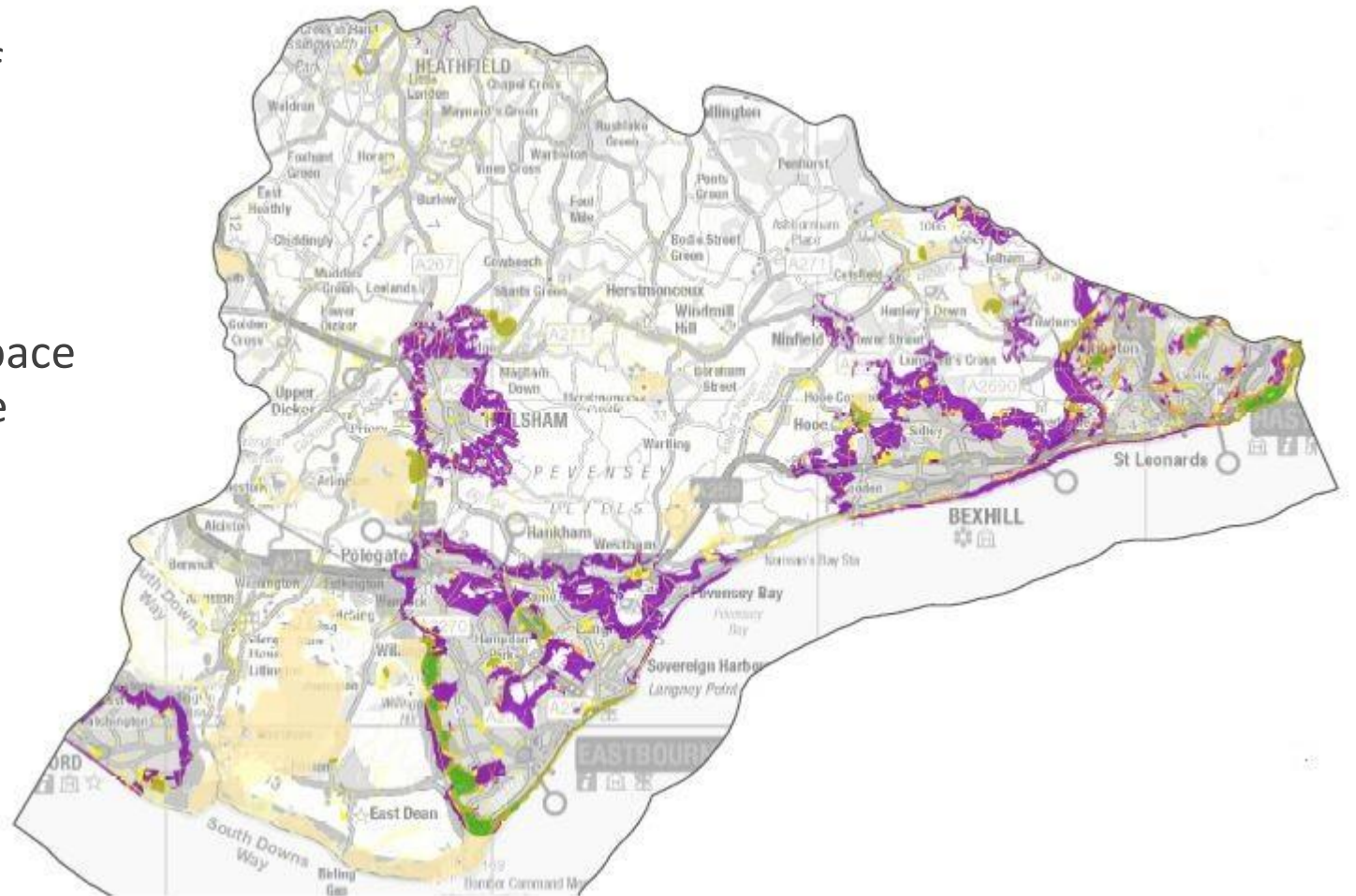
<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605150542/http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/114033>

# Pevensey and Cuckmere analysis

Analysis undertaken by members of the catchment demonstrates:

Areas with a lack of accessible greenspace are shown in PURPLE

There is a lack of accessible greenspace where the urban area meets private farmed land



# What we did

Pevensey Farmers – a Facilitation Fund of over 60 members - asked if the test and trial could specifically address access, which was a key concern for them

We asked Footprint Ecology, who have extensive experience in developing visitor surveys, to come and talk to the group.



Housing, urban effects and recreation: land management on the urban fringe

Durwyn Liley

# Visitor surveys and access management

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The way people access the countryside, ie how far they will walk/drive and how often, is locally specific. Surveys on other areas indicate:

- Walkers live locally, ie within 5km and more than two thirds drive to a site.
- A typical dog walk is 2.5 km long and people typically go about 700m from an access point so a dog walking site should ideally be 40ha.
- Car parking – how much and where – has an impact on access.
- Signage has some impact on visitor behaviour but recreational rangers on site, ie people explaining impacts and how to avoid them, is the most effective intervention to change visitor behaviour.
- No single solution works in all places and involves careful engagement with the community.

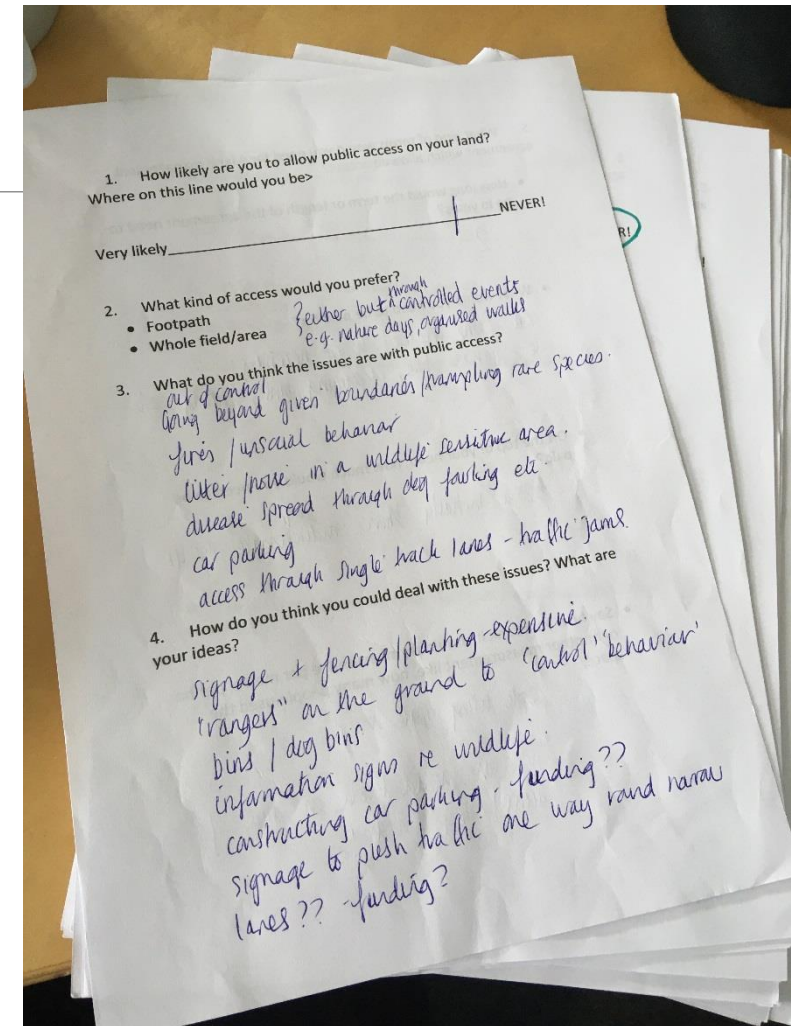


# Farmers reflections

After Footprint's presentation there was an extensive discussion session.

About 25-30 farmers attended the workshop.

18 farmers completed a questionnaire



# Farmer reflections: issues

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Farmers assessment of the issues that access are shared across the group, well understood and developed from their own personal experience.

“Disruption of farm animals. Loss of wildlife. Crime. Disease.”

“Public lack of knowledge about the area they are walking in – especially dog walkers, dog fouling, wildlife and crop damage.”

“Out of control – going beyond given boundaries”

“Irresponsible attitudes. Problem of numbers.

Mixed use – bicycles/horses problematic.”

Access has to be delivered on a landscape scale - for instance café on a neighbouring farm, can impact on the farm next door (raised in discussions).

# Are farmers willing to provide access

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Surprising the answer is largely yes.

They placed themselves on a line between being very likely to never offer access.

The group spread across the spectrum with most prepared to offer something.



# Farmer reflections on solutions

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Good paths – hard to get off. ‘Passive’ diversions.

Signage and fencing/planting. Rangers on the ground to control behaviour.

Bins and dog bins – and someone to empty them.”

Constructing car parking? Signage to push traffic one way around narrow lanes?

Good signage and information, well marked and signed access areas.

Circular walks where possible.

Dog and no dog access. Being able to restrict access at certain times of the year.

# Farmer reflections on solutions

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More were willing to provide footpath access than open access.

Footpath													
Whole field/area													

Suggested length of agreement for access 5 – 10 years.

Some concern about public seeing the access as a 'right' so reviews, breaks and intervals of exclusion suggested.

# Conclusions

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Farmers are willing to provide access – from footpaths to dog exercise areas - but clearly it is not core business for them or an area of existing expertise.

In areas of high development which already have a lack of accessible greenspace. Planning authorities need to link up with ELMS delivery. Farmers could offer potential access solutions particularly around the urban fringe where access is most needed.

Farmers recognise that access needs to be delivered on a landscape scale. Existing visitor survey information shows that people access the countryside within 5-10km of where they live and ideally it would be based on evidence gathered locally through planning policy development.

Farmers feel that they need support with a landscape scale access project, ie to identify and map existing official and unofficial access, to link up with local planning authorities and the contribute to the green infrastructure element of the local planning process. This is a discrete project which could be enable by an ELMS board and local convenor.

# Conclusions: actions

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Who will fund and organise visitor surveys? Farmers will support these by providing information on parking spaces and well-used routes but the information needs to be collated and analysed.

Not all farmers are willing to provide access - even in areas where there is evidence of need.

There is a good case that access needs to be organised and supervised, for instance by recreational rangers, in order to provide good value for money. There is potential that in some areas this could be provided through development levy but this won't be the case everywhere.

As a minimum access should be developed in consultation with local councils and access responsible bodies, ie county councils.